**OPINION 6** 

AGENDA FOR THE MODI

**WORLD 8** 

**UK POLICE PREPARES** 

**MONEY 10** 

STOCK MARKETS

**SNAP 3-DAY SLUMP** 

RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

Late City Vol.18 Issue 218 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

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**BHAKER ARRIVES** HOME TO ROUSING WELCOME

12 SPORTS

## HEARTBREAK FOR INDIA AT PARIS OLYMPICS

In a shocking reversal of fortunes, Vinesh Phogat was disqualified on Wednesday from the Olympics after being found overweight ahead of her women's 50kg final here, leaving her medal-less within hours of coming close to an unparalleled gold.

Vinesh had scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to reach the gold medal bout in her category on Tuesday night. Before this morning, she was assured of at least a silver medal but will now be coming back empty-handed due to the disqualification.

The shattered 29-year-old had to be taken to the polyclinic inside the Games village due to severe dehydration earlier in the day.

"She was found overweight by 100gm this morning. The rules do not allow this and she has been disqualified," said an Indian coach.

Indian Olympic The Association requested privacy for the wrestler, who was competing in her third Olympics.

"It is with regret that the Indian contingent shares news of the disqualification of Phogat from the women's Wrestling 50kg class. Despite the best efforts by the team through night,

**PM Modi crowns Vinesh Phogat Champion of Champions** 

Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached out to Vinesh Phogat and called her a "champion among champions." He also asked the wrestler to come back stronger. Modi urged the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to lodge a strong protest with the organisers of the Paris Olympics and spoke with IOA chairperson PT Usha and asked her to explore options to help Phogat's case, sources said. The issue also echoed in the Lok Sabha. Usha met teary-eyed Phogat at hospital. "Phogat, you

are a champion among champions! You are India's pride and an inspiration for each and every Indian. Todav's setback hurts.

weighed in a few grams over 50kg this in a remarkable performance and was morning," the IOA stated. "No further comments will be

made by the contingent at this time. The Indian team requests you to respect Vinesh's privacy. It would like to focus on the competitions on hand," it

International rules stipulate that any grappler found overweight at the time of weigh-in ends up at the bottom of the final standings. She had taken down defending champion Yui Susaki of Japan en route the finals on Tuesday

to face American Sarah Ann Hildebrandt in the summit bout this evening. Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who lost to Vinesh in the semifinals, replaced the disqualified Indian in the final.

"Vinesh failed second day weigh-in. According to the article 11 of the International Wrestling Rules, Vinesh will be replaced by the wrestler who lost against her in the Semifinal. Therefore Yusneylis Guzman Lopez will compete in the Final," the Paris Games organising committee said in a statement.

### **Reformed Waqf Bill** on Lok Sabha table

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, I proposing sweeping changes to the Act of 1995, is likely to be tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The legislation circulated to members aims to bring about far-reaching changes in the present Act, including ensuring the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims in such bodies. The proposed legislation "omits Section 40 relating to the powers of governing Waqf Board to decide if a property is waqf property". The legislation is likely to be tabled in Lok Sabha on Thursday.

The Bill proposes to rename the Act as the "Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act, 1995" and seeks to ensure the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims in Waqf boards, as well as the inclusion of "Aghakhani waqf" and "Bohra waqf" in addition to the existing Sunni and Shia Waqf boards. The Bill aims to empower women by securing their rights in welfare from Waqf and includes a clause related to the "welfare, maintenance of widow, divorced woman and orphan in such manner, as may be prescribed by the Central Government.'

It also curtails the powers to declare a property as Waqf, stating that no person shall create a Waqf unless they are the lawful owner of the property and competent to transfer or dedicate such property. The Bill addresses the contentious provision related to the creation of "waqf-alal-aulad," clarifying that it shall not result in the denial of inheritance rights of heirs, including women heirs, of the Waqif. The term Waqf will be clearly defined by a person practising Islam for at least five years

दिल्ली वक्फवोर्ड रेते एके रे and having ownership of such property. According to its statement of objects and reasons, "Based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee under the chairmanship of Justice (Retired) Rajinder Sachar and the

Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf and Central Waqf Council and after having detailed

consultation with other stakeholders,

DELHI WAKE BOARD

comprehensive amendments were made in the Act in the year 2013. Despite the amendments, it has been observed that the Act still requires further improvement to effectively address issues related to the powers of the State Waqf Boards, registration and survey of waqf properties, removal of encroachments, including the definition of the "waqf" itself," according to a statement of objects and reasons of the

### **Chopper crashes** in Nepal, 5 killed

 $F^{\mathrm{our}}$  Chinese tourists and a Nepali pilot were killed on Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains northwest region of Kathmandu. The crash took place in the border area between Kathmandu

A Nuwakot district police official said all five persons, including the pilot, on board the helicopter belonging to private airline, Air Dynasty, were killed

in the crash.
The 9N-AJD helicopter crashed at the Shivapuri National Park area in Nuwakot district, some 30 km North-West of Kathmandu at around 2 pm local time, he said.

According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), the helicopter was heading towards Rasuwa's Syafrubesi area from Kathmandu with four Chinese passengers.

The chopper took off from Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport at 1.54 pm and lost contact with the tower just three minutes after take off, the CAAN said in a Press release. The chopper was piloted by captain Arun Malla. There were three male and one female Chinese nationals in the chopper.

The dead bodies were taken to Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital at Maharajgunj in Kathmandu for postmortem, the airline's officials said. The crash comes just two weeks after a Saurya Airlines plane crashed at the Tribhuvan International Airport on July 24.

### **Supreme Court notes Constitution is Supreme**

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday expunged expunged "scandalous" "unwarranted" observations made against the apex court by a single judge bench of the Punjab and Haryana High saying it was "pained" by these remarks.

A five-judge special bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud took suo motu note of the remarks and said these observations of Justice Raibir Sehrawat of the high court were a "matter of grave concern"

Observing that no court including the High Courts and the Supreme Court is "supreme", the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, Surya Kant and Hrishikesh Roy, said such observations were wholly unnecessary for the conduct of the proceedings before the high court and moreover, the Constitution is "supreme". It, however, did not issue a

notice and initiate proceedings against the high court judge for his "scandalous" observations at this stage.

"We, accordingly, expunge the observations which have been made by Justice Sehrawat in the order dated July 17, 2024 and expect a greater caution



should be exercised in future while dealing with orders of the Supreme Court and for that matter, the orders passed by a division bench of the high court," the bench said

The top court noted it has been apprised that a division bench presided over by the high court's Chief Justice has taken suo motu notice of his observations and stayed his

It said every judge is bound by the discipline which the hierarchical nature of judicial system proposes on judicial functioning. "Iudicial discipline in the context of the hierarchial nature of the judicial system is intended to preserve the dignity of all institutions whether district courts, the high courts or the level of the Supreme Court," the bench said.

## Eyeless in Dhaka, Bangladesh gropes for normalcy

**PTI** ■ DHAKA

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim interim government in Bangladesh will take oath on Thursday, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, General Waker said the interim government is likely to Thursday.

He also said the advisory council may have 15 members.

Yunus, the 84-year-old economist, was on Tuesday appointed as the head of interim Government by Mohammed President Shahabuddin, a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs.

Meanwhile, students carried out traffic management as volunteers for the second consecutive day on Wednesday in Bangladesh, as a top police official called on every member of the police force to resume their duties gradually and maintain law and order.

Chaos reigned supreme in Bangladesh after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina Government on Monday, with police absent from their duty to keep law and order or manage traffic, local media reports

Additional Inspector General of Police (AIG) AKM Shahidur Rahman, who was appointed as the focal person of the Bangladesh Police on Tuesday to handle the



## Away from home, they pray for peace

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

Initially happy at the fall of the "dictatorial" regime of Sheikh Hasina, most Bangladeshis who had come to Kolkata for medical or other reasons are now praying for peace to return. This because they are now a stranded lot as all the trains and bus services between the two countries have been stopped for indefinite

"How can we go back home because both Maitryee and Bandhan Express have been suspended and the buses too are not plying ... if we have to go we have to make break journey first by crossing the border on foot and then by taking auto-

To hoist or not to hoist: AAP and BJP squabble over August 15 protocol

rickshaws, local buses... and even that is not certain," says Saheb Kamal (name changed) a Bangladesh tourist who had come to India to visit relatives. 'I am waiting for peace to return

so that I can go back home," he said, adding even flights have been cancelled between the two countries. 'We are stranded... we are sure of

our families' safety back in Bangladesh... but we are really concerned about our minority friends who have often been so good to us often arranging for our stay in Kolkata... at present I have postponed my journey and will wait for the things to cool down," said Rafikul Rehman.

current crisis, called on every member of the police force to resume their duties gradually and maintain public safety and law and

The students, including members of Bangladesh Scouts, were seen controlling the traffic movement at several places, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

"The police are friends of the people and work for the public. We cannot imagine a society without the police. Therefore, I request our police members once again to ignore rumours and return to their duties in a phased manner, tĥat ensuring security arrangements are properly in place," said Rahman, who has now been appointed as the Director General of RAB in a fresh reshuffle

on Wednesday. There were reports of attacks on police stations and facilities across the country on Tuesday, resulting in numerous police casualties, which have led to this unprecedented situation, the

newspaper said. The authorities reconstituted the top positions of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) on Wednesday. "AKM Shahidur Rahman has been appointed as Director General of RAB while Md Mainul Hasan will replace Habibur Rahman as the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police," news portal Prothom Alo said.

**India recalls non essential** staff from Dhaka Mission, P4

#### Kejriwal present in CM house during Maliwal assault: Delhi Police

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

In its chargesheet against Bibhav Kumar, a close aide of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Delhi Police has said there could be a larger conspiracy behind the alleged assault on Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal at the CM's residence. The Delhi Police also said Kumar and Kejriwal were "together" at the CM's official residence "for a significant period of time" after alleged offence was committed. Kumar, who is in judicial custody, is accused of assaulting Maliwal on May 13 at the CM's residence. complainant, subsequent/supplementary



bail hearing qua the accused before the Delhi High Court on July 10, 2024, had stated that the manner in which the entire AAP leaders and workers came in support of the accused (Kumar), against one of their own MP, shows that there is a larger conspiracy behind the attack and had urged the police to probe into ' the final report said.

#### SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

**T**ailed in Tihar in the alleged excise policy-linked money laundering case, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday reportedly wrote to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena informing him that Cabinet Minister Atishi will hoist the national flag at city Government's Independence Day function on August 15.

Behind bars for long, the AAP chief has neither resigned from the Chief Minister's post nor named anyone as his replacement. Kejriwal has written to the L-

G from jail saying Atishi will

hoist the Tricolour on his behalf on August 15," an AAP

statement said. Every year, the

Delhi Government's Independence Day function is held at Chhatrasal Stadium where Kejriwal has been unfurling the national flag and addressing the gathering since taking the reigns of Delhi. However, Raj Niwas officials

have claimed that no such letter has been received by Saxena. "With regard to the AAP claim regarding the flag hoisting on August 15, it is clarified that the LG Secretariat has not received any such communication whatsoever," an official said.

Prominent among the senior AAP leaders who have been at the forefront of party activities since Kejriwal was jailed on March 21, Atishi holds various portfolios, including that of Water Resources.



Rebuffing the AAP's statement, BJP's South Delhi MP Ramvir Bidhuri requested Saxena not to allow Atishi to absence.

hoist the flag in Kejriwal's "In the Independence Day programme organised by the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister can hoist the flag. If Kejriwal wants Atishi to hoist the flag, he should first

resign from the post of Chief



her in his place," he stated. This is not a personal choice

of the CM to nominate someone or any of his Ministers to hoist the national flag in his place," Bidhuri said. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the letter proves that the AAP and its leaders were anarchists yesterday and remain anarchists today.

"Perhaps the framers of the

flag protocol never imagined that one day, there would be a stubborn Chief Minister who would not resign even after going to jail," he claimed. The Delhi BJP chief called the letter 'anarchic' and said, "It

Constitution and the national

brings back the horrific memories of his declaration to disrupt the Republic Day celebrations on Rajpath in 2014 by staging a sit-in protest." He said Kejriwal tarnished the dignity of Republic Day in 2014 and has now tarnished the dignity of Independence Day in 2024. During the Independence

Day celebrations of the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister of Delhi can hoist the flag. If he is unable to do so, then traditionally, the LG will

was no Chief Minister in Delhi, the LG hoisted the flag," said Sachdeva, adding that if he wants his Minister Atishi to hoist the flag, then he should trust her and resign, allowing her to take the oath as the Chief Minister. It is noteworthy that only

hoist the flag. From 1991 to 1993 and in 2014, when there

Governors hoisted the national flag in States till 1973 which was changed by former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi who launched a campaign for the right to hoist national flag for the Chief Ministers. In February 1974. Karunanidhi wrote to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi demanding the right to hoist the national flag on the Independence Day.

## **Space crunch delays** geriatric centre establishment at GDMC

PNS DEHRADUN

 $T^{\text{he Government Doon}}_{\text{Medical College (GDMC)}}$ administration's plan to set up a geriatric centre in its premises hit a roadblock due to space constraints. Notably, the hospital administration had proposed to establish this centre to facilitate enhanced accessibility of healthcare services for senior citizens a few years ago. But things remain bogged in space crunch stalemate till date.

Informing this, the deputy medical superintendent at GDMC, Dr Dhananjay Dobhal said that the administration had initially planned to set up the geriatric centre within the hospital premises, specifically in the OPD building. "Though the centre is yet to start operation, let me af-firm that the plan has not been discarded yet," he said, adding that the hospital administration is still trying sincerely to tide over the spacehindrance for the centre. "We are mulling submitting a fresh proposal to the competent authorities on this matter," he

Asked to speak about the basic features of a geriatric centre, he said, 'The geriatric centre is primarily designed for senior citizens who are treated here by specialised doctors. We have been tirelessly trying to establish such a centre in the healthcare facility here since the number of elderly people- left behind by their children to fend for themselves- is surging in Doon. This is why we are so eager to set up the centre to cater to the medical needs of these helpless senior citizens. When the centre comes up it will provide not just special medical attention but emotional support to them," he

The limited space dogging the government-run medical facility which thousands of patients throng daily has remained a persistent issue. Recently, many patients raised concerns about the limited parking spaces that forced them to park outside the hospital premises. Asked to comment on this matter, Dr Dobhal had earlier said that despite the hospital's elevation from a district hospital to a medical college, the parking spaces have not been expanded. "Besides, many individuals visiting nearby areas use the hospital parking lot. We are addressing the parking concerns by adding two basement parking levels in the new building while shifting away the gynaecology block," he

### U'khand STF arrests another member of exam cheating syndicate in Haryana

The Uttarakhand Special Task Force (STF) along with Haryana STF apprehended a key member of a cheating syndicate involved in the recruitment examination of Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in Dehradun last year. The accused Pawan Wasi was arrested in Haryana's Jind district, marking a significant development in an ongoing investigation, the senior superintendent of police of STF, Ayush Agrawal said. He stated that this arrest follows the previous detainment of four syndicate members, including the well-known fugitive Mohit Mor, who had recently surrendered in a Dehradun court. The SSP informed that the investigation began after Suresh Kumar from WII staff registered an FIR against them at the Patelnagar police station on September 17, 2023. According to the complainant, two candidates were caught using electronic devices to cheat during the WII's recruit-



of Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) held at Raja Rammohan Roy school. Subsequent inquiries revealed the involvement of a larger organised group using advanced gadgets for exam malpractice, he said. Agrawal informed that the investigation was transferred to the STF considering the gravity of

the case. He said that the STF's ongoing investigation aims to uncover further details and additional suspects involved in this elaborate cheating scheme of the recruitment process. The accused has provided important details about his accomplices and more arrest can be expected in this case, he added.

#### | Himalayan Hospital hosts awareness programme on breastfeeding

PNS DEHRADUN

The Himalayan Hospital organised an awareness programme to educate mothers as part of World Breastfeeding Week on Wednesday. The depart-ment of community medicine at the Himalayan Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS) and the Himalayan Hospital conducted a weeklong awareness campaign in the rural areas around Doiwala. During the campaign, mothers of newborns were informed about the importance of breastfeeding.

Speaking on the occasion, the head of the community medicine department Dr Ashok Kumar Srivastava emphasised that the first breastfeeding session is ben-eficial for both the mother and the newborn's health. He highlighted that the mother's first thick yellow nation, providing essential minerals and immunity against diseases. "Breastfeeding can reduce infant mortality rate and malnutrition by 19 per cent. The first milk of the mother is rich in vitamins, helps clean the infant's intestines and protects the baby from jaundice," he Dr Surabhi Mishra said that due to lack of aware-

milk is the baby's first vacci-

ness, there is a misconception that the first milk can be harmful. She informed the gathering that a mother could start breastfeeding her baby approximately half an hour after birth. "In the case of a caesarean delivery, the mother can start breastfeeding about four hours after the operation or once the effects of anaesthesia wear off," she added.

#### Shri Venkateshwara **University and Harper** Adams University, UK sign academic agreement

PNS DEHRADUN

The Meerut-based Shri Venkateshwara University inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Harper Adams University, United Kingdom on Wednesday. The top officials of these institutions claimed that students and teachers of both the

head of International Affairs, Harper Adams University, United Kingdom, Yatin Gupta said that it would usher in plethora of employment opportunities for the Indian students in UK, particularly in the fields like agriculture, an-imal husbandry, veterinary



**DAV** College students hold

support of their demands

signature campaign in

countries would work together for research, investigation and higher education in each other's universities. The chancellor of Harper Adam University, Adam Cain is likely to visit Shri Venkateshwara University in November to take stock of the progress post-MoU signing.

Hailing the academic agreement, the pro-chancellor of Shri Venkateshwara University Rajeev Tyagi and the

PNS DEHRADUN

 $T^{\text{he students of DAV PG}}_{\text{College conducted a sig-}}$ 

nature campaign inside the

institution's premises on their

long-standing demands on Wednesday. The president of

the students' union of the col-

lege Siddharth Aggarwal said

that they had collected stu-

dents' signatures on a letter

during the campaign which

contained their important de-

mands to be served to the

He further said that the

campaign was focused princi-

pally on a large number of

posts of teaching and non-

teaching staff remaining va-

directly and indirectly our

studies and this warrants to

be addressed at the earliest,"

Sharing details, the union

president said that out of 185

teaching posts, 132 have been

filled. "Besides, there are 56

and 94 sanctioned posts for

third and fourth-class

staffers, but only 27 and 47

have been filled respectively.

through today's campaign the

students demand

"This is affecting

college management.

environment science. tourism sector, research and investigation.

Shri Venkateshwara Group chairman Sudhir Giri said that under this academic alliance, students and senior faculty of both the countries would have opportunities of working together in joint ventures in multiple professional and technical courses, further enhancing the standards in higher education.

management to step in im-

mediately and fill these va-

cant posts to facilitate unhindered and quality stud-

"We also demand the in-

stallation of a 100-ft national

flag which was promised by

the cabinet minister Ganesh

Joshi in 2023 but till date it

has not been installed. The

condition of the classrooms

to should be improved be-

sides revamping the infra-structure," he added.

Aggarwal warned that the

students of the college will

bee forced to start an agita-

tion if the management fails

to act on the demands of stu-

dents. Queried over the stu-

dents' demands, the dean of

student welfare of the college

Gopal Chettri acknowledged

that staff crunch has been

negatively impacting the quality of studies. "We are

aware of this problem and the

college management has al-

ready informed the authori-

ties concerned. We hope that

these vacancies will be filled

soon," he said.

ies," he added.

### **Sports University Act a good initiative,** but needs proper planning: experts

MANSI BHAMBRI DEHRADUN

The State government should engage in meticulous planning for the efficient implementation of the proposed Sports University Act in Uttarakhand, the sports experts said. This comes after the State sports minister Rekha Arya stated that the Sports University Bill is all set to be presented in the upcoming session of the State assembly. As per Arya, this act will facilitate the establishment of a sports university in the State.

Asked to speak on this issue, the sports experts and enthusiasts gave a mixed response.

A retired chief football coach at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Dayal Singh Rawat said that the Sports University Bill slated to be presented in the Assembly session is a crucial initiative to boost sporting prospects of the ne national and levels. international "Though a commendable initiative, the purpose be-

PNS DEHRADUN

The State government should draw a tree

plantation maintenance

plan in order to protect

and preserve the saplings

planted during the Harela

celebration this year, the

environment activists

Notably this year, fol-

lowing the State govern-

ment's initiative to

involve various depart-

ments in extensive plan-

tation activities during

Harela, a host of depart-

ments, ministers and

politicians have plunged

headlong into the sapling

planting spree across the

The ceremonial planta-

tion drive is still going on

in full swing as per the 50

lakh tree plantation target

set by the chief secretary

Radha Raturi by August

Completely unfazed by

the plantation spree, the

activists warned that

mere sapling plantation

programmes- conducted

with pomp and show-

with scant attention to

their maintenance and

preservation would be an

averred.

hind it will be met only when talent is properly honed in the potential sportspersons," he said.

He stressed on interna-

tional standard training

facilities to be imparted to the players that incorporates advanced training in sports biomechanics and sports psychology. "Unless the training is enhanced substantially there is little bone for the State to prohope for the State to produce quality players. We may take for instance the case of the ace badminton player Lakshya Sen. He hails from Almora but had to relocate to Karnataka for training at Prakash Padukone Academy due to insufficient sports facilities available in Uttarakhand. The proposed Sports University Bill should be a comprehensive one. As for me, I may suggest grooming sports talents from the regions mountainous through result-oriented sports programmes. I will ernment appoints foreign coaches and trainers for them. Besides, sports

Plantation cacophony unsup-

cise in futility: green activists

ported by maintenance an exer-

exercise in utter futility.

Talking to The Pioneer,

the president of the Citi-

zens For Green Doon

(CFGD) Himanshu Arora

said that the government

has remained engaged in

tree plantation endeav-

ours across the State on

the occasion of Harela for

years on end. "But unfor-

tunately, there is no fol-

low-up care to be taken of

them so as to help these

saplings grow into trees.

No one is there to take

the Harela enthusiasm to

successful culmination

and the saplings more

often than not end up de-

caying and dying," he

Arora recalled that the

tree plantation campaigns

to mark Harela had been

initiated by the former

chief minister Trivendra

Singh Rawat in 2019 and

1, 50,000 trees had been

Dehradun. "Some vil-

lagers were given the task

of looking after those

saplings in lieu of salary.

Later, their salary payment stopped and the

saplings were left to fend

around the

bridge

planted

Rispana

training centres should be set up in high-altitude playgrounds like that in Pauri," he added.

Speaking on the same matter, a senior journalist Raju Gusain said that the Sports University Bill offers excellent career opportunities for sports players in Uttarakhand. However, its successful implementation hinges on effective planning and learning from successful examples in other States," He added that the

State government should go for quotabased reservation for the native sportsper-sons in the proposed sports university. "This protection is an imperative. Otherwise, those from other states may avail the opportunities on offer at the expense of the native players. The Sports University Bill should ensure that the facilities to be provided are significantly

for themselves. This is

the farce hidden in the

Speaking of the CS's 50

Harela hubbub," he said,

lakh tree plantation tar-

get directive, he said that

this much-flaunted exer-

cise is bound to result in

wastage of energy and re-

Dehradun Development

Authority (MDDA) only

has 10,000 tree guards

and with this, how can

they expect to maintain

50 lakh plants?" he asked.

Speaking in the same vein, the noted environ-mentalist Ravi Chopra

said that the tree planta-

tion boom and scant

post-plantation mainte-

nance is the sad story

being told each year. "To

ensure that the drive

yields enduring results,

the common people should be involved in-

stead of the government

agencies in the plantation

drive. They should be en-

couraged to plant

saplings themselves and

subsequently, they may

be more caring for these

saplings than the unfeel-

ing government agen-

cies," he added.

sources.

"Mussoorie

vate sports universities. Including typical courses found in private universities will not be enough to attract athletes to the State-run sports universities. Instead, unique and modern approaches, courses, facilities and infrastructure should be of-fered which will help them steal a march over the private sports universities," he added.

being offered by the pri-

#### THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS **PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is informed to all the general public that I have changed my name ANJULI PATWAL (old name) to ANJUULI RAWAT (new name) In future I may be known as ANJUULI RAWAT W/o BIJENDRRA RAWAT. resident of Badowala, Arkedia Grant, Shimla Bypass Road, Dehradun.

It is informed to all the general public that I have changed my name from the BIJENDER SINGH (old name) to the BIJENDRRA RAWAT (new name). In future I will be known as BIJENDRRA RAWAT S/O GOVIND SINGH Be known by the name of. Bijendrra Rawat resident of Badowala, Arkedia Grant, Shimla Bypass Road, Dehradun.

I, Army No. 3500511P Rank WO GD, Mahender Prasad S/o Sh. Kedari Ram, R/o Village Bhalya, P.O.- Rari Khuti, Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand-262529. In my Army records my name wrongly recorded as MAHENDRA PRASAD, whereas my correct name is MAHENDER PRASAD.

मेरे पति के सैन्य अभिलेखोनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम रीता देवी दर्ज है, सही नाम कुमारी रीता आधार नं. 230488774572 W/o आर्मी नं. 14448244P हवालदार (जीएनआर) मनेसर प्रसाद, गांव-पूरनीडीह, पोस्ट –भोपतपुर, तह– मोतिहारी, जिला– मोतिहारी, बिहार-845432 है

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखोंनुसार मेरा गलत नाम सूरजपाल सिंह दर्ज है, सही नाम सूरजपाल आधार नं. 274531528637 F/o आर्मी नं. 2895284L हवलदार अनिल कुमार, ग्राम – दादुपुर, पोस्ट– सिकंदराबाद, तह-सिकंदराबाद, जिला-बुलंदशहर, उत्तर प्रदेश –203205 है

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#### कार्यालय : निदेशक उत्तराखण्ड चाय विकास बोर्ड, अल्मोड़ा जिला पंचायत परिसर, धारानौला, अल्मोड़ा-263601 पत्रांक : 298/4-स्टोर/ई-निविदा सूचना/2024-25 दिनांक : 07 अगस्त, 2024 अल्प कालीन ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तराखण्ड चाय विकास बोर्ड, अल्मोड़ा द्वारा अपने जैविक/अजैविक चाय बागानों हेतु जैविक/अजैविक खाद व दवाएँ तथा स्प्रे मशीन क्रय करने हेतु ई—निविदायें दिनांक 07—08—2024 से ऑनलाइन Website www.uktenders.gov.in पर दिनांक 20-08-2024 को सायं 5.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित सम्पूर्ण जानकारी, निविदा प्रपत्र व निविदा शर्ते Website

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निविदा सूचना

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क्र० सं०		विकास क्षेत्र	घरोहर घनराशि		कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
01	सामान्य मरम्मत जयहरीखाल	जयहरीखाल	50000.00	2000.00+जी.एस.टी	6 माह
02	सामान्य मरम्मत नैनीडाण्डा	नैनीडांडा	50000.00	2000.00+जी.एस.टी	6 माह
03	विभिन्न पेयजल श्रोत, जलाशय	जयहरीखाल /	50000.00	2000.00+जी.एस.टी	4 माह
	अनुरक्षण, क्लोरीनेशन/	रिखणीखाल /			
	सुरक्षात्मक कार्य	नैनीडांडा			

द्वारा मनोनित अधिकारी द्वारा खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 22.08.2024 की अपरान्ह 5:00 बजे

उक्तयोजनाओं पर धनावंटन होने के उपरान्त ही भुगतान किया जाना सम्भव होगा। शेष नियम एवं शर्ते कार्यालय में किसी भी कार्यदिवस एवं कार्यालय समय (सुबह 10 बजे से सायं

5 बजे तक) में देखी जा सकती है।

नल संचय-जीवन संचय'' ''कृपया जल स्रोतो को प्रदूषित होने से बचाईर्थ वैद्यानिक चेतावनी-जल स्रोतो को प्रदूषित करना दण्डनीय अपराद्य है।

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY

**E-AUCTION NOTICE** 

The Bids were invited through e-auction scheduled on 20.08.2024 for leasing of parcel space of 32 SLRs in Train Nos.: 14816 (F-1, F-II, R-I), 19566 (F-I, F-II, R-I) 12912 (F-I), 14308 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 14631 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 19610 (F-I), 14230 (F-I, F-II, R I), 12056 (F-I), 14310 (F-I), 14042 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 14120 (F-I), 12172 (F-I), 14090 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 19020 (F-I),14318 (F-I), 22660 (F-I), 15019 (F-I), 19272 (F-I), originating from Moradabad Division for a period of 2 years. E-auction for the same will be invited on 20.08.2024 10:00 am through www.ireps.gov.in. The detailed terms and conditions for the same are available on the website itself.

The Bids were invited through e-auction scheduled on 21.08.2024 for leasing of parcel space of 33 SLRs in Train Nos.: 14320 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 22918 (F-I), 14236 (F-I, F-I, R-I), 14321 (F-I), 14718 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 12091 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 14315 (F-I, F-II, R-I) ),14609 (F-I), 14605 (F-I), 12037 (F-I), 15120 (F-I), 12018 (F-I) 14887(F-I,F-II,R-I) 14304 (F-I,F-II,R-I),14306 (F-I, F-II, R-I), 14314 (F-I, R-I) originating from Moradabac Division for a period of 2 years. E-auction for the same will be invited on 21.08.2024 10:00 am through www.ireps.gov.in. The detailed terms and conditions for the same

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#### **NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE**

DEN/II/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against following tender. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards Tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net panking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

102-DRM-MB-24-25

106-DRM-MB-24-25

Alamnagar - Rosa (DN)- Rebuilding of Bridgr Name of Work TRR(P) - 24.30 Tkm in the 40(1x0.914m),92(1x		
section of ADEN/I/ HRI, TRR(S)=1.407 Km in BLM-RAC and TFR=(16.976 TKM in BLMSPC section and 46 TKM in ON-BLM) in the section of ADEN/II/HRI.	1.82 the /HRI 2m), the	
Tender Closing Date Time 02.09.2024 16:00 02.09.2024 16:0	0	
<b>Advertised Value (Rs.)</b> 1,84,75,613.02 3,19,41,386.85		
Earnest Money (Rs.) 2,42,400.00 3,09,700.00		
Bidding Start Date 19.08.2024 19.08.2024		
Validity of Offer (Days) 60 Days 60 Days	60 Days	

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06 Months

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## Focus on innovation, austerity and increasing revenue: CM to secretaries

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

that special attention should be paid to innovation in the of modern technology should be made in their Aayog. implementation. The CM participated in the meeting of the Secretary Committee officers that the issues relatat the State secretariat on Wednesday. Incidentally

paid towards good governance. He said that the formulation the government attention should be paid to schemes and maximum use Sustainable Development Goals setup by the Niti

> The CM instructed the ed to the State's interest should be reviewed regular-

Chief Minister Pushkar meeting, the CM said that districts from time to time ty. Emphasising on austerisingh Dhami has said special attention should be and regularly review the ty, the CM said that it is schemes. He suggested that necessary to control the the major projects of the State should be reviewed expenditures along with increasing revenue. The CM separately and on a larger was informed that in the scale. Dhami added that wake of the decision taken safety audits of various proby the government of India jects should also be done to for moving towards 'net protect them from natural zero emission' by the year 2070, the State needs to make forays in the field of thermal and geo-thermal calamity or any other possible damage. Safety protocols must be strictly fol-

> Many suggestions were given by the secretaries in the interest of the State in the meeting. Discussions on increasing the revenue capacity of the state and reducing capital expendi-ture, making plans keeping in mind the elderly people, effective measures for the protection of destitute cattle and cyber security were

Suggestions were also given agriculture, horticulture, increasing employment and self-employment oppor-tunities in the State.

Chief secretary Radha Raturi, additional chief secretary Anand Bardhan, principal secretary RK Sudhanshu, L Fanai, principal secretary (legal) Pradeep Pant and all the secretary retaries were present in the

## Efforts intensify to reopen **Kedarnath Dham route**

#### SDRF rescues 200 stranded people in Kedarnath

PNS DEHRADUN

The departments and agencies concerned have started the ardours task of reopening the blocked roads and bridle path leading to Kedarnath in Rudraprayag district to restart the Kedarnath Dham Yatra. The movement on the pathway from Kedarnath to Chhoti Lincholi was also resumed on Wednesday. The bridle path to Kedarnath Dham, which was damaged in several places, is also being repaired swiftly despite chal-lenging conditions, as per the officials.

The executive engineer from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Nirbhay Singh informed that work has begun to clear the completely damaged 1.5 metre stretch of the national highway between Sonprayag and Gaurikund using a earth remover machine. Besides this, the damaged road near the Sonprayag bridge is also undergoing repair and reinforcement. The executive engineer of District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Vinay Jhinkwan informed that multiple sections of the Kedarnath bridle path have been severely damaged, with approximately15 spots where the path is com-pletely blocked. He stated that despite difficult conditions, labourers are persistently working on repairing and

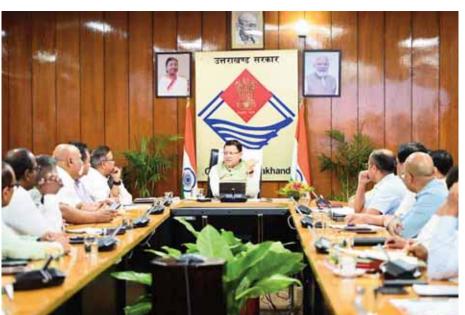
reconstructing the path. The pathway from Kedarnath Dham to Chhoti Lincholi is now functional for movement. However, he also added that adverse weather conditions adverse weather conditions pose significant challenges, affecting the safety of the workers and the continuity of

Meanwhile, the authorities halted the traffic on the Kund Bridge on Rudraprayag Kedarnath National Highway for both light and heavy vehicles due to erosion at the abutment considering safety concerns. The officials informed that the heavy vehicles are

being sent via an alternative route from Kund-Chunni Band to Kalimath Gate-Guptkashi. Moreover, the temporary pedestrian bridge constructed by the Army near the Sonprayag Shuttle also got washed away on Tuesday night due to heavy rainfall. Besides this, the Sonprayag-Gaurikund Kedarnath bridle path also got blocked at Linchauli due to a landslide.

The authorities have been working on reconstruction of the damaged bridges and paths, as per the officials. Moreover, the teams of the Uttarakhand State Disaster

Response Force (SDRF) continued its rescue and search operations on the Kedarnath Dham bridle path on Wednesday as well. A team led by sub-inspector Ashish Dimri safely rescued 150 locals and pilgrims stranded in Gaurikund via An alternate path. Another team led by constable Ramnaresh also rescued a group of 60 locals and pilgrims from Lincholi. The officials said that these concerted efforts aim to ensure the timely reopening of the Kedarnath Dham Yatra route, allowing pilgrims to resume their journey safely and



Committee. Addressing the districts should visit the is no loss of life or proper-

Dhami is the first CM of the State to participate in the meeting of the Secretary Committee. The secretaries in charge of the secretaries in charge of the districts should right the

### **Rebate on Heli fare** decision deplorable and immature: Dasauni

PNS DEHRADUN

The chief spokesperson of Uttarakhand Congress Garima Dasauni has said that in such a situathe decision of the state gov- tion the priority ernment to resume helicopter of the governservices to Kedarnath Dham ment should be to and offer 25 per cent rebate in reduce the loss to the Heli fares is immature and life and property. deplorable. She said that the In such a situaconditions are not favourable tion the decision in the State as incidents of landslide, cloud burst and ernment to resume helicopter areas. She said that the develheavy rains are occurring in services appears suicidal," she different parts of the State.
The NDRF, SDRF and Army are pressed into the relief and rescue works and as per per cent of the energy and the reports the State has so far incurred a loss of more than is concentrated on monitor-Rs 100 crore. "Many roads ing, administration and coorhave been washed away. Large

of the State gov-

Dasauni said that today 80 capacity of the administration dination of disaster affected



opment activities and other routine works are affected. Dasauni said that the government appeared confused in its decisions from the start of the Char Dham Yatra and the mismanagement on part of the government derailed

#### **Rescue operation under** CM Dhami saved thousands of lives : Chamoli

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Dharampur MLA and senior leader of BJP, Vinod Chamoli has expressed gratitude to the chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and rescue agencies for saving lives of thousands of people in the recent rain triggered disaster. He also expressed hope that the Char Dham Yatra will resume

Chamoli said that Uttarakhand is bearing the brunt of the disaster and it is the result of an effective and mega rescue operation that more than 16,000 people were safely evacuated. He said that the Police, administration and the agencies associated with rescue worked in tandem for the success of the operation. Chamoli added that local people and different social organ-

isations also helped in tiding over the crisis.

He said that the first priority of the State government was to save the lives of the people stranded in disaster and after accomplishment of this task the priority is to restart the Yatra. Taking this into consideration, the CM has directed the officers to restart the Yatra and has offered a rebate of 25 per cent in the fares of Heli services to Kedarnath Dham, he

The BJP leader said that it is very challenging to restart the Yatra as more than 75 per cent of the bridle path to Kedarnath is damaged. The State government has taken up the challenge and set a target to restart Yatra within a week.

#### **Senior Congress leaders of** U'khand summoned to Delhi

PNS DEHRADUN

The central leadership of the Congress party has summoned top leaders of Uttarakhand Congress to New Delhi. The leadership is likely to discuss key issues related to functioning of the party in the State with the senior leaders of the State in the meeting. The Vice President of Uttarakhand Congress Mathuradutt Joshi told The Pioneer that the in-charge of the Uttarakhand Congress Kumari Selja will hold a meeting with the senior leaders of State in New Delhi on Thursday. He said that the party leaders are likely to discuss the upcoming Assembly by-election of Kedarnath and elections of the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in the meeting.

The Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president

Karan Mahara, the leader of opposition (LoP) in State assembly Yashpal Arya, former chief minister Harish Rawat, former PCC presidents Pritam Singh and Ganesh Godiyal, deputy leader in State assembly Bhuwan Kapdi, former speaker of State Assembly Govind Singh Kunjwal, former cabinet ministers Mantri Prasad ership of the party can take Naithani, Surendra Singh Negi some drastic steps and revamp and Harak Singh Rawat have been convened by the State in -charge to Delhi. All the five candidates of the Congress party in the Lok Sabha elections of 2024 will also attend the meeting.

The meeting assumes sig-nificance since it is being held after the recent visit of senior party leader KL Punia to Uttarakhand. He was sent by in Delhi, he added.

the party leadership on a fact finding mission to the State. During his visit Punia held deliberations with the senior leaders, office bearers of the party and frontal organisations and dwelled on the causes of the loss of the party candidates in all the five LS seats of Uttarakhand. Speculations are rife that the central leadthe party organisation in Uttarakhand. Refuting the speculations of change of guard in the State Congress, the vice president Joshi said that the State in- charge had not met the senior leaders of the State since the party secured victory in the recent assembly by-elections of Manglaur and Badrinath. So she has convened the meeting

## **Environmentalists support NGT's** accountability push, demand comprehensive reforms

PURNIMA BISHT■ DEHRADUN

The National Green Kedarnath, Hemkund Tribunal (NGT) has Sahib, Yamunotri and pilgrimage opined that the NGT's order highlights the critical need for Uttarakhand administration to reassess guidelines for carrying capacity and robust disaster essential to ensure the safepreservation of the region's fragile ecosystem.

the pilgrim tracks at sites.

recently castigated the Gomukh. The NGT's bench Uttarakhand administra- questioned the State's pretion over their handling of paredness for managing safety and environmental mishaps due to the absence issues at the Char Dham of a regulated carrying sites— capacity for pilgrims. Kedarnath, Badrinath, Despite a State government Yamunotri and Gangotri. circular dated May 10, The environmentalists 2022, which set carrying capacities for each site-16,000 for Badrinath, 13,000 for Kedarnath, 8,000 for Gangotri, and 5,000 for and strengthen their Yamunotri—a subsequent approach to manage the circular on April 21, 2023, Char Dham pilgrimage. revoked these limits, leaving the said that effective ing the sites without any waste management, clear official restrictions. The NGT has ordered the Uttarakhand's secretary of preparedness plans are Environment to appear virtually at the next hearing to ty of pilgrims and the clarify the State's stance on mishap responsibility and compensation mechanisms in the absence of these The NGT analysed the capacities. This scrutiny situation following a petition that highlighted the accentuates the long-standing neglect by state authorunregulated dumping of ities concerning the sensiwaste, including equine tive geographical condidung and carcasses, along tions of the Char Dham

Development Communities (SDC) foundation Anoop Nautiyal also criticised the State's development model as dangerously flawed. He emphasised that the authorities' failure to implement concrete measures in these high-risk areas, such as Kedarnath—frequented by millions annually—reflects a fundamental disregard for safety and environmental sustainability. Nautiyal opined that the state's approach, which focuses on setting new records for pilgrim numbers rather than addressing underlying

The founder of the

Dehradun-based Social

'The government should stop looking at pilgrim numbers as a 'record' as it is a fundamentally flawed approach. This perspective is short-sighted and contrary to the principles of responsible and sustainable tourism advocated by the NITI Aayog too. The Char

risks, is fundamentally

flawed. He said,

Dhams are situated in ecologically delicate areas, particularly in Rudraprayag where Kedarnath is situated. Rudraprayag is among India's most landslideprone regions along with Tehri, as reported by the Landslide Atlas prepared by the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) of ISRO. Still, nothing is being done to address the issue." Nautiyal further stated that the current model of development is fraught with inherent risks and immediate caution is necessary. The government must shift its focus from merely increasing pilgrim numbers to addressing the crucial issues of environmental management and disaster preparedness. This way, the administration will have a better probability of handling the risk of disaster, he

The Padma Shri awardee and founder of Maiti Movement, Kalyan Singh Rawat also stressed on the need of making policies

with stakeholders and people who actually know about Himalayas rather than those who have hardly visited it. He said, "People in administration have made Char Dhams a tourist spot. The administration needs to make policies considering ground realities along with people who are actually living there. People who have hardly visited the Himalayas cannot understand the issue and certainly cannot properly

He added, "Uttarakhand is prone to disasters due its geography and ecology. Nobody can change that. However we can certainly prioritise these concerns and engage with all stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable solutions. Without significant changes, the ongoing neglect of these issues could lead to more severe environmental and safety challenges in the future."d

### Maharaj suggests connecting U'khand's Chaainsheel Valley with Himachal to boost tourism

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State tourism minister Satpal Maharaj proposed a plan to connect the Chaainsheel Valley of Uttarakhand with Himachal Pradesh to boost tourism in the region. He suggested this during a meeting with the PWD minister of Himachal Pradesh Vikramaditya Singh on Wednesday. The discussion during the meeting mainly revolved around road connectivity linking Himachal with the tourism-important Chaainsheel Valley of Uttarakhand and the Paonta National Highway.

Regarding the connectivity, Maharaj emphasised that the Chaainsheel Valley, situated on the

border Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, is currently connected to the border areas of Uttarkashi, Dehradun and Shimla districts.

He further said that despite the location, tourists tend to travel via Himachal instead Uttarakhand. He underscored the significant potential for tourism development



in the Chaainsheel Valley, espe-This valley boasts beautiful rare herbs, he added.

mountains, expansive bugyals, cially for adventure tourism. streams and a rich source of

### 23rd Board meeting of **UTDB** held in Doon

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Development Board was held meeting, the proposal to amend the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (Group 'A' and B') Service Rules-2013

 $T^{\text{he 23rd meeting of was passed and the event cal-}}_{\text{Uttarakhand Tourism endar of adventure tourism}}$ proposed for 2024-25 was under the chairmanship of the approved. The board was also cabinet minister Satpal Maharaj apprised of the works being on Wednesday. During the done regarding the planned development of Shri Jageshwar Dham, Mahasu Devta, Om Parvat and Munsiyari.

## WAVE OF SYMPATHY FOR VINESH PHOGAT

## President, VP, MPs back wrestler

 $P^{\text{resident Droupadi Murmu}}_{\text{and Vice President Jagdeep}}$ Dhankhar expressed strong support and admiration for Vinesh Phogat who was disqualified at Paris Olympics. President Murmu lauded Phogat's achievements and resilience saying her "extraordinary feats at the Paris Olympics have thrilled every Indian and done the country proud." She said "While we all share her disappointment at the disqualification, she remains a champion in the hearts of 1.4 billion people. embodies the

world

while pointing to Phogat's indomitable spirit and contribution to Indian sports. "Vinesh Phogat's remarkable performance at the Paris Olympics has made India proud. We all share her pain and disappointment at the setback she suffered. Her undaunted spirit remains a testament to courage, conviction, and perseverance. She will remain a champion in the hearts of people of this country. I wish her continued success and many more accolades in life," Dhankhar

Members of Parliament, cutting across party lines also wrestler Vinesh Phogat and praised her hard work and dedication to the sport. Lok Sabha members demanded accountability and a review of the decision.

In a shocking turn of events, Phogat was disqualified from the Paris Olympics for being found overweight ahead of her women's 50 kg final.



Speaking outside Parliament, RLD MP Jayant Choudhary said, "It was very saddening to see Vinesh Phogat being disqualified. Watching her yesterday...All the hard work and dedication she has put in to reach this point". "The effort and dedication that athletes and soldiers put in is beyond the reach of ordinary people. The entire nation is with her, and I believe the Indian Government is also

prioritising this. The Prime

Minister has taken notice of it and has given directions. The appeal process will be carried out," he said. Congress MP Selja raised

questions about the team management, 'Managers are there, it is their job. All our athletes and sportspersons go there, and every little thing of theirs is monitored." "Their diet is watched over, what they are drinking, what they are eating and the type of food they are

reason for this girl's weight increased? Who didn't pay attention? This has to be answered," she said. "We were hoping since morning that considered for the silver this girl would bring home the Olympic gold medal, who has struggled on the streets, and today, this has happened to her. Why did it happen? How did it happen?" the Congress leader asked.Congress MP Deepender Hooda called for a review of the decision that led to Phogat's disqualification. "When the entire nation was sitting for Vinesh's final bout, hoping for her to win the gold medal, the whole country was stunned. Everyone feels the pain in their hearts, but Vinesh was, is, and will remain a champion for the entire nation. She worked very hard to reach the final," he said. "While all the other players were practicing, she was sitting in a protest for justice, and then worked hard

to reach here. In the eyes of

consuming. So, what was the the nation and the world, she is a true champion," the MP said. Hooda said yesterday, her weight was correct in all three bouts, so she should be medal in the final. While Congress MP Pramod

Tiwari said, "I salute the struggle she has fought", Congress MP Jothimani questioned the circumstances surrounding disqualification. heartbreaking to hear the news. Just for a 100-gram difference, something is not adding up. Someone who defeated her opponent thrice in a day, how can this happen,"

she questioned.
BJP MP Dinesh Sharma expressed unwavering support for Phogat and said, "It was very sorrowful." "She was a champion, is a champion, and will remain a champion for the people of India. It was unfortunate. There will be new efforts and new records will be made," he said.

## **Support pours in**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

From fans to athletes and public figures to business tycoons India is reeling from the shocking disqual-ification of Vinesh Phogat, who was found 100 grams overweight ahead of her 50kg wrestling final at the Paris Olympics. This unexpected setback,

just before what was expected to be a historic gold medal match, has been described as the "biggest heartbreak" of the games, with widespread anger and disappointment expressed across social media and among celebrities.

Cricketer Sunil Gavaskar and wrestler Sakshi Malik, among others, have called the situation "unfair" and "devastating," while AAP MP Sanjay Singh has demanded a boycott of the



Olympics, labeling the incident as a grave injustice to India. Anand Mahindra, Chairman of the Mahindra Mahindra group, expressed shock wrote: "NO! NO! NO! Please make this a bad dream that I will wake up from and find it isn't true...." Bollywood stars like Farhan Akhtar and Taapsee Pannu have also expressed their solidarity, praising Phogat's achievements despite the disheartening end to her Olympic journey.

Ambedkar in the Parliament

complex -- which was objected

to from the treasury benches,

and Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said Kharge was

"RSS and BJP are trying to

impose their communal

ideology on people by

tampering with curriculum.

And the step taken by NCERT

is not right," he said amid

protests from the ruling side.

At this point, Dhankhar

ordered that nothing will go

on record and he would "look

into what has to be deleted...

Last four minutes to be

'You are digressing from the

deleted."

deviating from the subject.

### India brings back non-essential Establish Sri Nankana staffers from Dhaka mission

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

indefatigable spirit of Indian

women, and her epic fortitude

and resilience are already

champions from India. I wish

her many laurels in the

future," in a social media post.

Vice President Dhankhar

echoed similar sentiments

inspiring future

Non-essential staffers at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka and their family members returned to India on Wednesday on a voluntary basis through commercial flights, official sources said.

However, all Indian diplomats at the mission are operating from the Bangladesh Capital, they said adding the Indian High Commission remains functional.

The non-essential staffers returned home as various parts of Bangladesh continued to report clashes. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post on Monday and landed at the Hindon air base near Delhi following unprecedented anti-Government protests.

It is learnt that non-essential staffers at other Indian missions in Bangladesh are also likely to return to India. In addition to the High Commission in Dhaka, India Assistant High Commissions in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet. senior staff are left at the High

Commission in Dhaka. Shahabuddin Mohammed dissolved Parliament on



Tuesday and appointed Nobel laureate Mohammad Yunus as the head of an interim The decision was made in a

President meeting Shahabuddin had with Chiefs of the three services and a 13member delegation of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement at Bangabhaban palace), (Presidential President's Press Secretary Md Joynal Abedin said late Tuesday night.

The other members of the interim Government will be finalised after consultations with various political parties, the President's press secretary

On Tuesday, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said around 10,000 Indians were presently residing Government was in "close and continuous" touch with the community through its diplomatic missions.

"The situation in Bangladesh by the protesters.

is still evolving... We are in close and continuous touch with Indians in Bangladesh through our diplomatic community," Jaishankar said in Parliament.

Addressing MPs in Parliament during an all-party meeting, Jaishankar said the situation in Bangladesh was not that alarming to require the evacuation of the 10,000 Indians in the violence-hit

Of particular concern for India has been the attack on houses and temples of the minorities in Bangladesh. With an interim Government still to be formed, widespread vandalism and looting of homes have been reported. The interim Government will be headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

The neighbouring country plunged into chaos after a controversial quota system for Government jobs saw massive street protests and violence, leaving over 400 dead and hundreds more injured.

On Monday, Shéikh Hasina quit as Prime Minister and fled to India as protesters vandalised it. After her departure, the Awami League's main office was set on fire and several leaders were targeted

## Sahib Corridor, clean public utilities: MPs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 $R^{\text{aghav Chadha (AAP) on}}_{\text{Wednesday demanded}}$ establishment of a corridor to Sri Nankana Sahib in Pakistan's Punjab province to facilitate the visit of Sikh devotees to the sacred birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev. ]

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, Chadha urged Government to take the diplomatic route and make the dream of crores of Punjabis and followers of Guru Nanak Dev come true. In this regard, he made three suggestions. He suggested that the

Governments of the two countries work together in establishing Sri Nankana Sahib corridor, on the lines of Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor. Also, there should not be any mandatory requirement of passport, visa, and cumbersome forms for the devotees. Chadha also said from the devotees. The third suggestion related to a safe road passage starting from (Attari-Wagah Amritsar Border) till Sri Nankana Sahib clean toilets.



In her Zero Hour mention, Priyanka Chaturvedi (Shiv Sena UBT) expressed concern over gender disparity in access to public utilities.

"It is a matter of serious concern that with nearly a decade of Swachh Bharat Mission, the disparity in women's access to clean public utilities and conveniences is very prominent.

So we have 48 per cent of the country's population, yet clean public toilets have still not been adequate and hygienic enough for us to be able to feel comfortable," she said.

Referring various constituencies during elections and public works, she said they have faced challenges to find access to

## Constitution's Preamble not dropped from NCERT books: Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday said the Preamble to the Constitution is very well there in NCERT textbooks of Class VI as he refuted charges made in this regard by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge. Earlier, Opposition Congress party raised in the Rajya Sabha the issue of dropping Preamble from certain textbooks, saying this was an attempt to impose communal ideology on the country a claim which Union Minister JP Nadda countered saying the Government was committed to protecting Constitution. During Zero Hour, Leader of the Opposition and Congress President Kharge said Preamble, which is the soul and foundation of Indian Constitution, used to be NCERT published in textbooks. Soon after Zero Hour, Pradhan said Kharge has made certain remarks regarding NCERT books of the education department.

in the House," he said. The Minister informed the House that till now textbooks for classes up to 7th have been



saying that earlier there used to be Preamble (in the textbooks).

In the new textbooks of Class VI, there is Preamble. Not only Preamble, there Fundamental Duties, Fundamental Rights, and

National Anthem (in the books). These also represent core values of the Constitution and they are in the books. What he said was not a fact," Pradhan said. In Zero Hour, Kharge said,

every citizen especially the future generation needs to be educated about foundational principles and values of Indian democracy and Constitution as well as the sacrifices made by freedom fighters such as Nehru, BR Ambedkar, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He then went on to make a Statement on shifting of statues of Gandhi and

issue," he told Kharge. Kharge demanded that Government give a clarification on the issue, present facts before the House and withdraw the move to drop Preamble from NCERT textbooks."Undoubtedly all of us are committed to the Constitution and any perception to the contrary will hurt all of us," Dhankhar said. Leader of the House and BJP President JP Nadda said

NCERT textbook or the change but can with all authority State that there is no question of any needling of the

## Appropriation Bill 2024 introduced in RS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $F_{ ext{Sitharaman on Wednesday}}^{ ext{inance Minister Nirmala}}$ introduced the Appropriation (No 2) Bill 2024 in the Rajya Sabha which authorises certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund of India for services in 2024-25. Sitharamam also introduced the Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2024 in the Upper House. The Lok Sabha passed the two legislations last week. Initiating the discussion on

the bills, Digvijaya Singh (Congress) Stated that the focus of the Government should be on reducing the disparity between rich and poor, tackling price rise and

Attacking the Government, he said for the last decade the Government has just worked for the benefit of big corporations.

He stated that household

savings have come down in the country signalling that poverty is on the rise. He said while price increase is there, earnings remain at the same level as was the case 10 years ago."The number billionaires has risen the most during the Modi Government. Poor have become poorer, the rich have become richer," Singh stated. He also advocated levying a 2 per cent wealth tax on the top 300 rich families in the country. Singh also asked the Finance Minister to make all cancer treatment drugs and machines



involved in the treatment free from customs duty. He also sought doing away with the 18 per cent GST on health insurance.

Derek O'Brien (TMC) also asked the Finance Minister to roll back 18 per cent GST on health insurance and life insurance. "This was a provision introduced in 2017.

Our humble appeal to the FM through you. No one saw this maybe from 2017 to 2024. In the last two weeks it has been brought up in Parliament. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has written a letter. Yesterday there were 350 MPs from 20 parties, we all are together in this," he stated. A senior cabinet Minister has

also written a letter to the Finance Minister in this regard, O'Brien said. O'Brien commenced his speech by lauding wrestler Vinesh Phogat. "Medal or no medal, we salute you. You are our hero Vinesh Phogat. Thank you for what you have done for India," the TMC leader Stated in the Upper House. V Vijaysai Reddy (YSRCP) asked the Government to make pension tax free. He also pointed out that the

interest on small saving schemes like PPF remain low thereby encouraging people to invest in risky stock markets. Bhubaneswar Kalita (BJP) cited various developmental works taken up by the union Government, especially in the

### INS Tabar conducts maritime partnership exercise with German Navy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Indian Navy's frontline frigate, INS Tabar during her return leg from St Petersburg, Russia conducted Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with German Navy off Kiel Canal on Monday, navy said here on Wednesday. Giving details, officials said

INS Tabar had earlier visited Hamburg, Germany from July 17 - 20. These engagements are aimed at strengthening the maritime relations between both the nations. The conduct of MPX between Indian Navy and German Navy off Kiel Canal signifies Indian Navy's outreach and sustenance efforts, also marking a significant milestone in the maritime cooperation between the two



The MPX with the Sea Lynx of 3rd Squadron Naval Air Wing 5(MFG5) of the German Navy involved a series of advanced maritime operations such as Ship Controlled Approaches, Winching exercises and VERTREP serials. Units from both the navies demonstrated high levels of professionalism commitment to enhance

collaborative efforts. India and Germany share a relationship built on a foundation of shared values, democratic principles and a commitment to global peace and security. The Indian Navy remains committed to fostering partnerships with navies across the world. The MPX with the German navy reinforces the strong bilateral naval ties and our ability to work together in

## Surge in dogbite cases makes India's goal of eliminating rabies by 2030 difficult

**ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

India's goal of eliminating rabies by 2030 appears increasingly difficult to achieve amid surge in dog bite cases, which rose from 1.7 million in 2021 to over 3 million in 2023. According to the Government data, the number of reported dog bites escalated from 1,701,133 in 2021 to 2,180,185 in 2022, and further to 3,043,339 in 2023.

follows a period of significant decline in reported cases from 2019 to 2021

This troubling increase The issue

has

too, with Ghaziabad MP Atul Garg recently highlighting alarming figures: 30.5 lakh dog bites and 286 deaths nationwide. "If this figure is correct, then in Ghaziabad alone, 35,000 people have been bitten by dogs in a year. Small kids are becoming victims of this...", said Garg urging the Government to form a panel to address the imbalance between animal human freedom, the MP welfare laws and human safety, emphasising the Dr growing terror among children and families. Garg said that if a pet dog bit actively raising awareness

someone, a person could be held responsible but no dog lover came forward to save the person being attacked if it was a stray dog. "... Children cannot play, an atmosphere of terror has been created within the city. So it is my request that a committee be formed and the matter be taken up, he said, adding that there is an imbalance in the laws between love for animals and noted.

Khyatee physiotherapist Ghaziabad who has been

a from such situations, emphasised people on how to handle such

about basic life support in mishaps. "If bitten by a dog,

clean the wound with soap that it is crucial to educate and water, apply antiseptic, and seek immediate medical

attention for potential rabies treatment. Check the dog's vaccination status and report the bite to authorities if the dog is stray or its status is unknown. If unvaccinated, get 5 doses on Days 0, 3, 7, 14, and 28," said Dr Arora, exsenior research officer with AIIMS Delhi. So much the menace has

spread across the States, that first-of-its-kind compilation of startling figures, Chhattisgarh State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) recently took cognisance of the issue as it noted that a total of 1,19,928

dog bite incidents registered across the State in 2023. It has asked the State to collate information on the number of dog bite cases registered in each district of Chhattisgarh, the vaccinations carried out and if the deaths were reporting.

The Centre on its part has asked the State health authorities to provide quality data on the number of animal bites from all primary health centres, community health district-level hospitals and tertiary care facilities with specific details on bites by pet dogs and stray

be maintained for new and follow-up patients in the animal bite exposure register. The Centre has also recently introduced the Animal Birth Control Rules 2023 under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, replacing the previous Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules, 2001. According to the WHO, dogmediated rabies causes an estimated 59,000 human deaths globally each year, with India accounting for 20,565 (35 per cent) of these deaths. This data is derived from a 2004 study.

dogs. Separate records have to

## **CPM** ideologue raps State **Govt for Wayanad coverup**

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCH

hief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan-led cabal in the CPI-M in Kerala suffered a major setback on Wednesday as a widely respected party ideologue came out in the open lambasting the State Government for covering up its failures and blaming the Center for last Tuesday's landsides and floods in Wayanad district. More than 400 lives were lost and hundreds were rendered

G Shakthidharan, known as a copybook communist and who was a senior editor of party organ Deshabhimani said in his social media post that what Kerala received as disaster relief from the Center during the current crisis is the best help which it has got from the past Governments

"The hour-long speech delivered by Home Minister in Parliament is an excellent proof of how the Centre has been the

administration about an impending disaster days before the landslide struck Wayanad. The way the Prime Minister and the Home Minister responded to the mishap shows the Centre cares and Modi deserves full credit for the kind of help being offered to the



State," said Shakthidharan with a plea to the journalists and intellectuals in the State not to categorize him as a Sanghi (part of the RSS Parivar). He was blunt in stating that no

other Central Govts have shown the kind of attention and care the Modi Govt is showering in Kerala. "But the Vijayan-led government, enmeshed in corruption, Viiavan-led favoritism and misdeeds of all kind wants to save its skin from charges of mismanagement and carelessness," he said . The Marxist ideologue asked

prevented Government from having a discussion with Prof Madhav Gadgil who headed the UPA Government appointed Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel that made serious study of the status of the ecologically fragile Western Ghats of which Wayanad is a part. Prof Gadgil had warned of major natural

government wemt ahead with quarrying, mining construction activities. Pinarayi Vijayan, while briefing the media on 30th July, the day the district was devastated by the landslide scoffed at the WGEE Panel report and described the same as trash.

Though a CPI(M) follower. Shakthidharan never hesitated to speak his mind out.

"Prof Gadgil had warned the State many times about the impending natural disaster. But why the CM Vijayan is reluctant to meet him and discuss with him the solution available to save Wayanad and other such regions in the State. His reluctance has its epicentre on Vijayan's ego and arrogance. Moreover there are dacoits who masquerade as politicians and have made it to the inner chamber of the chief minister's residence and

office," said Sakthidharan.

## Chhattisgarh jobs scam: CM Sai slams Cong Govt amid CBI raids

¬hief Minister Vishnu Deo on Wednesday the previous Congress Government in Chhattisgarh for "maligning" the image of an institution like the state public service commission, asserting that the ruling BJP won't spare the corrupt.

His remarks come amid the ongoing CBI searches at multiple locations in the state tied to alleged irregularities in the state Public Service Commission recruitment examination during the previous Congress government.

In a post in Hindi on X, Sai said, "Writing a new chapter of good governance - youth of the state will get justice. The previous Congress government in Chhattisgarh maligned an institution with a clean image like PSC by committing scams and playing with the future of the vouth.

Now, in the government of good governance, scams are being investigated thoroughly and no corrupt person will be spared. Youth will get justice."

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) began searching more than a dozen



locations Dhamtari, Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur districts over the alleged recruitment scam, official sources said.

Last month, the CBI took over the probe into the two cases registered in the state for alleged favouritism in the selection deputy collectors, deputy superintendents of police and other senior government posts through the Chhattisgarh PSC during 2020-2022, the agency had

As per the two cases, the then CGPSC chairman Taman Singh Sonwani, former

secretary Jeevan Kishore Dhruy, the then controller of examinations and many public servants politicians misused their positions to get their children, relatives

acquaintances recruited. Notably, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other top BJP leaders, during electioneering for last year's Assembly polls, had targeted the then-ruling Congress over the alleged recruitment scam and promised to get it probed if the saffron party came to

### Bangladesh turmoil matter of concern for NE: Himanta

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said the situation in Bangladesh is a matter of concern for the northeastern states, apprehending that the neighbouring country may again become a hub of insurgents and people from there may enter the region illegally.

Sarma said he was hopeful that the Centre would continue with dialogue with the new dispensation in Bangladesh and that concerns of the northeastern states would be at the forefront.

'We are concerned about the recent developments in Bangladesh and if the trouble continues, we fear that it will affect the region from two angles," the chief minister told reporters on the sidelines of an event in Dergaon.

The border between the two countries has to be protected "people from the neighbouring country may try to enter the region through the India-Bangladesh boundary", he said.

'During Sheikh Hasina's regime, insurgents from the northeast region were forced to leave Bangladesh. It will be a matter of concern for us that the neighbouring country may again become a hub of insurgents," the chief minister

said. There is no doubt that with the cooperation of the previous Bangladesh government, 'we have been successful in curbing extremist activities in North East India. I have full confidence that the new government in the neighbouring country will also

The death toll in the antigovernment protests in Bangladesh on Tuesday climbed to 440, according to local media, even as efforts were on by the army to bring the situation under control in the violence-hit nation.

maintain this cooperation', he

Nobel laureate Mohammad Yunus was on Tuesday appointed as the head of Bangladesh's interim government by President Mohammed Shahabuddin, a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country following deadly protests against her government controversial quota system in

## Kailashnathan takes oath as Puducherry LG



 $F^{\rm ormer\ IAS\ officer\ K}_{\rm Kailashnathan\ was\ sworn}$ in as Lt Governor of Puducherry at a ceremony in Nivas here Wednesday.

Madras High Court Justice D Krishnakumar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Kailashnathan. Chief Secretary to Puducherry Administration Sharat Chauhan read out the warrant of appointment issued recently by President Murmu. Kailashnathan is the 25th Lt Governor of the union

Chief Minister N Rangasamy,

his cabinet colleagues, the Speaker of Puducherry Assembly R Selvam, Deputy Rajavelu, legislators, high ranking Police officials, opposition AÏADMK (DMK), Puducherry unit Secretary A Anbalagan, officials and representatives of various organisations were among who greeted Kailashnathan after the swearing in ceremony. Puducherry police presented the guard of honour to the new Lt Governor outside Raj Nivas after the ceremony.

## HP cloudburst: Efforts to trace missing people enter day 7, kin losing hope

Family members of the around 30 people who went missing following flash went missing following masin floods triggered by a cloudburst here on July 31 have begun losing hope as the search and rescue operations to trace the victims entered the seventh day on Wednesday amid incessant

Sharing details about the ongoing operation in Samej here, Assistant Commanding Officer, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Karam Singh, said, "It is raining but the joint search and rescue operations are underway."

The water level is rising in Sutlej River and slides are also occurring at multiple places. JCBs and other machines are being used to clear the roads. Our soldiers are skilled and through ropes to search the sites where there is any possibility of finding the missing people", Singh people", added.

Samej falls under Sarpara Rampur Panchayat subdivision of Shimla district and borders the Kullu district.

The family members of the missing persons who have



been camping at the site for the past seven days have now lost hope and are praying for the recovery of bodies to perform last rites. "The entire family including

my brother, two sisters-indaughter-in-law, nephews and niece are with one daughter-in-law grandson survived as they were out of home when the tragedy struck. The water level in the river is increasing and the rescue teams are facing a lot of difficulty due to the continuous rains, said Kair Singh, a local.

Meanwhile, the local meteorological office issued an orange alert of heavy to very heavy rain, thunderstorm and lightning at isolated places in the state for Wednesday and Saturday. The Met also said that

monsoon activity is likely to intensify in the next five to with fairly six days So far 16 deaths have been

reported due to flash floods and cloudbursts in three districts of Himachal Pradesh on July 31 midnight and over 35 people are still missing in Kullu's Nirmand, Sainj and Malana, Mandi's Padhar and Shimla's Rampur subdivision.

BJP MP Kangana Ranaut who visited Samej village on

Tuesday and other parts of Shimla and Kullu accused the state Congress government of doing "nothing" to help the

According to the officials, 410 rescuers from teams of the Army, NDRF, SDRF, ITBP, CISF, Himachal guards are involved in the hunt and rescuers have intensified the operation by deploying more machinery, sniffer dog squad, drones and other equipment. A total of 93 people were killed rain-related

incidents between June 27 and August 6 and the state suffered losses amounting to Rs 748 crore.

### 6-year-old Dalit boy found locked in classroom in UP expressed ignorance, she

Asix-year-old Dalit child, who was allegedly forced to clean the toilet by some teachers, was found locked in the classroom of a government primary school in the Jansath police said Wednesday.

Basic Education Department has taken action against the school's principal and a teacher. The incident took place on Tuesday when a six-year-old student of class one was found locked in the school classroom, allegedly due to the laxity of Principal Sandhya Jain and class teacher Ravita Rani, police said.

A police complaint in this regard has been lodged by the child's mother in which she that the two teachers used to force her son to clean the toilet as they had "hatred' against Dalit children.

She alleged that due to the negligence of the teachers, her son remained locked in the classroom for more than an hour after the school closed When her son did not reach home after the closure of the school, she inquired about him with other students, who

school closed when she went there, and heard the cries of her child, after which the villagers and her family members called the principal. Later, teacher Ravita Rani's husband reached the school with the keys and opened it. Rani's husband said the child might have fallen asleep in the class.Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) Sandeep Kumar told PTI that the principal has been suspended and teacher Rani

added. She said she found the

has been given an adverse A probe has been ordered into the matter and a two-member committee led by the block shiksha adhikari, Jansath and Shahpur, will look into it and submit its report within three

Kumar said that all staff have been asked to check the

classrooms before closing the school. Principal Jain said that "injustice" was done with her as the class teacher was

responsible for this. "Even if the child was sleeping, the classroom should have been checked before locking it," she

### Khurshid frustrated, says Vijayvargiya on Cong leader's Bangladesh-like jibe

**PTI** ■ PUDUCHERRY

Senior BJP leader and Madhya Pradesh minister Vijayvargiya on Wednesday called Congress leader Salman Khurshid "frustrated" over his remarks that a Bangladesh-like situation could happen in

At a book release function on Tuesday night, Khurshid said that though "everything may look normal on the surface, what is happening in Bangladesh could happen in

Bangladesh was rocked by waves of violent antigovernment protests since mid-July, following which Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign as the prime minister and flee the country.

On Khurshid's comment, Vijayvargiya said, "He should understand that this is (Prime Minister) Modi ji's country. This is Bharat. Such frustrated leaders trying to spread anarchy by giving statements should be ashamed?

Responding to another question, he said that those who were acting as the face of Pakistan have now understood the situation in Bangladesh and

"Bharat is a strong country and its leader Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a very strong leader. Therefore, talking about such anarchy in India is reprehensible," said the MP minister.

Khurshid's comments came at the launch of academician Mujibur Rehman's book 'Shikwa-e-Hind: Political Future of Indian Muslims'.

The Congress leader said is happening in Bangladesh can happen in India though "everything may look normal on the surface".

surface.
"Everything ring in may 100 Kashmir. Everything may look normal here. We may be celebrating the victory, although of course some people believe that that victory or that success of 2024 was perhaps only marginal, perhaps a lot more needs to be done," he said."The fact remains that under the surface there is something," he said.

happening 'What's Bangladesh can happen here... The spread in our country prevents things blowing up in the manner in which they've blown up in Bangladesh," he said.

#### One more arrested in **BSP** leader murder case

PTI CHENNAI

32-year-old man has been Aarrested in connection with the brutal killing of BSP state president K Armstrong last month, police said on Wednesday. The arrested has been

identified as N Aswathaman. A police release here said he is a resident of Vyasarpadi in the city. Prior to him, 21 people were arrested as part of the probe into the high profile murder, t said.

One accused person was gunned down by the police last month when he tried to attack them and flee, while being taken to a city location to unearth some weapons allegedly hidden there by

Armstrong (52), state chief of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was hacked to death by a group of assailants last month, sending shockwaves. Political parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, besides BSP supremo and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati, have demanded a CBI probe into the killing.

## TN Ministers Ramachandran, Thenarasu to face trial in assets case: Madras HC

Setting aside trial court Oorders discharging Tamil Nadu Revenue Minister KKSSR Ramachandran and Finance Minister Thangam Thenarasu disproportionate assets cases, the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed the lower court to frame charges against them and proceed accordance with law.

Passing an order on the criminal revision petition initiated by him, Justice N Anand Venkatesh set aside the orders of the Special Court for MPs and MLAs cases, Virudhunagar, dated July 20, 2023 and December 2022 respectively, discharging Ramachandran and Thennarasu from the disproportionate

The ministers, both senior DMK leaders, have to face trial in the cases registered against them by the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC). As prima facie materials were

available to frame charges, the Special Court shall proceed to frame charges and thereafter proceed in accordance with The judge said that one of the manner in which the DVAC officials have also colluded with each other to ensure that criminal trials against two sitting ministers were "quietly and indecently buried within the precincts of the Special Court."

directed judge Ramachandran to appear before the Special Court on September 9. Thennarasu has to appear before the Special Court on September 11.

The judge said as the case was of the year 2011 and 2012 respectively, the proceedings of the Special Court shall be conducted on a day-to-day basis keeping in mind the directives of the Supreme Court in Vinod Kumar vs State of Punjab, and dispose of the case as expeditiously as

The judge made it clear "this most striking aspects of these Court has not examined or two cases was the meticulous commented upon the merits

of the case, which shall be decided by the Special Court on merits, without being influenced by any of the observations made herein above".

Narrating various principles, the judge said tested on the touchstone of the aforesaid principles, the conclusion was that the orders of the Special Court deserves to be set aside on the short ground that it had committed a manifest jurisdictional error

discharging the accused in the face of relevant material, the correctness of which could not be the subject matter for inquiry at the stage of discharge. Additionally, the very fact that the Special Court has not assigned a shred of independent shred reasoning was another reason warranting interference in exercise of revisional powers,

## Bridge over Kali river collapses in Karnataka, traffic disrupted

PTI ■ PANAJI/KARWAR

An old bridge across Kali Ariver in Uttara Kannada district collapsed in the small hours of Wednesday, resulting traffic along in heavy in heavy traffic along National Highway 66, connecting Goa to Karnataka. A large portion of the bridge near here caved in around 1.30 am when a truck was crossing it, leaving the driver of the vehicle injured as he fell into the river, Karwar police said.

According to officials, the bridge was used for Goabound traffic after the construction of a new one a decade ago. The injured truck driver has been identified as Bala Murugan (37) from Tamil Nadu.

The truck, en route to Karwar, fell into the water, police said, adding that the night patrol team alerted higher police officials. "Our night patrolling team noticed the collapsed bridge and alerted the control room. There was a truck in the river and the injured driver was on top of the vehicle.

The local fishermen along with our team managed to rescue the driver,' Superintendent of Police

(Karwar) M Narayana said. "He is admitted to Karwar Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital. The truck driver is stated to be stable and is recovering," he said. Traffic on the new bridge was stopped for some time following the incident. Later, vehicles, except heavy ones, were allowed to pass through, the Karwar police said.

"Due to the bridge collapse, only light vehicles will be allowed on the new Kali bridge while suspending the movement of heavy vehicles temporarily," a statement from Karwar SD oci d from Karwar SP said. Traffic movement on the new

bridge was restricted as the Karnataka authorities were checking its stability after the collapse of the old bridge, Goa's Canacona police station in-charge Harish Raut Desai said. An FIR has also been registered over the bridge collapse. Following

Following the incident, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called Deputy Commissioner of Uttara Kannada Lakshmi Priya K and instructed her to ensure the safety of all bridges and roads in the district and to take precautions to prevent any loss of life.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Finance Minister yields**

Facing a backlash over changes to the property transaction taxation, the FM has given some concessions to homeowners

owing to the popular pressure and critiques from MPs within the NDA coalition, the Central Government has relented to grant some relief for property transactions. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced in the budget that the tax on long-term capital gains was reduced from 20% with indexation benefits to 12.5% but without indexation benefits. However, following significant opposition, an amendment is being made to The Finance Bill, 2024. For the transfer of a long-term capital asset such as land or a building acquired before July 23, 2024, the taxpayer can now choose to calculate their tax either at 12.5% without indexation under the new scheme or at 20% with indexation under the old scheme and pay whichever amount is lower. Indexation adjusts purchase price for inflation, reducing tax liability on gains from investments like debt funds. The government eliminated indexation benefits on long-term capital gains, increasing taxable gains. It prevents infla-

tion from eroding returns on long-term investments. This adjustment marks a significant reversal from the government's firm stance on the issue after the

The ministry officials had argued that the new tax rate structure, with a lower tax rate minus the indexation benefits, would benefit people in almost all cases. However, the industry experts had different opinions. Industry bodies had sought to rethink the proposal, observing that the removal of indexation benefits amounted to a retrospective tax change for those who had bought properties earlier. They pointed out that this would particularly hurt those who

had invested in assets that had delivered lesser appreciation in value over the years. It was widely feared that the removal of indexation benefits on long-term capital gains would slow down property transactions in the Mumbai real estate market, and the real estate engine of the country and could have cascading effects throughout the country. Besides, several MPs also urged the Government to reconsider the proposal. During the debate on the Finance Bill in the Lok Sabha, TDP MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu echoed the concerns of other MPs, emphasising that this issue involves taxpayers' hard-earned money and impacts middle-class people the most. He noted that the middle class views real estate as a safe investment and and so should be protected. Indeed he had a point, as the middle-class is facing the pinch of price rise and rising unemployment. If their small investments and savings are wiped off they would have nothing to fall back upon. Providing taxpayers with the option to choose between the two tax regimes would address some of their concerns. Thankfully the finance minister yielded to allow for the second option. This would indeed give some relief to small and middle-class homeowners, providing a more balanced approach to long-term capital gains taxation in the real estate sector.



Fishermen cast their nets in the Arabian sea, at the Kochi coas

## The evolution of Rahul Gandhi



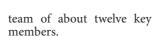
It may be premature to assess Rahul Gandhi's effectiveness as the new Leader of the Opposition, but his initial performance is promising

t might be too soon to judge how well Rahul Gandhi is doing as the new Leader of the Opposition. The current budget session ends in just a few days, so we'll need more time to understand his leadership fully. But he has begun well. After winning in the Lok Sabha

polls, Rahul has been confident and strong both inside and outside the house, which is appropriate for an opposition leader.Nobel laureate Amartya Sen recently discussed Rahul's evolution since their days at Cambridge University. Sen underlined that Rahul has significantly matured over the years and underscored that his true test lies in how he steers the Opposition in Parliament.

Rahul stepped into the shoes of the Leader of the Opposition, a quarter of a century after his political debut in 2004. The Lok . Sabha had been without a Leader of the Opposition for a decade, as no opposition party had the requisite number of members to stake the claim in the last two Lok Sabhas. During the recent budget session, the first after Rahul became the LOP, he took a vital leadership role in his party and the Opposition. Since becoming the Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi has taken on more responsibilities.

He now leads and represents the Opposition's viewpoint on various subjects. This is a new role for him. He organised protests, delivered powerful speeches against the Modi government, and worked closely with allies to coordinate their efforts on the floor. He also focused on critical issues for the people and made himself more accessible.In the recent budget session, Rahul Gandhi, as the Leader of the Opposition, took on an important leadership role within his party and the Opposition. He has organised protests, delivered powerful speeches against the Modi government, and worked losely with allies. Additionally, he has focused on critical issues for the people and made himself more accessible.Rahul Gandhi's backroom office has a Indian people's voice than it



This team, led by General Secretary K.C. Venugopal and including Sam Pitroda, Sunil Kanugolu, K. Buju, B. Srivatsa, Manickam Tagore, Alankar Sawai, and Kaushal Vidyarthi, plays a vital role in managing Gandhi's political activities and election strategies, including logistics and social media. Rahul's growth and evolution in the political arena have transformed him into a more confident leader, marking a significant departure from his previous image as a reluctant politician.

This change has been compelling to witness in his political journey.Rahul finds it easier to take on a more assertive role now, with a substantial number of opposition members in the 18th Lok Sabha. Furthermore, the success of united allies in the 2024 polls has made them realise the power of unity.

When Rahul spoke as the Leader of the Opposition for the first time, he said, "While the government has political power, the Opposition also represents the voice of the Indian people. This time, the Opposition represents significantly more of the



MP FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES, RAHUL WAS NOT **CONSIDERED** A GOOD PARLIAMENTARIAN. HE ASKED ONLY 99 QUESTIONS, PARTICIPATED IN 26 DEBATES, AND WASN'T ALWAYS PRESENT AT

CRITICAL TIMES

**DESPITE BEING AN** 

did last time."Rahul Gandhi's criticisms of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have caused strong reactions from the ruling party. During Rahul's maiden speech as LOP, PM Modi spoke up for the first time in 10 years. Modi accused Rahul of say-

ing that the entire Hindu society is 'violent'. The Prime Minister stated, "Democracy and the Constitution have taught me to take the Leader of the Opposition seriously.' Modi's responses to Gandhi's criticisms show an acknowledgement of the changed situation and the resulting tension in the Parliament. Rahul Gandhi has been speaking out against the Modi government's decision to arrest AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal and JMM chief Hemant Soren. He opposes the BJP's attempts to silence opposing viewpoints.

This has caused increased tensions in Parliament for the ruling party.During his Lok Sabha campaign, Rahul Gandhi strategically showed a small red pocket edition of the Constitution at public meetings . This move effectively highlighted what he called the perceived threat to the Constitution from the

His use of the Constitution helped him gain support from reservation beneficia-

Despite being an M.P. for the past two decades, Rahul was not considered a good Parliamentarian. He asked only 99 questions, participated in 26 debates, and wasn't always present at critical times. Since 2014, he has been noticeably absent during budget sessions, only appearing occasionally. He also frequently went abroad, leaving the party in a crisis.Rahul is doing well as the Leader of the Opposition (LOP).

His success will depend on his political planning. He missed some opportunities in the past, like becoming a minister in Manmohan Singh's cabinet or strengthening the party as the Congress President.

However, his current role shows his potential. He must use this opportunity to face future political challenges confidently. Rahul's belief in the power of the LOP to raise its voice in Parliament gives nope and optimism to the

(The writer is a popular columnist; views expressed

**PRABHUMIRASHI** By 2030, India plans to achieve 500 GW of installed capacity from non-fossil

## way for a sustainable future

fuels, marking a significant shift towards sustainability and energy security

Renewable energy: Paving the

ndia's growth story over the past two decades has ▲been marked by vibrant economic progress, largely driven by service exports and rising domestic consumption. As of 2024, the economy appears robust, poised to replicate its service sector

success by transforming into

a global manufacturing hub

to leverage its demographic

dividend.

A robust manufacturing sector necessitates significant resources, with power being a crucial component. Despite this, India's per capita electricity consumption remains low compared to global averages. As the country embarks on its manufacturing-focused era, electricity demand is expected to rise significantly. To meet this demand while adhering to climate commitments, India plans to add new electricity generating capacity primarily from non-fossil fuel sources. The goal is to achieve 500 GW of installed non-fossil fuel capacity by

By May 31, 2024, India's nonfossil fuel-based power generation capacity stood at 201.7 GW, with renewable energy, including small hydro pro-



To meet growing demands, a significant increase in renewable energy capacity is anticipated, supported by the renewable energy procurement roadmap from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), which targets 50 GW of bids annually from FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28.

Regulatory policies for the renewable energy sector are governed by both central and state governments, as electricity is part of the concurrent list. Key aspects of central government policy include promoting domestic manufacturing of solar modules and electrolyzers, safeguarding domestic manufacturing, and domestic content requirements, and implementing policies to encourage specif-

ic types of electricity genera-

tion like rooftop solar and offshore wind.

India's renewable energy policy framework adopts a holistic approach, addressing multiple factors. For example, the Ladakh region, with excellent irradiation levels, lacks sufficient infrastructure to integrate its power into the grid. To tackle this, the government announced the green energy corridor. Furthermore, the government identified states with offshore wind potential and introduced a viability gap funding scheme with an outlay of Rs 7,453 crores for installing 1 GW of offshore wind projects. Regulatory policies also aim to enhance self-sufficiency in the energy. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, with an outlay of Rs. 24,000 crores, targets achieving gigawattscale manufacturing capacity of high-efficiency solar PV modules. Additionally, the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Program, with an outlay of Rs. 17,490 crores

under the National Green

Hydrogen Mission, supports

domestic manufacturing of

electrolyzers and green hydro-

gen production. These investments are expected to generate numerous direct and indirect jobs while ensuring energy security. The government has also

introduced schemes to promote distributed solar generation at the household level in both rural and urban areas. The PM-KUSUM scheme aims to reduce the agricultural sector's reliance on diesel and boost farmers' incomes by providing central government subsidies of up to 50% for installing standalone solar pumps and solarizing existing grid-connected agricultural pumps. Farmers can alsoinstall grid-connected solar plants on barren land and sell electricity to local distribution companies (DISCOMs). In the interim budget for FY 2024-25, the government announced the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, which offers subsidies covering up to 40% of solar panel installation costs. This scheme aims to equip 10 million homes with solar panels, saving INR

(The writer is a managerinvestments at AMPIN Energy *Transition, views are personal)* 

75,000 crores in electricity

costs.

#### **PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT**

Madam — President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a six-day state visit to three nations: Fiji, New Zealand, and Timor-Leste a couple of days ago. I wonder why the President has undertaken this visit? How will engaging with these nations benefit India? Fiji and Timor Leste are almost unheard of countries in India. What is the government's agenda really? As both Fiji and New Zealand are approximately 11,000 kms and Timor Leste is about 6.5000 kms away, it goes without saying that a to and fro visit to these countries would cost our nation a humongous sum. Besides, the President who would be travelling by a state aeroplane (read, like a private airliner) would leave a heavy carbon footprint. Will a RTI query in respect of the purpose and cost of the tri-nation jaunt be answered, if at all?

Avinash Godboley Dewas

#### **BLINDING HEADLIGHTS CAUSE ACCIDENTS**

Madam— Blinding headlights are one of the important causes of road accidents in India. À driver can be blinded by the opposite vehicles as well as the rear ones. On an average, glaring headlights are direct or contributory causes of 75 percent of vehicular collisions in India. Of course high beam lights are useful in low visibility when there are little or no street lights. However, rules say high beams can be employed by the drivers only if there are no oncoming vehicles but not many drivers are sticklers for rules. Rear vehicles can distract the front drivers' vision by using bright lights within 60 metres.

It has become a fashion for several youngsters, especially in small towns and cities with none to keep a hawk's eye on them, to use ornamental illumination like flashy headlights. Flickers, Light emitting diodes(LED), and its variants, are freely used by irresponsible drivers. Section 177 of the Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) has explicitly detailed the proper and improper use of headlights. Many drivers, especially the non-professional ones, are oblivious to the correct usage of headlights and

#### Justice delayed is justice denied

parties involved.

#### editorial is a concern shared by all. The staggering fact that 44 million cases are pending and could take 300 years to resolve at the current pace should prompt the ruling government to seek a tangible solution. Currently, filing a case itself feels like a punishment for both



"Justice Delayed". The Chief Justice of India's deep concern over the excessive delay in disposing of cases, as noted in the

this can mainly be blamed on poor qual-

ity of driving schools and doling out

licences without proper application of

his is wtih reference to your editorial

Even after winning a case, the appeals process undertaken by the losing party makes the entire affair extremely frustrating. There is a pressing need to increase the capacity of courts at all levels to handle and dispose of cases in a timely manner. However, it is unfortunate that even the existing courts are forced to operate with severe manpower shortages. Simply changing the Acts and their

names is not the change people desire; what

is urgently needed is systemic and infrastruc-

tural improvement A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

Ganpat Bhat | Akola

#### **TURMOIL IN BANGLADESH**

Madam — Sheikh Hasina's resignation as Prime Minister of Bangladesh is a result of socio-political upheaval of her own making. Every nation is an enterprise owned and run by its people who elect a government to run it as also simultaneously place an Opposition as the auditor. So long as the auditor is facilitated by the government to put up dissenting notes and is willing to correction, the shareholders let the checks and balances play out. When the government fails to give credence to the opposition, a plethora of public fora and institutions come in to press an alternative narrative. Should the government resort to suppressing them too , the people step in as suo- moto auditor. The likes of social media then expound dissent and if this too goes unheeded, peo-

ple act as regulators leveraging electoral

platforms to tone down aberrations in governance by impinging on electoral standing of the ruling dispensation. Should a government seek to neutralise the process of such franchise itself, as has been in many nations across the globe, people take to roads to convey the message. An extremely recalcitrant government could then compel people to set up tribunals and don the robes of judge and jury. Bangladesh has apparently slipped into this unhappy final phase. It's military may yet be sagacious enough to restore law and order and enable the nation to reclaim governance and eschew going the Myanmar way. There is a lesson for every progressive democratic nation. Stifling the elected opposition and relentless and heavy handed suppression of dissent per se in hubris of power, is bound to heavily set back economic progress while the socio political fabric stands frayed beyond repair.

R Narayanan | Mumbai

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### **FIRST COLUMN**

#### **SPIRITUAL PRACTICES CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE**

Praying, Chanting, meditation and other such practices can transform your life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

e are forever doing material acts like eating, sleeping, 'vihar' (entertainment) and, yes, work. Some of us may be doing some spiritual practices as well. Why is there such a mismatch? Because most people do not realize how beneficial spiritual practices are for a human being. Read on and you will agree. I have chosen ten common spiritual practices for this article. They are simple to do and almost everyone can benefit by doing them. Beginning with praying, what is so difficult to do it? Someone is not well in a family, and a family member prays for his or her quick recovery. Even small children pray for their mother when she is unwell. What happens then? God hears them, as He has eyes and ears everywhere. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 13.13)

What is God's response? He has to consider several factors like what does the person prayed for deserves, what effect it will have on other family members, who is praying, etc. There will be a response, which will be appropriate taking into consideration everything. Let us remember that God knows 'The Big Picture', which includes the past, present

Whatever God may decide, the act of praying sincerely curbs ego, which helps one to become humble - a necessary quality to be able to deal properly with others. Praying is also a good start for taking shelter from God – the topmost spiritual activity. Chanting of God's names and mantras is quite common across all religions. Many studies have been done to see the effects of chanting on the brain. They have found that chanting stimulates positive changes in the brain. Mantras with the sound 'Ohm'



are especially useful. God's names bring similar benefits. When we take God's name, He must respond. Didn't Lord Krishna respond to calls of Draupadi – "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna"? How the Lord respond to us depends again upon what we deserve and what will be good for us. 'Darshan' - seeing God's 'murti' in Deity form or a photo of one of God's incarnations like Krishna, Rama, etc. is very useful. This is my favourite spiritual act. I have hung a large photo of Lord Krishna on the right side of my bed. All I do is to sit or lie comfortably and look at the Lord's attractive face. Lord Krishna has allowed gaining spiritual knowledge to be pleasing in doing. (9.2) What better company than of God there can be? My Lord has become my own. And He rewards me in many ways. 'Atmabala' (inner strength) flows into me. This strength – the mother of all strengths has made me stronger mentally. I am also able to tolerate the inevitable miseries of this world better. Meditation is getting quite popular worldwide.

People are beginning to see the enormous benefits of this spiritual practice. Lord Krishna has recommended it strongly. In verse # 6.35, the Lord says, "Mind can be brought under control by practice." In verse # 12.8, He tells us where our mind should be fixed, i.e. in Him only. (12.8) In verse #18.65, the Lord asks us to develop His consciousness. Then, what will happen? We will be in God, i.e. become part of Him. (9.29) Could anything be better than that? Hearing about God is another great activity. Lord Krishna goes to the extent of indicating that those devoted to hearing from others will also benefit greatly. (13.25) There are many, who are conversant with spiritual truths. Satsang is a meeting of persons, who are conversant with spiritual truths. "And preachers of supreme knowledge (spiritual benefits) amongst My devotees please Me the most." (18.69) This is the highest devotion towards God. Remembering God and thanking Him whenever some good happens to us are immensely beneficial; they make us deserving of more such rewards. Why don't we do such activities? Because we are almost entirely focused on material acts. We can all do spiritual acts - the givers of great benefits both spiritual and material.

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

## Negligence and tragedy: The price of complacency-



The death of three IAS aspirant highlights severe systemic negligence by coaching center management, property owners, and municipal authorities



n reflecting on the powerful speech delivered by Mark Antony following the assassination of Julius Caesar, one cannot help but recall his stirring words: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." Antony's oration skillfully ignited the Roman populace, who were initially ambivalent towards Caesar's murder. Through his use of rhetorical questions and ironic praise for Brutus and the other conspirators, Antony incited the crowd to question the motives behind the assassination. <

By revealing Caesar's will, which generously bequeathed wealth and public parks to the citizens, Antony further endeared Caesar to the people and painted the conspirators as traitors. The crowd, now convinced of Caesar's benevolence and the conspirators' treachery, erupted into chaos, leading to a violent riot. This turmoil precipitated a civil war, ultimately overthrowing the existing order and paving the way for the rise of the 'Second Triumvirate' (all 'sought revenge for the murder of Julius Caesar) and the end of the Roman Republic.

A tragic incident in the Capital City of India echoes this (Shakespearean) historical upheaval, where the death of three students (IAS aspirants) has incited public (students') outrage. On Saturday, July 27, 2024 evening, a supposed drainage burst led to flooding in the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar used as a library where approximately 35 students were present when rainwater began to inundate the basement, creating a panic-stricken atmosphere. Despite attempts to evacuate, three students were trapped and subsequently

This disaster has cut short the dreams of the parents of three students. Unlike Bhola Baba - who philosophically dramatized death as an inevitable part of life following the Hatras stampede tragedy - the negligence displayed by the coaching centre owners in this instance cannot be so easily dismissed. The failure to ensure proper evacuation facilities has underscored the mismanagement of the institution.

Although the Municipal Corporation of

cannot fully absolve themselves of responsibility. More than anything else, the basement, intended for parking and storage, was illegally repurposed as a library. As the news became the talk of the town, sentiments of anger and frustration poured amidst huge grief and loss. The incident in Old Rajinder Nagar underscores a pervasive pattern of systemic negligence among various stakeholders, including coaching centre management, property owners, and municipal authorities. The illegal conversion of the basement into a library, without proper safety measures reveals a severe disregard for student safety. Compounded by chronic infrastructure deficiencies such as inadequate drainage systems, this negligence is exacerbated by municipal authorities' failures.

Regulatory lapses, such as issuing No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) without thorough verification and compliance checks, further point towards significant enforcement

shortcomings. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi's (MCD) delayed actions in sealing other illegally repurposed basements reflect a reactive rather than proactive enforcement strategy. Additionally, the coaching centre's lack of an effective emergency plan, including proper drills and protocols, significantly contributed to the chaos and heightened the tragedy, demonstrating a critical need for better emergency preparedness, stricter regulations and oversight to prevent such tragedies

in the future. Accounts from traumatized students reveal harrowing experiences. Whether it is Aishwarya Rai, a 30year-old UPSC aspirant from Kanpur, Nakul Tiwari, or Shreya, the very fact that they have been rescued from the terrifying moment of being drowned to death will linger

in their psyche for years to come. The question arises: why does it take such disasters for the administration to take action?

The arrest, bulldozing of illegal constructions and other preventive and punitive measures often come only after tragedy strikes. Videos now emerging tell tales of utter mis-management and illegal use of properties, breaking all norms. Why are the students only now flagging these issues? Another question is why their seniors, who have perhaps lived and studied in these conditions and are either IAS aspirants or have cleared their examinations, did not raise such issues of negligence in the past. Moreover, if a few of them have become Civil Servants from these coaching centres, why didn't they, over the years, bring this to the notice of the local administration? Another crucial issue is that the commercialization of education, driven by the high demand for competitive exam preparation, should not compromise safety standards, which in this case has resulted in unsafe and overcrowded condi-

The commercialization of education, characterized by the increasing influence of profit-driven motives, brings both benefits and drawbacks to student welfare. On the positive side, it often leads to improved infrastructure, better resources, and innovative teaching methods that enhance the learning experience. Private institutions do attempt to provide advanced facilities and extracurricular activities, fostering a more dynamic and engaging educational environment. This recent incident must become an eye-opener. It critically highlights the need for enhanced regulatory oversight and stricter enforcement of building codes and safety regulations, emphasizing regular inspec-

ance. Investment in infrastructure, particularly drainage systems, is crucial to mitigate flooding risks, especially in flood-prone areas like Old Rajinder Nagar.

Additionally, educational institu-

tions, particularly coaching centres, should be mandated to develop and regularly practice emergency evacuation plans, as safety drills can significantly improve preparedness and reduce panic during emergencies. Increased public awareness about safety regulations and accountability mechanisms is necessary, encouraging students and residents to report violations and demand action from authorities. Moreover, the process for obtaining necessary permits and NOCs should be transparent and stringent, with severe penalties for deviations from approved plans.

Public awareness and advocacy are crucial. Educating students and residents about safety standards and rights is another key factor Further, creating platforms for community engagement and empowering residents with safety mechanisms is crucial.

More than anything else, authorities should respond promptly to such reports and take corrective action. While this is a sad moment for all of us to have lost young budding talents of our country in this manner, it is time we foster a culture of accountability, in our endeavour to safeguard the dreams and lives of countless students who come to Delhi in pursuit of their aspirations. The path forward requires a collective effort from authorities, institutions, and the public to prioritize human safety over commercial interests and ensure that such a tragedy never

(The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

## Indian cardiologist sparks global debate on mind-based medical protocols

REGULATORY

ISSUING NO-

**CERTIFICATES** 

**OBJECTION** 

WITHOUT

**THOROUGH** 

**VERIFICATION** 

COMPLIANCE

**FURTHER POINT** 

CHECKS.

**TOWARDS** 

**SIGNIFICANT** 

**ENFORCEMENT** 

**SHORTCOMINGS** 

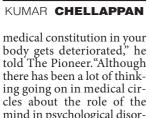
LAPSES, SUCH AS

In a groundbreaking challenge to conventional medical practices, Prof B M Hegde has called for a paradigm shift in the treatment of serious ailments

¬he world of medicine is all set to see an intense debate on the medical protocol to be employed in curing serious ailments thanks to an Indian doctor.

An internationally reputed cardiologist Prof B M Hegde who is based in Mangalore in Karnataka has challenged the existing diagnostic system in the field of physical ailments practiced across the world and has called for a shift to mind-based cure protocol.

Dr Hegde says that if one wants to live a life free of ailments like cancer and other serious medical issues, all one needs to do is to love all and hate none. "The more you hate people and



in the field of physical ail-Recent data on the important role played by the human mind in the causanesses like heart attacks and cancer have rekindled our interest in the intricacies of the working of the human mind vis a vis the human body. In the 17th century itself, William Harvey had clearly indicated that in all bodily afflictions there is a mental basis.

As there is no big money involved in this kind of research unlike the gold rush in the field of epidemiology and interventions, the field did not until very cles about the role of the mind in psychological disorders, much needs to be done ders, much needs to be done Hegde, who is also the chief editor of the "Journal of Science of Healing Outcomes", a super peerreviewed scientific publica-

tion.Interestingly, Prof

the University of London, always had strong reservations about the treatment protocol for cardio vascular diseases and cancer. In the editorial of the July 2024 issue of the JSHO, he quoted from the Journal of American Association which has published a large study on the connection between life stresses and their role in the causation of coronary artery

professor of cardiology at,

He said the JAMA study focused on the immediate and long-term effects of various emotional stressors that are a part of life in the modern rat race of the monetary economy.Prof Hegde with more than five decades of abuse/criticize them, the tion of major physical ill- Hegde, a former visiting medical research and prac-



tice to his credit has found that hostility, anger, frustration and bereavement come up on top among the nega-

tive emotions. "Love, compassion, social support and job satisfaction have control over one's situation, negative emotions acutely raised the blood he said.

pressure as also the heart rate and the breathing rate," said the octogenarian professor who has been honoured with Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan by the President of India for the scintillating works he has done over the decades.According to Prof Hegde's experience, chronic stress does take its toll leading to killer diseases. "Emotions play a major role in one getting afflicted with such ailments. Scientists, business barons, professionals and politicians should bear this in mind.

When the competition becomes too intense, chances of one losing control shoot up and there can be no coming back to normalcy,"

Dr Hegde pointed out the debates in Parliament and election campaigns to drive home the point that one should be elegant and coolheaded during the battle for power. "Even military officers behave in a disciplined manner while they are engaged in fighting the ene-

This is what we should learn to stay cool and free of ailments," he said. For the uninitiated, Prof Hegde is the author of many books and has written the preface for medical books published by medical scientists. His seminal work "What Doctors Don't Get to Study in Medical School" is widely read in the world of medicine and many doctors rate it as the Holy Bible of

Modern Medicine. If we stay away from unhealthy competition for wealth and power, we can keep serious ailments like heart disease and cancer miles away from

The only losers would be pharma companies that charge a fortune for a course of medicine. The JSHO has the whose-who of the world of medicine and science working as its editorial staff and board. This includes Prof Joanna Floros, and Evan Pugh Professor of Paediatrics and Obstetrics, Penn State University Hershey, USA, who is the co-editor in chief.

(The writer is a special correspondent with the Pioneer, views expressed are



## Professor's journey to becoming Bangladesh head

ife has come full circle for Nobel laureate Professor Mohammad Yunus, ✓ who faced persecution during Sheikh Hasina's regime for embezzlement, is now all set to head of the interim government in Bangladesh after she resigned and fled

President Mohammed Shahabuddin dissolved Parliament on Tuesday and appointed the 84-year-old economist as the head of an interim government. His decision was prompted by a demand by the Anti-Discrimination Student

Movement to make him the non-partisan head of the caretaker government. Yunus, globally recognised as 'The Father of Microfinance, is expected to return to Bangladesh from Paris on Thursday to take

Yunus, who started as a Professor at national and international Universities, earned the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for women's empowerment through poverty alleviation, and received multiple national and international awards over the years. But back home, he faced harsh scrutiny by the Hasina government for more than a

decade due to obscure reasons while authorities initiated a series of investigations against him after she came to power

Bangladesh authorities launched a review of the statutory Grameen Bank's activities in 2011 and fired Yunus as its founding managing director on charges of violating the government retirement regulation.

Many people believe Hasina became enraged when Yunus announced that he would form a political party in 2007 when the country was run by a military-backed government and Hasina was in prison. Ýunus, however, did not follow through on the plan but at that time he criticised Bangladeshi politicians alleging they were

Meanwhile, over the years, he was charged under dozens of cases. In January, Yunus was sentenced to six months in jail by a court on charges of labour law violation. On June 10 this year, a Dhaka court prosecuted Yunus and 13 others - currently out on bail - for embezzling as it rejected a plea for the dismissal of charges by the accused. The prosecution accused Yunus and the others of embezzling Taka 250 million (about USD 2 million) from the workers

only interested in money.

welfare fund of Grameen Telecom, which owns a 34.2 per cent stake in Bangladesh's largest mobile phone operator, Grameenphone, a subsidiary of Norway's telecom giant Telenor.

"She destroyed the legacy of her father Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman. Bangladesh is liberated... We are a free country now," Yunus told an Indian portal from Paris after news broke out of Hasina fleeing the country amid civil

Yunus was in Paris for a minor medical procedure, as reported by local media, when the President agreed to make him the head of the interim government.

Notwithstanding the Hasina government's stand, Yunus continued to receive international accolades as was evident by the speech by Susanna B Afan, president of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, on June 27 this year at Manila. In 1984, the then 44-year-old Yunus was

awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership for "his pioneering efforts in enabling rural men and women to become economically self-sufficient through sound group-managed

AP CHARLESTON (US)

ly marches north.

coastal cities in Georgia and

South Carolina with more than

a foot (30 centimetres) of rain in

places, stirring up tornadoes and

submerging streets with waist-

But its core was surrounded by

drier air and the worst rainfall

was falling hundreds of miles to

the north, into eastern North

Carolina before spreading into southeast Virginia. Both

declared a state of emergency. Forecasters warned 5 inches

(13 centimetres) of rain could

fall from South Carolina to

Vermont through this weekend.

The area of most concern

Wednesday was in southeastern

North Carolina, where

Hurricane Matthew caused a

historic billion-dollar flood in

2016. Two years later, many of

high floodwaters.



Stating that the work by Yunus, globally recognised as 'The Father of Microfinance' has not just inspired similar projects in Philippines, Indonesia and Pakistan but their respective founders too received the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

The 2006 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded for his work in poverty alleviation and the empowerment of poor women through Grameen Bank where Yunus has "successfully melded capitalism with social responsibility" through the microcredit institu-

Born in pre-Independence India in 1940 in Chittagong, Yunus first studied at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, which was then East Pakistan; went as a Fulbright

scholar to study economics at Vanderbilt University in the US and obtained PhD in economics in 1969.

The very next year, he became an assistant professor of economics at Middle Tennessee State University in the US but returned to Bangladesh to head the economics department at Chittagong

The bio published at the time when Yunus was awarded the Nobel lists his international achievements inkling from 1993 to 1995 as a member of the International Advisory Group for the Fourth World Conference on Women, a post to which he was appointed by the UN secretary general. He has also served on the Global Commission of Women's Health, the Advisory Council for Sustainable Economic Development and the UN Expert Group on Women and Finance, it adds.

Apart from multiple national awards, Professor Yunus is the recipient of numerous international awards for his ideas and endeavours from countries including Sri Lanka, USA, Jordan, Sweden, Japan, The Netherlands, and South Korea.

Published on January 1, 1991, his auto-

biography, 'Banker to the Poor: Microlending and the Battle Against World Poverty,' has been translated into at least a dozen languages including French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Gujarati, Chinese and Arabic.

His sphere of influence was evident when in January, more than 241 global leaders, including over 125 Nobel Laureates and former US President Barack Obama, had expressed their concerns via an open letter to Hasina over Yunus' "continuous judicial harassment and potential jailing."

With the regime change, it remains to be seen what will be the fate of over 150 other cases, including the major corruption charges that Yunus faces. Earlier, those could have seen him jailed for years if found guilty while the economist has denied all the wrongdoing.

When one clicks on Yunus' own website, the very first quote of the Nobel laureate that greets you is, "If you imagine, Some day it will happen. If you don't imagine, It will never happen. For a person who had dreamed of a pover-

ty-free Bangladesh, Yunus perhaps never had imagined that one day he would be heading his country.

## Turkey to join genocide case against Israel in UN court

**AP** ANKARA

Turkey on Wednesday filed a request with a UN court to join South Africa's genocide lawsuit against Israel, the foreign minister said.

Turkey's ambassador to the Netherlands, accompanied by a group of Turkish legislators, submitted a declaration of intervention International Court of Justice in The Hague

Turkey, one of the fiercest critics of Israel's actions in Gaza, becomes the latest nation to seek to participate in the case. "No country in the world is above international law," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Oncu Keceli said in a post on X. "The case at the International Court of Justice is extremely important in terms of ensuring that the crimes committed by Israel do not go unpunished."
Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused Israel of Mexico, Spain and Palestinian genocide, called for it to be punished in international courts and criticized Western

nations for backing Israel. In May, Turkey suspended trade with Israel, citing its assault on Gaza. In contrast to Western nations that have designated Hamas as a terrorist organisation, Erdogan has commended the group, calling it a liberation movement.

South Africa brought a case to the International Court of Justice late last year, accusing Israel of violating the genocide convention through its military operations in Gaza.

Israel has strongly rejected accusations of genocide and has argued that the war in Gaza is a legitimate defensive action against Hamas militants for their Oct 7 attack in southern Israel that killed around 1,200 people and in which 250 hostages were taken. Nicaragua, Colombia, Libya,

officials have sought to join the case. The court's decision on their requests is still pending. If admitted to the case, the countries would be able to make written submissions and

speak at public hearings. Preliminary hearings have already been held in the genocide case against Israel, but the court is expected to take years to reach a final decision.

Keceli, meanwhile, called for the immediate implementations of precautionary measures ordered by the court, including a halt to military offensive and an increase in humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Former allies Turkey and Israel have experienced a volatile relationship since Erdogan took power in 2003, marked by periods of severe friction and reconciliation. The war in Gaza disrupted the most recent attempts at normalising ties.

Tropical Storm Debby was swirling over coastal Georgia and Carolinas on Wednesday, its wide bands of rain swelling inland waterways before it slow-Debby was expected to restrengthen a little and turn north toward the South Carolina coastline before its centre makes a second landfall late Wednesday or early Thursday, weather officials said. The meandering storm -- moving forward at just 4 mph (6 kph) Wednesday morning -- has already drenched

those records were broken during Hurricane Florence. Both storms killed dozens.

The National Weather Service warned up to 9 inches (23 centimetres) of rain could fall west of Wilmington, North Carolina, in areas that already saw heavy rains overnight.

Charleston and Savannah, Georgia, were deluged Monday and Tuesday, and Charleston imposed a curfew in its downtown peninsula that lasted 32 hours before it was lifted Wednesday. Dozens of roads were closed because of flooding similar to what the city sees several times a year now because of rising sea levels.

Charleston Mayor Williams Cogswell said the closures avoided the need for water rescues and kept "yahoos" from damaging properties by driving through flooded streets and pushing water over sandbags. In one Savannah neighbourhood, firefighters used boats to evacuate some residents and waded through floodwaters to deliver bottled water and other supplies to those who refused to

Tropical Storm Debby swirls over Atlantic, still

dumping rain on Carolinas before moving north

Michael Jones said water gushed into his home Monday evening, overturning the refrigerator and causing furniture to float. Outside, the water seemed to be everywhere and was too deep to flee safely. So Jones spent a sleep-less night on his kitchen table before firefighters going door to door showed up in a boat Tuesday morning.
"It was hell all night," Jones said.

Debby's centre was about 90 miles (145 kilometres) east of

Savannah on Wednesdav morning, according to a bulletin from the National Hurricane Center. It had maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (73 kph).

"Tropical cyclones always produce heavy rain, but normally as they're moving, you know, it doesn't accumulate that much in one place," said Richard Pasch, of the hurricane centre. "But when they move very slowly, that's the worst situation."

Green Pond in rural Colleton County, South Carolina, reported the most rain so far, just over 14 inches (36 centimetres). A nearby dam had water run over its top but did not crumble, while trees and washouts blocked a number of roads, county Fire-Rescue Assistant Chief David Greene

Floodwaters remained in Colleton County Wednesday morning where police officers kept watch on barricades blocking roads where stately trees were reflected in the standing

Tornadoes knocked down trees and damaged a few homes on Kiawah Island and Edisto Island Crooked Hammock Brewery in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, closed early on Tuesday. "Flash flooding is super unpredictable, and we'd rather our staff and guests be home and safe," marketing coordinator

Georgena Dimitriadis said. Far to the north in New York City, heavy storms that meteorologists said were being enhanced by Debby flooded some streets and expressways, stranding motorists. The weather service issued a flood watch until noon Wednesday for the

entire city. Emergency officials warned of potential flash flooding, flying drones with loudspeakers in some New York City neighbourhoods to tell people in basement apartments to be ready to flee at

a moment's notice. Debby made landfall as a Category 1 hurricane early Monday along the Gulf Coast of Florida.

At least six people have died due to the storm, five of them in traffic accidents or from fallen trees. The sixth death involved a 48-year-old man in Gulfport, Florida, whose body was recovered after his anchored sailboat partially sank, WTSP-TV

reported. President Joe Biden approved emergency declarations making federal disaster assistance available to Florida, Georgia and the

Carolinas.

Debby is finally forecast to pick up speed Thursday before weakening inland as the weather moves north over North Carolina and Virginia into the Washington area by Saturday.

## **UK police prepares** for more clashes

Thousands of police personnel, cialist training, are geared up as the so-called "standing army" of defence against an expected surge of far-right anti-immigration protests on Wednesday, this time targeted at immigration lawyers and their offices.

After a week of violent clashes on the streets of different cities across the UK, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer chaired his second emergency COBRA meeting on Tuesday evening with ministers, police chiefs and security experts to draft a detailed strategy to counter any further riots. A list of solicitors' firms and immigration advice agencies has been circulating online, inviting protesters to "mask up" and turn out - described by the government as "unacceptable"

"We're doing everything we can to ensure that where a police response is needed, it's in place, where support is needed for particular places, that is in place," Starmer told reporters after the Cabinet Office Briefing Room A (COBRA) meeting. "Obviously it's a difficult situation with disorder going on in a number of different places at the same time, but that is precisely why I held my second COBRA meeting to coor-

dinate the response and to get the assurance that I want and need that we do have adequate police with this disorder," he said.

Around 400 arrests have been made, with around 100 charged and appearing before the courts for a sped up "substantive sentencing" process.

"That should send a very pow-erful message to anybody involved, either directly or online, that you are likely to be dealt with within a week. Nobody, but nobody, should be involved themselves in this disorder," added Starmer, who pledged that all communities "will be safe". Stephen Parkinson, England's director of public prosecutions, has warned rioters that they could face terrorism charges.

"We are willing to look at terrorism offences. I'm aware of at least one instance where that is happening," he told the BBC.

In addition to more riot police being on standby, forces are also stepping up neighbourhood policing patrols, teams of detectives are drawing on CCTV, officers' body-worn footage and making use of retrospective facial recognition to identify perpetrators of violence, and intelligence teams are monitoring known influencers and organisers for

#### Act responsibly, UK govt tells Elon Musk

 $T^{he\ British\ government\ has}_{called\ on\ Elon\ Musk\ to\ act}$ responsibly after the tech bilplatform X to unleash a barrage of posts that officials say risk inflaming the violent unrest gripping the country.
Justice Minister Heidi

Alexander made the comments Tuesday morning after Musk posted a comment saying that Civil war is inevitable" in the UK Musk later doubled down highlighting complaints that the British criminal justice system treats Muslims more leniently than far-right activists and comparing Britain's crackdown on social media users to the Soviet Union.

"Use of language such as a civil war' is in no way acceptable,' Alexander told Times Radio. "We are seeing police officers being seriously injured, buildings set alight, and so I really do think that everyone who has a platform should be exercising their power responsibly.

Britain has been shaken by violence for more than a week, as police clashed with crowds spouting anti-immigrant and Islamophobic slogans in cities and towns from Northern Ireland to the south coast of England.

## **Khaleda Zia gets** renewed passport

PTI DHAKA

 $B_{\text{minister Khaleda Zia, who}}^{\text{angladesh's former prime}}$ was released from jail after the ouster of her arch-rival Sheikh Hasina, has received a renewed passport, her party said on Wednesdav.

Zia, 79, was sentenced to 17 years in prison for graft in 2018 under the rule of Hasina, 76, who resigned as prime minister on Monday and fled to India in the face of massive protests against her govern-

She has received a renewed passport, BNP media cell member Shairul Kabir Khan was quoted as saying by Dhaka Tribune newspaper.

The renewal process for her passport was completed on Tuesday. Subsequently, Zia's personal secretary ABM Abdus Sattar received her renewed

machine-readable passport on her behalf later that night, it

The Bangladesh National Party (BNP) chairperson, currently undergoing treatment for various ailments, was released on executive order from President Mohammed Shahabuddin on Tuesday following the collapse of the Hasina-led Awami League government.

Zia had been imprisoned for more than two years. On March 25, 2020, the Hasina government suspended her sentence and granted her conditional release through an executive order. Subsequently, the government extended her sentence suspension and release period every six months, upon application.

The rivalry between the two begums — Hasina and Zia has defined politics in Bangladesh for decades.

## Deeply concerned about B'desh violence: US

The United States has L expressed deep concerns about the continued violence in Bangladesh including attacks on members of religious or political groups, and said it will be vital for the new government to credibly investigate all such instances and provide justice to victims.

"We are deeply concerned about continued reports of violence in Bangladesh including violence directed at members of religious or political groups. We are equally concerned about reports of violence against police and law enforcement," a State Department spokesperson told enforcement," PTÎ on Tuesday.

"We repeat our call for de-escalation on all sides and a return to calm. This is not a time for retribution or revenge," the spokesperson said in response to a question

"As a friend and partner to the Bangladeshi people, the United States will continue to support Bangladesh's democratic aspirations and promote respect for human rights for all," said the spokesperson.

Bangladesh is going through an unprecedented crisis with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. who was in power for 15 years, resigning and fleeing the country after a protest against a jobs quota scheme snowballed into a massive agitation against her and her government. More than 300 people have died during the past few tumultuous weeks.

"We are monitoring the situation in Bangladesh very closely. We have long called for respect of democratic rights in

Bangladesh, and we urge that the interim government formation be democratic and inclusive," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news

conference.

'We commend the army for the restraint they have shown. We encourage all parties to refrain from further violence and restore peace as quickly as possible," she said.

We express our deep concern and sadness about the reports of casualties and injuries over the weekend and past weeks. We share our deepest condolences with those who lost loved ones and those who are suffering," said the press secretary. "It will be vital for the new government to carefully and credibly investigate all attacks and provide accountability and justice for victims," she said.

## China, Saudi, UAE agree to roll over cash-strapped Pak's USD 12 bn debt for one year

DEBT

month.

hina, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have agreed to roll over cash-strapped Pakistan's USD 12 billion debt for one year, as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is likely to approve its USD 7 billion bailout package later this

After a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance on Tuesday, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb told reporters that there was no delay in the IMF Executive Board meeting, which is going to take place by the end of this month to approve the USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility, the

Wednesday. The Executive Board is scheduled to meet on August 28 to approve the USD 7 billion package, the report said, quoting government officials.

The development marks an end to the uncertainty over the timing of the Executive Board meeting, which was contingent upon the rollover of debts by Pakistan's three traditional creditors, it said.

Aurangzeb said the USD 12 billion cash deposits by China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates would be rolled over for one year, like last time. Earlier, he had said that the IMF had asked for the rollover for three to five years these loans when the country's

Express Tribune reported on before the Executive Board meeting.

However, he clarified that the requirement was to secure the rollover for one year but the government was trying to have these rollovers for three to five vears. He added that the three bilateral creditors had agreed to roll the loans over on the existing terms and conditions.

The IMF announced a staff-level agreement for USD 7 billion last month subject to the approval of the Executive Board and securing financing commitments from the bilateral and multilateral creditors. The finance minister said there was no point in asking for an

increase in the interest rates on

foreign exchange reserves strengthened compared to a year ago. The IMF, he added, had identified only a USD 3-5 billion financing gap over the three-year programme period, which was quite

manageable.

"Pakistan has also received an offer from a foreign commercial bank but we are waiting for the IMF Board approval to ask the lender to cut the offered interest rates," said Aurangzeb. The offer had come from a non-Gulf and non-Chinese commercial bank, he added, without disclosing the name.

official said that Standard Chartered Bank had offered a less than USD 400 million loan but it was asking for a double-digit interest rate that the government could not afford to

Pakistan was well on its way to

achieving macroeconomic sta-

bility. He described the Fitch

pay. Aurangzeb said the government would wait for the IMF Board's approval to get the commercial a big jump. bank to cut its offered interest rates. The finance minister said two important developments had taken place in the last few days which showed that

rating agency's decision to improve Pakistan's credit rating by one notch and the central bank's decision to cut the interest rates by 1% as "very critical elements for achieving macroeconomic stability".

When asked as to why Standard and Poor's had not improved Pakistan's CCC+ rating, the minister stated that raising a CCC+ rating to a B negative one would have been

He hoped that the three rating agencies would improve Pakistan's standing to B negative by the end of this year, a grade where it can venture into the international capital markets to float sovereign bonds at relatively lower rates than offered at the current CCC+ ratings.

The three international credit rating agencies have given below investment grade to Pakistani bonds due to their weak economic position and huge external financing requirements. However, Fitch last week improved the rating by one notch — from CCC to CCC+ — which was still below the investment grade.

The finance minister said the government was trying to issue the Panda bond in the Chinese markets and had engaged a Chinese financial adviser firm to complete the transaction either by the end of this calendar year or in early 2025. Aurangzeb said the govern-

hiring another Chinese financial adviser to secure the energy debt rollover. He said that Pakistan had requested up to a five-year extension in the energy debt but it would take time before any agreement was reached. He said that even the conversion of the Chinese power plants from imported to local coal would take at least two to three years. The finance minister also said

ment was also contemplating

that to cut expenditures, the government had undertaken the privatisation programme and an exercise was ongoing to close ministries or merge them. "It is about time to right-size the federal government," Aurangzeb said.

## US to skip A-bomb memorial service in Nagasaki as Israel not invited

US Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel will skip this year's atomic bombing memorial service in Nagasaki because Israel was not invited, the embassy said Wednesday. Emanuel will not attend the event on Friday because it was "politicized" by Nagasaki's decision not to invite Israel, the embassy said.

He will instead honor the victims of the Nagasaki atomic bombing at a ceremony at a Buddhist temple in Tokyo, it

An atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, destroyed the city, killing 140,000 people. A second bomb dropped three days later on Nagasaki killed 70,000 more. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, ending World War II and the country's nearly half-century of aggression in Asia.

Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki had indicated his reluctance in June to invite Israel, noting the

Namal Rajapaksa, the 38-year-old heir to the

Rajapaksa dynasty, was on

Wednesday named as the SLPP

candidate for the presidential

election, thus officially ending Rajapaksa family's backing to

the incumbent Ranil

Sagara Kariyawasam, the general secretary of the Sri Lanka

People's Front (SLPP, also

known locally by its popular

Sinhalese name, Sri Lanka

Wickremesinghe.

over "possible unforeseen situations" such as protests, sabotage or attacks on attendants. Nagasaki hoped to honor the atomic bomb victims "in a peaceful and solemn atmosphere," he said.

Suzuki said he made the decision based on "various developments in the international community in response to the ongoing situation in the Middle East" that suggested a possible risk that the ceremony would be disturbed.

In contrast, Hiroshima invited the Israeli ambassador to Japan to its memorial ceremony on Tuesday among 50,000 aftendees who included Emanuel and other envoys, though Palestinian representatives were not invited.

Nagasaki officials said they were told that an official of the US Consulate in Fukuoka will represent the United States at Friday's ceremony. Five other sage.

Namal Rajapaksa announced as

candidate for Lanka presidency

announced the younger

Rajapaksa's candidacy early on

Wednesday morning at a cer-

emony at the party headquar-

ters. Namal's entry has made

the election a four-cornered

contest. Besides, President

Wickremesinghe, the main opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and the Marxist

JVP leader Anura Kumara

Dissanayake are already in the

The Rajapaksas - Mahinda,

Basil and Gotabaya - were ouster.

escalating conflict in the Middle East. He announced last week that Israel was not  $\begin{array}{c} \text{Group of Seven nations} - \\ \text{Canada, France, Germany, Italy} \\ \text{and the UK} - \text{and the} \\ \end{array}$ invited because of concern European Union are also expected to send lower-ranking envoys to Nagasaki.

Envoys from those nations signed a joint letter expressing their shared concern about Israel's exclusion, saying treating the country on the same level as Russia and Belarus the only other countries not invited - would be mislead-

The envoys urged Nagasaki to reverse the decision and invite Israel to preserve the universal message of the city's ceremony. The exclusion of Israel would make their "high-level participation" difficult, they said. British Ambassador to Japan Julia Longbottom, who attended the 79th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Tuesday, told Japanese media that she planned to skip the Nagasaki ceremony because the city's decision to exclude Israel could send a wrong mes-

Wickremesinghe winning the parliamentary vote in July 2022

to take over Gotabava's remain-

ing term. It was soon after the

unprecedented development

of mid-April 2022 when the

island nation declared its first-

ever sovereign default since gaining independence from Britain in 1948 and almost civil

war-like conditions followed as unrest spread amid locals over

inflation and other economic

stress that had led to Gotabaya's

Citing a police official, the paper said that the bodies of two men, one woman and the pilot, identified as Arun Malla,

One body has not been identified yet as it is charred beyond recognition, Myrepublica

Shantiraj Koirala, at the Distric Police Óffice, Nuwakot, who reached the crash site, confirmed that five bodies had

crash at the Tribhuvan International Airport on July

## Helicopter with 5 people on board crashes in Nepal

PTI KATHMANDU

 $F^{our\ Chinese\ tourists\ were}_{among\ five\ people\ killed\ in}$  Nepal on Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains northwest region of Kathmandu.

Police have recovered five dead bodies from the crash site in Ward No 7 of Shivapuri Rural Municipality, Nuwakot, Myrepublica newspaper report-

Nepal-based Air Dynasty helicopter, 9N-AJD, was en route to Rasuwa from Kathmandu when it crashed.

The helicopter departed from Kathmandu at 1:54 PM and was en route to Syaphrubensi when it crashed.

According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), a Prabhu helicopter (9N-ANL) was dispatched to the crash site immediately after the incident There were five individuals on board, including four Chinese tourists, the paper said. The helicopter lost contact with the tower just three minutes after takeoff from Tribhuvan International Airport, according to the CAAN.

were recovered from the crash

reported.

Superintendent of Police (SP) been recovered.

This crash comes just weeks after the Saurya Airlines plane



A group of Mexican faithful wearing traditional costumes meet with Pope Francis attends the weekly general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican on Wednesday

## Thai court dissolves progressive Move Forward Party, which won election but failed to take power

**AP** BANGKOK

court in Thailand on Awednesday ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party, which finished first in last year's general election, saying it violated the constitution by proposing an amendment of a law against defaming the country's royal

it voted unanimously to dissolve the party because its campaign to amend the law was considered an attempt to overthrow the nation's constitutional monarchy The Move Forward Party was

The Constitutional Court said

unable to form a government after topping the polls because members of the Senate, at that time a conservative militaryappointed body, declined to endorse its candidate for prime minister.

The Election Commission had filed a petition against the Move Forward Party after the Constitutional Court ruled in January that it must stop advocating changes to the law, known as Article 112, which protects the monarchy from criticism with penalties of up to 15 years in jail per offense.

The ruling also imposed a 10year ban on political activity on those who held the party's executive positions while it

its charismatic former leader, Pita Limjaroenrat, and current chief Chaithawat Tulathon. It remained unclear what will happen to the rest of its nonexecutive lawmakers, although Pita said in an interview with The Associated Press that the party will ensure they have a 'smooth transition into a new house", or a new party. Lawmakers of a dissolved polit-

ical party can keep their seats in Parliament if they move to a new party within 60 days. Move Forward and its reform agenda shook up Thai politics by winning the most seats in

the 2023 elections even though afterward it was blocked from taking power. The latest legal action is one of many that have drawn widespread criticism and are seen as part of a yearslong attack on the country's progressive movement by conservative forces trying to keep their grip on power. The party was denied power

after the Senate refused to accept its then-leader Pita's nomination as prime minister. Senators, who were given power to veto prime ministerial candidates by the constitution adopted in 2017 under a military government, said they opposed Pita because of his intention to reform the royal

campaigned for the proposed amendment. Among them are defamation law. Move Forward was later removed from a coalition formed with the now-governing Pheu Thai party and became head of the opposition. In its arguments submitted to the court, Move Forward said the Constitutional Court does not have jurisdiction to rule on the case and the petition filed by the Election Commission did not follow due process because Move Forward was not given an opportunity to defend itself before it was submitted to the court.

The court said in its ruling that it has the authority to rule on the case, and that its previous ruling in January was enough of an evidence for the Election Commission to file the case without having to hear more evidence from the party.

Human rights organisations have expressed concern about the case. Amy Smith, executive director of the human rights group Fortify Rights, ahead of the ruling called the attempt to disband Move Forward "a direct attack on democratic principles" that "severely undermines Thailand's com-

mitment to human rights". The chairperson of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Ben Cardin, sent a letter to Thai Foreign Minister Maris Sangiampongsa to express his concern. He said that dissolving a party that "secured a significant victory in the 2023 elections would "disenfranchise millions of voters who called for progressive change and democratic reform' Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has maintained that the Thai justice system is fair and impartial, and that the government cannot interfere with the judicial process.

Move Forward's predecessor, the Future Forward party, was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in 2020 on charges of violating election laws on donations to political parties.

Thailand's courts, especially the Constitutional Court, are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them and nominally independent state agencies such as the Election Commission to issue rulings to cripple or sink political oppo-

The dissolution of Future Forward, whose promises of reforms were particularly attractive for younger people disillusioned after years of military rule, further highlighted the struggle between the progressive movement and conser vative forces in Thailand.

It was one of the triggers for youth-led pro-democracy protests that sprang up across the country in 2020.

## Putin accuses Ukraine of 'large-scale provocation'

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday described a Ukrainian incursion into the country's southwestern Kursk region as a "large-scale provocation" as his officials asserted that they were fighting off cross-border raids for a second day. Ukrainian official remained quiet about the scope of the operation

Putin told Cabinet officials he would meet with top defense and security officials to discuss what he called the "indiscriminate shelling of civilian buildings, residential houses, ambulances with different types of weapons." He instructed the Cabinet to coordinate assistance to the Kursk region.

The head of the region urged residents to donate blood due to the intense fighting. "In the last 24 hours, our region has been heroically resisting attacks" by Ukrainian fighters, acting Gov. Alexei Smirnov said on Telegram, adding that all emergency services were on high alert.

Smirnov also said authorities had evacuated more than 200 people from areas under shelling, while several thousand others left in their own vehicles. If confirmed, the cross-border foray would be among Ukraine's largest since Russia's

2022, and unprecedented for its deployment of Ukrainian military units.

Kyiv's aim could be to draw Russian reserves to the area, potentially weakening Moscow's offensive operations in several parts of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region where Russian forces have increased attacks and are advancing grad-ually toward operationally significant gains.

But it could risk stretching outmanned Ukrainian troops fur-ther along the front line, which is more than 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) long.

Even if Russia were to commit reserves to stabilize the new front, given its vast manpower and the relatively small number of Ukrainian forces engaged in the operation, it would likely have little longterm impact.

However, the operation could boost Ukrainian morale at a time when Kyiv's forces are facing relentless Russian attacks and are expected to face more in coming weeks. Several Ukrainian brigades sta-

tioned along the border region said they could not comment. Ukrainė's Defense Ministry and General Staff said they would not comment. Russian forces have swiftly

repelled previous cross-bor-der incursions, but not before

they caused damage and embarrassed authorities. The Russian Defense Ministry

said Tuesday that up to 300 Ukrainian troops, supported by 11 tanks and more than 20 armoured combat vehicles, had crossed into Russia and suffered heavy losses.

and border guard troops "continued to destroy Ukrainian military units in the areas alongside the border in the Kursk region."

It said Wednesday that military

The ministry said Russian forces backed by artillery and warplanes "didn't allow the enemy to advance deeper into the territory of the Russian Federation?

It wasn't possible to verify the Russian claims.

Open-source monitors have also not been able to verify the claims. The US-based Institute for the Study of War could not verify whether damaged and abandoned armoured vehicles shown in geolocated video 7 kilometres (4 miles) north of the border west of Lyubimovka in the Kursk region were Ukrainian.

The think tank also cast doubt on video shared by Russian military bloggers claiming to show the aftermath of the Ukrainian raids. Most of the damage shown "appears to be the result of routine Ukrainian shelling and does not indicate

that there was ground activity in the area," it said in its daily

report. Responsibility for previous incursions into Russia's Belgorod and Bryansk regions has been claimed by two murky groups: the Russian Volunteer Corps and the Freedom of Russia Legion, which are made up of Russian citizens and have fought alongside Ukrainian forces.

Disinformation and propaganda have played a central role in the war, now in its third year. Some Russian war bloggers who have proved knowledgeable about the war said that Ukrainian soldiers were in Kursk.

Rybar, a Telegram channel run by Mikhail Zvinchuk, a retired Russian Defense Ministry press officer, said Ukrainian troops had seized three settlements in the region and continued to fight their way deeper into it. Another pro-Kremlin military blog, Two Majors, claimed that Ukrainian troops had advanced up to 15 kilometres (9 miles) into the region.

Neither claim could be independently verified.

The Kursk region's border with Ukraine is 245 kilometres (150 miles) long, making it possible for saboteur groups to launch swift incursions and capture some ground before Russia deploys reinforcements.

## NASA delays next crew launch to buy more time for Boeing's troubled capsule

**AP** WASHINGTON

 $N_{\rm astronaut}^{\rm ASA}$  is delaying its next astronaut launch to buy more time at the International Space Station for Boeing's troubled new crew capsule. The space agency said Tuesday

it's bumping SpaceX's four-person flight from this month to next. It's now targeted for Sept. 24 at the earliest. Officials said that will give them more time to analyze thruster and leak problems that hit Boeing's Starliner capsule after its June liftoff, its first with a crew on

Tuesday marked the twomonth point at the space station for Starliner's test pilots, Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who should have

been back by mid-June. NASA is weighing all its options for returning the two veteran astronauts, including a ride home in a SpaceX capsule.

"NASA and Boeing continue to evaluate the spacecraft's readiness, and no decisions have been made regarding Starliner's return," NASA said in a statement. Further details were expected at a news conference set for Wednesday. Only two docking ports at the

space station can accommodate U.S. astronaut capsules and, right now, both are occupied. So one will need to be vacated before the next SpaceX crew can arrive. Russia has its own parking places for its Soyuz

capsules.

Boeing and SpaceX topped NASA's list for astronaut taxi

with SpaceX in March now also face a longer mission than planned. Over the past several weeks, Boeing has conducted thruster

four astronauts who flew up

test firings on the ground as well as in space to better understand why five thrusters failed ahead of Starliner's June 6 arrival at the space station. All but one came back online. Helium leaks in the capsule's propulsion system also cropped

up.
Citing the testing, the company late last week said: "Boeing remains confident in the Starliner spacecraft and its ability to return safely with

service to and from the space station, after the shuttles retired in 2011. NASA signed contracts worth billions with both companies in order to have a backup in case one of them got

sidelined by an accident. SpaceX launched its first crew in 2020; the upcoming flight will be its 10th astronaut flight for NASA. It's also sent a few private crews into orbit.

Boeing has had to overcome multiple Starliner problems over the years. The company had to launch an empty Starliner twice before committing to a crew, repeating the initial flight test because of bad software and other issues. The delays have cost the company more than \$1

## Tunisian Oppn figure Moussi sentenced to prison

potential presidential candi-Adate in Tunisia has been sentenced to two years in prison, marking another setback to the country's fledgling opposition challenging President Kais Saied as he seeks a new term.

Abir Moussi, a 49-year-old lawyer and the head of the right-wing Free Destourian Party, was arrested in October after criticizing the electoral process and presidential decrees guiding it, alleging a lack of transparency.

Assistant Registrar

Tenure: 2 years subject to annual appraisal

NA/12/24618/2023/36423 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024

Following a complaint by the North African nation's election authority, she was found guilty of violating a controversial anti-fake news decree outlawing spreading information that slanders or harms others. The law has been widely used to prosecute those who criticize authorities.

Moussi's lawyer Nafaa Laribi

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told The Associated Press on Tuesday that she still intends to run in the Oct. 6 presidential election, and that, unlike other candidates, nothing in Monday's sentence prevents her from run-

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ning. Laribi said Moussi's morale remained high, and he planned to appeal. The sentence is the latest in a

growing crackdown that observers have said is politically motivated against Saied's critics, regardless of political affiliation. With Moussi and other leading opposition figures in prison, Saied is expected to face little election competition in what was once the Middle East and North

Africa's most progressive democracy. Moussi appeals to parts of the population nostalgic for Tunisia's pre-revolutionary era. A strong critic of Islamists such as imprisoned Ennahda leader Rached Ghannouchi, Moussi was an official in longtime President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's ruling party. Over the years, she became one of the country's most popular and contentious political figures

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Short Term E-Tender Enq. No. 7586/P-1/EMP-12751 dated 05.08.24 Dy. Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-1) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2024 POWER 124984 1 for Procurement of Special purpose Welding Electrodes for the year 2024-25. For detailed NIT K Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 06.08.24/ 02.00 PM onwards.

Note: - Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

76155/12/3240/2023/36455 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024



E-Tender Enq. No. 7591/P-3/EMP-12761 dated 06.08.24 Dy.Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTP Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2024 POWER 125048 1 for Procurement of MSRL tank for Storage of HCL acid in DM Plant Stage-II at GGSSTP, Rupnagar. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 07.08.2024/ 01.00 PM onwards. Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

76155/12/3254/2023/36472 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024



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vebsite alongwith requisite fee from eligible candidates for admission to various CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA Courses, i.e. six month/one year Certificate courses and wo/three year Diploma courses, session 2024. The Last date for submission o Online Fee through payment gateway is **27.08.2024.** Note: For Schedule. Eligibility/ detail/ Fee/ Prospectus visit University website i.e. **www.bfuhs.ac.in**. The detail of courses is mentioned in Prospectus

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REGISTRAR

**Appointment of Resource Persons on Contract Basis** Bank intends to engage two Resource Persons on contract basis @

consolidated remuneration of Rs. 75.000/- per month per resource person plus incentive as applicable for a specific period of the project ie. 3 years with a performance review on yearly basis, for establishment of Business Diversification and Product Innovation Cell (BDPIC) in The Harvana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd. Chandigarh. The detailed terms and conditions, eligibility criteria experience, age, etc, can be accessed from the bank website www.harcobank.org.in The interested candidates may apply and submit their applications either personally or by post on the prescribed Performa duly filled, in the office of

The Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd., Sector-17B, Bank Square Chandigarh by 21.08.2024 till 4.00 P.M. The envelope should be super scribed with "Application for the Post of Resource Person". The applications if received after the due date will not be entertained. The Managing Director reserves the right to cancel appointment process without assigning any

Managing Director The Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd.

Online applications are invited w.e.f 08.08.2024 to 25.08.2024 through University

## Stock markets snap 3-day slump

**PTI** ■ MUMBAI

 $\begin{array}{cccc} B_{\text{Sensex}} & \text{and} & \text{Nifty} \\ \text{bounced back sharply on} \end{array}$ Wednesday after three straight days of slump following a rally in global peers and value-buying in metal, IT and oil shares at lower levels.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 874.94 points or 1.11 per cent to settle at 79,468.01 with 25 of its constituents ending with gains and five with losses. During the day, it jumped 1,046.13 points or 1.33 per cent to 79,639.20. The NSE Nifty jumped

304.95 points or 1.27 per cent to 24,297.50. Intra-day, it surged 345.15 points or 1.43 per cent to 24,337.70. Among Sensex firms, Adani

Ports & SEZ rose the most by 3.42 per cent. Power Grid climbed 3.39 per cent, Tata Steel by 2.4 per cent and JSW Steel by 2.61 per cent. Infosys, HDFC Bank, ITC, Reliance Industries. & Mahindra, Mahindra Maruti, and Larsen & Toubro

IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever, Tech Mahindra and Titan were the

also advanced.

Most sectors contributed to the upward movement, with



metals, energy, and pharma being the top performers. "Global markets experienced a notable rebound after the BoJ's Deputy Governor

•

reassured that the central bank would not raise interest rates during a period of financial instability. The Indian market also witnessed broad-based buying across sectors, with the realty sector seeing a relief rally due to the reinstatement of indexation benefits," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit

Financial Services. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 2.63 per cent and smallcap index climbed 2.39 per cent. All indices ended in the positive territory. Oil & Gas jumped 3.75 per cent, metal

(3.32 per cent), capital goods telecommunication (2.80 per cent), services (2.53 per cent), commodities (2.49 per cent), healthcare (2.03 per cent). Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said that markets experienced a breather after the recent decline, gaining over a percent, driven by strong global cues.

As many as 2,985 stocks advanced while 948 declined and 98 remained unchanged. Asian markets settled in the positive territory, where Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended significantly higher. European markets

### Sebi issues ₹25 cr notice to Karvy Stock Broking, Parthasarathy

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday sent a notice to Karvy Stock Broking Ltd (KSBL) and its CMD C Parthasarathy asking them to pay around Rs 25 crore within 15 days in a case pertaining to misappropriation of clients' funds by misusing the Power of Attorney.

The notice came after they failed to pay the fine imposed on them by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

Sebi in April 2023 barred KSBL and Parthasarathy from the securities market for seven years and also imposed a penalty of Rs 21 crore on them for misappropriating clients' funds by misusing the Power of Attorney given to the broking firm.

Individually, the regulator had levied a fine of Rs 13 crore on KSBL and Rs 8 crore on Parthasarathy, promoter-cummanaging director.

In its fresh notice, the regulator has directed KSBL and Parthasarathy to pay Rs 15.21 crore and Rs 9.36 crore, respectively, which includes interest and recovery cost, In the event of non-payment

of dues, the markets regulator will recover the amount by attaching bank accounts, attaching as well as selling the entities' moveable and immoveable property. Besides, Parthasarathy may face "arrest and detention in prison".

The case relates to KSBL's massive asset mobilisation drive followed by raising of huge funds from financial institutions by using the securities mobilised from the clients with a promise to pay them interest.

funds misappropriated and diverted to KSBL's connected entities, thereby defaulting in its obligations to settle the securities and funds with the clients as per regulatory instructions.

In its order passed in April last year, the regulator found that KSBL was raising funds by pledging clients' securities and by misusing the Power of Attorney (PoA) granted to it by its clients. Further, the funds by KSBL were being diverted to its group entities thereby violating various provisions of law.

## Rupee settles 4 paise lower at 83.96 against US dollar

 $T^{\text{he rupee consolidated in}}_{\text{a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 4}}$ paise at 83.96 (provisional) against US dollar on Wednesday, weighed down by a recovery in the US dollar and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Forex traders said the Indian rupee depreciated on Wednesday on a strong US dollar and positive crude oil prices. However, strength in the domestic markets cushioned the downside.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.86 and touched an intraday low of 83.97 against the dollar during the session.

It finally settled at 83.96 (provisional) against the American currency, down 4 paise from its previous

On Tuesday, the rupee recovered from its all-time low level and settled for the day 17 paise higher at 83.92 against the US dollar.

The local unit had slumped 37 paise to settle at an all-time low of 84.09 against the US dollar on Monday.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias on a recovery in the US dollar and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. However, positive global equities may support the rupee at lower Choudhary Research Analyst at Sharekhan by

BNP Paribas. Any further intervention by the Reserve Bank may also support the rupee. Investors may watch out for RBI's

monetary policy decision. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.20, Choudhary added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against

a basket of six currencies, gained 0.31 per cent to

Tuesday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 3,531.24 crore, according to exchange data. Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel three-day started its deliberations for the next set of bi-monthly monetary policy on Tuesday amid

Brent crude, the global oil

benchmark, was trading 1.22 per cent higher at USD 77.41 per barrel in futures

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 874.94 points,

or 1.11 per cent, to close at 79,468.01 points, while the

Nifty advanced 304.95 points, or 1.27 per cent, to

Investors (FIIs) were net

sellers in the capital markets

Institutional

24,297.50 points.

Foreign

view of concerns on inflation and economic growth remaining steady. The decision of the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Dasheaded six-member Monetary Committee (MPC) will be

announced on Thursday.

expectations of no change in

benchmark interest rate in

## Goyal urges BIMSTEC group to relook at progress of FTA talks

trade pact.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday suggested the seven member countries of the BIMSTEC bloc to relook at the progress of Free Trade Agreement talks which are moving at a very slow pace. He said that the members can think of negotiating a preferential trade agreement instead of a full-fledged free

BIMSTEC stands for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Technical and Economic Cooperation. Its seven members are five South Asian countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka) and two Southeast Asian countries (Myanmar and Thailand).

been has bloc negotiating a proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) since 2004. So far over 20 rounds of talks have been held. The last

fundamental issues about the possibilities of making this FTA a reality," Goyal said here at CIIs BIMSTEC Business Summit 2024.



He said that so far 22 rounds of talks have been held for the agreement and this itself raises a question on whether 'we need to pause and have a relook at the track where we are going". The last

round negotiations took place some six years ago, which means something is holding back

The reasons for slow progress can be the non-trade barriers "I would like to raise a few the way of normal trade, he said adding the possible where we stand and what are the possibilities of making this FTA a reality," Goyal said region could be the cause of the delay.

"It could be the trade

practices or current trade relationships that could be a reason for this FTA not taking place," the minister said. He also asked the business leaders of the seven countries to think whether they need this agreement.

further minister suggested the member nations to consider trade in local currencies to balance out trade imbalances.

"I would urge business feedback of what you feel about the potential BIMSTEC FTA. Do you see merit in it, Do you see value in it," he said Feedback from the business

community would help the

political leaders to take a decision on this. He asked the CII to take the lead and discuss about the proposed pact and come out with their recommendations by next year's Summit.

"Maybe, we can begin with a PTA (preferential trade agreement) if not a full FTA...But realistic examine the and possibility move forward on a fast track basis," he said. Representatives from the member countries including

Sri Lanka, Myanmar and, Thailand talked about the early conclusion of FTA negotiations as it would help boost trade and investments in the region.

Overall, India's total trade with BIMSTEC countries amounted to USD 44.32 billion in 2023-24. On Bangladesh, Goyal said,

deeply about concerned the Bangladesh and we wish the people of Bangladesh well and we will convey our best wishes for a smooth transition and bright future for the Bangladesh". people

### Pan masala makers to pay ₹1 lakh penalty from Oct 1 for failure to register machines with taxmen

The government has notified October 1 as the date for implementation of the penalty provision for manufacturers of pan masala and similar tobacco products, if they fail to register their packing machinery with GST authorities. The GST Network had earlier

in May and June notified two forms GST SRM-I and II for registering machines used by such manufacturers and to report inputs procured and corresponding outputs with tax authorities

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) on August 6 notified October 1, 2024, as the date for levy of up to Rs 1 lakh penalty for failure to register their packing machines with GST authorities.

In January, the Central Board Indirect Taxes and (CBIC) Customs announced the introduction of a new registration and procedure to improve GST compliance manufacturers of pan masala and tobacco products effective April 1.

The date was later extended till May 15.



The move to overhaul the registration, record-keeping, and monthly filing of such businesses was aimed at improving Goods and Service Tax (GST) compliance for manufacturers of pan masala and tobacco products.

Via the Finance Bill 2024 in February, the GST law was amended to say that manufacturers of pan masala, gutkha and similar tobacco products will have to pay a penalty of up to Rs 1 lakh, if packing machinery with GST authorities with effect from

applicable for manufacturers of The procedure was to be of pan-masala, unmanufactured tobacco (without lime tube) with or without brand name, 'Hookah' or 'gudaku' tobacco, smoking mixtures for pipes and cigarettes, chewing tobacco (without lime tube), filter khaini, jarda scented tobacco, snuff and branded or unbranded 'Gutkha', etc. The manufacturers of such

tobacco products required to furnish the details of packing machines being used for filling and packing of packages in Form GST SRMdays of the notification coming into effect i.E., April 1, 2024.

The input and output statement GST SRM-II needs to be filed by the 10th of the succeeding month.

Amazon partners with 45 Govt emporiums, NGOs, trade bodies to empower local artisans

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

E-commerce India Wednesday said that it has partnered with over 45 government emporiums, NGOs, and trade bodies in India to bridge the gap between artisans customers, providing economic opportunities for marginalized communities.

'Customers can shop for over 1.5 lakh products featured from 25 states depicting regional various crafts of India

"Amazon will also launch a showcase of selection from over 35 State emporiums including Biswa Bangla, Panthoibi, Garvi Gurjāri, House of Himalayas and more," said a company statement.

More than 2,500 master weavers, co-operatives, artisans and government ministries like Textiles, Cottage Industries, and Welfare, among Tribal others have been onboarded on Amazon.In to sell online, according to the statement.

## TRAI to review, tighten regulations to curb spam calls: Lahoti

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom regulator will review and strengthen regulations to curb pesky, spam calls, TRAI Chairman Ânil Kumar Lahoti said on Wednesday. The crackdown on pesky calls

has figured high on the agenda of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, and the regulator has been hardening its stance on the issue, amid rising consumer complaints around unsolicited communications unauthorised telemarketers.

"We had an interaction with service providers on spam calls and that is the next thing on our table. We will work seriously...We will plug any loopholes that people are existing finding on regulations to tighten (the checks on) spam call issue," Lahoti said on the sidelines of India SatCom 2024 organised by Broadband India Forum

TRAI on Tuesday held a meeting and conveyed a strong message to service providers and telemarketers to take effective measures to curb bulk communications using voice

As part of the crackdown, the regulator has sought proactive action from all the stakeholders specially access



service providers (telcos) and their delivery telemarketers. The immediate action sought implementing solutions for technical traceability and preventing bulk calling by enterprise customers using 10-digit

Asked about the rising instances of fraud and scams over calls, and actions that are being proposed, Lahoti said that a joint committee of regulators is working collectively to address the

"The role of TRAI comes in controlling spam calls. Where it is fraudster or scammer...It also becomes an issue of law enforcement where Ministry of Home Affairs... And financial sector regulator also plays a role," he said.

Asked if raising the criminal liability could serve as an effective deterrent, he said, "We will review regulations to make it strong and very strict as far as control of spam is concerned...As far as the scam is concerned that falls in the domain of law".



India increased to about 60 per cent in 2023-24, according to the annual report of parent firm Reliance Industries Limited. ahead-of-the-curve investments in next-generation

network and technologies would sustain a competitive edge and market share gains, it said and added this will ensure strong and consistent shareholder return over the coming years. In the annual report, Reliance

Industries' Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said Jio turned a "Data Dark India" into a "Data Rich" nation with affordable, highspeed 4G data, and followed it up with a 5G network rollout across India in world-record

According to the annual report, the rollout of the next-generation fixed wireless networks would catalyse demand for high-speed fixed broadband. Rural areas are expected to see a higher uptake of these services due to limited last-mile infrastructure currently.

The report further said Jio's indigenously developed indigenously technologies are being deployed at scale in India and being will subsequently be taken to the rest of the world.

# about 60% in FY24: RIL annual report

Jio's share of data traffic in India rises to

With highest average per capita data usage at 28.7 GB per month in the March 2024 quarter, the company has recorded a 31 per cent yearover-year increase in overall data traffic to about 149 exabytes during FY 2023-24 with increase in 5G user base as well as its fixed broadband connections

An extraordinarily large unit of digital data, one exabyte is equal to one billion gigabytes.
"Jio has built enough data capacity to serve over a billion Indians for their digital needs at homes, offices, and on-the-go. Jio's share of data traffic in India has increased to about 60 per cent, making it the most preferred broadband network,"

the RIL annual report said. The company leads the Indian telecom market both in mobile and fixed line segment with a total subscriber base of 48.18 crore comprising 10.8 crore 5G users and 1.2 crore fixed broadband users.

The Jio True5G network now carries almost 30 per cent of Jio's mobility data traffic, and the entire 5G data is now carried on Jio's own 5G+4G combo core. Jio is the only operator in India rolling out 5G on Standalone architecture," the report said.

Highlighting the opportunities, it said Jio's all-India True5G "strongly network positioned" to lead the progress towards 5G in India. Jio's deep fiber presence and rollout of fixed wireless access services are primed to connect 100 million premises with digital solutions, it said emphasising that Jio's connectivity and compute infrastructure would drive market share gains.

On the threats landscape, the annual report said that disruptive technological disruptive technological changes could make current

technologies obsolete and that entry of a new disruptive player or price competition could

impact long-term returns.
"Jio's ahead-of-the-curve investments in next-generation network and digital technologies would sustain a competitive edge and market share gains. This will ensure strong and consistent shareholder return over the coming years," the report said. The company is also making The company is also making concerted efforts in building capabilities in evolving technologies such as AI/ML (Artific i al Intelligence/Machine Learning), AR/VR (Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality), robotics, natural language recognition and

processing.
Ambani said the world is increasingly recognising India as an innovation hub, and asserted that Jio will continue to play a stellar role in building nation's digital infrastructure and capabilities. With the launch of Jio 4G in 2016, we set out on a journey to make digital inclusion in India a reality. Jio turned a Data Dark India into a Data Rich nation, supplying every Indian home with affordable, high-speed 4G data, and this year, Jio has further enhanced the country's digital infrastructure by rolling out its

True5G network across India

in world-record time," he said.

### to place orders in India unless Govt tweaks policies, says AEPC

Bangladesh unrest: Buyers hesitant

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the civil unrest in Bangladesh, buyers will remain hesitant to place their orders in India unless the Modi government tweaks its import policies to allow greater and easier access to imported man-made fabrics, trims and accessories, Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) said on Wednesday. AEPC also stated that buyers

are "very concerned" with the escalation of the civil unrest in Bangladesh and have no option but to pull out their orders from the nation and place them elsewhere at least in the short term.

According Chairman Sudhir Sekhri, most of these orders are in man-made fabrics, purchased from buyer nominated sources in China, Korea and even Europe.

"Shifting these short-delivery orders using special imported fabrics to India is not viable, given India's current import policies. Only orders in fabrics of Indian origin are expected to be shifted to Indian factories," he added.

The AEPC Chairman observed that buyers will continue to be hesitant to place their orders in India unless Government of India tweaks its import policies to allow greater and easier access to imported man-made fabrics, trims and accessories.



"In the long term, buyers will

remain skeptical of being dependent Bangladesh. Even before the current turmoil in Bangladesh, buyers were already looking for capacities elsewhere, due to capacity saturation in Bangladesh. The recent turmoil will expedite their plans. Indian factories will get a piece of the cake only if they ramp up capacities," Sekhri stated. Bangladesh is facing its worst political crisis since Independence in 1971. The neighbouring country has plunged into uncertainty after street protests over job quota forced Sheikh Hasina to quit as prime minister and "Buyers are very concerned with the escalation of the civil

unrest in Bangladesh. In the short term, fast fashion buyers have no option but to pull out their orders from Bangladesh and place them elsewhere," Chairman said.

## I THINK IT MIGHT BE SABOTAGE: BOXING ICON VIJENDER ON VINESH'S DISQUALIFICATION

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ndian boxing stalwart Vijender Singh has alleged that wrestler Vinesh Phogat's disqualification from the Olympics final might be a case of sabotage as elite athletes like her are wellversed with the techniques of cutting weight before major

competitions. Vijender, who is India's first and only male boxer to have won an Olympic medal, knows a thing or two about maintaining weight before major bouts and he said it is shocking that Vinesh was 100gm over in the weigh-in before an Olympic final.
"I think it might be sabotage

100gm, you have got to be kidding me. We athletes can shed 5 to 6kg overnight. It is difficult no doubt but we know how to control our hunger, thirst, and exert to the extreme," the middle-weight (75kg) boxer told PTI.

"And when I say sabotage I mean people who are not happy to see India rise as a sporting nation. This girl has been through so much, your heart breaks for her. What more could she have done? Which other test?" he wondered.

Vinesh was the face of a lengthy protest against former Wrestling Federation of India head Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who has been accused of sexual harassment and intimidation women wrestlers. She had endured police detention, nights on the streets and a tumultus

Kellie Harrington is an unusual boxing champion. She is passionate

only about the amateur version of her

pro-dominated sport, and she has long

claimed to have no ambitions of being

Minutes after she stepped onto the podium at Court Philippe Chatrier to have her second gold medal hung around her neck Tuesday night,

Harrington announced her retirement

from boxing. The money to be made

from being a two-time Olympic gold

medalist in a passionate fight nation

like Ireland still isn't enough for

Harrington to change her plans after

her magical run at the Paris Games.
"I'm done and dusted." Harrington sa



are held as per weight categories, have to go through the painful process of staying within their divisions.

It involves going hungry for situations, stay huddled inside

'There have been times when I spat out saliva continuously so that nothing goes inside, you know. One can't imagine this extreme exercise. There are special Sauna suits that we wear, they feel like a furnace and there are Athletes who compete in times we run wearing them to contact sports, where fights shed weight," he explained. It's an extraordinary exercise that takes a physical and mental toll on athletes and in six-time champion woman boxer M C Mary Kom, in an interview to PTI, had revealed how she lost 2kg in a matter of four hours.

But hours before she was to take the ring, she had gone through the strenuous process of shedding weight just to be eligible to fight.

3-3:30 in the morning and the general weigh-in was at

three years ago in Tokyo, she clinched

her second gold with a remarkable charge through the Paris field, capped by her 4-1 victory over China's Yang

Harrington pressured Yang more than enough to get the victory despite losing the third round. The champion's most

impressive win in Paris likely was in the

semifinals, when she spectacularly outboxed Brazilian IBF lightweight

champion Beatriz Ferreira, whose

physicality and aggression had made her look like a gold-medal favorite.

Harrington isn't the fastest or the most powerful woman in the lightweight

division, but she might be the best ever

to fight at the weight in the four

AP PARIS

Olympics with women's boxing.

been four fights with

Wenlu at Roland Garros.

around 7:30am. I was a couple of kilograms above 48kg, the category I compete in, at that point," she had said.

"So, I had roughly four hours to shed that or I would have been disqualified for being over-weight at the time of general weigh-in. But I did skipping for an hour at a stretch and just like that, I was

"Thankfully, the flight we travelled in was nearly empty so I could sleep with my legs outstretched, ensuring that I was not stiff on landing there. Otherwise, I don't know how I would have been able to compete," she had revealed.

> The 26-year-old Chopra knows it too well, having been in the global circuit for more than eight years.
> "In the final, everyone has a

His stunning monster throw of 89.34m in the

qualification round made

quite a statement but a tough

challenge awaits defending champion Neeraj Chopra as he

seeks another piece of history in the Paris Olympics mens

javelin throw final round here

Just like he did at the same stage in the Tokyo Olympics three years back, Chopra

needed just a few seconds to top the qualification round

with his opening throw but the

This time, the quality of the

field is better than Tokyo with

nine throwers crossing the automatic final round

qualification mark of 84m in

Paris as against six in Tokyo.

Out of the nine, five made it to the final round with their first

throws and thus will have a lot in their tanks for the medal

similarity ends there.

on Thursday.

round.

different mindset and different situation. It will be a good competition. Whoever competition. qualifies automatically is the best in preparation," Neeraj told journalists after his 'lightening' appearance on the

He was in a hurry to go back to the Games Village and take rest to prepare for his best for the final round, as a lot is at stake on Thursday.

Chopra will have a chance to become only the fifth man in Olympic javelin throw history to defend the title.

Eric Lemming (Sweden; 1908

(Finland; 1920 and 1924), Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic; 1992, 1996 and 2000) and Andreas Thorkildsen (Norway; 2004 and 2008) are the only ones to have defended the men's javelin gold medals

in bid for another piece of history

Tough challenge awaits Chopra

in the Olympics. If he wins gold, and for that matter a medal, he will become the most decorated Indian in Olympics in individual sport. Shuttler PV Sindhu (one silver, one bronze), wrestler Sushil Kumar (one silver, one bronze) and shooter Manu Bhaker (two bronze) have won two

Olympic medals each post

Independence. The tremendous effort, which was the second best of his career, also set aside concerns surrounding Chopra's fitness after he revealed that he had been battling an adductor niggle in the build-up to the Games. His personal best continues to be 89.94m achieved back in 2022.

His 89.34m throw may also raise hopes of millions of Indian fans to see Chopra cross the elusive 90m mark on Thursday. His effort was also the second-best qualifying throw at an Olympics after the 89.39m registered by the legendary Jan Zelezny at 2000 Sydney Games.

But there were some ominous signs coming out from the qualification round which Chopra will have to be wary of. The peaking of two-time world champion Anderson Peters (personal best 93.07m) of Grenada as well as immediate hitting of form by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem may indicate that the final round at Stade de France could be a classic contest.

Peters, of the same age as

thrown off a party boat in his native country just a few days after winning a silver medal at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. A month before that incident, he had won the World Championships gold in Eugene, USA, after beating Chopra with a monster throw

of 90.54m.

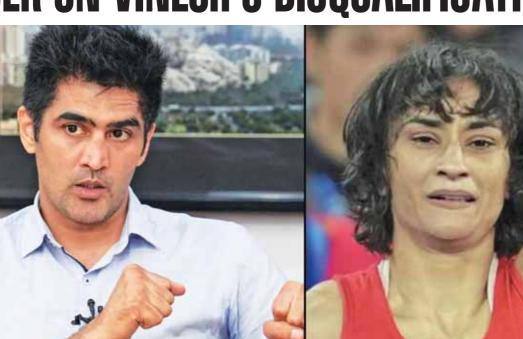
The Grenadian, who interestingly finished third when Chopra won gold in 2016 World Junior Championships in Poland, has gone past 90m four times in his career and he is one of the few who have beaten the Indian superstar. His season's best of 88.63m in the qualification round could be a precursor to something bigger. Nadeem, who beat Peters to win the 2022 Commonwealth Games gold with 90.18m, is unpredictable and he has pulled off big throws earlier also. After coming back from an elbow surgery, he claimed silver behind Chopra in the 2023 Budapest World

of 87.82m. Nadeem has not beaten Chopra in 10 meetings since 2016 but he can spring a

Championships with a throw

Czech Republic's experienced thrower Jakub Vadlejch could also be looking to make the records with Chopra as he had ended up with a silver in Tokyo Olympics. He had beaten Chopra for the gold in Doha Diamond League in

Conditions on Thursday may also be different from the qualification round. The final is expected to be cooler as it's happening in the evening as against daytime during the



making it here.

highlight of her remarkable performance at the Olympics was the opening win over defending champion Yui Susaki of Japan who came into her international career.

can't believe that Vinesh would make a mistake like this. She has been an elite athlete for so long that she knows, there has to be something more to it. I am worried for her, I hope she is fine. What has happened is not good at all," said Vijender, a trailblazer in Indian boxing.

hours, avoiding even liquids the competition undefeated in and in some desperate layers of blankets to sweat out the extra weight.

Mary Kom had landed in Poland for a tournament, where she eventually picked up her third gold of that year.

"We landed in Poland at round

Kellie of Ireland wins second boxing gold and retires fantastic opponents," Harrington said. "Everyone who is here is the best of the best. Everyone deserves respect."

> Harrington's final drew thousands of Irish fans to the famed tennis arena where she clinched her gold. They waved flags, chanted her name and generally put on a party while their improbable boxing hero got her final

> "To have the support of the nation. It is just amazing," Harrington said. "The people here today lifted me. They made me feel like I wasn't tired and I was exhausted."

Harrington danced in the ring after her victory, clearly thrilled to be fighting in front of her frenzied fans instead of in the mostly empty Ryogoku Kokugikan



 $A^{ ext{ll}}$  the favored teams in the first three men's basketball

quarterfinals at the Paris Olympics had problems. Canada lost to France. Serbia erased a 24-point deficit to beat Australia. Germany had to shake off a double-digit

deficit before beating Greece.

So, going into the fourth and

final game of the night, the U.S. Knew what it had to do.

'We wanted to come out and

make sure we were the aggressor," U.S. Coach Steve

They made it look easy, too. Devin Booker led a balanced

front with 18 points and the Americans had little trouble

with Brazil in the quarterfinals of the Paris

Olympics, winning 122-87 on

Tuesday. The U.S. (4-0) moves on to

face Serbia (3-1) in Thursday's

semifinals, while Germany (4-

0) takes on France (3-1) in the

other semifinal. Winners of

those games will play Saturday

This time at the Olympics, hammer

Echikunwoke got to compete. Not only

compete, but win a medal - for the

Three years ago, Echikunwoke arrived at the Tokyo Games ready to represent

Nigeria, but she wound up needing to

leave before even getting to take a

throw. Nigeria was among a handful of countries deemed "high risk" by track's

anti-doping regulators in the lead-up to

those Olympics - forcing its athletes to

be subjected to more drug testing.

Annette

Nneka

1 thrower

United States.

### was beaten up and qualification roun US rolls into semifinals of basketball tournament, eases past Brazil 122-87

night for the gold medal; Thursday's losers will play Saturday morning for the bronze medal.

"Everybody expects us to win," U.S. Forward Jayson Tatum said. "But you don't take things for granted, right? Canada lost earlier. It's a different game. It's not like playoffs, where it's a series. We've got one game and a lot of (stuff) can happen in one game, especially over here." If there was one issue, it was this: LeBron James left in the

third quarter after catching an elbow around his left eye, struck by Brazil's Georginho de Paula while going for a rebound. James went down, eventually pressed a towel over the eye and left for the locker room area later in the



third. Kerr said James needed four stitches

'I'm all right," James said. "Got hit with an inadvertent elbow around the eye." Anthony Edwards scored 17

points, while Joel Embiid -booed again in France, of

**Echikunwoke changes countries** 

course - had 14 points and seven rebounds in 12 first-half minutes for the Americans. Anthony Davis finished with 13 points and eight rebounds for the U.S. James had 12 points and nine assists. Kevin Durant scored 11 points

and passed Lisa Leslie as the U.S. Olympic career scoring leader, men's or women's. Leslie had 488 points in her four Olympic appearances, all of which ended with gold medals. Durant is trying to go 4 for 4 on the gold front as well; he's two wins away from getting that done. "He's incredible. He was born to play ball and he's simply incredible," James said. "I'm happy for him. Congratulations to him. I'm super proud of him. And he's got more to go."

Brazil might have thought it had a chance. It trailed the U.S. By only eight midway through the second quarter. A big deficit had turned into something rather manageable.

There was a moment where

## Demoralised India need to regroup quickly to win in bronze medal play-off

paid to fight.

heart-wrenching defeat in semifinals, notwithstanding, a demoralised Indian men's

hockey team will have to regroup quickly and aim for a second consecutive podium finish at the Olympics when it takes on Spain in the bronze medal play-off here on Thursday The Indians played bravely

against Germany, putting their defence under pressure from the start and in the process took the lead in the seventh minute through a penalty corner conversion by skipper Harmanpreet Singh. But the Germans came back

strongly in the second quarter and fourth quarters to secure the close win, courtesy some silly defensive lapses from the Indians, especially Jarmanpret

The Indians too were guilty of wasting too many scoring chances, including as many as 10 penalty corners, while converting two, one directly and another through variation. The opposition teams seemed to have found out a way to deny one of the world's best drag-flicker Harmanpreet as he managed to be on target just once on Tuesday.

The over-reliance Harmanpreet and lack of innovative penalty corner variations seemed to be hurting India badly here as they don't have much options in their hands.

But the return of Amit Rohidas, who missed Tuesday's match after being shown the red card against Great Britain in the quarterfinal, should bolster the Indian defence and also give more chances from



"I'm going to go out a champion. That's

the way I want to go out. I don't want to

go out and lose a fight and then retire.

I'll retire happy."
Harrington is the first Irish woman to

win gold medals at two Olympics, and

she is just one of four Irish athletes to

penalty corners as he is second best option from set pieces after Harmanpreet.

The Indians were looking to break a 44-year-old jinx to reach an Olympic final but it eluded them narrowly. The last time India made the

Olympic hockey final was way back in 1980 Moscow Games, which, in fact, was their last of the eight gold medals at the quadrennial event.

A place in final would have at least assured India a silver medal after 1960 Olympics but that also slipped out of hands. But all is not lost for the Indians as they still have a chance to claim a podium finish if they beat Spain on Thursday in the bronze medal

match. For that, the Indians will have to leave the baggage of the semifinal loss behind and come out with a fresh mind to

get the better of Spain. Veteran India goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who is playing his last international tournament,

reminded his teammates that all is not lost. "It's a heartbreaking loss for us (against Germany). We had the chance to win gold, but now,

we have to forget this semifinal

and focus on the bronze medal match," he had said.

It's a medal match and it's about the country. It's about those 19 players here, all the staff. And I think we all get a last opportunity to play, to get a medal for our country rather than worrying about what happened today (Tuesday).

These 19 players should play like this is our last opportunity as a player to get a medal for our country."

Going by form and world ranking, the Indians are clear favourites to win the tie against Spain but in the end it will all boil down to the mental aspect of the side.

While India lost a close semifinal, Spain were thrashed 0-4 by Netherlands. In world ranking too, Spain are placed eighth while India are

currently at the fifth spot. But it would be easier said than done for the Indians as Spain, while not matching India's Olympic achievements, has

made significant strides in recent decades. The Spanish team has secured two European Championship titles and has consistently participated in World Cups

Ohio and originally decided to represent Nigeria because that's where her parents are from. But after the issues in 2021, she switched her Olympic country to the U.S., and on Tuesday night became the first American woman to earn Summer Games medal in the hammer, getting a silver.

Echikunwoke was in the early lead before Canada's Camryn Rogers won the gold on her second-to-last throw. "I think (this medal) could have happened three years ago, but I'm it's happy it's happening now," Echikunwoke said. "I feel like everything happens for a reason, even if it's bad or good or ugly or whatever the case may be. This is beautiful."

Echikunwoke was among those from Nigeria who did not meet the requirement and so was not allowed to She remembers that time in Tokyo so participate. The 28-year-old was born in vividly, such as not being able to walk in



the opening ceremony. "Not the best feeling, as you could imagine," said Echikunwoke, who went to the University of Cincinnati.

Echikunwoke's application to change what country she would compete for finally came through at the last minute before the U.S. Nationals in 2022, and she earned a spot for the world championships that year.

Now, she's an Olympic medalist for the red-white-and-blue.
"It doesn't feel real right now," she said.

"I can't really put it into words."

Echikunwoke led after the third round Tuesday with a throw of 75.48 meters (247 feet, 7 inches). Rogers, though, threw the hammer 76.97 (252-6) on her second-to-last attempt to overtake her. Bronze went to Zhao Jie of China.



## HISTORY-MAKING BHAKER ARRIVES HOME TO ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPT

Star pistol shooter Manu Bhaker landed back in the country on Wednesday after her historic feat of winning two medals in a single edition of the Olympic Games and was welcomed by hundreds of supporters and her family, who braved a steady drizzle to give her a memorable reception here.

The Air India flight (AI 142), which brought Bhaker from Paris to Delhi, landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at around 9:20am, delayed by one hour.

waited at the airport long before her arrival despite the morning drizzle in the city, accorded her — and her coach Jaspal Rana — an enthusiastic reception.

The 22-year-old Bhaker won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event — where she had paired with Sarabjot Singh — to script Olympic history for the

Before her, only British-Indian athlete Norman Pritchard had achieved the rare landmark for the country with his two silver

200m hurdles at the 1900 Olympics but this happened in the pre-Independence era.

Before leaving for India, Bhaker had stated that she was looking forward to a grand welcome and she was not disappointed on Wednesday. The youngster was greeted with bouquets, garlands, and celebratory dhol after celebratory emerging from the airport exit. Flower petals were showered on her and Rana as soon as

they came out amid significant

police presence to manage the Singh Rana. "She is coming along with her Among those present were

coach Jaspal Rana. He is my Kishan and Sumedha — and son. He brought glory playing sports enthusiasts and officials for India in shooting. Jaspal Rana and Abhinav Bindra from her home state Harvana, started it all," he added. Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, the state to which Rana belongs. Rana's father was also

People gathered at the airport long before her arrival and they celebrated her feat with song and dance, holding banners with photos of Bhaker and

Bhaker will be meeting sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya in the afternoon. She will head back to Paris on Saturday to participate in the closing ceremony on Sunday where she will be one of India's flag-



## Top surfers converge in Kovalam for final National Surfing Championship

The Covelong Classic, the final National Surfing Championship of the year, is set to kick off at Kovalam near here on Thursday, with over 75 surfers from across the country competing for top honours.

The event will happen across four categories — Men's Open, Women's Open, Junior Boys & U-16, and Junior Girls & U-16. U-16, and Junior Girls & U-16. The 2024 season started with the International Surfing Festival Kerala Varkala, followed by the Indian Open of Surfing in Mangalore, and the third stop — Mahabs Point Break Challenge — happening earlier this month in Mahabalipuram.

Mahabalipuram.
Covelong Classic will be a three-day surfing carnival organised by the Tamil Nadu Surfing Association under the aegis of the Surfing Federation of India, to be hosted by Surf

The competition has also received significant support from the Tamil Nadu Government and the Ministry of Youth Welfare and Sports Development.

Among the top surfers to participate will be Ajeesh Ali, Srikanth D, Harish M and Open categories.

Recently, Ajeesh, Harish and Srikanth were named in the Indian squad for the Asian Championship Surfing happening next week in Maldives. Additionally, Srikanth D will be looking to

defend his title. In the Women's Open category, Kamali P (ranked first) has already secured the overall championship title, making her performance at the Covelong Classic irrelevant. However, she is anticipated to face stern competition from fellow surfers Sandhya Arun (ranked second), Shrishti Selvam (ranked third), and Sugar Shanti Banarse (ranked fourth).

Kamali and Sugar have also been selected for the Indian squad competing in the Asian Surfing Championship, representing the Women's Open and Junior U-18 categories, respectively.

Local surfers Tayin Arun and Kishore Kumar will grab eyeballs, thanks to their recent performances and national rankings in the Junior Boys & U-16 category. Additionally, fellow local surfer

Harish P, having gained

surfing skills, will aim to defend his Covelong Classic championship title with championship determination.

In the Junior Girls & U-16 category, defending champion Kamali P will look to secure a double victory, as she is a strong contender for both the Women's Open and Junior Girls & U-16 titles at the Covelong Classic.

Meanwhile, Dhamayanthi Sriram (ranked second) and Saanvi Hegde (ranked third) Dhamayanthi will be putting forth their best

efforts to claim the title.
Surfing Federation of India's president, Arun Vasu said, "As the surfing calendar culminates with the year's final national championship, the Covelong Classic, the best surfers are set to compete in the Asian Surfing Championship. I would like to extend my best wishes to all the surfers participating in this prestigious

championship." Apart from the medals and trophies, victors in each category will receive cash rewards, with the overall competition champion being

## Refugee athlete's dream of taekwondo medal cut short

**AP** ■ PARIS

Having overcome so many hurdles, the disappointment was immense

for refugee athlete Hadi Tiranvalipour as his dream of was cut short when he lost in a taekwondo qualification bout on Wednesday at the Paris Games.

Tiranvalipour was up against Omar Ismail of Palestine in the men's under 58 kilograms competition and was handed a 2-0 loss in a lopsided match at the lavish Grand Palais venue on the first day of taekwondo events.

"I'm not satisfied with my performance, I don't have an answer for this. I wanted a good result, happening," he said.

Before making the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, Tiranvalipour fought for eight years as a member of the



national team. winning the gold medal at the Asian Junior championship back in 2015. But Tiranvalipour, who also worked as a TV presenter and studied sports science, was forced to leave his country after speaking out in favour of women's rights, losing his job. In October 2022, he travelled to Turkey, then to Italy where he lived in a forest for 10 days

a sofa in a shared accommodation that Iranian students had helped him find. 'Our journey is too difficult," he said after his loss to Ismail 'Not for me, for all the refugee athletes. It's too difficult for each of us to be here?

Athletes from the refugee team compete under the same flag and come from different parts of the world. The team was created for the Rio Olympics and then slept three months in 2016 as a symbol of hope and to call attention to the plight of refugees worldwide. After training alone in a park, Tiranvalipour approached Italian federation, which helped him apply for asylum and settle for

there at the airport.
"It is a matter of pride for us that a daughter of India is

coming back after creating

history by winning two medals

in an Olympics. It has never happened before. She is only 22 years old," said former Uttarakhand Sports Minister

and Rana's father, Narayan

In the build-up to the Games, he trained at the Olympic Sports Center in Roma with the likes of Vito Dell'aquila, defending Olympic champion.

After missing out on Olympic qualification during European qualifiers in March, he was selected by the refugee Olympic team and had big expectations in Paris.

"I'm not satisfied because I had too much sacrifices about my losing weight process, my training. I'm really sad," he

"We passed so many difficult journeys. If you have a target, you have to keep going. Life is

## US women's volleyball team advances to semifinal with straight-set win against Poland

The reigning Olympic champion U.S. Women's volleyball team posted a straight-set victory against Poland on Tuesday night at the Paris Olympics. The Americans led throughout while aking the first two sets 14. They fell behind 5-0 and 7-1 in the third set before rallying to close it out,

Next up is a semifinal date on Thursday with powerhouse Brazil, which swept the Dominican Republic earlier in the day. It's a rematch of the Tokyo Games

Turkey eliminated China with a 3-2 victory and was waiting on the result of Tuesday's late match between Italy and Serbia to learn its next opponent.

US coach Karch Kiraly said he was thrilled to get his players off their feet sooner - and not have to play any extra sets, especially for setter Jordyn Poulter as she continues to regain her form in match play after coming back from a devastating left knee injury in

December 2022 that required surgery.

"To be able to chip away and get back and tie it up at 13-all and get out with 3-0 instead



of 17-15 in the fifth, which happens so often, that's really big, especially for somebody like Jordyn Poulter who's on a really good recovery," Kiraly said.

"But to have less load here and more recovery before we play a really big Brazil team was big."

Kiraly made a lineup change after the team's five-set defeat to China on July 29 to open group stage play, moving veterans Jordan

"The first time we ever played with this now we've got three matches," Kiraly

beginning to click.

"Most other teams have been playing for years with the same (lineup). We now have three matches, so things are coming together."

Larson and Kelsey Robinson Cook to

reserve roles and bringing in Avery

Skinner and Kathryn Plummer. The

Americans bounced back to beat Serbia

two days later. The new starting six are

Andrea Drews had 13 points, while Plummer and Skinner contributed 12 apiece. Plummer credited the Americans for improving their service pressure and four-time Olympian Larson's boost off

the bench to get them back in it. 'We started out the third set very slow, we tend to do that even when we have a 2-0 lead

in the match," she said. We got out of that first rotation and then I think we just got strings of points together, had a couple of big momentum swings

with some big blocks, some big serves. ... The third set was a testament to what happens when we stay together and connected.

## Sprint powerhouse Jamaica has had more injuries than medals and celebrations

The midpoint of the Olympic **1** track meet used to be time for Jamaican sprint stars - Usain Bolt. Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and all the rest - to catch their breath, recover from their victory parties, then start gearing up for more.

This year in Paris, there hasn't been much to celebrate, and there's a sense that it could be years, not days, until the good times start rolling again for the Caribbean nation known for sun, sand and sprints.

After Tuesday, which marked the halfway point of the action at the Stade de France, Kishane Thompson's silver in the 100 meters was the only medal the Jamaican team had won on the track.

And in a twist hardly anyone on the island could have ever imagined, Jamaica actually had more medals from field events (three) than from

sprinting.
"I know the world is used to Jamaica winning, and Jamaica always celebrating," said Asafa Powell, the Jamaican legend who held or shared the 100-meter world record for nearly three years before Bolt broke it when he surged onto the scene in 2008. "But believe me, it's going to

happen again." It almost happened this time. Exactly a month later, Jackson, the

Thompson's quest to become Jamaica's next Olympic male sprint champ came a scant .005 seconds

THE JAMAICAN SPRINTING WOMEN HAVE DEALT WITH INJURIES: For the women's program, the problem has simply been etting a contender to the starting

Elaine Thompson-Herah, Shericka Jackson and Fraser-Pryce, all in their 30s, all pulled out of their Olympic sprints with injuries. They made up the entire 100-meter podium in Tokyo in 2021.

The team that won 15 of the 24 Olympic medals in the women's 100 and 200 between 2008 and 2021 will go home with none this year. It will mark the first time since 1976 the country hasn't won a women's medal in either of those

"I think people appreciate us more when they see a down period like this," said Powell, who is in town hanging at the PUMA house, which used to be party central for Jamaica at the Olympics.

The pieces started crumbling on June 9, when Thompson-Herah, the twotime defending champion at 100 and 200 meters, hurt her Achilles at a meet in New York



second-fastest woman of all time at 200 meters, pulled up lame in a race in Hungary. She arrived in Paris, only to pull out of the 100 first, then the 200. Even had she raced, there were

she would have had in the 200 given her pedestrian 22.29-second run at Olympic trials. It left 37-year-old Fraser-Pryce as the

only healthy member left from the questions as to what kind of impact group. But that ended Saturday

when, shortly before the 100 semifinals, s he pulled out with an undisclosed injury, saying on social media it was "difficult for me to describe the depth of my disappointment." WHO ARE THE NEXT STARS

FOR JAMAICAN TRACK?: Now, track fans await the lineup for Thursday's 4x100 relays.

Have the old guard healed enough to compete?

Or will the world see the likes of Tia Clayton, 19, who finished seventh in the 100 final; Shashalee Forbes, 28, who finished sixth in the 100 semifinal; and Niesha Burgher, 21, who came in fifth in the 200-meter semi-

"It's a very young team," said Lanae Tava-Thomas, another relay candidate, who is 23 and finished fifth in the 200-meter semifinal. "We definitely have time to develop. It's going to be a very strong team when we get actually fully developed." JAMAICA HAS A HISTORY OF FINDING NEW SPRINTERS: History shows there is hope for

Jamaica. There was a time when Merlene Ottey (three silver, six bronze medals over six Olympics with Jamaica) seemed irreplaceable. Then along came Veronica Campbell-Brown, who won eight Olympic medals, including three golds, over a stretch that covered 2004-16.

In the weeks before the 2008 Beijing Games, vitriol flew at the then-21year-old newcomer, who then went by Shelly-Ann Fraser, from those who believed the spot she captured in the 100 was depriving Jamaica and "VCB" a sure medal. Fraser won gold that year and again

in 2012. She won eight medals and became one of Jamaica's all-time greats over the span of four Olympics before this year.

If the next Fraser is out there, she hasn't arrived yet, though Thompson's relatively quick emergence on the men's side - he was a virtual unknown outside the island before June - shows how fast things can change.
EVEN USAIN BOLT STARTED

SLOWLY AT HIS FIRST OLYMPICS: Remember this: Four years before he became an international celebrity, Bolt made his Olympic debut in the 200 meters in Athens. He went out quietly in the first round

Four years later, though, the 6-foot-5 force of nature turned the Olympic track into his own personal stage 9-point-something seconds of running followed by a reggae-filled, dance-fest and capped off by his iconic bow-and-arrow victory pose. At times during this Olympic track meet, it has felt like more than eight years have passed since Bolt reigned supreme. But Powell remains hope-

"We will see Jamaica celebrating again," he said.