



**OPINION 6**  
DELHI SINKS IN CESSPOOL OF GOVERNMENT APATHY

**WORLD 8**  
'CHINA BEHIND 2021 CYBERATTACK ON GOVT AGENCY'

**MONEY 10**  
STOCK MARKETS RISE FOR 4TH DAY

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SINDHU STORMS INTO OLYMPICS SINGLES PRE-QUARTERFINALS  
11 SPORTS

## CM refutes Shah's alert claim on Wayanad tragedy



Rescue operation underway following landslides triggered by heavy rain in the hilly areas of Wayanad district, on Wednesday

PTI

**KUMAR CHELLAPAN ■**  
NEW DELHI/KOCHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that advance warnings on heavy rainfall in Kerala were issued to the State Government at least a week ahead of the deadly landslides in Wayanad that have left a trail of death and destruction. Meanwhile, the Kerala Government alleged the Central Government agencies like Meteorological Department, Geological Survey of India failed miserably in issuing early warnings about the rainfall and landslides that struck the Wayanad district. "On July 18, it was forecast that Kerala's western coast



would experience above-normal rainfall. On July 25, it was forecast that there would be heavy rain. On July 23 itself, eight teams of the NDRF were sent to the region," Shah said. He informed Parliament that the Centre had sent eight teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) on July 23 to assist the Kerala Government in the

eventuality of any disaster. "When the landslides struck Wayanad, the NDRF teams got the green signal from the Collector and relief operations were launched immediately," the Home Minister said. Shah said about six years ago, experts from IIT-Delhi had suggested relocating people from the landslide-affected areas, but their advice was not heeded to. Even as the death toll in Tuesday's massive landslides crossed the 200 mark by Wednesday evening, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, reacted to Shah's statement. "This is not the time for blame game. There are 91 people undergoing treatment in various hospitals in the district while 240 persons are

missing. My Government has put 8,107 people in 82 relief camps in the district. The Meteorological Department had not issued any red alert about the rainfall or landslides. The red alert was issued by the GSI at 6 am on Tuesday hours after the landslide at Mundakkai. The landslides occurred at 2 am and 4.30 am on Tuesday. The Central Water Commission, which is the agency responsible for issuing flood warning, did not issue any such warning," alleged Vijayan. He said though the Central agencies had forecast 404 mm rainfall for a period of 48 hours, the region recorded 572 mm rainfall during the period.

## Crackdown on coaching centres mooted in Delhi

**RAJESH KUMAR ■** NEW DELHI

After the tragic death of three IAS aspirants by drowning in the basement of Rau's IAS study centre in Old Rajinder Nagar area, the Delhi Government is planning to relocate coaching centres in Narela and Rohini and develop it as an education hub. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has formed a high-level committee headed by Chief Secretary to address issues related to the regulation of coaching centres. The committee will prepare an action plan for shifting coaching institutes from various places to well-planned areas. Amid the IAS aspirants' protest for fourth day in a row against civic authorities and 'coaching mafia' near the Rau's coaching centre, braving scorching heat with their Mains exams less than one and a half months away, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) Additional Commissioner Tariq Thomas on Wednesday admitted the civic body's responsibility in the death of three students, stating that there are serious structural issues, which need to be addressed. Interacting with the protesting students at UPSC coaching hub in old Rajinder Nagar, the senior civic body official said there can be no



A police personnel interacts with students during a protest over the deaths of three civil services aspirants due to drowning at a coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar area, in New Delhi, on Wednesday

Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

excuses for the incident and the agency should have done its duty better. Students who started their indefinite hunger strike on Tuesday ended it on Wednesday morning after their meeting with Thomas. Saxena has directed the Delhi Police Commissioner for cracking down on coaching institutes which take exorbitant rentals in cash transactions to evade tax. Besides, the Lieutenant Governor has directed that a portal be established, with Aadhar based log-in credentials of all coaching institutes in the city and the enrolled students. This would help create a transparent database which would help the Government in shaping the policy framework from time to time.

## Students' safety guidelines issued

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Wednesday issued guidelines for safety and security of school students in the aftermath of the Rajinder Nagar coaching centre flooding incident, which claimed the lives of three UPSC aspirants. According to the guidelines issued by the Directorate of Education (DoE), the schools — both private and government run — have to follow the provisions of Master Plan for Delhi, 2021 regarding use of basement in public buildings.



## Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh killed in Iran

**AP ■** BEIRUT

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed by a pre-dawn airstrike in the Iranian capital on Wednesday, Iran and the militant group said, blaming Israel for a shock assassination that risks escalating the conflict even as the US and other nations were scrambling to prevent an all-out regional war. Iran's supreme leader vowed revenge against Israel. There was no immediate comment from Israel, which has pledged to kill Haniyeh and other Hamas leaders over the group's October 7 attack on southern Israel. The strike came just after Haniyeh had attended the inauguration of Iran's new president in Tehran — and only hours after Israel targeted a top commander in Iran's ally Hezbollah in the Lebanese capital Beirut. The assassination of Hamas' top political leader was potentially explosive amid the region's volatile, intertwined conflicts — because of its target, its timing and the decision to carry it out in Tehran.

## Khedkar's IAS career over

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Wednesday cancelled a trainee Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Pujja Manorama Dilip Khedkar's candidature in the 2022 Civil Services Examination (CSE) and barred her from appearing for any future examinations of the commission, after finding she had violated rules by appearing for the exam more times than what was allowed. It said her provisional candidature for the CSE-2022 (Civil Services Examination-2022) has been "cancelled" and she has also been "debarred permanently" from all future UPSC examinations or selections. The UPSC had issued Khedkar a show-cause notice on July 18 for "fraudulently availing attempts beyond the permissible limit provided for in the Examination Rules by faking her identity". She was asked to submit her response to the notice by July 25, but she asked for further time till August 4. The UPSC allowed her till



## UPSC gets new chief

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday appointed former Health Secretary Preeti Sudan chairperson of the Union Public Service Commission after Manoj Soni resigned from the UPSC's top post early this month, according to an official order. Sudan, currently a member of the UPSC, will take charge on Thursday. A 1983-batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre, Sudan has served in various capacities.

3.30 pm on July 30 to make her submissions. According to a statement, the UPSC said it has examined the available records carefully and found her guilty of acting in contravention of the provisions of the CSE-2022 Rules. It said the 34-year-old was told to submit her response to the notice by July 25, but she requested for time till August 4. The UPSC granted her time till July 30 and made it clear that it was the "final opportunity" and "no further extension in time" would be allowed. She was also told that if no response is received by the deadline, UPSC would take action. "Despite extension in time allowed to her, she failed to submit her explanation within the prescribed time," the panel has said in the statement. "The UPSC has examined the available records carefully and found her guilty of acting in contravention of the provisions of the CSE-2022 Rules. Her provisional candidature for the CSE-2022 has been cancelled and she has also been debarred permanently from all the future Examinations/Selections of the UPSC," it said.



## Remove 18% GST on life, medical insurance: Gadkari to FM

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has requested Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to withdraw the 18 per cent goods and services tax (GST) on life and medical insurance premiums. In his letter to the Finance Minister, Gadkari raised concerns of the Nagpur Division Life Insurance Corporation Employees Union, which had submitted to him a memorandum regarding the issues of the insurance industry. Referring to the memo, the Minister said, "Levying GST on life insurance premiums amounts to levying tax on the

uncertainties of life. The Union feels that the person who covers the risk of life's uncertainties to give protection to the family should not be levied tax on the premium to purchase cover against this risk." Further, he said the main issue raised by the Union is related to the withdrawal of GST on life and medical insurance premiums. Both life insurance and medical insurance premiums are subject to an 18 per cent GST. "In view of the above, you are requested to consider the suggestion of withdrawal of GST on life and medical insurance premium on priority as it becomes cumbersome for senior citizens as per rules with due verification," he said.

## Caste jibe rocks Parliament

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Ruling party BJP and Opposition members engaged in a verbal duel on Wednesday leading to adjournments of Parliament over the BJP MP Anurag Thakur's remarks a day earlier in the Lok Sabha during his attack on Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi when the former stated "whose caste is not known talks about caste census". While Congress has moved a Privilege Motion against Thakur and the Prime Minister claiming that Narendra Modi encouraged a "serious breach of parliamentary privilege" by sharing Thakur's speech on social media, Opposition MPs slammed Thakur's speech as an insult to Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs. As the row erupted in Parliament, the Congress said the Gandhi family's caste is martyrdom but the BJP-RSS will never understand that. Upon protests from the Opposition benches, the Chair, Jagadambika Pal, assured MPs that the comments will be expunged, he said. The BJP flayed the Congress for escalating the caste row and said what's wrong in asking the



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi arrives for the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting, at the Parliament House in New Delhi, on Wednesday

Leader of Opposition's caste when he can ask about the castes of others, including the Government officials, judges and even journalists. In the same vein, however, the ruling party clarified that Anurag did not ask about Rahul's caste while speaking on the Union Budget in the Lok Sabha and wondered why the Leader of Opposition took an offence and called it an insult to him when none of the other members raised any objection to the former Union Minister's remarks. Congress MP Charanjit Singh Channi submitted a notice to move a Privilege Motion against Modi for having posted

on social media a video that allegedly contained portions of remarks made by Anurag that were expunged from the proceedings of the House by the Chair. Channi, a Dalit MP of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, submitted a notice to Speaker Om Birla seeking to move a Privilege Motion under Rule 222 of the Rules of Procedure against the Prime Minister. Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav said his party has been saying BJP people have no place in their hearts for SCs, STs, OBCs and Muslims. RJ/D's Manoj Jha said Thakur had given proof of his feudal mindset.

## Rain brings Delhi, NCR to a halt

**SAUMYA SHUKLA ■**  
NEW DELHI

Sudden rain brought the National Capital and adjoining regions, including Noida and Ghaziabad, to a standstill on Wednesday evening with water woes, traffic congestion and major power cuts albeit there was respite for the residents who had been reeling for days from the muggy and sweltering weather due to high humid levels in the city. While several areas suffered power cuts, loadshedding, at least 10 flights were diverted from the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport between 7.30 pm and 8pm. The city has been put on a red alert and the National Flash Flood Guidance Bulletin has included Delhi in its list of 'areas of concern'.



A woman being assisted by a police official while wading through a waterlogged road during rain near Pusa Road area, in New Delhi, on Wednesday

PTI

Due to the moderate to heavy rain lashing whole of Delhi and its adjoining areas of Noida, Gurugram and Ghaziabad, commuters witnessed traffic snarls on large stretches of road while

going back to their homes from work due to waterlogging in several places including Chirag Delhi, Saket, Sainik Farms, Qutub Minar metro station, Chatta Rail Chowk, Minto

Bridge, ITO, Janpath, Karol Bagh, Gaffar Market, Nauroji Nagar, Pant Marg, Nigam Bodh Ghat, Connaught Place and Mayur Vihar. Rain on Saturday evening led to flooding in the basement of the Rau's coaching centre which claimed the life of three IAS aspirants, rain on Wednesday caused waterlogging yet again outside the institute. Local MLA Durgesh Pathak reached the site to make sure that the water is pumped out of the low-lying area. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena also took to social media and said, "Have cautioned all officers to remain alert in light of the ongoing heavy downpour in Delhi. Apart from ensuring minimum inconvenience to people,

they are advised to specifically address issues at sites prone to waterlogging, including coaching centres. The Delhi Traffic Police issued an advisory to the commuters in a series of social media post, "Traffic is affected in the carriageway from Moolchand towards Chirag Delhi due to water logging at Chirag Delhi. Kindly plan your journey accordingly," it said. It also advised to plan one's journey keeping in mind the waterlogging at places, including Railway Under Bridge, Ram Bagh Road, Azad Market, and Anuvrat Marg. Residents in several parts of the city also witnessed power cuts including Sainik Farms, Patel Chowk, Kalkaji and Laxmi Nagar among others.

## Lord Shiva devotees



Kanwariyas or Lord Shiva devotees carry holy water during the 'Kanwar Yatra' in the month of 'Shravan', in New Delhi, on Wednesday

Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer



## Ensure increase in GSDP contribution from animal husbandry and dairy: CM to officers

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that the contribution of animal husbandry and dairy in the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) should be increased from existing three percent to five percent in next three years. The CM reviewed the Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries and Sugarcane development departments at the Secretariat on Wednesday.

He said that resources required for increasing GSDP in the field of animal husbandry and dairy development will be provided by the State government and directed the officers to prepare an action plan for the purpose. He also directed the officers for building one model veterinary hospital in every district. Dhami said special focus should be paid towards innovation along with the successful implementation of the government schemes. He said that setting up of Goat valley, Poultry valley and Broiler farm have proved helpful in increasing the income of animal breeders in the state. While reviewing the Fisheries department, the CM



said that production of trout fish should be promoted in the mountainous areas. He said that the officers should ensure that the farmers get the benefit of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana.

Dhami said that fish ponds should be constructed in the State by forming clusters. In the meeting the CM directed the officers to ensure that the sugar mills are brought of losses. "Work should be done towards modernization of sugar mills, increasing their efficiency and capacity. It should be ensured that the sugarcane price is paid

to the farmers on time," he said. Cabinet Minister Saurabh Bahuguna said that a massive campaign for animal vaccination is going on in the State. He added that veterinary services are being provided at the doorstep of livestock owners through mobile veterinary units.

Chief Secretary Radha Raturi, additional Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan, Principal Secretary RL Sudhanshu, Secretary BVR Purushottam, Special Secretary Parag Madhukar Dhakate and others attended the meeting.

## U'khand administration wakes up after Delhi coaching centre tragedy

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In response to the recent tragic death of three IAS aspirants due to flooding in a Delhi coaching institute, the Uttarakhand government formed a six member committee in each district for safety audit of all coaching centres. This decision was taken as per the order of the Urban Development minister Prem Chand Agarwal on Wednesday. These committees will have to submit their reports to the State administration within two weeks.

Agarwal said that this directive aims to identify and rectify any irregularities that might pose a threat to students' safety. The recent incident in Delhi underscored the critical need for stringent safety standards in educational facilities. Agarwal emphasised the necessity of ensuring such a calamity does not recur in Uttarakhand. He stated that officials must

not hesitate to take strict action against operators of coaching centres failing to meet safety standards.

The additional secretary of the State administration Atar Singh issued an order regarding the same stating that a five-member committee has been formed in all districts to conduct thorough inspections and to enforce appropriate measures. The committee will evaluate coaching centres based on six key safety criteria. This comprehensive approach is designed to ensure that all coaching centres adhere to necessary safety regulations, providing a secure environment for students, the order stated.

In Dehradun, numerous coaching centres operate out of small rooms, houses and other buildings not designed with adequate safety measures. Areas like

Karnpur and East Canal Road have become hubs for coaching centres preparing students for UPSC examinations, banking exams and other subjects including Science and English.

These centres attract hundreds of youths from mountainous regions but their locations in narrow, congested areas pose significant risks. Access for ambulances or fire brigade vehicles is often impossible in such centres. Most of these coaching centres do not adhere to safety standards, posing a serious risk to the lives of hundreds of students in case of emergencies. Similar situation prevails in many other cities and towns of the State.

## Increase compensation for disaster affected families of Uttarakhand: Bhatt

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Rajya Sabha MP and president of Uttarakhand BJP, Mahendra Bhatt has demanded that the compensation to disaster affected people of Uttarakhand should be increased. In his address in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, Bhatt drew attention of the house on the tough geographical conditions of Uttarakhand and its sensitivity towards natural disasters. He said that the compensation to the affected people for the mountainous areas under the national disaster management authority should be increased. Bhatt also requested that the States should be given the right to amend the norms of the compensation granted for landslides, floods and earthquakes. He said that he represents Uttarakhand, where it is a major challenge to rehabilitate people affected by natural disasters. Bhatt said that compensation amount

given to the affected people is very less due to which they fail to get justified economic assistance. He said that the houses in the mountainous areas are



constructed with stones and mud and have a unique architecture but they are not considered Pucca houses due to which they are deprived of adequate compensation. Bhatt also raised the issue of mobile and internet connectivity in the house. He demanded that new mobile towers should be constructed to bring all the villages of Uttarakhand under the internet connectivity.

## Two Nepali men arrested for killing man

PNS ■ UTTARKASHI

The police arrested two Nepali men on charges of killing a man Girvir Singh in Mori, Uttarkashi. The officials informed that the deceased's wife Pyari Devi registered a complaint on July 26 stating that her husband had gone to Polhadi Tok to work on their field when two men allegedly killed him and disposed of his body in the Kedarganga River. His body was recovered from the river on July 25. Under the investigation led by Purola SHO Mohan Singh Kathait, the police teams conducted a thorough investigation



using technical support such as phone Girvir managed to escape but was

chased down and caught near the Kharsadi bridge by the accused. As per the accused, they struck him on the head with a wood, causing him to fall unconscious and threw him into the Kedarganga River. They also threw all of his belongings in the river. The police recovered the deceased's pants from the possession of the accused, the officials said. Commending the police team for solving the case and apprehending the culprits, the Uttarkashi SP Arpan Yaduvanshi awarded the team a cash reward of Rs 5,000.

call records and location data. This led to the arrest of two Nepali-origin suspects, Veer Bahadur and Prem Bahadur late on Tuesday. During interrogation, the accused revealed that the deceased had forcefully entered their tent in Polhadi Tok on July 24 with malicious intent, leading to a physical altercation.

**कार्यालय नगर निगम, देहरादून**

पत्रांक :- 516 / सांनिधि / नानि / देहरादून / 2024-25 दिनांक :- 30.07.2024

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

नगर निगम देहरादून वर्ष 2024-25 में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत निम्नांकित निर्माण कार्य की ई-निविदा (सिंगल बिड) के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन बैबसाईट [www.nagarinagamdehradun.com](http://www.nagarinagamdehradun.com) पर दिनांक 19.08.2024 को अपराह्न 4.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। सम्बन्धित कार्य में दस फर्मों को इस हेतु प्राथमिकता दी जायेगी। उक्त कार्य की निविदा दिनांक 31.07.2024 को पूर्वाह्न 11.00 बजे से दिनांक 10.08.2024 को अपराह्न 4.00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन डाउनलोडिंग के लिए उक्त वेबसाईट पर उपलब्ध होगी।

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नगर आयुक्त  
नगर निगम, देहरादून

### Ace chef Rajeev's culinary journey from Rishikesh to North Carolina

**Rajeev Chauhan**

string of leading hotels, including Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace in Udaipur.

"After acquiring experiences in the nuanced art of special cooking, I dared to create my own recipes. The most famous of them is Molecular Gastronomy. It became quite popular in Dubai. Every guest who would visit Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor Restaurant started ordering for Molecular dishes," he said.

Queried on what Molecular Dish actually is, the eminent chef said

in honour of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi held at Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi. "Being a member of the culinary delegates flying outside India for doing special VIP events is something I treasure. In India too, I was chosen to participate in a special VIP event for the then chief minister of Jammu & Kashmir. Besides, I was one of the chefs on a special invite in Hilton Iru Fushi at Maldives to do special events for important delegates. These are wonderful moments of my life," he said.

Dwelling on the world-wide appreciation of his culinary invention Molecular Gastronomy, he said, "This, of course, proved to be a great morale booster for me. It was something new. While working under Sanjeev Kapoor, I have learnt culinary details and in-depth hidden recipes."

As far as awards and accolades bestowed upon him are concerned, he was a member of the team which won the Maggy Awards 2024. He was a member of the Bombay brasserie team that won the best caterer awards 2022. He was adjudged the best employee of the year of Lalit Hotel Udaipur in 2012. Plus, he was felicitated with the Gold Award for Signature By Sanjeev Kapoor Restaurant in 2017.

Speaking highly of the originality and many-sidedness of his culinary skill, Sanjeev Kapoor said that Rajeev is well-versed with current culinary trends. "He was the favorite chef of all the guests who visited my restaurant in Dubai. He is out and out a perfectionist and knows his job very well. I am sure he will rock wherever he goes," he said.

that Molecular Gastronomy is a sub-discipline of food science that seeks to investigate the physical and chemical transformations of ingredients that occur in cooking.

Asked to recount his experiences as a leading chef catering to the culinary preferences of the VVIPs, Chauhan said that he had been flown along with Padmashri awarded celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor to serve VVIP lunch and dinner hosted by the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohammed Bin Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan

Before landing in the US, he worked as Chef De partie in Taj Dubai for two years at Bombay brasserie and at Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor Restaurant at Hotel Melia Dubai. He, however, began his culinary career at a hotel in Amritsar and worked for a

### पंजाब नैशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank E-Auction Sale Notice

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**E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with provision to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.** Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical/symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of dues due to the Bank/Secured creditor from the respective borrower(s) and Guarantor (s). The Reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

**SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS**

Lot No.	Name of The Branch Name of the Account Name & Addresses of The Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/Owner's Name (Mortgagors of Property (ies))	(A) Dt. of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI Act 2002 (B) Outstanding Amount as on (C) Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act 2002 (D) Nature of Possession Symbolic/Physical/Constructive	(A) Reserve Price (B) EMD (C) Last Date of deposit of EMD (D) Bid Increase Amount	DATE & TIME OF AUCTION	Details of The Encumbrances Known To The Secured Creditors
1.	<b>Branch: Dhakrni Dehradun</b> Ms Fiski Devi W/o Sh Ram Singh (Mother Legal Heir of late Surender Singh) Add. VIII Chakhood PO Kalsi Gate, Distt. Dehradun. Ms Nisha Raji W/o Late Surender Singh (Wife & for on behalf of minor son Legal Heir of Late Surender Singh) Add. Ward no. 2 New Adarsh Vihar, Saharanpur Road, GIC Herbertpur, Dehradun. Ms Savita Devi W/o Late Surender Singh (Wife & for on behalf of Aditya Chauhan Minor son Legal Heir of late Surender Singh) & Borrower: Add. Vill Kota Dimou, PO Dimou via Koti Colony, Dehradun 248165, Add: Ward no. 2, New Adarsh Vihar, Saharanpur Road, GIC Herbertpur, Dehradun., Mr. Thepa Ram Tomar S/o Bhajan Singh (Guarantor) Add: Ward no. 2, New Adarsh Vihar, Saharanpur Road, GIC Herbertpur, Dehradun. vAdd: 92 ka Ward 5, Vikas nagar Distt. Dehradun	All that property comprising of land and building upon bearing khata no. 706 (fashi 1417 to 1422), khasra no. 245 min & property no. 676 area measuring 139.77 sq.mtrs or 0.0139 hect. out of measuring 139.77 sq.mtrs or 0.0139 hect. out of that 80 sq.mtrs. consisting of three rooms, one kitchen, one toilet, one bathroom and one veranda 11 year old construction, situated at Mauza Fatehpur (Ward no. 2, Adarsh Vihar nagar panchayat saharanpur road, Herbertpur) Pargana Pachwadon, Tehsil Vikasnagar, Distt Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Registered at Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 1728, Pages 379 to 408 at serial No. 2156 dated on 19.03.2016 at SRO-II Vikasnagar. Bounded and Butted as under:- North: 20 ft i.e. 6.09 mt. wide rasta, SM 32 ft. South: land of Sh. Sanjay Garg, SM 32 ft. East: Land of Sh. Mangal etc, SM 47 ft. West: Land of other, SM 47 ft. (As per title deed Ownership Sh. Surender Singh S/o Sh. Ram Singh Residence: ward no. 2, Adarsh Vihar Nagar Panchayat Saharanpur road, Herbertpur	(A) 16.03.2024 (B) Rs. 17,59,235.86 © 30.05.2024 (D) Symbolic Possession	(A) Rs. 37,00,000/- (B) Rs. 3,70,000/- (C) 05.09.2024 Up to 05.00 PM (D) Rs. 0.50 Lakh	06.09.2024 From 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM	Not Known
2.	<b>Branch: Clock Tower Race Course Dehradun.</b> Borrower/Mortgagor: Smt.Sunita Negi Vasudev W/o Sh. Praveen Vasudev, Add.1100 Nalapani Road, Dehradun 248001, Add 2. 36 Gurudwara Road, Karanpur, Dehradun-248001, Shri. Praveen Vasudev S/o Shri Ram Gopal Vasudev (Co-Borrower/Mortgagor) Add.1. 100 Nalapani Road, Dehradun 248001, Add 2. 36 Gurudwara Road, Karanpur, Dehradun-248001, Add 3. Gali No.1, Block D, Aman Vihar, Sahasthradra Road, Dehradun-248001.	All the residential property at Ground Floor part of property comprised in Land Forming part of khasra no. 16 (Old Khasra No. 1/1) area 111.52 sq. mtrs (Total Covered) Situated at Mauza Kandoli Pargana Central Doon Distt Dehradun with rights of common parking stairs from ground floor to second floor common passage etc. with proportionate share in whole land bounded and butted as under:- East: Property of Others, West: Property of Mr. Mohan Kandpal, North: 22 ft wide Road, South: Property of Shri uniyaji j. Sale deed Registered at Bahi no. 1, Zild 3796, Pages 393 to 414 at Sr No. 10167, Dated 27.12.2017 at SRO Dehradun IV (As per sale deed) Ownership: Smt Sunita Negi Vasudev W/o Shri Praveen Vasudev (Co-Borrower/Mortgagor)2. Sh. Praveen Vasudev S/o Sh. Ram Gopal Vasudev. (Co-Borrower/Mortgagor)	(A) 19.04.2024 (B) Rs. 51,47,852.75 © 25.06.2024 (D) Symbolic Possession	(A) Rs. 52,70,000/- (B) Rs. 5,27,000/- (C) 05.09.2024 Up to 05.00 PM (D) Rs. 0.50 Lakh	06.09.2024 From 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM	Not Known

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions: 1. The auction sale will be "online through e-auction" portal <https://ebkraj.in> on 06.09.2024 From 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM 2. The intending Bidders/ Purchasers are requested to register on portal (<https://ebkraj.in>) using their mobile number and email-id. Further, they are requested to upload requisite KYC documents. Once the KYC documents are verified by e-auction service provider (may take 2 working days), the intending Bidders/ Purchasers has to transfer the EMD amount using online mode in his Global EMD Wallet before the e-Auction Date and time in the portal. The registration, verification of KYC documents and transfer of EMD in wallet must be completed well in advance, before auction. 3. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount as mentioned above shall be paid online through 3 modes i.e. NEFT/ Cash/ Transfer (After generation of Challan from (<https://ebkraj.in>) in bidders Global EMD Wallet. NEFT transfer can be done from any Scheduled Commercial Bank, however for Cash/ Transfer the bidder has to visit Punjab National Bank Branch. Payment of EMD by any other mode such as Cheques will not be accepted. Bidders, not depositing the required EMD online, will not be allowed to participate in the e-auction. The Earnest Money Deposited shall not bear any interest. 4. Platform (<https://ebkraj.in>) for e-auction will be provided by e Auction service provider M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd having its Registered office at Unit-1, 3rd Floor, VIOS Commercial Tower, Near Wadala Truck Terminal, Wadala East Mumbai-400037 (contact Phone & Toll free Numbers +91 8291220220, E-mail- [psba@psballiance.com](mailto:psba@psballiance.com)). The intending Bidders/ Purchasers are requested to participate in the e-Auction process at e-Auction Service Provider's website <https://ebkraj.in>. This Service Provider will also provide online demonstration/ training on e-Auction on the portal. 5. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule herein above have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 6. For Further rules and regulations of the auction either visit these websites or Contact Authorised Officer, Mob: 8193024024 at the address Punjab National Bank, Circle Sastra, PNB House, 1 Paltan Bazar, Dehradun. The bank reserves the right to cancel/suspend the auction process without furnishing any reason. Any type of taxes i.e. TDS/ Gst etc. Shall be borne by the successful bidder himself. Any Bid increment will be treated to have increased proportionally on both Land & building and plant & Machinery. 7. The successful bidders shall immediately, i.e on the same day or not later than next working day, as the case may be, deposit 25% of the bid/sale amount (which is inclusive of earnest money deposited) to the account mentioned as above or by way of Demand Draft, to the Authorized Officer conducting the sale. In case of default in payment of the bid amount within the prescribed period, the amount deposited will be forfeited and the secured assets shall be resold. 8. The successful bidder shall be required to deposit the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale. In case of default in payment of the remaining 75% of the bid amount within the prescribed period, the amount deposited will be forfeited and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold. In case the date of auction is declared a holiday, then the auction shall be held on the following day. 9. Borrowers/Guarantor are informed that according to the demand notice, deposit all the amount (including interest and other expenses) before the date of the auction. If is not done, the property will be auctioned and remaining amount, if any, will be recovered along with interest and expenses from the Borrower. Note: For more information, Contact Authorised Officer Mobile Number: 8193024024.

Date: 31.07.2024 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer



# Viksit Bharat, Sashakt Uttarakhand

## State top performer in SDG India Index 2023-24

Driven by the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the state of Uttarakhand, led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama, has demonstrated tremendous achievement in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as depicted in the **SDG India Index 2023-24**

PIC-DIPR, UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama gifting 'Grain of Uttarakhand' to Prime Minister Narendra Modi

**Uttarakhand has set a standard by leading in essential domains including healthcare, clean energy, reduction in poverty, urban sustainability, and environmental protection**

benefits to remote places, and improving the quality of care. Ingenious health agendas and expanded investment in public health have additionally strengthened the ranking of Uttarakhand, positioning it among the highest achievers in this crucial domain.

**PROVIDING AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS**

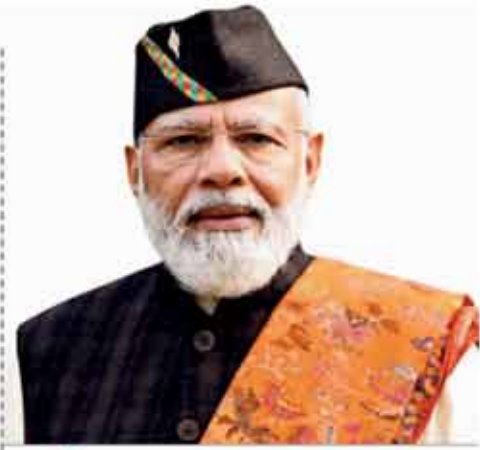
The accomplishments of Uttarakhand in the SDG India Index emphasise its adherence to assuring access to affordable, trustworthy, sustainable, and contemporary energy for everybody. The state has taken noteworthy steps in boosting renewable energy capability, especially in harnessing its hydroelectric potential. Further, Uttarakhand has concentrated on enhancing energy efficiency and extending the electricity grid to rural and isolated regions, assuring overall access to clean energy. These measures have improved energy security as well as contributed to environmental sustainability, making the state achieve a leading position in this classification.

**CREATING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN COMMUNITIES**

The state has undertaken several metropolitan expansion to enhance infrastructure and improve various public services. Introduction of smart cities concept, affordable accommodation schemes, and integration of disaster threat reduction efforts into urban planning have greatly enhanced the quality of life for urban citizens.

**CONSERVING TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY**

The commitment of Uttarakhand towards



"I congratulate the Uttarakhand government on the remarkable progress achieved in the last few years. This has been made possible by sustained policy push and focus on key sectors such as tourism and renewable energy. Alongside, the state has made significant strides in infrastructure development, setting new benchmarks for sustainable growth. Uttarakhand's commitment to harnessing its natural resources and promoting tourism has not only bolstered its economy but also showcased its potential on the global stage. I applaud the state's dedication to inclusive development and look forward to its continued success in the years ahead."

**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

maintaining the ecosystem and biodiversity is illustrated in its high ranking in the SDG India Index. The state has launched strong efforts to save and revive forests, conserve wilderness, and fight land degradation.

The rich biodiversity and vast forest cover of Uttarakhand are important assets that the state preserves via different environmental approaches and community-based conservation agendas. Measures to foster sustainable farming and forestry techniques have additionally bolstered the ecological harmony of the state, assuring the long-term health of its natural resources.

The holistic strategy of Uttarakhand for growth, incorporating financial development with social inclusion and environmental administration, illustrates the regulations of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are committed to the holistic development of our state, leveraging its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and immense potential. Through sustainable policies and strategic initiatives, we aim to foster economic growth, improve infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life for all our citizens. Our goal is to make Uttarakhand a model of progress, where tradition meets innovation, and every individual can thrive in a conducive environment for prosperity and well-being.

**Pushkar Singh Dhama**  
Chief Minister

Uttarakhand has emerged as a top performer in the recently released SDG India Index 2023-24, ranking alongside Kerala with an impressive score of 79. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama, the state has worked on comprehensive development, promoting renewable energy, augmenting healthcare infrastructure, evolving urban surroundings, and preserving biodiversity, underlining its dedication to sustainable evolution and effective policy execution, thus attaining a spot among the top five states in several SDG goals.

**ALLEVIATING POVERTY AND SAFEGUARDING FINANCIAL SECURITY**

The performance of Devbhoomi Uttarakhand in alleviating poverty is admirable, illustrating the state's victorious measures in its mitigation. The SDG India Index underscores that Uttarakhand has attained

important landmarks in lessening poverty levels, assuring financial security for its citizens, and implementing comprehensive social security programmes. The exhaustive strategy of the state contains targeted initiatives for the marginalised, livelihood generation agendas, and improving access to fundamental needs such as housing, education, and healthcare. These endeavours have collectively contributed to the top-tier ranking of the state in eliminating poverty.

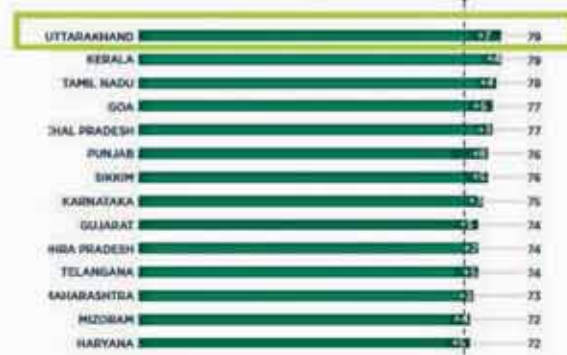
**PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR ALL**

The state of Uttarakhand has exhibited remarkable advancement in boosting health and well-being. The healthcare system of the state has demonstrated outstanding progress in different health indicators, including mother and child health, immunisation coverage, and the management of infectious and

non-communicable diseases. The focus of the government has been on bolstering healthcare infrastructure, extending the coverage of health

**SDG INDIA INDEX 23-24**

PERFORMANCE OF STATES AND UTs ON SDGs (INDIA-7)



Uttarakhand has undertaken a historic step to introduce the Gross Environmental Product (GEP) Index, becoming the first Indian state to introduce such a pioneering endeavour that connects ecology with the economy

## U'khand aces in the introduction of gross environmental product index

The Gross Environmental Product (GEP) Index, was recently launched by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama and it evaluates the environmental health of the state based on the quality of four essential elements, viz. air, water, forest, and soil. The GEP shows

relative data from 2020 to 2022, indicating a 0.9% growth, signalling favourable environmental trends amid expansion.

CM Dhama highlighted the importance of this endeavour in facilitating a balance between financial growth and ecological

PICS: DIPR, UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT



Uttarakhand strives to lead by example with the introduction of the GEP Index, in balancing growth with environmental sustainability

conservation. The GEP Index will act as a vital instrument in forming prospective environmental conservation objectives and raising public understanding about the significance of protecting natural resources. The Chief Minister, while emphasising the rich natural legacy of Uttarakhand, highlighted the necessity for effective utilisation

of forest wealth and the revitalisation of water sources via comprehensive plantation of trees and water conservation measures.

The concept of GEP was envisioned by environmentalist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi. It allocates an economic worth to environmental services, providing a tangible standard of ecological influence. Uttarakhand strives to lead by example with the introduction of the GEP Index in balancing growth with environmental sustainability. This assures a brighter tomorrow for its residents and establishing a standard for other states to pursue.



Under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, the 'One District Two Products' scheme launched by CM Pushkar Singh Dhama aims to promote local products and create self-employment opportunities across all 13 districts of the state

## ODTP Scheme: A step towards local economic empowerment

Uttarakhand's 'One District Two Products' (ODTP) Scheme is an innovative initiative launched by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama in October 2021. The scheme aims to promote local products and create self-employment opportunities across all 13 districts of the state.

**EMPLOYMENT IMPACT**

One of the key aspects of the ODTP scheme is its potential to generate employment opportunities at the local level. By developing products based on market demand and utilising modern technology, the scheme creates jobs in various sectors, including packaging, testing, and logistics. The increase in business and export opportunities is expected to further bolster employment, benefiting local farmers, artisans, and craftsmen.

Notable products from various regions include Almora's tweed and Bal Mithai, Bageshwar's copper craft and Manduwa biscuits, Champawat's iron crafts and handwoven products, Chamoli's



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama inquiring about the products made by local artisans

handlooms, handicrafts, and aromatic herbals, Dehradun's bakery and mushroom products, Haridwar's jaggery and honey, Nainital's Aipan art and candle craft, Pauri's herbal products and wooden furniture, Pithoragarh's woolen carpet and Munsiyari rajma, Rudrapur's handicrafts temple shapes and prasads products, Tehri's natural fiber and Tehri Nath, Udham Singh Nagar's mentha oil and Moori grass products, and Uttarkashi's woolen handicrafts and apple-based products.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

Skill development and design enhancement are also crucial components of the implementation strategy. By equipping local artisans and craftsmen with modern skills and design techniques, the scheme ensures that the products meet contemporary market demands.

**MARKET & EXPORT POTENTIAL**

The ODTP scheme aims to position Uttarakhand's local products in both domestic and international markets.

By promoting these products on a larger scale, the scheme seeks to enhance their visibility and demand. The government's efforts to improve packaging, branding, and marketing are expected to play a significant role in this endeavour. Tourism also plays a crucial role in the ODTP scheme's market strategy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has encouraged tourists to spend at least 5% of their total expenditure on local products. This initiative not only boosts the local economy, but also promotes state's cultural heritage.

**FUTURE PROSPECTS**

The ODTP scheme is a promising step towards the sustainable economic development of Uttarakhand. By focusing on local products and creating self-employment opportunities, the scheme aims to foster economic resilience in the state's rural areas. The successful implementation of this scheme could serve as a model for other states to follow, highlighting the potential of local industries to drive economic growth.

## District-wide crafts get recognition

Local products find national & global platforms



PM Narendra Modi interacting with women entrepreneurs (SHG) during Uttarakhand Investor Summit 2023

The 'One District One Product' (ODOP) scheme is an endeavour under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, striving to boost regional products and promote financial evolution in districts across India. By recognising and sustaining outstanding products from each district, the scheme seeks to facilitate manufacturing, help regional craftspeople, and furnish a forum for these products in nationwide and global markets. Recently, Uttarakhand and its border district, Uttarkashi, obtained nationwide acclaim under this scheme, marking a notable accomplishment for the state.

The state's commendation came during the Atmanirbhar Bharat Utsav 2024 awards, where Uttarkashi district

States (Category B)		
Rank	State	Award
1.	J&K	Gold
2.	Uttarakhand	Silver
3.	Meghalaya	Bronze
4.	Sikkim	Bronze

won the second award for its production of Red Rice in the agriculture category.

Different districts in Uttarakhand have been recognised with special products under the ODOP scheme, including Almora's apricot-based products, Bageshwar's kiwi-based products, Chamoli's fish-based products, Champawat's *tejpatta* and spices, Dehradun's bakery products, Haridwar's mushrooms, Nainital's fruit juice and squash (peach, etc), Pauri's citrus-based products (Malta), Pithoragarh's turmeric-based products, Rudrapur's *amaranthas*-based products, Tehri's ginger-based products, Udham Singh Nagar's mango-based products, and Uttarkashi's apple-based products.

This is supported by the Common Facility Centre (CFC) Scheme, which furnishes up to 90 percent of the project expenditure in economic aid. This allows local producers to improve their production establishments and enhance their product quality. The Marketing Development Assistance Scheme presents economic support to participants of nationwide and multinational exhibits and fairs, letting them demonstrate and market their ODOP-selected products. Further, the Finance Assistance Scheme (Margin Money Scheme) offers assistance to set up projects, assuring that financial limitations do not restrict the development of local enterprises.

## AYUSH POLICY: TOWARDS WELLNESS



CM's visit to Adi Kailash promoted the area as a notable pilgrimage destination

The AYUSH Policy of Uttarakhand summarises enterprising strategies to incorporate conventional healthcare procedures with contemporary methods, striving for holistic wellness and financial development.

The policy strives to capitalise on this legacy by enabling the cultivation of over 1,000 rare medicinal plants native to the area. Endeavours such as the Chief Minister Medicinal Plant Development Programme are set to involve 50,000 farmers in growing these plants, promoting sustainable farming approaches, and augmenting regional revenues.

In the domain of AYUSH production, Uttarakhand already has a strong drive, backed by ample raw materials and promising business necessities. The state hosts multiple GMP-certified manufacturing departments making a vast array of AYUSH medicines and consumer items. Under the new policy, more incentives and assistance will be

offered to enable more units to attain WHO GMP certification and adhere to global quality norms. This action is anticipated to greatly improve the sector's contribution to the state's GDP, presently evaluated at Rs 4,000-5,000 crore.

The policy encapsulates strategies to credit all specified government AYUSH healthcare centers under the NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers) within five years.

#ExploreUttarakhand



@DIPR\_UK

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

Text by Tareesh Dutta



## Arya inaugurates mini stadium in Ranikhet

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State sports minister Rekha Arya inaugurated the mini stadium in the Tarikhet block of Ranikhet in Almora district on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, she said that as there was no stadium in the area, the players

will now have better access to sports facilities in their area," she said, adding that the State government helmed by the chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has been tirelessly working to support sports and players, including providing government jobs for the players. She further said that a host of schemes aimed at honing sports talent inherent in boys and girls of the State is being implemented. Speaking about the upcoming



and the sports enthusiasts used to face numerous challenges and had to travel to other places for their practice. "With the inauguration of this mini

38th National Games slated later this year in Uttarakhand, Arya claimed that preparations for the 38th National Games have been completed.

## Prasar Bharti files FIR against Akashvani employee for encroachment

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand cluster head of Prasar Bharati, Ashok Kumar lodged an FIR in Dehradun against an Akashvani employee. The FIR addresses the issue of illegal occupation in the Akashvani colony in Uttarkashi which houses officials and employees. Kumar informed that the Akashvani centre in Uttarkashi, established by the Government of India for information, education, and entertainment, has been encroached upon by an employee named Madan Lal. He claimed that Lal has illegally occupied an additional house besides his allocated one and engaged in unauthorised construction and cattle rearing at

the site. Following these actions, Prasar Bharati cancelled Lal's allotment and discovered later that he had forged signatures and misused office stamps to obtain a false No Objection Certificate (NOC) for a water connection. Considering this, Kumar filed an FIR against him in Nehru Colony police station. He said that the Uttarkashi district magistrate Meharban Singh Bisht has also been informed about the issue and has assured to give full support in removing the encroachment. Kumar said that the authorities have assured him of taking strict action in the matter.

## Orientation programme for nursing students held at Venkateshwara University

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The orientation programme titled 'Diksharambh-2024' was organised for the newly admitted students in the School of Nursing Session-2024 at Shri Venkateshwara University in Meerut on Wednesday. On this occasion, the old students presented a cultural programme

Education Policy (NEP) and said that nursing is the noblest and the most humanitarian of all professions and was on equal footing with the noble profession of the doctors. The pro-chancellor Rajeev Tyagi said that his institute is committed to presenting a successful and safe career to the nursing students



by way of welcoming the new ones. Addressing the programme, the Venkateshwara group chairman Sudhir Giri hailed the all-inclusive National

admitted here. Among other dignitaries present were the CEO Ajay Srivastava, the vice-chancellor Krishna Kant Dave and registrar Piyush Pandey.

## Coronation hospital prepared to take on dengue challenge

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The district hospital is fully prepared to take on the potential dengue challenge. The medical superintendent at the hospital Dr V S Chauhan said on Wednesday that no dengue cases have been reported at the hospital yet. "However, we are not complacent. We are fully alert to the potential danger. We have reserved 10 per cent of the isolation beds for dengue patients. To be specific, there are 10 general isolation beds for dengue cases while two beds are kept reserved in the ICU for patients whose conditions may worsen. We are ready to enhance the facilities in the coming days as requirements arise," he said and added that regular fogging is being con-

ducted at the hospital to keep mosquitoes away.

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made by the said accused Akram, S/o : Dilbar Hussain, R/o : H. No. Ward No. 3, Islam Nagar, Khatima Distt., Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 521/2018, Dated : 16.05.2022 U/s : 498A/377/406/34 IPC & 4 DPAct Police Station, Welcome and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused Akram cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Akram has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Akram of FIR No. 521/2018, Dated : 16.05.2022 U/s : 498A/377/406/34 IPC & 4 DPAct Police Station, Welcome is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 04.09.2024.

By Order  
Ms. Shruti Sharma  
Metropolitan Magistrate, Mahila Court-01,  
Room No-55,  
Shahdara, Karkardooma Court, Delhi  
DP/10042/NE/2024

# 1,424 village Panchayats of U'khand declared TB free

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Health Minister Dhan Singh Rawat has said that the government of India has declared 1,424 village Panchayats of the State free from TB. He said that Uttarakhand is moving forward successfully to eliminate TB from the State. Rawat said that the TB free Panchayats campaign is operational in the State under the National TB eradication programme of the National Health Mission (NHM). The minister said that following the successful implementation of the programme, the union government has declared 3,200 villages under 1,424 village Panchayats free from TB. Elaborating further Rawat said that 115 village Panchayats of Almora, 76 of Bageshwar, 115 of Chamoli, 187 of Dehradun, 18 of Haridwar, 124 of Nainital, 297 of Pauri, 124 of Pithoragarh, 44 of Rudrapur, 144 of Tehri, 117 of Udham Singh Nagar and 23 of Udham Singh Nagar have been declared TB free. The minister said that soon district level programmes will be held where these Panchayats will be handed over the TB free certificates.

The minister said that the TB free Panchayat campaign

## Primary school teachers' stir against SCPCR chief continues

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Teachers of all the primary schools in Dehradun district continued their protest by wearing black ribbons on their arms on Wednesday to express their annoyance with the recent comment made by the chairperson of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) Dr Geeta Khanna. The protesters said that they were not alone in the agitation with their counterparts from Almora, Haridwar and Haldwani joining in to express their solidarity with them.

The president of Uttarakhand Primary Teachers' Association (UPTA) Dharmendra Rawat said that they were on strike since Monday against the SCPCR chief having negatively commented on their demeanour and dress code during an orientation programme held on July 26.

"No teacher with a modicum of dignity can take such things lying down. It deserves strong protest. So, the primary school teachers of Dehradun district have been protesting under the banner of UPTA since Monday," he said.

Queried on how long such black ribbon wearing stir would continue, he said that it would continue until the SCPCR chief issues a public apology and assures that she would not make such derogatory remarks about teachers again. "If the SCPCR chief fails to comply, the UPTA, together with state primary school teachers, will not just continue the stir but will further intensify the agitation against her," he said, adding that more than 32,000 primary teachers have been currently working in schools across the State.

## Theft of ventilator: Coronation Hospital admin to enhance security

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Alarmed over the recent theft of a portable ventilator machine from the Emergency ward, the administration of the Coronation Hospital has decided to hike the security by recruiting additional staff. The hospital administration said on Wednesday that the number of the Prantiya Rakshak Dal (PRD) guards is being raised at the Emergency ward of the government-run healthcare facility. The senior hospital administration officers are still clueless on how the portable ventilator machine was stolen when there was a strong presence of staff and security guards. It is learnt that the miscreants stole one machine and tried to take away the second one too. However, they could not open it in time and so it is still in the hospital. The medical superintendent at the hospital, Dr V S Chauhan said that on being informed of the theft, he along with other seniors had inspected the ward and spoken to the staff members. "It seems that the thieves took advantage of the preoccupation of staffers with the influx of patients at the Emergency Ward. It is easy to take away as it is a light weight machine. After the theft was detected, the administration lodged a First Information Report (FIR) at the Dalanwala police station. Police assured us they were taking necessary actions to arrest the thieves and recover the stolen machine," he added. Chauhan further said that operations at the Emergency are not being impacted by the theft of the ventilator since five more portable ventilators are in place. "To stop recurrence of such theft, we are enhancing the crowd control management and security at the Emergency ward by raising the number of PRD guards," he added.

भारत सरकार  
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय  
त्यरित कॉर्पोरेट समान प्रसंकरण केंद्र (सी-पासे),  
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, ग्रीन मॉडल,  
प्लॉट P-6,7,8, से. 5, आई.एम.टी. मानेसर, गुडगाँव,  
हरियाणा - 122050.  
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

Government of India  
Ministry of Corporate Affairs  
Centre for Processing Accelerated  
Corporate Exit (C-PACE)  
ICA Building, 7th Floor,  
Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IIT Manesar,  
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050.  
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

FORM No. STK-6  
PUBLIC NOTICE  
[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice :ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2024-25/543 Date: -10/07/2024

Reference:  
(1) In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (1) companies in the state of Uttarakhand under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S.No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AA8363978	U74999UR2016PTC007261	AUSTITIVE HERBAL PRIVATE LIMITED

(2) Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under subsection (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.

(3) Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.

(4) Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Irkan Tirkey  
Assistant Registrar  
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit  
CBC 07123/11/0272/2425

REOI No: N-11018/05/2023-RL-Proc (386466)

Ministry of Rural Development  
Rural Livelihoods Division  
Government of India

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

The Ministry of Rural Development, Rural Livelihoods Division, invites Expression of Interest, engaging a Technical Support Agency for the Operations and Management of the SARAS Gallery and eSARAS, eCommerce portal under DAY NRLM on 'Revenue Sharing Basis'. Expression of Interest (EOI) must be submitted in hard copy in packed envelope to the Ministry by or before the deadline i.e. 21 August 2024 up to 2:00 PM. EOI should be dropped in the tender box at reception at Ground Floor, NDCC II Build-ing, Jai Singh Marg, New Delhi 110001. The details REOI along with Terms of Reference (TOR) may be downloaded from Sd/-  
<https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/> Joint Secretary(RL)  
<https://rural.nic.in/en/documents/advertisement-tenders> Ministry of Rural Development  
<https://nrhm.gov.in> Rural Livelihood Division  
<https://aajeevika.gov.in> Government of India  
CBC 35101/11/0002/2425

District Co-operative Bank Ltd, Dehraudn(Head Office: Kutchery Ahatta, Dehradun) Ph. No. 0135-2975436, Email-ho@dcdbdehradun.com

POSSESSION NOTICE  
(Rule- 8(1)) (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the District Co-operative Bank Ltd under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower / Guarantor as given below to repay the amount mentioned below within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has now taken the possession of the assets described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules, 2002 on. The borrower attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

S. No.	Name of the Branch/ Borrower/Guarantor	Description of the Immovable Property	Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding as per Demand Notice	Date of possession
1.	Branch: Premnagar Borrower: Doon Material Supplier & Construction Works, Khasara No. 14/02, Total Rakba 0.1004 Hectare Mauza Prop.Anwar Hussain S/o Liyaqat Hussain and Guarantor: Abdul Kadir Teliwala Doiwala Dehra-dun, Uttarakhand. Sunita Rawat Moolchand Enclave Poly Kids School, Mazra Dehraun UK	East: Other Land, West: Other Land] North: Main Shimla Bypass Road, South: Other Land, Land Khata No. 77, Khasara No. 14/02, Total Rakba 0.1004 Hectare Mauza East HopeTown, Pargana Pachwadon, Dehradun	02.06.2023	Rs. 40,51,409.17 dt. 07.03.2024 (Forty Lakh Fifty One Thousand Four Hundred Nine And Seventeen paise Only) + future interest & other expenses.	29.07.2024
2.	Branch: Majra Borrower: M/s Lucky Supplier Prop. Shri Mohd Abid S/o Shri Jamaluddin and Guarantor: Shri Munnu Mujahid S/o Shahid R/o Noor basti, Meh-wala Mafi Dehradun and Mohd Jahid S/o Shri Mainaundn R/o Ward No. 12 naya nagar Mehuwala mafi Dehradun UK.	All that land Khata No. 874, Khasra No. 1600, area 248.61 Sq mtrs. situated at Mehuwalamafi, Tehsil & District Dehra-dun, Uttarakhand at the name of Mohd Abid S/o Jamaludu-din which is bounded and butted as under- Bounded of East: land Seller, Side measuring 49 ft 4 inch, West: 30 ft wide road, side measuring 45 ft, North: land owner, side measuring 58 ft, South: Approx 30 ft. wide road, side meas-uring 58.50 ft.	05.03.2024	Rs. 10,87,720.00 dt. 01.03.2024 (Ten Lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred TwentyOnly) + future interest & other expenses.	29.07.2024
3.	Branch: Majra Borrower: Ultranchal Bric Field Prop. Mohd Saleem Ansari and Guarantor: Shyam Singh S/o Shankar Singh R/o Mehuwala mafi Dehradun and Smt Shama Parveen Ansari R/o Mehuwala mafi Dehradun	All that land Khata No.441, (Fasli year 1417-1422) Land Khasra No. 1701 kha, area 600 Sq.mtrs.situated Mauza Mehuwalamafi, pargana Pachwadon, Tehsil & District Dehra-dun, Uttarakhand at the name of Mr. Shyam Singh S/o Late Mr. Shankar which is bounded and butted as under Bounded of: East: Land Mr. Bheem Bahadur, West: Land Matloob Hasan, North: 12ft. wide road, South: Land Matloob Hasan	05.03.2024	Rs. 21,33,800.00 dt. 01.03.2024 (Twenty One Lakh Thirty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Only) + future interest & other expenses.	29.07.2024

Date: 31.07.2024 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer, District Co-operative Bank Ltd.

GRIHUM HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED  
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS POONAWALLA HOUSING FINANCE LTD)  
REGISTERED OFFICE: 602, 6TH FLOOR, ZERO ONE IT PARK, SR. NO. 79/1, GHORPADI, MUNDHWA ROAD, PUNE 411036  
BRANCH OFF UNIT: SAI KRIPA, FIRST FLOOR, 59/3, RAJAPURA ROAD, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND 248001

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE SALE OF SECURED IMMOWABLE ASSET UNDER SARFAESI ACT

E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the "Act") read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to Grihum Housing Finance Limited (formerly known as Poonawalla Housing Finance Limited) and originally incorporated with name of GE Money Housing Finance Public Limited Company (hereinafter referred to as the "Secured Creditor" as per the Act), the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) of the Act read with Rules 8 and 9 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rule pursuant to notice under section 13(2) of the Act. The Secured Assets will be sold on "Asiswheris", "Asiswhatis", and "Whateverters" basis on 10/08/2024 through E-Auction. It is hereby informed to General public that we are going to conduct public through E-Auction platform provided at the website: <https://www.bankauctions.com>. For detailed T&Cs of sale, please refer to link provided in GHFL's Secured Creditor's website i.e. [www.grihumhousing.com](http://www.grihumhousing.com)

PROPOSAL NO. CUSTOMER NAME (A)	DEMAND NOTICE DATE AND OUTSTANDING AMOUNT (B)	NATURE OF POSSESSION (C)	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (D)	RESERVE PRICE (E)	EMD (10% OF RP) (F)	END SUBMISSION DATE (G)	INCREMENTAL BID (H)	PROPERTY INSPECTION DATE & TIME (I)	DATE AND TIME OF AUCTION (J)	KNOWN ENCUMBRANCES/COURT CASES IF ANY (K)
LOAN NO. HM/0034/H/18/10 0405 POOJA TAMTA (BORROWER) ASHOK KUMAR TAMTA(CO-BORROWER)	Notice date: 09/05/2023 Total Dues: Rs. 569950.23 (Rupees Five Lacs Sixty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty and Twenty Three Paisas Only) payable as on 09/05/2023 along with interest @ 16.50% p.a. till the realization.	Physical	All That Property Comprising Of Land Bearing Khata No. 588 (Fasli 1422 To 1427) Khasra No. 742 Area Measuring 0.0012 Hect., Situated At Mauza Kariharwala, Pargana Parwa Doon, Tehsil Doiwala, Distt. Dehradun, Which Is Bounded As Under- East- 14 Ft Wide Passage, West-Property Of Shri Pyare Lal, North- Property Of Shri Pyare Lal South-Property Of Shri Pradeep Kumar	Rs. 18,20,000/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Twenty Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,80,200/- (Rupees One Lakh Eight Thousand Two Hundred Only)	16-08-2024 Before 5 PM	10,000/-	10-08-2024 (11 AM 4 PM)	17-08-2024 (11 AM 2 PM)	NIL

The intending bidders/purchasers are advised to visit Secured Creditor Branch and the auction properties, and make his own enquiry and ascertain additional charges, encumbrances and any third-party interests and satisfy himself/herself/itself in all aspects thereto before submitting the bids. All statutory dues like property taxes, electricity/water dues and any other dues, if any, attached to the property to be ascertained and paid by the successful bidder.

The interested bidders are required to register themselves with the portal and obtain login ID and Password well in advance, which is mandatory for e-bidding, from auction service provider) C1 India PVT LTD. Address- Plot No-68 3rd floor Gurgaon Haryana-122003. Helpline Number- 7291981124,25,26 Support Email id Support@bankauctions.com. Contact Person Dharni P, Email id- dharni.p@c1india.com Contact No- 9948182222. Please note that Prospective bidders may avail online training on e-auction from them only. The intending purchaser/bidder is required to submit amount of the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by way of NEFT/RTGS/DD in the account of "Grihum Housing Finance Ltd., Bank-ICICI BANKER LTD. Account No-000651000460 and IFSC Code- ICIC0000006, 20, R. N. Mukherjee Road-Kolkata-700011 drawn on any nationalized or scheduled Bank on or before 16/08/2024 and register their name at <https://www.bankauctions.com> and get user ID and password free of cost and get training on the service provider. After their registration on the website, the intending purchaser/bidder is required to get the copies of the following documents uploaded, e-mail and sent self-attested hard copy at Address: Sai Kripa, First Floor, 59/3, Rajapura Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand 248001 Mobile no. +91 9567626050 e-mail id rahul.r1@grihumhousing.com. For further details on terms and conditions please visit <https://www.bankauctions.com> & [www.grihumhousing.com](http://www.grihumhousing.com) to take part in e-auction.

This notice should also be considered as 15 days' notice to Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s) under Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule-2002

Authorised Officer Grihum Housing Finance Limited  
(Formerly Known as Poonawalla Housing finance Ltd)  
DATE: 01.08.2024

## CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is informed that I have changed my name from Medhavini (old name) to Medhavini Upadhyay (new name). In future, I should be known as Medhavini Upadhyay, Daughter of Mrs Garima Upadhyay 31 Trimurti Enclave Doon University Road Kedarpur Ajabpur kalan, Dehradun, Uttarakhand Pin 248121

In my Husband's Army record my name is mistakenly recorded as SARSWATI DEVI whereas my correct name is SARSWATI PANT as mentioned in other all documents. Army No- 13605639W PTR LATE MADAN MOHAN R/O DIVYA VIHAR RAJEEV NAGAR DEHRADUN UTTARAKHAND. vide IN-UK35648378833108W Affidavit 31.07.2024 before Dehradun.

मेरे सैन्य अभिलेखोंनुसार, मेरे पुत्र का गलत नाम सार्शक दर्ज है, उसका सही नाम सार्शक सैंधि बारुजे जन्म प्रमाणपत्र रजिस्ट्रेशन नं. 238 S/O आर्मी नं.14441173W हवलदार (एम/के)सैंधि शिवाजी बारुजे, ग्राम - चोटवी, पोस्ट - चोटवी, तहसील-श्रीगोदा, जिला-अहमदनगर, महाराष्ट्र- 413728 है

मेरे पति के सैन्य अभिलेखोंनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम कल्पना बारुजे दर्ज है, सही नाम कल्पना सैंधि बारुजे आधार नं. 902584379517 W/O आर्मी नं. 14441173W हवलदार (एम/के) सैंधि शिवाजी बारुजे, ग्राम - चोटवी, पोस्ट - चोटवी, तहसील - श्रीगोदा, जिला - अहमदनगर, महाराष्ट्र - 413728 है

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Kuldeep Rawat S/o Jagmohan Singh Rawat and Mrs. Patma Devi W/o Shri Jagmohan Singh, land measles NO-1104 Rakba 164.3 Sequence, i.e. 152.71 sqm. Tehsil Vikasnagar, the owner of District Dehradun, is the owner. Kuldeep Rawat and Mrs. Patma Devi have buy land from Mr. Varun Gurung S/o Shri Sher Bahadur Gurung residents of village Danda, Dakpathar, Pargana Pachwadun, District Tehsil Vikasnagar District Dehradun, On 28.06.2024 was done through the registered decision sheet on 30/06. Mr. Varun Gurung S/o Shri Sher Bahadur Gurung residents village Danda, Dakpathar, Pargana Pachwadun, District Tehsil Vikasnagar District Dehradun, On 28.06.2024 was done through the registered sales letter on 24.07.2015 on the recorded details on Bahi no-01 jild no 1258 and page no 225 to 252 srial no. 6672. Kuldeep Singh Rawat, S/o Jagmohan Singh Rawat, was lost the original letter of the said land has been lost. This land is not mortgage or deals in any bank institution. Kuldeep Rawat S/o Jagmohan P.O. Rikhaun Tehsil Barkot, District Uttarkashi.

## NOTICE

(Where flow of title is of complex nature) TAKE NOTICE THAT Mrs. Geeta Ramnagar W/o Mr. Suresh Kumar residing at No 1077, near mittal mall pahladpur khallia Panipat haryana have agreed to purchase the property more particularly described in the schedule mentioned hereunder written (hereinafter referred to as the said property) from 1. Mr. Karan Chopra S/o Mr. Ramesh Chopra, 2. Mr. Raja Dogra S/o Mr. Amar Nath Dogra, 3. Mr. Pradeep Kumar S/o Mr. Jia Lal ("Seller") and to mortgage to my/or client IDFC FIRST Bank Limited Address as 69, Rajpur Road Dehradun Uttarakhand the said property, free from all charges or encumbrances. All PERSONS claiming any share, interest or right in the said property or any part thereof by way of sale, transfer, assignment, mortgage, charge, lease, license, lien, tenancy, trust, gift, easement, possession, inheritance or otherwise however are hereby required to make the same known to the undersigned in writing, within (7) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice, with all supporting documents, failing which mortgage over the said property shall be created without reference to all claims if any, and the same shall be deemed to waived/ and abandoned and will not be binding on my/or clients THE SCHEDULE ABOVE REFERRED TO (Detail description of the property) All that plot forming part of land bearing Khata No. 129 (fasli year 1418 to 1423) Khasra No. 66 KA area measuring 125.60 sq. mtrs. situated at Mauza Dhorankhas, Pargana Parwa Doon, Distt. Dehradun, which is bounded and butted as under: East: 30 ft wide Passage, side measuring 23 ft. West: Land of others, side measuring 23.65 ft. North Property of others, side measuring 56 ft. South: Land of Kishan Devrani, side measuring 61.5 ft. Adv- AloK Pundir Mob No: 9412054582 Add: Res. cum Off.184/71, West Canal Road, Majra, Dehradun (U.K.)

## Disclaimer

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# Karnataka Gov seeks response from CM on MUDA 'scam'

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot has sought a "response" from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to allegations relating to the distribution of sites by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority, including to his wife Parvathi, sources in the Congress government said on Wednesday.

The move comes after a delegation of BJP Legislators met the Governor on July 25 and submitted to him a memorandum seeking transfer of the MUDA case to CBI for a probe and resignation of the Chief Minister. "Since a memorandum is submitted, it is imperative for the Governor to seek a reply from the Chief Minister. Accordingly, the Governor has asked the Chief Minister to respond to it," sources in Raj Bhavan said.

Referring to the Governor's action, Home Minister G Parameshwara said there is reason to believe that it was politically motivated.

"He (Gehlot) has been given some Constitutional powers. He should function within its framework. It will give rise to



doubts if he crosses the threshold. There are suspicions that politics is happening," Parameshwara told reporters in the district headquarters town of Bagalkote. "The Governor has moved further to issue a show cause notice. We will have to consider it as politically-motivated," he added. Karnataka Information Technology and Biotechnology Minister Priyank Kharge alleged that the Governor is being "misused" by the BJP. "You have seen Governors in

Tamil Nadu, earlier in Maharashtra and West Bengal. In some places these Governors are misusing their Constitutional position. Even the Supreme Court has made its observations. Several articles have also appeared on how the Governors are interfering in the functioning of the Government exceeding their limits," Kharge told reporters. "It appears, here too, the same thing is happening. Already we have said that I-T (Income Tax Department) and ED (the Enforcement Directorate) are

being used. Isn't it that they (BJP) are using them (Governors)," the Minister said. According to him, there are no instances of the Governor immediately asking for a reply soon after a memorandum is submitted. "During the Ballari mining scam there were strong evidences for the Governor to act but in MUDA case there is nothing," he said. "The BJP has got a standard operating procedure to let the I-T, ED loose (on its opponents) and misusing the Governors," Kharge alleged.

## Villages in South Goa oppose Sunburn fest for promoting drug culture

PTI ■ PANAJI

Several villages in South Goa district have passed resolutions against the Electronic Dance Music (EDM) Sunburn Festival, which is likely to be held by the end of this year, alleging that it promotes drug culture.

The stakeholders of the tourism industry, however, came out in support of the festival, saying that such events generate revenue for the state. Seven villages in South Goa — Chicalim, Carmona, Nuvem, Varca, Sarzora, Chinchinim and Camorlim — during their Gram Sabha meetings held on Sunday decided to oppose the Sunburn Festival 2024.

These villages passed the resolutions, in which they decided not to give permission for the festival, claiming that it fuels drug culture in the State. The resolution mentioned that the Sunburn Festival should not be held in Goa as it is a "hub for sale of drugs and also results in several problems for locals including traffic congestion".

This festival was traditionally held in North Goa, but it is likely to be held in South Goa this year. When contacted, state Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte said the Sunburn Festival organisers were yet to apply for permission.

"We will be able to make any statement on the festival only after they apply for it," he said. Meanwhile, Travel and Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG), an umbrella organisation of tourism stakeholders, supported the festival, saying such events generate revenue to the scale of around ₹200 crore.

## Zika virus testing can now be done at AIIMS Rajkot



PTI ■ RAJKOT

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gujarat's Rajkot has been recognised as a facility for the screening of Zika virus, cutting down on the need for swab samples to be sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) at Pune in adjoining Maharashtra, an official said on Wednesday.

"Our centre has been recognised for the screening of Zika virus (by Indian Council of Medical Research). We have received kits from the NIV, and are going to begin the tests very soon," said Ashwini Agarwal, professor and head of the department of microbiology at AIIMS Rajkot.

He said the new testing centre at AIIMS will become operational next week. Agarwal informed that the central government has also sanctioned a biosafety laboratory at AIIMS Rajkot that deals with highly infectious and pathogenic organisms. "BSL 3 (biosafety level 3) lab has been sanctioned, and its construction will begin next month," he said.

After the centre for Zika virus testing at AIIMS Rajkot becomes operational, results of samples of suspected cases will be known within 24 hours.

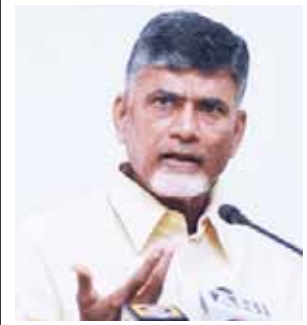
When samples from Gujarat were sent to the Pune-based NIV, it took from one week to up to a month for confirmation.

"The centre will make the test results of suspected Zika virus patients known within 24 hours. Samples collected for surveillance purpose will take some time," he said.

The Zika virus disease is transmitted through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito, which is also known to transmit infections like dengue and chikungunya. The virus was first identified in Uganda in 1947. Thirteen cases of Zika virus — three from Karnataka and 10 from Maharashtra — were reported till July 22 this year, Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel had said in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. In 2023, the country had witnessed 23 cases of Zika virus, while two infections were seen in 2022 and 234 in 2021.

Gujarat had last reported three cases of the disease in 2017. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated Gujarat's first AIIMS at Rajkot on February 25 this year. Spread across 201 acres, Rajkot AIIMS is a world-class hospital with 720 beds, including the ICU. The multispecialty medical facility was built at a cost of Rs 1,195 crore.

## CM: Reach out to investors, industrialists who gave up on Andhra



PTI ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday directed officials to reach out to industrialists and investors who had forged agreements with the state but later abandoned them due to alleged mishandling by the erstwhile YSRCP government.

The Chief Minister highlighted that he himself will step in to woo them back if needed during a review of the Department of Industries today, which delved on the deals signed in the past 10 years. "Negotiate with the industrialists who turned their backs on the state even after forging agreements with it due to the policies of the YSRCP government. If needed, I will personally talk to them," Naidu said in an official press release.

According to the CM, the erstwhile TDP government between 2014 and 2019 had signed agreements worth Rs 16 lakh crore and alleged that the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government had later driven them away with its policies.

Officials informed the CM that land pooling for industrial needs was allegedly diverted for other purposes during the YSRCP regime, which included setting aside 1,382 acres of land for welfare house sites.

The TDP chief underscored that 14,125 acres of land was made available through 64 industrial parks between 2014 and 2019 and observed that only 31 such parks were made available by the YSRCP government.

Noting that this kind of discouraging developments dampened the spirit of investors, Naidu exhorted that there is a new need to instill confidence in industrialists. Instructing officials to speed up work in the projects which have already taken off, the CM called for the completion of projects worth Rs 1 lakh crore within this year to enable the employment of over 1.3 lakh people. Further, he directed officials to come up with five new policies on industries, MSMEs, food processing, electronics, IT and cloud and textiles within the next 100 days.

Naidu emphasised that the policies should be good enough to attract investments with a conducive environment. Moreover, he also directed officials to design policies to turn the southern state into a green hydrogen and green energy hub. Similarly, he called for the drafting of proposals to create four new industrial clusters and procure Central Government approvals, adding that the clusters could come up at Kuppam, Mulapeta, Chilamathuru and Donakonda or Pamuru. Naidu also deliberated on the Rs 11,542 crore bulk drug park at Nakkapalli, Rs 60,000 crore NTPC green hydrogen hub and others.

# Gutkha row: HC seeks CM, MLAs' response to privilege breach notice

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday asked Chief Minister M K Stalin and a few other DMK MLAs to submit their respective explanation to the show cause notices issued by the Privilege Committee in 2017 for displaying banned gutkha sachets in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, when they were in the opposition.

The DMK MLAs had then displayed the sachets to claim they were available freely during the then AIADMK regime.

Allowing a batch of appeals from the Secretary, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, a division bench comprising Justices S M Subramaniam and C Kumarappan set aside the order of a single judge, which set aside the show cause notices issued by the Privilege Committee.

"The Secretary of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, the Speaker of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and the Privilege Committee of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly shall proceed with the show cause notice (SCN), issued to the contesting respondents, by following the due process under the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules and take final decision on merits and in accordance with law as expeditiously as possible", the bench added.

The bench said in view of the legal position and having not convinced with the reasoning given by the single judge for setting aside the show cause notice, it was of the firm opinion that the 'SCN' issued must reach its logical conclusion by following the due process as contemplated under the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules.

The bench said the powers of the Committee of Privileges and the powers of the Speaker of the House would not lapse merely on account of change of Government. The notice issued by the Privilege Committee was relating to disciplinary affairs of the House. Therefore, the proceedings will not lapse merely for the reason that the opposition party turned to be the ruling party. The nature of proceedings require a decision to be taken on merits by following due process contemplated under the Assembly Rules.



Therefore, by setting aside the 'SCN', issues relating to disciplinary matters inside the House, cannot be buried, the bench added.

The bench said, "it is we the people of India who constituted the Assembly under the Indian Constitution.

The assembly proceedings are to be conducted in the manner prescribed. Actions initiated must be concluded by following the procedures as stipulated under the rules", the bench added.

It said issues such as breach of privileges cannot be washed away after dissolution of each and every assembly.

The Assembly and the Committee of Privileges constituted thereunder must deliberate on the issues relating to privilege breach and arrive at conclusions in the best interest of the Assembly representing the people of Tamil Nadu, the bench added.

The sovereign nature of the Assembly must be respected under all circumstances and the internal conduct should be carried on smoothly for which Rules and privileges have been formulated. And any such breach of the same must be dealt with in accordance with the principles enshrined under the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules and the Constitution of India, the bench added. It further said the legislative assembly was a floor to voice out the concerns of the people and the privileges were extended to the members representing the people in the Assembly to perform their functions without any

undue interference and to carry on the legislative affairs of the House in a smooth manner.

Such privileges were to be valued in the interest of the people for whom the legislative assembly functions.

In a democracy, people were always supreme and the assembly functioning in the interest of the people must ensure that its sovereignty and dignity remain protected under all circumstances, the bench added.

The bench said the privileges were a part of the inherent nature of the House and the dissolution of an assembly does not dissolve the privileges of its members once it was reconstituted.

Similarly, breach of the privileges, if any, does not lapse with the dissolution of the assembly.

It gets carried forward to the new Committee of Privileges to be constituted by the Speaker and was left before them for further deliberations.

If the argument of senior counsel N R Elango was adopted, that breach of privilege lapses with dissolution of an assembly, the very purpose behind privileges granted to the members of the assembly become meaningless.

Utter chaos may ensue where every member will be motivated to not take the privileges seriously thereby leading to breaches and after the end of the term, on dissolution of assembly, all such proceedings lapse and this shall go on in an endless fashion, the bench added.

## ED raids Himachal Cong MLA, CM's associate in fraud case

PTI ■ SHIMLA

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday raided the premises of Himachal Pradesh Congress MLA R S Bali, some private hospitals and their promoters as part of a money laundering probe linked to the alleged Ayushman Bharat scheme fraud, officials said.

About 19 locations in Shimla, Kangra, Una, Mandi and Kullu districts of the state apart from those in Delhi, Chandigarh and Punjab are being searched since morning, they said.

The premises of Bali, a legislator from Nagrota assembly seat, Fortis Hospital in Kangra (promoted by Bali's company Himachal Healthcare Pvt Ltd.), Balaji Hospital in Kangra and its promoter Rajesh Sharma are being raided. Sharma, according to the officials, is a "close associate" of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. He got his ticket for the recent Dehra assembly bypoll for Sukhu's wife Kamlesh Thakur. She won the bypoll.

Bali is also the chairman of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation and the vice-chairman of the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Board. The money laundering case filed on July 16 stems from a January 2023 FIR registered by the state vigilance and anti-corruption bureau against one Kiran Soni, Una-based Shri



Banke Bihari Hospital and others for allegedly generating "fake" AB-PMJAY (Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna) cards.

The ED has alleged that many medical bills were generated on such "fake" cards, causing a loss to the exchequer and the public with the total "proceeds of crime" in this case estimated to be around Rs 25 crore.

The agency found that a total of 8,937 Ayushman Bharat golden cards have been scrapped in the state for alleged violation of the AB-PMJAY scheme till now. It alleged that Bankey Bihari Hospital, Fortis Hospital, Shri Balaji Hospital, Sood Nursing Home and Sri Harihar Hospital among others aided "illegal benefits" under the AB-PMJAY scheme.

As many as 373 fake Ayushman cards have been identified and claims of ₹40,68,150 were made for reimbursement from

the government in the name of treatment given to some Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries, the agency found.

List of such "fake" beneficiaries included one Rajnish Kumar and Pooja Dhiman who "denied" possession or any information of a PMJAY card issued to them, the ED found. They never underwent any such treatment in any of these hospitals, the ED claimed. The accused hospitals made claims for treatments, surgery, admission which were actually never given or performed upon the patients, it said.

In another instance, Raksha Devi was "denied" admission in the hospital and her package was "dishonestly and illegally" blocked. The accused hospitals were "de-empanelled" from the Ayushman Bharat scheme for illegal practices and non-compliance of procedures and guidelines, the agency claimed.

# Gujarat court orders FIR for group's Muslim boycott call

PTI ■ PATAN (GUJ)

A court in Gujarat's Patan district has ordered the registration of an FIR against a group of people for allegedly calling for an economic boycott of Muslims in a village after communal violence in July last year.

In a recent order, the court of Judicial Magistrate First Class HP Joshi directed the sub-inspector of Balisana police station to register a case on the basis of a complaint by petitioner Makbul Husen Sheikh and complete the investigation in a time-bound manner. The petitioner had moved the court alleging that some persons

in Balisana misused the "unfortunate incident of a communal riot" on July 16, 2023, to incite locals to boycott Muslims and force them out of business by cancelling the rent agreement of their shops. The move has affected the businesses and livelihood of Muslims living in the area, and some have even been compelled to leave the place, he said in the petition. The court directed that the group be booked under the Indian Penal Code for promoting enmity between different groups (153-B) and circulating or publishing statements containing rumour or alarming news with intent to create or promote the feeling of enmity - 505 (2). At the same time, the court also



observed that no offence was made out under the IPC section concerning hate speech - 295 (A) - gave up the petitioner sought to add it to the FIR.

Nearly two months after the riot, Sheikh told the court, he approached the district superintendent of police (SP) with videos being shared on social media showing some villagers inciting others for an economic boycott of Muslims and forcing them out of rented shops in the village market and other places.

The petitioner said he moved the court after the police did not initiate action against those calling for the economic boycott of Muslims in the village. In an earlier order, the court had

directed the police to inquire into the matter and submit a report. The police subsequently submitted a report saying no crime appeared to have been committed.

The court, however, refused to accept the report after considering the video clips and statements of affected persons submitted by the petitioner and directed the police to register an FIR in an order passed on July 26. Two groups of villagers had clashed in Balisana on the night of July 16, 2023, over a social media post. Mobs targeted one another with iron rods, pipes and stones, leaving several injured, after which cross-FIRs were registered for rioting, resulting in the arrest of several persons.







**FIRST COLUMN**  
**FROM HURT TO HEALING**

By understanding our desires and analysing our actions, we can find ways to heal ourselves



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Nobody can hurt me without my permission, said Mahatma Gandhi, however, the truth is that most of us hurt each other in our relationships and we do it because we just want to do it. There is no larger reason for it, but it's something that just happens. According to psychologists, most people hurt someone because they want something they think they can't have, or have something they don't want. If we closely observe ourselves, then we would find that most of us are in one of the above two conditions, and we don't know what to do about it, hence we think that the only method of getting what we want is to hurt someone. So, is this the only way out? Is it the right method to follow? We all know it's wrong because it creates a lot of pain on both sides, so why do we do it?

Simply because we don't understand how to have that thing that we badly want or get rid of that thing that we do not need without hurting. There may be numerous reasons for us to hurt people, however the most common of them is 'unfulfilled expectations' which we all experience in our various relationships. Take for example, we just met someone and have fallen in love with him/her. Now before there is any kind of exchange of feelings, we just start dreaming about things that are totally out of context.

After a lot of pursuing, chasing and pushing, when we finally fail to get the desired reply from the other end, we start feeling miserable and then start blaming the person by saying things like 'You



hurt me', 'You broke my heart' etc. We should sit aside in a quiet corner and ask ourselves whether our expectations right from the beginning were realistic. Did the opposite person give us any inclination to believe so that he/she also feels the same as we are feeling? Were feelings of love mutual on both sides? When it was time to understand what he/she was saying, we were building love castles in the air, when it was time to give some space to the opposite person, we were suffocating the person with our forced love & affection. Is this the right kind of behaviour?

Remember! Any kind of one-sided relationship is extremely painful and maleficent because it makes you feel like a spare part in someone else's life as if you aren't as important to them as they are to you. Hence to prevent oneself from such pain and agony, it is best to have clear communication with the person whom you have feelings for. It doesn't matter what kind of a relationship you are in, but you have got to communicate your feelings because when we open the door of a dialogue, we open our hearts.

So always express yourself because carrying the burden of unspoken words can take a toll on you. It's 100 times better to say what you genuinely feel rather than repeating 'I love you' 100 times. However, it's so unfortunate that most of us prefer to bleed from within and stick to our 'no expressing' stubbornness. A wise person would thus always think about these reasons when being hurt rather than wasting time on 'Why me?'

So c'mon don't give up so easily because life is too short for such mundane things, just forget what hurt you but never forget what it taught you. Learn your lessons and move on.

(The writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist; views are personal)

# Reforming the personal income tax regime



UTTAM GUPTA

In the Budget for 2024-25, Finance Minister has made the 'new regime' of personal income tax more appealing, while continuing to rationalise the capital gains tax structure



In the Union Budget for 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has endeavoured to make the 'new regime' of personal income tax (PIT) a bit more attractive besides continuing the process of 'rationalising' and 'simplifying' the structure of capital gains tax (CGT) that was started in her budget for FY 2023-24. Sitharaman had introduced the new PIT regime in the Budget for 2020-21. Even while retaining a 5 per cent tax for annual income in the Rs 250,001-Rs 500,000 range (as under the old regime before 2020-21), on income higher than Rs 500,000, the government levied: 10 per cent on Rs 500,001-Rs 750,000; 15 per cent on Rs 750,001-Rs 1,000,000; 20 per cent on Rs 1,000,001-Rs 1,250,000; 25 per cent on Rs 1,250,001-Rs 1,500,000. For income above Rs 1,500,000, the 30 per cent tax continued. Unlike the old regime where persons could claim annual exemptions and deductions on long-term investments up to a maximum of Rs 375,000, none was allowed under the new regime.

However, individuals were given the choice to go either for the new regime or continue with the old regime. In the Budget for 2023-24, she altered the tax new structure to provide for nil tax on income up to Rs 300,000; 5 per cent tax on income in the Rs 300,001-Rs 600,000 bracket; 10 per cent in the Rs 600,001-Rs 900,000 bracket; 15 per cent in Rs 900,001-Rs 1,200,000; 20 per cent in Rs 1,200,001-1,500,000; and 30 per cent on above Rs 1,500,000. Besides, salaried persons and pensioners can also claim a standard deduction of Rs 50,000. This was much better than the 2020-21 package. Under it, a person with an annual income of say Rs 1,500,000 needs to pay Rs 140,000 as tax when compared to Rs 150,000 payable under the old regime albeit with tax breaks. Besides, the former left the person with cash-in-hand of Rs 1,360,000 against only Rs 975,000 under the old regime (after paying tax Rs 150,000 and investment Rs 375,000). Furthermore, under the new (modified) regime a salaried person won't have to pay any tax on annual income up to Rs 750,000. In the Budget for 2024-25, the FM has further tweaked the slabs to provide



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

for nil tax on income up to Rs 300,000; 5 per cent tax on income in the Rs 300,001-Rs 700,000 bracket; 10 per cent in the Rs 700,001-Rs 1,000,000 brackets; 15 per cent in Rs 1,000,001-Rs 1,200,000; 20 per cent in Rs 1,200,001-1,500,000; and 30 per cent on above Rs 1,500,000. Besides, salaried persons and pensioners can now claim a standard deduction of Rs 75,000. For a person with an annual income of Rs 1,500,000, these changes will yield an incremental savings of Rs 15,000 over the tax payable as per the 2023-24 budget. She will need to pay only Rs 125,000 as tax. Moreover, a salaried person won't have to pay any tax on annual income up to Rs 825,000 up from Rs 750,000 earlier. Already, nearly two-thirds of those filing IT returns have shifted to the new tax regime.

The additional sweetener from the 2024-25 budget will incentivize more persons to shift. Coming to CGT, the subsisting tax rates varied widely depending on the asset such as equity shares, bonds, physical assets, listed or unlisted, holding period, etc. This was prone to arbitrage/misuse, evasion and protracted litigation. Last year, the government began the process of reforming it. In the Finance Bill, 2023 passed by the Lok Sabha on March 24, 2023, it amended to change the tax treatment of capital gains from non-equity or debt mutual funds (DMF). DMF is a scheme that invests in fixed-income instruments, such as corporate and government bonds, corporate debt securities, money market instruments etc. that offer capital appreciation.

Earlier, any capital gain on redemption of units in a debt fund held for three years or longer was treated as long-term capital gain (LTCG) and taxed at a flat 20 per cent with the

benefit of indexation (it adjusts the cost of a person's investment to account for inflation, effectively reducing her capital gains and in turn, her tax liability). Any capital gain on redemption of units before three years was treated as short-term capital gain (STCG) and taxed at an individual's income tax (albeit personal) slab rate.

The amendment dispensed with this distinction in the case of 'Specified mutual funds' (SMFs) which essentially refer to mutual funds where not more than 35 per cent of their total proceeds are invested in equity shares of domestic companies. As a result, gains arising from SMFs irrespective of the period for which the units are held by investors are deemed STCGs and hence, liable to tax at the rate applicable to the slab in which their total income falls.

The new tax treatment effective from April 1, 2023, also applied to exchange-traded funds (ETFs), gold funds, outbound mutual funds equity funds etc. In the budget for 2024-25, the FM has gone for a major overhaul of the CGT regime. For all categories of assets - financial or physical, listed or unlisted - except debt and non-equity MFs and unlisted bonds, long-term capital gains (LTCG) will attract tax at a uniform rate of 12.5 per cent. The holding period for deciding long-term is 24 months except in the case of stocks, equity mutual funds and REITs/InvITs where the threshold is 12 months. In the case of debt and non-equity MFs and unlisted bonds, the gains will be taxed at the applicable slab rate.

For assets held for less than 24 months, short-term capital gains (STCG) will be taxed at the applicable slab rate. However, in the case of stocks, equity mutual funds, listed bonds and REITs/InvITs, the STCG will be taxed at 20 per cent. This is up from

15 per cent levied earlier. Pertinently, for these instruments, even the LTCG tax of 12.5 per cent is higher than the 10 per cent levied earlier. Three broad messages emanate from these changes.

First, these reward long-term investors who will now pay LTCG of 12.5 per cent down from 20 per cent or the applicable slab rate (generally 39 per cent) earlier depending on the asset class. A higher annual exemption limit of Rs 125,000 (up from the existing Rs 100,000) from LTCG from stocks and equity MFs is an added sweetener. Second, while reducing the LTCG tax rate, FM has taken away the benefit of indexation.

This way she has plugged a major source of revenue loss in the real estate sector whereby developers could drastically reduce the tax outgo by taking advantage of indexation. However, owners of old houses acquired before 2001 (ancestral property) have been spared as they will continue to get indexation benefits. Third, investors looking for short-term gains pay more as the STCG tax rate on stocks and equity mutual funds now is 20 per cent up from 15 per cent earlier.

These persons being mostly rich persons/high net-worth individuals with surplus funds, Sitharaman's endeavour to collect more tax from them is fully justified. The new CGT regime is undoubtedly a big improvement. However, the government should aim at a structure where irrespective of the asset class, listed or unlisted and the holding period, the capital gains arising therefrom are an addition to her income in the relevant year. Therefore, tax should be levied at the rate applicable to the slab his total income falls in (all sources put together).

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

# The OTT platforms are redefining star power and entertainment

These platforms not only showcase diverse stories and talents but also help actors reach a global audience and achieve instant stardom

In today's rapidly changing entertainment landscape, Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms have emerged as a powerful force in redefining how we consume content and perceive celebrity status. These platforms have not only revolutionized the way stories are told but also introduced a new breed of superstars, offering actors opportunities to gain recognition and connect with audiences on a global scale that rivals traditional commercial movie stardom. The accessibility of content through platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ has disrupted the established order in both Hollywood and Bollywood. Unlike conventional cinema, where fame often dictated success, OTT platforms prioritize diverse



CHAITANYA KUMAR PRASAD

storytelling and talent. This shift has empowered actors who were previously relegated to supporting roles or lesser-known projects to take center stage and achieve instant fame. For instance, actors like Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Pankaj Tripathi, Vijay Varma, and Jaideep Ahlawat in India, along with Phoebe Waller-Bridge in the West, have risen to stardom through standout performances on OTT platforms.

These digital stages provide a unique opportunity for actors to connect with audiences worldwide, transcending borders and cultural boundaries. OTT platforms have also given rise to a new form of celebrity influence, one that values performance, quality, and character relatability over traditional box office metrics. The popularity of these stars is rooted in their ability to connect with audiences through captivating stories and authentic performances.

This evolution has opened doors for exploring a wide range of genres and unconventional characters, allowing actors to showcase their versatility and depth. By stepping beyond the typical main character archetypes, actors now have the opportunity to por-

tray complex roles that not only highlight their talent but also solidify their star status and diversify their portfolios. What sets OTT stars apart is their relatability and authenticity, which enhances their appeal. Unlike traditional movie icons who are often seen as larger-than-life figures, OTT stars are perceived as more down-to-earth and relatable. This relatability translates into strong brand value, as audiences feel a deeper connection to these actors and their on-screen personas. OTT platforms also serve as a hub for brand collaborations, where actors endorse products that align with their on-screen personas. This integration of content and commerce has opened up new avenues for revenue generation for actors,



while also boosting their brand image. Additionally, OTT platforms have the distinct advantage of reaching a larger and more diverse audience, further enhancing their appeal. The influence of OTT platforms is also evident in how they have breathed new life into theatrical releases. There is now a "reverse osmosis"

effect where movies that may have had limited box office runs or regional appeal find broader audiences and renewed popularity when released on streaming services. Moreover, the allure of OTT platforms has attracted big stars and celebrated directors to create original content specifically for streaming audiences. Renowned filmmakers and top-tier actors, who traditionally dominated the theatrical space, are now embracing the creative freedom and diverse storytelling opportunities offered by OTT platforms. High-profile projects like Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman" on Netflix and Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Heeramandi" are prime examples of this shift. During the COVID-19 pandemic,

when theaters were shut down, OTT platforms not only sustained the entertainment industry but also thrived as the sole infotainment channel for audiences.

The era of DVD rentals and brick-and-mortar video stores has given way to the convenience of streaming services, which offer a vast library of movies and TV shows at the click of a button. Streaming platforms have emerged as launchpads for movies and series that gain immense popularity, often surpassing traditional cinema. Shows like "Stranger Things," "Money Heist," and "Sacred Games" have garnered cult followings, turning their actors into global sensations. The viral nature of streaming content, combined with its global accessibil-

ity, can catapult relatively unknown actors and smaller productions into the limelight, achieving a level of fame that rivals big-budget blockbusters. OTT platforms also cater to niche audiences by offering content that may not have widespread commercial appeal but resonates deeply with specific viewer groups. This has allowed for a variety of stories and genres to thrive, from indie films to experimental series. By tapping into these niche markets, OTT platforms have redefined the concept of a "hit," allowing for diverse forms of success that go beyond traditional box office.

(The writer is former Addl. DG DFF & Festival Director IFFI, Views are personal. Inputs: Zoya Ahmad, Vaishnavie Srinivasan)



# Hamas leader Ismail killed in alleged Israeli strike

AP ■ BEIRUT



Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed by a pre-dawn airstrike in the Iranian capital Wednesday, Iran and the militant group said, blaming Israel for a shock assassination that risks escalating the conflict even as the US and other nations were scrambling to prevent an all-out regional war. Iran's supreme leader vowed revenge against Israel.

There was no immediate comment from Israel, which has pledged to kill Haniyeh and other Hamas leaders over the group's October 7 attack on southern Israel. The strike came just after Haniyeh had attended the inauguration of Iran's new president in Tehran — and only hours after Israel targeted a top commander in Gaza, Iran's ally Hezbollah in the Lebanese capital Beirut. The assassination of Hamas' top political leader was potentially explosive amid the region's volatile, intertwined conflicts — because of its target, its timing and the decision to carry it out in Tehran. Most dangerous was the potential to push Iran and Israel into direct confrontation if Iran retaliates.

"We consider his revenge as our duty," Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a statement on his official website. He said Israel had "prepared a harsh punishment for itself" by killing "a dear guest in our home."

Bitter regional rivals, Israel and Iran risked plunging into war earlier this year when Israel hit Iran's embassy in Damascus in April. Iran retaliated and Israel countered in an unprecedented exchange of strikes on each other's soil, but international efforts succeeded

in containing that cycle before it spun out of control. Haniyeh's killing could also prompt Hamas to pull out of negotiations for a cease-fire and hostage release deal in the 10-month-old war in Gaza, which US mediators had said were making progress. And it could inflame already heightening tensions between Israel and Hezbollah — which international diplomats were trying to contain after a weekend rocket attack that killed 12 young people in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights.

Tuesday evening, Israel carried out a rare strike in the Lebanese capital that it said killed a top Hezbollah commander allegedly behind the rocket strike. Hezbollah, which denied any role in the Golan strike, said Wednesday that it was still searching for the body of Fouad Shukur in the rubble of the building that was hit in a Beirut suburb, killing two women and two children, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. There was no immediate reaction from the White House to the killing of Haniyeh. A key question was whether Israel told its top ally

the US ahead of time about the strike.

Asked about Haniyeh's killing during a visit to Singapore, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, "This is something we were not aware of or involved in."

Speaking to Channel News Asia, Blinken said he would not speculate about the impact on cease-fire efforts. "But I can tell you that the imperative of getting a cease-fire, the importance that that has for everyone, remains."

In Manila, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said he still had hopes for a diplomatic solution on the Israeli-Lebanon border. "I don't think that war is inevitable," he said. "I maintain that. I think there's always room and opportunity for diplomacy, and I'd like to see parties pursue those opportunities."

But international diplomats trying to defuse tensions were alarmed. One Western diplomat, whose country has worked to prevent an Israeli-Hezbollah escalation, said the double strikes in Beirut and Tehran have "almost killed" hopes for a Gaza cease-fire and could push the Middle East into a "devastating regional war." The diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive situation.

An Israeli military spokesman declined to comment. Israel often doesn't comment on assassinations carried out by its Mossad intelligence agency or strikes on other countries. In a statement by his office, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Israel doesn't want war after its strike on the Hezbollah commander in Beirut, "but we are preparing for all possibilities." He did not mention the Haniyeh killing.

The killing of Haniyeh abroad comes as Israel has not had a clear success in killing the group's top leadership in Gaza, who are believed to be primarily responsible for planning the October 7 attack, after nearly 10 months of fighting in the enclave.

Earlier this month, Israel carried out a strike in Gaza targeting the head of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, killing at least 90 Palestinians living in nearby tents, according to Gaza health authorities. Israel said it believed Deif was killed, but neither it nor Hamas has confirmed his death.

More elusive has been Hamas' top leader in Gaza, Yehya Sinwar, believed to be the mastermind of Hamas' brutal surprise assault into southern Israel, during which militants killed some 1,200 people and abducted 250 others.

Haniyeh left the Gaza Strip in 2019 and had lived in exile in Qatar. Israel has targeted Hamas figures in Lebanon and Syria during the war — but going after Haniyeh in Iran was vastly more sensitive. But Israel has operated there in the past: It is suspected of running a yearslong assassination campaign against Iranian nuclear scientists. In 2020, a top Iranian military nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, was killed by a remote-controlled machine gun while traveling in a car outside Tehran. During Haniyeh's last hours in Iran — a close ally of Hamas — he was smiling and clapping at the inauguration ceremony of the new President Masoud Pezeshkian. AP photos showed him seated alongside leaders from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group and Hezbollah, and Iranian media showed him and Pezeshkian

## China flays Haniyeh killings; warns of deeper chaos

Beijing (PTI): Strongly condemning the assassination of the Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, China — which brokered a unity deal between various Palestine groups last week — on Wednesday warned that the killing could plunge the region into deeper chaos.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a media briefing here that Beijing strongly opposed the assassination of Haniyeh, whose Hamas group took part in the unity talks along with 14 Palestine factions in Beijing sponsored by China. Haniyeh, Hamas' supreme leader, was killed in an airstrike in Tehran early Wednesday. He was in exile and was on Israel's hit list after the militant group launched a surprise attack on Israel on October 7 last year. "China has always advocated resolving regional disputes through

negotiation and dialogue," Lin said, adding that China was "deeply concerned" that the incident could lead to further turmoil in the region. He also reiterated China's call for a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire in Gaza to avoid further escalation of the conflict. Last week, the Chinese Foreign Ministry which coordinated the dialogue among 14 rival factions, said the declaration was a first step to promote a "comprehensive, durable and sustainable ceasefire" in the Gaza Strip battered by Israeli bombing. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who met the leaders' factions, said the signing of the agreement was "an important, historic moment in the Palestinian cause." He had also said that under the deal the rival groups had agreed to set up an "interim national reconciliation government" to govern post-war Gaza.

rebels who control much of Yemen.

As a show of support for Hamas in the Gaza war, Hezbollah has been exchanging fire almost daily with Israel across the Israeli-Lebanese border in a simmering but deadly conflict that has repeatedly threatened to escalate into all-out war. The Houthis and Iraqi and Syrian militias have also fired rockets and drones at Israel and at American bases in the region, though most have been intercepted. A strike Tuesday night southwest of the Iraqi capital Baghdad killed four members of one Iranian-backed militia, Kataib Hezbollah, which has targeted US bases previously, according to Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, a militia coalition. It accused the US of being behind the strike. US officials did not immediately comment.

## 'Palestinians detained by Israeli authorities faced torture'

Geneva (AP): The UN human rights office issued a report Wednesday saying Palestinians detained by Israeli authorities since the October 7 attacks faced waterboarding, sleep deprivation, electric shocks, the release of dogs, and other forms of torture and mistreatment.

The report said Israel's prison service held more than 9,400 "security detainees" as of the end of June, and some have been held in secret without access to lawyers or respect for their legal rights. A summary of the report, based on interviews with former detainees and other sources, decried a "staggering" number of detainees — including men, women, children, journalists and human rights defenders — and said such practices raise concerns about arbitrary detention. "The testimonies gathered by my office and other entities indicate a range of appalling acts, such as waterboarding and the release of dogs on detainees, amongst other acts, in flagrant violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law," said UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk in a statement. Findings in the report, one of the most extensive of its kind, could be used by International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutors who are looking into crimes committed in connection with Hamas' October 7 attacks and Israel's blistering ongoing military campaign in Gaza.

## Sudan's military says its top commander survived drone strike that killed five

AP ■ CAIRO

Sudan's military said its top commander, Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, survived a drone attack on a military graduation ceremony that killed five people in the country's east. The military said in a statement Wednesday that the attack by two drones took place in Gebait, a town in eastern Sudan, after the ceremony was concluded. Military chief Burhan, who was attending, was not hurt, according to Lt. Col. Hassan Ibrahim, from the military spokesman's office.

Sudan has been torn by war for more than a year between the military and a powerful paramilitary group, the Rapid

Support Forces. With fighting in the capital, Khartoum, the military leadership largely operates out of eastern Sudan near the Red Sea Coast. Videos posted by Al Araby TV shows multiple people running along a dusty road at the time of the drone attack, while other footage showed people at the graduation ceremony apparently looking to the sky as the drone strike hit.

The assassination attempt comes nearly a week after Sudan's paramilitary leader said that he plans to attend cease-fire talks in Switzerland next month arranged by the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, head of the Rapid

Support Forces fighting Sudan's army, emphasized at the time that the talks would become "a major step" toward peace and stability in Sudan and create a new state based on "justice, equality and federal rule." The Sudanese Foreign Ministry on Tuesday responded to the U.S. invitation to the talks in Geneva, saying the military-controlled Sudanese government is prepared to take part but said that any negotiation before implementing the Jeddah Declaration "wouldn't be acceptable to the Sudanese people." The Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect Civilians passed last year meant to end the conflict, but neither side commit-

ted to its objectives. Representatives from the Sudanese Army and the RSF, led by Mohamed Hamadan Dagalo, engaged in revived talks brokered by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia in Jeddah, focusing on the delivery of humanitarian aid, achieving ceasefires and paving the way toward a permanent cessation of aggression, among other objectives.

In its Tuesday statement, the Sudanese Foreign Ministry accused the RSF of being the only party that attacks cities, villages and civilians. The military-controlled Sudanese government demanded sanctions to be imposed on "rebels to stop their continuous aggression, end their siege on cities, and open roads."

## Mosque targeted, around 40 police officers injured at UK stabbing site

PTI ■ LONDON

A far-right mob targeted a mosque in north-west England that saw three young girls fatally stabbed during a peaceful vigil in their memory and around 40 police officers suffered injuries in the disorder. According to reports, misinformation being spread on social media about the ethnicity and religion of the 17-year-old male suspect in police custody led to the rioting at the mosque in Southport on Tuesday night. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who had earlier visited the site of Monday's brutal stabbing attack on a dance

studio on Hart Street, condemned the mobs for hijacking the vigil and insulting the grieving community with their actions. "The people of Southport are reeling after the horror inflicted on them yesterday. They deserve our support and our respect," said Starmer.

"Those who have hijacked the vigil for the victims with violence and thuggery have insulted the community as it grieves. They will feel the full force of the law," he said. Alice Dasilva Aguiar, 9, Bebe King, 6, and Elsie Dot Stancombe, 7, were named as the victims of the fatal stabbing. Eight others were seriously injured, five of

whom remain in critical condition in hospital. Merseyside Police have said it was currently not treating the incident as terror-related. "There has been much speculation and hypothesis around the status of a 17-year-old male who is currently in police custody and some individuals are using this to bring violence and disorder to our streets. We have already said that the person arrested was born in the UK and speculation helps nobody at this time," said Alex Goss, Assistant Chief Constable of the force.

The police said 22 of its officers sustained serious injuries, including fractures, lacerations, a suspected broken nose and concussion. The rioters set cars belonging to members of the public alight, threw bricks at the local mosque and damaged a local convenience store, and set large refuse bins on fire.

As a result, strict legal orders have been enforced in the area designed to minimise serious violence and giving additional powers to officers to tackle anti-social behaviour. "Sadly, offenders have destroyed garden walls so they could use the bricks to attack our officers and have set cars belonging to the public on fire, and damaged cars parked in the Mosque car park.

## About 8 in 10 Democrats satisfied with Harris after Biden drops out: Poll

Washington (AP): Vice President Kamala Harris appears to have energized Democrats in the early days of her candidacy, with the surge in warm feelings extending across multiple groups, including some key Democratic constituencies that had been especially tepid about President Joe Biden, a new poll shows.

About 8 in 10 Democrats say they would be somewhat or very satisfied if Harris became the Democratic nominee for president, according to the survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which was conducted after Biden withdrew from the race.

In a separate AP-NORC poll, taken before Biden dropped out but after his debate against former President Donald Trump, only about 4 in 10 Democrats said they were somewhat or very satisfied that he was the Democratic Party's likely nominee for president.

The rapidly changing views among Democrats in such a short time span underscore how swiftly the party — from rank-and-file voters to elected officials — has coalesced behind Harris as its standard-bearer, motivated by the fresh face at the top of the ticket and newfound confidence in the party's prospects against Trump in November. Gary Hines, a Democrat from Philadelphia, said he wasn't particularly impressed by Harris' first presidential bid but now, she's shown "she's up to the task, can do the work, has proven that she's running a strong campaign so far and maybe on a bigger level, she's somebody



that can beat Donald Trump." All those factors have ignited an enthusiasm in Hines that wasn't there when Biden was still in the race, he said.

"I really want to go out and maybe knock on doors, which I would've never done," said Hines, 68. "It's jazzed me up quite a bit." Americans are also more likely to say that Harris would make a good president than they were earlier in July, a shift that was primarily driven by Democrats. They still see a tough contest looming, though: A majority of U.S. adults, 56%, say that if Trump and Harris are their parties' nominees for the general election in November, Trump is more likely to win. Lauren Schulman, a Democrat from Pompano Beach, Florida, said she admires Biden and what he has accomplished during his presidency. But she said with him at the top of the ticket, "I have just been so terrified that we were going to lose."

## 'China behind 2021 cyberattack on govt agency'

AP ■ BERLIN

An investigation has determined that "Chinese state actors" were responsible for a 2021 cyberattack on Germany's national office for cartography, officials in Berlin said on Wednesday. The Chinese ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Ministry for a protest for the first time in decades.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Sebastian Fischer said the German government has "reliable information from our intelligence services" about the source of the attack on the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, which he said was carried out

"for the purpose of espionage." "This serious cyberattack on a federal agency shows how big the danger is from Chinese cyberattacks and spying," Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in a statement. "We call on China to refrain from and prevent such cyberattacks. These cyberattacks threaten the digital sovereignty of Germany and Europe." Fischer declined to elaborate on who exactly in China was responsible. He said a Chinese ambassador was last summoned to the German Foreign Ministry in 1989 after the Tiananmen Square crackdown. Germany's attribution of the cyberattack is the latest case to reflect increasing ten-

sions between Berlin and Beijing about potential security risks posed by China. In April, three people were arrested in Germany on suspicion of spying for China and arranging to transfer information on technology with potential military uses. And an assistant to a prominent German far-right lawmaker in the European Parliament was arrested on suspicion of spying for China. Three weeks ago, Germany said it will bar the use of critical components made by Chinese companies Huawei and ZTE in core parts of the country's 5G networks in two steps starting in 2026. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government last year drew up a

strategy for relations with China that refers to a "systemic rivalry" with the Asian power and a need to reduce risks of economic dependency, but highlights Berlin's desire to work with Beijing on challenges such as climate change and maintain trade ties. The strategy drew criticism from Beijing. In the 2021 case, the Interior Ministry said that part of the cartography agency's network was compromised but further malware wasn't found. It said the attacker was successfully kicked out of the network, and the agency — which provides official geodata for Germany — undertook a series of measures to improve its IT security.

## Carter Center unable to verify Venezuela poll results, blasts officials



Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, left, and opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez hold up vote tally sheets from the top of a truck during a protest against the official presidential election results declaring President Nicolas Maduro the winner in Caracas, Venezuela, on Tuesday two days after the election. AP/PTI

AP ■ CARACAS

The Carter Center said it was unable to verify the results of Venezuela's presidential election, blaming authorities for a "complete lack of transparency" in declaring Nicolas Maduro the winner without providing any individual polling tallies. The statement Tuesday night by the Atlanta-based group is perhaps the harshest rebuke yet of Venezuela's chaotic election process because it comes from one of just a handful of outside groups invited by the Maduro government to observe the vote.

"The electoral authority's failure to announce disaggregated results by polling station constitutes a serious breach of electoral principles," the Carter Center said. The group, which had a technical mission of 17 experts spread out in four cities across Venezuela, added that the election did not meet

international standards and "cannot be considered democratic." The Carter Center's harsh criticism capped a second long day of protests against the results by opponents of Maduro who said their candidate, Edmundo Gonzalez, trounced the incumbent by a more than two-to-one margin.

Maduro's government hasn't taken lightly to the criticism and ratcheted up their attacks on their opponents Tuesday, with some allies suggesting the opposition's most influential leader and a presidential candidate be arrested.

A day after Maduro was declared the winner by a National Electoral Council that is loyal to him and the ruling party, the attacks, which were aired on national television, followed the opposition's surprise release of detailed voting data that it said shows that Edmundo Gonzalez won by a landslide.

## Storm disrupts high-speed trains from Paris

Paris (AP): A local storm on Wednesday interrupted all high-speed train traffic connecting Paris to the southeast of the country as well as Switzerland in both directions, France's rail company said, leaving thousands of travellers stranded amid the Olympics and departures for summer vacation. The SNCF said all the fast trains leaving from and arriving at the Gare de Lyon train station in the French capital were immobilised due to a tree that fell on the tracks and was hit by a train in Burgundy. Regular-speed trains use separate tracks and haven't been affected. Authorities cut the power off the track, but initial observations showed the matter won't be fixed quickly, the SNCF said, adding that all on that line were being brought back to a station in order to help people.

## 'US-Mexico border arrests expected to drop by 30%'

San Diego (AP): United States-Mexico border arrests have plummeted about 30 per cent in July to a new low for Joe Biden's presidency, US authorities said, raising prospects that a temporary ban on asylum may be lifted soon.

The US Border Patrol is expected to arrest migrants about 57,000 times during the month, down from 83,536 arrests in June, the previous low mark of Biden's presidency, according to two US Customs and Border Protection officials who spoke to The Associated Press on Wednesday on the condition of anonymity because the figures had not been released publicly. It would be the lowest monthly tally since 40,507 arrests in September 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic slowed movement across borders in many countries, including to the United States.

Even before Biden's Democratic administration invoked powers to suspend asylum on June 5, border arrests had fallen by about half from a record-high of 250,000 in December amid increased Mexican enforcement. Since June 5, arrests have fallen by half again, helping the White House fend off attacks by former President Donald Trump and other

Republicans that Democrats, including Vice President Kamala Harris, have allowed the border to spiral out of control. The asylum halt would end if daily arrests drop below 1,500 over a seven-day average, a scenario that Customs and Border Protection officials are preparing for with arrests now hovering 1,600 to 1,700 a day. The halt would be reinstated if arrests reach a seven-day daily average of 2,500, a threshold of "emergency border circumstances" that was immediately met when the restrictions took effect in June. Immigrant advocacy groups are challenging the asylum measures in court. Under the halt, US authorities deny a chance at asylum to anyone who crosses the border illegally.

Unaccompanied children are exempt, and others may seek asylum-like forms of protection that allow them to stay in the United States with a higher bar and fewer benefits, like the United Nations Convention Against Torture. Asked to comment on July numbers, the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday referred to a statement last week that arrests had dropped 55 per cent since asylum restrictions took effect.



# Hasina seeks cooperation from UN, to conduct probe into violence

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday sought cooperation from the United Nations and other international organisations to conduct a proper investigation into the recent nationwide violence during the anti-quota agitation to punish the real culprits involved in the attacks. Bangladesh witnessed violent clashes between the police and mostly student protesters demanding an end to a controversial quota system that reserved 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971.

"We're seeking UN and other international organisations' cooperation for a fair and proper investigation into the matter," Hasina said, adding that the people involved in the violence must be brought to justice.

"Because I know I have no negligence to this end," she was quoted as saying by the Dhaka Tribune newspaper.

Speaking at an event, she came down heavily on those who were involved in damaging public properties alongside killing many people and thus



tarnishing the country's image. "My question is who has gained what (through the mayhem)? Why was there bloodshed?" she asked.

The prime minister said they have already formed a one-member judicial probe commission with an apex court justice before raising any such demand to investigate the matter.

"We have formed the commission with a judge (of the High Court). I have given the order to include two more as man-

power and enhance the periphery of the investigation," she said.

"You (countrymen) have to find out the people involved in the conspiracy to push the country backwards through fishing in troubled water by launching such an incident," she said.

The conspiracies being hatched by the collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces pushed Bangladesh back time and again, she added.

"These are the most painful

and regrettable things," she said with an emotional voice.

The prime minister said her government had earlier issued a notification cancelling the quota system.

The Bangladesh government for the first time on Monday officially acknowledged that 150 people were killed across the country during the students' unrest over the quota system.

The government called in the army to quell protests, which started in universities and colleges earlier this month, quickly turning into a more widespread agitation against Hasina and her government, regarding job quotas.

The unrest has left several thousand people, including policemen, wounded and major government installations damaged.

The protests subsided last week after the apex Appellate Division of unitary Bangladesh's Supreme Court on July 21 ordered a massive quota reform, keeping only seven per cent of reserve posts instead of the existing 56 per cent.

The government subsequently issued a Gazette notification in line with the order saying 93 per cent of jobs would be open to candidates on merit.

# Myanmar's military regime extends state of emergency by 6 months

AP ■ BANGKOK

The military regime that seized power in Myanmar 3 1/2 years ago on Wednesday extended the state of emergency in the civil war-ravaged country for another six months, saying it needs time to prepare for long-promised elections.

The state of emergency was initially declared when troops ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on February 1, 2021, arresting her and members of her National League for Democracy party.

The emergency decree empowers the military to assume all government functions, giving the head of the ruling military council, Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing, legislative, judicial and executive powers.

At the moment, military regime is facing its greatest challenge since taking power, as powerful ethnic minority militias and people's defense forces that support Myanmar's main opposition have taken wide swaths of territory in fierce fighting in recent months. The military is now estimated to control less than half the country, but is holding on tenaciously to much of central Myanmar, including the capital, Naypyidaw, which



was recently targeted by small rocket attacks and two bombings. The extension of the state of emergency was granted by the National Defense and Security Council, after Ming Aung Hlaing argued more time is needed to restore stability to the country and carry out a census in preparations for national elections, state-run MRTV reported.

The plan for a general election is widely seen as an attempt to normalize the military's seizure of power through the ballot box and to deliver a result that ensures the generals retain control.

Critics have already said the military-planned elections will be neither free nor fair because there is no free media and most of the leaders of Suu Kyi's National League for

Democracy party have been arrested.

Under the country's 2008 constitution, drafted by the army, the military can rule the country under a state of emergency for one year, followed by two possible six-month extensions before holding elections.

Wednesday's extension, however, was the regime's sixth, and was again rubber-stamped by the NDSC, which is nominally a constitutional administrative government body, but in practice is controlled by the military. It did not announce the details behind its decision.

Additionally, such extensions are supposed to be endorsed by the country's president, but current acting president Myint Swe last week authorized Min Aung Hlaing to carry out his duties with the NDSC while he is on medical leave.

The military originally announced elections would be held in August, 2023, but has regularly pushed the date back and has recently said they would take place sometime in 2025. Under the country's constitution, for an election to be held the military has to transfer government functions to the president at least six months before the polls.

The 2021 military takeover was met with widespread non-violent protests. But after

peaceful demonstrations were put down with lethal force, many opponents of military rule took up arms, and large parts of the country are now embroiled in conflict.

The fiercest fighting in recent weeks has been in the north-east, where the ethnic militias from an alliance group claimed last week to have seized Lashio, which houses the northern regional military headquarters, and Mogoke, the center of the country's lucrative gem-mining industry.

Reports suggest that regime troops continue to hold the regional headquarters but could be forced from Lashio soon. In Lashio, the main prison gate was reportedly opened over the weekend and more than 200 political prisoners, including Tun Tun Hein, a former deputy speaker of the lower house of Myanmar's parliament and senior member of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, were released. Maung Maung Swe, a member of Myanmar's main opposition group, the National Unity Government — whose leadership operates largely from outside the country — told The Associated Press that its forces in Myanmar were providing care for more than 200 of released political prisoners.

# China sanctions US lawmaker for 'interference' in its domestic affairs

**Bangkok (AP):** China sanctioned a United States lawmaker on Wednesday for "frequently interfering" in China's domestic affairs.

The sanctions against Rep. Jim McGovern include freezing his assets and properties in China, prohibiting any organization or individual in China from conducting transactions or working with him, and denying him and his family a visa to enter the country, according to a statement from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It's one of several rounds of sanctions against US lawmakers and companies that China has announced as relations have soured between Beijing and Washington.

China previously sanctioned US representative Michael McCaul and ex-representative Michael Gallagher over their support for Taiwan, a self-governed democracy that China claims as its own. McCaul and McCaul introduced a bill calling for stronger US support for Tibet, a region in China where human rights groups have criticized authorities for the treatment of ethnic Tibetans. Relations between the US and China have sunk, starting with a trade war in 2018 and then the COVID-19 pandemic. The US has been increasingly critical of China's human rights record, its handling of the pandemic and its actions towards Taiwan.

# China accuses Japan of 'smear attacks' in recent talks with US, India, Aus

**Beijing (AP):** China has expressed strong dissatisfaction to Japan about what it called "smear attacks" against China at recent high-level meetings with the United States, India and Australia, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday.

A ministry statement said that Liu Jinsong, the director general of the Asian affairs department, conveyed solemn representations and serious concern at a meeting the previous day with Akira Yokochi, the deputy chief of mission at the Japanese Embassy.

"Liu pointed out that Japan's smear attacks on China are self-contradictory to its statement of promoting the strategic and reciprocal relationship between the two countries," the statement said.

Meeting in Tokyo on Sunday, Japan's foreign and defense ministers agreed to bolster military cooperation with the US at what are known as "2+2" talks with their American counterparts.

A joint statement said China's foreign policy "seeks to reshape the international order for its own benefit at the expense of others" and that such behavior represents "the greatest strategic challenge" in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. The US-Japan talks were followed by a meeting on Monday of the foreign ministers from the Quad countries — the US, Japan, India and Australia. The joint statement did not mention China by name but expressed



opposition to "the militarization of disputed features and coercive and intimidating maneuvers in the South China Sea."

The Chinese government has complained repeatedly about the US deepening ties with other countries in the face of China's rise, which President Joe Biden has made a priority during his four years in office. The Foreign Ministry statement said China urges Japan to stop making irresponsible remarks on China's internal affairs — a likely reference to Taiwan — and called on Japan to stop colluding with "certain countries" to form small circles that lead to confrontation. A Japanese Embassy statement said that Yokochi had expounded Japan's positions at the meeting and made representations on various China-related topics, but it did not provide any details.

# Russian military begins 3rd round of drills to train troops

AP ■ MOSCOW

The Russian military on Wednesday began a third round of drills with tactical nuclear weapons, part of the Kremlin's messaging intended to force the West to limit its support for Ukraine.

The Russian Defence Ministry said the drills will feature units of the central and southern military districts armed with Iskander short-range missiles. They will practice receiving nuclear weapons from storage and deploying them to designated

launch areas. The maneuvers will also include air force units that will arm their warplanes with nuclear weapons and perform patrol flights. The ministry said the drills are intended to maintain troops' readiness for combat missions. Tactical nuclear weapons include bombs, warheads for short-range missiles and artillery munitions and are meant for use on a battlefield. They are typically far less powerful than strategic weapons — massive warheads that arm intercontinental ballistic missiles and are

intended to obliterate entire cities.

The previous two rounds of the maneuvers were held in May and June. The drills in June were conducted jointly with the armed forces of Russia's ally Belarus. Last year, Russia moved some of its tactical nuclear weapons into neighboring Belarus, which also borders Ukraine and NATO members Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko has relied on close ties with Russia and provided

his country as a staging ground for sending troops to Ukraine in February 2022. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his officials have repeatedly reminded the West about the country's nuclear might in a bid to discourage NATO allies from ramping up their support for Kyiv. The Kremlin has described the drills with tactical nuclear weapons as part of Moscow's response to statements by NATO allies encouraging strikes on Russian territory with Western weapons and the possible deployment of Western

troops to Ukraine. Amid recent battlefield gains in Ukraine, Putin has emphasized that Russia doesn't need nuclear weapons to achieve his goals. But he also reaffirmed that they can be used in the case of a threat to Russia's territorial integrity in line with the country's nuclear doctrine. Russian hawks have urged the Kremlin to change the doctrine to lower the threshold for using nuclear weapons, and Putin said the document could be modified to take into account the evolving global situation.

# Boeing names new chief executive officer

**Chicago (AP):** Boeing named a longtime aerospace industry veteran on Wednesday as its next chief executive, who will take over a company that has been rocked by legal, regulatory and production problems.

Robert "Kelly" Ortberg, a former CEO at aerospace supplier Rockwell Collins, will succeed David Calhoun, 67, as CEO and president effective August 8, the company said. Calhoun announced in March that he would retire at the end of the year.

Boeing named its new CEO as it reported a loss of more than USD 1.4 billion on falling revenue during the second quarter. The loss was wider and revenue lower than Wall

Street expected, as both Boeing's commercial-airplanes business and defence unit lost money. The disappointing results come at a tumultuous time for Boeing. The company agreed to plead guilty this month to a federal fraud charge in connection with its 737 Max jetliner and two crashes that killed 346 people. The Federal Aviation Administration increased its oversight of the company after the blowout of a panel on an Alaska Airlines jet raised manufacturing quality concerns.

Boeing Chairman Steven Mollenkopf said Ortberg was chosen after a "thorough and extensive search process" and "has the right skills and experience to lead Boeing in its

next chapter". Ortberg has earned a reputation for running complex engineering and manufacturing companies, Mollenkopf said. The company waived the mandatory retirement age of 65 for Ortberg, a spokesperson said. Boeing did the same for Calhoun days after he turned 64 in 2021.

Ortberg emerged as a leading candidate only recently. Others who were reportedly considered for the job included Patrick Shanahan, a former Boeing executive and now

CEO of its most important supplier, Spirit AeroSystems, and another longtime Boeing executive, Stephanie Pope, who recently took over the commercial airplanes division.

Like Calhoun, who took over as CEO in the wake of the two Max crashes, Ortberg will be inheriting the leadership of a company facing ongoing crises and criticism from both outside and internally. It is pushing back against whistleblower allegations of manufacturing shortcuts that crimp on

safety. The company, based in Arlington, Virginia, also is dealing with supply-chain problems that are hindering production, which it hopes to fix in part by re-acquiring Spirit AeroSystems, a key contractor. It is still trying to persuade regulators to approve two new models of the Max and a bigger version of its two-aisle 777 jetliner. And it faces a multi-billion-dollar decision on when to design a new single-aisle plane to replace the Max.

**Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**  
Tender Notice Reference No. GNDU/Gen/55/2024  
The Department of G.N.D.U. Amritsar invites online bids for the following:

Sr. No.	Item	Quantity
1	Supply/ Printing of 40 Pages OMR Answer Books	16 Lac
2	Supply / Printing of 20 Pages Answer Book	50,000

Closing date & time: 21-08-2024 at 5:00 p.m.  
For details log onto: [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in)  
Note: Any corrigendum (s) to the Tender Notice shall be published on the above website only.

NA/12/24480/2023/36216 Dated CHD :- 7/31/2024

**Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot (Ph.D Section)**  
BABA FARID UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, FARIDKOT  
PH.D ENTRANCE TEST (PHDET)  
Online fresh applications in the prescribed format are invited through University website w.e.f from 01/08/2024 to 10/08/2024 for admission to Ph.D Courses in faculties of Medical / Allied Health/ Dental/ Nursing/ Physiotherapy/ Pharmaceutical Sciences, alongwith fee of Rs. 3000/- + 18% GST through University payment gateway. The date of Entrance Examination will be notified on University website. For eligibility/detail/updates visit at University at: [www.bfuhs.ac.in](http://www.bfuhs.ac.in)  
Note: The candidates who have already applied for PH.D Entrance Test (PHDET) Session 2022-23 need not apply again.

REGISTRAR

nil/12/206/2023/36207 Dated CHD :- 7/31/2024

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)  
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813  
Phone No. 0172-2207679, Email id: se-it-os@pspcl.in

**Tender Enquiry No.320/DIT-1083 dated 30-07-2024**  
Dy. CE/ IT (O&S) Ground Floor PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala invites e-tender for Provisioning of MPLS connectivity in 47 towns of PSPCL and PSPCL DC/ DRC. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 30-07-2024, 5:00 PM onwards.  
Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

C-517/24

76155/12/3207/2023/36243 Dated CHD :- 7/31/2024

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HAR DIN CHA, HAR DIN CHA

**THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.**  
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022, EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66  
Notice Inviting Tender [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop)

e tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Head office, Chandigarh Hologram i. Type-I ii. Type-II	Annual/ 60 Lac 80 Lac
2.	For Verka Mohali Dairy Hiring of vehicles:- a) Swift Desire/ Venue/ Breeze or Equivalent. b) Mahindra Pick-up (Capacity 02 Ton) c) Mahindra Camper	25 No's 02 No's 01 No.
3.	For Verka Bathinda Dairy Hiring of:- a) Insulated vehicles for supply of packed milk and fresh milk product in Bathinda Milkshed Area. b) Diesel Cars (Swift Dzire or Equivalent) at Milk Union Bathinda for Procurement, Marketing and Depot, Verka Bathinda Dairy	01 year with extension upto one year / 01 vehicle for 03 MT & 01 vehicle for 2.2 MT 03 No's
4.	For Verka Patiala Dairy a) Fire Wood b) Hiring of Passenger Car (Bolero/ Swift/ Dzire/ Toyota/ Etios or equivalent) for marketing activities. c) Hiring of:- i. Vehicle for Veterinary Route & Extension work. ii. Insulated S.S Road Milk Tankers for Milk lifting from BMC's /MCC's & sister Dairies Cap. 9000 - 11000 ltrs. iii. Vehicle Tata 207, Mahindra Maxi truck etc. for transportation of Milk from Societies/ Farms at MCC Samana (Route No. 14, 15 & 28).	Half yearly/ 1500 MT Annual 01 No. Single Chamber-14 No's Double Chamber-01 No. 03 No's
5.	For Verka Sangrur Dairy a) Hiring of Mahindra Maxi Truck Pickup, Bolero Pickup or equivalent for transportation of :- i. Milk through cans from various Societies/ Dairy Farms to MCC/BMC/ Dairy Dock. ii. Cattle feed and allied products from Verka Sangrur Dairy/ Stores to various Societies/ Dairy Farms/ Macc/ BMCs. b) Hiring of SS Road Milk Tankers cap.15,18,20,23,25,30 KL for transportation of milk from Verka sangrur Dairy to other Plants of Punjab and outside Punjab. c) For Design, Supply, Erection, Installation and testing of the PCC and APFC Panels. d) Allotment of Verka Milk booths at different location in distt. sangrur/ Barnala/ Malerkotla on rent basis. i. Civil Hospital Tapa ii. Civil Hospital Bhadour iii. Civil Hospital Ahemadgarh iv. Govt. Sen. Sec. School Sandhu Patti Barnala v. Market Committee Khanouri vi. Govt. Sen. Sec. School Moonak	02 Years/12 No's 02 Years/01 No. 03 No. 01 No. 03 Year on rent / 06 No's

NOTE:  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in).  
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

NA/12/24483/2023/36219

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

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SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022, EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66  
Notice Inviting Tender [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop)

e tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Jalandhar Dairy Design, Supply, Installation, testing & Commissioning of 1010 KVA DG set with electrical and civil work.	One job
2.	For Verka Gurdaspur Dairy a) For backlit glow sign board, double sided glow sign board, non lit flex board, flex change, flex banner, wall painting/ shop painting, vehicle painting, umbrella, A-type standing flex board and vinyl stickers. b) Allotment of civil Hospital Batala Milk Bar on rent. c) Hiring of :- i. Car (Swift Dzire or its equivalent) ii. Diesel Car (05 Seater Bolero camper or its equivalent)	01 year 02 year 01 year 01 year
3.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy a) Purchase of polypropylene bottles cap. 180ml with caps. b) Hiring of Vehicles (3.0 MT, 6.0 MT, 9.0 MT and 15.0 MT) for supplying of Milk Products in the Punjab and other states. c) Hiring of vehicle for supply of fresh Milk and Milk Products at Local Army 02/ Tray capacity 250) and Beas route (Tray Capacity 200)	Annual 01 No. 02 No's
4.	For Verka Ludhiana Dairy a) Sale of the unserviceable material on Annual Rate Contract basis. b) Supply of :- i. Veterinary medicines. ii. Single Phase Dairy Barn Ventilation fan with motors. c) Hiring of :- i. Insulated vehicles for supply of packed milk and fresh milk products in Ludhiana city and adjoining towns. ii. Passenger vehicles Innova crystal for Verka Ludhiana Dairy without driver for minimum running of 2000 kms per month on lump sum basis. d) Outsourcing of milk Booth/ Milk Bar at :- i. Park back side Main Shopping Centre Sector 32 A Chandigarh Road, Ludhiana. ii. Machhewara. iii. Kamalpur	Annual Annual One time purchase 200 No's 01 year with extension upto one year 01 No. 03 years
5.	For Verka Faridkot Dairy Hiring of :- a) Insulated road milk tanker for transportation of milk from MCC's to various Milk Plants in Punjab etc. on rate contract. b) Pick up or its equivalent vehicle for lifting the milk from MPCs/DF to MCC at Route 5,25,27,62 & 18. c) Insulated road milk tanker for transportation of milk from BMC's to various milk chilling Centres/ Milk plants in Punjab etc. on rate contract. d) Diesel Cars for procurement, Marketing & AI Activities in the field. i. Bolero Jeep ii. Swift Dzire or its equivalent	Cap.10000 Kg-06 No's Cap.15000 Kg-02 No's Cap.20000 Kg-02 No's - Cap.10000 Kg-02 No's
6.	For Verka CFP, Bhattian (Khanna) Labour Job contract for different activities related with Production, store & Mktg. sections.	Annual
7.	For Verka CFP, Ghania Ke Banger Transportation of Verka Cattle Feed and mineral feed supplement to various stations in the state of Punjab.	Annual

NOTE:  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in).  
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

NA/12/24488/2023/36228

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)



# Stock markets rise for 4th day

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rose by nearly 286 points to close at a record high while Nifty settled above 24,950 level on Wednesday, extending their winning run to the fourth day on gains in metal, power and select auto shares.

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled higher by 285.94 points or 0.35 per cent at 81,741.34 — its all-time closing high — with 20 of its components advancing and 10 ending lower. The index opened higher and jumped 372.64 points or 0.45 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 81,828.04.

The NSE Nifty rose 93.85 points or 0.38 per cent to close at an all-time high of 24,951.15. During the day, it surged 127.3 points or 0.51 per cent to hit a high of 24,969.35.

“The domestic market is attempting to cross above the psychological threshold of 25,000, as subdued Q1FY25 earnings and stretched valuations are curbing the challenge, while positive global trends and sector rotation are supporting the



traction,” Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. Positive global sentiment driven by expectations of an easing interest rate cycle by the US Fed and the RBI in the medium term, owing to benign inflation, ignited the rally, he added.

As expected, the BoJ raised its interest rate while all eyes are on US Fed policy to be announced later in the evening. Among the Sensex stocks, JSW Steel, Asian Paints, Maruti Suzuki India, NTPC, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, Bharti Airtel, ITC and Tech Mahindra were the major

gainers. Maruti Suzuki rose by 2.28 per cent as the auto major reported a 47 per cent jump in its net profit for the June quarter. Reliance Industries, Tata Motors, Infosys, Mahindra and Mahindra, Bajaj Finance and Axis Bank were the laggards. Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities, said Nifty ended comfortably in the green ahead of the FOMC outcome, closing just shy of the psychological 25,000 mark, signifying the bulls’ continued strength on Dalal Street.

Investors now await key data releases and the FOMC outcome, with expectations

set on Jerome Powell’s commentary, Tapse said. The US Federal Reserve (Fed) will announce its fifth interest rate decision for this year later in the night, after a two-day meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC). From this meeting, the Fed might offer hints about a possible rate cut in September.

“Indian shares began Wednesday on a positive note, buoyed by strong cues from other Asian markets amid expectations for additional stimulus measures from Beijing to support its ailing economy,” Avdhut Bagkar Technical and Derivatives Analyst at StoxBox, said. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies jumped to a life-time peak of Rs 462.38 lakh crore (USD 5.52 trillion) on Wednesday helped by a four-day rally in benchmark indices, making investors richer by Rs 5.45 lakh crore.

At the market close, the BSE smallcap gauge fell 0.14 per cent to in the broader market. However, BSE MidCap gauge jumped 0.86 per cent. During the day, both the indices hit their all-time high level.

# India’s smartphone shipments dip 2% in Q2 2024 as heatwave, slower demand take toll

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India’s smartphone shipments fell two per cent year-on-year in June quarter, hurt by the heatwave and slower demand, as per a report by global research firm Counterpoint that showed Xiaomi reclaimed top spot in volume share and Samsung led in value terms. Notably, 5G smartphones captured their highest-ever share of 77 per cent in the overall shipments, according to Counterpoint’s Monthly India Smartphone Tracker. Another key takeaway was that India’s smartphone market hit its highest ever Q2 value, driven by the ongoing trend of premiumisation.

“India’s smartphone shipments fell 2 per cent YoY in Q2 2024 (April-June),” it said. The decline was influenced by a heatwave, a seasonal slump, and slower demand from Q1 2024.

“In response, OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) hosted sales



events in Q2 to clear inventory, leading to a reduced sell-in and a period of degrowth,” it said. On the market’s volume dynamics, Senior Research Analyst Shilpi Jain explained that heatwave conditions in various regions led to lower footfalls in offline channels and delayed smartphone purchases as consumers prioritised appliances like air-conditioners and refrigerators. This reduced demand led to

an inventory build-up. However, summer sales at online channels, good harvest and aggressive promotions towards the end of the quarter provided relief to OEMs, helping close the quarter on a better note than at the beginning. “During the quarter, Xiaomi reclaimed the top spot with a 23 per cent YoY growth in its shipments, driven by a streamlined and focused portfolio that spans from the entry-level to affordable

premium segments,” Counterpoint said. Xiaomi reclaimed the top spot with an 18.9 per cent shipment share, and Vivo followed closely with 18.8 per cent share. On value dynamics, Research Analyst Shubham Singh said: “In Q2 2024, India’s smartphone market achieved its highest ever Q2 value, driven by the ongoing trend of premiumisation.” Consumers continued to upgrade to higher-value smartphones, supported by better trade-in values and easy financing schemes. This resulted in a 24 per cent YoY growth in the ultra-premium (over Rs 45,000) segment. Samsung led the market in terms of value with a 25 per cent share, followed by vivo and Apple. “Meanwhile, Apple ranked third in value terms. But it is expected to rebound in the next quarter, driven by the recent price cuts across the entire range of iPhones,” Singh said.

# Toyota to set up manufacturing plant in Maharashtra; likely to invest ₹20 K crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automaker Toyota Kirloskar Motor on Wednesday said it will set up a new manufacturing plant in Maharashtra at an investment of around Rs 20,000 crore.

The company has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Maharashtra government to examine the setting up of a greenfield manufacturing facility at Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) said in a statement.

Headquartered in Karnataka, TKM already has two manufacturing units located at Bidadi near Bengaluru.

In Karnataka, the automaker, including its group companies, has invested more than Rs 16,000 crore and created close to 86,000 jobs in the entire value chain, it said. Toyota’s cumulative export contributions also stand at around Rs 32,000 crore thus representing the company’s export focus, it added.

“Today’s MoU signing



marks a pivotal point as we stride into the next phase of growth in the country enabling us to contribute to enriching lives with qualitative mobility solutions locally and globally,” TKM Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Masakazu Yoshimura said. The proposed investment, once finalised, is expected to be made over a multi-year period, potentially contributing to substantial job creation and economic growth in the region. In a social media post on

X, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis shared the investment figure of Rs 20,000 crore for the plant.

“Transforming Maharashtra, Developing Marathwada! Reaffirming its commitment to India; Toyota Kirloskar Motors is set to launch a Green Field Manufacturing Facility in Maharashtra!” he posted.

TKM currently has an installed production capacity of 3.42 lakh vehicles at its two Bidadi-based units.

# Encora expands strategic partnership with Cloud Software Group

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Encora has announced plans to expand its strategic relationship with Cloud Software Group to include extended product engineering and support. The pact includes product development and engineering services under a managed services model, supporting the evolving needs of global businesses of Cloud Software Group (CSG), a release said on Wednesday.

As part of the existing partnership, Encora has established and operates a ‘TIBCO’ Center of Excellence (CoE) and Academy in India. The centre employs over 350 engineers across technologies, contributing to the development, quality assurance, and support for the TIBCO platform and other key products. “With the intent to build on the existing strategic relationship, Encora and Cloud Software Group have expanded the scope of engagement to include



extended product engineering and support,” according to the release. While Cloud Software Group provides enterprise with mission-critical software, the Santa Clara, California-headquartered Encora is a technology modernisation and innovation partner to enterprise companies. Encora’s portfolio includes digital engineering services, including product engineering and development, cloud services, quality engineering, data and analytics, digital experience, cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Model (LLM) Engineering, among others.

# SoftBank-backed Unicommerce to float IPO on August 6

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

SoftBank-backed SaaS platform Unicommerce eSolutions Ltd will launch its Initial Public Offering (IPO) on August 6.

The initial share sale will conclude on August 8 and the bidding for anchor investors will open for a day on August 5, according to the Red Herring Prospectus (RHP). The issue is entirely an Offer For Sale (OFS) aggregating up to 2.56 crore equity shares by the selling shareholders. Since the IPO is completely an OFS, the entire proceeds will go to the selling shareholders.

Under the OFS, SB Investment Holdings (UK) Ltd, an affiliate of Japan’s SoftBank, will offload 1.61 crore shares and promoter AceVector Limited (formerly known as Snapdeal Limited) will sell up to 94.38 lakh shares.

Founded in 2012, Unicommerce eSolutions is India’s leading e-commerce enablement Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform. The company’s suite of SaaS solutions enables end-to-end management of e-commerce



operations for brands, retailers, marketplaces and logistics service providers. It serves a large and growing base of clients in India including Lenskart, Fabindia, Zivame, TCNS, Mamaearth, Emami, Sugar, BoAt, Portronics, Pharmeasy, Cello, Urban Company, Mensa, Shiprocket, Xpressbees. In February, Unicommerce had said it is expanding its overseas operations by onboarding more clients. It is already serving 46 clients in Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia and is now expanding these operations by adding more clients. According to a Redseer Report, the Total Addressable Market (TAM) for players in

the eCommerce enablement SaaS in the transaction processing or nerve centre layer was estimated at about USD 1.2 billion in 2023. This growth is driven by the increasing market potential for core products in this layer, an opportunity to broaden the product portfolio, and international expansion prospects in SEA and the Middle East. Specifically, in India, the TAM for core products in the transaction processing layer was approximately USD 260 million in 2023. IIFL Securities and CLSA India are the book-running lead managers to the issue. Shares are proposed to be listed on BSE and the National Stock Exchange.

# Rupee closes 1 paisa higher at 83.72 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 1 paisa at 83.72 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, as the support from positive domestic equities was negated by month-end Dollar demand from importers. Forex traders said significant foreign fund outflows and overnight surge in crude oil prices weighed on the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the domestic currency opened 1 paisa higher than the previous day’s close.

It slipped to 83.75 during the day and settled for the day 1 paisa higher at 83.72 (provisional) against US dollar. On Tuesday, the rupee closed flat at 83.73 against the American currency. “We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on month-end dollar demand from importers and oil marketing companies (OMCs). However, a positive tone in the domestic markets and weak US dollar may support the rupee at lower levels,” Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said. Any fresh intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may also support the rupee, he said.

“Investors may watch out for the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting outcome on Wednesday and



Bank of England’s monetary policy on Thursday. USDINR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.50 to Rs 84,” he said.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 285.94 points to hit an all-time high of 81,741.34, while Nifty rallied 93.85 points to a record 24,951.15.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, was down 0.36 per cent to 104.17.

“The US dollar fell on Wednesday after the Bank of Japan raised interest rates by 15 bps to 0.25 per cent from 0.1 per cent, leading to a sharp surge in the yen. Other Asian currencies, too, appreciated on weakness in the US dollar,” Choudhary said. Brent crude — the global oil benchmark — went up 2.26 per cent to USD 80.41 per barrel in futures trade. Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital markets on Tuesday, offloaded shares worth Rs 5,598.64 crore, according to exchange data.

# Omaxe may challenge Sebi order barring firm, chairman, MD from securities market for 2 yrs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Omaxe will consider challenging market regulator Sebi’s order that barred the company, its Chairman Rohtas Goel, Managing Director Mohit Goel and three others from the securities market for two years for misrepresentation in the company’s financial statements.

The Sebi order had a negative impact on the company’s share prices. The stock of the company on Wednesday declined 4.99 per cent to Rs 152.20 apiece -- its lower circuit limit -- on the BSE.

It fell 5 per cent to hit the lower circuit limit of Rs 154.19 per piece on the NSE. Asked about the Sebi order and its future course of action, the Omaxe spokesperson said, “The company has not received any order from Sebi. Once received, the content will be verified and appropriate remedy available under the law, including filing of appeal will be contemplated.”

“As per news articles, it appears more in the nature of accounting interpretations, which were duly explained through documentation, market practice and case laws. Rest we will be filing our response to stock exchanges within the stipulated time frame, on receipt of order,” the spokesperson added. In its 126-page final order, Sebi has also restrained three others -- Sudhangshu S Biswal, Arun Kumar Pandey,



and Vimal Gupta — from the securities markets. Additionally, these five persons have been prohibited from holding any position as Director or Key Managerial Person of any other listed company for a period of two years.”

Apart from these, the regulator has levied a fine totalling Rs 47 lakh on 16 entities, including these six. The penalties range from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 7 lakh need to be paid within 45 days. Sebi said these entities have “acted in concert in order to execute a fraudulent scheme that they tried to portray as normal transactions for the benefit of the company although it was experiencing loss, while also trying to portray these as merely lending activities, thereby trying to maintain the price of the scrip of Omaxe for a period of three years.”

The company misrepresented the financial statements during 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 through its various items -- revenue, debtors, advances, and expenses. “By the act of large-scale

misrepresentation/misstatement/manipulation in financial statements by Omaxe, the scrip price was directly or indirectly manipulated to maintain the value of the collateral kept by the promoter against the loan, Sebi noted. Furthermore, the fraud was never disclosed to shareholders of Omaxe, which misled them to remain invested in its shares or deal in its securities. Also misrepresentation of the books and accounts of Omaxe misled the investors in the securities market, it added.

Accordingly, Sebi has barred six entities, including Omaxe, Rohtas Goel, Mohit Goel, and three others from “accessing the securities market and further prohibited from buying, selling or otherwise dealing in securities, directly or indirectly, or being associated with the securities market in any manner, whatsoever, for a period of two years.”

The order came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) received a complaint against Omaxe alleging that the company conducted fraudulent transactions, diverted/siphoned off funds, misrepresented the financial statements, inflated turnover among others. As these allegations were serious in nature, the matter was taken up for further examination by Sebi, including a forensic audit into the affairs of Omaxe.

# Key jute sector issues feature at advisory committee meeting

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Indian Jute Mills Association highlighted several pressing issues at the 32nd Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting in New Delhi, including the challenges faced by the sector due to declining demand for jute bags, officials said.

Key stakeholders such as representatives from the sugar and plastic industry bodies participated in the meeting on Tuesday. The SAC makes recommendations to the Union government on the mandatory use of jute packaging materials, and packaging norms for essential commodities such as foodgrains and sugar. The Jute Commissioner’s Office (JCO) stressed upon the need for supporting the sector, the IJMA officials said. An estimated 40 million farmers and 3.5 lakh jute mill workers are dependent on the industry.

The representatives of sugar industry bodies raised concerns about the pricing and quality of jute bags, urging the government to fix rates for sugar jute bags. “They also noted the reluctance by major buyers like some beverage giants to use jute bags, despite environmental benefits,” said industry sources present at the meeting.

The non-compliance with government notifications by the sugar industry was also a



cause for concern, they said. Plastic industry representatives sought the removal of “discouraging language” about plastic bags in the Jute Packaging Materials Act (JPMA), the sources said.

“The jute industry is operating at 55 per cent capacity, affecting over 50,000 workers. The demand for jute bags is projected to drop to 30 lakh bales for 2024-25,” IJMA Deputy Chairman Rishav Kajaria said.

The IJMA also urged the SAC for immediate government intervention in enforcing 100 per cent reservation norms in foodgrain and sugar packaging in 2024-25. Other key issues discussed at the meeting include revising policies on the use of used jute gunny bags, addressing financial constraints due to the GeM portal pricing cap, initiating investigation into subsidised jute imports, and ensuring strict compliance with labour laws and wage agreements, the officials said. The jute industry contributes over Rs 12,000 crore to the rural economy, but is faced with challenges as raw jute prices fall below MSP levels, they added.

# Gold rises ₹350; Silver jumps ₹1,100

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose Rs 350 to Rs 71,950 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday, taking cues from domestic demand and global trends.

In the previous session, the precious metal had closed at Rs 71,600 per 10 grams.

Silver prices jumped Rs 1,100 to Rs 85,600 per kilogram on Wednesday. It had closed at Rs 84,500 per kg in the previous trade, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also increased by Rs 350 to Rs 71,600 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 71,250 per 10 grams.

The commodity market experts suggested that the gold demand in the Indian markets remains high, driven by the recent import duty cuts and the upcoming festive season. “Participation in gold has been on an increasing trend. The prices of the yellow metal may further firm up correction as some participation continues to increase. We believe that prices of gold will increase from its current prices,” Chintan Mehta, CEO of Abans Holdings, said.

Globally, Comex gold is trading higher at USD 2,465.50 per ounce, up by USD 13.60 per ounce from the previous close. “Comex gold extended gains following a 1 per cent gain yesterday, holding well above USD 2,400 per ounce buoyed primarily by safe-haven buying in response to the recent airstrike in Beirut by Israel,” Kaynat Chainwala, at Kotak Securities, said.



# Sindhu storms into Olympics women's singles pre-quarterfinals

PTI ■ PARIS

Ac Indian shuttler PV Sindhu stormed into the pre-quarterfinals of the Olympic Games' women's singles competition after beating Kristin Kuuba of Estonia in straight games here on Wednesday. The two-time Olympic medallist won 21-5 21-10 in her second and last Group M match that lasted 33 minutes. The 29-year-old Sindhu, who had beaten Maldives' Fathimath Abdul Razzaq 21-9 21-6 in her first match, topped the group. The winner of each of the 16 groups qualifies for the round of 16. "I'm very happy. It was important for me to top the group. I would be playing



against He Bingjiao mostly. I hope I take this confidence and go forward. It's not going to be easy, especially in the next coming rounds, so I have

to be prepared and be 100%," Sindhu said after the match. The Indian ace has previously won a silver medal in the 2016 Rio Games and a bronze in

the Tokyo edition. "I think it's one match at a time and obviously I want that medal and I feel really happy when people say that

we want a hat-trick from you, we want that medal from you. "But at the same time, it comes with a lot of responsibilities, lot of pressure but it's important for me to just stay calm and just keep going and just one match at a time because yeah, you can't expect easy wins, you have to fight hard to earn it."

Just like in her first match, Sindhu did not have to toil much, as the gulf in class between the two players was evident. The Estonian, ranked 73rd in the world as against the 13th position of the Indian, was completely out of sorts in the first game which Sindhu pocketed in 14 minutes. The 27-year-old Kuuba gave a fight in the second game,

making a lot of retrievals, but Sindhu was just too good for her.

Kuuba took a 2-0 lead but Sindhu quickly seized the initiative and levelled the score. But Kuuba did not throw in the towel and engaged the Indian in longer rallies.

There was one rare moment when Sindhu was stretched to the maximum near the net and Kuuba smashed the shuttle beyond the reach of the Indian.

But the vastly experienced Sindhu was in her elements soon after.

Two cross-court smashes gave Sindhu a 15-6 lead and from there on, it was all over for the Estonian, who saved two match points before surrendering.

## Sen stuns Christie to enter men's singles pre-quarterfinals

PTI ■ PARIS

India's Lakshya Sen progressed to the pre-quarterfinals of the Olympics men's singles badminton competition with a stunning straight-game win over Indonesia's world number 4 Jonatan Christie in the final group match here on Wednesday. The 22-year-old from Almora, a 2021 world championships bronze medallist, displayed great maturity and tactical acumen to outwit Christie, the reigning All England and Asian champion, 21-18 21-12 in what turned out to be a lop-sided contest. Sen is likely to face compatriot HS Prannoy in the pre-quarterfinals. Prannoy will face Vietnam's Le Duc Phat later in the day. Sen had defeated Kevin Cordón, a Tokyo Olympics semifinalist, in the opening Group L match on Sunday which was "deleted" after his Guatemalan opponent pulled out due to a left elbow injury.



Sen engaged Christie in fast and flat exchanges to move to 14-12, and the latter slowed down the pace with a gruelling rally, which he won with a push at the backline. The Indonesian drew parity at 16-16 with a precise cross-court smash, which a diving Sen couldn't reach and soon eked out a two-point lead at 18-16. A straight smash from Sen was followed by a wide smash from Christie, and it was 18-18.

A perfect flat push and then an incredible behind-the-back return in the middle of the next rally gave Sen game point and he converted it easily to earn the bragging rights.

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## Olympics bet against climate change with Seine swimming

AP ■ PARIS

With plans for athletes to swim the Seine River through the heart of Paris, Olympic organisers essentially bet against climate change's extreme weather. For several days it appeared they would lose - by ditching the swimming portion of triathlon races. It wasn't until early Wednesday, after the men's race had been postponed a day and test events called off, that organizers announced the most recent tests showed the water met standards to allow swimming. Some scientists and engineers said organizers were taking a huge gamble at a time when heavy rains have increased with human-caused climate change, especially in Europe. The rains run off from the urban environment and contribute to higher bacteria levels in the city's famed river. "They just gambled, flipped the coin and hope for a dry season and it turned out to be the rainiest in the last 30 years," said Metin Duran, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Villanova University who has researched stormwater management. Organisers "had worked through most of the scenarios related to computer hacking and physical threats without fully assessing the implications of extreme events associated with climate," said University of Arizona climate scientist Kathy Jacobs, who directs the Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions. "It's definitely time to take climate threats seriously?"

If any city could be expected to be mindful of the challenges of climate change, it's Paris. It's where the most significant climate agreement in history was struck almost a decade ago - to try to limit Earth's warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

## Quarters berth sealed, Indian men's hockey team set for first real test against Belgium

PTI ■ PARIS

Assured of a quarterfinal berth, India will aim for consistency when they take on reigning champions Belgium in their tough penultimate Pool B match of the Olympic Games here on Thursday. The Red Lions are leading Pool B with three wins from as many matches, while the Indians are a rung below in the second place with two wins and a draw. Mighty Australia are placed third with seven points from two wins and a loss. Argentina have also qualified for the quarterfinals with four points from three games, which includes a win, a draw and a

loss. New Zealand and Ireland are out of the race after suffering three consecutive losses. Only the top four can make the last-eight stage cut. The Indians started their campaign on a shaky note with a close 3-2 win over New Zealand and then scored a last-minute goal to salvage a draw against former champions Argentina. But against Ireland, it was a completely different performance from the Indians, at least in the first two quarters. They dominated the possession with one-touch play to score two goals in the first quarter which proved vital in the end. India skipper Harmanpreet



Singh once again rose to the occasion, first converting a penalty stroke and then finding the net from a set piece in the second quarter to hand his side the win. The Indian mid-field, led by veteran and four-time

upfront by keeping the pressure on the opposition defence.

Against Ireland on Tuesday, India opted for one-to-one short passes to build their attacks, instead of going for aerial balls.

Right-back Jarmanpreet Singh has been a revelation in the tournament so far and was omnipresent, be it in defence or creating chances from flanks.

Another player who deserves credit is Amit Rohidas, who produced a rock solid performance at the back. He defended the penalty corners brilliantly being the first rusher and from one-on-one situations.

## At 55, Georgian shooter shows up at record 10th straight Olympics to fulfil father's last wish

PTI ■ CHATEAURoux (FRANCE)

Nino Salukvadze had all but decided to bid adieu to her pistol after nine Olympic appearances, which yielded three medals, until she lost her father, whose "last wish" pushed her to compete in an unprecedented 10th Games. The 55-year-old, who was Georgia's flagbearer at the opening ceremony, became the first woman and only the second athlete overall after Equestrian show jumper Ian Millar to compete in a 10th consecutive Summer Games. Her first two Olympic medals, a gold and silver in 25m pistol and 10m air pistol, came in the 1988 Games in Seoul where she represented the USSR before she completed the set with a bronze for Georgia 20 years later in Beijing. Salukvadze said she found the resolve to give it another shot here here when she recalled her father Vaktang Salukvadze's words, which to her, seemed like a final wish. "He never asked me for anything, so I think maybe it was his last wish," said the veteran, who will be



competing in the 25m pistol qualifications on Friday. Stuningly, she stills holds the junior world record in this event. She touched that landmark in 1989 and it has only been equalled by India's Manu Bhaker, who is putting on quite a show here with bronze medals in 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team events. While the 22-year-old Bhaker is revelling in her newfound stardom and rise in stature, Salukvadze is enjoying her swansong. Battling issues with her right eye, the veteran is certain that she is in the middle of her Olympic farewell. "After Tokyo I thought I had finished, but my father, who

was my coach - he died this year - told me, 'Maybe you will cry (if you don't carry on). It is only three years, not four years (since Tokyo 2020),' she recalled. "I thought 'Ok, I will try'. He was a very good coach because our sport is very psychological. Now it is a competition with my mind." Salukvadze is a role model back home and also a perfect ambassador of global sports fraternity. During the Beijing Games, she made quite a statement by giving a friendly peck to Russian silver-medallist Natalia Paderina on the podium despite their countries being at war with each other. Besides her father's wish, Salukvadze wanted to be present at the Paris Olympics to also push for gender equality. "When I was told I had a quota place representing Georgia, I wanted to take this pistol and throw it into the air. Only one man has ever done this before - a horse rider from Canada - so maybe this is good for women's equality," she said.

## Defending champion US women fall to Germany in pool play in 3x3 basketball

AP ■ PARIS

The defending champion U.S. Women lost to Germany 17-13 on Tuesday in the opening game of pool play in 3x3 basketball at the Paris Olympics. Hailey Van Lith led the U.S. With six points. But she was struggling after the game, and she said she believes the heat exacerbated an illness she already was dealing with. "I think I actually have a cold," she said. "I think it was from the rain in the opening ceremony. So, I think it's a combination of that, but I'll be fine. I played through it in the NCAA Tournament, so there's nothing that's going to take me out." Sonja Greinacher had five points and six rebounds for Germany. Marie Reichert added five points. The U.S. Raced out to a 5-0 lead, but Germany scored the next six points, including three from Elisa Mevius. Van Lith made a layup before dishing to Dearica Hamby for another basket to cut Germany's advantage to 11-10 with about three minutes to go.



Greinacher made a 2-point shot for Germany before another basket by Van Lith got the U.S. Within one again with about 90 seconds remaining. This time, Germany scored the next four points on two each from Greinacher and Reichert. "It obviously gives us a lot of self-confidence going forward," Greinacher said. Cierra Burdick was disappointed in the team's Olympic opener, but she said it isn't surprising that they still have work to do since they haven't been playing together that long. Hamby replaced Cameron Brink on the team this summer after Brink sustained a knee injury.

Katherine Plouffe sealed it when she made a basket before hitting a 2-pointer to give Canada 22 points with 1:22 left on the clock. Wilson led Australia with six points and six rebounds. SPAIN 18, AZERBAIJAN 16 Gracia Alonso and Vega Gimeno scored five points each as Spain outlasted Azerbaijan. Spain trailed by one before scoring the next eight points to make it 14-7 with less than three minutes to go. Azerbaijan responded with a 4-0 run to get within three with about 1:30 remaining. Spain took advantage of a turnover to score the next three points, capped by a 2-pointer from Gimeno, to push the lead to 17-11. Azerbaijan closed to 17-14 on a free throw by Dina Ulyanova with six seconds left, but Gimeno added a free throw for Spain. Tiffany Hayes made a pair of free throws for Azerbaijan to cut the lead to two with one second left. But the clock ran out before Azerbaijan could do anything else.

## Simone and Team USA earn redemption by powering to gold in women's gymnastics

PTI ■ PARIS

Simone Biles, Jordan Chiles and Sunisa Lee spent the night before perhaps the biggest gymnastics meet of their lives restless. There was a tension in the air. They'd all been in the Olympic spotlight before, experiences that left them with medals but also the kind of scars - be they physical, psychological or both - that heal but never really go away. And here they were in Paris, the leaders of a star-laden U.S. Team everyone expected to finish atop the medal stand, and something wasn't right. In a different time, in a different era, it might have festered. Might have followed them onto the floor at Bercy Arena and into the history books, too. This is not a different time. This is not a different era. This is now. So the oldest team the U.S. Has ever sent to the Olympics, including a trio

that has spent their respective careers breaking barriers about what a female gymnast can and can't do, what they can and can't be, did something they never used to do. They talked, with Biles - three years removed from a Tokyo Games that dragged the conversation around mental health and sports kicking and screaming into the light - right in the middle of it. "I think there was a little bit of struggle," she said. "So it was really needed." By the time they walked onto the floor for the Olympic final, the tension was gone, largely replaced with joy. And not soon after, gold. The self-described "Redemption Tour," the moniker given to a team filled with women who wanted to return to the Games for deeply personal reasons, ended with Biles and the Americans where they have almost always been since she burst onto the scene 11 years



ago: on top of the podium, the rest of the world looking up. Eight years after winning gold in Rio with a team that called Aly Raisman grandma because she was all of 22, Biles - now 27 and married - was back again with Jade Carey (24), Chiles (23), Lee (21) and teenager Hezly Rivera at her side. "We don't have to be put in

the box anymore," Biles said about a group that has dubbed itself "The Golden Girls." No, they don't. With Biles at her show-stopping best, the Americans' total of 171.296 was well clear of Italy and Brazil and the exclamation point of a yearlong run in which Biles has cemented her legacy as

the greatest ever in her sport, and among the best in the history of the Olympics. "She's the greatest of all greats," said Chiles, who now has gold to go with the team silver she, Lee and Biles earned in Tokyo, when Biles removed herself from the team final to protect herself. Chiles, who seemed like a longshot to make it this

spring after injuries piled up, was pretty good in her own right. She began the night by drilling her double-twisting Yurchenko vault, sending the Americans on a four-apparatus stop on their "Tour" that felt equal parts coronation and celebration. By the time Biles, the left calf that bothered her during qualifying heavily taped, stepped onto the floor for the final event - a floor exercise set to music by Taylor Swift and Beyonce - it was over. She joked she knew she simply needed to stay on her feet to win. She did more than that, providing an exclamation point on the U.S.'s third gold in its last four trips to the Games. The Americans remain peerless (if not flawless, this is gymnastics after all) when at their best. And over two hours in front of a crowd that included everyone from tennis great Serena Williams to actor Natalie Portman, Biles left

little doubt about anything. Her status as the sport's greatest of all time. Her ability to move past the "twisties" that derailed her in Japan. Her spot in the pantheon of the U.S. Olympic movement. She now has a staggering 38 medals in major international competitions. Eight of those have come under the Olympic rings, moving her past Shannon Miller for the most by an American gymnast. Yet her return wasn't so much about winning. That's never really been the point anyway, just a byproduct of her unparalleled excellence. It was about a joy she had lost somewhere along the way. It seems to have returned. She leaned into the crowd that roared at every flip, every leap and, yes, every twist. With her husband - on break from NFL training camp - waving an American flag while sitting next to her parents, Biles did what she has done so well for so long save for a couple of difficult days in Japan during

a pandemic: she dominated. Biles met with her therapist in the morning to put her in the right mindset. There was brief - very brief - moment of trepidation as she raced down the vault runway, the event that began to spin out of control in Tokyo. Only this time, she essentially stuck her Cheng vault, the one that sends her spinning through the air in a fraction of a second. Afterward, she exhaled. "I was like Yes, please no flashbacks or anything," Biles said. "But I did feel a lot of relief. And as soon as I landed I was like 'Oh yeah, we're going to do this.'" Yes they were. Just like always. The only real drama centered on who would finish next to the Americans on the medal stand. Italy, which was a surprising second to the U.S. During qualifying, returned to the podium for the first time since 1928 by holding off Brazil for silver.



# Gambhir praises India's tenacity but calls for further improvement on turning pitches

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

Head coach Gautam Gambhir praised India for pulling off a tenacious Super Over win in the low-scoring third T20I against Sri Lanka for a series whitewash, but called for consistent improvement on pitches assisting sharp turn. In a contest delayed by an hour due to rain here on Tuesday, India struggled against both spin and pace on a fresh pitch to make a mere 137/9. But the Suryakumar Yadav-led side showed doggedness in the second half despite Sri Lanka's domination to force the contest into a Super Over, restricting the hosts to 137/8 from 129/4 after 18 overs, and eventually winning the match to seal a 3-0 win. "Guys, congratulations on a great series win. Congratulations to Surya as well, outstanding captaincy and with the bat as well. I asked for something before the start of the game and you absolutely delivered it. "This is what happens when you keep fighting, (and when) you don't give up," Gambhir told the team in a dressing room chat shared by



BCCI on 'X'. "These kind of games happen and the only way these key games can happen (in favour) is when we keep fighting on every delivery and for every run and this was the example." Gambhir, however, urged the team to keep working on improving collectively on turning tracks which posed a

different challenge to the batting group in particular. "We keep getting better, we keep improving our skills as well because we still need to get better on playing on wickets like these, because we might end up getting these kind of wickets (in future). "So we should first assess the situation and conditions

really quickly and what is the par score as well," he said. Gambhir urged players, who are not a part of the three-match ODI series starting on Friday, to enjoy their break but at the same time, keep working on their fitness. "Some of the guys will not be a part of the 50-overs format which will have a longer break, so

make sure when you come back for the Bangladesh series...You can take a break. You absolutely deserve it, but more importantly, keep your skills and especially the fitness levels high." "You don't want to come for that series thinking that 'okay, I can just turn up, probably deliver for the team'. So make sure that from the fitness point of view, the fitness levels are right up there," he said. Hardik Pandya praised Shubman Gill and Riyan Parag for their gritty 54-run stand which pulled India out of trouble. "In batting first, we were challenged, the conditions were difficult, but after losing those early wickets, Shubman and Riyan, the way they batter and created the partnership was brilliant," he said. "When you speak about situational awareness, at that point of time what both of you did was very, very important. That gives us a platform to at least reach to a decent total (to which) our bowlers can make sure and bowl at the right areas," he said. Pandya praised Washington

Sundar (25 off 18 balls) and Ravi Bishnoi (8) for their respective contributions highlighting the importance of runs from lower order batters. "I always emphasise on the fact that the lower order has to come and chip in, and Washy and those eight runs by Bishi (Ravi Bishnoi) was very important," he said. Pandya also praised Suryakumar for his inspired bowling changes, with the India skipper bringing on Rinku Singh (1-0-3-2) for the penultimate over and himself for the last over (1-0-5-2) which turned the game on its head. "As Gauti bhai mentioned, Surya, well done in making sure that the way you rotate the bowlers, showing faith in the bowlers which you gave (the ball to) in the last couple of overs that was brilliant and as a bowling group, obviously, it was fantastic," he said. "When you win games like this, eventually it kind of takes us forward. We are taking it step-by-step, but this was definitely a right step going forward for the future and well done to all the guys who are playing ODIs, kill it, continue," Pandya added.

## Italy wins gold in women's team epee fencing to disappoint passionate French crowd again

AP ■ PARIS

The fans at ending are among the loudest and most passionate at the Paris Olympics, especially when France is challenging for a gold medal. They usually leave disappointed. Italy overcame a passionate "Marseillaise"-singing crowd at the Grand Palais to hand France its fourth fencing silver medal of the Games in the women's team epee Tuesday. Alberta Santuccio got the winning touch for Italy in overtime against France's Auriane Mallo-Breton to complete a hard-fought 30-29 win for gold. It was the second time that Mallo-Breton lost a Paris Olympic final by a single point after a 13-12 loss to Hong Kong's Vivian Kong Man Wai in the individual epee Saturday. French fencers are 0-3 in finals against non-French opponents at the 2024 Olympics, with those losses coming in epee events. The host nation's only gold came when Manon Apithy-Brunet beat her teammate Sara Balzer in the women's saber final on Monday. "If you look at the (epee) finals, of course we seem to be losing, but we're in the finals

all the same," Mallo-Breton said Tuesday through an interpreter. "I think that in the teams, there are possibilities to go and get some wonderful medals, and we hope that the other (French) teams will be able to go and do that, so we're going to be supporting them." Team fencing involves squad members fencing one-on-one in a rotating sequence that means everyone gets to face each opponent once. Despite the overtime loss, Mallo-Breton was still France's standout in the final with a combined record of 14-10 against all opponents. Italy has one gold, one silver and one bronze medal so far in fencing. Five more team events remain. Polish fencer Aleksandra Jarecka was shaking on the floor with emotion after winning her team bronze. Jarecka tied the score with less than three seconds to go and then won the tiebreaker point for a 32-31 overtime win against China. Just before that was an unexpected twist when an apparent glitch with the scoring system seemed to give Poland an extra point in the last minute, only to take it away.

## Swiatek remains on course for another title

AP ■ PARIS

For almost five full games at the Paris Olympics, No. 1-ranked Iga Swiatek's high-bouncing topspin shots were being sent back over the net by No. 52 Wang Xiyu of China with crushing baseline groundstrokes of her own. Wang even held a break point that would have given her a 3-2 lead in the opening set. Then Swiatek restored the expected order on Court Philippe Chatrier - the site of her four French Open titles - and won four straight games to close out the first set along the way to advancing to the quarterfinals with a 6-2, 6-4 victory amid stifling conditions on Tuesday. "It's never about only one player," Swiatek said. "I was aware that she can play great tennis. And I accepted that some points she can really take advantage. But I wanted to really be intense and push in the right moments. Also be patient and not slow down. So I think my intensity worked and in important moments I was the one that was more solid." In part because of Swiatek's dominance on the red clay at Roland Garros, where the Olympic tennis tournament is being held, the 23-year-old from Poland is favored to add a gold medal to her growing collection of big titles.



Swiatek's quarterfinal opponent will be eighth-seeded American Danielle Collins, who eliminated Camila Osorio of Colombia 6-0, 4-6, 6-3. Second-ranked Coco Gauff was left fuming over a perceived missed officiating decision in a 7-6 (7), 6-2 loss to Donna Vekic of Croatia. Angelique Kerber, the 36-year-old German who has won three Grand Slam titles and used to be ranked No. 1, beat 2021 U.S. Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez of Canada 6-4, 6-3 to become the oldest women's quarterfinalist since tennis returned to the Olympics in 1988. Kerber has said the Paris Games will be the final tournament of her career. Anna Karolina Schmiedlova of Slovakia eliminated Jasmine Paolini - the Italian who was the runner-up at the French Open and Wimbledon this year - 7-5, 3-6, 7-5. Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine rallied past seventh-seeded Maria Sakkari of Greece 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4.

## It's amazing leadership from big hearted Suryakumar: Washington Sundar

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

Suryakumar Yadav's ability to stake risks at crucial junctures of the game like using Rinku Singh in the penultimate over and himself in the final one won India the third and final T20I against Sri Lanka, said all-rounder Washington Sundar. In a low scoring match on Tuesday, India pulled off a stunning win with Suryakumar making some interesting bowling changes towards the end of Sri Lankan

innings. Chasing 138, Sri Lanka were cruising towards a comfortable win when they needed 12 runs from the last two overs with six wickets in hand, but Suryakumar introduced Rinku Singh in the penultimate over who returned 1-0-3-2, and brought himself on in the final over to take a couple of more wickets and stun Sri Lanka. In the Super Over, Sri Lanka lost two wickets in just four balls as India knocked off the target of three runs on the first ball itself with Suryakumar



hitting a four to seal a series clean sweep. "Honestly, it's amazing of him, amazing of his leadership skills to be honest because (with) 12 balls (left and) 12 (runs) to win and for him to bring Rinku (on), especially when Kusal Perera is batting, and Rinku got him out and Surya (then) himself came in the last over and won the game for us," Sundar told the media after the match. "We all know he has a big heart when he goes out there to bat but also he has a big heart in terms of leadership

as well. All the credits to him and (it was) amazing of him." Sundar said it was Suryakumar who kept on insisting that India must take wickets in the middle overs to maintain pressure on Sri Lanka, even though the hosts remained in command during the run chase. "Surya kept telling us that one or two wickets in between game would definitely change and obviously in these kind of games, low scoring games, even run-a-ball would put a lot of pressure on the batsmen

because they need to get the job done especially when the wicket has something for the bowler," he said. "He kept saying that (with) one or two wickets in the middle, especially in the middle overs between 11 to 15, (we) will definitely be in the game and exactly that's what happened. "I hope the audience enjoyed the game because you won't see such games every now and then but to be a part of this kind of a game and to be a part of this game honestly feels great," he added.

## Daniel of Ireland wins Olympic gold and also hopes to pick up some new YouTube followers

AP ■ NANTERRE, FRANCE

Daniel Wiffen won Ireland's first Olympic gold medal in the pool in 28 years. That was thrilling enough as he wiped away tears standing on the podium, the Irish flag draped over his shoulders. Perhaps just as importantly, the 23-year-old Irishman is sure to pick up some new followers on his YouTube channel - a pitch he made when asked how people can learn more about a swimmer who is largely unknown outside his country. "People should watch," Wiffen said after winning the 800-meter freestyle on Tuesday night. "I blog every week - show you exactly what an Olympic champion does day-in, day-out in the pool." Get ready for a flood of fans, Daniel. Wearing round glasses and



looking studious, Wiffen cried as the Irish anthem played in La Defense Arena. He may not look the part of an Olympic champion, but his performance in the pool says otherwise. Wiffen will be back later in the Paris Games, hoping to win another gold on Sunday in the 1,500 meters - the final day of competition in the pool. "I don't normally cry, so I really

hope nobody is going to see that," Wiffen said. "But it did come out of me, and it's obviously just a special moment. I've never heard that national anthem from an Olympics before." Wiffen surged past Italy's Gregorio Paltrinieri on the final lap, looking as fresh as he did at the beginning of the grueling race. He won in 7 minutes, 38.19 seconds, overpowering defending Olympic champion Bobby Finke (7:38.75) of the United States and Paltrinieri (7:39.38). Mona McSharry won bronze for Ireland's first medal of these Games on the previous night in the 100 breaststroke. "I was dying the last 20 meters," Wiffen said. "I'm not sure if you saw that, because my arms are in absolutely so much pain. But I knew that the crowd is gonna

carry me in, and that's exactly what happened. Then I saw the red light on the block, and that was it." Until these Olympics, Ireland's swimming history was essentially confined to Michelle Smith de Bruin, who surprisingly claimed three golds and a bronze at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics amid suspicions she was doping. She later received a drug ban that essentially ended her career, but she kept her medals. Wiffen was not asked about Smith de Bruin as he huddled with reporters, primarily Irish who were not looking to spoil a special night. "To be honest - it's going to sound really weird to say - I've dreamt of this moment so many times in my head, I've gone over it so many different ways of how it was going to happen," he said.

## France, Germany, Canada clinch Olympic basketball quarterfinal berths

AP ■ VILLENEUVE-D'ASCO, FRANCE

France's miracle last-second comeback at the Paris Games got even better a few hours later, when the host nation clinched a spot in the quarterfinals and a trip to Paris for the knockout round next week. Also now officially in the Olympic quarterfinals: Germany and Canada. And on Wednesday, the winner of the U.S.-South Sudan game also will have a spot in the quarterfinals all wrapped up. The field for the medal round began taking shape Tuesday, especially after reigning World Cup champion Germany pulled away from a halftime tie and beat Brazil 86-73 in the final game of the evening. That victory came just after France got a four-point play from Matthew Strazel to tie the game late in

regulation and beat Japan 94-90 in overtime behind 18 points from Victor Wembanyama. Those results left France and Germany atop Group B at 2-0 and ensured of the top two spots in the group over Brazil and Japan, both of whom are 0-2. Canada's win over Australia earlier Tuesday also pushed it to 2-0 and now assured of no worse than a wild-card spot in the quarterfinals. "I just heard that," Germany forward Franz Wagner said about clinching the spot in the quarterfinals. "Honestly, I didn't know. It's good." There are three different groups of four teams in the Olympic tournament; the top two finishers in each group make the quarterfinals, and the final two spots in the next round go to the best third-place teams in group play.

# Kaylee still rules Olympic backstroke

AP ■ NANTERRE, FRANCE

When it's time to race, Kaylee McKeown is sure hard to beat. American Regan Smith came into the women's 100-meter backstroke at the Paris Olympics with the world record and no shortage of confidence. At the turn Tuesday night, it was Smith in the lead with McKeown right on her heels. By the time they reached the other end of the pool, it was the Aussie lunging there first. McKeown still rules the backstroke. "She is an absolutely incredible racer and she knows what to do when it matters," Smith said. Smith, who broke McKeown's world mark with a time of 57.13 seconds at the U.S. Trials last month, led at the turn but couldn't hold off the hard-charging Aussie, who defended the title she won in Tokyo three years ago. McKeown surged to the front about halfway through the return lap and reached for the

wall in 57.33, winning by a relatively comfortable margin over Smith's finish of 57.66. "The nerves were definitely there but I just reminded myself it's a pool in a different venue, and I train every single day of my life," McKeown said. The U.S. Also grabbed the bronze as Katharine Berkoff touched third in 57.98, capturing her first Olympic medal and following in the footsteps of her father, David Berkoff, who won four medals - two of them gold - in Seoul and Barcelona. Smith reached over the lane rope to congratulate McKeown, but this one had to sting. The 22-year-old Minnesota native appeared to be in top form and primed to win her first gold medal. Instead, it was McKeown capturing her fourth gold overall. She swept the backstroke events in Tokyo and also claimed a relay gold. "It's one race at a time," McKeown said. "I've checked off three boxes so far and there's a few more to go."

**American swimmers are getting used to silver**  
It was a night of silvers for the Americans, who took the runner-up spots in all three of the finals. Bobby Finke came up short in defense of his Olympic title in the men's 800 freestyle, relegated to silver by Ireland's Daniel Wiffen. The Americans also finished second in the men's 4x200 freestyle behind Britain, which captured its second straight gold in that event. Through four days at La Defense Arena, the U.S. has a bunch of medals - 15 in all - but only two of them are gold. Seven silvers and six bronzes round out the tally.

**Irish win first swimming gold since 1996**  
Wiffen won Ireland's first gold medal in swimming since scandal-plagued Michelle Smith finished first in three events at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Wiffen surged past Italy's Gregorio Paltrinieri on the final lap, looking as fresh as he did at the beginning of the



grueling race. Actually, he was in excruciating pain. "I was dying the last 20 meters," Wiffen said. "I'm not sure if you saw that, because my arms are in absolutely so much pain. But I knew that the crowd is gonna carry me in, and that's exactly what happened. Then I saw the red light on the block, and that was it."

Wiffen won in 7 minutes, 38.19 seconds, climbing on the lane ropes to hold one finger skyward. Finke also came on strong late in what was essentially a three-man race, also passing Paltrinieri to take the silver in 7:38.75. The bronze went to the Italian, who posted a time of 7:39.38. It was another dazzling performance by an Irish

swimmer, on the heels of Mona McSharry grabbing a bronze in the 100 breaststroke the previous night. Until these Olympics, the country's swimming history was essentially confined to Smith, who surprisingly claimed three golds and a bronze in 1996 amid suspicions she was doping. She later received a doping ban that

essentially ended her career, but she kept her medals.

**British men defend their relay title**  
The British men defended their title in the 4x-200 freestyle relay, holding off the United States and Australia. The team of James Guy, Tom Dean, Matthew Richards and Duncan Scott - the same foursome that captured gold in Tokyo three years ago -- finished in 6:59.43. The only difference from the last Olympics was Dean took the leadoff, with Guy going second. It was good enough for another gold, Britain's first swimming victory of the Paris Games. Luke Hobson, Carson Foster, Drew Kibler and Kieran Smith gained a bit of redemption for the Americans with a silver medal in 7:00.78, making up for a disappointing fourth-place showing at the last Olympics. Maximilian Giuliani, Flynn Southam, Elijah Winnington and Thomas Neill earned the bronze for Australia in 7:01.98.

**Doubling up**  
French star Léon Marchand had a very busy day, advancing to the final in both the 200 butterfly and 200 breaststroke. Marchand did a double in the morning preliminaries, then gutted through another back-to-back in the evening semifinals with about 80 minutes between races. He posted a time of 1:53.50 in the fly semis, trailing only defending Olympic champion and world-record holder Kristóf Milák of Hungary (1:52.72). Marchand was faster than everyone in the breaststroke round, posting a time of 2:08.11 with another raucous home crowd cheering him on. Marchand will have to double up one more time in the finals Wednesday, looking to add to the gold he earned in the 400 individual medley. "The French crowd has been amazing for me," he said. "I'm just really lucky to be in good shape this week to swim as fast as possible."