



OPINION 6 GENDER REFORM IN 19TH-CENTURY BENGAL

WORLD 8 DHAKA'S TRAFFIC FACING CHAOS DUE TO SPORADIC PROTESTS

MONEY 10 SENSEX RALLIES 600 POINTS

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PRANNOY TAKES BREAK 11 SPORTS

UKRAINE SENDS RUSSIA ITS 9/11 MESSAGE

AP N KIVY

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday condemned Russia's overnight and early morning barrage on his country as "vile" and said it involved over 100 missiles of various types and about 100 "Shahed" drones. Ukraine's leader said there were deaths and dozens of injuries and that the attack caused a lot of damage to Ukraine's energy sector. "Like most previous Russian strikes, this one was just as vile, targeting critical civilian infrastructure. Most of our regions - from the Kharkiv region and Kyiv to Odesa and our western regions," Zelenskyy said. The barrage began around midnight and continued beyond

daybreak in what appeared to be Russia's biggest attack against Ukraine in weeks. Russian forces fired drones, cruise missiles and hypersonic ballistic Kinzhal missiles at 15 Ukrainian regions - more than half the country, Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said Monday morning. "The energy infrastructure has once again become the target of Russian terrorists. Unfortunately, there is damage in a number of regions," Shmyhal said, adding that Ukraine's state-owned power grid operator, Ukrenergo, has been forced to implement emergency power cuts to stabilise the system. He called on Ukraine's allies to provide Kyiv with long-range weapons and permission to use

MODI AND BIDEN DISCUSS UKRAINE

them on targets inside Russia. "In order to stop the barbaric shelling of Ukrainian cities, it is necessary to destroy the place from which the Russian missiles are launched," Shmyhal said. "We count on the support of our allies and will definitely make Russia pay." According to Ukraine's air force, there were multiple groups of Russian drones moving toward eastern, northern, southern, and central regions of Ukraine, followed by multiple cruise and ballistic missiles. The Russian Defence Ministry said in a statement that the attacks used "long-range precision air-

and sea-based weapons and strike drones against critical energy infrastructure facilities that support the operation of Ukraine's military-industrial complex. All designated targets were hit". Explosions were heard in the capital, Kyiv. Power and water supplies in the city have been disrupted by the attack, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said. At least three people were killed - one in the western city of Lutsk, one in the central Dnipropetrovsk region and one in the partially occupied Zaporizhzhia region in the southeast, according to local officials. Thirteen others were wounded - one in the Kyiv region

that surrounds the Ukrainian capital, five in Lutsk, three in the southern Mykolaiv region and four in the neighbouring Odesa region. Blackouts and damage to civilian infrastructure and residential buildings were reported across the country, from the region of Sumy in the east, to the Mykolaiv and Odesa regions in the south, to the region of Rivne in the west. In Sumy, a province in the east that borders Russia, local administration said that 194 settlements were in a full power blackout, while 19 others had a partial blackout. Ukraine's private energy company, DTEK,

introduced emergency blackouts, saying in an online statement that "energy workers throughout the country work 24/7 to restore light in the homes of Ukrainians." In the wake of the barrage and the power cuts, regional officials all across Ukraine were ordered to open "points of invincibility" - shelter-type places where people can charge their devices and get refreshments during energy blackouts, Prime Minister Shmyhal said. Such points were first opened in Ukraine in the fall of 2022, when Russia targeted the country's energy infrastructure with weekly barrages. In neighbouring Poland, the military said Polish and NATO air defences were activated in the

eastern part of the country as a result of the attack. In Russia, in the meantime, officials reported a Ukrainian drone attack overnight and on Monday morning. Four people were injured in Russia's central region of Saratov, where drones hit residential buildings in two cities. One drone crashed into a residential high-rise in the city of Saratov, and another hit a residential building in the city of Engels, home to a military airfield that had been attacked before, local officials said. Russia's Defence Ministry said that a total of 22 Ukrainian drones were intercepted overnight and in the morning over eight regions, including the Saratov and Yaroslavl regions in central Russia.

Final countdown in Jammu and Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI N JAMMU

The top brass of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday faced a piquant situation following a strong backlash from a section of party workers soon after the party released a list of 44 candidates for the upcoming Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir. However, the original list of candidates was swiftly withdrawn by the party and a trimmed-down list of 16 candidates for the first round of polling was released again to pacify the angry workers who held a protest at its headquarters in Jammu and claimed "parachute candidates" were picked over hardworking workers. Three former MLAs and a woman candidate, Shagun Parihar, whose father Ajeet Parihar and uncle Anil Parihar were gunned down by terrorists in Kishtwar district in November 2018 figured in the list of 16 candidates. The party had earlier dropped names of former Cabinet Ministers, a Deputy Chief Minister, and other non-performing MLAs facing a high degree of anti-incumbency in their respective constituencies. Ironically, the same list also included the names of all those leaders who joined the BJP after dumping their respective parties. Meanwhile, the party's high command went into a huddle in New Delhi and reviewed the fast-paced developments taking place in Jammu, a strong bastion of BJP. This was necessitated as several workers threatened to work against the party in the polls starting September 18, warning that their votes would go against the party



thereby weakening its position. The first list, which caused a flutter, was cleared by the National Election Committee under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi late on Sunday night. The meeting was also attended by BJP President JP Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah, General Secretary (Organisation) BL Santosh, and other members of the Central Election Committee who deliberated on the names during the two-hour-long meeting in New Delhi. As the list was made public via the social media handles of the party early on Monday morning a high-voltage drama unfolded at the State party headquarters in Jammu much to the chagrin of the party's high command. Several senior party leaders, present in the office, were surrounded by slogan-shouting supporters of leaders left out of the list. "I have been working for the party for the last 18 years and was expecting a ticket, but the list of 44 candidates

showed the party has chosen retired police officer Mohan Lal Bhagat, who joined BJP just two days ago. I have worked tirelessly to bring people into the party fold," Jagdish Bhagat, former president of SC Morcha told reporters here at the party headquarters. "Welcoming the withdrawal of the initial list, Bhagat said, "We hope that committed and long-serving party leaders would be given preference over those who have done nothing for the party." "If they ignore us, there will be serious consequences. We will not allow any wrongdoing and will protest against this injustice within the party," Bhagat said. Many workers were also seen protesting at the BJP office demanding a ticket for Omi Khajuria from the Jammu North constituency. In the withdrawn list, the BJP had fielded former Congress leader Sham Lal Sharma from this seat. "We have been associated with the BJP since we

Ladakh is now seven districts

MOHIT KANDHARI N JAMMU

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday announced the creation of five new districts in the Union Territory of Ladakh, taking the total number of districts to seven in the region. The new districts are Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang. Ladakh currently has only two districts, Leh and Kargil, each managed by its autonomous district council. Announcing the decision the Union Home Minister said, "The Narendra Modi Government is committed to creating abundant opportunities for the people of Ladakh. The new districts, namely Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra and Changthang, will take the benefits meant for the people to their doorsteps by bolstering governance in every nook and cranny." Ladakh got a Union Territory status after the Centre revoked Article 370, which gave special status to the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated it into two UTs in 2019. Being a UT, Ladakh comes under the direct administrative control of the Home Ministry. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also hailed the creation of five new districts in Ladakh as a step towards better



governance and prosperity. Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang will now receive more focused attention, bringing services and opportunities even closer to people," he said, congratulating them. He said on X, "Creation of five new districts in Ladakh is a step towards better Governance and prosperity." Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Tashi Gyalson also extended greetings to both Modi and Shah for the historic announcement. Engineer turned education reformer and environmentalist Sonam Wangchuk also welcomed the announcement and hoped the newly created districts would be administered by the Independent district councils under the sixth schedule.

including former Deputy Chief Minister Nirmal Singh and former ministers Sat Paul Sharma, Bali Bhagat, Priya Sethi and Sham Lal Choudhary and Sukhmandan Choudhary.



Malayalam women call out sleazy film industry men

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN N KOCHI

The turmoil faced by Malayalam film industry got worsened on Monday with three more actresses alleging that veteran actors sexually abused them in the course of movie making and script discussions. The prominent actors to face the accusation of sexual molestation are Mukesh, who is a CPI(M) MLA, Baburaj, an actor essaying the roles of evil characters, Jayasoorya, a Kerala State Film Award winner for the best actor category and Manian Pillai Raju. This is not the first time Mukesh, who hails from a family of artists in Kollam, figures in a controversy. His first wife Saritha, South India's prominent actress who had bagged national awards for her portrayal of challenging characters in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada films, "ran away" with her sons to escape torture by the actor-turned-politician. Methil Devika, eminent danseuse whom he married later too gave up on him and left his household following the ill-treatment by Mukesh and divorce proceedings are on in a family court.

A junior artiste was the first person on Monday to come out with allegations of sexual abuse against Baburaj (who is also the vice-president of AMMA), Shine Tom Chacko and Sreekumar Menon (ad film maker). The day also saw a senior artiste accusing Jayasoorya, Idavela Babu, and MP Raju for their sexual misdeed towards her. "Since these people hold important positions in Association of Malayalam Movie Artists, female artists are afraid to file any complaints against them. The situation in Malayalam film industry is that the female artistes have to make a lot of compromises to survive in the profession," she said. Even as this report is being filed, Geetha Vijayan, a film actress who was rated as the star of the future by critics, disclosed that she was ousted from the industry for not making any kind of adjustments with the directors and lead artists who approached her seeking sexual favours. "I have come out of many projects asking them to get lost. Though I lost my chances, looking back, I feel happy and satisfied," said Geetha Vijayan.

The current upheaval in Malayalam film industry started with the release of K Hema Committee Report on the victimisation and harassment faced by women artistes in Malayalam industry. The report "claimed" two persons on Sunday viz Ranjith (moviemaker and chairman of Government run-Chalachitra Academy) and Siddique, general secretary of AMMA who were accused of inappropriate behaviour by Bengali actress Sreelekha Mitra and an upcoming artist Revathy Sampath. Both Ranjith and Siddique have resigned from their official positions. The Kerala Government on Monday appointed a Special Investigation Team consisting of women IPS officers to probe the findings of the Hema Committee Report and also to look into the complaints by the women artistes. Ministers and bureaucrats got a reprieve from the heart rending devastation of Wayanad as the focus is on the spicy reports emerging from Mollywood. Even the evening debates in Malayalam satellite news channels have been monopolised by discussions on sexual abuse featuring the stars.

Bengal stunned by psychopath rapist

SAUGAR SENGUPTA N KOLKATA

Former RG Kar Medical College principal Dr Sandip Ghosh aided by his "team of crony doctors" and even an advocate had taken all the measures so as to "sabotage and dilute" the forensic test results of the victim postgraduate lady doctor who had allegedly been raped and murdered in the night intervening August 8 and 9 triggering massive nation-wide stir paralysing medical services both in Bengal and other parts of India. According to a former head clerk of the RG Kar mortuary section Ghosh had influenced the constitution of "team of doctors who belonged to his own coterie" to perform the autopsy test. This was done by ignoring and keeping out "very senior doctors of the forensic department of the Hospital," he said adding also that "despite the RG Kar Hospital has a most modern system of preservation of dead bodies with 68 chambers... in 4 degree temperature... the forensic team conducted an hurried autopsy in about one hour" while the police threw all norms and protocols to the

wind by disposing off the body in a matter of a few hours. "The autopsy report seems to have been prepared in a most amateurish manner... proper terms have not been used in right places... minute details have been avoided... which will make it very difficult for the prosecution to prove the case beyond doubts... a good defence lawyer will pierce through the prosecution case and it will be difficult for the Court to award punishment to the prime accused who is now in CBI custody," said Dr Subarna Goswami a senior doctor. Besides, buttressing the CBI's arguments footages have gone viral in the social media where it is seen that a number of "outside doctors and an advocate belonging to a political party" who are not connected to the RGKMCH visiting the place of occurrence along with Dr Sandip Ghosh in the night of August 9, hours after the victim's body was discovered. The said former head clerk of the Hospital also questioned the reason behind the police failing to cordon off the area



RG Kar Medical College and Hospital junior doctors during their sit-in protest against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor, in Kolkata, on Monday PTI

and allowing Dr Ghosh and his friends to visit the place of occurrence and hold meeting there. "If what is being said is true then the conduct of these people is under question... the role of the police should come under the scanner... the thumb rule is that after a heinous crime like this everyone around comes under suspicion and so no one... even the principal... let alone any outsider should be

allowed in the PO and here people roamed about the area freely... the question is whose interests they were serving," asked the said head clerk of the hospital. Meanwhile, in a related development, the Kolkata Police on Monday declared illegal the protest march towards the State Secretariat Nabanna demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as illegal and warned that strict action

would be taken against those who would play mischief. Additional Director General of Police (South Bengal) Supratim Sarkar said, "An unknown students' organisation called Paschimbanga Chhatra Samaj has given us intimation - but not sought any permission - that they will be taking a procession to the prohibited areas... one of their leaders yesterday met a senior politician at a five star hotel... apparently making their intentions to create trouble... they as well as all the right thinking people of the State are requested not to participate in such protest march." He also said a joint forum of citizens had indeed sought such permission but that had been "rejected" considering law and order issues and also a UGC NET exam scheduled for Tuesday. However, the leadership of the students' wing said it would march towards the Nabanna and force the Chief Minister to resign "taking responsibility as the Health Minister and the Home Minister of the State for the RG Kar incident."

Bole Kangana, bole BJP

RAJESH KUMAR N NEW DELHI

Expressing disagreement with MP Kangana Ranaut's remarks on the farmers' protests, the BJP on Monday said the Lok Sabha MP from Mandi had been directed to not make such statements in the future. This came after Ranaut stoked a controversy by suggesting that the farmers' protests could have led to a Bangladesh-like situation in the country if the top leadership was not strong enough. The BJP MP from Mandi recently alleged that "rapes, murders" were committed during the farm struggle, but farmers continued to stage protests. In a video shared by the Mandi MP on X, she alleged that "bodies were hanging and rapes were taking place" during the farmers' protest against the now-repealed three farm laws. "The statement made by the BJP MP in the context of the farmers' movement is not the opinion of the party. The Bharatiya Janata Party expresses its disagreement with the statement made by Kangana Ranaut," the BJP said in a statement. On behalf of the BJP, Ranaut is neither permitted nor authorised to make statements



on the party's policy issues, it said. "On behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Ranaut has been directed to not make any such statements in future," the statement said. "The BJP is committed to follow the principles of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' and social harmony," it added. Ranaut's comments came at an awkward time for the BJP, with Assembly elections in Haryana just weeks away. Party insiders maintained Ranaut's statement might serve as a fresh trigger for farmers' outrage against the party and adversely impact its prospects in certain farmer-centric areas. During the recently held Lok Sabha elections, BJP candidates faced a stiff opposition from farmers

while campaigning in the State. A BJP leader said at present, there was no resentment among farmers against the party, but Ranaut's statement could create trouble for the candidates as campaigning progressed. Farmer organisations have expressed anger over the way Ranaut has again raked up issues pertaining to farm protests, calling her a "habitual offender" and have asked the Punjab Government and the Centre to investigate at whose instance she is "spitting venom" against the protesters. Farmers also see a "conspiracy" to create trouble to get support for her upcoming film. Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala has also posted on X wishing the BJP MP to "Get well soon, Kangana!". He asked, "Why do BJP people hate the country's food providers so much? Were these just Kangana's words or did someone else copy them?" BJP has always lied, deceived, conspired and oppressed our farmers. And once again a BJP MP has made baseless allegations against our food providers."

A gallery on the life of Kushabhau Thakre to be set up: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, BJP State President and Khajuraho MP Vishnudutt Sharma and State Organization General Secretary Hitanand on Monday paid floral tributes to Kushabhau Thakre, the patriarch of the BJP, at his statue at Kushabhau Thakre International Convention Center on his birth anniversary. On this occasion, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced that a gallery will be set up to showcase his life in the Kushabhau Thakre Convention Hall in Bhopal, while a memorial will be built in his memory in Dhar as per the intention of the organization. BJP State President and Khajuraho MP Vishnudutt Sharma said that the work of how the organiza-

tional system can be increased in the party was started by revered Kushabhau Thakre. BJP State President and Khajuraho MP Vishnudutt Sharma and State Organization General Secretary Hitanand paid floral tributes to Kushabhau Thakre on his birth anniversary by offering floral tributes to his statue located near Bhadbhada Vishram Ghat and also to his picture in the BJP State Office. Yadav said that today the festival of Janmashtami is being celebrated. Kushabhau Thakre adopted many ideals of Lord Krishna and included them in his life. Revered Kushabhau Thakre was also among those leaders who called upon patriots to establish democracy for good governance in the country. From Jan Sangh to Bharatiya Janata Party

organization, he worked to develop each and every worker and provided support. Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav said that Kushabhau Thakre can never be forgotten, his life will always be a source of inspiration for us. Yadav said that heavy damage has been caused by the floods caused by rain in Kerala and Tripura. Financial assistance will be provided by the state government in both the places. State President of Bharatiya Janata Party and Khajuraho MP Vishnudutt Sharma said that revered Kushabhau Thakre was such a personality who worked hard on how a worker, an ideal worker can be. Thakre did the work of molding workers not only in Madhya Pradesh but in the whole country. After Jan Sangh to Bharatiya

Janata Party in 1980, he played an important role in making the party a cadre based organization. State President Sharma said that Thakre made Bharatiya Janata Party a worker based party. He established the method of developing this quality in the workers on how to move forward in politics by staying honest. He developed the method by giving an example across the country on how to run one's organization with honesty while being in power. Thakre worked to make the organization self-reliant through the lifelong cooperation fund. Every worker of Madhya Pradesh Bharatiya Janata Party is moving forward by following the ideals of revered Thakre and taking inspiration from his politics of honesty. State gov-

ernment minister Vishwas Sarang, Krishna Gaur, senior leader Suresh Pachauri, party's state vice-president and MP Alok Sharma, state vice-president Seema Singh Jadoun, Pankaj Joshi, party's state general secretary and MLA Bhagwandas Sabnani, MLA Rameshwar Sharma, Mayor Malti Rai, party's state minister Rahul Kothari, state media in-charge Ashish Usha Agarwal, former MP Alok Sanjar, state spokesperson Hitesh Vajpayee, district president Sumit Pachauri, state spokesperson Ms. Neha Bagga, Hirendra Bahadur Singh, SS Uppal and Ajay Singh Yadav along with state and district officials and workers of the party also paid floral tributes at the statue located at Kushabhau Thakre International Convention Center.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav pays tributes to BJP stalwart leader Kushabhau Thakre on his birth anniversary at Kushabhau Thakre convention center in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Instead of searching for other accused, cops busy in parading robber in public

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Jehangirabad police have paraded main accused who had robbed two bus conductors of Rs 11000 cash, mobile phone at knife point and also attacked one of the conductors. The main accused Naseem alias Breaker was arrested and he was paraded in the area. Earlier a bus conductor was robbed by four miscreants at knife point while another was attacked after the accused boarded the bus at Galla Mandi, miscreants robbed Rs 11000 and escaped in an autorickshaw. Three miscreants stopped the bus in the Jahangirabad area of Bhopal after obstructing its way. As soon as the accused entered the bus, they put a knife on the conductor's neck. The miscreants snatched the Rs 8000 kept in

his pocket. After this, they sat in the bus. When another conductor boarded this bus from Galla Mandi, the accused stabbed him in the ear. They snatched Rs 3000 kept in his pocket. Along with this, the miscreants also looted his mobile phone and fled. The attackers have also injured another conductor by stabbing him. In this case, the police have registered a case against three people including one named. They are being searched. According to the police, Rajesh Lovanshi (45) of Mandideep district Raisen, works as a conductor in Rathore Travels bus plying between Mandideep-Bhopal. The bus came to Bhopal with passengers at around 10.30 pm on Saturday night. Naseem alias Breaker, resident of Mother India Colony, parked a passenger

auto in front of the bus near Barkhedi petrol pump. After stopping the bus, Naseem and his two companions boarded it. As soon as they came inside, Naseem and his companions beat Rajesh and put a knife on his neck. The bus reached further till Galla Mandi, where it stopped, in which two youths named Mashkoor and Shahwar boarded. Both of them work as conductors in other buses. Spotting them, the accused started beating them, stabbed Mashkoor in the hand when he protested, and attacked Shahwar with a knife in his ear. The accused snatched three thousand rupees in cash and mobile from these two. After this, they got down from the bus near Capital Petrol Pump. Their other companion was chasing them in an auto. Later they

fled in the same auto. However, the police have seized the auto used in the robbery. According to sources, two suspects have been taken into custody and are being questioned. Complainant Rajesh said that the accused have been robbing buses for the last several days. Due to the fear of them, no one complains. Naseem's gang often robs the blue bus running between Mandideep and Bhopal. He was recently released from jail. He was robbed on the second day of his release. He said that he is still afraid that after complaining, he will definitely take revenge. He will attack again. Similarly, Mashkoor, who was injured in the attack by the accused, also refused to talk about the incident. He said that we have to travel on the bus on this route.

Probe on to check whether caves being taken for salughter in BMC trucks

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In the case of more than 50 calves loaded in Bhopal Municipal Corporation trucks, Bajrang Gau Raksha team remained stationed at Bilkhriya police station till 4 am. Gau Rakshaks have claimed that the animals were taken for slaughter at night, while the corporation officers are saying that they were taken to the cowshed. On Monday, Corporation Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi also inquired about the matter. He said, if the matter is found to be true, strict action will be taken against the guilty corporation employees. Bajrang Dal Gau Raksha team has also given an application in Bilkhriya police station. It was told that cows were being loaded into corporation trucks from Arawaliya Kanji House

BMC Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi also inquired about the matter. He said, if the matter is found to be true, strict action will be taken against the guilty corporation employees

late at night and left towards the forest. Animals were being unloaded from two out of three trucks near Adampur. When Santosh, the driver of one truck, was asked, he said that they leave them in the village cowshed. Bajrang Dal district coordinator Upendra Sharma said that Sarpanch representative Prashant Thakur also reached the police station at night. He told that a cowshed is proposed in the village, but it has not been built yet. The animals were being unloaded from the vehicles far from the place where the proposal is made. The last rites of dead animals are performed at this place.

In such a situation, the matter is serious. Here, the anger of the cow protectors also witnessed and they lashed on the corporation officers who reached the spot. They also accused them of cow smuggling. The cow protectors said that the animals were either being left for smuggling, or were taken to the incinerator located in Khanti to be burnt alive. This should be investigated. This matter is serious. Late Sunday night, the cow protectors caught two such trucks of the Municipal Corporation, in which calves were being taken. In these trucks caught near Adampur Khanti, there were calves of the

age of one and a half to three years. Many cow protectors including Bajrang Dal district convener Upendra Sharma, cow protection chief Purana Bhopal Vinod Johare reached Bilkharia police station and applied for action. Sharma and Johare say that these cows were either brought here to be burnt in the incinerator or there were preparations to send them to the slaughter house through a big vehicle. This is a unique case of smuggling in a corporation vehicle. Strict action should be taken. Corporation ADC Ranveer Singh, who reached the spot, has talked about shifting the animals to the cowshed. Corporation Chairman Suryavanshi said, this matter has come to notice. It will be investigated. If found true, strict action will be taken against the culprits.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav during Janmashtami celebrations at his residence in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

National eye donation fortnight begins at AIIMS Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

National Eye Donation Fortnight is being observed at AIIMS Bhopal from 25 August to 8 September 2024. This annual campaign aims to spread awareness about the importance of eye donation and motivate people to donate their eyes after death. Professor (Dr.) Ajai Singh, Executive Director, AIIMS Bhopal said, "Eye donation is the greatest donation. It brightens another person's life, giving a new light. At AIIMS Bhopal, we are committed not only to provide world-class eye care services but also to educate the public about the importance of eye donation. I urge everyone to pledge to donate their eyes and contribute to this life-changing act. Together, we can make a significant impact in this fight

Eye donation brightens another person's life, giving a new light. At AIIMS Bhopal, we are committed not only to provide world-class eye care services but also to educate the public about the importance of eye donation

against blindness. AIIMS Bhopal has corneal transplant services and a fully functional eye bank, where advanced procedures like lamellar corneal transplant are performed, in which only the affected corneal layer is replaced, leading to better clinical outcomes." Blindness is a serious public health problem and according to the World Health Organization (WHO), corneal diseases are one of the leading causes of visual impairment and blindness. Dr. Bhavna Sharma, Professor and

Head, Department of Ophthalmology, AIIMS Bhopal, emphasised on the importance of eye donation and said, "We all should come forward and extend our full support to this important cause of eye donation and spread awareness about it. At AIIMS Bhopal, we are committed to providing super-specialty ophthalmic services that will be accessible and affordable to patients from all sections." Dr. Sharma also spoke about the efforts being made by the department to

achieve the targets set under the National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI). "We hope to spread awareness about eye donation and dispel myths prevalent in the society during the 'Netradaan Pakhwada', which is the need of the hour," she said. AIIMS Bhopal treats conditions such as cataract, childhood eye diseases, trauma, retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), diabetic retinopathy, and complex retinal disorders. During the fortnight, various activities are being organised to promote eye donation which include display of posters and banners on eye donation, health talks, taking oath for eye donation, eye check-up in rural areas and eye donation awareness programmes.

Dy CM Shukla to address workshop on enhancing rural governance

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Patna, and Absolute Gramya Private Limited are set to host a workshop dedicated to enhancing rural governance, healthcare, and skill development through the innovative E-Panchayat system. The event, titled "Empowering Compatible Rural Governance, Health, and Skilling through Developing E-Panchayat," will take place on September 2, 2024, at Hotel Marriott, Bhopal at 10:15 AM. The workshop will feature an inaugural address by Rajendra Shukla, the Deputy Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. His speech will outline the government's vision for rural development and the pivotal role of E-Panchayat. Prof. T. N. Singh, Director of IIT Patna and Chairman of the Foundation for Innovators in Science and Technology (FIST), will deliver a special address focusing on the intersection of technology and rural development. This workshop represents a significant advancement in

integrating technology into rural governance processes. The E-Panchayat initiative is anticipated to revolutionize governance, healthcare delivery, and skill development at the grassroots level. A key highlight of the event will be the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FIST, IIT, Patna and Absolute Gramya Private Limited. This agreement will formalize the commitment of both organizations to collaborate on advancing the E-Panchayat initiative and ensuring its successful implementation. The workshop will identify challenges and opportunities related to E-Panchayat implementation. This technological focus approach is crucial for modernizing rural governance and amplifying the impact of E-Panchayat. The workshop will feature a range of sessions addressing key aspects of E-Panchayat. The Interactive Workshop on E-Panchayat Applications will focus on the practical applications of E-Panchayat in governance, healthcare, and skill development.

Exhibition on folk, tribal culture of Jharkhand

Bhopal: An exhibition focusing on folk and tribal culture of Jharkhand organized by Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya. This exhibition aims to showcase the rich cultural heritage, customs and traditions of Jharkhand in its glorious history and seventy-five years of independence of India and to develop mutual coordination, cooperation and partnership among its people, as well as to enhance the social, economic and economic development of the people of Jharkhand. Reflects cultural life, their religious beliefs and emotional ties. On this occasion Professor Amitabh Pandey Director of the Museum, said that the exhibition presented as part of the Amrit Mahotsav of 75 years of India's independence and its glorious history, was dedicated to Munda, Santhal, Oraon, Birhor, Bhumij, This is a humble attempt to present a glimpse of the socio-cultural life of Jharkhand through a diverse collection related to Mal Paharia, Asur, Ho and Gond. Apart from the above mentioned natural splendor of greenery and mineral wealth, Jharkhand is also known as a tribal dominated state as it is the home state of 32 tribal groups.

PIMR students contribute to 'Main Hoon Traffic Mitra' initiative

PNS ■ INDORE
As Indore grapples with the growing challenges of traffic congestion, Prestige Institute of Management and Research (PIMR) volunteers have stepped up with an impactful initiative. Under the leadership of the Mayor of Indore, these dedicated volunteers are playing a pivotal role in the 'Main Hoon Traffic Mitra' campaign, ensuring smoother traffic flow at the city's busiest intersections. Already recognized for their involvement in literacy and various social programs through the PIMR Literacy Mission, these volunteers are now expanding their efforts to include traffic management. By positioning themselves at key junctions on weekends, they are aiding in efficient traffic operations and educating the public on the importance of following traffic regulations. Davish Jain, Chairman of the Prestige Education Foundation, highlighted the urgency of this initiative, stating, "Just as Indore has set benchmarks in cleanliness, it's time we take bold steps towards traffic

improvement." Inspired by this vision, the volunteers from the Prestige Literacy Mission have embraced their roles in this crucial traffic reform campaign. Dr. Jain stressed that this campaign is more than just a social project; it's a crucial opportunity to fulfill one's civic duties. He proudly mentioned that the students of the PIMR Literacy Mission are not only dedicated to their studies but also deeply committed to their responsibilities towards society. In addition, he shared that the Prestige Education Foundation has a long-standing tradition of active participation in social causes, positively impacting various segments of the community. The institution has previously contributed to improving basic facilities in government schools, providing educational resources to students, and organizing free medical camps to deliver healthcare services to those in need. As part of their ongoing commitment to environmental conservation, the Prestige Group has also initiated a tree plantation drive, planting thousands of trees to create a sustainable, green environment for future generations.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav feeds cows on the occasion of Janmashtami festival in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Promoting new research is the first priority: New VC

PNS ■ JABALPUR

Mandeep Sharma, the new Vice Chancellor of Jabalpur-based Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, here on Monday said that being the only veterinary university in the state, our work area is as big as our responsibility. While talking to media persons, he said that our priority is to

bring a dairy college, promote new research, ensure safety of cows roaming on the road and increase their utility for cattle keepers. Become a partner in the story of development. The Vice Chancellor said that the purpose of the university is to do the work of education, research and dissemination, but this work will be completed only when every member of the university participates. My effort will be

that the university professors, scientists, employees and students, all become partners in the story of development of the university. Mandeep Sharma, the new Vice Chancellor of the Veterinary University, said, dissemination of education and research will happen only with the participation of every member. He reiterated his set goals and said that work is going on rapidly in the veterinary field.

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Chanderi celebrates Sri Krishna Janmashtami: Chief Minister

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has said that Sri Krishna has given mankind a message of following the path of Dharma. Chanderi, the holy city has been associated with Lord Krishna. All efforts would be made for development of this city. Chanderi will be developed as a tourist destination. Chief Minister Yadav was addressing the Sri Krishna Parv program organized at the new Krishi Upaj Mandi of Chanderi, Ashoknagar. Chief Minister Yadav performed Bhoomi puja and dedicated development works. He distributed benefits to the beneficiaries of various schemes. The program included cultural programs based on Krishna Leelas presented by the artists of the Culture

Department, Model School Chanderi, Folk Art Troupe Chanderi, and Vrindavan. District Panchayat President Ajay Pratap Singh Yadav, Pichhor MLA Shri Pritam Singh Lodhi, former MLA Ashoknagar Jajpal Singh Jajji, public representatives, officers, and a large number of distinguished citizens were present in the program. Chief Minister Yadav said that India is culture-oriented. He said that people of all religions working together on handlooms in Chanderi Handloom Park have made the Chanderi saree famous worldwide. Yadav said that Lord Sri Krishna taught us the importance of education at the age of 11 and gave us a lesson on karma. He said that Sanatan Dharma is amazing. He described in detail the love of Mata Yashoda and



Sudama's friendship. Chief Minister Yadav said that we all are proud to participate in the Sri Krishna Parv program in Chanderi, the city of Shishupala. Chief Minister Yadav said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Modi, religious places are being developed and uplifted. The new education policy has been implemented to improve education for the first time in Madhya Pradesh in the country. Religious education

has also been emphasized in the new education policy. Lessons from Lord Sri Ram and Lord Sri Krishna have also been included in the school curriculum. **Faith will remain firm:** Minister Shri Shukla Minister for New and Renewable Energy Department and in-charge of the district, Rakesh Shukla said that Krishna Janmashtami has started from Chanderi. Lord Sri Krishna has come to this land. I bow down to this land. This program should be celebrated every year in Chanderi. He said that the confidence with which Chief Minister Yadav has handed over the charge of the district will remain firm. Chanderi MLA Jagannath Singh Raghuvanshi, Mungawali MLA Brijendra Singh Yadav, former MP K.P. Yadav, and Alok Tiwari also addressed the program.

Chief Minister Yadav said that Chanderi will be developed as a tourist destination. The city will also be included in the 'Sri Krishna Patheya'. Mountaineer Sushri Muskaan from Ashok Nagar will be provided an incentive of Rs 4 lakh. A college will be opened in Naisaraithehil after scrutiny. A community health center will be opened in Bahadurpur tehsil. Shishupalgarhi Kalyan Rai Dwar will be renovated. Five rooms will be constructed in Qila Kothi of Chanderi. Cattle rearers will be given a subsidy by the government if they rear more than 10 cows. **Dedication and Bhoomi Pujan** Chief Minister Yadav performed the bhoomipujan of 4 development works worth Rs 2.60 crore and dedicated 3 works worth Rs 11.33 crore in Chanderi.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav goes through a collection of silk sarees during his visit to Handloom Park in Chanderi, Ashoknagar district Madhya Pradesh on Monday. Pioneer photo



Union Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan pulls a chariot of Lord Krishna during a procession taken out by the members of Yadav Community on the occasion of Janmashtami festival in Bhopal on Monday.

Five open fire in South Delhi cafe

New Delhi: Birthday celebration turned into a tragic affair in southwest Delhi's Satya Niketan area as the Delhi Police arrested five men who had come to the cafe in the posh area and opened fire after a scuffle with the owner of the place. According to the police on Monday, a shot was fired at the cafe on Sunday following an argument over seating. The police had arrested two accused, both 26 years old, Ahmed and Aurangzeb alias Mangal alias Monu shortly after the incident. "A PCR call at about 8:48 pm regarding firing at Satya Niketan was received at South campus police station and immediately the beat staff who was on patrol nabbed one of the accused after a hot chase. He was identified as Ahmed, resident of Jhangir Puri

and was working as paneer vendor in Jahangirpuri," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southwest) Rohit Meena said, adding that other staff and forensic team also arrived at the spot. Further, the police also nabbed Aurangzeb, who sells footwear, at a petrol pump in Jhangir Puri. On Monday, they arrested 20 year old Atul, 23 year old Javed, who was previously involved in six cases and 19 year old Adil. All are residents of Jahangir puri and had come from there for a birthday celebration, according to the initial investigation. Meena said the SUV Thar car the accused arrived in and the illegal firearm used in the shooting had been confiscated. "Vehicle Thar used in the crime was recovered from accused Aurangzeb.

ICICI Lombard introduces 'Elevate'

New Delhi: ICICI Lombard announces the launch of its revolutionary health insurance product, 'Elevate'. Powered with AI the first-of-its-kind health product is loaded with cutting-edge features and add-ons, offering personalised solutions to meet the needs of dynamic lifestyle, unforeseen medical emergencies and medical inflation. This significant launch underscores ICICI Lombard's commitment to pioneering advancements in the insurance industry delivering exceptional value to its customers. Designed to cater to the rapidly evolving ecosystem, 'Elevate' offers a suite of personalised customer-centric plans that prioritise comprehensive coverage and flexibility. The key features of 'Elevate' include: "Infinite Sum Insured: Addressing the concern of limited coverage and sum insured, this feature ensures that policyholders never run out of coverage. "Infinite Claim Amount: This add-on offers comprehensive financial protection with infinite claim amount for one-time claim during the lifetime of policy without taking into purview the sum-insured amount. "Power Booster Add-on: This add-on provides a 100% cumulative bonus annually, irrespective of claims, for an indefinite period. "Reset Benefit: This feature triggers unlimited resets of your coverage, ensuring continuous protection irrespective of claims. "Infinite Assurance: This jumpstart add-on enables people with pre-existing disease conditions like asthma, diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidaemia and obesity to start benefitting from the policy after 30th day.

Financial assistance to Kerala, Tripura

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said that to provide relief to the governments of Kerala and Tripura affected by the severe natural disaster, the state government has decided to release assistance of Rs 20 crore each. He said that we have our sympathies towards the disaster victims and the Madhya Pradesh government stands with both the states in this hour of crisis. The Chief Minister has prayed

to Lord Krishna to end this crisis as soon as possible. Chief Minister Yadav said this while discussing with the media at Kushabhau Thackeray Auditorium. He said that various states in the country including Madhya Pradesh are affected by heavy rains, floods, and landslides. In the last few days, incidents of severe natural disasters have occurred in the states of Tripura and Kerala, resulting in large-scale loss of life and property, which is extremely sad.

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Notice to the Shareholders for 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Notice is hereby given that the 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company will be held on **Thursday, 19th September, 2024 at 11.30 A.M. (IST)** through two-way Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM") to transact the business as set out in the Notice, in accordance with applicable provisions of Companies Act, 2013 and in compliance with the procedure prescribed in MCA Circular No. 14/2020 dated 8th April, 2020, Circular No.17/2020 dated 13th April, 2020 issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs followed by Circular No. 20/2020 dated 5th May, 2020, General Circular No. 02/2021 dated 13th January, 2021, General Circular No. 02/2022 dated 05th May, 2022, General Circular No. 10/2022 dated 28th December, 2022, General Circular No. 09/2023 dated 25th September, 2023 and SEBI Circular dated 12th May, 2020, 15th January, 2021, 13th May, 2022, 05th January, 2023, 06th October, 2023.

Research work on various aspects of Lord Krishna's life will be encouraged: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has said that Lord Shri Ram stayed in Madhya Pradesh for 11 years, while Lord Sri Krishna pursued studies in Acharya Sandipani Ashram, Ujjain in the state which makes Madhya Pradesh a proud state. Madhya Pradesh government has decided to develop those places where they stepped to make their memories associated with the state everlasting. Along with this, research on various aspects related to the personality of Lord Sri Krishna and his education in Madhya Pradesh will also be encouraged. Chief Minister Yadav was addressing a program organized on the occasion of Janmashtami at the Chief Minister's residence premises today. Chief Minister

said that the friendship between Lord Krishna and Sudama is a source of inspiration. From the perspective of Madhya Pradesh, it is historic that Lord Krishna came to Madhya Pradesh for studies. Chief Minister Yadav heartily welcomed the public representatives, dignitaries, and citizens at the Janmashtami program. The program started with garlanding and worshipping of the image of Lord Krishna. Khajuraho MP V.D. Sharma said that Chief Minister Yadav has taken important steps in the field of religion and spirituality. Initiatives are being taken to create an ideal society by developing Barsana village in every development block of the state, promoting cattle rearing, organic farming, activities of humanity, social unity, and cultural awareness in the villages.

Along with this, the idea of building Geeta Bhawan will also be realized to serve the elderly in the cities and make arrangements for study for them. Commendable work is being done in the state to develop the places related to the lives of Lord Shri Ram and Lord Shri Krishna. Principal Secretary of Culture Department, Sheo Shekhar Shukla said that Krishna Parv was celebrated at many places in the state. The cleanliness and beauty of Shri Krishna temples added uniqueness to the programs. In the Janmashtami program at Chief Minister's residence, 10 teenagers performed a spectacular Malkham under the direction of Ashish Mehta of Ujjain. Chief Minister Yadav openly praised their performance and honored them with

Angavastram. All the attendees unanimously appreciated the performance and said that it was a wonderful presentation. Many programs including dance, drama, singing, and musical instruments were organized by the Culture Department. Along with regional folk dance Badhaai of Bundelkhand, Peacock Dance, Flower Holi of Mathura and Makhani Matki, Phod programs were also organized. Raj Parekh of Kolkata presented devotional songs, Sushri Jaya Saxena of Mathura presented peacock dance and flower Holi programs. The dance drama was presented by Sushri Harshita Sharma of Indore. Badhaai dance was directed by Abhilash Chaubey. The programme was conducted by Kritika Gupta and Vijay Manwani. Among those who attended the

program were Hitanand Sharma, former Union Minister Suresh Raghunandan Sharma, Public Works Minister Rakesh Singh, Sports and Youth Welfare, Cooperatives Minister Vishwas Sarang, Minister of State for Public Health and Family Welfare Narendra Shivaji Patel, Minister of State for Dairy and Animal Husbandry Lakhani Singh Patel, Minister of State for Backward Class Welfare Krishna Gaur, Bhopal Mayor Malti Rai, MP Alok Sharma, MP Darshan Singh Chaudhary, MP Sandhya Rai, MLA Rameshwar Sharma, Bhopal Municipal Corporation Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi, Sumit Pachauri, Additional Chief Secretary in the Chief Minister's Office Rajesh Rajoura and many senior officers and other public representatives.

Hunger strike may end soon in JNU campus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ongoing stalemate between the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) administration and its students' union, which has been staging a hunger strike for the past 15 days over various unresolved issues, may soon come to an end as the two sides have reached a consensus on several demands. The university has agreed to fulfill at least six of the 12 major demands of the protesting students' union. These include reinstating the old in-house entrance exam system -- JNU Entrance Exam (JNUEE) -- for admissions, conducting a caste census of the campus, increasing scholarship amounts, and proposing

a reduction in the weightage given to the viva for admissions. Despite these developments, the union has continued its protest, with President Dhananjay and Councillor Nitish Kumar remaining on hunger strike, which entered its 16th day on Monday. They are demanding written confirmation of the agreed-upon demands. The hunger strike started on August 11. "Dhananjay has lost more than 5 kg and has a ketone level of 4+, which indicates severe pressure on his kidneys due to the hunger strike. He has also developed jaundice and urinary tract infection (UTI). Nitish has lost around 7 kg and has become

extremely weak, suffering from severe joint and muscle pain," the students' union said in a statement. The JNUSU has called for a relay hunger strike and night vigil to press their demands. In a negotiation meeting held on August 23, the day of the long march to the Ministry of Education by the JNUSU, Rector-I of the university, Brijesh Kumar Pandey, assured the students that the university would accept some of the demands raised, according to a statement by the students' body. When contacted, Pandey said, "The administration will accept all the positive demands of the students in their best interest.



Devotees offer prayers on the occasion of Janmashtami festival at Laxmi Narayan Birla temple in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Krishna Janmashtami celebrated at PIS

Khandwa: Lord Krishna's birthday was celebrated with great devotion in Poddar International School Khandwa. The program was inaugurated by the school's Principal Samira Bakht. Lord Krishna's cradle was rocked after offering butter and sugar candy. Thereafter, Lord Krishna's Aarti was performed. Geetanjali Kale, a student of the school's nursery class, charmed everyone by assuming the form of Bal Gopal. The tiny students of the institution came to school in traditional, attractive costumes of Lord Krishna and Shri Radha Rani. Students of other classes gave charming presentations. The school's Principal Samira Bakht, while sharing her views on Lord Krishna's philosophy of life, said that like Lord Krishna, karma should be paramount in our lives as well. On this occasion, students of class IX and X collectively made a pyramid and broke the Dahi



Handi. The programs were presented by the students and teachers. In which the students performed dance, devotional bhajans, and recited poems. Along with this, the teachers also presented melodious bhajans. Matki breaking, antakshari of bhajans and quiz based on the life of Shri Krishna were also organized with the students. At the end of the program, Panjari bhog prasad was distributed.

Janmashtami program held in Central Jail

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has said that Shri Krishna Janmashtami festival is being celebrated enthusiastically. Festivals occur according to position of planets therefore good wishes are exchanged. Chief Minister Yadav extended greetings and good wishes to all those present on Shri Krishna Janmashtami. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav today participated in the program organized on Shri Krishna Janmashtami in Central Jail, Bhopal. At the outset, the incident related to the birth of Lord Shri Krishna was shown through a film. Chief Minister Yadav inaugurated the Petrol Pump started with the help of Hindustan Petroleum near the Central Jail. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav dedicated development works in various jails of the state including the bhoomi-pujan of 4 new barracks in Bhopal Central



Jail. The capacity of 4 barracks of Bhopal costing Rs 3 crores will be 80 prisoners. Apart from this, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav dedicated the newly constructed barracks including the outer wall in Sub Jail Tarana in Ujjain district, the watch tower in Central Jail Narmadapuram and Sub Jail Dabra, and the bakery unit in Central Jail Narsinghpur. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav. Cultural programs were presented by both male and female prisoners. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was presented with a memento. Additional Jail Inspector General Sanjay Pandey proposed the vote of thanks.

Additional Chief Secretary Home and Jail S.N. Mishra was also present. Director General J.G.P. Singh and other senior officials welcomed Chief Minister Dr. Yadav and public representatives. Sports and Cooperatives Minister Vishwas Sarang said that Madhya Pradesh is drenched in the devotion of Krishan. There is joy and happiness everywhere. Reformatory programs are going on in the jail as intended by Chief Minister Dr. Yadav. Jails are functioning as correctional homes. On this occasion, the prisoners of Central Jail, Bhopal prepared an attractive tableau of Lord Shri Krishna which was appreciated by Chief Minister Dr. Yadav. Cultural programs were presented by both male and female prisoners. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was presented with a memento. Additional Jail Inspector General Sanjay Pandey proposed the vote of thanks.

आर.सी.व्ही.पी. नरोन्हा प्रशासन एवं प्रबंधकीय अकादमी मध्यप्रदेश, भोपाल दूरभाष क्र. : 0755-2840716

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प्रशासन एवं प्रबंधकीय अकादमी
मध्यप्रदेश, भोपाल

G-15336/24

PM Modi to spearhead BJP's Assembly polls campaign in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the BJP's campaign in the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the first such democratic exercise after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP national president J P Nadda and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath were also included in the list of 40 star campaigners submitted by the party to the Election Commission for the first phase of assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.



Union ministers Anurag Thakur and Smriti Irani and Gen (Retd.) V K Singh besides Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and former

Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur are other prominent faces who will visit Jammu and Kashmir during the campaigning. The

three-phased assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are scheduled for September 18, 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will be

taken up on October 4.

In a letter addressed to the Election Commission, BJP national general secretary and in-charge headquarters Arun Singh said the list of the 40 star campaigners of the party may be treated as valid for the remaining phases "unless we forward an amended list" within the prescribed time limit.

The list also included former BJP general secretary and recently appointed election in-charge for Jammu and Kashmir Ram Madhav, party national general secretary in-charge Jammu and Kashmir Tarun Chugh, Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina, Member of Parliament Jugal Kishore Sharma, Rajya Sabha member Gulam Ali Khatana, General secretary (organization) Ashok Kaul and Jammu and Kashmir BJP vice president Sofi Yousuf.

Growing ties with Australia reviewed in telephonic talks between Modi, Albanese

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

India and Australia on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their growing ties during telephonic talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart Anthony Albanese. A statement by Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said Prime Minister Narendra Modi today spoke with the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Anthony Albanese. Both leaders took stock of progress in the bilateral relations and cooperation in the multilateral fora, including the Quad.



The Prime Minister posted on social media "Delighted to speak to my friend Anthony Albanese. We took stock of progress in our bilateral relations and cooperation in the

multilateral fora, including the Quad." The talks also came in the backdrop of growing Chinese assertiveness in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region. In November 2017, India, Japan, the US, and Australia gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the Quad to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence. India is likely to host the Quad summit this year wherein heads of states of the four countries may discuss the future course of Quad combine. The 2023 summit was held in Hiroshima, Japan. China has all along criticized the Quad claiming it will lead to the militarization of the Indo-Pacific.

Congress asks if each new district in Ladakh would have AHDCs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

With the government announcing the creation of five new districts in Ladakh, the Congress on Monday asked whether there will be elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils for each of the new districts and will they have a much more meaningful and relevant say in how budgets are spent.



each of the five new districts as well?" he asked.

Presently, the two existing elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils have control over less than 10% of the total expenditure allocated to Ladakh and the balance 90% is being under the control of the lieutenant governor and the bureaucracy, he said. Will the elected AHDCs have a much more meaningful and relevant say in how budgets are spent? Ramesh asked.

Earlier, the home minister said the Modi government is committed to creating abundant opportunities for the people of Ladakh. Ladakh was made a UT after the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two UTs on August 5, 2019. The other UT is Jammu and Kashmir.

The elected Autonomous Hill Development Council for Kargil was set up in 2003. "Now five new districts have been formed in Ladakh in addition to Leh and Kargil. Will there be elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils for

each of the five new districts as well?" he asked.

Presently, the two existing elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils have control over less than 10% of the total expenditure allocated to Ladakh and the balance 90% is being under the control of the lieutenant governor and the bureaucracy, he said.

Will the elected AHDCs have a much more meaningful and relevant say in how budgets are spent? Ramesh asked.

Earlier, the home minister said the Modi government is committed to creating abundant opportunities for the people of Ladakh. Ladakh was made a UT after the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two UTs on August 5, 2019. The other UT is Jammu and Kashmir.

Coast Guard rescues 11 crew members from ship sinking off WB coast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI



The Indian Coast Guard

(ICG) on Monday rescued 11 crew members from the distressed MV ITT Puma during a challenging night-time search and rescue operation. The Mumbai-registered general cargo vessel was en route from Kolkata to Port Blair when it reportedly sank about 90 nautical miles south of Sagar Island (West Bengal), defence ministry said here.

The Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Chennai initially received a distress signal late Sunday evening. The ICG's Regional Headquarters (North East) in Kolkata promptly mobilised two ICG vessels and a Dornier aircraft to the site. The Dornier aircraft, equipped with advanced night-capable sensors detected adrift life rafts and sighted survival red flares from the distressed crew.

Centre must increase funding for anti-pollution measures: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday criticized the Modi government for its handling of the deteriorating air quality in India and demanded that it must drastically increase the funds for the anti-pollution measures being proposed under the National Clean Air Program (NCAP).

Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh said there are clear steps the government must take moving forward, and the first must be to acknowledge the public "health crisis" associated with air pollution across wide swathes of India.

"Among the lesser-known tragedies of the non-biological PM's reign is the rapidly deteriorating air quality nationally and the inattentiveness and policy chaos that has characterised the Government's response to it," Ramesh said in a statement.

To make his point, the former environment minister cited various recent studies that have highlighted the deteriorating air quality across the States in the Country.

"Aap chronology samajhiye: In early July, a study published in the prestigious Lancet journal showed that 7.2% of all deaths in India are associated with air pollution - about 34,000 deaths each year in just 10 cities," he said. In mid-July, a study by the



Centre for Science and Environment revealed that the government's pollution control interventions are poorly designed, with the National Clean Air Program (NCAP) largely focused on mitigating road dust rather than industrial, vehicular, and biomass emissions -- the source of PM 2.5 -- that are the leading causes of mortality, Ramesh said.

To make matters worse, in the past five years, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has left more than 75 per cent of the Environment Protection Charge (EPC) and Environmental Compensation (EC) funds unspent, he said, claiming that in total Rs 665.75 crores have been left unutilised. "On July 29, 2024, upon being asked a question about the Lancet study, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change made the

shocking claim in the Rajya Sabha that there was 'no conclusive data' to directly correlate air pollution and deaths," he pointed out.

In districts where air pollution exceeds National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), there is a 13 per cent increase in premature mortality for adults and around 100 per cent increase in mortality for children, he said.

Ramesh called for a substantial boost in financial resources allocated to the NCAP. "Our cities need at least 10-20 times more funding - NCAP must be made a Rs. 25,000 crore programme. NCAP must adopt measurement of PM 2.5 levels as the yardstick for performance. NCAP must reorient its focus to key sources of emissions - burning of solid fuels, vehicular emissions, and industrial emissions," he said.

Chief Secretaries of 17 States, UTs to make personal appearance in SC today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

In what may appear to be a rare event, the Chief Secretaries of 17 State Governments and Union Territories (UTs) are slated to appear before the Supreme Court on Tuesday over non-implementation of the Second National Judicial Pay Commission's (SNJPC) recommendations on payment of pension arrears and retirement benefits to judicial officers.

According to the cause list uploaded on the Supreme Court's website, a bench by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and comprising justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is scheduled to hear on Tuesday the case on the plea of the All India Judges Association and 22 other similar petitions. The Association is seeking the implementation of welfare and other measures for former judges and judicial officers.

The top-most bureaucrats of Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Bihar, Goa, Haryana and Odisha have to be present in the apex court in person on August 27. "I can see there is no substantive compliance. They will have to personally appear before us or we will issue non-



ailable warrants (NBWs) against them," the CJJ had observed on August 22.

Advocate K Parmeshwar, amicus curiae in the matter, had contended before the top court earlier that as many as 18 States and UTs have not complied with the SNJPC recommendations fully though several orders have been issued. The All India Judges Association (AIJA) is seeking implementation of welfare and other measures for former judges and judicial officers. The Bench said the top bureaucrats will have to appear personally to explain the delay and rejected the request of various States that the Chief Secretaries be permitted to appear virtually.

On July 11, the Bench had summoned the Chief Secretaries of 23 States for non-compliance with the SNJPC recommendations on August 23. The amicus curie later informed the court that five more States have complied with the directives in the meantime.

Rajnath Singh visits museum, interacts with Indian community in Tennessee

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited the National Civil Rights Museum and interacted with the Indian community in Memphis, Tennessee on Sunday on the last day of his tour to US, defence ministry said here on Monday.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also acknowledged the efforts of the Indian community in establishing an exhibit of Mahatma Gandhi and placing two honorary 'Gandhi Way' street signals near the National Civil Rights Museum on the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in 2019. In this last event of his US visit, he underlined India's growth story in the last decade, and the immense potential with a promising future.

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SC directs States to provide info on functioning of open prisons

PTI n NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has directed several states and Union Territories (UTs) to provide complete information with regard to the functioning of open prisons within four weeks.

Semi-open or open prisons allow convicts to work outside the premises during the day to earn a livelihood and return in the evening. The concept was introduced to assimilate the convicts with society and reduce psychological pressure as they faced difficulties in leading normal lives outside.

A bench of Justices B R Gavi and K V Viswanathan was informed by senior advocate K Parmeshwar, who is assisting the top court as an amicus curiae in a matter related to congestion in jails, that several states and UTs have not yet filed their responses. The bench noted that states and UTs like Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab have not yet submitted the qualitative/quantitative charts despite circulation of a questionnaire seeking information in respect of the status and functioning of open correctional institutions and whether such institutions exist within their jurisdiction. "We, therefore, direct that all the States/Union



Territories, which have not yet filed their response, to file complete response within a period of four weeks from today," the bench said in its order passed on August 20. It said the states and UTs, which have not given complete information, shall also ensure compliance within four weeks. "We further clarify that if any

of the state governments or Union Territories do not respond in terms of the orders passed by this court, we will be compelled to direct the presence of the chief secretary of the states/Union Territories concerned before this court," the bench said and posted the matter for further consideration after four weeks. The apex court noted that on

July 15, it had directed the chief secretaries of various states and UTs to submit their responses on the issue of open jails. The amicus told the bench that states and UTs of Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and Ladakh, have not filed their responses yet. While hearing the matter on May 9, the apex court had observed that establishing open jails can be one of the solutions to overcrowding and also addressing the issue of rehabilitation of prisoners. In its May 17 order, the bench had noted the submission of the amicus that a model draft manual has been prepared by the Union of India where the nomenclature 'open correctional institutions' is used for such facilities.

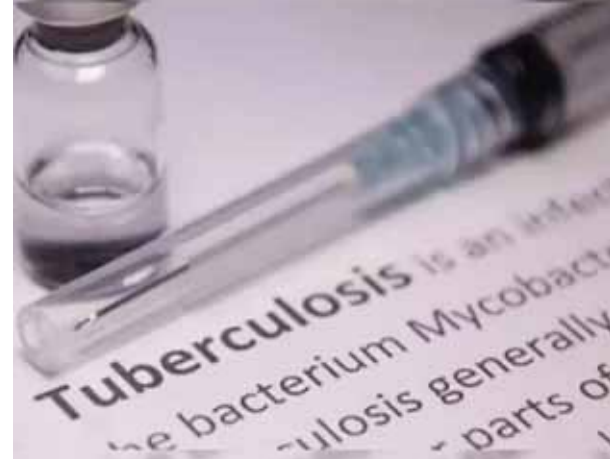
ICMR centre in Assam develops technology for precise TB testing priced at ` 35

ARCHANA JYOTI n NEW DELHI

As India races to meet its ambitious target of eliminating Tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, the Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) regional center in Dibrugarh, Assam, has made a significant breakthrough: It has developed an affordable precise TB testing technology priced at just Rs 35, which employs a CRISPR-based system to detect the deadly disease using a patient's sputum sample.

This innovative testing method, known as the 'CRISPR-Cas12a-based system', is not only cost-effective but also efficient. It offers a rapid and precise diagnosis, a critical advancement in the fight against TB, especially in resource-limited settings. The low cost and ease of use make it a promising tool for widespread implementation, potentially accelerating India's progress toward its TB elimination goal, said an official from the ICMR. In contrast, conventional TB tests, such as culture, microscopy, and nucleic acid-based techniques, are often time-consuming and require sophisticated equipment. For example, TB cultures can take

up to 42 days to confirm a negative result, and other methods may suffer from issues related to sensitivity, specificity, speed, and cost. "However, the new testing technology can analyze over 1,500 samples in a single run within approximately two and a half hours, offering a significant improvement over traditional diagnostic methods," said the official about the diagnostic tool developed by Regional Medical Research Centre at Dibrugarh, one of the 26 permanent institutes of ICMR in the country. "Current diagnostic methods often exhibit limitations in



terms of sensitivity, specificity, speed and cost, emphasizing the need for innovative approaches. Conventional diagnostic techniques for TB commonly rely on culture (which requires 42 days to confirm as TB negative), microscopy, and nucleic acid-based methods. These are time-consuming and may require sophisticated equipment. Additionally, some molecular diagnostic methods, while offering improved sensitivity, may lack the desired specificity or face challenges associated with cost and ease of handling," said an official from the

ICMR. India has the highest TB burden in the world, accounting for an estimated one-fifth of global cases. The new CRISPR-Cas12a-based system, branded as 'GlowTBPCRKit', includes an amplification step using a thermal cycler and the 'RapidGlow' device. This approach aims to address the limitations of current diagnostic tools by providing a more accurate, rapid, and cost-effective solution for detecting Mycobacterium tuberculosis. The ICMR is now seeking Expressions of Interest (EoI)

from organisations, companies, and manufacturers to commercialize this technology. The ICMR-RMRCNE institute will offer expert guidance and technical support throughout the production and commercialization phases. According to the India TB report 2024 released by the Union Health Ministry in March, the incidence rate in India had fallen from 237 per lakh population in 2015 to 199 per lakh population in 2022, while the mortality rate had declined from 28 per lakh population in 2015 to 23 per lakh population in 2022.

Batenge toh katenge: UP CM Yogi says B'desh mistakes shouldn't happen in India

PTI n AGRA (UP)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath here on Monday urged people to stay united to reach the pinnacle of prosperity, saying the mistakes in Bangladesh should not happen in India. "Batenge toh katenge (if divided, we will be cut up)," he said during an inauguration event in Agra. Bangladesh recently saw massive anti-government protests, leading to the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina. The country continued to witness incidents of violence, including targeted attacks on the Hindu minority community, even after the fall of the Hasina-led government. Addressing the gathering at the programme here, Adityanath said, "There can be nothing bigger than the nation, and when will a nation be strong, when we are united and good."



what is happening in Bangladesh and said those mistakes should not happen here, adding, "If divided, we will be cut, if together, we will be good, secure and reach the pinnacle of prosperity." The chief minister also shared a clip of his speech on X. "We have to realise the resolve of Viksit Bharat (developed India)," Adityanath said after inaugurating a statue of Durga Das Rathore near the Taj Mahal metro station here. Rathore was a commander in the army of erstwhile Jodhpur province's king Maharaja Jaswant Singh who took on Mughal ruler Aurangzeb in the 17th century. After unveiling the statue, the chief minister said "evil and cunning" Aurangzeb killed Singh by deceit. He added that it was an

honour for him to inaugurate the statue in the centenary year of the 'Kakori Train Action', which is being celebrated in the state, and on the day of Janmashtami. "In a country where great heroes like Durgadas Rathore are born, no foreign invader can harm that country in any way. Humble tribute to him!" he later said on X. Addressing the gathering in Agra, Adityanath said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a clarion call for making India a developed nation by 2047 and it is the everyone's combined duty to work towards realising this resolve. Highlighting the mythological significance of Agra, he said, "Agra is an important part of the Braj region. Every particle of this region is believed to be the abode of Lord Krishna. This place has art, culture, faith, and devotion."

Cong's DNA is anti-public, says Scindia

PTI n GWALIOR

The DNA of the Congress is anti-public and the party stands in support of oppressors and those who are corrupt, Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Monday. In Gwalior to take part in Krishna Janmashtami events, he further said the Congress opposes the rule of justice. Asked about the Congress' opposition to authorities razing the house of a man accused of indulging in violence during a protest in Chhatarpur, Scindia said, "The Congress will oppose every step taken for public welfare. The Congress' DNA is anti-public. They will oppose the Unified Pension Scheme and bulldozing houses of those who oppress people." "The Congress is standing in support of oppressors and those who are corrupt. This character of the party has been exposed. It is talking in favour of those involved in crimes against women as is being seen from West Bengal to Karnataka. There is rule of oppression when the Congress is in power. It opposes the rule of justice,"



Scindia added. The Congress has condemned MP authorities for bulldozing the house of Shahzad Ali, who is accused of indulging in violence during a protest called in Chhatarpur to condemn the allegedly objectionable remarks against Islam by Nashik-based spiritual leader Ramgiri Maharaj. The protest was held on August 21 and Ali's house was brought down the next day, with authorities claiming it was built without requisite permission. Speaking on local issues, Scindia said a regional industry conclave being held on August 28 will pave the way for further development of Gwalior.

After repartee, Rajini, TN Minister Duraimurugan hold out olive branches

PTI n CHENNAI

DMK senior Minister Duraimurugan, who had reacted strongly to Tamil film superstar Rajinikanth's "old timers" in DMK remark, held out an olive branch on Monday saying both of them will remain friends forever. Playing down the sudden repartee between the two, the film star said he had no regrets over Duraimurugan's remark that "old actors" were denying opportunity to youngsters. "He (Duraimurugan) is my long-time friend. I like him very much. I have no regrets over what Duraimurugan has said. Our friendship will continue," Rajinikanth told reporters at the airport on Monday when his comments were sought. On Sunday, DMK General Secretary Duraimurugan, who holds the Water Resources portfolio as minister in the M K Stalin cabinet, said, "Actors who have grown old, with falling teeth, and sporting beards in their end stages are continuing to act, denying opportunity to young actors." The minister made the remarks aimed at the top actor when reporters in Vellore drew his attention to Rajinikanth's earlier comment likening the DMK



seniors to old students refusing to leave the classroom even after securing a rank in the exams. While speaking at the release of the book 'Kalaigarn Ennum Thaa', authored by Public Works Minister E V Velu here on Saturday, Rajini who received the first copy from Chief Minister M K Stalin, compared the DMK senior Ministers to old students making it difficult for the class teacher to handle them. "The DMK has many old students who refuse to leave the classrooms even after securing a rank in exams. There's Duraimurugan who could even make life difficult for Kalaigarn (late Chief Minister M Karunanidhi)," Rajini said at the event. Turning to the chief minister, Rajini said in his inimitable

style "to a school teacher, handling new students isn't difficult. But, managing old students is not an easy task. Here there are many old students. They are not normal but are rank holders. How to manage them? Stalin sir, hats off to you." This evoked spontaneous laughter from the audience and even the chief minister was amused. Bringing the sudden controversy to a close, Duraimurugan told reporters here on Monday, "Let's not convert humour into hostility. We will forever remain as friends." Meanwhile, BJP state chief K Annamalai took a dig at the DMK, saying the actor's comments could be interpreted as a sign of brewing discontent within the ruling party.

Tripura: 12 houses set on fire after idol defaced at temple

PTI n AGARTALA

At least 12 houses and a few vehicles were set on fire by unidentified persons after an idol was found defaced at a temple in Ranirbazar area in West Tripura, police said on Monday. Prohibitory orders under Section 163 of BNSS were imposed in Jirania subdivision under which Ranirbazar falls. Heavy security deployment has also been made in the area to defuse tension. "Around 12 dwelling houses were set on fire at Ranirbazar by miscreants late on Sunday after an idol of Goddess Kali was found defaced in Kaiturbari. A few motorcycles and pick-up vans were also gutted in the blaze," Assistant Inspector General (Law and Order) Ananta Das told PTI. No human casualties were reported in the incident. Eyewitnesses said that the residents fled their dwellings upon seeing the raging mob. Das said heavy deployment of security forces have been made to defuse tension and Director General of Police, Intelligence,

Anurag Dhankar and West Tripura Superintendent of Police Kiran Kumar have visited the area. "Police will register a suo moto case once the assessment of loss of properties is completed. The situation is under control," he said. Following apprehension of breach of peace, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of BNSS have been imposed in Jirania subdivision of West Tripura district from August 26 to 28, District Magistrate Vishal Kumar said in an order. Under the prohibitory orders, assembly of five or more people will be prohibited due to violent activities in the subdivision, it added. Tipra Motha supreme Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma on Monday expressed concern over the incident and appealed to everyone to maintain law and order. "Last night incident in Ranirbazar Kaiturbari area is a worrying sign with reports of communal clashes. I appeal to those who are responsible for maintaining law and order to follow the rule of law," he wrote on Facebook.

Mayawati recalls '95 guest house incident to berate SP, Congress

PTI n LUCKNOW

BSP chief Mayawati on Monday referred to the 1995 Lucknow 'state guest house incident' to attack the Samajwadi Party for the "deadly assault" on her, and the Congress for not coming to her aid despite being in power at the Centre at that time. The fresh salvo comes three days after the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief expressed her gratitude to Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav for his stance on the "objectionable comments" made by a BJP MLA against her during a TV debate. The SP had carried out a deadly attack on her on June 2, 1995, after the BSP withdrew its support, then why does Congress never speak on this? The Congress government at the Centre during that time also did not fulfil its responsibility on time," the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said in a post on X. "Even when Kanshi Ram ji was in a serious condition and hospitalised, the home minister had to be



reprimanded and the opposition also gheraoed the Parliament, only after that did the Congress government take action," she said in Hindi. "Because at that time the central Congress government's intentions had also become bad, which after some untoward incident wanted to run its government from behind the scenes by imposing president's rule in Uttar Pradesh, whose conspiracy was foiled by BSP," Mayawati further claimed. "But after the caste census, will the Congress be able to ensure the rightful rights of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs)? Those who are still silent on the issue of classification and creamy layer in SC/ST reservation should answer," she added.

house where Mayawati was scheduled to meet her party leaders and allegedly attacked her. She was rescued from the guest house by BJP leaders. Later, the governor sacked the Mulayam Singh Yadav dispensation and invited Mayawati to form the government. Mayawati said the entire opposition, including the BJP, had fulfilled its duty to save her from criminal elements of the SP in the name of humanity. "So why does the Congress keep having trouble with this from time to time? People should be aware of it." "Apart from this, the BSP has been putting full pressure for a caste census for years, first on the Congress at the Centre and now on the BJP," Mayawati said. "But after the caste census, will the Congress be able to ensure the rightful rights of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs)? Those who are still silent on the issue of classification and creamy layer in SC/ST reservation should answer," she added.

Devotees throng temples across Jaipur to celebrate Janmashtami

PTI n JAIPUR

Thousands of devotees on Monday thronged Govind Devji temple and Shri Radha Gopinathji temple and paid obeisance amid tight security arrangements on the occasion of Janmashtami. From early morning, devotees made a beeline for 'mangla darshan' at the Govind Devji Temple at 4.30 am. Jaipur Police Commissioner Biju George Joseph said the influx of devotees is expected to increase as the day advances. Accordingly, we have made adequate security arrangements for their safety. A huge rush of devotees was also seen in several temples including Shri Radha Gopinath Ji Temple. Joseph said facial recognition CCTV cameras to identify pickpockets, vehicle thieves and other miscreants have been installed in Govind Devji temple, ISKCON temple and Akshaya Patra temple.



Control rooms have been set up at each of the three temples for surveillance. Teams of policemen in plain clothes have also been deployed in the temples, he said. "Photos and other details of criminals of the state and interstate are already fed in the database. Whenever these criminals come in the range of the CCTV, they will be identified and immediately an alert will pop up and security personnel on duty will nab them immediately," the officer said. Temples in Jaipur and across the state have been decorated with flowers and lights for Janmashtami celebrations.

IMD warns of torrential rain in MP, Rajasthan Gujarat, Maha

PTI n NEW DELHI

A depression over northwest Madhya Pradesh and adjoining Rajasthan has intensified into a deep depression, the India Meteorological Department said on Monday and warned of heavy to extremely heavy rainfall in parts of the two states and Gujarat, Goa and Maharashtra over the next two to three days. At 11:30 pm on August 25, the deep depression lay centred near 70 km south-southeast of Chittorgarh, Rajasthan. This system is expected to move west-southwest, affecting South Rajasthan, and Gujarat, and reaching Saurashtra, Kutch, and parts of Pakistan by August 29, the IMD said in an update issued at 2 am. The weather department said another low-pressure area is located over Bangladesh and adjoining Gangetic West Bengal. It is likely to intensify further and move towards Gangetic West Bengal, north Odisha, and Jharkhand over the next two days. Issuing a red alert, the IMD said heavy to extremely heavy rainfall is expected in West Madhya Pradesh on August 26. Similar conditions are forecast for east and south Rajasthan, Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch from August 26 to 29. Konkan, Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal, and Jharkhand are also expected to receive heavy to extremely heavy rainfall over the next two days. The IMD has warned of strong winds reaching up to 50 kmph in Madhya Pradesh on August 26 and up to 60 kmph in south Rajasthan on August 26-27. In Gujarat, nearby Pakistan, north Maharashtra, and the northeast Arabian Sea, strong winds gusting up to 55 kmph are expected on August 26, increasing to 60 kmph on August 27 and 28. Rough to very rough sea conditions are anticipated off the coasts of Gujarat, Pakistan, and north Maharashtra until August 30.

Trademark suit: HC temporarily restrains Pune eatery from using brand name 'Burger King'

PTI n MUMBAI

In an interim relief to US giant Burger King in a trademark infringement suit, the Bombay High Court on Monday restrained a Pune-based eatery from using the brand name till September 6. The company moved the high court last week, challenging an order passed by a Pune court dismissing its suit alleging trademark infringement against a namesake eatery in Pune. A division bench of Justices A S Chandurkar and Rajesh Patil on Monday said that it would first hear the company's application seeking interim injunction against the eatery on September 6.



Until then, the ad-interim order granted by the Pune court in January 2012 restraining the eatery from using the name "Burger King" shall be extended, the high court said. The fast-food company, in its suit, sought an injunction against the eatery from using the name "Burger King", as it

was causing the company huge loss, damage and harm to its goodwill, business and reputation. A Pune court had dismissed the 2011 suit filed by Burger King Corporation, noting that the city-based eatery had been operating since 1992, which was even before the US burger joint opened shop in

India. Burger King Corporation also filed an application in the high court seeking an interim injunction against the eatery owners from using the name pending the hearing and final disposal of its appeal. The company's advocate, Hiren Kamod, on Monday submitted to the court that until their plea or application seeking an interim injunction is heard, the ad-interim order passed in 2012 by the Pune court shall be extended. Advocate Abhijit Sarwate, appearing for the eatery owners, Anahita Irani and Shapoor Irani, submitted to the court that they have started using the name 'Burger King' online since two days.

Seven prison officials suspended in K'taka for giving special treatment to jailed actor Darshan

PTI n BENGALURU

Seven prison officials have been suspended for allegedly giving special treatment to Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is currently in judicial custody in the Renukaswamy murder case. A Superintendent of the Central Jail at Parappana Agrahara here has also been transferred following an inquiry after a photo of the actor smoking with a coffee mug in hand emerged on social media on Sunday sparking a row. The picture shows Darshan sitting leisurely on a lawn on the jail premises along with three others, including two alleged rowdy-sheets. Those suspended are jailers



Sharan Basappa Amingad and Prabhu S Khandelwal, assistant jailers L S Kuppeswamy, Srikanth Talwar, head warders Venkappa, Sampath Kumar and warder K Basappa, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara told reporters here on Monday. The new jail superintendent will be asked to strictly deal with such incidents of

"dereliction of duty," he said. Parameshwara said soon after the matter came to his knowledge he directed the Director General of Police to conduct a probe following which a team of senior police officials visited the jail. Their inquiry confirmed the involvement of the suspended officers in facilitating special treatment to Darshan, he added. Parameshwara said it is a matter of concern that such incidents occur despite the presence of CCTVs and jammers inside the prisons in the state. A total of 17 people including Darshan along with his friend Pavithra Gowda are currently in judicial custody in connection with the murder case.

Buried under mining waste, river pulled back from brink in Rajasthan

PTI n KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Environmentalist Bitthal Sanadhya was roaming near the Labhakho and Peepalada areas of the Dabi forest range in Rajasthan's Bundi district when he was told by a forest ranger that the place was a river buried by debris from illegal mining sites. Stunned by the revelation, Bundi Jal Biradari president Sanadhya -- who

draws inspiration from Ramon Magsaysay Award winner Rajendra Singh -- was driven to revive the river, a tributary of the Chambal known locally as the Aeru. Armed with GPS images of the illegal mining sites and the buried river, he approached Rajasthan High Court in 2018 and filed a PIL to revive the Aeru in the region. An eight-kilometre stretch of the Aeru, which covers 40

kilometres through the Bhilwara and Bundi districts before merging into the Chambal, had been buried under debris from illegal mines. The Aeru originates from Tilaswa Mahadev in Bhilwara and passes through six villages before entering Bundi at Lamakhoh. For years, suspected mining mafia illegally mined stones and slabs in the Aeru, turning



the river into a dump yard. "The ranger's response when he said it was part of the Aeru

river buried under mining dump stunned me," Sanadhya said. "Since then, I devoted

myself to bringing the river back to life," he added. Following a five-year battle, the high court last year ordered the Department of Mines & Geology to prepare an action plan for the removal of the mining waste from the river and allocate funds for its implementation. Complying with the order, Bundi collector Akshay Godara allocated Rs 10 crore from the District Mining

Foundation Trust for removing the waste earlier this year. Work on the river revival project, beginning with the removal of the mining debris, started in June and it has already begun to pay dividends. Crystal-clear water now flows over a more than two-kilometre stretch, with the hope that the Aeru will once again enrich the riverbanks as

it had previously done. At least 15 earthmovers and 25 dumpers have been deployed to remove the mining waste and 40 per cent of the work has already been completed, said Ajay Singh Gurjar -- a junior engineer of the water resources department, which is executing the cleanup drive. The work is now stopped for the monsoon but it will be completed by November, he added.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Give peace a chance

The Cairo talks represent a glimmer of hope for war ravaged Gaza in an otherwise bleak situation

As fighting continues unabated in Gaza, negotiators gathered in Cairo this weekend for crucial discussions aimed at securing a ceasefire. The talks come at a pivotal moment, with the conflict between Hamas and Israel now in its tenth month. Despite the ongoing hostilities, there is hope that a breakthrough might be within reach, though significant hurdles remain. The war has left Gaza in ruins and triggered a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions. The conflict has displaced nearly all of Gaza's population at least once, and efforts to broker a ceasefire have so far failed to bring lasting peace. The international community, led by the United States, Egypt, and Qatar, has been engaged in persistent but ultimately inconclusive negotiations to end the violence. The Cairo talks, held under the shadow of ongoing violence, are seen as a critical step towards ending the conflict. However, the talks are complicated by the fact that Hamas, while sending a delegation to Cairo, has stated that it will not participate directly in the negotiations. Instead, the Hamas delegation is expected to meet with senior Egyptian officials to receive updates on the progress of the talks. Hamas continues to insist on a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, including from the Philadelphi Corridor along the Gaza-Egypt border, a key sticking point in the discussions. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has his own reservations and is unwilling to withdraw troops from border.



The framework for the current talks is based on a plan outlined by U.S. President Joe Biden on May 31, which has been endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. The plan envisions a three-phase process, beginning with a full and complete ceasefire, during which hostages would be exchanged for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. Despite initial agreement on the plan by Hamas leadership, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has expressed reservations, particularly regarding the continued presence of Israeli troops along the Gaza-Egypt border, which he argues is necessary to prevent Hamas from rearming. The United States is exploring new proposals to bridge the gap between Israel and Hamas. The success of talks likely hinging on whether the U.S. can pressure Netanyahu into accepting a compromise. Meanwhile the war rages on in Gaza. Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire have devastated the territory, with reports of dozens of civilian casualties in recent days. The United Nations has reported large-scale evacuations from areas such as Deir el-Balah and Khan Yunis, as Israeli military operations intensify. The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains dire, with displaced families forced to flee daily in search of safety. Both Israelis and Gazans are increasingly desperate for an end to the bloodshed. Protests have erupted across Israel, with thousands calling for a deal to secure the release of the remaining hostages. The path to peace remains fraught with challenges, and the coming days will be crucial in determining whether a lasting ceasefire can be achieved.

PICTALK



A farmer harvests grapes, at Repora Lar area in Ganderbal, Kashmir

Gender reform in 19th-century Bengal



RAJDEEP PATHAK

In the 19th century, a complex interplay of reformist and colonial influences emerged, particularly concerning the status of women

In the 19th century, as British colonialism reshaped the Indian socio-cultural landscape, intellectuals like Captain N. Augustus Willard and Indian reformers grappled with the status of women in India. Willard, like many British officials, viewed Indian women with a mixture of pity and a sense of moral duty, perceiving them as victims of ignorance, reflected in their preference for songs that were considered passionate and sensual. At the same time, English-educated Bengali elites, inspired by both Western ideas and traditional Hindu values, sought to reform women's education while retaining patriarchal norms. It is pertinent to mention the role played by the renowned social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, a key figure among the Bengali bhadralok, who championed the cause of widow remarriage and women's education.



His multifaceted legacy extends beyond his literary genius, encapsulating his role as an intellectual force in the socio-political landscape of 19th-century India. Bankim Chandra was a pioneering figure in the sphere of educational reforms in India. His vision for education was grounded in the belief that a modern, enlightened society could only emerge through an educated populace. Chatterjee advocated for the modernization of the education system, emphasizing the need to integrate Western scientific knowledge with traditional Indian learning. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's engagement with educational reforms is evident in his writings

and his role as a Deputy Magistrate – the first in-charge (Sub-divisional magistrate) of the Arambag subdivision in West Bengal. He used his position to influence educational policies and advocate for the establishment of institutions that could impart contemporary education. Author of India's National Song Vande Mataram became a clarion call during India's Independence movement, Bankim Chandra's novels, often interwoven with themes of social and educational upliftment, served as a medium to propagate his ideas to a broader audience. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's novels often depicted strong, complex female characters, who played crucial roles in the narrative, challenging the traditional views of women in society. "Vande Mataram," depicted in Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel "Anandamath," serves as the manifesto of the Sanyasi group, celebrating a land abundant with rice, lush greenery, vibrant flowers, and sparkling rivers. The song idolizes the country as a goddess incarnate. While historically and politically significant, "Anandamath" unfolds through semiotic, discursive, and aesthetic dimen-



BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY'S NOVELS OFTEN DEPICTED STRONG, COMPLEX FEMALE CHARACTERS, WHO PLAYED CRUCIAL ROLES IN THE NARRATIVE, CHALLENGING THE TRADITIONAL VIEWS OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

The narrative, through characters like Mohendra, Kalyani, and Sukumari, intertwines with India's traditional and cultural contexts. The Santan of the Math, led by guru Satyananda and his disciples, embody qualities of truth, knowledge, emotion, patience, and being. "Vande Mataram" transcends patriotism, embodying philosophical renderings of existential and metaphysical human attributes, with women depicted as equals, exemplified by Shanti's bravery and sacrifice. Bankim Chandra's portrayal of women was significant as it challenged the prevailing societal norms and provided a progressive vision of women's roles in society. In "Devi Chaudhurani" (1884) the protagonist Prafulla transforms from a submissive girl into the powerful Devi Chaudhurani, a leader of a band of rebels. Her character embodies the potential for women's empowerment and the possibility of their active participation in societal change. By depicting women as strong, capable, and essential to the nation's progress, his novels contributed to the broader discourse on women's rights and empowerment in pre-independent India, which, however, is debatable.

Novels like "Kapalkundala," "Debi Chaudhurani," and "Durgeshnandini" feature characters such as Kapalkundala, Prafulla, and Ayesha, who exhibit depth and complexity. "Brisabhiksha" (The Poison Tree) and "Krisnakanter Uil" addresses social issues like widow remarriage and polygamy through the stories of Suryamukhi, Kundanandini, and Rohini. In "Sitaram," the tragic effects of polygamy are highlighted, while "Anandamath" contrasts the nation's depiction as Mother, while the exclusion of women from the fight for its cause is also depicted. It can be said that Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's depiction of strong, independent female characters – despite their complexities – challenged existing gender norms and inspired a rethinking of women's potential and place in society. By showcasing women as central figures in the fight against oppression and as leaders in their own right, Bankim Chandra's works resonated with the growing movements for social and political reform. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SANCTITY OF OATH

Madam — We all expect aspirants who desire to make a career in public service must be clean in their thoughts and acts. All MPs, MLAs take oath and swear on this but the reality is different. For those of whom read this information don't be confused and conclude yourself that this is the tally of medals in the recently concluded Paris Olympics 2024. Anybody would have been shocked and put their head in shame to feel pity for the people who have voted for the respective candidates from their constituency by the fond hope that they will deliver well for them. The update is that there are as many as 151 sitting MPs and MLAs declared cases related to crimes against women in their election affidavits, with West Bengal having the highest number of lawmakers facing such cases, according to a recent report by a poll rights body. West Bengal tops the list with 25 sitting MPs and MLAs facing charges related to crimes against women, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 21 and Odisha with 17, according to the report that comes under the ongoing nationwide protests. BJP tops the list with 54 MPs and MLAs facing charges of crime against women, and Congress follows with 23. It would be more appropriate if the law takes its course to prove or clear those of charges by putting them before the fast track so that people's trust on them can be delivered on its own merits.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Madam — Today, we are facing a serious threat in the form of youth unemployment, which is hindering India's long-term development and growth. It stresses the need to tackle this problem for sustainable economic development. A few announcements have been made in the recent budget to address the issue of the job crisis in India. The key factors responsible for the employment cri-

Chalk vs cheese!



This relates to your edit "Surging Ahead" (Aug.24). Words, they say, are the dress of thoughts. And it is by their words that Americans are today judging Kamala Harris and Donald Trump. Trump's utterances are akin to Modi's in the last lap of the 2024 elections when he neither had issues nor proper words to bash the Opposition with. He spoke like one cornered and defeated, rather than one who was optimistic of winning the election. In the end, his "mutton,

mughal and mangalsutra" rants did not resonate even with those aligned with the BJP. In the fight for the US' presidency, Trump is not coming out trumps with his all too palpable lies, slanderous remarks at Kamala and his fist-pumping which is not helping him or his party to take the battle into the 'enemy' lines. Poor leadership is on full display, with Trump seemingly tilting at the windmills. In contrast, Kamala has shown much grace, sense and sensibility as she speaks about issues rather than engaging with Trump in a shouting match. Trump already has the baggage of making the USA a laughing stock of the world with his open calls for violence and questioning institutions that constitute America's bedrock of democracy. As the hour of reckoning approaches, it is becoming increasingly clear that it's going to be chalk Vs cheese, and that there are no fence-sitters this time.

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

There should be important laws and regulations for the protection of lands. Such laws need to be framed and strictly enforced. Special ordinances should also be framed to protect temple lands. People's cooperation is very important for the protection of temple lands. Conservation of lands is possible if temples, their administrators and local people work together. All necessary measures regarding protection of lands can be taken by deputing specially trained personnel to protect temple lands. By recording land status and other details in digital form, illegal encroachments can be detected quickly. It is good for conservation of lands.

Protection of temple lands means protection of spiritual, cultural and social rights. Hence, it is imperative that the government, local institutions, and people work together.

Appanna Gonapa | Visakhapatnam

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Life's dilemmas: Lessons from everyday conflicts

We should recognise the value of pausing and reflecting, to determine whether our reactions to perceived insults are genuinely justified



SANJAY CHANDRA

We face conflicts and dilemmas many times in our lives. We resolve a few of those, avoiding others to avoid confrontation. We went through some fascinating times recently. We cast our votes to elect the next central government. The excitement of the crowd at the polling booth was palpable even early in the morning. There was another major event, which was at our society level. We also had elections for the governing body of our residents' welfare association. I realised that the two elections mirrored each other. New alliances were formed, and old ones were discarded. Sworn foes smiled at each other with a warmth not unlike the hot Delhi summers. There were many heartbreaks too if friends vied for the same position. Two of the prospective candidates for a position went about venting their frustration when told by well-meaning friends about the intent of the other. I suggested a mutual tete-a-tete. The conflict was resolved. I faced a dilemma as an



adolescent half a century back. One afternoon, I had an argument with a friend, which went a little overboard, and I punched him. He was taller than me and did not take kindly to my aggression. He punched me back. It did not erupt into a full-blown fist fight only because I had already rationalised his punch a little before it had connected with my soft abdomen. After all, I had started the battle; he was entitled to retaliate. Many of us hesitate to ask for personal favour, apprehensive of facing rejection. It is also a dilemma, albeit in our minds. I had no say in the allotment of the zonal

railways after the completion of our railway probation training. I did get an opportunity to express my heart's desire, when my senior asked me if I had any preference for the place of posting. I was diffident and I gave a convoluted reply, "Anywhere, though my preference would be Mughalsarai." This was a small town in my native state. He took the first part of my statement at face value. I was posted at Sealdah, the other end, and a long way from my hometown - physically, linguistically, and culturally. I understood much later in life the importance of plain speaking, however unpalatable it might be. It may cause initial bitterness, but the relationship would be stronger eventually. The self-realisation still did not give me the courage to upbraid a junior colleague for his tardiness. I chose to walk away from confrontation by not allocating him any responsibilities. I envy those who have mastered sugar-coating the bitter pill. It softens the blow, yet hits the person equally

hard. But it might even convey a wrong meaning. During a recent conversation, my wife and her friend contemplated conveying a rather difficult sentiment to another friend through a message. A small phrase was added to be polite. I felt that this changed the intent to something entirely different. They did not agree and chose not to send the message. Yet, the friend had not hesitated to upbraid another friend a few days earlier over a trivial issue. I saw conflict in the two situations, she did not. Conflicts have been a part of our lives since ages. I would not like to be the Arjun who faced the biggest challenge of his life. I am a mere mortal. I have my follies. It is not for me to preach to be perfect. I would look at the words of author Jo Coudert to give me strength, "Every life is a dilemma that must be solved by the person living it." (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

ALL WORK AND NO SPORTS MAKES YOU DULL

Sports are essential for achieving physical and mental balance to have wholesome life



SAKSHI SETHI

The question of whether India is overly focused on work and less on sports is a valid concern, especially in a country where academic and professional success is often prioritized over physical activities. In many Indian families, there is a strong emphasis on academics and securing stable, well-paying jobs. However, this focus often overshadows the importance of sports, which sometimes are viewed as extracurricular activities rather than potential career paths. Despite living in the 21st century, the competitive nature of academic exams, such as the IIT-JEE, NEET, IIFT and various public service exams, place enormous pressure on students to excel in academics and as a result, sports often end up taking a backseat during the crucial educational years.

There is no denying the fact that sports teach valuable life skills such as teamwork, leadership, discipline and resilience, which are beneficial in both personal as well as professional life. Today, if we look back, India's journey in the Olympics has been marked by significant achievements, challenges and a growing presence in various sports disciplines be it archery, weightlifting, badminton, athletics and the list goes on and on. Increasing media coverage of a diverse range of sports beyond cricket has helped in promoting other sports. Moreover, sports have proved to be a powerful tool for promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. They bridge divides, foster understanding, and create opportunities for personal and collective growth as can be seen in the 2024 Olympics being held in Paris. Enhancing sports in India



requires a multi-faceted approach that involves government support, private-sector investment, grassroots development and public engagement.

By addressing these areas, India can unlock its vast potential in sports, leading to greater national pride, improved public health and economic benefits which even include initiatives to encourage female participation thereby providing equal opportunities, safety assurance and challenging societal norms that restrict women's involvement in sports. Moreover, sports can be adapted for individuals of all abilities thereby promoting inclusivity for people with disabilities. This will help not only in breaking down barriers but ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate.

Sports can be a tool for conflict resolution, providing a neutral ground where individuals or groups in conflict can engage constructively. It even teaches important life skills such as leadership, resilience and teamwork. These skills are transferable to other areas of life, contributing to personal development and societal harmony. Programs that use sports for peacebuilding have been successful in areas of conflict around the world. International sports events such as the Olympics often serve as platforms for diplomacy and dialogue between nations, helping to ease tensions and promote global peace. While there has traditionally been a strong focus on academics and work in India, there is a growing recognition of the importance of sports.

However, for sports to gain equal footing, there needs to be a cultural shift, increased investment and better integration of sports into daily life. By promoting a balanced approach that values both work and sports, India can and will foster a healthier, more active and well-rounded society. Achieving this balance involves effective time management, prioritization and a shift in mindset that values both mental and physical well-being.

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

How feasible is the goal of \$5 trillion economy by 2025



B K JHA

Can India truly sustain such high growth rates, or do these figures oversimplify the complex realities of its socio-political landscape?



In any discussion involving economists, a common saying goes, "When six economists gather and deliberate, there will be seven views." This adage humorously reflects the diversity of opinions that often arises in economic discourse. While economists are inclined to project growth through metrics like GDP, inflation, and depreciation rates, these projections sometimes oversimplify the complexities of real-world politics and societal dynamics. Indeed, even the most well-reasoned economic forecasts can falter when confronted with the unpredictable nature of political realities and the broader socio-economic context. Economists from the Reserve Bank of India, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, other big financial institutions, and even our government-serving prominent experts arrive at different projections of India's growth story. Going by the latest two projections, Krishnamurthy Venkata Subramanian, the former Chief Economic Adviser to the Narendra Modi government and current Executive Director for India at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) says India will be reaching a \$55 trillion economy by 2047. Subramanian's projection of a \$55 trillion economy appears optimistic, especially when juxtaposed with Ernst & Young's prediction of \$26 trillion by 2047. At this point, it is difficult to say whose projection is realistic given the very dynamic nature of the Indian economy where several socio-economic and political forces are at work simultaneously. Subramanian has made a bold claim in his new book, India @100: Envisioning Tomorrow's Economic Powerhouse. Released recently by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal at a Special Session organized by ASSOCHAM in New Delhi, the book envisions India reaching a \$55 trillion economy by 2047. Subramanian's proposition, while ambitious, is grounded in a comprehensive analysis of India's economic trajectory and the policies required to sustain high growth rates. It is not difficult to find the economic rationale behind such an ambitious projection, considering India's historical inflation rates, currency depreciation, and recent economic policies. He rightly emphasizes that achieving this target hinges on maintaining a real growth rate of 8% and an inflation rate of around 5%. Historically, the depreciation of the Indian rupee against the dollar has averaged between 3% and 3.5%, primarily due to India's higher inflation rates. Subramanian notes that before the adoption of inflation targeting in 2016, India's inflation averaged above 7%, necessitating higher depreciation rates. However, with inflation targeting and subsequent economic stability, India's inflation rate has moderated to around 5%, even amid global economic shocks like COVID-19 and the Ukraine war. The rule of 72—a simple formula to estimate the doubling time of an investment—to project India's economic growth may have some limitations. Subramanian posits that if India's real growth rate remains at 7% and inflation at 5%, the nominal growth rate in rupee terms would be 12%. Accounting for a historical depreciation rate of 3%, the dollar-denominated growth rate would be around 9%, doubling the economy every eight years. This would place India's GDP at \$26 trillion by 2047. However, Subramanian argues that with improved inflation targeting, resulting in lower inflation and depreciation rates, India could achieve a nominal growth rate of 13% in rupee terms and 12% in dollar terms. This would lead to the economy doubling every six years, reaching the \$55 trillion mark by 2047. To many economists and experts, these projections seem unreasonable as it is very difficult to predict 20 years of macroeconomic environment and political realities. Political stability would be a growth driver certainly but if India's current stable coalition



SINCE 2014, NEW FIRM CREATION IN INDIA HAS SURGED, ESTABLISHING THE COUNTRY AS THE THIRD-LARGEST ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM GLOBALLY. ENTREPRENEURSHIP NOT ONLY DRIVES PRODUCTIVITY IN NEW FIRMS BUT ALSO COMPELS INCUMBENT FIRMS TO INNOVATE

government loses its strength the entire economic journey would face a difficult path. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal may disagree as while releasing the book launch, he also emphasized that the target appears realistic due to the current political stability in India. He noted that even in a coalition government, the ability to make bold decisions has been a key factor in driving economic reforms. Goyal highlighted that political stability, particularly with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) maintaining a dominant position, provides a conducive environment for long-term economic planning. He pointed out that most seats the BJP lost in the last general elections were by margins of less than 30,000 votes, suggesting a strong underlying support base. This political backdrop, according to Goyal, is essential for sustaining bold economic reforms over the next two decades and beyond. It is widely admitted that achieving these ambitious targets requires sound economic policies, particularly those that promote formalization, innovation, and entrepreneurship. India's informal sector, which constitutes a significant portion of the economy, is far less productive than the formal sector. Enhancing formalization through digital infrastructure and regulatory reforms could substantially boost productivity. Additionally, the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation. Since 2014, new firm creation in India has surged, establishing the country as the third-largest entrepreneurial ecosystem globally. Entrepreneurship not only drives productivity in new firms but also compels incumbent firms to innovate, leading to overall economic growth. A key pillar of Subramanian's vision is ethical wealth creation, which he believes

is essential for fostering a large, prosperous middle class. He refutes the notion that wealth creation and employment are opposing forces, citing examples from his personal experiences and the broader economy. Wealth creators, he argues, generate significant employment and pay higher wages, contributing to overall economic welfare. Emphasis on ethical wealth creation stems from past instances of crony capitalism, which stifled economic growth and led to systemic inefficiencies. By promoting a transparent and fair business environment, India can ensure that wealth creation benefits a broader spectrum of society, thereby enhancing social and economic inclusion. The claim of a \$55 trillion economy may be viewed by some economists as hypothetical, given the complexities of global and domestic economic landscapes. Nevertheless, India's inherent economic strengths and resilience could indeed support the realization of the India@100 vision. Despite the slowing pace of globalization, geo-political tensions, and other unseen negative forces could pose significant threats to India's growth trajectory. Nonetheless, with the right policies, particularly those that encourage domestic investment and exports, India can navigate these challenges and sustain high growth rates, controlled inflation, prudent currency management, and robust economic policies that foster innovation, formalization, and ethical wealth creation. As India stands on the cusp of a new economic era, these pillars will be crucial in shaping its journey toward becoming a global economic powerhouse.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views expressed are personal)

Building the foundation for the future: The struggles of adolescent girls in slums

Despite government initiatives, the young girls are often deprived of education facilities as they have to work and shoulder domestic responsibilities

In Narrow lanes of Baba Ramdev Nagar, a slum in Jaipur, 12-year-old Pooja (name changed) cradles her three-year-old brother while her mother Sharda cooks nearby. Pooja obediently runs back and forth fetching water and other necessities as her mother instructs.

In contrast, her 8-year-old brother plays undisturbed. The scene takes a poignant turn when a friend of Pooja's, returning from school, stops by. Pooja's eyes light up as they discuss school, revealing her longing for education. But when asked why Pooja isn't attending school, Sharda interjects, "If she goes to school, who will look after the children?" Pooja's dreams seem to slip further from her grasp.



HARSHALI NEELKANTI ZALKE

Sharda and her husband, daily wage labourers, are among the many families in Baba Ramdev Nagar, a slum of over 500 people. Predominantly inhabited by Scheduled Castes and Tribes, including Lohars (blacksmiths), Jogis, Kambliyas, and daily labourers, these families have migrated from remote rural areas of Rajasthan, driven by the hope of better employment opportunities in

the city. While some families have settled permanently, others migrate seasonally, depending on the availability of work.

However, the migration process and the economic hardships it brings take the greatest toll on the education of children, particularly girls. The struggle to make ends meet often forces families to prioritize immediate survival over long-term investments like education. In these situations, girls bear the brunt of the burden. The economic strain on the household disproportionately affects girls compared to boys, stunting not only their education but also their physical and mental development. Another story echoes Pooja's in this slum—14-year-old

Asha (name changed), the eldest of four siblings. With her parents working as scrap dealers, Asha is left to care for her siblings and manage the household. On days when her mother cannot work, Asha steps in. Despite her strong desire to learn, Asha hasn't seen the inside of a classroom since fifth grade.

Her education, like that of many girls in the slum, halted as she took on responsibilities at home. An elderly resident, Kanti, questions, "If the girl goes to school, who will take care of the house and the younger siblings?" Yet, she remains silent on why these responsibilities aren't placed on the boys. Akhilesh Mishra, a social worker who has been active in the slum for eight years, points out, "There is



still a lack of awareness about educating girls in urban slums like Baba Ramdev Nagar. Economic challenges and a lack of social consciousness about the importance of education lead parents to prioritize income over

schooling, often dragging children into child labor." He adds that although the government has launched programs to promote girls' education, the distance girls in Baba Ramdev Nagar maintain from school prevents

them from benefiting. IndiaSpend's report highlights a concerning trend: while primary school dropout rates for girls in 2021-22 were 1.35%, this figure jumped to 12.25% at the secondary level. The report underscores the urgent need for not just policy implementation but also grassroots awareness. Societal awareness is critical to ensuring girls' education is valued as highly as boys'. The struggle for education is most pronounced for adolescent girls, particularly in urban poverty-stricken areas like Baba Ramdev Nagar. Though some urban areas are beginning to reduce barriers to education, the girls in this slum continue to fight for their right to learn.

In Baba Ramdev Nagar, the pursuit of education for girls like Pooja and Asha faces formidable obstacles. Economic hardships and entrenched societal norms prioritize immediate survival over long-term education, leaving many girls out of school. Despite government initiatives, the gap in educational attainment remains wide due to factors such as child labor and domestic responsibilities disproportionately shouldered by girls. Addressing these challenges is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and securing a brighter future for these young girls.

(The writer is a grassroots worker from Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Charkha Features)

Despite regime change, Dhaka's traffic facing chaos due to sporadic protests

PTI n DHAKA

Dhaka's roads, known for its notorious traffic, have become more chaotic as sporadic protests by various organisations have led to severe congestion, leaving commuters stranded and scrambling for alternative routes.

On Monday morning, rickshaw pullers blocked the Shahbagh intersection to demand a ban on battery-operated auto rickshaws and other issues, stopping all traffic on nearby roads. The protest began around 10:30 a.m.

The rickshaw pullers protesting at Shahbagh claimed that autorickshaw drivers were charging too little-Tk20 (approx Rs 14) instead of the standard Tk50 (approx Rs 35)-from passengers, which meant they weren't getting any business. They also pointed out that autorickshaws, which previously operated in the alleys, now run on main roads, ignoring traffic rules and causing traffic jams and accidents.

This situation has worsened the already chaotic traffic and led to a shortage of public transportation options for commuters.

On Sunday, the city's traffic came to a standstill in key locations including the High Court, Motsho Bhaban, Shahbagh, Science Lab, and Dhanmondi. Protesters took to the streets in these areas to voice their demands, further aggravating the already notorious traffic situation in Dhaka.

Many commuters found themselves abandoning their vehicles and walking to their destinations due to the prolonged congestion.

"I was stuck in traffic for hours. After crossing Shahbagh and reaching the High Court area, my vehicle



came to a halt. I had no choice but to get out and continue on foot," said Rakibul Hasan, a commuter travelling from Dhanmondi to Paltan. His experience is a testament to the widespread disruptions faced by many in the city.

In 2023, Dhaka was ranked the fifth worst city in the world for traffic congestion in Numbeo's Traffic Index, up from ninth place in 2022, with the average one-way travel time increasing from 61 minutes to 57.8 minutes.

Adding to the congestion, a programme by the Ansars, a volunteer security force, led to significant traffic jams around Purana Paltan, Bijoy Nagar, Gulistan, and Segunbagicha. The disruption extended to areas like Banglamotor, Kawran Bazar, and Farmgate, creating a ripple effect throughout Dhaka's road network.

"The protests are constant and sporadic, making it nearly impossible to predict traffic conditions from one day to the next," said Ajijul Ahmed, another frustrated commuter.

"It feels like every few hours there's a new roadblock or demonstration, and it's causing a lot of inconvenience for people trying to go about their daily lives," he said.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has been struggling to manage the traffic chaos. A senior official of traffic police said various organisations have been holding programmes and sit-ins leading to road blockades and traffic.

"On Sunday there were a lot of processions and also sit-ins by the Ansar group. Demonstrations and protests by several groups and communities in various pockets have been a regular affair for the last few weeks. That has led to a lot of traffic congestion," a traffic police official said.

With one side of the road closed, traffic pressure has shifted to surrounding areas. Although we have advised using alternative routes, drivers are often disregarding this, resulting in additional congestion.

The reopening of the metro

services, which had been closed due to the violent anti-government protests, has somewhat alleviated the strain on other modes of transportation.

However, the relief has been limited as continuous and sporadic protests continue to disrupt traffic flow.

Commuters who previously relied on the metro are now facing the dual challenge of navigating congested roads and dealing with the unpredictability of protest-related disruptions.

With the metro back in operation, many students and office-goers have returned to using this mode of transport. However, the impact of the prolonged protests is still felt. The return of metro services has not fully resolved the traffic issues, as the ongoing demonstrations continue to create bottlenecks and delays.

The economic impact of these disruptions has been significant. The cost of commuting has increased due to higher fares for cabs and auto rickshaws, and the delays have affected

business operations and daily routines.

Middle-class families and students, already strained by rising costs, find themselves further burdened by the need to navigate through the traffic chaos.

"There is a problem of inflation in Bangladesh and the ongoing traffic crisis has only aggravated the situation for middle-class people like us who have to depend on public transport. In several places cabs and auto-rickshaws charge us more than the normal rates," Sukumar Mitra, an employee at a three-star hotel here.

Both Shahbagh and the adjoining Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) area, close to Dhaka University, were central to the protests that led to the ousting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5. Hasina fled to India amid escalating violence and unrest, leaving a volatile situation in her wake.

As Dhaka grapples with the ongoing and sporadic protests, the city's infrastructure and public services are under severe strain.

Commuters like Sadikul Hasan and Ajijul Ahmed are left to navigate a constantly shifting landscape of roadblocks and delays, hoping for a resolution to the unrest that has so profoundly impacted their daily lives.

The city's traffic woes, exacerbated by the protests, highlight the broader issues facing Dhaka's transportation system and the ongoing struggle for stability in the capital.

After unprecedented anti-government protests, which reached a crescendo on August 5, Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled the country. She landed in India on August 5 and is currently staying there.

Bangabandhu to toppled statue: Mujibur Rahman's contested legacy post Bangladesh upheaval

PTI n DHAKA

When a popular uprising in Bangladesh brought down the Sheikh Hasina-led government, college student Alif Hossain felt the deposed prime minister got what she deserved, but the toppling of the Dhaka statue of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by protesters on August 5 left him deeply disturbed.

"It was just wrong. He fought for the liberation of our country, he is the Father of the Nation, our Bangabandhu, how could he be so disgraced in the fit of anger," the Dhaka-based student rued.

The legacy of Rahman or Mujib, as he was popularly called, lives on in the names of streets, institutions, public landmarks, his fiery speeches made during the struggle for independence, the face of Bangladeshi currency, and till recently in statues and murals.

The unprecedented protests precipitated the fall of the previous government as Hasina fled to India on August 5 leaving behind a country in political turmoil.

In the wake of her departure, she courted even more public opprobrium, and her father's legacy too became a prime target as anti-government protesters vented their ire on Rahman's towering statue at Bijoy Sarani in the heart of Dhaka and pulled it down, with images being broadcast on local and international media channels.

Public murals depicting Bangabandhu ('Friend of Bengal') — a sobriquet that characterised the legacy of Bangladesh's first president — were defaced, and his house in Dhanmondi where he and most of his family members were assassinated on August 15, 1975 and which was later turned into a memorial, was badly damaged by protesters.

In the Dhaka University area, a series of wall panels on the front side of the building of the famous Teacher Student Centre (TSC) bears old mosaic panels depicting legendary personalities and historic moments like the signing of the Instrument of Surrender of Pakistani forces in Dhaka on December 16, 1971, which led to the birth of the new nation of Bangladesh.

The mosaic panel depicting Rahman has been defaced, his face blackened.

On the Dhaka University campus, a huge mural on a wall depicting Bangabandhu was defaced with graffiti scrawled all over the artwork.

Many artworks made on public walls in the university area after August 5 mock Hasina and her fleeing to India and extol the public resistance culminating in what many Bangladeshis now call the 'Victory Day' of '36 July'.

From being revered by countrymen to his images and memorials being disgraced, Rahman's legacy is now much contested in the post-upheaval society of Bangladesh.

The 'Gen Z' as the young protesters are being labelled by many, were born after the Liberation War of 1971, and political observers say their idea of Bangladesh is "different" from what the pre-1971 generations may have had.

Hasina, 76, resigned as the prime minister on August 5 amid mass protests against her



government. The protests, which started last month initially with a demand to end the quota system that reserved 30 per cent of government jobs for the families of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's War of Independence against Pakistan in 1971, later turned into anti-government demonstrations.

Abdul Moyeen Khan, a senior leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and a former Cabinet minister of Bangladesh criticised Hasina and accused her of "destroying" the several institutions of the country which resulted in this "revolt by students" that was later supported by the general masses.

"If she was a real leader, she wouldn't have led the country to drive to that stage," Khan told PTI in an interview in Dhaka on Thursday.

Asked if the demigration of Rahman's legacy is undermining the 1971 liberation war, he said, "No".

"It is a continuous process, you have to formulate and reformulate, the human society doesn't remain static at any place. It (recent movement) is not undermining anything," Khan said.

But, a section of Bangladeshis feels a palpable fear that "Mujib's legacy may be slowly erased or whittled down", an argument countered by protesters who claim that "he was given undue space in history by the Awami League government" and "many controversial facets of his life have not been told to people".

Alif Hossain, who studies at a college in Dhaka, however, pleads for a "more mature" approach to looking at history.

"In retrospect, we cannot go back and start attacking Mujibur Rahman's legacy. History should not be erased even if it is contested. His daughter (Sheikh Hasina) did wrong things and faced consequences. But, toppling statues and defacing Bangabandhu's murals is just plain wrong," he told PTI here.

Opposite the TSC is the famous Raju Memorial — an iconic sculpture mounted on a raised platform — located in a traffic roundabout that faces

the Suhrawardy Udyan, a national memorial which marks the spot where Rahman had delivered the historic March 7, 1971 speech during the independence struggle.

On two Dhaka Metro piers, one on each side of the Raju Memorial, huge murals of Rahman and Hasina were earlier painted. During the agitation, both artworks were defaced by anti-government protesters, and still stand sullied, making a visible dent in Mujib's legacy in Dhaka.

The Bangabandhu National Stadium, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre, and the Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka, all carry the name of the founding father of Bangladesh.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre, inaugurated in September 2004, was established as a non-formal science educational institution to "eradicate superstitions and blind faith from the society and to inculcate positive scientific temper in the mind of people, especially among the students", reads a description on its website. The headquarters of the Awami League is located on Bangabandhu Avenue. The party, formed in 1949, under Rahman had led the struggle for independence of Bangladesh. Its offices were also targeted by anti-government protesters recently.

Rahman was born in 1920 in undivided India. Bangladesh evolved from Bengal presidency to East Bengal to East Pakistan and eventually as a separate nation born in 1971. According to a profile of Rahman on the Dhaka University website, "he is regarded as 'Jatir Janak' or 'Jatir Pita' (both meaning 'Father of the Nation') of Bangladesh. The then Hasina government had marked his birth centenary by declaring 2020-21 as 'Mujib Year'.

In the highly charged environment that Bangladesh is in right now on the back of anti-government protests, there is an element of uncertainty around the future of Mujib's legacy, but his legend shall live on.

Greek-flagged tanker burning after Houthi attacks, but no sign of oil spill

AP n DUBAI

A Greek-flagged tanker repeatedly attacked by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea remains ablaze but hasn't sprung a major oil leak in the waterway, a European Union naval command said Monday.

The attack on the Sounion marks the most serious assault in weeks by the rebels, who continue to target shipping through the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. The attacks have disrupted the \$1 trillion in trade that typically passes through the region, as well as halting some aid shipments to conflict-ravaged Sudan and Yemen.

Images published by the EU's Operation Aspidos, whose mission is to protect shipping in the area, showed smoke rising from multiple points along the Sounion's deck and its bridge Sunday. Fires could be seen burning in at least nine different locations on the deck



of the vessel, which had been loaded with 150,000 tons of Iraqi crude oil — roughly 1 million barrels. Some flames appeared near hatches of the tanker's oil tanks.

"So far there are no obvious signs of an oil spill," the EU mission said. The Sounion "is both a navigational and an imminent environmental hazard. This situation underlines that these kinds of attacks pose not only a threat against the freedom of

navigation but also to the lives of seafarers, the environment, and subsequently the life of all citizens living in that region."

The U.S. State Department similarly warned about the ecological danger to the Red Sea, home to coral reefs and other natural habitats and wildlife. Footage showing explosions on board the Sounion released earlier by the Houthis and later analyzed by The Associated Press suggested that the rebels again

boarded an abandoned vessel and rigged it with explosives in an attempt to sink it.

"While the crew has been evacuated, the Houthis appear determined to sink the ship and its cargo into the sea," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement Saturday.

"Through these attacks, the Houthis have made clear they are willing to destroy the fishing industry and regional ecosystems that Yemenis and other communities in the region rely on for their livelihoods, just as they have undermined the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to the region through their reckless attacks."

For their part, the Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel highlighted the EU's photographs and described the Sounion as being targeted for "punishment to the company that owns the ship for violating the decision to ban access to the ports" of Israel.

The Sounion came under repeated attack last week by the Houthis. A French destroyer operating as part of Operation Aspidos later rescued the Sounion's crew of 25 Filipinos and Russians, as well as four private security personnel, and took them to nearby Djibouti.

The Houthis have targeted more than 80 vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October. They seized one vessel and sank two in the campaign that also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a U.S.-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets.

The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the U.S. or the U.K. To force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran.

PTI n SINGAPORE

Singapore Indian-origin Opposition leader seeks High Court trial over alleged lies to Parliament

Singapore's Indian-origin leader of the Opposition Pritam Singh has applied to have his case heard in the High Court instead of the State Courts.

Singh, 48, faces two charges of lying to a parliamentary committee that was convened in November 2021 to look into the lying controversy involving his party's former MP Raeesah Khan. Khan has resigned from Parliament.

He applied to have the case heard in the High Court on Monday, according to a Channel News Asia report.

Singh's lawyers, Andre Darius Jumabhoy and Aristotile Emmanuel Eng, relied on the case of former transport minister S. Iswaran which has been rescheduled for hearing in the High Court next month.

Citing the Iswaran case, the lawyers said in the arguments that there was also "strong public interest" for Singh's case to be heard in the High Court.

This is the first prosecution of its kind, the Channel cited Jumabhoy as having said.

"This case goes to the very essence of our democracy, and this is not

my characterisation," said the lawyer. He referred to a speech that Leader of the House, Minister Indraneel Rajah, made in February 2022 to refer Singh's case to the public prosecutor.

She said: "Fundamentally, the motions are about safeguarding the essence of democracy - our democracy - and preserving its most vital and essential characteristic, which is trust. They are about the need to ensure the integrity of our institutions and Parliament in particular, and about the confidence Singaporeans can have in their elected representatives."

Jumabhoy said the minister's "eloquent summary" touches on what is at stake, and said it seems "almost churlish" in such circumstances to say Singh's case does not warrant a transfer to the High Court.

The lawyer said he was not denigrating the State Courts or attempting to insult the State

Courts' capabilities by providing reasons for why the High Court is better suited to hear the case.

If not, every such application would involve some form of disparagement and leave the application "entirely redundant", said Jumabhoy.

He said the prosecution appeared to be taking a position that Singh's application was "offensive" in and of itself, using the term "scandalous" and saying the defence is questioning the integrity and independence of the State Court judges.

"It's not only the resources that are being brought to bear against what I say is a straightforward application, it's the tenor of the (prosecution's) submissions that are troubling," said Jumabhoy.

Justice Hoo Sheau Peng, who heard the motion, said there seems to be an implication that the State Courts and their judges are "not well-placed to hear this case" because of the nature of the case.



Jumabhoy said the trial judge, whoever he is, will have to grapple with important personalities in the Singapore context, and this is very different from the usual run-of-the-mill cases that come before the court.

He said the defence did not intend to make any implication in relation to the State Court judges. "I think in fairness to ourselves, if we intended to make that point, we would have come out and said it," he said.

The prosecution, which Jumabhoy characterised as "something of a star-studded line-up", comprised a four-member team led by Deputy Attorney-General and Senior Counsel Ang Cheng Hock.

Ang pointed out that Iswaran's case was referred to the High Court under a different section.

Singh's application was made under Section 239 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which states that the High Court may order the transfer for three reasons: That a

fair and impartial trial cannot be had in any State Court, that some question of law of unusual difficulty is likely to arise, or that it is expedient for the ends of justice or is required by the Criminal Procedure Code or any other law to transfer the case.

Ang explained that Singh's lawyers had written to the prosecution to ask the prosecution to exercise its powers to transfer the case to the High Court.

The prosecution replied to say they were "unable to accede to this request" and did not agree to do so.

At this point, Singh and his lawyers should have applied for a judicial review of the prosecution's decision, but instead, they filed the criminal motion under Section 239 of the Criminal Procedure Code, said Ang.

"There is nothing to be gained in law at least by the applicant relying and referring to Iswaran's case, said Ang.

"Instead ... There are all manner of attempts to refer to Iswaran's case as if the matter is the case, the facts are analogous, there's the same level of public interest, etc. And we say this is really a backdoor attempt to review the public prosecutor's discretion," said Ang.

TAIWAN DRILLS WITH ANTI-AMPHIBIOUS LANDING MISSILES TO DETER CHINA

AP n PINGTING (TAIWAN)

Taiwan drilled Monday with anti-amphibious landing missiles as part of strategy to remain mobile and deadly in an attempt to deter an attack from China, which claims the democratically ruled island of Taiwan as its own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary.

Troops fired tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided missiles known as TOW 2A missiles mounted on M1167 Humvees at floating targets off a beach in Pingtung County during the two days of exercises. The area on Taiwan's southern tip faces both toward the Taiwan Strait and China, and toward the Pacific Ocean.

The missiles are among the most effective and popular anti-tank weapons in the world and a key component in what some experts say is Taiwan's best strategy to resist a potential Chinese invasion. China has ramped up its military threat in recent years based on its vast edge in numbers of warplanes, ships and missiles.

Taiwan bought 1,700 units of the newer TOW 2B system from the U.S., the last of



which are due to be delivered by the end of the year. The two days of testing will also gauge the more sophisticated TOW 2B's interoperability with the TOW 2A and its ability to acquire targets at night, the Defense Ministry said.

Advocates of such weaponry argue that these more mobile systems stand the best chance in an asymmetric battle against a much larger Chinese force. China has the world's largest standing military, but most of Taiwan is composed of steep mountains, mud flats and heavily built-up urban areas poorly suited to such a conventional force. Others have argued Taiwan needs more warplanes and surface ships.

China sends warplanes and warships near Taiwan on a near-daily basis in an attempt to intimidate its citizens and degrade the island's defenses. In response, Taiwan has extended the period of national military service to one year, building its own submarines and importing sophisticated new equipment from the U.S.

The vast majority of Taiwanese favor the current status of de-facto independence for their island, which separated from mainland China amid civil war in 1949.



Trump is expected to tie Harris to chaotic Afghanistan war withdrawal in speech to National Guard

AP n WASHINGTON

In a speech Monday to National Guard soldiers in Michigan, former President Donald Trump is expected to promote his foreign policy record and the Vice President Kamala Harris to one of the Biden administration's lowest points: the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years of war.

The speech coincides with the third anniversary of the Aug. 26, 2021, suicide bombing at Hamid Karzai International Airport, which killed 13 U.S. Service members and more than 100 Afghans. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack.

Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, is set to appear at 2 p.m. Eastern time at the National Guard Association of the United States' 146th General Conference & Exhibition in Detroit.

Since Biden ended his reelection bid, Trump has been zeroing in on Harris, now the Democratic presidential nominee, and her roles in foreign policy decisions. He specifically highlights the vice president's statements that she was the last person in the room before Biden made the decision on Afghanistan.

"She bragged that she would be the last person in the room, and she was. She was the last person in the room with Biden when the two of them decided to pull the troops out of Afghanistan," he said last week in a North Carolina rally. "She had the final vote. She had the final say, and she was all for it." The relatives of some of the 13 American servicemembers who were killed appeared on stage at the Republican National Convention last month, saying Biden had never publicly named their loved ones. The display was an implicit response to allegations that Trump doesn't respect veterans and had previously referred to slain World War II soldiers as suckers and losers - accusations denied by Trump.

Under Trump, the United States signed a peace agreement with the Taliban that was aimed at ending America's longest war and bringing U.S. Troops home. Biden later pointed to that agreement as he sought to deflect blame for the Taliban overrunning Afghanistan, saying it bound him to withdraw troops and set the stage for the chaos that engulfed the country.

A Biden administration review of the withdrawal acknowledged that the evacuation of Americans and allies from Afghanistan should have started sooner, but attributed the delays to the Afghan government and military, and to U.S. Military and intelligence community assessments.

The top two U.S. Generals who oversaw the evacuation said the administration inadequately planned for the withdrawal. The nation's top-ranking military officer at the time, then-Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley, told lawmakers earlier this year he had urged Biden to keep a residual force of 2,500 forces to give backup. Instead, Biden decided to keep a much smaller force of 650 that would be limited to securing the U.



Israel-Hamas war latest: Iran's Foreign Minister vows definitive retaliation against Israel

AP n JERUSALEM

Iran's foreign minister again has referenced his country's planned retaliation over the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

Abbas Araghchi said late Sunday he made the remark in a conversation with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani by telephone.

"Iran reaction to Israeli terrorist attack in Tehran is definitive, and will be measured & well calculated," Araghchi wrote on the social platform X. "We do not fear escalation, yet do not seek it - unlike Israel."

Tajani said in a statement he "called for restraint and to pursue a constructive approach, in order to stop the cycle of military actions in the region, which only risks bringing more suffering."

"It is important that Iran exercises moderation towards Hezbollah in order to avert an escalation on the Lebanese-Israeli border, where Italian soldiers of the UNIFIL contingent are operating, and towards the Houthis in order to avoid an increase in tensions in the Red Sea area, where Italy plays a leading role in the (European Union's) Aspidem mission," he said in the statement. Their call came after Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, long backed by Iran, traded heavy fire early Sunday but backed off from sparking a widely feared all-out war.

Meanwhile, a round of high-level talks in Cairo meant to bring about a cease-fire and hostage deal to at least temporarily end the 10-month Israel-Hamas war in Gaza ended Sunday without a final agreement, a U.S. Official said. But talks will continue at lower levels in the coming days in an effort to bridge remaining gaps.

The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the talks, said lower level "working teams" will remain in Cairo to meet with mediators the United States, Qatar and Egypt in hopes of addressing remaining disagreements. The talks included CIA director William Burns and David Barnea, the head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency. A Hamas delegation was briefed by Egyptian and Qatari mediators but did not directly take part in negotiations.

HERE'S THE LATEST:

Israel says more polio vaccines are delivered to Gaza: Polio vaccines for more than 1 million people have been delivered to Gaza, Israel's military said Sunday, after the first confirmed case of the disease in the territory in a quarter-century.

It was not immediately clear how, or how quickly, the more than 25,000 vials of vaccine would be distributed in Gaza, where ongoing fighting and unrest have challenged humanitarian efforts during more than 10 months of war.

Other polio cases are suspected across the largely devastated territory after the virus was detected in wastewater in six different locations in July.

Aid groups plan to vaccinate more than 600,000 children under age 10 and have called for an urgent pause in the war to increase vaccinations. The World Health Organization and the United Nations children's agency have said that, at a minimum, a seven-day pause is needed.

The U.N. Has aimed to bring 1.6 million doses of polio vaccine into Gaza, where hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians are crowded into tent camps lacking clean water or proper disposal of sewage and garbage.

North Korea shows new drone attacking a target as Seoul and US hold large military exercises

AP n SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a demonstration of new exploding drones designed to crash into targets and pledged to spur development of such weapons to boost his military's war readiness, state media said Monday.

Kim has been flaunting his growing military capabilities amid tensions with Washington and Seoul. North Korean photos of the test showed a white drone with X-shaped tails and wings supposedly crashing into and destroying a target resembling South Korea's main K-2 battle tank. Most combat drones stand off from targets and fire missiles.

The test, which state media said took place Saturday, came as the U.S. and South Korean militaries are conducting a large-scale exercise aimed at enhancing their combined capabilities to defend against growing North Korean nuclear threats.

The allies said the Ulchi Freedom Shield drills, which continue through Thursday, are focused on enhancing their readiness against North



Korean threats and will also reflect lessons learned from recent armed conflicts.

The United States and South Korea also on Monday began a separate amphibious landing drill involving dozens of aircraft and vessels from their navies and marines, including U.S. F-35 fighters and amphibious assault ship USS Boxer. South Korea's military said the Ssangyong Exercise, which will continue through Sept. 7, is aimed at sharpening combat interoperability.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday's drone test involved various types of drones built to fly different ranges to attack enemy targets on land and sea.

It said the drones flew along various routes before accurately hitting test targets.

Kim said global trends in military technologies and modern combat show the importance of drones in war and that the North's military should be equipped with advanced drones "as early as possible."

He called for accelerated development and production of various drones that explode on impact, conduct reconnaissance or attack targets underwater, KCNA said.

Lee Chang Hyun, spokesperson of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, said during a briefing that South

Korea's military was closely examining North Korea's drone capabilities but did not provide a detailed assessment. He said without elaborating that the South's military is equipped with systems to detect and intercept such drones.

Some analysts suggest the North Korean drones shown in state media photos resemble Russia's Zala Lancet-3 drones, and Lee said the South was looking into the possibility Russia had helped North Korea acquire its drone capability.

"We are aware that during the past exchanges between North Korea and Russia that some (drones) were given (to North Korea) as gifts," Lee said. "We would need to analyze various aspects, including whether (North Korea) would have modified to improve their capabilities, or other possibilities."

North Korea and Russia have been aligning closely in the face of their separate confrontations with the United States, with Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin holding back-to-back summits in September last year and June.

Protesters against judiciary overhaul plan urge Mexican president to respect democracy

AP n MEXICO CITY

Thousands demonstrated in Mexico's capital Sunday in the latest opposition to President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's proposed judicial overhaul and other moves by the governing party that critics say will weaken democratic checks and balances.

Throng of people, many of them striking federal court workers and judges, ended their march outside the Supreme Court building in the heart of the capital, waving flags reading "Judicial independence" and "Respect democracy."

"Right now, we're protesting the reforms, but it's not just the reforms," said lawyer Mauricio Espinosa. "Its all of these attacks against the judicial branch and other autonomous bodies. What it does is end up strengthening the executive, the next president." Following big electoral victories in

June by the president's Morena party and its allies, the government has pushed for sweeping changes to Mexico's judicial system, long at odds with López Obrador, a populist who has openly attacked judges and ignored court orders.

His proposal includes having judges elected to office, something analysts, judges and international observers fear would stack courts with politically biased judges with little experience.

That was the concern for Espinosa, who said judges "will have to raise money to campaign, find someone to have their backs. So their sentences will no longer be 100% independent." The proposed changes would require approval by Mexico's Congress, where the governing coalition has the majority.

And electoral authorities on Friday allocated Morena and allied parties 73% of the seats in the lower house of



Congress, though they won a significantly smaller 60% of the vote. That would give the governing bloc the two-thirds majority in Chamber of Deputies needed to push through constitutional changes with little or no compromise.

The coalition will be a few seats short

of a two-thirds majority in the Senate, but it could feasibly win the needed votes from a smaller party.

While the new legislators don't take office until Sept. 1, a congressional committee on Friday already began pushing forward another contentious initiative - the elimination of seven

autonomous bodies, including the National Institute of Transparency.

Morena argues Mexico's independent oversight and regulatory bodies are a waste of money. It says oversight responsibilities should be given to government departments instead, essentially allowing them to police themselves.

The collective moves by the president and his party have fuelled concerns about undermining democratic institutions. But for many in the crowds, the overhaul of the judiciary represents the greatest threat.

Federal court employees and judges are on strike, the value of the peso has slumped and international financial firms have voiced concerns. At midweek, U.S. Ambassador Ken Salazar warned that electing judges is a "risk" for Mexico's democracy and "threatens the historic commercial relationship" between the two countries.

Gunmen kill 33 bus passengers in Pakistan's restive Balochistan

PTI n KARACHI

Heavily-armed gunmen killed at least 33 people in two separate attacks in Pakistan's Balochistan province on Monday, as insurgent attacks spiked in the restive region.

In the first incident, at least 23 people from Pakistan's Punjab province were killed in a targeted attack in Balochistan's Musakhel district after gunmen offloaded them from buses and checked their identities.

Senior Superintendent of Police Ayub Khoso said: "The passengers were told to get down from buses and shot dead after being identified from their national ID cards,"

Khoso said. "Most of those killed belonged to southern Punjab and some are from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa suggesting they were killed because of their ethnic background," he added.

In another attack, gunmen killed at least 10 people, including four police officers, in the Qalat district also in Balochistan, authorities said. Security sources told Geo News that terrorists attacked multiple sites in Balochistan on the night of August 24 and 25.

Khoso said the armed men also set some 12 vehicles on fire on the highway in Musakhel. The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), the most active

militant group in the province, claimed responsibility for the attack in Musakhel.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the attack, Radio Pakistan reported.

Expressing grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the despicable incident, they prayed for the departed souls and condoled with the bereaved families.

Zardari said the brutal killing of innocent people was the killing of the entire humanity and called for the culprits to be brought to justice.

The Prime Minister directed the local administration to fully cooperate with the bereaved families and provide



medical aid to the injured. He also directed the law enforcement agencies to immediately investigate the incident.

"The terrorists responsible for

this incident will be severely punished," the premier vowed, adding that any kind of terrorism was not acceptable in the country.

Both the president and the

prime minister expressed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to eradicate the menace of terrorism.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti strongly condemned the incident of terrorism.

He expressed heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of those who died in the cowardly act of terrorists.

The terrorists and their facilitators will not be able to escape an exemplary end, he said, adding that the Balochistan government will pursue the terrorists.

In a separate terrorist attack, a railway bridge was blown up in Bolan's Dozan area, said police. Balochistan is

Pakistan's largest province but, although it has more resources than other provinces, it is the least developed.

The BLA and other Baloch separatists have intensified attacks on Punjabis and Sinhdhis from elsewhere in Pakistan working in the region. They have also targeted foreign energy firms they accuse of exploiting the region without sharing profits.

The attacks come nearly four months after a similar attack targeting people from Punjab. In April, nine passengers were offloaded from a bus near Noshki and shot dead after gunmen checked their ID cards.

In October last year, unidentified gunmen fatally

shot six labourers hailing from Punjab in Turbat in Balochistan's Kech district. According to the police, the killings were targeted. All victims belonged to different areas of southern Punjab, suggesting they had been chosen for their ethnic background.

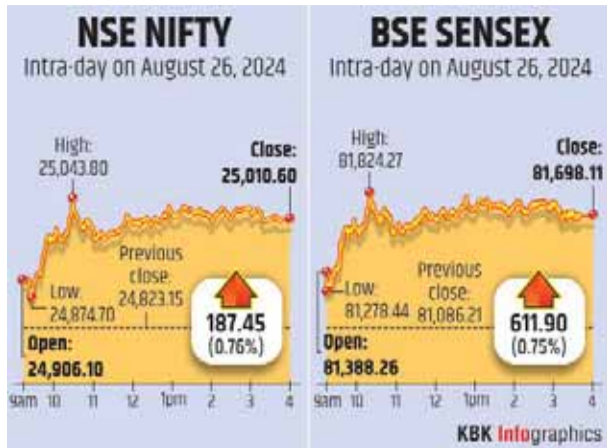
A similar incident occurred in 2015 when gunmen killed 20 construction workers and injured three others in a pre-dawn attack on a labourers' camp near Turbat.

There were at least 170 militant attacks in Balochistan last year which killed 151 civilians and 114 security personnel, according to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies.

Sensex rallies 600 points

PTI n MUMBAI

Stock market benchmark Sindices Sensex and Nifty surged nearly 1 per cent on Monday, propelled by intense buying in metal, IT and consumer durable stocks amid hopes that the US Federal Reserve will start cutting interest rates soon. Renewed Foreign fund inflows and buying in frontline stocks HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries further bolstered investor sentiment, traders said. Rising for the fifth straight day, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 611.90 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at 81,698.11. During the day, it surged 738.06 points or 0.91 per cent to 81,824.27. A total of 2,189 stocks advanced, while 1,860 declined and 148 remained unchanged on the BSE. The NSE Nifty soared 187.45 points or 0.76 per cent to 25,010.60, registering gains for the eighth session in a row. Among the 30 Sensex firms, HCL Technologies, NTPC, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra, JSW Steel, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro and Tata Consultancy Services were the biggest



gainers. On the other hand, Kotak Mahindra Bank, IndusInd Bank, Maruti and Hindustan Unilever were among the laggards. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.66 per cent and the smallcap index soared 0.20 per cent. "US Fed has signalled a rate cut in September, reflecting in the decline in US treasury yields and the dollar index, which has led to a rally in global markets despite there being no indication of the size of cuts. Indian markets hit a new high led by a change in FII stance to positive from negative, along

with continued strong DII inflows. "Although the overall trend was positive, large caps outperformed on account of healthy earnings and relatively fair valuation compared to broader markets. IT, Realty, FMCG and Consumption gained on account of improved outlook," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. Among the indices, metal surged 2.03 per cent, realty (1.69 per cent), consumer durables (1.43 per cent), IT (1.37 per cent), teck (1.11 per cent) and commodities (0.91

per cent). Telecommunication and services were the laggards. In Asian markets, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Seoul and Tokyo ended lower. European markets were trading mostly lower. The US markets ended with significant gains on Friday. "Markets kicked off the week on a positive note, gaining over half a per cent, driven by a dovish stance from the US Fed," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,944.48 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.08 per cent to USD 79.87 a barrel. "Optimism was the order of the day as dovish statements by the Fed Chair last week sparked positivity across the globe and also at Dalal Street. Markets shrugged off the recent sluggish trading sessions, as the US Fed chairperson, last week, pointing towards a likely rate cut fuelled a major rally that saw Nifty close above the crucial 25k mark.

RBI constantly working on policies, platforms to make India's financial system strong: Guv Das

PTI n BENGALURU

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said the central bank is constantly working on policies, systems, and platforms to make the country's financial sector strong, nimble and customer centric. Addressing the RBI@90 Global Conference on 'Digital Public Infrastructure and Emerging Technologies', Das recalled various initiatives being taken by the RBI with regard to Unified Lending Interface (ULI) and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). The Governor also said that the UPI system has the potential to evolve into a cheaper and quicker alternative to the available channels of cross-border remittances and "a beginning can be made with small value personal remittances as it can be quickly implemented." According to the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament in July, remittances to India, the second largest source of external financing after service exports, are projected to grow at 3.7 per



cent to USD 124 billion in 2024 and at 4 per cent to reach USD 129 billion in 2025. Das said the Reserve Bank of India is looking forward to the journey towards RBI@100 with considerable optimism. "We are constantly working on devising policies, approaches, systems and platforms that will make our financial sector stronger, nimble and customer centric," he said. Speaking on the theme of DPI and emerging technologies, he said over the last decade, the traditional banking system has undergone an unprecedented technological

transformation. By all indications, this process is likely to become even more intense in the coming years, he added. He said DPI spurs market innovation by reducing transaction costs, democratising access, maintaining competition through interoperability, and attracting private capital. Referring to the country's experience, Das said "DPI has enabled India to achieve, in less than a decade, levels of financial inclusion that would have otherwise taken several decades or more". Digital Public Infrastructure refers to basic technology

systems, created mainly in the public sector, which are openly available to users and other developers. India's DPI journey is a unique model, wherein the base technical infrastructure is built, operated and managed in the public sector, while the private sector accesses the DPI to create innovative customer facing services. "The advantage of developing DPI in the public sector is that typically the private sector would be averse to capital investment to create infrastructure with uncertain returns," the Governor said and added that privately created infrastructure may not also be amenable to democratised access or interoperability. The Governor talked about India's advancements in the field of digitalisation of the financial services. He further said Unified Payments Interface (UPI), a real-time payment system, has emerged as a robust, cost-effective and portable retail payment system and is attracting active interest across the globe.

Alembic Pharma gets USFDA nod for generic drug

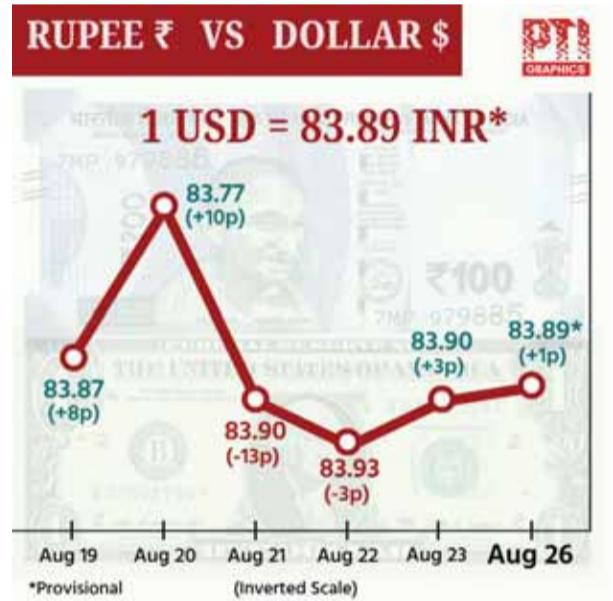
PTI n NEW DELHI

Alembic Pharmaceuticals on Monday said it has received approval from the US health regulator to market a generic medication used to treat moderate-to-severe psoriasis of the scalp. The company has received final approval from the US Food & Drug Administration (USFDA) for its abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) for Betamethasone Valerate Foam, the drug firm said in a statement. The approved ANDA is therapeutically equivalent to the reference listed drug product Luxiq Foam (0.12 per cent) of Norvium Bioscience, LLC (Norvium). Betamethasone valerate foam is a topical corticosteroid indicated for relief of the inflammatory and pruritic manifestations of corticosteroid-responsive dermatoses of the scalp.

Rupee settles on flat note, closes 1 paisa higher at 83.89 against US dollar

PTI n MUMBAI

The rupee pared its initial gains and settled for the day on a flat note, rising just 1 paisa to 83.89 (provisional) against the American currency on Monday, weighed down by a surge in crude oil prices. Forex traders said the Indian rupee gained in morning trade on rise in domestic markets and a weak US Dollar. However, a surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains for the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.83 and touched an intra-day high of 83.80 against the US dollar and a low of 83.91. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.89 (provisional), 1 paisa higher than its previous close. On Friday, the rupee traded in a narrow range and settled higher by 3 paise at 83.90 against the American currency.



Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.07 per cent higher at 100.78. The US dollar had witnessed a sharp correction and fell to the lowest level since July 2023, on dovish comments by Fed Chair Jerome Powell at the Jackson

Hole Symposium. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on risk in global risk sentiments amid dovish Fed speak and rising expectations of a rate cut by the Fed in September. However, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and rising crude oil prices may cap sharp upside," said Anuj Choudhary -- Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Meanwhile, Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.92 per cent to USD 79.75 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex advanced 611.90 points, or 0.75 per cent, to close at 81,698.11 points. The Nifty rose 187.45 points, or 0.76 per cent, to 25,010.60 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Friday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,944.48 crore, according to exchange data.

Finance Minister-led inter-ministerial panel meets Singapore president, discusses boosting ties

PTI n SINGAPORE

Inter-ministerial delegation led by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday met Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam and discussed boosting partnership between the two countries. Both sides discussed boosting the India-Singapore Strategic Partnership by focusing on key areas like digitalisation, green initiatives and skill development. "FM Smt. @nsitharaman appreciated President Mr. @Tharman_S for being a strong proponent of multilateralism through his seminal contribution to developing far-reaching reforms that can enable governments and institutions to deal with 21st century challenges," the finance ministry said in a post on X. During the meeting, Sitharaman expressed gratitude to the Singapore



President for his invaluable contributions as a member of the G20 Expert Group on Strengthening MDBs during India Presidency in 2023. Along with Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav were present for the meeting. India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable is a unique mechanism established to set a new agenda for India-Singapore bilateral relations. Its inaugural meeting was held in New Delhi in September 2022. This meeting will enable both sides to review various aspects of their strategic partnership and identify new avenues to further elevate and broaden it. The delegation also met Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong earlier during the day. During the interactions, the leaders discussed the need to strengthen partnership and broaden cooperation between the two countries.

Over 23 lakh Govt employees under NPS get option to choose unified pension scheme

PTI n NEW DELHI

The just-announced Unified Pension Scheme for central government employees will be available only for those who are currently subscribers of the New Pension Scheme (NPS), including retirees. The new scheme guarantees employees 50 per cent of their average basic pay over the last 12 months before retirement as a pension for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years against a market returns linked payout under the NPS. According to the scheme approved by the Union Cabinet, the pension will be proportionate for a lesser service period of up to a minimum of 10 years. Also, assured pension of Rs 10,000 per month on superannuation



after a minimum of 10 years of service. The scheme has been brought out to address the concerns of government employees over NPS, which came into effect from January 1, 2004. Under the old pension scheme (OPS), effective before January 2004,

employees got 50 per cent of their last drawn basic pay as pension. Unlike the old pension scheme, OPS is contributory in nature, wherein employees will be required to contribute 10 per cent of their basic salary and dearness allowance while the employer's

contribution (the central government) will be 18.5 per cent. Under the NPS, the employer contribution is 14 per cent, and the employee contribution is 10 per cent. However, the eventual payout depends on the market returns on that corpus, mostly invested in government debt. Employees, under the OPS, were not required to make any contribution. They, however, contributed to the General Provident Fund (GPF). The accumulated amount, along with interest, was paid to the employee at the time of retirement. As the NPS was less attractive than the OPS, several non-BJP-ruled states decided to go back to the old pension scheme, which offered a DA-linked benefit.

GST taxpayers without valid bank a/c to be barred from filing GSTR-1 from September 1

PTI n NEW DELHI

GST taxpayers who do not furnish bank account details to GST authorities will be barred from filing outward supply return GSTR-1 from September 1, GST Network (GSTN) has said in an advisory. As per GST Rule 10A, a taxpayer is required to furnish details of a valid bank account within a period of 30 days from the date of grant of registration, or before furnishing the details of outward supplies of goods or services or both in Form GSTR-1or using Invoice Furnishing Facility (IFF), whichever is earlier. "From 1st September, 2024 this rule is being enforced. Therefore, for the tax period August-2024 onwards, the taxpayer will not be able



furnish GSTR-01/IFF as the case may be, without furnishing the details of a valid bank account in their registration details on GST portal," GSTN said in an advisory dated August 23. The GST Council in its meeting in July last year, had approved amendment to Rule 10A to strengthen the registration process and to effectively deal with the menace of fake and fraudulent registrations in

goods and services tax (GST). As per the amendment, a registered taxpayer was required to furnish the details of bank account having his name and PAN within 30 days of grant of registration or before filing of statement of outward supply in Form GSTR-1/IFF (invoice furnishing facility), whichever is earlier. In the advisory, the GSTN asked all the taxpayers who have not yet furnished the details of a valid bank account information in their registration details by visiting the GST portal. "...In absence of a valid bank account details in GST registration, you will not be able to file GSTR-1 or IFF as the case may be, from August 2024 return period," the GSTN advisory added.

India offers huge opportunity, economic trajectory fantastic: Infosys CEO

PTI n NEW DELHI

India offers a "huge opportunity" for Infosys, CEO Salil Parekh said, noting that the country's "fantastic" economic trajectory has set it apart from the rest of the world. The Bengaluru-headquartered IT company has clocked "strong growth" in its India business in the first quarter of this fiscal year, although revenue from the market is relatively small. "India is a huge opportunity... The growth that we are seeing for different types of work across Indian environment is massive, and we are very much part of making sure that we engage both with private sector companies and with Government agencies," Parekh told PTI.

Sebi issues notice to Paytm on ESOPs given to CEO Sharma; firm says disclosure already made

PTI n NEW DELHI

Market regulator Sebi has issued notice to fintech firm One97 Communications, which owns the Paytm brand, in the March 2024 quarter on employee stock options given to its MD and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma, according to the company filing on Monday. In response to a query from stock exchanges, Paytm said the notice is not a new development, and it is in regulatory contact with the market regulator to make required representations. According to Paytm's financial year 2024 annual



result filing, it had issued 2.1 crore employee stock options (ESOP) to Sharma in the financial year 2022. Sebi had issued a show cause notice to Paytm on ESOP issued to Sharma. "This is not a new development, as the Company had already made relevant disclosures on this matter in its financial results for the quarter and year

ended March 31, 2024, as well as the quarter ended June 30, 2024. The Company is in regular communication with the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and making necessary representations regarding this matter," Paytm said in response to a stock exchange query. The disclosure made on May 22 and July 19 said that Paytm has submitted its preliminary response and is in the process of seeking further information from the regulator in this regard. "Based on an independent legal opinion obtained by the management, it believes that the Company is compliant with the relevant regulations.

India adds record 15 GW solar capacity in Jan-June: Report

PTI n NEW DELHI

India has registered record solar installations of about 15 GW during the first half of 2024 as "developers raced" to complete delayed projects, a report by Mercom Capital said. The country added 3.89 GW of solar capacity during January-June 2023, the US-based research firm said in its latest report. "In the first half, solar installations in India reached 15 GW, surpassing all previous years records, posting an increase of 282 per cent compared to 1H 2023," the report titled 'India Solar Market Update' said. The record installations were registered as developers raced



to commission the previously delayed projects, it said. As of June 2024, India's

cumulative installed solar capacity stood at 87.2 GW, of which the utility-scale

projects accounted for nearly 87 per cent, and rooftop solar over 13 per cent. Solar energy accounted for 19.5 per cent of India's installed power capacity and over 44 per cent of the total installed renewable energy capacity. The average cost of large-scale solar projects was down by almost 26 per cent year-on-year and 2 per cent quarter-on-quarter. The year "2024 is shaping up to be a breakout year for India's solar industry, with an impressive first half. "However, to ensure that the strong pipeline of projects and ramped-up tender activity translate into timely installations, it is critical that we tackle the component

supply and grid connectivity challenges with urgency so we can meet the 280 GW target by 2030," Raj Prabhukar, CEO of Mercom Capital Group, said. In 1H 2024, a total of 41.4 GW of tenders were announced. The tendered capacity issued during the period increased 51 per cent from 27.5 GW in 1H 2023. In the first half of 2024, about 31.8 GW of projects were auctioned, up 321 per cent from 7.6 GW in 1H 2023. Mercom Capital specialises in providing market intelligence on energy storage, smart grid technology and solar energy, in addition to offering advisory services on emerging markets and strategic decision-making.

Players from 13 countries to compete in junior badminton meet



Abhishek Kanpala and Prakriti Bharath will lead the Indian boys and girls respectively against participants from 13 countries in the Late Sushant Chipalkatti Yonex Sunrise India Junior International Grand Prix Badminton Tournament, starting here from Tuesday.

A total 280 players from 13 countries including India, USA, UAE, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal, Malaysia, Switzerland, England, Taipei, Iran will be seen in action during this event.

Para-athletes laud Svayam, PCI for transportation accessibility

Accessibility organisation Svayam, which is partnering the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI), has been lauded by top para-athletes like table tennis player Bhavina Patel for making transportation accessible for them during their stay in the national capital before heading to Paris for the Paralympics starting on Wednesday.

overall experience and performance," she said in a press release issued by PCI. Para discus thrower Sakshi Kasana also appreciated the organisation, which started as an online portal providing information on policies, laws, and healthcare before expanding its focus to promote "Accessibility For All".

Prannoy takes break to recover from impact of chikungunya

Seasoned Indian shuttler HS Prannoy on Monday said he is taking a break from the sport to allow his body to fully recover from the effects of chikungunya, which had adversely impacted his performance at the Paris Olympics.



Prannoy, however, did not provide a time line for his recovery or mentioned the tournaments he has withdrawn from. The Kerala shuttler, who won the world championship bronze in 2023, had been ravaged by a spate of illnesses, including a chronic stomach disorder and a nagging back injury.

Swimmer Ali makes Paralympics a year after losing lower leg in shark attack while snorkeling

The first step for swimmer Ali Truwit was overcoming her newfound fear of the open place she had always felt safe - the water. Because the sound of water, any sound involving water, instantly triggered flashbacks to the day she swam for her life after being bitten by a shark. She and a friend were snorkeling in the ocean off Turks and Caicos on May 24, 2023, when a shark charged and bit Truwit's lower left leg. Bleeding and with the shark circling, Truwit went into competitive swim mode and raced 75 yards toward the safety of the boat.

To reclaim her love of the water, she went to the family's backyard pool. She waded up to her waist, fought off fear and took back control. The plunge not only started her path toward healing but to Paris for the Paralympics. "I love comeback stories," said the 24-year-old from Darien, Connecticut, who qualified for Paris in the 100 free, 400 free and the 100 back. "I've definitely relied on other people's comeback stories to help me hold on to what feels like a bold and unrealistic hope - of fighting off a shark and surviving and losing a limb and making the Paralympics all in a year.



Her itinerary for that summer involved fun and adventure before starting work at a consulting firm. Truwit had just graduated from Yale after a career in the pool in which she was a four-

year letter winner. She kicked things off by running a marathon with her mom on Mother's Day. Next on the list: joining friends for some sun on the beaches in Turks and Caicos. She went snorkeling with Yale teammate and good friend Sophie Pilkinton in an area not known for sharks.

foot right now?" Truwit said. "It was a really hard image for me. But you move immediately into action." Stay calm. Remain conscious. Just get to the boat. That's all she focused on as she and Pilkinton sprinted through the water, intensely aware the shark was still there. Once on the boat, Pilkinton applied a tourniquet to slow the bleeding. Truwit was later airlifted to a trauma hospital in Miami for two surgeries to fight infections. She was transported to a hospital in New York, where on her 23rd birthday, she underwent a transbilial - below-the-knee - amputation. "A lot of dark days," she said. "But I'm alive and I almost wasn't." The Truwit family has a mantra - "Work works." That's why Truwit went to rehab even on days when she didn't feel good or was sad.

HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Corporate Office: 167-169, 2nd floor, Near Little Mount Metro Station, Saidapet, Chennai - 600015 Regional Office - 101-B, 1st Floor, NRK Business Park, Vijaynagar, Indore(MP) - 452010 PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION CUM SALE (APPENDIX - IV A) (RULE 8(6))

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF ONLINE E-AUCTION SALE: - 1. The Property is being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS, WHATEVER THERE & WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS". As such sale is without any kind of warranties & indemnities. 2. Particulars of the property / assets (viz. extent & measurements specified in the E-Auction Sale Notice has been stated to the best of information of the Secured Creditor and Secured Creditor shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission. Actual extent & dimensions may differ. 3. E-Auction Sale Notice issued by the Secured Creditor is an invitation to the general public to submit their bids and the same does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the Secured Creditor. Interested bidders are advised to peruse the copies of title deeds with the Secured Creditor and to conduct own independent enquiries/ due diligence about the title & present condition of the property / assets and claims / dues affecting the property before submission of bids. 4. Auction/bidding shall only be through "online electronic mode" through the website https://www.banksauctions.com. Or Auction provided by the service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited, bid amount and coordinate the entire process of auction through the e-auction platform. 5. The bidders may participate in e-auction for bidding from their place of choice. Internet connectivity shall have to be ensured by bidder himself. Secured Creditor / service provider shall not be held responsible for the internet connectivity, network problems, system crash down, power failure etc. 6. For details, help, procedure and online bidding on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the Service Provider M/S C1 India Pvt Ltd., Plot No- 68, 3rd floor Sector 44 Gurgaon Haryana - 122003 (Contact No. 7291981124, 25, 26) Support Email - Support@banksauctions.com, Mr. Mithlesh Kumar, Mob. +91 70808 04466. Email: up@c1india.com. 7. For participating in the e-auction sale the intending bidders should register their name at https://www.banksauctions.com well in advance and shall get the user id and password. Intending bidders are advised to change only the password immediately upon receiving it from the service provider. 8. For participating in e-auction, intending bidders have to deposit a refundable EMD of 10% OF RESERVE PRICE (as mentioned above) shall be payable by interested bidders through Demand Draft/NEFT/RTGS in favor of "HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LTD." or on or before 23-September-2024. 9. The intending bidders should submit the duly filled in Bid Form (format available on https://www.banksauctions.com) along with the Demand Draft remittance towards EMD in a sealed cover addressed to the Authorized Officer Sameer Singh Branch Office: 295, 3rd Floor, Gulati Tower, Jabalpur Hospital Road, Nagpur, Madhya Pradesh, 482001 Mob No. 9584290575, latest by 03.00 PM on 23-September-2024. The sealed cover should be super scribed with "Bid for participating in E-Auction Sale (as mentioned above) for property of "Borrower". 10. After expiry of the last date of submission of bids with EMD, Authorized Officer shall examine the bids received by him and confirm the details of the qualified bidders (who have quoted their bids over and above the reserve price and paid the specified EMD with the Secured Creditor) to the service provider M/S eProcurement Technologies Limited to enable them to allow only those bidders to participate in the online inter-se bidding / auction proceedings at the date and time mentioned in E-Auction Sale Notice. 11. Inter-se bidding among the qualified bidders shall start from the highest bid quoted by the qualified bidders. During the process of inter-se bidding, there will be unlimited extension of "10" minutes each, i.e. the end time of e-auction shall be automatically extended by 10 Minutes each time if bid is made within 10 minutes from the last extension. 12. Bids once made shall not be cancelled or withdrawn. All bids made from the user id given to bidder will be deemed to have been made by him alone. 13. Immediately upon closure of E-Auction proceedings, the highest bidder shall confirm the final amount of bid quoted by him BY E-Mail both to the Authorised Officer, Sameer Singh Branch Office: Plot No.240, GRP Colony, Near Hotel Alanankar Palace, M.P Nagar zone II, Bhopal - 462011 and 295, 3rd Floor, Gulati Tower, Jabalpur Hospital Road, Nagpur Town, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, 482001 Mob No. 9584290575 and the Service Provider for getting declared as successful bidder in the E-Auction Sale proceedings. 14. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount (including EMD) on the same day of the sale, being knocked down in his favour and balance 75% of bid amount within 15 days from the date of sale by DD/Pay order/NEFT/RTGS/Cheq favouring HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LTD. 15. In case of default in payment of above stipulated amounts by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid (including EMD) will be forfeited and the property will be again put to sale. 16. At the request of the successful bidder, the Authorised Officer in his absolute discretion may grant further time in writing, for depositing the balance of the bid amount. 17. The Successful Bidder shall pay 1% of Sale price towards TDS (out of Sale proceeds) and submit TDS certificate to the Authorised Officer and the deposit the entire amount of sale price (after deduction of 1% towards TDS), adjusting the EMD within 15 working days of the acceptance of the offer by the authorized officer, or within such other extended time as deemed fit by the Authorised Officer, failing which the earnest deposit will be forfeited. 18. Municipal / Panchayat Taxes, Electricity dues (if any) and any other authorities dues (if any) has to be paid by the successful bidder before issuance of the sale certificate. Bids shall be made taking into consideration of all the statutory dues pertaining to the property. 19. Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful bidder only upon deposit of entire purchase price / bid amount and furnishing the necessary proof in respect of payment of all taxes / charges. 20. Applicable legal charges for conveyance, stamp duty, registration charges and other incidental charges shall be borne by the auction purchaser. 21. The Authorized officer may postpone / cancel the E-Auction Sale proceedings without assigning any reason whatsoever. In case the E-Auction Sale schedules is postponed to a later date before 30 days from the scheduled date of sale, it will be displayed on the website of the service provider. 22. The decision of the Authorised Officer is final, binding and unquestionable. 23. All bidders who submitted the bids, shall be deemed to have read and understood the terms and conditions of the E-Auction Sale and be bound by them. 24. For further details and queries, contact Authorised Officer, Sameer Singh- 9584290575, Rajesh Chakotiya- 9435571111, Vaibhav Shrivastava-9755225338, Ashish Singh- 9981998190. 25. This publication is also 30 (Thirty) days' notice to the Borrower/ Mortgagee/ Guarantors of the above said loan account pursuant to rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, about holding of auction sale on the above-mentioned date / place. Special Instructions / Caution: Bidding in the last minutes/seconds should be avoided by the bidders in their own interest. Neither HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LTD. nor the Service Provider will be responsible for any lapses/failure (Internet failure, Power failure, etc.) on the part of the bidder in such cases. In order to ward off such contingent situation, bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements / alternatives such as back-up power supply and whatever else required so that they are able to circumvent such situation and are able to participate in the auction successfully.

Focus on Suryakumar, Shreyas and Sarfaraz in Buchi Babu meet

PTI n COIMBATORE

India dasher Suryakumar Yadav will turn up for Mumbai in their Buchi Babu contest against TNCA XI, beginning here on Tuesday, with an aim to get his Test career back on track.

Shreyas Iyer, also part of Mumbai's squad, too will be looking to make a statement in the pre-season event, having last played a Test in February.

The star-studded Mumbai side will be captained by Sarfaraz Khan, who too will be jostling for space in a full strength Test squad when the home season begins next month despite a promising beginning against England earlier this year.

The likes of Virat Kohli, K L Rahul and Rishabh Pant, who were not available for different reasons over course of the five games against England, are expected to be available for the two Test series against Bangladesh beginning September 19 in Chennai.

The centre of attention in the round three of the Buchi Babu match undoubtedly will be Suryakumar, who recently led India to victory in his first series as T20 skipper. Not in the team's ODI plans for the



moment, the 33-year-old remains determined to play in all three formats. His sole Test appearance came against Australia in February 2023.

Since then, he has continued to flourish in white-ball cricket before taking up the T20 International captaincy duties for the Men in Blue.

Effectively, the Buchi Babu

outing will be a mere warm-up for Suryakumar and others in the mix, given they all will be part of the Duleep Trophy beginning September 5.

Suryakumar's last competitive outing in First-Class cricket came during the Duleep Trophy last year.

Playing for West Zone, Suryakumar managed only 71

runs in four innings at an average of just 17.75, with a top score of 52, while his side, led by Priyank Panchal, lost the final to South Zone by 75 runs.

Besides Surya, Sarfaraz and Shreyas will also be among the attractions in the Mumbai squad.

Sarfaraz, who made his Test debut earlier this year against

England, has been promising with the bat, managing 200 runs in five innings at an average of 50.00, including three half-centuries.

As for Iyer, he is yet to leave a mark in the longest format after 14 Tests, while since January 2023, he has only managed 187 runs in 12 innings at an average of only

17.00, with a top score of only 35.

Therefore, while there is no headache for Sarfaraz heading into this Buchi Babu meet, the upcoming domestic season holds more significance for Iyer, who will be leading Team D in the Duleep Trophy.

Mumbai's opponents TNCA XI will be led by R Sai Kishore, who was the leading wicket-taker in Ranji Trophy last season.

TEAMS (FROM)

TNCA XI: R Sai Kishore (c), Pradosh Ranjan Paul (vc), Mokit RS Hariharan, G Ajitesh, Indrajith Baba, Boopathi Vaishna Kumar, S Lokeshwar (wk), SR Athish (wk), R Sonu Yadav, P Vidyuth, S Lakshya Jain, S Ajith Ram, G Govinth, CV Achyuth, H Trilok Nag and V Yudheeswaran.

MUMBAI: Sarfaraz Khan (c), Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Akhil Herwadkar, Divyansh Saxena, Musheer Khan, Vedant Murkar, Siddhanth Addhatrao, Suryansh Shedje, Shams Mulani, Tanush Kotian, Himanshu Singh, Atharva Ankolekar, Roystan Dias, Mohit Avasthi, Sylvester Dsouza and Junaid Khan.



Australia name fit again Darcie Brown in T20 World Cup squad, Jonassen misses out

PTI n SYDNEY

Pacer Darcie Brown, who has recovered from her foot injury, was on Monday named in Australia's 15-member squad for the T20 World Cup even as the defending champions left out experienced spinner Jess Jonassen.

Brown, who pulled out of the tour of Bangladesh in March due to a foot injury, is now fully fit and will be joined by fellow pacer Tayla Vlaeminck.

"The pace duo of Tayla and Darcie is one we've been wanting to unleash for a while and is a real point of difference for us," selection chief Shawn Flegler said.

The team, which will be vying for a fourth consecutive T20 title, will be led by Alyssa Healy while Tahlia McGrath will be her deputy in the tournament beginning in the UAE on October 3.

"This is the first time in a long time we've had our entire contract list available for selection ahead of a World Cup and it's resulted in a really stable and balanced squad," Flegler said.

"It's the first time Alyssa will have the reins at a World Cup and we've already seen what her and Tahlia bring from a leadership perspective, so it's exciting for them to have this opportunity to lead their country on the biggest stage," Flegler added.

Left-arm spinner Sophie Molineux and Grace Harris have also recovered from their injuries.

Molineux was forced to pull out of The Hundred having

suffered an acute rib fracture after being struck by a ball while batting in the off season while Harris also missed the English franchise league due to a calf injury.

However, left-arm spinner Jonassen has been left out of the squad again despite being the joint highest wicket-taker for Delhi Capitals in the Women's Premier League and the third-highest wicket-taker in The Hundred earlier this month.

"Jess Jonassen is again unlucky to miss out but we've been impressed with the way she's bounced back and we'll continue to monitor her form ahead of the home summer," Flegler said.

She will miss a T20 World Cup for the first time since her debut in 2012, having featured in five tournament wins since then.

Rising star Phoebe Litchfield will play in her first World Cup and Flegler said she will be "a real x-factor" within an experienced squad.

Australia will play three T20Is against New Zealand next month in the run up to the T20 World Cup.

All-rounder Heather Graham, who won't travel to the UAE, will be the only addition to the squad for the series against New Zealand.

SQUAD: Alyssa Healy (c), Tahlia McGrath (vc), Darcie Brown, Ashleigh Gardner, Kim Garth, Grace Harris, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Sophie Molineux, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Wareham, Tayla Vlaeminck.

US Open 2024: Even players aren't sure who will be at their best on New York's hard courts

AP n NEW YORK

Tennis fans unable to decide who has the best shot at doing well at the U.S. Open have company as the year's last Grand Slam tournament is set to begin Monday. Even the players themselves aren't sure what to expect.

"We've seen people, all the time, surprise us every single week, every single tournament, every Slam. Sometimes there's no rhyme or reason why someone maybe does well," said Jessica Pegula, a six-time major quarterfinalist. "Sometimes it doesn't make any sense."

There is the usual uncertainty that comes in New York, thanks to the vagaries of injuries and the grind of a long season. One additional factor this time could be all of the surface-switching: Tennis at the Summer Olympics was played on courts at Roland Garros, also the French Open site. So players went from clay in

Paris to grass at Wimbledon, then back to clay, before shifting to hard courts before the U.S. Open.

"It's a strange year," British player Dan Evans said. "That's for sure."

Pegula, for one, handled that last transition just fine, going from the Olympics to a title at Toronto and a runner-up showing at Cincinnati. Her doubles partner in Paris, 2023 U.S. Open champion Coco Gauff, played in three Olympic events, exiting early in each, then lost her second match in Toronto and her first in Cincinnati.

"Changing surfaces, it's tough, not just on your body, but mentally. ... But it's part of the job, and we'll adjust," said Tommy Paul, who won a bronze medal in doubles with Taylor Fritz for the U.S. In Paris and had a 1-2 record in Montreal and Cincinnati. "Maybe there's one player or two players that are burned out from the (Olympic) experience. But other than that, for

the most part, everyone is pretty adjusted by now."

The woman who defeated Pegula in the Cincinnati final, No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, skipped the trip back to France for the 2024 Games but said she isn't all that convinced that

having - or not having - normal preparation necessarily will dictate results the next two weeks.

"Everyone who came here, they think they are ready to win. I think it's not about who is ready. You can be ready better" than the rest of the group," said

Sabalenka, a two-time champion at the Australian Open and runner-up to Gauff at last year's U.S. Open, "but at the end of the day, it's all about how hard are you ready to fight for it - especially on those days when you don't feel your best."

Another player not at the Olympics, Frances Tiafoe, reached the Cincinnati Open title match before losing to No. 1 Jannik Sinner, whose two positive steroids tests in March came to light less than a week ago.

Tiafoe, a 26-year-old from Maryland, finds the home crowds and high attention of the U.S. Open bring out his best, so he wanted to concentrate on getting ready for the site of his first Grand Slam semifinal in 2022.

"It's open for a lot of guys this year, for sure. ... It's always different in a Slam. The lights are a little brighter," he said. "We'll see what ends up happening. Personally, I just like where I'm at."

Then there are those such as defending U.S. Open champion Novak Djokovic, who won a gold medal at the Paris Games but didn't play a single hard-court tuneup event, or Carlos Alcaraz, the silver medalist whose only recent match on a hard court was a loss in Cincinnati.



Lydia Ko completes Cinderella-like story by winning British Open

AP n ST ANDREWS (SCOTLAND)

Lydia Ko covered her face with her hands and cried tears of joy.

An Olympic gold medal. Entry into the Hall of Fame. And now another major championship title - at the home of golf, no less. Summers don't come much better than that.

Ko completed what she described as a "Cinderella-like story" by breaking free from a logjam of world-class talent to win the Women's British Open by two strokes at St. Andrews on Sunday, securing a third major title - and a first in eight years. Just two weeks ago, the 27-year-old New Zealander took gold at the Olympic Games in Paris.

"This is almost too good to be true," Ko said.

She rolled in a left-to-right birdie putt at the storied 18th hole on the Old Course to shoot 3-under 69 - for 7 under overall - and then had to wait to finish ahead of top-ranked Nelly Korda, defending champion Lilia Vu and two-time champion Jiyai Shin. That quartet of past or present No. 1s shared the lead at one point down the stretch of an engrossing final round played mostly in cold, blustery and wet conditions before ending in sunshine.

Ko was waiting on the practice putting green not far from the 18th green, doing stretches while wearing ear muffs, when Vu lined up a 20-foot putt for birdie that needed to go in to force a playoff. It came up short, and Vu

ultimately made bogey to shoot 73 and drop to 5 under alongside Korda (72), Shin (74) and also Ruoning Yin (70) in a four-way tie for second place. Ko wept in the embrace of her caddy.

Ko qualified for the Hall of Fame by winning the gold medal in Paris on Aug. 10 and now has what many believe to be the ultimate prize in the sport - a major championship title at the home of golf.

Ko was asked what feels better: an Olympic gold medal, her first two majors, or winning a third at St. Andrews.

"It's kind of like saying, Do you like your mother better or your father better?" she said, eliciting laughter from the crowd around the 18th green. "They are all special in their own way."

Her last major came at the Chevron Championship in 2016. A year earlier, she won the Evian Championship as an 18-year-old prodigy.

Now, she's like a veteran - and still winning trophies.

Korda, seeking a second major title of a dominant 2024 containing six victories for the American, started the final round two shots back from Shin, the champion from 2008 and '12 and the overnight leader on 7 under. By her 10th hole, Korda was in the outright lead after three birdies in a four-hole stretch around the turn and before long she was two strokes clear as Shin and Vu toiled at the start of the back nine in miserable weather.

AP n CASTLE ROCK (US)

Adam Scott is playing in the Presidents Cup for the 11th straight time, the most of any player from the International team. That wasn't much of a surprise.

Neither were the six players for the American team.

The BMW Championship was the final tournament for six automatic qualifiers for the U.S. And International teams who will compete Sept. 27-30 at Royal Montreal.

The leading six players remained unchanged.

Scottie Scheffler, Xander Schauffele, Wyndham Clark, Collin Morikawa, Patrick Cantlay and newcomer Sahith Theegala qualified for the Americans. Sam Burns could have grabbed the sixth spot only if he had won. He finished one shot behind Keegan Bradley.

The six qualifiers for the International team were Hideki Matsuyama, Tom Kim, Sungjae Im, Jason Day, Scott

Presidents Cup teams get six automatic qualifiers with half teams still to be picked

and Byeong Hun An.

Corey Connors of Canada had a chance with a big finish at Castle Pines, but he closed with a 73 and tied for 22nd. The International team is based on the world ranking.

Jim Furyk and Mike Weir of Canada will announce their six captain's picks after the Tour Championship, and that's where the intrigue lies.

"I hope I didn't throw a huge wrench in everybody's plans," Bradley said, whose victory moved him to No. 10 in the U.S. Standings.

Bradley, 38, already is the youngest Ryder Cup captain since Arnold Palmer (34) was a playing captain in 1963. He also has PGA Tour titles in each of the last three years, and his win at the BMW



Championship moved him to No. 11 in the world ranking.

Burns moved to No. 7, followed by Tony Finau, Russell Henley, Bradley, Brian

Harman and Max Homa. Henley has never played in the Ryder Cup or Presidents Cup team.

Harman and Homa have not

been in good form for most of the summer. And then there is Justin Thomas, who has played for every U.S. Team since 2017. He is at No. 19, following a year in which he was the lowest-ranked player in the Ryder Cup standings when he was picked.

Thomas at least made it to the Tour Championship - the 30th and final spot - giving him a week to perform.

"I feel like I played well in some big tournaments this year. I just did it earlier in the season," Thomas said. "I know I'm playing well enough, but that's up to Jim and the rest of the captains and the guys on the team. My hope is that I get to Atlanta and I prove that I belong."

Weir would like to have Canadians on his side for the

home crowd. None qualified. Connors was at No. 7, followed by Cam Davis and Min Woo Lee of Australia, Christiaan Bezuidenhout, and three Canadians - Taylor Pendrith, Nick Taylor and Adam Hadwin.

Pendrith played in the last Presidents Cup. He led it together on the back nine to assure a spot at the Tour Championship next week.

"I want to be at East Lake. I want to be on the Presidents Cup badly. But I've had a great season, and if I didn't play great these last two weeks, I'd be OK with it," he said. "It would sting a little bit for sure, but to come out here and do it and perform under the pressure, it feels incredible. I can't wait to keep going."

Scott has played on every Presidents Cup team since 2003 - one year after Tom Kim was born - but has never been on a winning team. The 2003 matches ended in a tie in South Africa, and the Americans have won nine in a row.

Kvaratskhelia inspires Napoli to 1st win of Conte era with 3-0 victory over Bologna

AP n MILAN

Antonio Conte has Khvicha Kvaratskhelia back to his brilliant best and Napoli back to winning ways.

Kvaratskhelia set up one goal and scored the second as Napoli beat Bologna 3-0 on Sunday for the first Serie A win of the Conte era - and the team's first league victory since April 7.

Conte became Napoli's fifth coach in little more than a year when he was hired in June but his new team crumbled 3-0 at Hellas Verona in his first match back in Serie A.

"The punch in the face we got in Verona made us immediately understand that if we want to forget the past we have to stay in the center

of the ring, you give punches and you get them, but you have to keep standing," Conte said.

"I have a lot of faith in this group ... it was a tough week but we united even more, you won't get anywhere individually. These are my first three points with Napoli and I have great emotion. It is these feelings that push you to go further."

Napoli also lost Kvaratskhelia to a minor head injury in Verona but the Georgia winger was back on Sunday - despite also having recently returned from his home country after his wife gave birth to their first child this week.

It was a different team right from the start in Naples and Giacomo Raspadori almost scored in the opening



minute.

Kvaratskhelia hit the crossbar shortly before halftime with a looping header from the tightest of angles but Napoli didn't have to wait much longer for the first goal under Conte.

Giovanni Di Lorenzo started the move in first-half

stoppages, cutting inside from the right before passing to Kvaratskhelia, who played him a superb ball back, dinking it over the Bologna defense for Di Lorenzo to sweep into the far side of the net. And Kvaratskhelia got on the scoresheet himself in the 75th, racing downfield

from just inside the Bologna half and firing into the bottom left corner from the edge of the area, with the help of a slight deflection.

Kvaratskhelia celebrated by sucking his thumb in an apparent dedication to his newborn son.

Kvaratskhelia also had a hand in the third, in stoppage time. As he threaded the ball through to new signing David Neres, who rolled it across for Giovanni Simeone to slot past Lukasz Skorupski.

SURPRISE DEFEATS: Atalanta and Roma both fell to shock defeats.

Atalanta, which was one of only four sides to win on the opening weekend, had a penalty saved and hit the woodwork twice in a 2-1 loss at Torino.

Summer signing Mateo Retegui headed Atalanta into the lead in the 26th minute but Che Adams set up Ivan Ilic for the equalizer five minutes later and scored himself at the start of the second half.

Retegui and Charles De Ketelaere saw efforts come off the bar and Atalanta had an even better chance to level in stoppage time when it was awarded a penalty for a foul by Valentino Lazaro on Atalanta teenager Federico Cassa. Mario Pasalic stepped up but saw his spot kick saved by Torino goalkeeper Vanja Milinkovic-Savic.

Roma lost 2-1 at home to Empoli.

Fiorentina was jeered off the field after a drab 0-0 draw at home to newly promoted Venezia.