



OPINION 6
A NEW STANDARD FOR
GLOBAL POPULISM

WORLD 8
5 MORE MURDER CASES FILED
AGAINST B'DESH OUSTED PM

MONEY 10
MARKETS SETTLE
ALMOST FLAT

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11 SPORTS

Protests singe City of Joy

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Many people, including policemen, were injured in pitched battles intermittently fought at various locations of Kolkata and Howrah between the men in uniform and students protesting against the rape and murder of the lady doctor at a medical college in Kolkata. Several protesters were taken into custody. The students under the banner of a relatively obscure Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj — with apparent blessings of the Opposition BJP — marched towards the State Secretariat Nabanna to demand the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee when clashes took place.

Initial jostling turned into skirmishes with the police repeatedly bursting tear gas, charging water jets and resorting to lathicharge as the charged up agitators that included many women refused to relent and turned aggressive. The pitched battles continued for more than five hours giving the police a harrowing time, sources in the administration said, adding additional combat forces and RAF had to be called in from the neighbouring districts. At various places people profusely bleeding from head were seen being carried away by their co-agitators to the hospitals. Similarly the policemen who often got isolated were also attacked. At Babu Ghat a crowd of agitators badly beat up two policemen with lathis, rods, bricks and even shoes. Some even spit on them while



Tear gas shells being used by security personnel to disperse students during their protest march towards West Bengal Secretariat over the alleged sexual assault and murder of a trainee doctor, in Kolkata, on Tuesday

journalists covering the incident tried to intervene by appealing the people not to take law into their own hands. Intensity of the protest was such that the agitators who were quickly joined by swarms of political activists, moved dangerously close to the seat of State power, Nabanna with the police armed with riot gear having a trying time to push them back. The scene was almost same on both sides of the Hooghly River as the agitators broke through firmly erected barricades one after the other at Mahatma Gandhi Road, College Square, Princep Ghat, Esplanade, Hastings, Santragachi, Vidya Sagar Setu leading to Nabanna, Howrah Maidan, Sarat

Safety of healthcare workers: Portal floated, public view sought

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court-appointed National Task Force (NTF) to formulate a protocol for the safety and security of healthcare professionals held its inaugural meeting under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary on Tuesday. It decided to conduct broader consultations with key stakeholders to identify critical issues and develop a comprehensive framework for

protecting those in the healthcare field. Soon after the NTF panel also favoured setting up an online portal seeking suggestions from public, the Union Health Ministry shared a link in this regard, posting on the X social platform, "Suggestions to N T F" — <http://serviceonline.gov.in/directApply.do?serviceId=2987> for seeking suggestions from individuals and different stakeholders across the country.

Chatterjee Road and elsewhere shouting the hitherto familiar slogan 'we want justice.'

At Princep Ghat and Mahatma Gandhi Road the police chased away the agitators who were trying to break the cordons. At Kona Express Way too, the police fought intermittently with the agitators who were trying to enter Nabanna area from Howrah side.

In the melee more than 50 people, including policemen were hurt, sources said, adding that the count could go up as "more information from other zones are still awaited." The police had detained more than 350 people, the BJP sources said.

While the police accused the agitators of resorting to violence first by throwing bricks the opposite side said the students got agitated as news spread that four of their leaders who had been organising the movement for the past several days had "mysteriously gone missing" as they had allegedly been picked up around midnight on Monday.

Incidentally most of the agitating doctors at various medical colleges and the members of the civil society remained indifferent to the Tuesday's march but continued their cease work at their workplaces, sources said. The Tuesday's clashes were the culmination of fortnight long protests by the people from all walks of life against the brutal rape and murder of a lady doctor at the RG Kar Medical College Hospital and allege effort by the Kolkata Police and the powers that be to shield the real guilty.

PM Modi shares perspectives on Russia-Ukraine conflict with Putin

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin and shared "insights" from his recent visit to Ukraine. During the telephone talks, Modi reiterated India's firm commitment to supporting an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

A day earlier on Monday, Modi had briefed US President Joe Biden on his visit to Ukraine and conveyed India's full support for the early return of peace to the region through dialogue and diplomacy.

As regards talks with President Putin, Modi said in a social media post, "Exchanged perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and my insights from the recent visit to Ukraine. Reiterated India's firm support to an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict." The Prime Minister also said he and President Putin also discussed measures to further strengthen Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between the two countries.

A statement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) here said Modi had on Tuesday a telephone conversation with the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin.

The Prime Minister recalled his successful visit to Russia last month to participate in the 22nd India-Russia Bilateral Summit.

The two leaders reviewed progress on a number of bilateral issues and discussed measures to further



FILE PHOTO

strengthen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. They also exchanged views on a range of regional and global issues of mutual interest.

The two leaders exchanged views on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict as Modi shared with Putin insights from his recent visit to Ukraine.

He underlined the importance of dialogue and diplomacy as well as sincere and practical engagement between all stakeholders to achieve an abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict. The two leaders agreed to remain in touch.

Modi's talks with Putin took place days after he met Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv.

During his meeting with the Ukrainian President, Prime Minister Modi had said India is "not neutral as it is always on the side of peace".



NDA touches majority mark in Rajya Sabha, 11 elected unopposed

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a major setback to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and a big relief to Bharat Rashttra Samithi (BRS) leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha, the Supreme Court on Tuesday granted her bail in the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy 2021-22.

A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan passed the order after noting that the investigation is over and trial will take a long time to conclude. The bench also questioned the fairness of the prosecution agency (CBI/ED) and criticised their selective approach in treating some accused as approvers. It also

BRS leader Kavitha gets bail in Liquorgate

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asked the ED and the CBI about the "material" they had to show that Kavitha was involved in the alleged scam. The bench noted that the investigation is complete and chargesheet/prosecution complaint has been filed in both the CBI and ED cases. Hence, the custodial interrogation of the petitioner, who has been behind the bars



Bharat Rashttra Samithi (BRS) leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha

is plagued by allegations of sexual misconduct. A number of stars and directors, including Ranjith, (chairman, Chalachitra Academy), Siddique (general secretary, Amma), Mukesh MLA, Jayasooraya, Manian Pillai Raju, KP Prakash, Babu Raj (joint secretary, Amma) Babu (former general secretary, AMMA) have been

for over five months, is no longer necessary. Also, the trials in both cases are unlikely to be completed soon since there are about 493 witnesses to be examined and the documentary evidence runs into nearly 50,000 pages.

"The appellant (Kavitha) is directed to be released forthwith on bail... on furnishing bail bonds in the sum of ₹10 lakh in each of the cases," the bench said, while allowing her appeals against the July 1 verdict of the Delhi High Court which had denied her bail in the two cases. "The appellant (Kavitha) shall not make any attempt to tamper with the evidence or influence the witnesses. The appellant shall deposit her passport with the learned Trial Judge. The appellant

shall regularly attend the Trial Court and cooperate with the expeditious disposal of the trial," reads the order. Later in the day, a city court issued release warrants for Kavitha, paving the way for her release from jail. The Supreme Court's decision has given hope to AAP convener and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal whose bail petition is pending in the apex court. Kejriwal's legal team is expected to argue the case on the basis of bail granted to Kavitha and Manish Sisodia in the same case. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja issued the release order for Kavitha after being informed that the politician was granted bail earlier in the day by the SC in both the cases.

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The controversy over casting couch in the Malayalam film industry took an interesting turn on Tuesday as Mohan Lal, popularly known as the superstar and South Indian Amitabh Bachchan, quit as president of Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA), the apex body of film stars. All office bearers, including the executive committee members of AMMA, too, submitted their resignation along with Lal as the industry

Mollywood's MeToo movement topples South Indian superstar

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named by female artists as people seeking sexual favours in lieu of work or inappropriate behaviour or even attempt to rape. Those who raised the issue include Bengali actress Sreelekha Mitra, Revathy Sampath, Minu Muneer, Geetha Vijayan and a number of junior and senior artists giving the Malayalam film

industry a bad name. Lal's decision to quit was preceded by a WhatsApp chat with other office bearers and members of the executive committee. "We can expect more such allegations in coming days and it is better to quit rather than face the charges. Let a new team of office-bearers take over after the general body meeting," Lal reportedly told his colleagues. Though other office-bearers persuaded Lal to continue, the super star remained adamant and resigned.

Rise of daughters in Jammu and Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In the absence of any 'son'rise, it is time for the 'Laadli betis' to make their presence felt in the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. On Tuesday, two daughters with strong claim to political legacy from the Jammu and Kashmir divisions filed their nomination papers for the first round of polling on September 18.

From Kishtwar, 29-year-old Shagun Parihar filed her nomination as the BJP candidate in the presence of J&K BJP chief Ravinder Raina. She is the niece of late BJP leader Anil Parihar. Anil Parihar was killed by

terrorists along with his brother Ajeet Parihar while they were returning home on November 1, 2018. Anil Parihar had considerable influence in the area and was an active member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. "It is the love of the people of Kishtwar that has motivated me to file my nomination. I am confident of my victory. I am also certain that the brothers, sisters, and elders of Kishtwar will support my candidature and ensure my victory by a large number of votes," the BJP nominee told reporters after filing her nomination at the office of the returning officer in Kishtwar. She emphasised that this mandate is not just



for her family, but for the families of all martyrs in the region. Shagun Parihar, pursuing a doctorate in electronics, expressed gratitude to the BJP for honouring the families of martyrs who laid down their lives for the nation and the party. She stressed that peace, security, employment, and

women's empowerment would be the core areas of her work for the uplift of the mountainous district. In the Valley, 37-year-old Iltija Mufti, daughter of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti, made her electoral debut by filing the nomination papers from the Srigufwara-

Bijbehara constituency of south Kashmir. Bijbehara is a traditional bastion of the PDP. It has been represented from 1999 to 2018 by senior party leader Abdul Rehman Veeri. "The party has reposed faith in me by fielding me from the Bijbehara Assembly constituency," Iltija told

DAHI HANDI SHOW



Devotees form a human pyramid to break the 'dahi handi', an earthen pot filled with curd, as part of Janmashtami celebrations, at Dadar, Mumbai, on Tuesday

media persons in Anantnag on Tuesday. She said that her grandfather, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, and mother Mehbooba Mufti had also started their political career from Bijbehara. "Today, it is a very emotional moment for me and I am truly honoured," she said. Mehbooba Mufti has vowed not to contest Assembly elections until Statehood is restored. In Kishtwar, BJP candidates Sunil Sharma and Tariq Keen also filed their nomination papers from Paddar Nagseni and Inderwal seats, respectively. Meanwhile, the BJP on Tuesday named 29 more candidates for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, taking to 45 the number of

seats for which it has announced its nominees. The BJP has made one change from the now-revised list, which was put out on Monday, as it has named Baldev Raj Sharma from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi seat in place of Rohit Dubey. All other names are the same for the same set of constituencies, announced on Monday before being withdrawn. In Srinagar, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference released a list of 32 candidates which included Omar Abdullah for the Ganderbal Assembly seat, a constituency that he represented from 2009 to 2014 when he was the Chief Minister of the NC-Congress coalition Government.



U'khand govt likely to give UPS option to employees under NPS regime

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The union government's decision to provide the option of the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for the employees covered under New Pension Scheme (NPS) has put the Uttarakhand government under pressure to implement the scheme in the State. It is learnt that the Pushkar Singh Dhama government can soon make an announcement regarding the implementation of UPS in the State. The Dhama government is likely to bring a proposal in this regard in the next meeting of the State cabinet.

However implementation of the scheme will put a big financial burden on the State exchequer as majority of the employees covered under the NPS are likely to opt for the UPS. Though the employees want the government to restore the more lu-

crative Old Pension Scheme (OPS) most of them will opt for UPS instead of the NPS for its element of guaranteed pension. The State president of national movement for restoration of OPS (NMOPS), Jeetmani Painyuli said that the massive rally organised by the NMOPS at Ramlila grounds in New Delhi on October 1 last year forced the government to take a decision to give pension to the employees. He said that the employees want to get the benefit of OPS where 50 percent of the last salary drawn is given as pension along with dearness allowance (DA) and other allowances. Painyuli added that employees want nothing short of OPS and their agitation will continue. There are about one lakh employees in Uttarakhand who are under the NPS.

The NPS was introduced in the year 2004 by the Manmohan Singh government to reduce the burden of pension on the State exchequer. Over the years the employees found the NPS non lucrative and are demanding the restoration of OPS in which the retiring employee gets 50 per cent of his last drawn salary as pension. Under the pressure of the employee associations, the State governments of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh have dismantled the NPS and restored the OPS for their employees. Taking cognizance of the resentment of the employees, the union government has now come out with UPS in which 50 per cent of the basic salary of the retiring employee will be given on completion of 25 years of service.

Bhatt asks Umesh Kumar to provide evidence on allegation made in Assembly

Says, the allegation of destabilising govt sans evidence baseless

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State president of ruling Bharatiya Janata Party Mahendra Bhatt said that the party will investigate the claims made by Independent MLA Umesh Kumar regarding the Gupta brothers' alleged attempts to destabilise the government, only if Kumar provides the necessary evidence. Without concrete evidence, the BJP considers the allegations to be baseless and an attempt to seek attention in the Assembly with the aim to create unrest in the State, he said.



Gupta brothers receiving Y and Z category security in 2016 and 2018 during the tenure of the then chief ministers Harish Rawat and Trivendra Singh Rawat respectively.

On Harish Rawat's recent claim that Gairsain would have been made the permanent capital if his tenure as CM had not been disrupted by Congress leaders who later defected to BJP, Bhatt stated that the Congress had enough time to declare Gairsain as the permanent capital but failed to take action. "Rawat is making claims about what he could have done, but neither he nor his party took any real steps," he said. He highlighted that under the BJP-led government, Gairsain has been declared the summer capital and development work is underway there. He stated that the BJP is focused on Uttarakhand's development, whereas the Congress has little to show for its contributions. "Rawat's statements are aimed at gaining public attention. The Congress has no significant achievements regarding the development of the State," Bhatt added.

During the recent monsoon session of Uttarakhand Vidhan Sabha held in Bharadwaj, Gairsain, Khanpur MLA Umesh Kumar alleged that the Gupta brothers are trying to destabilise the government by spending a significant sum of money of around Rs 500 crore. He also raised questions about the security provided to the Gupta brothers, asking whose directive led to the

However, Bhatt dismissed allegations of destabilising the government calling them baseless. He said that the narrative lacks any truth and is merely an attempt by Kumar to stir controversy. "Our party has a stable and strong government that is continuously working for the welfare of people. We will only take this matter seriously if substantiated evidence is presented to us," he added.

CM hands over appointment letters to 72 assistant professors

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama handed over appointment letters to 72 assistant professors recently recruited by the higher education department at his residence on Tuesday. The new assistant professors are of sociology, economics and English subjects. The CM also launched a portal for providing a sum of Rs 50,000 to meritorious students of the state in National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) Institute. Congratulating the newly appointed college teachers, the CM said that teachers play an important role in building the future of students. He said that higher education plays an im-

portant role in giving the right direction to youngsters. Teachers also play an important role in making students responsible towards society and the country along with giving them good education.

He expressed confidence that the newly selected assistant professors will use innovation at their workplace and make the society aware of the ill effects of social evils.

The CM said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the third decade of the 21st century will be the decade of Uttarakhand and the State government is moving forward in this direction.



Goals released by Niti Aayog. The Chief Minister said that higher education is the basis for honing human resources. He said that work is being done in all areas of building infrastructure and expanding technology in the State's government colleges and universities. Raja Sabha MP Naresh Bansal, MLAs Umesh Sharma Kau, Khajan Das, Savita Kapoor, vice president of the higher education development board Devendra Bhasin, secretary higher education Shailesh Bagoli, additional secretary Ashish Srivastava and other officers attended the programme.

He said that the preparations for implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the state are in the final stage.

Dhama said that in the last three years, many decisions have been taken in public interest by the State government. He said that more than 16,000 youth have been given appointments in different departments of the State government.

The State has enacted a strict anti-copying act and an anti-riot law has been implemented. The State has got the first place in the country in the Sustainable Development

Umesh Kumar should prove his allegations: Dasauni

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Congress chief spokesperson Garima Mehra Dasauni has criticised the independent MLA Umesh Kumar for the claim he made in Vidhan Sabha in Gairsain regarding the Gupta brothers' alleged attempts to destabilise the



claims and asked why Kumar seemed concerned about a possible conspiracy to topple chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama's government. She also raised doubts about the State's Intelligence unit, questioning how an independent MLA would be aware of such information before the government. Dasauni also posed a question about the BJP legislators' loyalty, suggesting that if any wealthy individuals could purchase them, it would indicate a major issue for the ruling party. She called on the Speaker of the Assembly to instruct Kumar to substantiate his claims with evidence. She remarked that what transpired in Vidhan Sabha was unfortunate and detrimental to the dignity of the institution, urging for accountability and transparency in addressing such serious allegations.

government. Calling it irresponsible, she emphasised that the Vidhan Sabha is regarded as a temple of democracy, not a battleground for settling personal disputes through misleading allegations. She questioned the legitimacy of Kumar's

CS piqued at delay in adjudication on food safety cases

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Taking a stern note of the cases of delay in the cases filed for adjudication in relation to food security, Chief Secretary Radha Raturi has directed the officers concerned/district magistrate/ADM to hear the cases quickly. She also expressed concern over the delay in timely compliance of the orders. Raturi chaired a meeting of the State Level Advisory Committee on safe food and healthy diet at the State secretariat on Tuesday.

In the meeting the CS directed the officers to undertake special campaigns during festivals to test milk, sweets and other food products and take strict action against those involved in adulteration. Raturi directed the officers to ensure that the upcoming food testing lab of Garhwal division in Dehradun starts operation within two months. The State government has approved 13 posts for the new lab. The proposed lab being set up with a budget of Rs 23 crore will have



an initial capacity to test 5,000 samples.

The CA also directed that a modern microbiological lab should be set up in Rudrapur. The state government has also approved eight posts on contract basis for the Food Safety on Wheels programme. In the meeting the CS gave instruc-

ness regarding food safety in all the residential schools. She said that all the schools, colleges, universities, government and non-government campuses should be linked with the Eat Right Campus campaign.

It was informed in the meeting that additional food safety officers have been deployed to check the food items being sold on the Char Dham Yatra route and to stop the sale of adulterated food items. The officers informed that an intensive checking campaign is being conducted at the entry routes of the state by the officers of the food safety and vigilance cum intelligence unit working under the Food Safety and Drug Administration department.

Principal Secretary L Fanai, Secretary R Rajesh Kumar and officers of education, health, Police, women and child development departments attended the meeting.

The CS asked the education department to increase aware-

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Police to identify social media influencers in U'khand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The police will identify all social media influencers and hold meetings with them at the district headquarters or police stations levels to encourage them to post content that promotes positivity and public awareness in Uttarakhand. This was stated by the additional director general of police (Crime, Law and Order) AP An-

shuman in a video conference held on Tuesday to review the functioning of the social media promotion and monitoring cells established in various districts.



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The conference emphasised the importance of using social media as a tool for maintaining law and order and raising public awareness while also emphasising the need for

vigilance against misinformation and misleading content. Several senior officials including officials from Garhwal and Kumaon range, district in-charges and heads of social media cells among other senior police officials joined the meeting. Anshuman said that the social media cells in each district should be made

more active, ensuring regular monitoring of posts that could affect law and order. Immediate action must be taken against misleading posts in accordance with the SOP issued by the police headquarters.

He said that the works carried out by the social media cells should be regularly supervised by the respective deputy superin-

tendent of police (Operations). Besides this, the district in-charges should also evaluate the manpower and work of these cells and submit review reports to the respective Range office and the police headquarters, Anshuman said. He issued some directions for the officials during the meeting.

He said that immediate rebuttal should be issued against misleading posts that may disrupt law and order. Police should take actions to remove posts that disturb peace and order on social media, including issuing takedown notices. Letters should be sent to the nodal DIG (Crime, Law and Order) designated by the government and actions should be carried out in accordance with the instructions provided in the SOP.

He said that all police personnel must comply with the social media policy issued by the police headquarters. Any violation of this policy by any police personnel will result in departmental action as per regulations, ensuring necessary further action.

Compulsory retirement for non employees of cooperative banks: Secretary

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The secretary of Cooperatives, Dilip Jawalkar said that accountability must be established for branch managers and employees of the cooperative banks in the State who are not performing their duties properly. Employees underperforming due to health issues or other reasons will be given compulsory retirement under the Performance for Unwell Employees' programme. He stated this during a review meeting at the State cooperative bank's Dehradun camp office on

Tuesday. He directed senior bank officers to ensure proper implementation of these measures. He also emphasised the importance of launching modern services like mobile banking and net banking in all the district cooperative banks to en-



hance customer convenience. Addressing the issue of rising Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in the banks, Jawalkar stressed ensuring employee accountability in NPA recovery and issued directives to seek police assistance for this purpose. He also reviewed a presentation by the State Cooperative Bank. The managing director Neeraj Belwal also provided a detailed progress report, informing that currently, 12 out of 15 branches of the State cooperative bank and district coopera-

Minister's Cooperative Housing Loan, home loans and cooperative housing loans. He also called for a campaign to attract government employees and corporate clients to open accounts with the cooperative banks. He also expressed concern over the low credit deposit ratio in district cooperative banks and instructed them to improve it. He emphasised the need to ensure that bank services reach more customers without difficulty.

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Tuesday. Due to the closure of the highway, the pilgrims heading to Badrinath and Hemkund as well as people going to the district headquarters Gopeshwar from Nandprayag were facing difficulties. To ease the transportation problem, small vehicles were being allowed to move through Nandprayag-Saikot motorway, but as this motorway is narrow, long traffic log-

of the blocked highway took as many as five days, a senior district administration officer said that the operation proved time-consuming because of the safety factor. "As landslides continued unabated, we took special caution to keep the personnel engaged in the road-opening operation away from any risk. Hence, it took five days," he added.



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Loan Code No. 09700007842, Dehradun (Branch), Abhishek Batuni (Borrower), Archana A (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 18-02-2019, Rs. 38,61,557/- (Rs. Thirty Eight Lakh Sixty One Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Seven Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- Old No 38 New No 84/87 NA Situated At Araghar Situated At Araghar Dharampur Dehradun Uttarakhand IN 248001 Boundaries As:- North: 15 Ft Road South: Prop. of Other East: Prop. of Other West: Prop. of Other	Rs. 46,18,800/- (Rs. Forty Six Lakh Eighteen Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Only)	Rs. 4,61,880/- (Rs. Four Lakh Sixty One Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Only)	Rs. 74,70,526/- (Rs. Seventy Four Lakh Seventy Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Six Only)

DATE OF E-AUCTION: 13-09-2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 01:00 P.M. (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH), LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 12-09-2024, BEFORE 04:00 P.M.

For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in www.piramalfinance.com/e-Auction.html or email us on piramal.auction@piramal.com

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR / MORTGAGOR
The above mentioned Borrower/Guarantor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned in section 13(2) notice in full with accrued interest till date before the date of auction, failing which property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost from borrower/guarantor.

Date: August 28, 2024
Place: Uttarakhand
Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

Destination Uttarakhand

UTTARAKHAND PIONEERING SOCIAL REFORMS



Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttarakhand is scaling new heights of growth and development. I am working with full dedication to ensure that this stream of progress and prosperity continues in coming years as we follow the path of good governance.

Pushkar Singh Dhami,
Chief Minister

UCC TIMELINE

- Announcement: Feb 12, 2022
- 5-member panel formed: May 27, 2022
- 2 sub-committees: August 22, 2022
- Draft submitted: February 2, 2024
- Cabinet approval: February 4, 2024
- Table in assembly: February 6, 2024
- Passed in assembly: February 7, 2024
- 9-member panel to draft rules: February 10, 2024
- Presidential assent: March 11, 2024
- PLANS AHEADS
 - 2 sub-committees to submit report before Aug 31
 - 1 sub-committee to submit report before Sept 30
 - To be implemented around Nov 9 (state foundation day)



Opportunities for growth

Uttarakhand steers ahead towards a promising pathway to economic empowerment, social justice, and growth

The implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand presents a significant opportunity for economic empowerment and growth. One of the foremost advantages of the UCC is the simplification of legal procedures related to property and inheritance. Currently, different religious communities in India follow their laws, leading to a complex legal landscape. This complexity can create ambiguities and disputes, deterring investment and economic activities. With the UCC in place, all citizens in Uttarakhand will follow the same set of rules. This clarity will boost investor confidence and encourage both domestic and international investments in the region.

Empowering women: Bridging the gender gap

The UCC also holds the potential to significantly empower women economically. In many personal laws, women have traditionally been at a disadvantage regarding inheritance and property rights. The UCC, by providing equal rights to all individuals, irrespective of gender, can rectify these historical injustices. Empowering women in this way is not only a matter of social justice but also an economic imperative, as it can lead to higher household incomes, improved economic productivity, and overall economic growth.

Economic empowerment: From equality to prosperity

Entrepreneurs and businesses will benefit from standardised laws, reducing the time and costs involved in legal compliance. This can make Uttarakhand an appealing destination for new businesses and startups, encouraging a thriving entrepreneurial environment. Simplified legal processes and decreased administrative obstacles can boost economic activity, job creation, and innovation in the state. Furthermore, the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) can contribute to social harmony and cohesion, which are crucial for maintaining a stable economic environment. A more harmonious society creates an environment that is favourable for economic activities, as it promotes trust, cooperation, and a sense of community. This stability can also attract more tourists, investors, and businesses to Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand stands to gain significantly in terms of economic development and improved quality of life for its citizens and a promising pathway to economic empowerment and growth.

With the Uniform Civil Code, CM Pushkar Singh Dhami led Uttarakhand government has taken significant strides towards promoting equality and ensuring equal rights for all its citizens

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami led government, with the vision of bringing uniformity in the society by providing same set of laws regarding marriage, divorce, land, property and inheritance to all people of Uttarakhand - irrespective of their faith - has taken the initiative to implement Uniform Civil Code in the Himalayan state. With CM Dhami announcing to implement UCC before November 9 - the state foundation day - Uttarakhand is on path of becoming the first state of the country, since independence, to implement UCC. The law that intends to increase social harmony, promote gender justice and empower women, is in compliance with the provisions of Article 44 of the Constitution.

UNIFIED LAW, UNIFIED GROWTH

Uttarakhand's initiative to implement the UCC marks a significant step towards realising the constitutional mandate of equal rights for all. The state's leadership has recognised that diverse personal laws can perpetuate inequalities and impede social justice. By adopting the Code, Uttarakhand aims to streamline its legal system, ensuring all citizens are subject to the same laws and thus fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

TIMELINE TO THE HISTORIC BILL

The bill was introduced in the state legislative assembly on Feb 6 and was passed on Feb 7 during a special session of the Uttarakhand assembly. A nine-member panel drafted rules on Feb 10. Gurmit Singh, Uttarakhand governor, referred the bill sent by the state government to President Murmu for her approval, which she approved on March 11. This makes Uttarakhand the first state in the country to implement the UCC. Pushkar Singh Dhami, chief minister, Uttarakhand, declared it as a historic day and stated that his state will implement the UCC before State Foundation Day (November 9).

Uniform Civil Code: Promoting equality



>> Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India and Pushkar Singh Dhami, CM Uttarakhand

The proposed law has 392 sections divided into four parts and seven chapters providing equal rights to women in marriage, divorce, alimony, and inheritance of property, proscribes certain kinds of relationships, bans polygamy, sets the marriageable age for men and women (21 years and 18 years respectively), and makes registration of marriages mandatory

ENSURING EQUAL RIGHTS TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN

One of the primary benefits of UCC is the promotion of gender equality. UCC would eliminate disparities and gender biases, ensuring that women have equal rights to property and inheritance, regardless of their religion. The UCC also promises to uphold children's rights by standardizing adoption laws. Currently, different religious communities have varying practices regarding adoption, with some not recognising it at all. The UCC would establish a uniform legal framework, guaranteeing that

all children have the same rights to a family environment, irrespective of their background.

PROMOTING SOCIAL HARMONY

In a diverse state like Uttarakhand, where different religious and ethnic communities coexist, the UCC would reinforce the principle that all citizens are equal before the law, thus promoting a more harmonious and integrated society.



>> CM Pushkar Singh Dhami in discussion with UCC Panel

SIMPLIFYING LEGAL SYSTEM

The implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) would simplify the legal system in Uttarakhand. The presence of multiple personal laws complicates legal proceedings and can result in conflicting judgments. UCC would establish a single legal framework for all civil matters, making the judicial process more streamlined and efficient.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Uniform civil laws can have positive economic implications. By ensuring that property rights are clear and consistent, a UCC can create a more predictable environment for economic activities. This legal clarity can encourage investments and economic development, contributing to the overall growth of the state. Additionally, by securing women's property rights, UCC would empower women economically, allowing them to participate more fully in economic activities. As Uttarakhand leads the way, it sets a precedent for other states to follow, bringing India closer to the constitutional ideal of equality for all.

WHAT UCC AIMS

- Provide security and empowerment to weak, poor, and sensitive section of society.
- Connect women, children, youth, and the elderly of every section with the mainstream of development.
- Promote the feeling of unity, integrity, and nationalism through a uniform law.
- Encourage daughters and sons for higher education by increasing the age of marriage.
- Create a prosperous society by ending evil practices that have been going on for years.
- Eliminate discrimination between son-daughter and man-woman by giving equal rights to people of all communities.



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

Narendra Modi,
Prime Minister

Benefits of a Uniform Civil Code for Uttarakhand's judicial system

Uttarakhand's initiative to implement the UCC is a significant step towards legal simplification, promising numerous benefits for the state's judicial system. Read to know more...

The concept of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) has long been a subject of discussion in India, aiming to replace the personal laws of various religious communities with a common set of rules applicable to all citizens. One of the primary advantages of the UCC is the simplification of legal processes. Currently, personal laws in India vary significantly among different religious communities, leading to complexities and inconsistencies in the legal system. For instance, laws governing marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption differ for different communities.

By introducing UCC, Uttarakhand aims to establish a single, cohesive legal framework that applies to all citizens. This uniformity will streamline legal procedures, reduce ambiguities, and enhance the efficiency of the judicial process.

Legal reforms and social progress

In a country where we have more than 5 crore pending court cases, the UCC

will facilitate quicker resolution of legal disputes. With a standardised set of laws, courts can process cases more swiftly, as judges will no longer need to interpret varying personal laws. This will significantly reduce the backlog of cases and ensure timely delivery of justice. For instance, disputes over inheritance and property rights, which



>> CM Pushkar Singh Dhami presiding over a meeting on Anti Copying Law

often involve complex interpretations of personal laws, can be resolved more expeditiously under the UCC. This efficiency will not only benefit the judiciary but also provide relief to citizens who often endure prolonged legal battles. The Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

brings about a significant benefit by promoting equality before the law. The implementation of UCC will eliminate discrepancies, ensuring that all citizens are treated equally under the law. Furthermore, laws about parental rights on property, the legitimacy of children born in live-in relationships, and equal property rights will prove beneficial in the long term. The UCC represents a move towards gender equality and non-discrimination, upholding the principles of the Indian Constitution and fostering social justice and inclusivity.

Economic growth through legal uniformity

The Uniform Civil Code aims to improve the transparency and predictability of legal outcomes. This will help citizens gain a clear understanding of their rights and obligations, leading to better compliance with the law. By adopting UCC, the state is aligning with the constitutional vision of uniformity and equality.

After the implementation of the Anti-Copying Law, it has proven to be a game changer in the state

Anti-Copying Law boosts job creation in U'Khand

The Anti-Copying Law has addressed several concerns like cheating, corruption, and favouritism head-on. By establishing stringent measures to prevent malpractices the state has ensured a level playing field for all aspirants. With the law in place, government examinations have become more transparent and fair.

malpractice, enabling the government to speed up the recruitment process. **Restoring public trust:** Candidates now have greater confidence that their hard work and merit will be fairly evaluated, leading to more genuine and competitive participation in government exams. This renewed trust has also motivated

and competent individuals to public service, ultimately enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the government workforce. This, in turn, leads to better governance and improved public services, contributing to the overall development of the state.

Future prospects: To sustain its effectiveness, it is crucial to ensure strict enforcement, maintain technological infrastructure to prevent malpractice, and continuously update the law to counter new cheating methods. Additionally, the government must focus on creating awareness among candidates about the law and its benefits to foster a culture of integrity and honesty. With continued efforts and commitment to upholding the principles of this law, Uttarakhand can look forward to sustained progress and development in the years to come.

POSITIVE EFFECTS

Boosting job creation: Ever since CM Dhami took charge, 15 thousand jobs have been created. And after the implementation of the Anti-Copying Law, Uttarakhand has conducted exams and more than 10,000 government positions have been filled, providing employment opportunities across various sectors. The implementation of this law has led to fewer exam delays and instances of



>> CM Pushkar Singh Dhami presiding over a meeting on Anti Copying Law

more individuals to pursue government jobs, knowing that the selection process is unbiased and transparent.

Long-term benefits: A transparent and fair recruitment system attracts more qualified

Ensuring progress

UCC has some key features that will help the CM Dhami led government promote social justice and equality

KEY FEATURES OF THE UCC

Equal rights for husband and wife

Under the UCC, the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife are equal. This ensures that both partners have the same legal standing and obligations in their marriage.

Exclusion of scheduled tribes

The UCC thoughtfully excludes scheduled tribes from its scope, recognising the importance of preserving their distinct cultural practices and traditions. This respectful approach ensures that the unique identity and heritage are safeguarded.

Legitimacy of children born in live-in relationships

Children born during a live-in relationship are granted legitimacy under the UCC. These children are entitled to all the rights of a biological child, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged or stigmatised. This provision protects the welfare and rights of all children, promoting their acceptance in society.

Equal property rights

The UCC provisions equal property rights for sons and daughters across all religious communities. This ensures that inheritance laws are fair and non-discriminatory, empowering women with the same economic rights and opportunities as men.

Uniform marriage age

The UCC standardises the minimum age for marriage across all religions, setting it at 21 years for boys and 18 years for girls.

Mandatory registration for live-in relationships

To provide legal recognition and protection to live-in relationships, the UCC mandates their registration. This ensures that partners have clear legal rights and responsibilities.

Equal rights on divorce

The UCC ensures equal rights for both husband and wife, guaranteeing fair dissolution of marriage with equitable treatment.

Mandatory marriage registration

All marriages to be registered within a stipulated time. This mandatory registration helps maintain accurate records and provides legal clarity and protection to married couples.

Equality for men and women of all religions and sects

The UCC ensures equal rights for individuals of all religions and sects, thus fostering inclusivity and eradicating gender and religious-based discrimination.

Anti-Copying Law: A bold step towards recruitment integrity

The new law underscores the state government's commitment to establish a fair and just recruitment system. Anti-Copying Law addresses the same

of justice and transparency in employment. Chief minister Pushkar Singh led the Govt. ruling BJP government in Uttarakhand has brought the country's strictest anti-copying law and blamed previous governments for being slack in the matter. "Why has no one in the past tried to tighten the noose around

Anti-Copying Law: A necessary reform
The integrity of job examinations is crucial to maintaining a fair and merit-based recruitment process. However, with the increasing instances of cheating and unfair practices, the need for stringent measures has become more pressing than ever. The Anti-Copying Law is designed to address this issue comprehensively by introducing stringent penalties for those who engage in cheating. It serves as a deterrent to potential offenders and reassures students, parents, and educators that the government is serious about creating a level playing field for all. The introduction of an anti-copying law in job exams aims to address this challenge head-on, ensuring that only the most deserving candidates earn their positions. This law not only safeguards the credibility of the examination process but also reinforces the principles

have provisions for disqualification of candidates guilty of using unfair means from appearing in any examination for 10 years and confiscation of property of those facilitating cheating." The Uttarakhand Competitive Examination (Measures for Prevention and Prevention of Unfair Means in Recruitment) Ordinance came into force after the approval given by the Governor on February 10.



>> CM Dhami distributing appointment letters

the neck of the cheating mafia? I knew an attempt would be made to intimidate us after we decided to act against the mafia involved in the paper leak. I would like to know in whose government's tenure the accused were sent to jail," Dhami said. CM Dhami further said, "It will also

Upholding the sanctity
The bill aims to ensure transparency and fairness in competitive exams in the Himalayan state. The state authorities clarified that the provisions shall remain applicable only in competitive exams and not in school and college exams. Following actions punishable under this law:
● Any involvement in unfair exam processes may result in life imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs 10 crore for individuals, printing presses, service provider organizations, management systems, or coaching institutes.
● Conspiring with such entities can lead to life imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs 10 crore.

Text by: Sarita Shukla

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



U'khand govt engaged in identifying new film shooting destinations: CM

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that the State government, in collaboration with the tourism department, is in the process of identifying new film shooting locations in Uttarakhand. This announcement came during a meeting the CM had with the renowned Bollywood director Vipul Amritlal Shah in Dehradun on Tuesday. Shah recently visited Dehradun to find locations for the shooting of his film 'Hisab'. While appreciating the director's decision to shoot his film in Uttarakhand, Dhami reiterated his government's commitment to the overall development of the film production sector.



Shah lauded the new film policy 2024 introduced by the Uttarakhand government as immensely film-friendly. He expressed his gratitude to Dhami for the new film policy, stating that it would further boost film production activities in Uttarakhand.

Dhami said that the process of identifying new shooting destinations with the support of the tourism department has already begun. This initiative aimed to promote relatively lesser-known tourist places in Uttarakhand through film shoots, he added. Reciprocating the CM's gesture of apprecia-

To recall, the new film policy has provisions for subsidies, including up to 50 per cent of the expenditure for regional language films or a maximum

of Rs two crore and 30 per cent of the expenditure for film to be made in Hindi and languages included in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution or a maximum of Rs three crore.

Additionally, the policy includes provisions for subsidies for short films, documentaries, OTT and web series. The new film policy also envisages establishment of a film city and film institute in the State.

Meethi-Maa Ku Ashriwad to hit U'khand cinemas on Aug 30

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A film titled Meethi - Maa Ku Ashriwad which showcases the region's diverse and rich cuisine is all set to be released on August 30 in cinemas across Uttarakhand. Sharing this information on Tuesday, the producer of the film Vaibhav Goyal said that the film seeks to tell the story of Meethi, a village girl, who inherits her mother's culinary skills and the rich food traditions of Uttarakhand. "The movie explores the deep connection between food and people, underscoring the role of traditional Uttarakhand dishes in

shaping the narrative and connecting the audience with the film's characters", he said. Set against the backdrop of Uttarakhand's picturesque landscapes, the film follows Meethi as she faces challenges that lead her to leave her village and move to a city.

Goyal further said that despite facing deprecation for the traditional Pahari dishes she cooks, Meethi's culinary talent finally captivates everyone, from roadside customers to Master Chef-style competition judges. "The film takes

viewers on an emotional journey as Meethi strives to preserve her heritage, overcome past wounds and build a future that honours her roots", he said.

Goyal also emphasised that Uttarakhand food, particularly dishes made from millets, is rich in nutrients, offering significant health benefits. "Yet, it remains underrepresented in mainstream culinary discourses. This inspired us to develop a story that explores the themes of culture, heritage and migration within an urban and contemporary setting," he added.

Over 30 k people take Bhagavad Gita exam online

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Greater Noida-based spiritual organisation Prashant Advaita Foundation conducted an online examination on the subject of Bhagavad Gita for the first time in the country and over 30,000 people took the exam simultaneously. The questions for the unique exam related to Bhagavad Gita and Vedanta besides fear and terror impacting common life. Notably, the founder of the organisation Acharya Prashant

is educated from IIT Delhi, IIM Ahmedabad and a former civil service officer which he left to choose propagation of spirituality. The functionaries of this organisation said that over 77 million people have joined this organisation through social media. While its YouTube channel has 57 million subscribers 5.5 billion people have watched it, they further said. Acharya Prashant said that as the use of mobile and internet

has spiked a lot due to the domination of the Western culture, it is imperative to draw the youngsters of the country towards the spiritual knowledge enshrined in the timeless scriptures of this ancient land. This though is a quite challenging task for them, given the encroachment of the Occidental culture into every sphere of India's collective life, he added.

UJVNL sets electricity production record in August

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

With efficient management and a well-structured operational strategy, UJVNL Limited (UJVNL) produced 26.015 million units of electricity on August 25. Managing director of UJVNL, Sandeep Singhal informed that the corporation achieved this significant milestone on August 25, marking the highest electricity production in a single day since its establishment. Despite facing challenges in power generation caused by heavy rainfall in certain project areas and reduced water flow in rivers compared to the previous year, the corporation's work ethic and planning led to this

achievement even under adverse circumstances, which is truly commendable, he said. He further informed that the corporation achieved its highest electricity generation in a single day twice during the last few days of August. Firstly, on August 13, a total of 25.978 million units of electricity were generated by the corporation's projects, marking the highest electricity generation in a day since the establishment of the corporation. Subsequently, on August 18, the corporation set a new record by producing 25.992 million units of electricity in a day. Further, on August 19, the Chibro power

house of the corporation achieved its highest daily electricity generation of 4.937 million units. Previously, the highest daily electricity generation by Chibro power house was recorded as 4.935 million units on August 31, 2022, he said. Singhal stated that the maximum power generation achieved is attributable to the enhanced operation and maintenance of the power plant machinery, as well as the exceptional performance of the personnel. He emphasised that the corporation is committed to maintaining this record of power generation excellence in the future.

IN BRIEF

33512 kms of roads constructed in U'khand since 2000: Maharaj

DEHRADUN: The State PWD minister Satpal Maharaj said that since Uttarakhand's formation, a total of 33512 kms of roads have been constructed in the State till March 2024, adding that a target has been set to construct 171 km of new roads in the FY 2024-25. He further said that 187 roads were closed due to rain-triggered landslides out of which 18 roads have been opened with 151 JCBs engaged in operation.

PNB's Haridwar circle hands cheque of Rs 1 Cr to RPF constable's widow

DEHRADUN: Punjab National Bank's Rakshak Plus Scheme for savings accounts for defence and police personnel provides Personal Accident Insurance (Death) cover worth INR 1 crore among a host of other benefits, said the circle head Haridwar. He said this after handing a cheque of INR 1 crore to the widow of Utsav Saini, Joni Saini on Tuesday. The event was attended by the superintendent of police Railways in Haridwar Sarita Dobhal. Saini who was working as a head constable in the Railway Protection Force died an untimely death.

Int'l seminar on climate change concludes at KU

NAINITAL: Prof P C Chanyal of the department of Geography of Kumaun University's DSB campus said that the climate change has been negatively impacting the flora and fauna thriving in the Himalayan region. Their life system and habits are changing fast while pressure is mounting on the available water resources, he said, adding that this might trigger water shortage in near future with adverse effects on irrigation, hydroelectric power production and drinking water supply. Notably, the three-day international seminar on the topic of climate change in the Himalayas and its influence hosted by the university's Geography department concluded.

पंजाब नेशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank
Circle Office-01 Patlan Bazar, PNB House, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
CORRIGENDUM
(The Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties)
The Sale notice for sale of immovable properties of Sl. No. 1, Branch: Sahastadhara Road, Dehradun, Borrower: M/s Somya Communication, Was published on 21.08.2024 in Pioneer (Dehradun Edition) under Sarfaesi act. Nature of Possession Should be read as Physical Possession instead of Symbolic Possession. The other terms and condition will remain the same.
Date: 27.08.2024 Authorized Officer, Place: Dehradun Punjab National Bank

दि बाजपुर को-आपरेटिव शुगर फैक्ट्री लि०, बाजपुर, कुयमसिंह नगर (उत्तराखण्ड)
चक्र: काठकली / 2024-25 / 1028 दिनांक: 27.08.2024
ई-निविदा सूचना
मिल में विभिन्न सामग्री तथा सेवाओं एवं मिल के पेशई सत्र 2024-25 के कुशल संचालन के दृष्टिगत मिल में 03 बॉयलरो हेतु एश पॉन्ड का मोडिफिकेशन कर निर्माण कार्य हेतु पंजीकृत, प्रतिक्रित एवं अनुमती टेकेंदारों से दिनांक 28.08.2024 सायं 4.00 बजे से दिनांक 30.09.2024 प्रातः 10.00 बजे तक ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा सूचना www.bazpursugar.com तथा विस्तृत निविदा प्रपत्र www.uktenders.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है। कार्यकारी प्रबन्धक

Congress to resume Kedarnath Pratishtha Raksha Yatra

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Vice president of Uttarakhand Congress Suryakant Dhasmana has said that the party will soon resume the Kedarnath Pratishtha Raksha

it has received. Dhasmana demanded that the trust surrender the donation it had received in the name of Kedarnath Dham to Badrinath



Yatra. The Yatra from Haridwar to Kedarnath was led by the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Karan Mahara and was suspended on August 1 after rain triggered disaster in Kedarnath valley. Interacting with the media persons at the State headquarters of the party on Tuesday, Dhasmana said that the State government was forced to take a U-turn on the issue of construction of Kedarnath temple by a self confessed Kedarnath Dham trust after the protest by the Teerth Purohiths, stakeholders, locals and the Congress party. He said that though the trust has decided not to construct Kedarnath temple in Buradi of New Delhi and has blocked the QR code for seeking donation from the general public it has not disclosed the total donation

Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) and give back the sacred stone (Shila) transported from Kedarnath. He said that the Congress party had started the Yatra to Kedarnath on the issue of restoring the pride of the Kedarnath Dham and missing gold from the temple. He said that the BKTC and government are unable to answer as to where the 230 kg gold has gone and how it got converted into Brass. Dhasmana added that the name of sacred Krishna Mai cave in Kedarnath was changed to Modi cave and the Congress wants that the name of the cave should be after Krishna Mai who had meditated there for years.

No one can build Char Dham shrines anywhere in country: Bhatt

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The president of State unit of Bharatiya Janata Party Mahendra Bhatt said that no trust or organisation can build Char Dham shrines anywhere in the country due to the efforts of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

Delhi Trust. Godiyal demanded that the CM should ensure that the trust deposits the donations collected in the name of the construction of the temple to the Badrinath Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC). Bhatt said that all trusts and societies are governed by specific rules and regulations, with their registration carried out under the guidance of the society's office. Banking operations for these entities are conducted according to pre-established procedures, preventing any undue interference.

Therefore, making baseless statements or questioning the government's actions only serves to create unnecessary political controversy, he said. Bhatt challenged Godiyal and other Congress leaders to use their expertise to reclaim funds collected in the name of Badrinath and Kedarnath temples not just in Delhi but also in cities like Mumbai and transfer them to BKTC.

He said that the Dhami government's firm stance reflects its commitment to protecting the sanctity of Uttarakhand's sacred sites and preventing any misuse of their names for personal or organisational gain.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
1 Name of work with its location : 14_SrDEE_G_MB_2024_II Call:- Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC) for three (3) years for On Line UPS of different make and capacities with battery bank installed at various UTS and PRS locations over Moradabad division.
2 App. Cost of the work (in Rs.) : 56,23,105.36 (Including GST)
3 Address of the office from where the tender form has been issued : Electrical Branch, Divisional Railway Manager's office, Northern Railway, Moradabad.
4 Bid Security to be deposited (in Rs.) : 1,12,500/-
5 Completion period of the work : 36 (Thirty Six) Months
6 Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of tender : Tender will be received upto 15:00 hrs. and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 13.09.2024
7 Website particulars & Address of office : Website www.ireps.gov.in in Divisional Railway Manager's office, Northern Railway, Moradabad.
Tender Notice No.: 20/2024 Dated.: 22.08.2024 2652/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PMSHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA IIP MOHKAMPUR DEHRADUN
(An Autonomous body under the Ministry of Education)
Email id: kvilipcontr@gmail.com
CBSE SCHOOL No.: 84050
ADMISSION NOTICE
There are some vacancies for students of Category-1 (Employees under Central Government) and Category-2 (Autonomous Employees of Central Government) in Balvatika-3, Class 11 Humanities stream and Commerce (Commerce) stream for the academic session 2024-25. Application forms are invited for admission to the position. The said vacancy also includes the vacancies reserved for SC, ST and OBC (NCL). Interested and eligible candidates must scan and submit the completely filled application form along with all the documents on the e-mail ID given below by 5 pm on 29-08-2024. Applications submitted through any other means and after the last date will not be accepted. Admissions will be done as per the updated Admission Guideline 2024-25 of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. Application form can be obtained from the school website <https://dehradunip.kvs.ac.in/>
To see the Hindi Version of this advertisement available on the school website Send the completely scanned form to the email ID given below.
Email: pmshrivip.admission@gmail.com Principal

Reg. off.: 410-412/18/12, 4th Floor, W.E.A, Arya Samaj Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005, **CSL Finance Limited**
Corp. off.: 716-717, 7th Floor, Tower B, World Trade Tower, Sector 16, Noida, 201301, U.P., Ph.: +91 120 4290650/52/53/54/55, Email: info@cslfinance.in
Legal@cslfinance.in, Web.: www.cslfinance.in, CIN: L74899DL1992PLC051462
POSSESSION NOTICE FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY [(Appendix IV) Rule 8(1)]
Whereas The undersigned being the authorized officer of the CSL FINANCE LTD. (hereinafter referred as Company) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantor mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors having failed to repay the demanded amount, accordingly notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned on behalf of company has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said act read with rule 8(1) of the said rules.
The Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the below mentioned property and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the first charge of the Company for the amount as mentioned herein below with future interest thereon.

Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Loan No.	Demand Notice Dated and Amount	Date of Possession
LAN: SMEHW0010003052 Borrower/ Security Provider Sohan Singh Co-borrower Mohan Singh, Lalita Devi Address- Near Shiv Maindar Pawti, Manakpur Adampur(Pawti), Gram Pawti, Manakpur Adampur, Haridwar, Uttarakhand - 247668 And Co-Borrower- Neelu Address- Sonu Provision Store Gajiwali, Haridwar Uttarakhand - 249408	Rs. 24,92,847/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lacs Ninety Two Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Seven Only) as on 17/06/2024	26.08.2024

Details of Property: All That Property Forming A Residential Plot Khata No. 79, Khadra No. 129 Situated At Village Gaziwali, Pargana Najibabad, Tehsil And District- Haridwar, Measuring 1553.75 Sq Ft Or 144.40 Sq Meter Bounded And Dimension As Under: (Hereinafter Called The Said Property)
Bounded As Under As Per Title Documents: North - 8 Ft Wide Road, South - Land of Shanti Dutt Sharma, East: Remaining Land of Seller, West - 8 Ft Wide Road, As Per Actual/ Technical Valuation Report : North- 14 Ft Wide Road, South- House of Shanti Dutt Sharma, East: House of Hukkum Singh, West - 15 Ft Wide Road
Date: 27.08.2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer, Place: Haridwar (Uttarakhand) CSL Finance Ltd.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public is informed that I have changed my name from Vijay Lakshmi Bargoti to Vijay Lakshmi Vihan and in future I should be known as Vijay Lakshmi Vihan W/O Rupesh Bargoti Address: H No.-124, Govindpur, Ps- Jwalapur, Haridwar, UK

In my army record my mother's name is mistakenly recorded as LILA DEVI whereas my mother's correct name is SHRIMATI LEELA DEVI as mentioned in other all documents. Mary No-JC302416P EX SUB MAHENDER SINGH R/O VILL. GARH NIWAS P.O. IIP MOHKAMPUR DEHRADUN, Uttarakhand. vide IN-UK40670855431362W Affidavit 27.08.2024 before Dehradun.

In my Husband Army record my name is mistakenly recorded as RINKU DEB NATH whereas my correct name is RINKU DEBNATH as mentioned in other all documents. Army No-JC 340228X EX SUB BISWANATH DEBNATH R/O VILL. & P.O. BADOWALA DEHRADUN, Uttarakhand. vide IN-UK40688508524456W Affidavit 27.08.2024 before Dehradun.

सूचना
मेरी सम्पत्ति की लीज डीड की पंजीयन सं० 01, जिल्द सं०-2314, पृष्ठ सं० 391, एफ०डी० का बुक 1, जिल्द 348 के पृष्ठ सं० 1116 में दिनांक 14.12.1984 को विधिवत रूप से सब रजिस्ट्रार, देहरादून कार्यालय में पंजीकृत है। उपरोक्त सम्पत्ति की लीज डीड की मूल प्रति कहीं खो गई है। काफ़ी दूढ़ने के बाद भी नहीं मिली। श्रीमती राजलक्ष्मी सक्सेना पत्नी स्व० श्री प्रदीप सक्सेना निवासी 542, इन्द्रिया नगर कॉलोनी, न्यू कॉन्स्टे, देहरादून, उत्तराखण्ड

PUBLIC NOTICE
Two old original Sale deeds related to land Khadra No. 262 Ka, area 41.48 Sq. Mtrs. Suddhowala, Vikasnagar, Dehradun 1. Shri Rajendra Singh Rawat sold to Mrs. Arjinder Kaur on 30.09.2013 registered in SR Vikasnagar Dehradun in BK No.1, vol. 2749, pages 313 to 328, Sr.No. 8084. 2. Mrs. Arjinder Kaur sold to Mr. Rajendra Singh Rawat on 29.10.2015, registered in SR Vikasnagar Dehradun BK No.1, vol. 1453, pages 383 to 406, Sr.No. 9789, actually lost and not found.
Shri Rambuabu Mahaton R/o Suddowala Vikasnagar Distt. Dehradun.

CHANGE OF NAME
I VANSHIKA alias AASHIRYA SAHU D/O MUKESH KUMAR SAHU R/O C-23 Saraswati-Puram Hazaribagh Kankhal Haridwar Uttarakhand-249408 changed my name to AASHIRYA SAHU.

PD(709)A
I Shivani Agarwal alias Pankhuri Agarwal D/o Pawan Kumar Agarwal W/o Akhil Kumar R/o,H.No.04, Nanital-Road, Kalyani-View, Rudrapur, Udhamshingh Nagar, Uttarakhand -263153, have changed my-name to Pankhuri Gupta.
PD(710)A

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Office of the Superintending Engineer
6th circle, PWD, Uttarkashi
E-Mail : sepwduki@rediffmail.com Fax No-01374-222127
Letter No.- 3078/56 M-06/2024 Date 24.08.2024
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-TENDERING) E-TENDER NOTICE
On behalf of the Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand, Superintending Engineer Sixth Circle, PWD, Uttarkashi invites Item Rate tender in (two-bid system) for the following work. All the information related tender will be available on <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> from 15:00 PM dated 09.09.2024.

S. No	Name of work	Earnest money	Cost of tender (in Rs.)	Validity of tender	Time of Completion	Category of Contractor
1	Under state Sector Improvement and Damikaran of Bhalsi-Vinoli Motor Road From Udalka Bend.	3.20	5000+ GST 18%	153 days	12 Months	For road work registered in "B" and higher category in PWD

Seven killed in rain-related incidents in Gujarat; more than 6,000 relocated

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

At least seven persons have died in rain-related incidents in different parts of Gujarat, and heavy showers continued to pound the state for the third consecutive day on Tuesday, throwing normal life out of gear and flooding low-lying areas, officials said. More than 6,000 persons have been relocated to safer places as water levels in dams and rivers rose amid incessant rainfall, they said.

According to officials, seven persons lost their lives in rain-related incidents on Monday. Four persons were killed in wall collapse incidents in Gandhinagar, Kheda and Vadodara districts, while one person died after a tree fell on him and two others drowned in Anand district.

The administrations of Panchmahal, Navsari, Valsad, Vadodara, Bharuch, Kheda, Gandhinagar, Botad and Aravali districts shifted hundreds of people to safer locations as a precautionary measure amid flooding in low-lying areas as water levels rose in rivers and dams. In Panchmahal, the district administration shifted around 2,000 people, while 1,000



were relocated in Vadodara, 1,200 in Navsari, and 800 in Valsad, among other areas, officials said. As per data shared by the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC), the state has received nearly 100 per cent of its average annual rainfall so far, with Kutch, Saurashtra and south Gujarat accounting for more than 100 per cent of their average annual rainfall this season.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast isolated extremely heavy rainfall in most parts of the state on Tuesday, in the Saurashtra-Kutch region on Wednesday and Thursday, and heavy to very heavy rains across the state till Thursday. Tankara taluka in Morbi

district received 347 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending at 6 am on Tuesday, the highest in the state, followed by Morva Hadaf in Panchmahal (346 mm), Nadiad in Kheda (327 mm), Borsad in Anand (318 mm), Vadodara taluka (316 mm) and Anand taluka (314 mm). At least 24 out of 251 talukas received more than 200 mm rainfall, and 91 talukas received more than 100 mm showers in 24 hours, the SEOC said.

A fresh spell of rainfall on Tuesday battered Rajkot city, inundating low-lying areas, roads and underpasses. Rajkot city alone received 142 mm of rainfall in four hours since 6 am, the SEOC data showed.

Central team to visit Tripura to assess flood damage : CM

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha said the Centre will send a team to the state to assess the damage caused by the floods.

At least 26 people died as the floods devastated the state. A total of 17 lakh people were estimated to have been affected, and of them, 1.37 lakh were rendered homeless, officials said.

"Union Home Minister Amit Shah has assured me that he will be sending a central team shortly to assess the damage caused by the floods. The central team will physically visit the flood-hit areas," Saha told reporters on the sidelines of a Janmashtami programme on Monday.

He said the state government will present a "true picture of devastation" caused by the floods when the central team arrives. Saha also expressed gratitude to Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav and UP CM Yogi Adityanath for extending financial support to the state. "Yogi Adityanath has spoken to me and donated Rs 10 crore for restoration works in flood-affected areas. The



Madhya Pradesh government also donated Rs 20 crore for restoration works. The Centre will certainly assist Tripura during these difficult times but it is praise-worthy the way other states are also lending a helping hand," he said. Speaking to the reporters, Revenue Secretary Brijesh Pandey said all district magistrates were asked to conduct an assessment of damage caused by the floods. The flood has caused extensive damage to roads, buildings, power lines, embankments and farmlands. It is estimated that the flood caused damage worth about Rs 15,000 crore, officials said. Despite waters receding in all major rivers, around 70,000 people are still in 471 relief camps, they said.

Decision on shifting Darshan to another prison likely soon: Min

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister KG Parameshwara on Tuesday said a decision is expected to be taken by authorities in a couple of days on shifting Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is currently in judicial custody at Parappana Agrahara Central jail here in the Renukaswamy murder case, to another prison.

A photograph of Darshan hanging out with three others, including a rowdy-sheeter, on the lawns of the jail had gone viral on Sunday, sparking a row.

In the picture, the actor is seen in a relaxed mood, sitting on a chair and holding a cigarette and a coffee mug. Also, a purported video of Darshan speaking to a person over a video call from the prison too had surfaced on social media. Parameshwara said an IPS officer has been appointed to review all the systems in the state's prisons.

The Minister said the government cannot take a decision on shifting Darshan to another prison. "It will be decided by the prison authorities in consultation with authorities from court and others.



Government doesn't decide it. There are certain norms as they (Darshana and co-accused) are undertrial, based on which authorities will decide," Parameshwara told reporters in response to a question. Asked as to when the authorities would decide, he said: "They will decide in a couple of days."

Nine prison officials, including the Chief Superintendent of the Parappana Agrahara jail, were suspended on Monday over their "lapses" after a preliminary probe into "special treatment" to Darshan.

Also, three FIRs were registered, including against Darshan, under sections of the Prisons Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Noting that certain lapses were found in the prison, Parameshwara said inmates were allowed to move from one barrack to another and it is captured in the CCTVs. "So, action was taken against prison officials."

"Nine officials have been suspended, they will be replaced. Even the Chief Superintendent and the Superintendent have been suspended, also others who have helped Darshan and group by supplying them with chairs, coffee, cigarettes...All these things have been captured in CCTV, based on that all of them have been suspended," he said.

The inquiry is in progress, the Minister said, adding, an IPS officer will be appointed for further probe.

"Based on the findings given by the officer, we will have to find some permanent solutions. After going through the report, we will do it," he said.

He added that he has come to know about a report submitted earlier for reforms in prisons. Also there is a national level report on police and prison reforms submitted during the tenure of the Manmohan Singh government

MP police arrest main accused in attack on Chhatarpur police station

PTI ■ BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh police on Tuesday arrested Haji Shahzad Ali, the main accused in the stone-pelting incident at a police station during a protest against a Hindu seer in Chhatarpur city, an official said.

The police had issued a lookout circular for Ali to ensure he didn't flee the country. The local administration also razed his palatial house, citing that it was built without due permission.

Hindu seer Ramgiri Maharaj had allegedly made objectionable remarks against Islam at Shah Panchale village in Sinnar taluka of Maharashtra's Nashik district during a religious event.

Following this, around 300-400 people led by religious leaders came to Kotwali police station on August 21 to submit a memorandum demanding a case against Ramgiri Maharaj, who already faces multiple FIRs in Maharashtra over his alleged objectionable remarks against the Prophet.

The crowd suddenly became aggressive and started pelting stones, it was stated. Talking to PTI, Chhatarpur's Superintendent of Police (SP) Agam Jain said Ali, the main

accused of the August 21 incident, was arrested from Chhatarpur during the day, and further legal steps will be taken after presenting him in the court.

Jain said the police had formed 10 teams to apprehend the accused. Ali has a criminal record and has six cases, including murder and offences under the Arms Act to his name, since 1988, the SP said, adding that the administration is also investigating complaints of illegal encroachment lodged against Ali.

The police are probing to find out where Ali stayed when he absconded after the incident and who was handling his social media account where he shared his videos during this period, Jain said. Efforts are underway to arrest other absconding accused, he said.

Officials had earlier said a case was registered against 46 named and 150 unidentified persons under various provisions of law in connection with the violence. The Congress and All India Majlis-e-Itehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi condemned the demolition of Ali's house and termed the administration as "bulldozer justice".

SC notice to Gujarat Govt on Sanjiv Bhatt's plea in custodial death case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought the Gujarat government's response on former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Sanjiv Bhatt's plea against his conviction in a 1990 custodial death case in which he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

"Issue notice returnable in four weeks," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Prasanna B Varale said. The court also tagged the appeal with other matters related to the case.

Bhatt has moved the top court challenging the Gujarat High Court's January 9, 2024 order dismissing his appeal. The court also upheld the conviction of Bhatt and co-accused Pravinshih Zala under Sections 302 (murder), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code.

The high court had dismissed the state government's appeal seeking to enhance the sentences of five other accused who were acquitted of murder but convicted under Sections 323 and 506. While Bhatt and Zala are behind bars, the court cancelled the bail bonds of the five other accused who are out of jail.

"We have also gone through the reasoning recorded by the



trial court while convicting the concerned accused persons for offences punishable under section 302 of the IPC," the division bench said while reading out the order.

"From the evidence based on record, we are of the opinion that the trial court has rightly convicted (five) accused...For offences punishable under Sections 323," the judges had said.

Bhatt and Zala, both police officers, were convicted for murder by the sessions court in Jamnagar on June 20, 2019. On October 30, 1990, then additional superintendent of police Bhatt detained around 150 people following a communal riot in Jamjodhpur town following a bandh call against the halting of BJP leader L K Advani's 'rath yatra' for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Prabhudas Vaishnani, one of the detained persons, died in hospital after his release. Vaishnani's brother accused Bhatt and six other police officials of torturing him in custody and causing his death.

Bhatt was arrested on September 5, 2018, in another case where he is accused of falsely implicating a man for drug possession. The trial in the case is underway. He is also accused in a case of alleged fabrication of evidence in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots cases along with activist Teesta Setalvad and former Gujarat director general of police R B Sreekumar.

Bhatt had also hit the headlines when he filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court alleging then chief minister Narendra Modi's role in the 2002 Gujarat riots. The allegations were debunked by a special investigation team. He was suspended from service in 2011 and sacked by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2015 for 'unauthorised absence'.

In the custodial death case, the Jamnagar court sentenced the other five policemen -- sub-inspectors Dipak Shah and Sailesh Pandya, and constables Pravinshih Jadeja, Anopsinh Jethva and Keshubha Jadeja -- to two years in prison.

Over 50 lakh vehicles used Atal Setu in seven months



PTI ■ MUMBAI

More than 50 lakh vehicles have used the Atal Setu, the country's longest sea bridge connecting Mumbai with its satellite city Navi Mumbai, since it was opened for traffic over seven months ago, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has said.

In a release issued on Monday, the MMRDA said 50,04,350 vehicles, including Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST), Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport (NMMT) and Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation's (MSRTC) Shivneri buses, have travelled between January 13 and August 26 on the sea bridge, which indicates a

daily average of 22,000 vehicles (over 227 days).

"The vehicles comprise 47.40 lakh cars, 50,020 mini buses and light motor vehicles, 59,799 double-axle vehicles, 73,074 three-axle vehicles, 80,277 four-six axle vehicles and 503 oversized vehicles," a spokesperson said.

The sea bridge - Mumbai Trans Harbour link (MTHL) - officially named Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu linking Sewri in Mumbai and Nhava Sheva in Navi Mumbai, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 12, while it was thrown open to the public the next day.

"The extraordinary usage highlights the bridge's role in easing congestion and reducing travel time between south Mumbai and key destinations such as Panvel,

Pune, and Navi Mumbai. Atal Setu's impact extends beyond mere traffic management. It has significantly improved connectivity between south Mumbai and other major regions, including the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport," the release said.

"The Worli-Sewri elevated road, now 75 per cent complete, will soon provide a rapid 5-10 minute connectivity from Worli Seaface to Atal Setu. The development of an elevated road between the Chirle Interchange and the Mumbai-Pune Expressway promises even faster commutes between South Mumbai, the western suburbs, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Pune, and the Mumbai-Goa Highway," it added.

Effective governance key to achieving our developmental goals: Siddaramaiah

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said that effective governance is key to achieving the state's developmental goals and that the government is investing in technology and innovative solutions to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the administrative processes.

Addressing a meeting with NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Suman Bery here, the chief minister said that sustainability is at the core of the state government's development strategy. "We are committed to environmental conservation and are implementing policies aimed at reducing our carbon footprint. For example, Karnataka is a leader in renewable energy; 53 per cent of our installed capacity of 32 Giga Wats comes from renewable energy sources. Our efforts also include protecting natural resources and encouraging sustainable



agricultural practices. We recognise that environmental stewardship is essential for long-term prosperity and quality of life," he said. The chief minister said the state government is investing in technology and innovative solutions to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in administrative processes. "For example we have a strong set of e-Governance solutions. Using these we were able to roll out the five guarantees in a record time of less than three months. Using our DBT module, we are transferring over Rs 54,000 crore to the beneficiaries directly into their bank accounts," he said.

Siddaramaiah further said that by adopting e-governance tools and fostering a culture of responsiveness, the government aims to improve service delivery and citizen engagement. "Our partnership with NITI Aayog has been instrumental in shaping our development strategies. We appreciate the guidance and support provided and are keen to continue collaborating on various Initiatives. We believe that through shared knowledge, resources, and expertise, we can address the challenges we face and unlock new opportunities for growth," he said.

He emphasised on the state's dedication to contributing to the collective vision of a progressive and prosperous India. "We are committed to working together with all stakeholders to achieve our common goals and make a positive impact on the lives of our citizens," he added.

Goa Govt mulls hike in fine up to ₹1 crore for illegal hill-cutting: Min

PTI ■ PANAJI

The Goa government did not grant permission to anyone for hill cutting in the state in the last six months and it plans to amend regulations to raise up to Rs 1 crore the amount of fine for illegal hill cutting and other such activities, a minister has said.

Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister Vishwajit Rane issued the statement on Monday amid apprehensions that his department was allowing rampant cutting of hills in the eco-sensitive areas like slopes.

"In the last six months, no permission was granted to anyone for hill cutting in the state," he said. The TCP Department is moving to amend regulations so that the minimum fine for such violations, such as hill cutting and other illegal activities, will range from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1 crore, depending on the size of the plot, he said. As directed by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant recently in a

press conference, local officials, like deputy collector, mamlatdar and talathis must take action against such illegal activities, Rane said. The Goa government has pulled up its sleeves in the wake of devastating landslides in Kerala's Wayanad district. In the future, new guidelines will be formulated, including requirement for soil stabilization reports from engineers, he added.

While the TCP department has not granted any fresh permission for hill cutting, it is also the responsibility of other departments to act for prevention of illegal hill cutting. The minister, who recently drew flak after a real estate giant constructed buildings on a slope of a hill in Reis Magos village near Panaji, claimed that permission for that was not granted by him. "Regarding the case of Reis Magos, the project's conversion 'sanad' was obtained in 1994 and the change of zone was done in Regional Plan 2001.

Court convicts man for outraging woman's modesty by winking at her

PTI ■ IMPHAL

A court here has convicted a 22-year-old man for outraging the modesty of a woman by winking at her and holding her hand but refused to impose any sentence on him considering his age and the fact that he has no criminal antecedents.

Magistrate Aarti Kulkarni observed that while the offence committed by the accused, Mohammed Kaif Fakir, deserves a sentence not less than life imprisonment, considering his age and the fact that he has no criminal antecedents, he should be given the benefit of probation.

The order was passed on August 22. The court said it couldn't ignore the mental agony and harassment the woman underwent, but imposing a sentence on the accused would affect his future and his image in society. The court convicted Fakir under section 354 (outraging the modesty of a woman) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The court ordered that Fakir be released after furnishing a



bond of Rs 15,000 and directed him to appear before the probation officer as and when called. As per the complaint lodged at Byculla police station in south Mumbai in April 2022, the woman had ordered groceries from a local shop, and the accused, who worked at the establishment, came to her house to deliver the same. The accused asked the woman for a glass of water, and when she was handing it over, he allegedly touched her hand inappropriately and winked at her. He touched her hand the second time while handing over the bag of groceries and

again winked at her, she alleged. When the woman raised an alarm, the accused ran away. The woman then told her husband about the incident, and they lodged a police complaint. The accused claimed that he had touched the woman's hand by mistake and had no intention to outrage her modesty. The court held that although only the victim and the accused were present at the time of the incident, the evidence and the woman's statement were strong enough to prove the accused's complicity.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Step in the right direction

Modi Govt launches assured pension scheme for Central Govt Employees, amid concerns of financial implications

The Modi Government has announced the fixed pension scheme for the central government employees. This must be music to the ears of central employees who were not happy with the ongoing market-linked pension scheme and were demanding its scrapping. In a significant policy shift, the Indian government has approved a new pension scheme guaranteeing central government employees 50% of their base salary as a pension. This move marks a departure from the current National Pension Scheme (NPS), which links payouts to market returns. The newly introduced Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) is set to be implemented from April 1, 2025, and will impact over two million federal employees. The shift towards the UPS stems from growing dissatisfaction with the NPS, which was adopted in 2004 as part of a broader fiscal reform. Under the NPS, employees contribute 10% of their base salary, and the government adds 14%, with the eventual pension amount depending on the market returns from investments, primarily in federal debt. However, as some states began reverting to the older, more fiscally burdensome system of guaranteed pensions, the Modi government faced mounting pressure to reassess the NPS.



The decision to approve the UPS aligns with demands from trade unions and the Opposition parties, who have long advocated for a guaranteed minimum pension. The issue gained political traction during recent general elections, where the lack of pension security under the NPS became a contentious topic. The UPS guarantees that employees who have completed at least 25 years of service will receive 50% of their base salary, calculated over the last 12 months before retirement, as a pension. This assured payout provides a safety for retirees, addressing concerns about the volatility of market-linked pensions. While the UPS offers greater security for employees, it also imposes a significant financial burden on the government. The expected cost to the exchequer for the fiscal year 2024-25 is approximately Rs 62.5 billion. This annual expenditure is likely to fluctuate based on the number of employees retiring each year. However, the shift to the UPS raises several concerns. First, the financial sustainability of the scheme is a critical issue. The guaranteed nature of the pension could strain government finances, especially if economic growth slows or tax revenues decline. Additionally, the UPS may lead to disparities between central and state government employees. Moreover, there is a risk that the shift back to a defined benefit pension system could set a precedent for other sectors, potentially leading to broader demands for similar guarantees. This could exacerbate fiscal challenges, particularly in a country where social welfare spending is already under pressure. As India prepares to implement the UPS in 2025, careful management and ongoing evaluation will be essential to ensure that the benefits of the scheme are balanced against its fiscal impact.

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A painter gives final touches to the Goddess Durga's idol ahead of Durga pooja, in Kolkata. PTI

The risk of monetising public education

Commercialisation of these institutions undermines their core mission which is to provide inclusive, affordable high-quality education to all

The Vice-Chancellor of JNU, Prof. C Santhoshree D Pandit recently remarked that the country's top university is facing a financial crunch with little regular income generated from its resources. The VC has decided to repurpose the university's properties with private participation. This culture of looking at public academic institutions as a source of revenue has been rhyming among our policymakers during the past several years. One reason is the huge prime land area holding maintained by the public sector institutions and another is the change in the societal perception. Today's society evaluates everything based on money. The primary objective of public sector academic institutions is to offer an inclusive and excellent education to all sections of the population. Central to these institutions is the concept of education as a public good—a valuable asset that has advantages for society as a whole, rather than solely for individuals. Education, in this view, is not simply a product that can be purchased and



sold, but rather a profound process that moulds individuals into knowledgeable, reflective members of society who are capable of making meaningful contributions to the collective welfare. Their value should be assessed based on the number of enlightened minds generated by these institutions. As we can see it's these enlightened minds who are driving the wheel of the government machinery, and the nation's progress. Public sector academic institutions have been under growing pressure in recent decades to implement business-oriented strategies, which include prioritising income creation. The transition has been prompted by several circumstances, such as decreases in government financing, increasing operational expenses, and the expanding

impact of market ideology in public policy. Consequently, numerous public universities and colleges have resorted to alternate sources of income, such as raising tuition fees, extending online programs, providing executive education courses, renting out spaces and forming alliances with private industry. Private parties, if allowed to rent out spaces, should work closely with the academic and research community of the university. It should also help in imparting knowledge and transformation to students. In many NITs, the guest house rate has been increased tenfold, as mandated by the policymakers. Unfortunately, people who visit these institutions including academicians and parents of students have to pay more than what is the market rate in that area. Although these initiatives can offer significant financial support, they also pose a potential threat of altering the core purpose of public sector institutions. It can be detrimental to maintaining high academic standards and fostering a wide range of intellectual perspectives.

Additionally, it can generate pressures to give higher priority to programs and research areas that provide greater profits, perhaps overlooking subjects that are less financially rewarding but equally crucial for societal progress. It is vital to provide students with a well-rounded education that encourages critical thinking and broad-based knowledge. Public sector academic institutions hold a distinct and crucial role in maintaining the social fabric of the nation. Their objective is not to earn financial gain but rather to generate enlightened minds capable of critical thinking, and contribute to the development of the nation. The great minds working in every field, including the bureaucrats and political leaders are groomed by these public sector institutions. For this to continue, we should not put a price tag on every facility a public sector university offers to the student or society at large. (The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

A new standard for global populism

Kamala prioritises the everyday citizen over corporate interests and her message is getting traction not only in the US but across the globe



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The global economic landscape could shift dramatically if the US Democratic Party's presidential nominee, Kamala Harris, succeeds in implementing her bold stance on prices and corporate control. This move could send shockwaves across the world, compelling nations like India to reconsider their current economic models—just as they did during the liberalization era when corporate power surged. It appears the tide is turning, as people worldwide demand freedom from the manipulative tactics that drive up prices. Harris's message is clear: Americans can no longer tolerate skyrocketing costs. Her aggressive, populist economic agenda aims to rein in corporate power and lower the cost of living, potentially setting a new standard for global economic policies. A 74-year-old Indian blogger after a lavish Indian corporate marriage in July blurted out on X-twitter, "In my 74 years, I have not seen, or even heard of, a more tasteless, egotistical or pretentious wedding than the recent, 24X7 televised extravaganza. The perversity and its real portent lie elsewhere. "It lies in the way money was expended, at a time when the average Indian has never been worse off economically, when inequality and unemployment have reached record heights, when 67 percent of the GST is paid by 50 percent of its poorest citizens, when the top 1 percent control 40 percent of the country's wealth, when 800 million people have to be provided free/ subsidized foodgrains to survive". Not much different is the weekend speech of Harris. She says, "We know that many Americans don't yet feel that progress in their lives. Costs are still too high and it feels too hard to get ahead." No wonder Republican nominee Donald Trump calls her too liberal. It seems so similar to the echoes of severe price rises and joblessness during the June Lok Sabha elections in India amid rows of mutton, muslim, mandir and mujra, mehngai and berojgari. Yes, Indians and Americans need food, a minimum quality of



life and freedom from organised oppression. Indians are certainly more concerned because with whatever rank in the world economy, it is nowhere near the US. If the American economy is not in good shape, Indians can at best be convalescing, post-COVID-19. But the stranglehold of the honchos in India is more gripping than in the US, which has strong anti-trust laws despite the protests from the big. Indian policies suit the big shops more with quite a few trillions being waved off in taxes and other benefits, including tailoring national and stock market policies. Harris instead, despite being the Vice President of the USA, empathising with the American people, says, "The bills add up. Food, rent, gas, back-to-school clothes, prescription medication. After that, for many families, there's not much left at the end of the month. As president, I will take on the high costs that matter most to most Americans." Those words any Indian voter would love to hear from their leaders. It follows a dozen proposals for improving the lives of Americans. Some like 3 million new housing units to the people seemingly have been picked up from Indian political party manifestos. Like India's PM Avas, she proposes to provide up to \$25,000 in down payment support for a million first-time home buyers.



AMERICANS CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE SKYROCKETING COSTS. HER AGGRESSIVE, POPULIST ECONOMIC AGENDA AIMS TO REIN IN CORPORATE POWER AND LOWER THE COST OF LIVING, POTENTIALLY SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC POLICIES

ers. An addition is tax incentives for builders, who build affordable rental housing. It could be a welcome scenario for most Indians. As now being debated in India on capital gains tax indexation or also rentals, Harris is keen on preventing corporate landlords from using algorithmic price-setting tools to increase rents by large margins. It is gradually becoming a problem in areas in the national capital regions of Noida, Gurgaon, Delhi's Dwarka, Bengaluru, and Chennai. India has just started feeling it. Medical costs and health insurance fraud are the worst in the US. Many Indian companies now have emulated it. Medical expenses are increasing in India and the US. Both countries are discussing it intensely and often end up saying the United Kingdom has the best medical facilities. Harris promises to eliminate medical debt for millions of Americans, possibly by using federal funds to buy and forgive outstanding debt from health providers. She wants to limit Americans' annual out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs to \$2,000. Thousands of kilometres apart the conditions are so similar! The one difference is that India wants to repeat the US insurance follies and they are trying to change it. Though in some cases like PM

JanAushadhi, India is doing better in providing generic medicines at low prices. Harris does not have that option and says would cap the out-of-pocket cost of insulin at \$35 per month for all. As direct benefit pensions are given to kisans in India, Harris would give a child tax credit that would provide \$6,000 per child to families for the first year of a baby's life. Indian budgetary novelties introduced as direct benefits or pensions in various ways have fascinated Harris. Each of Harris's proposals, whether in terms of food, medicine, housing or child care is "populist", involving government intervention against corporate interests on behalf of consumers. Socialism, direct or indirect, despite big companies ruling the roost, is returning to world politics. What Harris does may just create a flutter, but countries like India, who claim to be the next global leaders, have to tread more cautiously to safeguard the poor, farmers and the working class. Harris has borrowed quite a few of it from the Indian budget. Now it is India's turn to ensure how it could check the corporates to serve people's interests. The world is changing and India's populism is winning big one's heart. (The author is a freelance writer and columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CELEBRATING KRISHNA'S BIRTH

Madam — Krishna Janmashtami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, is a joyous celebration that embodies the triumph of love and divine joy over evil and negativity. This auspicious occasion marks the arrival of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu, who brought hope and redemption to a world plagued by darkness and despair. As devotees around the world honor Krishna's birth, they are reminded of his profound teachings in the Bhagavad Gita, which emphasize the importance of spiritual growth, self-realization, and the eternal victory of good over evil. Through vibrant festivities, soulful bhajans, and heartfelt pujas, Krishna Janmashtami celebrates the unconditional love and divine joy that Krishna embodies, inspiring devotees to embrace their own spiritual journey and revel in the bliss of the divine.

Purva Pandya | Ujjain

STALIN'S NEW MOVE

Madam — As against the Sanatana Dharma before the Lok Sabha elections, the DMK has changed its stand now by a mix in the Dravidian model by supporting the individual's faith of choice and wanting to help them in their religious pursuits. By inaugurating the two day Global Muthamizhil Murugan Conference, the Chief Minister of TN M K Stalin is bringing in a new colour other than black and red as he's well aware that this will help him in the forthcoming assembly elections to woo the votes of the Hindus by using the Murugan card to play to DMK's advantage. We welcome this change and are happy if something good for the people happens from the leadership of M K Stalin whom I respect for his flexibility of principle if he finds something worth it. One hopes Stalin's new found alliance with the Lord Murugan may bestow the blessings for the people for the prosperity of the state. A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Unified pension scheme launched



This refers to the news report, "Unprecedented Unified Pension Scheme by Modi Government" (August 25). Though driven by the huge political pressure after jolts in recently held Lok Sabha polls, the NDA Government's decision to roll out a new guaranteed Unified Pension Scheme for its employees is a step in right direction. In fact, pension is a social welfare measure which is granted to ensure that a retired employee lives with dignity in his

old age. Reversing its 21 year old pension reforms partially, the Government has introduced OPS features like assured pensions, inflation-linked adjustments, family pensions, and a guaranteed minimum pension in the UPS. Employees are still required to contribute 10% of their basic pay and dearness allowance to UPS remains only major difference between the OPS and the UPS. The government will also contribute to the UPS, which will increase from 14% (currently contributed to NPS) to 18.5%. Thus, the UPS will lead to higher burden on the exchequer. Thus, it remains to be seen whether state governments adopt the UPS, which certainly would not augur well for their financial health. Manoj Parashar | Ghaziabad

PM MODI BROKERS PEACE

Madam — Modi's visit to Kyiv will strengthen India-Ukraine bilateral relationship. Like with Russia in March 24 Modi is likely to have had the message of peace with Zelenskyy about ending the war and restoring peace. The catch is both Russia and Ukraine are not keen in fighting any further but both wanting to end the war on their own terms. Kyiv does not want to compromise on its sovereignty and territorial integrity which could lead to an instability and even a revolution in Ukraine. Kyiv wants to retrieve all the Ukrainian territory occupied by Russia something that Russia is unwilling to do. The US and NATO have rejected Russia's demand to end the war. Under this situation it is extremely unlikely that a peace can be brokered by PM Modi as an one off attempt. Unlike other leaders of the world PM Modi enjoys a special relationship with Putin who in his words has called Modi as his best friend. India also in none of the resolu-

tions passed by the UN has gone against Moscow. While on the same lines has been maintaining good equation with Zelenskyy (post his ire after having a hug with Putin in March 24) through telephone calls and the sidelines meetings in summits. With Modi's Aug 23 personal visit and signing of the trade agreements and India's commitment to be on the side of the PEACE and just a not a neutral country one can expect PM Modi will make attempts for a peace talk between the two warring leaders. Besides, PM Modi's initiative also takes care of the growing Chinese influence in the region and places India at par with it if not above, India must be more proactive in the region to safeguard its own interests. With US already started feeling the heat of recession and a leadership change in the offing one can see the light at the end of the tunnel! Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

LIVE IN THE PRESENT

MOMENT, IT MATTERS MOST

One needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, and remaining calm, whatever the circumstance



RAVI VALLURI

The romance was in the air as India attained freedom from the British yoke. The period was the 1950s as India embarked upon the socialistic pattern to revive the country, which had inherited an impecunious economy. Two bright students from coastal Andhra landed in rain-washed Delhi University to pursue their dreams. To remain connected with their past, they made recurrent trips to the New Delhi Railway Station to receive students arriving in droves from their state and revive those nostalgic moments. When it is repetitively said, "Those good old days!", in one stroke we send a signal to our Universe that the present is not congenial. As Buddha says, "The mind is everything. What you think you become." If we live in the past, we keep fretting and fuming about the missed opportunities and those past impressions create roadblocks in our physical and metaphysical advancement.

On completion of their studies, the more aspiring students stayed back and the less enterprising ones returned home. The person in Delhi aspired to be a civil servant like his more illustrious siblings and their children. But destiny had carved out its plan. His friends and acquaintances qualified for the coveted job, a sinecure that eluded him. So, the mind became envious of his siblings, their children and friends and started implanting his failed mission upon his children, much to their discomfort. How does one reach that state of 'present moment'? Before dwelling on some techniques, it will be useful to read a fas-



cinating Buddhist parable. One afternoon a Buddhist monk was carrying a bucket filled with water in a dense forest. Suddenly he heard a rustle. It was a tiger, smacking its lips and intently looking at the potential prey. The monk ran for his life, with the tiger in pursuit. The monk reached a precipice and had a choice to make, either be devoured by the ferocious tiger or jump off the cliff. Death stared in his face. The monk jumped and fortuitously clung onto a branch of a strawberry tree. He ate the strawberry—considering it to be his last meal—and thoroughly relished it. The monk had never had such a meal, as was absolutely in the present moment. A simple yet profound technique of sadhana is to be a witness to all the actions and activities that take place. The actor in us becomes the spectator too. This is what is espoused in the esoteric philosophy of Ashtavakra Gita (a classic dialogue between King Janaka—who himself was a Raj Rishi—and the sage Ashtavakra).

Any individual, householder or seeker needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, equilibrium, and equipoise to remain calm, whatever the circumstance or situation, to be contented and remain in the present moment. The protagonist who stayed back in Delhi could fulfil his dreams only partially. His son did qualify for the civil services, but could not join the service of his choice; this was due to excessive pressure applied by family members already in the elite services. Eventually, the son turned into an alcoholic. Perhaps it was because both father and son were not grateful to the Universe and did not adhere to the Law of Gratefulness.

Thus, lives were ruined. Meanwhile, the friend who returned home did not lose his way in the sands of time. He became a trade union leader and politician, living in the present. "Life is one big road with lots of signs. So, when you are riding through the ruts, do not complicate your mind. Flee from hate, mischief, and jealousy," sang Bob Marley.

(The writer is a faculty at Art of Living, views expressed are personal)

Catalyst for cinematic evolution and excellence



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

The 70th National Film Awards once again celebrated the rich tapestry of Indian cinema, where diverse languages and cultures converged to showcase the best talent

The National Film Awards: A Platform for The Great Leap Forward. At the 70th National Film Awards, India's cinematic excellence once again took centre stage, showcasing vibrant and diverse storytelling from across the nation's many languages. Southern cinema emerged as a dominant force this year, with films and artists from the region sweeping some of the most prestigious honours. The Malayalam film 'Aattam' captured the Swarna Kamal for Best Feature Film, while the Kannada blockbuster 'Kantara' clinched the title of Best Popular Film.

Rishab Shetty, the driving force behind 'Kantara', took home the Best Actor award, sharing the limelight with Nithya Menon and Manasi Parekh, who shared Best Actresses for the Tamil film 'Thiruchitrambalam' and Gujarati film 'Kutch Express' respectively. Meanwhile, the Haryana film 'Fouja' gathered acclaim, earning Pramod Kumar the award for Best Debut Director, while Pavan Raj Malhotra secured Best Supporting Actor. The epic Tamil drama 'Ponniyin Selvan: I' also made its mark, with AR Rahman's power-packed music earning him the Best Music Director (Background Music) award, alongside wins for Best Sound Design by Anand Krishnamoorthi and Best Cinematography by Ravi Varman. In the Hindi cinema category, 'Gulmohar' emerged as the Best Hindi Film, adding another feather to Sharmila Tagore's illustrious cap with her third National Film Award.

This year's awards not only celebrated individual excellence but also highlighted the ever-evolving and dynamic landscape of Indian cinema. The lifeline and longevity of any artist and any film is fuelled by the adrenaline of 4A's "Acknowledgment, Awards, Appreciation, and Applause". Globally, awards are given for excellence in the celluloid space which has opened a new phase of creativity, innovation perspective perspective-building through storytelling and film narration. Since its inception in 1954, the National Film Awards for Excellence in Cinema have symbolised the journey of excellence and creativity. The awards have offered an equal platform to cinemas of various languages, cultures, diversities, themes, and perspectives, where all the creative energies of India converge to speak the unified language of artistic excellence. These awards in the last seventy-odd years have showcased the gold standard of filmmaking across different verticals reinventing and shaping the diverse landscape of cinema in this country.

Each edition of the National Film Awards has strengthened inclusivity and converged the diversity of celluloid space seamlessly. The National Film Awards are unique in terms of their magnitude, canvas, and spectrum. Every award ceremony has been an opportunity to witness the emergence of different forms and categories of cinema that reflect continuity and legacy. The landscape of the National Film Awards is deep and insightful, promoting diversity, storytelling, and narration.

It has truly elevated parallel, regional, and experimental cinema; voiced social concerns; and embraced and adapted to contemporary standards, content, and style



THIS YEAR'S AWARDS NOT ONLY CELEBRATED INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE BUT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE EVER-EVOLVING AND DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE OF INDIAN CINEMA

of presentation. Over the years, Indian cinema has witnessed a remarkable evolution, with regional films gaining recognition for their artistic brilliance. It all began in 1954, as the film "Mirza Ghalib" made history as the first recipient of the Best Feature Film award.

This milestone paved the way for a treasure trove of cinematic gems from various regions. Bengali cinema, in particular, has been a shining beacon, with timeless classics like Satyajit Ray's "Pathar Panchali", "Apur Sansar", and "Charulata" earning the prestigious Swarna Kamal. The legendary Soumitra Chatterjee a revered Bengali actor has been lauded for his performances in classics like "Apur Sansar" and "Charulata," earning him National Film Awards for his works.

The spotlight has also turned to Southern cinema, which has produced its own set of trailblazers. In 1965, the Malayalam masterpiece "Chemmeen" captivated audiences and critics alike, winning the Best Feature Film award. Kannada cinema made a powerful statement with "Chomana Dudi" in 1976, sweeping the National Awards for Best Feature Film, Best Actor, and Best Story. Tamil cinema joined this illustrious list in 1990 when Marrupakkam became the first Tamil film to clinch the Best Feature Film award.

The northeastern region of India has also produced its share of winners at the National Film Awards, bringing regional tales to the national stage. "Halodhia Chorai Baodhan Khai", the first Assamese film to win the Swarna Kamal for the Best Feature Film in 1987. Rima Das, a director has been recognized for her movies "Village Rockstars" and "Bulbul Can Sing," which capture the essence of life in Assam by portraying simplicity and resilience. At the 60th National Film Awards, Jahnur Barua's Assamese film "Baandhon" won

the Best Feature Film in the category while "Ko;Yad", a Missing film won the Best Feature Film in the non-Eighth Schedule language category. At the 62nd National Film Awards the movie "Phum Shang", from Manipur was honoured with the Best Investigative Film award showcasing the contributions of filmmakers from North East India.

Such examples also prove that the National Film Awards serve as a crucible for bringing together a convergence of ideas, creativity, and talent. They offer hope that creativity knows no barriers in India, allowing unknown filmmakers and names to become stars. One of the most coveted awards of the National Film Awards is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema honouring the artists' lifetime achievement. Named after Shri Dadasaheb Phalke, the visionary often hailed as the father of Indian cinema, this award is a tribute to those whose contributions have indelibly shaped the landscape of Indian filmmaking.

This award was introduced in 1969 and was presented to Devika Rani. Since then this distinguished honour has been awarded to Waheeda Rehman, Satyajit Ray, B.N. Reddy, L.V. Prasad, Bhupen Hazarika, Sivaji Ganesan, B.R. Chopra, Soumitra Chatterjee, Lata Mangeshkar, Raj Kapoor, Shyam Benegal, Amitabh Bachchan and Rajnikant are some of the renowned names who have been recognized for their lasting impact and their outstanding contribution to cinema. The National Film Awards also spotlight the significance of non-feature films by inspiring emerging directors to experiment and push boundaries.

This platform has nurtured talent, with acclaimed works like "Ek Tha Gaon" and "An engineered Dream", the Marathi film "Girni" and the Bengali film "Aamaar Katha: Story of Binodini" winners at the 52nd and the 62nd

National Film Awards. These awards bring attention to themes and innovative storytelling approaches demonstrating that Indian cinema thrives on creativity and embraces diversity beyond commercial considerations. The non-feature segment of awards over the years has acted as a catalyst for young film-makers who have unleashed their creativity across diverse subjects and narratives. This segment has showcased a unique simplicity, aesthetics and deep understanding of filmmaking and creativity. The recent changes to the regulations for the 70th National Film Awards demonstrate an evident wave of evolution. Changes like renaming awards and merging categories reflect an approach to acknowledging excellence in filmmaking.

The National Film Awards of India have witnessed several historic moments that have not only enhanced the country's cinematic excellence but also served as a stepping stone to celluloid success and international acclaim. One such landmark was the recognition of Satyajit Ray's "Pathar Panchali" in 1956, which won the Best Feature Film award and subsequently brought Indian cinema to global attention. Another significant milestone was Aamir Khan's "Lagaan" in 2001, which not only won the National Film Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment but also earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. The National Film Awards have played an instrumental role in shaping the course of Indian cinema. By celebrating a variety of perspectives and pushing boundaries the awards not only recognize exceptional achievements but also inspire upcoming filmmakers and artists.

(The writer is former additional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI; views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

How personalised and adaptive technologies are shaping the future of education

The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change

The education system is witnessing a revolutionary shift, one that promises to reshape how we learn, grow, and succeed. At the core of this transformation lies advanced personalized and adaptive learning - a groundbreaking approach set to redefine the educational landscape.

With the global adaptive learning market projected to reach \$5.3 billion by 2025 and the personalized learning market expected to soar to \$19.86 billion by 2030, it's clear that these technologies are more than just a passing trend. **Unpacking Personalized and Adaptive Learning** Personalized learning crafts educational experiences that resonate with each student's



VEDANT HAMIRWASIA

unique needs, skills, and interests. It's about creating learning journeys that allow individuals to flourish in their way. Adaptive learning takes this concept further, using AI to adjust content difficulty and style in real time based on student performance. It's like having a high-tech tutor that ensures learning is always challenging but never overwhelming.

The Power of Data-Driven Insights: One of the most exciting aspects of these systems is their ability to harness data for good. Through sophisticated learning analytics, educators gain unprecedented insights into each student's progress. This foresight allows for timely interventions, ensuring no student falls behind. Predictive analytics even allows these systems to anticipate which students might struggle, enabling proactive support measures.

Customized Learning Paths: Gone are the days of one-size-fits-all education. Advanced personalized learning creates individual learning plans that adapt to each student's unique learning style.

Whether you're a visual learner who thrives on interactive simulations or prefer diving deep into text-based explanations, these systems have you covered. The flexibility extends to pacing as well, allowing students to linger on challenging concepts or race ahead in areas they excel.

Engagement, the Secret Sauce of Success: Engagement is crucial for effective learning, and these technologies serve it up in spades. Interactive content, gamification elements, and multimedia experiences make learning feel less like a chore and more like an adventure.

By catering to diverse learning preferences, these systems ensure that every student finds their groove and stays motivated.



Levelling the Playing Field: Perhaps one of the most profound impacts of these technologies is their potential to promote equity in education. Assistive features embedded within these systems support students with disabilities, offering tools like

text-to-speech and customized interfaces. This push for inclusivity ensures that quality, personalized education is accessible to all, regardless of individual challenges.

The Benefits and Challenges Ahead: The benefits of advanced personalized and adaptive learning are clear and compelling. Studies consistently show improved learning outcomes, increased student engagement, and the potential to bridge achievement gaps.

However, it's important to acknowledge the challenges that come with this educational revolution. Privacy concerns surrounding student data and the persistent digital divide are hurdles

that must be addressed thoughtfully. Embracing the Future of Education The educational landscape is evolving rapidly, propelled by the transformative potential of advanced personalized and adaptive learning. By embracing these technologies thoughtfully and addressing the challenges head-on, we can create an educational landscape where every student has the opportunity to thrive, learn, and reach their full potential. The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change and unlock the potential of every learner.

(The author is director, ODA Class; views are personal)

Khamenei open to America over nuclear talks

AP ■ DUBAI

Iran's supreme leader opened the door Tuesday to renewed negotiations with the United States over his country's rapidly advancing nuclear program, telling its civilian government there was "no barrier" to engaging with its "enemy." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks set clear red lines for any talks taking place under the government of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian and renewed his warnings that Washington wasn't to be trusted.



"We have long said that we ultimately view diplomacy as the best way to achieve an effective, sustainable solution with regard to Iran's nuclear program," it said. "However, we are far away from anything like that right now given Iran's escalations across the board, including its nuclear escalations and its failure to cooperate" with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations nuclear watchdog. "If Iran wants to demonstrate seriousness or a new approach, they should stop nuclear escalations and start meaningfully cooperating with the IAEA," it said. Since the deal's collapse, Iran has abandoned all limits that the deal put on its program, and enriches uranium to up to 60 per cent purity — near weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent. Surveillance cameras installed by the IAEA have been disrupted, while Iran has barred some of the Vienna-based agency's most experienced inspectors. Iranian officials also have increasingly threatened that they could pursue atomic weapons. Meanwhile, tensions between Iran and Israel have hit a new high during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. Tehran launched an unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel in April after years of a shadow war between the two countries reached a climax with Israel's apparent attack on an Iranian consular building in Syria that killed two Iranian generals and others.

'US, China aim to avoid conflict in Beijing talks'

AP ■ BEIJING

The United States and China are working to ensure the competition between them does not veer into conflict, a top White House official said Tuesday as the two sides started talks on a relationship that has been severely tested during President Joe Biden's term in office. Jake Sullivan, the US national security adviser, is meeting over two days with Wang Yi, a senior foreign policy official for Chinese leader Xi Jinping, in a scenic lake area on the northern outskirts of Beijing. "President Biden has been very clear in his conversations with President Xi that he is

committed to managing this important relationship responsibly," Sullivan said in brief remarks to media before the talks began. The goal of his visit, which lasts through Thursday, is limited — to try to maintain communication in a relationship that broke down for the better part of a year in 2022-23 and was only nursed back over several months. No major announcements are expected, though Sullivan's meetings could lay the groundwork for a possible final summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping before Biden steps down in January. Wang, the director of the Communist Party's Central Foreign Affairs Commission

Office, noted that the China-US relationship has gone through twists and turns in past few years. "The key," he said, "is to keep to the overall direction of mutual respect, peaceful co-existence, and win-win cooperation." According to Da Wei, a US and international relations expert at Tsinghua University in Beijing, it's important for the two countries to avoid any crisis in the remaining months of the Biden administration, as it could set the tone for US-China ties under the next one. The goal of this visit is not reaching new breakthroughs or progress but to continue the stable momentum of China-

US relations in the past year through strategic communication, and to avoid new crises in the next few months," he said. The Biden administration has taken a tough line on China, viewing it as a strategic competitor, restricting the access of its companies to advanced technology and confronting the rising power as it seeks to exert influence over Taiwan and the South China Sea. Already frosty relations went into a deep freeze after then-Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, a senior US lawmaker, visited Taiwan in August 2022. Hopes of restoring ties were dashed the following February when a suspected Chinese spy balloon

drifted across the US before being shot down by the US military. Sullivan has been Biden's point person for often unannounced talks with Wang, who is the foreign minister as well as the ruling Communist Party's top foreign policy official. Wang had initially stepped down as foreign minister when he took the party post, a more senior position, but he returned about seven months later, in July 2023, after his successor was removed for reasons that have not been made public. At a meeting between Sullivan and Wang in Vienna in May 2023, the two countries launched a delicate process of putting relations back on track. Since

than, they have met two more times in a third country, Malta and Thailand. This week will mark their first talks in Beijing. China's Foreign Ministry said this week that relations with the US remain at "a critical juncture." It noted that the two sides are talking on climate and other issues, but it accused the US of continuing to constrain and suppress China. Canada announced on Monday that it will match America's 100 per cent import tariff on Chinese-made electric vehicles, after being encouraged to do so by Sullivan during a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Cabinet ministers the previous day.

'Hasina's ouster watershed for student activism'

PTI ■ DHAKA

The recent student movement in Bangladesh, culminating in the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, marks a watershed moment in the nation's political landscape, fuelled by a 70-year legacy of student activism from the 1952 Language Movement to the Liberation War and beyond. Political analysts and observers view the recent student protests, which many in Bangladesh have christened as the "Bangla Spring" — taking a cue from the Arab Spring — or the "Monsoon Revolution," as a watershed moment in Bangladesh's political landscape, driven by the same spirit of activism that has characterised student movements in the country for over 70 years, even before its independence in 1971, when it was known as East Pakistan. The latest movement, which began in July 2024, was sparked by the Court's decision to reinstate a controversial job quota system, a move that reignited long-standing frustrations among students and the general public. The reinstatement of the job quota system, which had been abolished in 2018 due to student protests, sparked widespread demonstrations led by students that ultimately led to the collapse of the government led by long-time prime minister Hasina.

5 more murder cases filed against B'desh ousted PM

Dhaka (PTI): Five more murder cases have been filed against Bangladesh's ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina taking the total number of cases filed against the Awami League leader to 71, a media report said on Tuesday. Four of the new cases were filed in Dhaka and one in Rajshahi against the 76-year-old deposed former prime minister, several former ministers and police officials, The Daily Star newspaper reported. In the first case, Hasina and 48 others were booked for the death of one Dulal alias Selim in the city's Jatrabari area on August 3 during mass protests. The victim's brother Mostafa Kamal filed the case against the Awami League president and others with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saddam



Hossain. Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader, former Awami League lawmakers Shamim Osman and Ramesh Chandra are among the accused, The Daily Star said. In the second case, Hasina along with 21 others was booked on the charge of killing one Mansur Miah, a machine operator of Buriganga Filling Station at

Basila of Mohammadpur on July 19. In the third case, Hasina and 91 others were sued for the death of one Miraz Hossain at Sanarpar in the city's Demra area on August 5. The victim's brother Khorshed Alam filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Belal Hossain. The fourth case was filed against Hasina and 40 others for the death of 21-year-old Nahidul Islam at Mirpur-10 on July 19. The victim's brother Md Sabuj filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mehedi Hasan. Quader, Asaduzzaman, Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana, son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, Harun Or Rashid and former DMP commissioner are among the accused.

Ex-minister held

Dhaka (PTI): Bangladesh police on Tuesday arrested former junior minister for information and broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat, accused in several cases, including one filed over the killing of a student during the anti-government protests. Police said they arrested Arafat from the upmarket Gulshan area in the national capital. They were preparing to produce Arafat to a court with a petition seeking remand custody. The arrest came amid speculation that he might have left the country during or after the ouster of the Awami League regime on August 5 in a student-people mass upsurge as he was active on social media while other ministers or party leaders were unseen in the public domain. Two weeks ago, Bangladesh Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) ordered banks to freeze the

accounts of Arafat and his wife. Arafat was arrested a day after left-leaning Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JASOD) president Hasanul Haque Inu was detained from a relative's house in Dhaka while police sought a court order for him to be placed under a 10-day remand for questioning in a murder charge. JASOD was one of the key allies of the past government, with the Workers Party of Rashed Khan Menon being another. Menon was also arrested in a case and was placed on a five-day police remand by a Dhaka court. Former law minister Anisul Huq and entrepreneur's private sector affairs adviser and business tycoon Salman F Rahman were the first who were arrested from Dhaka's main river port Sadarghat terminal area as they were allegedly trying to leave Dhaka on a boat in disguise.

Starmer warns of 'painful' budget ahead in speech

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Tuesday gave the first indication of some tough tax measures in store in the October budget in the first keynote address of his premiership since taking charge at 10 Downing Street last month. In a planned speech at the Rose Garden before a gathering of apprentices, medics and other professionals, Starmer declared the state of the public finances was left in a much worse condition by the previous Conservative Party regime than the Labour government had expected. He declared that his job was now to fix the foundations which would involve "short-term pain for long-term good" and admitted that "unpopular" decisions would have to be made. "There is a Budget coming in October and it is going to be painful. We have no other choice given the situation that

we are in," said Starmer. "I promised that this government would serve people like you — apprentices, teachers, nurses, small business owners, firefighters, those serving our community and our country every day," he said, with reference to the Downing Street gathering. The keynote, timed a week before Parliament resumes after its summer recess next week, was designed to assert that "it won't be business as usual because we can't go on like this any more." "Things will have to be done differently. We will do the hard work to root out 14 years of rot, reverse a decade of decline and fix the foundations. Between now and Christmas, we will carry on as we started: action not words. We will introduce legislation and take decisions to protect taxpayers' money," said Starmer. Referencing the recent far-right riots across different parts of the UK, the former barrister and chief prosecutor said the

violent clashes didn't just "betray the sickness" left in the wake of the former government's "cynical conflict of populism" but also revealed that the cure was to be found in the "coming together of a country." "When, after the hard work of clearing up the mess is done, we have a country that we have built together, built to last, that belongs to every single one of us... This is our country. Let's fix it — together," he noted. Addressing media queries after the speech, Starmer reiterated that the tough economic decisions ahead were down to a GBP 22 billion "black hole" left at the end of 14 years of Tories in charge. "We were being honest about the situation before the election, we set out very clearly what we would be doing with tax rises," he said, stressing that his commitment not to put up income tax, National Insurance or VAT "remains the position" and "those with the broadest shoulders should bear the heavier burden."

Israeli military rescues hostage abducted in October Hamas attack

Jerusalem (AP): The Israeli military said Tuesday that it has rescued one of the scores of people abducted in Hamas' October 7 attack, which ignited the ongoing war in Gaza. The military said Qaid Farhan Alkadi was rescued "in a complex operation in the southern Gaza Strip." It did not provide further details. The 52-year-old is from Israel's Arab Bedouin minority and was working as a guard at a packing factory in Kibbutz Magen, one of several farming communities that were attacked on October 7. He has two wives and is the father of 11 children. Israel's Channel 12 showed Alkadi's family members sprinting through the hospital where he was brought after they received the news. Hamas-led militants abducted some 250 people in the October 7 attack, in which some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, who do not say how many were fighters. It has displaced 90 per cent of Gaza's 2.3 million people from their homes and caused heavy destruction across the besieged territory. Hamas is still holding around 110 hostages, about a third of whom are believed to be dead. Most of the rest were released in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel during a cease-fire last November. Israel has rescued a total of eight hostages, including in two operations that killed scores of Palestinians. Hamas says several hostages have been killed in Israeli airstrikes and failed rescue attempts. The United States, Egypt and Qatar have spent months trying to negotiate an agreement in which the remaining hostages would be freed in exchange for a lasting cease-fire.

French judge extends police custody for Telegram CEO

Paris (AP): A French investigative judge extended police custody for the CEO of the popular messaging app Telegram, Pavel Durov, prosecutors said on Tuesday. Durov was detained Saturday at Le Bourget airport as part of a judicial inquiry opened last month involving 12 alleged criminal violations. They include complicity in selling child sexual abuse material and in drug trafficking, fraud, abetting organized crime transactions and refusing to share information or documents with investigators when required by law. A statement from the Paris prosecutor's office said Durov's police custody order was extended on Monday evening for up to 48 hours. After that, authorities must release or charge him, the prosecutor's office said in an earlier statement. Durov is a citizen of Russia, France, the United Arab Emirates and the Caribbean island nation of St Kitts and Nevis.

Turkish-backed authorities arrest Syrian journalist

Idlib (AP): A local journalist in rebel-held northwestern Syria who works with international news agencies was arrested by Turkish-backed authorities, his wife and rights groups said Tuesday. Journalists and activists called Bakr Qassim's arrest part of an ongoing crackdown on them. Local authorities did not immediately comment. Qassim, who has reported and taken photos for French news agency Agence France Presse and Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency, was arrested Monday afternoon in al-Bab city in northern Aleppo province as he and his wife finished work. Britain-based opposition monitor The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said he was dragged and beaten while asking the reason for his arrest. It said he was presented with "a number of charges, including preparing press reports for several parties." His wife, Nabaha Taha, and the opposition monitor said he was held by Turkish-backed authorities in Hawar Kilis village along the border with

Turkey. Local military police held Taha for two hours before she was released following protests from journalists and residents, she said in a video. Taha said Qassim was taken to another location and his current circumstances were unknown. "We call on the local authorities in northern Syria to immediately release our correspondent Bakr Qassim and allow him to resume his work freely," AFP editor-in-chief Sophie Huet said in a statement. Journalists and activists in northwestern Syria said they would stage a protest later Tuesday calling for the release of Qassim and other journalists and activists they say are arbitrarily detained. They also call for the release of activist Karam Kellieh, who was arrested two months ago and whose whereabouts remain unknown. Northwestern Syria is the last rebel bastion in the war-torn country. Idlib province is under al-Qaida-linked Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and northern Aleppo province is under Turkish-backed forces.

WH pressured FB over some COVID-19 content during pandemic: Zuckerberg

Washington (AP): Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg says senior Biden administration officials pressured Facebook to "censor" some COVID-19 content during the pandemic and vowed that the social media giant would push back if it faced such demands again. In a letter to Rep Jim Jordan, the Republican chair of the House Judiciary Committee, Zuckerberg alleges that the officials, including those from the White House, "repeatedly pressured" Facebook for months to take down "certain COVID-19 content including humor and satire." The officials "expressed a lot of frustration" when the company didn't agree, he said in the letter. "I believe the government pressure was wrong and I regret that we were not more outsp-



ken about it," Zuckerberg wrote in the letter dated August 26 and posted on the committee's Facebook page and to its account on X. The letter is the latest repudiation by Zuckerberg of efforts to target misinformation around the coronavirus pandemic during and after the 2020 presidential election, par-

ticularly as allegations have emerged that some posts were deleted or restricted wrongly. "I also think we made some choices that, with the benefit of hindsight and new information, we wouldn't make today," he said, without elaborating. "We're ready to push back if something like this happens again." In response, the White House said in a statement that, "When confronted with a deadly pandemic, this Administration encouraged responsible actions to protect public health and safety. Our position has been clear and consistent: we believe tech companies and other private actors should take into account the effects their actions have on the American people, while making independent choices about the infor-

mation they present." Experts warn this year's US election could be swamped by misinformation on social media with the proliferation of artificial intelligence and other tools to produce false news stories and content that could mislead voters. Facebook in early 2021 appended what Zuckerberg called labels with "credible information" to posts about COVID-19 vaccines. That's after it moved in April 2020 — just as the virus had led to global shutdowns and radical changes in everyday life — to warn users who shared misinformation about COVID-19. Conservatives have long derided Facebook and other major tech companies as favoring liberal priorities and accused them of censorship.

Dam collapse in Sudan kills at least 30

Cairo (AP): The collapse of the Arbaat Dam in Sudan's eastern Red Sea state over the weekend flooded nearby homes and killed at least 30 people following heavy rains, a UN agency said. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said late Monday, citing local officials, that the actual number of fatalities from the collapse on Sunday might be higher. Additionally, about 70 villages around the dam were affected by the flash flooding, including 20 villages that have been destroyed. The Arbaat Dam, which is about 38 kilometers northwest of Port Sudan, was massively damaged because of heavy rains.

US judge pauses Biden's plan on spousal legal status

Houston (PTI): A Texas court has put a temporary pause on President Biden's ambitious plan to fast-track permanent residency for illegal migrants married to American citizens, a move that could hamper the hopes of approximately half a million such spouses, including several thousand Indian-Americans. In June, President Joe Biden issued a massive immigration relief to non-citizens offering a path to citizenship to the non-citizen spouses and children of American nationals. Biden had directed the Department of Homeland Security to take action to ensure that US citizens with non-citizen spouses and children can keep their families together. This new process will help cer-

tain non-citizen spouses and children apply for lawful permanent residence — a status that they are already eligible for — without leaving the country, the White House said. On Monday, US District Judge J Campbell Barker issued the two-week-long administrative stay on the same day the Department of Homeland Security began accepting applications for the so-called Parole in Place programme, which would grant work authorisation, permanent residency and eventually citizenship to spouses and stepchildren of US citizens who have been in the country for at least 10 years. "The claims are substantial and warrant closer consideration than the court has been able to afford to date," Barker wrote in his nine-page

order, which followed a lawsuit filed by 16 Republican-led states arguing that the programme would "incentivise illegal immigration and will irreparably harm" the states, the New York Post reported. The lawsuit, filed on Friday, further contended that the "Biden-Harris Administration — dissatisfied with the system Congress created, and for blatant political purposes — has yet again attempted to create its own immigration system." Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, who noted in the complaint that the Lone Star State has had to pay tens of millions of dollars annually to cover the costs of illegal migrants living in Texas, called the ruling "just the first step" in what may be a lengthy court battle.

Ukraine troops control nearly 500 sq miles of Kursk region

AP ■ KYIV

The chief of Ukraine's army said ON Tuesday that the country's troops control nearly 1,300 square kilometres (500 square miles) of Russia's Kursk region since their surprise incursion three weeks ago. Gen Oleksandr Syrskyi also said that Ukraine has captured 594 Russian prisoners in its operation. "The enemy drags troops from other directions, in such way weakening them. They attempt to create a ring of defence around our offensive group of troops and plan counter-offensive actions," Syrskyi said, commenting on the situation in the Kursk region. The seized territory is roughly the size of Los Angeles. His claim, which could not be independently confirmed, came hours after Ukraine endured a second consecutive barrage of nighttime air and missile attacks from Russia. Five people were reported killed and 16 injured in the attacks, which President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said included 81 drones, as well as cruise and ballistic missiles. He said four people died, but the governor of the Zaporizhzhia region later said a fifth person had died there from burns in the attacks. "We will undoubtedly respond to Russia for this and all other attacks. Crimes against humanity cannot go unpunished," Zelenskyy wrote on X. The Kursk operation, the largest incursion into Russia since World War II, forced some 130,000 residents to evacuate their homes. Russia has sent reinforcements into the region, but it was not clear to what extent these movements might be weakening Russia's position in eastern Ukraine, where it was making slow advances in efforts to gain ground in the Kharkiv region. The Russian Defence Ministry said Tuesday that Ukraine has suffered heavy casualties in Kursk — some 6,600 troops either killed or injured — and that more than 70 tanks have been destroyed along with

5 people killed in missiles and drones strike across Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Nighttime Russian drone and missile attacks struck across Ukraine, killing at least five people on Tuesday, a day after a heavy barrage pounded energy facilities throughout the country. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the attacks included 81 drones, as well as cruise and ballistic missiles and that 16 people were injured. He said four people died, but the governor of the Zaporizhzhia region later said a fifth person had died there from burns in the attacks. "We will undoubtedly respond to Russia for this and all other attacks. Crimes against humanity cannot go unpunished," Zelenskyy wrote on X. In the Kyiv region, which had struggled with blackouts after Monday's onslaught, five air alerts were called during the night. The regional administration said air defenses destroyed all the drones and missiles but that falling debris set off forest fires. After the Monday barrage across Ukraine of more than 100 missiles and a similar number of drones, Prime



Minister Denys Shmyhal said "the energy infrastructure has once again become the target of Russian terrorists" and urged Ukraine's allies to provide it with long-range weapons and permission to use them on targets inside Russia. President Joe Biden called Monday's Russian attack on energy infrastructure "outrageous" and said he had "re-prioritized US air defence exports so they are sent to Ukraine first." He also said the US was "surging energy equipment to Ukraine to repair its systems and strengthen the resilience of Ukraine's energy grid." The Russian Defence Ministry said the attacks used "long-range precision air- and sea-

based weapons and strike drones against critical energy infrastructure facilities that support the operation of Ukraine's military-industrial complex. All designated targets were hit." In Russia, meanwhile, officials reported four Ukrainian missiles were shot down over the Kursk region, where Russian forces are fighting Ukrainian troops that made a surprise incursion this month. The fighting in the region has raised concerns about the nuclear power plant there. International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi arrived inspected the plant on Tuesday, but did not immediately give a public assessment.

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Japan protests after Chinese plane violates its airspace

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan's top government spokesperson said on Tuesday a Chinese military aircraft had briefly entered Japanese airspace the day before, calling the incident an "absolutely unacceptable" territorial violation and safety threat. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said that a Chinese Y-9 reconnaissance plane briefly entered Japan's southwestern airspace Monday, forcing its military to scramble fighter jets. He added that it was the first time the Japanese Self Defense Force detected a Chinese military aircraft in Japan's airspace. "The Chinese military aircraft's incursion into Japan's airspace not only is a serious violation of our territorial rights but also a safety threat," Hayashi told a regular news conference. "We found it absolutely unacceptable." The Chinese Y-9 reconnaissance plane circled above Danjo Island off the southwestern coast of Japan's main southern island of Kyushu for two minutes, the Joint Staff of the Japanese Self Defense Force said late Monday, adding that officials were analyzing the latest Chinese military activity. The Joint Staff said Japan scrambled fighter jets and warned the Chinese plane to leave. Hayashi stressed that China's military activity around Japan in recent years has become "increasingly expanding and intensifying." Hayashi said Japan will continue watching Chinese military activity and do its utmost to respond to possible anti-airspace violations. The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Masataka Okano summoned acting Chinese Ambassador Shi Yong to strongly protest the airspace violation. Okano also demanded that China take steps to avoid such incidents. According to Japan's military, it scrambled jets nearly 669 times between April 2023 and March 2024, about 70% of the time against Chinese military aircraft, though that did not include airspace violations.

Philippine defence chief says China is 'the biggest disruptor of peace'

AP ■ MANILA

The Philippine defence chief said Tuesday that China is "the biggest disruptor" of peace in Southeast Asia and called for stronger international censure over its aggression in the South China Sea, a day after China blocked Philippine vessels from delivering food to a Coast Guard ship at the Sabina Shoal. Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr spoke at an international military conference organized in Manila by the US Indo-Pacific Command amid a spike in clashes between China and the Philippines in the disputed South China Sea and in its airspace. China is "the biggest disruptor of international peace" in Southeast Asia, Teodoro told the conference, which was attended by military officials and senior diplomats from the US and allied countries. He later told reporters on the sidelines of the conference that international statements of concern against China's increasingly assertive actions in the disputed waters and elsewhere were "not

enough." "The antidote is a stronger collective multilateral action against China," Teodoro said, adding that diplomats and defense officials should determine those stronger steps. Pressed by reporters to be more specific, Teodoro said a UN Security Council resolution condemning and ordering a stop to Chinese acts of aggression would be a strong step but acknowledged the difficulty of pursuing that. "The world is not that perfect," Teodoro said. There was no immediate reaction from Chinese officials. China, like its geopolitical rival the US, is one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and has power to veto such an adversarial step. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has paid "attention" to China's aggressive actions but should do much more, Teodoro said. The 10-nation Southeast Asian bloc includes the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei, which have South China Sea claims that overlap with each other, as well as China's and Taiwan's. "ASEAN, to remain relevant and credible, cannot continue to ignore what China is doing in the South China Sea," Teodoro said. In the latest incident in the South China Sea, Philippine officials said China deployed "an excessive force" of 40 ships that blocked two Philippine vessels from delivering food and other supplies to Manila's largest coast guard ship in the disputed Sabina Shoal in the latest flare-up of their territorial disputes in the busy sea passage. China and the Philippines blamed each other for the confrontation on Monday in Sabina Shoal, an uninhabited atoll both countries claim that has become the latest flashpoint in the Spratlys, the most hotly disputed region of the sea passage that is a key global trade and security route. China and the Philippines have separately deployed coast guard ships to Sabina in recent months on suspicion the other may act to take control of and build structures in the fishing atoll.

China calls for more support for Ukraine peace plan with Brazil

AP ■ BANGKOK

China called on Tuesday for more countries to endorse its peace plan for Ukraine, after a round of diplomacy with Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa to support its plan. Envoy Li Hui called the three countries representative of the Global South and "important forces in promoting world peace" who share similar positions with China. "They have maintained communication with both Russia and Ukraine and stay committed to a political settlement to the crisis through dialogue and negotiation," said Li, China's special envoy for Eurasian affairs. China and Brazil issued a joint peace plan earlier this year that calls for a peace conference with both Ukraine and Russia

and no expansion of the battlefield. China and Russia were absent from a peace summit hosted in Switzerland in June. Russia was not invited while China chose not to attend. Initially, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said China had pressured other countries to not attend the peace summit. But since then, Ukraine has recognized China's role in a peace process, given its close relationship with Russia, with the Ukrainian foreign minister paying a visit to the country in July, the first since the war began. While a diplomatic dialogue between Russia and Ukraine so far appears out of reach, the war has shifted. In August Ukraine opened a new front in the war by attacking the Russian oblast of Kursk, in a surprise move that made clear Russia was also vulnerable. Zelenskyy has said the aim was to create a buffer zone to protect Ukraine from attacks. Li noted the incursion and criticized Western support for Ukraine. "All sides are worried that the West continues to relax conditions for Ukraine to strike the Russian territory with aided weapons," Li said. "And recent developments on the battlefield confirmed these kind of worries." The US and NATO have called China an enabler of Russia in the war. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg then said China provides equipment, microelectronics and tools that are "enabling Russia to build the missiles, to build the bombs, to build the aircraft, to build the weapons they use to attack Ukraine."

Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) awarded to top Chinese general

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Commander of the Ground Forces of the People's Liberation Army of China General Li Qiaoming was on Tuesday conferred the Nishan-e-Imtiaz, one of the top honours in Pakistan, for his "unwavering commitment" in promoting close cooperation between the militaries of the two all-weather friends. Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif and Army Chief General Asim Munir participated during a special investiture ceremony at the President's House and attended by service chiefs and parliamentarians. "The citation at the ceremony highlighted General Li Qiaoming's four-decade career, noting his significant contributions to the Chinese military. His intellect, administrative skills, and dedication have earned him a reputation as a courageous and capable officer, crucial in promoting peace and stability in China and beyond," the state-run news agency Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said. "General Li is renowned for his exceptional professionalism and skills in maintaining peace and stability around China. As a friend of Pakistan, he greatly strengthened Pak-China military relations with unwavering commitment," it said. Earlier on Monday, Qiaoming met with Prime Minister Sharif and discussed various aspects of the Pakistan-China friendship, particularly the bilateral defence and strategic partnership, the report said. Sharif underscored that Pakistan and China are All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners and trusted friends and highlighted that the deep-rooted ties between the two nations enjoy broad public, political, and institutional support in Pakistan, "making them indispensable for the progress and development of both countries." The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction at the deepening military-to-military exchanges and noted that the defence and strategic ties between Pakistan and China are vital for peace and stability in the region.

Malaysian ex-leader charged with sedition for mocking former king

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin was charged Tuesday with sedition over a speech he made that allegedly questioned the integrity of the country's previous king, Muhyiddin, who led Malaysia from March 2020 until August 2021, pleaded not guilty in a court in northeast Kelantan state. According to the charge sheet, Muhyiddin made the seditious remarks last month during a by-election campaign in Kelantan. Nine ethnic Malay state rulers take turns as Malaysia's king for five-year terms under the country's rotating monarchy, which began when Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. The monarchy plays a largely ceremonial role, but are revered by the nation's majority Muslims. In his speech on August 14, Muhyiddin had questioned why then-King Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah

didn't invite him to be prime minister following a hung Parliament in November 2022. Muhyiddin had claimed he had the backing of majority lawmakers. Muhyiddin's Islamic nationalist bloc received stronger-than-expected support from Malays, who account for two-thirds of Malaysia's 34 million people. Sultan Abdullah appointed then-opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister after Anwar cobbled up support from rival parties to form a unity government. Sultan Abdullah from central Pahang state, who ended his reign on Jan. 30 this year, didn't comment on the case. But his son issued a strong rebuke to Muhyiddin, saying his remarks were dangerous and could divide the people and undermine the royal institution. Muhyiddin was questioned by police following complaints against him. He had denied insulting the royalty, saying his remarks were factu-

PM Sharif reiterates 'resolve' to root out terrorism from Pakistan

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in the restive Balochistan province as he reiterated the unwavering resolve of his government to root out terrorism from the country. Heavily armed Baloch gunmen killed at least 37 people in separate attacks in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province on Monday, as insurgent attacks spiked in the region bordering Iran and Afghanistan. Chairing a Cabinet meeting a day after violence in Balochistan stunned the country, Sharif strongly condemned the terrorist incidents that resulted in the death of innocent Pakistanis including the security personnel, state-run Radio Pakistan reported. He said the sacrifices rendered by the people and the Armed Forces of Pakistan in the war

against terrorism will not go waste. "The entire nation is committed for complete elimination of terrorism from the country," he said. Prime Minister Sharif said all available resources would be provided to the Armed Forces to curb terrorism. He said time has come to eliminate terrorism. "We need to move forward towards this path with firm resolve," he said. He said doors of dialogue are open for those who believe in Pakistan and its Constitution. However, no talks will be held with the enemies and terrorists, he added. Referring to the terrorist incidents, he said it is no secret now that the terrorists of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, operating from Afghanistan, are behind terrorist attacks. He said the government has already sensitized the Afghan government on the issue. He said the terrorist acts being carried out in Balochistan are

aimed at creating anarchy and disturbance in Pakistan and to disrupt the steps being taken by the government for development of the country. However, their nefarious designs could not terrorize the people and disrupt the development process. Prime Minister Sharif stressed the need for forging unity, saying such despicable designs are only meant to impede the country's progress, ongoing CPEC projects in Balochistan and undermine the time-tested friendship between Pakistan and China. He announced to soon visit Balochistan to hold in-depth deliberations on the situation and decide on immediate measures to deal with it. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Balochistan on Tuesday to support the provincial government in its efforts to tackle militancy. "My aim to visit is to let you all and the people of Balochistan know that the federal interior minister is standing behind the Balochistan chief minister. Whatever decision he (chief minister Bugti) makes, we will support him," he told the media in Quetta flanked by Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti. Naqvi ruled out any fresh operation, saying that a police station house officer was enough to tackle the law and order with proper and timely response. "They are terrorists and our civil armed forces, armed forces, and the police know how to combat them," the minister said.

If anything happens to me, Army chief & DG ISI responsible: Imran Khan

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan on Tuesday reiterated that the Army and the ISI are responsible for his condition and expressed fear for his life. Khan, 71, lodged at the Adiala Jail since last year, also blamed the current dispensation for being averse to criticism, for deteriorating law-and-order situation across the country, and also for ruining Pakistan's cricket that is facing repeated defeats. In a post on X from jail, Khan repeated claims about rigged elections and said only a government with a genuine mandate will be able to plan for fundamental reforms. "The ISI controls all administrative matters related to my imprisonment. I'm saying it again: if anything happens to me, the Army Chief and DG ISI will be responsible," the founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party said in a detailed post on X. Khan's comments come two days after the Pakistan government said that the

former prime minister's trial in cases concerning the violence on May 9 last year might go to the military courts. "The events and vandalism on May 9 last year invited the application of the Army Act since military installations were attacked and damaged," Government spokesperson for legal affairs Barrister Aqeel Malik had said. On May 9 last year, violent protests erupted after Khan's arrest by paramilitary Rangers from the premises of the Islamabad High Court in connection with an alleged corruption case. His party workers allegedly vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), the Mianwali airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad. A mob also attacked the Army headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. Khan's longish post on X started with "reminding" the nation of the two attempts on his life: first in Wazirabad, Punjab province and then again at the Judicial Complex in Islamabad. The ISI stole the CCTV footage from

Wazirabad, and the night before the attack in Islamabad, the ISI had taken control of the area where it happened, he claimed. "In their panic, they have made my conditions in jail even tougher. The staff assigned to ensure that my food isn't poisoned has been changed for the fourth time," he wrote. He also described the conditions of his and his wife Bushra's cell — rats fall from the top when she prays — and said the court has been informed about it. Khan further said that he had already explained why the Islamabad rally was postponed and how it had nothing to do with "contacts with the establishment." This entire government runs on lies; I don't even read the news about them. I have no contact with the establishment. If we do hold talks with them, it will only be for the sake of the country and the constitution," the PTI supreme added. Drawing a parallel to the situation that unfolded in Bangladesh, he also came up with a curt comment: "Cattle can be

herded in a desired direction, not humans" and said, "The Army Chief, Chief Justice, and Police Chief were all loyal to the Prime Minister (in Bangladesh), but when the people took to the streets, they won their rights." Anyone critical of the regime is labelled a digital terrorist. When internet services were shut down, people protested, but those in power couldn't handle the criticism. No one is permitted to even voice their problems. The nation blames a specific institution for this," he added. What are his qualifications? Under him, the law-and-order situation across the country is deteriorating," the PTI leader asked and described terror attack incidents in KP and Balochistan. The former cricketer-turned-politician rued about "the embarrassing defeat against Bangladesh" on Monday and said it set a new low. He also lamented the current condition of cricket in Pakistan, saying: "The blame for all of this collapse falls on one institution."

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Tender Enquiry No. 1704/C&I/O&M/PC-2583 Dated: 23-08-2024
Chief Engineer/ O&M (P&P Cell-I), GHPT, Lehra Mohabbat, invites E-tender for the Procurement of RTDs and thermocouple for Stage-I & II Units, GHPT, Lehra Mohabbat, Quantity as per NIT. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 23-08-2024 at 17:00 Hrs. onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> GHTP-73/24

76155/12/3350/2023/37011 Dated CHD :- 8/27/2024

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN COMPANY LIMITED
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
Nishtha Parisar, Bijalee Nagar, Govindpura, Bhopal-23
Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586636
Ref. : MD/MK/04/NIT/1410 Date : 27.08.2024

TENDER NOTICE
MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids from manufacturers through e-tendering :-

Tender Specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee including GST (in Rs.)	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD/MK/04/1082	Rate Contract for 140 Kg 8 Mtr. Long PCC Pole	2808.30	23600	05.09.24 at 3:00 PM	17.09.2024 at 3:00 PM

Other details and full Tender documents would be available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. Website <https://mptenders.gov.in> shortly.
M.P. Madhyam/116105/2024 CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

Markets settle almost flat

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Stock market benchmark Sindices Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note after a volatile session on Tuesday due to the emergence of profit-taking near record high levels amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine. The NSE gauge, however, hit a new lifetime peak of 25,017. According to traders, profit booking in metal, consumer durable and FMCG shares negated gains in telecom, teck and IT stocks. After oscillating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE Sensex eked out a marginal gain of 13.65 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 81,711.76 — its sixth consecutive session of rise. During the day, it hit a high of 81,919.11 and a low of 81,600.51. The NSE Nifty ended almost flat, up 7.15 points or 0.03 per cent, at 25,017.75 — its ninth straight session of gains. "The domestic market witnessed profit-booking near record highs. While the positive expectations regarding a potential rate cut by the Fed in September remain, the recent geopolitical tensions



and rising crude oil prices have made investors cautious amid high valuations. "Further, the recent shift in FII stance towards the domestic market and the anticipation that the RBI will align with the Fed's actions are expected to foster a positive outlook in the near term," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. On the Sensex chart, Bajaj Finserv, Maruti, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers. In contrast, Hindustan Unilever, JSW Steel, Titan, NTPC and Tata Motors were among the laggards. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.58 per cent to USD 80.72 per barrel. The smallcap index went up by 0.50 per cent. Among the indices, telecommunication jumped 1.13 per cent, teck (0.70 per cent), financial services (0.68 per cent) and healthcare (0.44 per cent). On the other hand, metal, consumer durables, power, commodities and consumer discretionary were among the laggards. Trading session lacked momentum due to weak investor participation on

account of Janmashtami and ended almost unchanged from its previous close. Weak US market cues and subdued Asian indices prompted local investors to book profit towards the fag-end, indicating that intraday volatility will continue amid growing geopolitical tensions and sluggish global growth," Prashant Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory, while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower. European markets were trading higher in mid-session deals. The US markets ended mostly lower in the overnight trade on Monday. "There are both headwinds and tailwinds for the market now. Headwinds are coming from the escalation of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine. Brent crude has shot up above USD 81. The strongest tailwind comes from the expected rate cuts by the Fed which will spill over to other central banks, including the RBI," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

GCCs offering up to 20 per cent higher salaries than IT services: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India are offering up to 20 per cent higher salaries as compared with the IT services, especially at entry and mid levels, a report said on Tuesday. According to the report by TeamLease Digital, India has over 1,600 GCCs employing over 1.66 million professionals. It is poised to welcome 800 new GCCs in the next 5-6 years, which shows the country's growing prominence as a global tech hub. GCCs are centralized units established by multinational companies to manage specific business functions or processes, leveraging cost advantages, a skilled workforce, and favourable business environments in strategic locations worldwide. GCCs play a vital role in driving efficiency and innovation across sectors such as IT, finance, and research and development. On the other hand, IT products & services encompass development, production, and management



of hardware, software, networks, and services that enable organizations in the creation, management and optimization of or access to information and business processes. "GCCs are rapidly surpassing the IT sector in the talent market, especially at entry and mid levels. They offer salaries that are, on an average, 12-20 per cent higher than those in IT services and non-tech industries," TeamLease Digital CEO Neeti Sharma said quoting the report. This wage premium underscores the growing influence of GCCs as they attract top talent from the IT sector to fuel their expansion, signalling a shift in market dynamics where GCCs are emerging as the dominant

force, she added. The 'Digital Skills and Salary Primer for FY25' report is based on an analysis of 15,000 job roles from the 3 sectors, including GCCs, IT services and non-tech sectors. Currently, in GCCs, there are more opportunities for people with 0-10 years experience. The senior level has a wider salary gap for many of the functional areas, and the premium for niche skills is also higher. The report further showed that there is a growing trend of setting up GCCs in tier-II cities like Kolkata, Ahmedabad, and Vadodara, which indicates a geographical diversification of tech opportunities across the country. Skills that are seeing an increasing demand in GCCs are PyTorch, AWS, DevOps, NLP, Kubernetes, Fabric, Hyperledger, Tableau, SQL, and ServiceNow, the report added. In GCCs, the percentage of women tech professionals is expected to increase to 35 per cent from the current 25 per cent by 2027.

Over 200 global players to take part in Bharat Battery Show 2025



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Over 200 global players are likely to showcase cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies at the Bharat Battery Show in January 2025. Industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA), in a statement, said it is organising the Bharat Battery Show at the second Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025. According to the statement, the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 led by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is set to be held on January 17-22, 2025, across three major venues — Bharat Mandapam, Yashobhoomi (IICC) Dwarka, and India Expo Center & Mart, Greater Noida. IESA, as a key industry partner, has been entrusted with the organisation of the Battery Tech Pavilion, Recycling Pavilion, and Charging Infra Pavilion under the umbrella of the Bharat Battery Show. Bharat Battery Show — part of the Bharat Mobility — will be organised at the central Delhi venue Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, from 19 to 21 January 2025. The Bharat Battery Show (an expo on batteries and charging) will feature cutting-edge technologies in battery storage, battery recycling, and charging infrastructure, reflecting IESAs commitment to driving the adoption of clean energy and sustainable mobility solutions in India. IESA said that it is expecting 200+ global players to showcase their cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies during this event. Some of the key firms already confirmed include Amara Raja, Replus Engitech, Epsilon Advanced Materials, Advik Hitech, Amphenol FCL, Bry-Air (Asia), Elcom International, EMO Energy, HENN Indo Pacific, Maestrotech Systems, Neenjas Electric, Polyprotic Chemicals, Huge Hippo Energy, MNE components, Hioki, Glida, Ipower batteries, and Molsynth, among others.

Rupee falls 5 paise to close at 83.92 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 5 paise to close at 83.92 (provisional) against the American currency on Tuesday, on overnight jump in crude oil prices and a surge in commodity prices. However, positive domestic markets and a soft US dollar cushioned the downside, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.91 and touched an intra-day low of 83.95 against the US dollar. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.92 (provisional), 5 paise lower from its previous close. On Monday, the Indian rupee settled for the day 3 paise higher at 83.87 against the American currency. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on rise in global risk sentiments amid dovish Fed speak and



rising expectations of a rate cut by the Fed in September. "However, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and rising crude oil prices may cap sharp upside. Traders may take cues from US consumer confidence data," Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to remain within a narrow range as the Reserve Bank of India has been actively intervening in the market, consistently absorbing inflows.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.05 per cent lower at 100.79. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.87 per cent to USD 80.72 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 13.65 points, or 0.02 per cent, to close at 81,711.76 points. The Nifty closed 7.15 points, or 0.03 per cent, up at 25,017.75 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Monday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 483.36 crore, according to exchange data. Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said the central bank is constantly working on policies, systems, and platforms to make the country's financial sector strong, nimble and customer centric.

India-Oman free trade pact talks at advanced stage: Official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Discussions for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between India and Oman are at an advanced stage and both sides hope to conclude the pact early, Indian Ambassador to Oman Amit Narang said on Tuesday. The pact will give a significant push to bilateral trade and investment ties between the two countries, he said. The pact, officially known as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), is expected to boost Indian exports to the west Asian country by eliminating duties, especially on petroleum products, textiles, electronics, pharmaceuticals, machinery, and iron and steel. "Discussions for a bilateral CEPA with Oman are at an advanced stage. We hope to conclude these discussions early and once this is done, this will be a significant push



to bilateral, not just trade, but also bilateral investment ties," Narang said. Addressing an event organised by Ficci here, the Indian Ambassador to Oman also highlighted the significant potential for enhancing direct shipping links between the two nations as a large part of Indian exports to Oman come not directly but through the UAE. He said the India-Oman bilateral trade, which crossed USD 12 billion in 2022-23, has moderated and settled at USD 8 billion in FY24. "Between 2021 and 2023 the

commodities globally," Narang said. He pointed out that a large part of Indian exports to Oman come not directly but through the UAE and these are not reflected in the India-Oman bilateral trade but in India's trade with the UAE, adding that there is potential for enhancing direct shipping links. "Currently, I understand that there are two shipping lines... There is therefore huge potential for direct shipping to reduce cost of bilateral trade and that will have a significant impact in further improving our bilateral trade figures," Narang said. "In the past financial year, the bilateral trade has moderated a little bit, it has settled to USD 8 billion... Moderation is mainly on account of over dominance of hydrocarbons in the bilateral trade," Narang said. "India imports a lot of oil and fertilisers from Oman and this decline in the value terms of the trade this year is a reflection of the decline in values of these two

India ranks 31st in JLL's Global Real Estate Transparency Index

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Global property consultant JLL on Tuesday said that India's top real estate markets have entered into a 'transparent' zone for the first time, driven by institutionalisation of commercial assets and improvement in data access. JLL has released its 'Global Real Estate Transparency Index, 2024', which showed that India's tier-I markets have entered into the 'transparent' zone for the first time with a composite score of 2.44. India ranks 31st in the list of 89 countries. The consultant noted that "India has made a remarkable leap forward in JLL's Global Real Estate Transparency Index 2024, reaching the transparent tier for the first time." This progress is a result of institutionalisation in the commercial market and



improved access to diverse real estate data sets, it said. "India is the top global improver in the 2024 index, making significant strides in transaction processes and market fundamentals," JLL said, the country is leading the global front in enhancing transparency, with expanded data coverage and improved data quality across various property sectors. There are 13 countries featured in the high-transparency zone. The United Kingdom is at the top (with a score of 1.24) in

the global list, followed by France, the United States, Australia, Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Japan, Belgium and Singapore. Finland leads 22 countries that figure in the 'transparent' zone, followed by Hong Kong SAR, Denmark, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Poland, Norway, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Hungary, Portugal, Chinese Taipei, South Korea, UAE-Dubai, South Africa, China-Tier 1, India-Tier 1, Thailand, Malaysia, Romania

and Slovakia. The remaining countries are in 'semi-transparent', Low transparency and opaque zones. "India is the top global improver, with greater data coverage and quality across both core and niche property sectors — ranging from industrial to data centres - as institutionalisation in the market increases. "A more proactive financial regulator, new climate risk disclosure guidelines, streamlined building regulations and digitised land records have also contributed to its leading cities entering the 'Transparent' tier," the report mentioned. Samantak Das, Chief Economist and Head-Research, India, JLL, said, "Increasing institutional participation, along with a push for transparency, has led to the adoption of best industry practices in India's commercial real estate

market." Notably, he said four existing listed REITs have driven growth in stabilised commercial assets, while standardised market valuation processes and REIT regulations have fostered market-based approaches. "Regulatory enhancements such as RERA and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code have improved investor protection, while digital land registry records and strict monitoring by RBI and SEBI have created a robust regulatory landscape," Das said. Karan Singh Sodi, Senior Managing Director (Mumbai MMR & Gujarat) and Head - Alternatives, India, JLL said, India's ascent to the transparent tier in JLL's Global Real Estate Transparency Index underscores the industry's cohesive efforts and governmental backing.

Auto majors to offer 1.5-3 per cent discount on purchase of new vehicles against scrappage certificate

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the festive season, several passenger and commercial vehicle manufacturers have agreed to offer discounts of 1.5-3 per cent on new vehicle purchase against scrapped old vehicles after a meeting with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, an official statement said on Tuesday. The statement further said Mercedes Benz India has offered a flat discount of Rs 25,000, which will be over and above all existing discounts. Union Road Transport and Highways (RT&H) Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday chaired a meeting with the SIAM delegation at Bharat Mandapam, where he addressed pressing issues in the automobile industry. "During this interaction, responding positively to the advice of the minister RT&H



and recognising the importance of Fleet Modernisation and Circular Economy, multiple Commercial Vehicle Manufacturers and multiple passenger vehicle manufacturers have agreed to offer discounts for a limited period against a certificate of deposit (Scrappage Certificate)," the statement said. It said commercial vehicle manufacturers are willing to offer discounts for a limited period of two years and

passenger vehicle manufacturers are willing to offer discounts for a limited period of one year. The statement noted that these discounts will further incentivise the scrapping of vehicles, thereby ensuring the plying of safer, cleaner and more efficient vehicles on roads. As per the statement, passenger vehicle manufacturers namely Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hyundai Motor India, Kia Motors, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, Honda Cars, JSW MG Motor, Renault India, Nissan India and Skoda Volkswagen India, will offer discount of 1.5 per cent of the ex-showroom price of new car or Rs 20,000, whichever is less, against the passenger vehicle scrapped by the owner in the last 6 months.

Gold climbs ₹550 to ₹74,350 per 10 gm; silver rallies ₹1,200

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices climbed Rs 550 to Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday on the back of fresh demand from local jewellers. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 73,800 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday. Silver prices also rallied Rs 1,200 to Rs 88,200 per kilogram on Tuesday from Rs 87,000 per kg in the previous close, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped Rs 550 to Rs 74,000 per 10 grams.



Traders attributed the rise in yellow prices due to a pick-up in demand by local jewellers and retailers in the domestic market. The bullion markets were closed in New Delhi on Monday on account of Krishna Janmashtami. In the Asian trading hours, gold is trading at USD 2,543.90 per ounce, down USD 11.30 per ounce.

"Gold declined marginally on Tuesday, weighed down by better than expected US macro data and an uptick in US Treasury yields," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. According to Manav Modi, Senior Analyst, Commodity Research, MOFSL, gold prices fell but remained in sight of record highs it hit last week as the prospect of lower US interest rates battered the US dollar and presented a brighter outlook for metal markets. Further, bullion surged to record highs last week, as market participants welcomed

dovish comments from the Federal Reserve. Some safe haven demand also buoyed gold as ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas yielded few results, while hostilities in the Middle East persisted, Modi added. Additionally, silver was quoted lower at USD 30.34 per ounce in the global markets. "Traders will focus on the US consumer confidence data going to be released later on Tuesday which will provide more insights on the direction of the bullion prices," Navneet Damani, Group Senior VP of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL), said.

Coal India's contribution to Govt exchequer rises 2 per cent in April-July

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Coal India Ltd's contribution to the government's exchequer rose 2.06 per cent to Rs 20,071.96 crore in the April-July period of the ongoing fiscal year. Coal India Ltd (CIL), which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output, paid Rs 19,666.04 crore to the government exchequer in the year-ago period, according to provisional figures of the coal ministry. Total levies paid to the government in July went up to Rs 4,992.48 crore from Rs 4,789.42 crore paid a year earlier.



The amount paid to the Centre and state governments include royalties, GST, cess on coal, and other levies. Coal production generates substantial revenue for both central and state governments. Of the total amount paid to the government exchequer in the first four months of FY24,

maximum amount of Rs 4,417.12 crore was made to the state government of Jharkhand, followed by Rs 4,319.67 crore to the Odisha government, Rs 3,950.41 crore to Chhattisgarh, Rs 3,526.27 crore to Madhya Pradesh, and Rs 2,086.35 crore to Maharashtra, among others. State governments are entitled to receiving 14 per cent of royalty on the sale price of coal and 30 per cent of the royalty as contribution towards the proposed district mineral foundations (DMFs) -- which are meant to support people affected by various projects -- and two per cent of

NMET from dry-fuel produced by the coal companies and also the private sector. In case of captive, commercial mines, states are also entitled to receiving the revenue share offered by the auction holder in a transparent bidding process. Apart from this, state governments also benefit from increased employment, land compensation, increased investment in allied infrastructure like railways, road and several other economic benefits. Coal India is aiming to produce 838 MT of coal in the ongoing financial year.

PARALYMPICS

INDIA EYE RECORD HAUL WITH LARGEST EVER CONTINGENT IN FRAY AT PARIS

PTI ■ PARIS

Beaten by life but not by its many challenges, an 84-strong contingent of Indian para-athletes, the largest ever in the country's history and a heady mix of youth and experience, would be eyeing an unparalleled gold rush when the Paralympic Games begin here on Wednesday. India won a record 19 medals, including five gold, in the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021 for a 24th-place finish in the overall rankings. Three years on, the country's target is more than 25 medals with a double-digit haul in gold. What has fuelled this ambition is the size of the contingent and the exceptional performances in the past one year. India won a record 111 medals, including 29 gold, at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games last year. This was followed by unprecedented success at the World Para Athletics Championships in May where the country snared 17 medals, including half a dozen gold for a sixth-place finish in the overall standings. Several medal winners in Hangzhou are in this Paralympics team, including top stars like world record-



holding javelin thrower Sumit Antil (F64) and rifle shooter Avani Lekhara (10m Air Rifle Standing SH1). Both of them would be defending their gold medals won in Tokyo. The Games, as much a celebration of sporting skills as human endurance, club athletes with similar functional abilities in terms of movement, coordination and balance into various classifications. The "degree and nature of their eligible impairments" decide these groups. For India, the para-athletics team has been a major medal giver in the past and this time too, it is expected to be the

biggest contributor with as many as 38 names in fray. Other top medal contenders include the likes of para-archer Sheetal Devi, who shoots with her legs as she was born without arms, landmine blast survivors Hokato Sema (shot putter) and Narayana Konganapalle (rower) and several other accident amputees. India is competing in 12 sports this time, as against nine by a 54-member team in Tokyo. Shooter Manish Narwal and shuttler Krishna Nagar are also among those who would be looking to defend their gold medals won in Tokyo.

Antil, whose left leg was amputated owing to an accident when he was 17, had also won gold in the para world championships in May and he is hoping to cross the 75m mark in Paris at the same venue where his able-bodied counterpart Neeraj Chopra won an Olympic silver earlier this month. Lekhara was the best performer in Tokyo with one gold and a bronze and one of the two athletes to win two medals, the other being Singhraj Adhana (silver and bronze). Adhana, however, could not make the current team.

Lekhara was the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic gold medal. She is now primed to join the club of three medal winners in the Paralympics. Current Paralympics Committee of India (PCI) President Devendra Jhajharia, a javelin thrower, is the most decorated Indian Paralympian with two gold (2004 Athens and 2016 Rio) and a silver (2021 Tokyo). Joginder Singh Bedi won three medals in the 1984 Paralympics (silver in shot put, a bronze each in javelin and discus throw). Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20; intellectual disability), Rio Olympics gold-medallist Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump - T63), whose right leg was disabled after being run over by a bus, and Yogesh Kathuniya (men's Discus Throw - F56), born with a neurological disorder that damaged his nervous system, would be also aiming to add to their existing Paralympic medal tally. Shuttler Krishna Nagar (men's singles SH6), who has overcome the disadvantage of his short height, is also looking good to defend his gold medal won in Tokyo, more so after winning the title in the World Para Badminton Championships in Thailand in

February. The other gold winner in Tokyo, Pramod Bhagat, is, however, serving suspension after whereabouts failure. Suhas Yathiraj (Men's Singles SL4 and Mixed Doubles SL3-SU5), who won a silver in Tokyo, will again be a medal contender. In para-archery, Sheetal and Harvinder Singh will be among the medal contenders. Harvinder had won a bronze in Tokyo in men's individual recurve open. Sheetal, the first and the only international para archery champion without upper limbs, bagged two gold medals in a stunning performance in the Asian Para Games in women's individual compound and mixed doubles, and a silver in the women's doubles compound event. In table tennis, after winning a silver in class 4 event in Tokyo, Bhavinaben Patel will hope to better the colour of the medal. The wheelchair-bound player is competing in women's singles S4 and women's doubles D10 events. Antil and shot putter Bhagyashri Jadhav, who won a silver in the F34 event in Asian Para Games, will be the joint flag bearers at Wednesday's Opening Ceremony to be held outside a stadium for the first time in the history of Paralympic Games.



US OPEN 16-year-old Californian Iva Jovic beats Magda in first round

AP ■ NEW YORK

Iva Jovic, a 16-year-old from California, became the youngest American to win a women's main-draw match at the U.S. Open since 2000, eliminating 2023 Australian Open semifinalist Magda Linette of Poland 6-4, 6-3. "Surprised, but not surprised," Jovic said on Monday about the result against someone who's been ranked in the top 20. "I just had a plan about what I was going to do before we started, and there weren't that many needs for crazy adjustments, because it was going well," Jovic said. "So just kind of sticking to that."

Just keep working. I'm on a good path, but there's a lot more to do." She earned a wild-card entry for the main bracket at the year's last Grand Slam tournament by winning the U.S. Tennis Association Girls' 18s national championship. She also paired with Tyra Grant there to take the doubles title, which gave them a wild card for women's doubles at Flushing Meadows; the USTA granted Jovic and another American teen, Kaylan Bigun, a spot in the mixed doubles field, too. Jovic and Grant teamed up to win junior doubles titles at the Australian Open in January and Wimbledon in July; they also were the runners-up at the French Open in June. Jovic's favorite players are 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic - he's Serbian, and so are her roots; after the English portion of her news conference concluded Monday, she answered questions in Serbian - and Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Belinda Bencic. Why? "Djokovic, I mean, do I need to say? We all know how great he is," Jovic responded. "And then Belinda, she just takes the ball so early and her footwork is very cutting the angle, so she just makes her opponents feel kind of suffocated. That's what I would like to try to do." Jovic would love the chance to have a conversation with Djokovic, but their lone interaction so far was when she asked if he would mind posing for a photo.

GRAND CHESS TOUR Gukesh holds Caruana; Firouzja consolidates lead



PTI ■ SAINT LOUIS (USA)

Grandmaster D Gukesh played out a hard-fought draw yet again, signing peace with top seed and local favourite Fabiano Caruana, while Frenchman Alireza Firouzja stretched his lead by a full point after the seventh round of Sinquefeld Cup, which is a part of the Grand Chess Tour. The other Indian in fray, R Praggnanandhaa, drew his seventh game on the trot to remain on a fifty per cent score. Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia was happy with a quick draw as Praggnanandhaa decided to save his energy. With just two rounds to come, Firouzja, who put it across world champion Ding Liren of China, has five points in his kitty and Caruana continues to trail him a full point behind. As many as five players -- Wesley So of United States, Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa -- share the third spot on 3.5 points each. A half point behind are Liren and Nepomniachtchi while Dutchman Anish Giri is still at the bottom of

the table on 2.5 points. Besides Firouzja's victory, Abdusattorov halted So's party with a clinical performance. In the other game of the day, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave drew with Giri. Gukesh continued with his uncompromising play but found Caruana adequately prepared in an Italian opening game. The Indian was much worse in the ensuing endgame but Caruana missed out on his 39th turn when he could have gotten a real advantage. Exchanges at regular intervals thereafter ensured the draw for the Indian. Praggnanandhaa got nothing as white against Nepomniachtchi's Petroff defense and the Chennai-based player had to be content with repetition of moves very early in the middle game. The game lasted a mere 19 moves. The day belonged to Firouzja, who came up with fine resources in a complicated middle game against Liren. The Italian opening has been doing well for the Frenchman and he knocked down a couple of pawns when Liren erred in the middle game allowing the white to invade his camp. The rest was easy. Results round 7: Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 5) beat Ding Liren (Chn, 3); R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 3.5) drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi (Fid, 2.5); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 3.5) beat Wesley So (Usa, 3.5); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 3.5) drew with Anish Giri (Ned, 2.5); Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 4) drew with D Gukesh (Ind, 3.5).

Coco begins her US Open title defense with an easy win after a two-match losing streak

AP ■ NEW YORK

The chant rang out in cavernous Arthur Ashe Stadium at the U.S. Open before Coco Gauff's first service game of her first match of her first Grand Slam tournament as a defending champion: "Here we go, Coco! Here we go!" Coming to Flushing Meadows off a series of early exits at other events, Gauff already was down 1-0 to Varvara Gracheva on Monday, having dropped the match's initial game at love by making four groundstroke errors. What followed was a tough, tight game, featuring 14 points across eight minutes and three break chances for Gracheva. The important part, of course, was that Gauff saved all of those break points, claimed that game, and suddenly was in complete control on the way to a 6-2, 6-0 victory that not only



put the 20-year-old American in the second round but also told her - and everyone else - that her game is in better shape than it appeared lately. "The last couple of weeks were tough, and I was like, I have to do this and do that, but I don't have to prove anything to anyone except myself. So ... (these) two weeks are just about proving all the

expectations that I have on myself," the No. 3-seeded Gauff said. "I have many more years coming back here and I'm not going to win every year. Just that perspective and just having the belief that I can - but not the expectation that I should." Day 1 at the year's last Grand Slam tournament went about as well as possible for Gauff

and another young American featured in Ashe, 13th-seeded Ben Shelton, a semifinalist a year ago who beat 2020 champion Dominic Thiem 6-4, 6-2, 6-2. It was the last U.S. Open match for Thiem, who turns 31 next week and is retiring after this season. "Obviously she plays with a lot of passion," Shelton, 21, said about Gauff. "You could tell that she cares out there. She's into it every time that she's on the court. I think that's something that the people love." Gauff was not the only past U.S. Open champ on Monday's schedule: The night session in Ashe began with 2017 winner Sloane Stephens blowing a huge lead against Clara Burel and losing 0-6, 7-5, 7-5 after taking the first nine games, followed by Novak Djokovic - whose collection of 24 Slam titles includes last year's in New York - against Radu Albot.

India to face West Indies, South Africa in Women's T20 World Cup warm-up matches

PTI ■ DUBAI

India will take on West Indies and South Africa in their two Women's T20 World Cup warm-up fixtures in Dubai, the International Cricket Council announced on Tuesday. India will take on West Indies on September 29 while Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. Are slated to play South Africa on October 1. All 10 teams that have qualified for the Women's T20 World Cup will participate in the practice games, with every side playing two warm-up games each. The warm-up fixtures will start on September 28 with Pakistan taking on Scotland and Sri Lanka facing Bangladesh.

Defending champion Australia will face arch-rival England on September 29, followed by West Indies on October 1 in Dubai. The warm-up fixtures will be 20 overs per side and will not have international T20 status, allowing teams to field all members of their 15-player squad. No two sides who belong to the same group will take on each other in the warm-up round. India has been clubbed in group A alongside Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka while group B comprises England, South Africa, West Indies, Scotland and Bangladesh. The competition, starting October 3, was moved to the

UAE by the ICC following the ongoing political unrest in Bangladesh, the original host. **WARM-UP FIXTURES:** September 28: Pakistan v Scotland (Sevens, Dubai) September 28: Sri Lanka v Bangladesh (ICCA1, Dubai) September 29: New Zealand v South Africa (Sevens, Dubai) September 29: India v West Indies (ICCA2, Dubai) September 29: Australia v England (ICCA1, Dubai) September 30: Sri Lanka v Scotland (Sevens, Dubai) September 30: Bangladesh v Pakistan (ICCA2, Dubai) October 1: West Indies v Australia (Sevens, Dubai) October 1: England v New Zealand (ICCA2, Dubai)

Nigeria hires German coach Bruno in bid to get World Cup qualifying back on track

PTI ■ LAGOS (NIGERIA)

Nigeria hired German coach Bruno Labbadia on Tuesday to lead the men's national soccer team in a bid to get its flagging World Cup qualifying campaign back on track. "The appointment is with immediate effect" said Mohammed Sanusi, the general secretary of the Nigeria Football Federation. The 58-year-old Labbadia has been out of work since April 2023 when he was fired by Stuttgart after failing to arrest its slide to the bottom of the Bundesliga. Nigeria is second from bottom in its 2026 World Cup qualifying group after failing to win any of its opening four

games. The Super Eagles drew 1-1 with both Lesotho and Zimbabwe in November last year before Portuguese coach Jose Peseiro led the team to the final of the Africa Cup of Nations. Nigeria lost the final to the host nation Ivory Coast in February. The NFF promoted Peseiro's assistant, Finidi George, to the top position in April after the Portuguese departed. But, the former right winger was unable to improve the team's fortunes in World Cup qualifying. George oversaw a 1-1 draw with South Africa followed by a 2-1 defeat in Benin in June. George then reportedly resigned after not being told of the NFF's plans to appoint a

technical advisor to oversee his work. The NFF did not publicly acknowledge the resignation. Labbadia only oversaw two wins from his 12 games in charge of Stuttgart during his second stint at the club - one each in the league and German Cup. His successor, Sebastian Hoeneß, ultimately saved Stuttgart from relegation and led the team to a club-record points total last season. Labbadia previously coached Hertha Berlin, Wolfsburg, Hamburger SV, Bayer Leverkusen and Darmstadt. As a goal-scoring forward, he helped Bayern Munich and Kaiserslautern win Bundesliga titles in the 1990s.

Duleep Trophy: Indisposed Siraj ruled out, Jadeja allowed more rest

PTI ■ MUMBAI, AUG 27 (PTI)

Seamer Mohammed Siraj will miss the Duleep Trophy's first round games due to illness while veteran all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has been allowed an extended period of rest by the BCCI's national selection committee, which announced a few changes to the participating squads on Tuesday. The first round of the Duleep Trophy, comprising two matches, will be held from

September 5-8 with India A taking on India B at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and India C facing off against India D at the Rural Development Trust Stadium A in Ananthapur. Siraj, who was a part of India's last away assignment in Sri Lanka, along with Umran Malik have both been ruled out of the first round games and have been replaced by Navdeep Saini and Gaurav Yadav respectively. "Both Siraj and Malik are



suffering from an illness and are not expected to be fit in time for their Duleep Trophy fixtures," the BCCI informed in a release. "All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has also been released from the Team B squad," the board added. Jadeja was last seen in action in the T20 World Cup final in June against South Africa and was rested from the ODI series in Sri Lanka. The 32-year-old Yadav, who hails from Madhya Pradesh, took 41 wickets in seven

matches for Pondicherry in the last season of Ranji Trophy to finish as the second highest wicket-taker in the country's premier domestic competition. **REVISED SQUADS:** **India A:** Shubman Gill (c), Mayank Agarwal, Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel (wk), KL Rahul, Tilak Varma, Shivam Dube, Tanush Kotian, Kuldeep Yadav, Akash Deep, Prasidh Krishna, Khaleel Ahmed, Avesh Khan, Vidwath

Kaverappa, Kumar Kushagra, Shaswat Rawat. **India B:** Abhimanyu Easwaran (c), Yashvi Jaiswal, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (wk), Musheer Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy*, Washington Sundar, Navdeep Saini, Yash Dayal, Mukesh Kumar, Rahul Chahar, R Sai Kishore, Mohit Awasthi, N Jagadeesan (wk). **India C:** Rituraj Gaikwad (c), Sai Sudharsan, Rajat Patidar, Abishek Porel (wk), Suryakumar Yadav, B Indrajith, Hrithik Shokeen,

Manav Suthar, Gaurav Yadav, Vyshak Vijaykumar, Anshul Khambhoj, Himanshu Chauhan, Mayank Markande, Aryan Juyal (wk), Sandeep Warrier. **India D:** Shreyas Iyer (c), Atharva Taide, Yash Dube, Devdutt Padikkal, Ishan Kishan (wk), Ricky Bhui, Saransh Jain, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Aditya Thakare, Harshit Rana, Tushar Deshpande, Akash Sengupta, KS Bharat (wk), Saurabh Kumar.

HOPEFULLY, WE WILL BREAK FINAL BARRIER IN T20 WC: HARMANPREET

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur remained optimistic that India can grab their maiden global title in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, and said conditions in the UAE could work to their advantage.

The International Cricket Council has recently shifted the showpiece, to be held between October 3 and 20, to the UAE from Bangladesh owing to the political unrest in the latter nation.

"Whenever we play on this kind of stage (World Cup), we always want to do well. We have always done well in the past as well, and hopefully, this time we will break that final barrier and go all the way," Harmanpreet told PTI videos.

Harmanpreet was on Tuesday appointed as the captain of the Indian team for the T20 World Cup.

The 35-year-old did not read too much into the venue shift, and said the conditions in the UAE are quite similar to India.

"We have not played much cricket in the UAE. But the conditions in the UAE are going to be similar to Indian conditions."



"We will see how the conditions play out (there) and try to adjust ourselves to the conditions as soon as possible," said Harmanpreet, who led India to the final of the 2020 T20 World Cup.

Irrespective of the playing conditions, she wanted the team to dish out a "positive" game in the World Cup.

"As a team, we learn from our defeats and break those barriers that are pushing us back. Hopefully this time we can express ourselves in a more positive way in the World Cup," she said.

Harmanpreet also backed the Indian bowlers, who floundered in the recent Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka, to deliver in the World Cup.

"The bowlers are working really hard as a team and, hopefully, in this World Cup we tick all the boxes."

Harmanpreet, who led Mumbai Indians to WPL victory last year, said the key to winning the World Cup will be to keep themselves in the present.

"It is always important for us to play good cricket, keeping ourselves in the present. Whatever the situation is in front of us...we go there and evaluate (it) as soon as possible," she signed off.



Jeev, Jyoti among Indian stars to compete in country's inaugural Legends Tour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian golfing greats Jeev Milkha Singh and Jyoti Randhawa will be among 64 international players vying for top honours in the inaugural HSBC India Legends Championships to be played at Jaypee Greens course at Greater Noida from August 30 to September 1.

The first Legends Tour tournament in the country, which will have USD 0.5 million as prize purse, will also see 2005 US Open champion Michael Campbell of New Zealand in action.

The winner of the HSBC India Legends Championship is set to take home USD 74,250, while the runner-up will receive USD 49,000. The third-place finisher will pocket USD 32,700.

The event will be played over 54 holes and it will be preceded by a star-studded Pro-Am event on August 28 and 29, which will see top golfers play alongside amateurs.

The Legends Tour is a professional golf tour for male golfers aged 50 and over, run by the PGA European Tour. It began as European Senior Tour in 1992 and was rechristened as Legends Tour since 2020.

Jeev is the host of the tournament, co-sanctioned by the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI). The event will see a participation from 17 countries.

Randhawa qualified after winning the Legends Tour's tough and challenging Qualifying School finals in Turkey.

"Since I am the host, I will ensure that I don't win the tournament this weekend," the 52-year-old Jeev joked at the press conference to launch the tournament.

"It's great for the country's golfers and for world golf in general. Golfing career is over when you are 40 or 45. But with the Legends Tour, you can have a second innings after reaching 50 years."

Randhawa, also 52, said not only the money, a golfer can also maintain the competitive spirit by continuing to play in the Legends Tour.

"It's good for the budding Indian golfers and amateurs. They will now know that a golfer can play another 10 years after retirement," he said.

"By playing in the Legends Tour, you are keeping your golfing passion and competitive spirit intact as well as keeping yourself fit." Jeev (twice Asia No. 1 in 2006 and 2008) and Randhawa (once Asia No. 1 in 2002) are well-known names around the world with numerous appearances in Majors too.

Jeev has won four times each on the European and Japan Tours, one on the Korean Tour besides six times on the Asian Tour. Randhawa has won eight times on the Asian Tour and once in Japan.

Jeev, who has played all four Majors, was the first Indian to tee up at the Masters at the Augusta National in 2007. He was a former captain of Asia in EurAsia Cup (Europe vs Asia team event). He has five top 10 finishes on the Legends Tour since 2022.

Besides Jeev and Randhawa, there are other seven Indians in the fray. They are Mukesh Kumar, Digvijay Singh, Harmeet Kahlon, Vijay Kumar, all past winners on the Asian Tour, Amandeep Johl, Vishal Singh and Sanjay Kumar.

The 55-year-old Campbell, who has also won 15 other tournaments around the world, said, "I started playing golf when I was 10. My grandmother told me that time when I achieve success, I should remember I have two hands, one for receiving and another for giving back," he said.

"Legends Tour is great in that way. You keep playing after retirement and inspire youngsters to take up the game. We have to give back to the game."

US OPEN

Djokovic starts his bid for record 25th Grand Slam title with straight-set win

AP ■ NEW YORK

Novak Djokovic began his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title and tied Roger Federer with his 89th match win at the U.S. Open by defeating qualifier Radu Albot of Moldova 6-2, 6-2, 6-4.

The second-seeded Djokovic, again wearing a gray sleeve over his surgically repaired right knee, was competing for the first time since claiming an Olympic gold medal three weeks ago at the Paris Games, the last significant achievement that was missing from his resume.

"It's always challenging to start, particularly when you haven't played on this surface for five, six months,

and coming off an Olympic gold and playing on clay. I haven't had any official matches before the U.S. Open. So I'm expecting to be probably challenged a little bit more in the opening rounds," he said.

"Hopefully, I can play better each day." He said his knee, which was operated on in early June, feels fine.

Djokovic, a 37-year-old from Serbia, improved to 18-0 in first-round matches at Flushing Meadows and is now 89-13 overall at the hard-court tournament, which he's won four times, including a year ago. He's never lost earlier than the third round at the U.S. Open; Albot never has been past the third round in 30 appearances at majors.



The retired Federer went 89-14 in New York, with five consecutive championships from 2004 to 2008.

He's the most recent man to win the U.S. Open at least twice in a row. Among men, only Jimmy Connors, who went 98-17, won more matches than Djokovic and Federer at the event.

Djokovic never has lost a Grand Slam match to someone ranked as low as No. 138 Albot. And Albot is now 0-12 against opponents ranked in the top 10.

Next up for Djokovic is a countryman, familiar opponent and friend, Laslo Djere, who advanced with a 6-7 (7), 6-1, 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-2 victory over Jan-Lennard Struff. A year ago, Djokovic

met Djere in the third round at the U.S. Open; Djere took the first two sets before Djokovic came through in five.

"It's a guaranteed third round for one of the Serbian guys. Hopefully it's going to be me. But Djere is a guy that really likes playing on a big stage.

I think he also loves the conditions here. It's a bit quicker. Ball stays low. He has a very flat backhand particularly and very good serve, great return. He's physically as fit as anybody," Djokovic said. "I remember very well our match. It was a very tough match.

I'm going to try to analyze that and hopefully do some things even better than I did last year."

New Champions League format promises more

AP ■ GENEVA

The new Champions League format this season will see more teams playing more games for more prize money. On Thursday, the Union of European Football Associations makes the draw in Monaco for the match schedule of the new single-standings league phase that replaces the traditional group stage.

The first new Champions League format since 2003 promises more of almost everything that Europe's wealthiest and most influential clubs wanted from UEFA.

There are four more places in a 36-team lineup; at least eight games each instead of six; Champions League games scheduled in January for the first time; a prize money rise of at least 25% to a minimum of 2.5 billion euros (USD 2.8 billion).

There also was more evidence, at UEFA's European Championship this summer, that constant expansion of international competitions is leaving players tired and unable to perform at their best year-round. The new league phase in European club soccer's marquee event will have 144 total games compared to 96 in the group stage last season.

The "key aims," UEFA said, is to "improve competitive balance and sporting interest and in the process increase the number of meaningful matches - matches with something at stake for both sides - throughout the competition."

In the eighth and final round, all 36 teams play on the same January 29 evening to finalize the



standings which will decide which eight teams advance directly to the pre-quarterfinals - and with what seedings in a tennis-like knockout bracket - as well as which 16 go into a new knockout playoff round in February, and which 12 are eliminated.

"We simulated that qualification should be possible with an average of 7.6 points, which means two victories and two draws," said UEFA's head of competitions strategy, Stéphane Anselmo.

Why change such a successful competition?

Money, mostly, though that's not the only reason. The Champions League in Europe has for the past 32 years showcased the highest quality play in world soccer. It let UEFA steer billions of euros (dollars) of prize money to clubs that pay the highest transfer fees and salaries.

Still, influential officials at the European Club Association

(ECA) got bored of the group stage, saying it was too repetitive and lacked drama. They wanted more games against stronger opponents that would be more valued by broadcasters, viewers and new fans worldwide. Their leverage over UEFA was potentially launching their breakaway competition.

The road to agreeing on the format was rocky. A controversial first proposal in 2019, favoring storied clubs, was stopped by a

backlash from mid-ranked clubs and domestic leagues.

There was intense turmoil sparked by the failed Super League launch in April 2021 by most of the same club officials who negotiated Champions League reform with UEFA.

Final format approval came in May 2022 - when Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were exiled from the talks and still pursued UEFA in court - and it was broadly what the rebel Super

League clubs had negotiated.

instead of four last season.

What is the new format?

Out goes the group-stage format played for 21 seasons where 32 teams were put into eight groups of four teams from a seeded draw. The top two in each group advanced to the pre-quarterfinals. Groups gave each team six games from September into December, playing each rival once at home and once away.

In comes a single-standings league - 36 teams each playing eight games against eight different opponents through January.

The top eight in the standings go directly to the pre-quarterfinals in March. Teams ranked ninth to 24th go into the knockout playoffs in February. The bottom 12 teams are eliminated.

In the playoffs, teams ranked Nos. 9-16 are seeded in the draw to play second legs at home against unseeded teams Nos. 17-24.

Who gets the four extra places?

Two for countries whose teams collectively had the best record in UEFA club competitions in the previous season. That was Italy and Germany so the fifth-placed teams in Serie A and the Bundesliga qualified: Bologna and Borussia Dortmund.

The fifth-ranked national league (based on five years of results in UEFA club competitions) gets a third direct entry. That is currently France and Brest was third in Ligue 1.

An extra place goes to the qualifying rounds path for national champions from lower-ranked countries. They now play for five total qualifying places

How will the draw be done?

The 36 teams come out of four seeding pots graded by each team's "UEFA club coefficient" - its ranking by results in five years of European competitions. The top-seeded pot contains recent Champions League winners and beaten finalists, plus Leipzig and Barcelona.

When a team's ball is drawn, its slate of eight opponents - two from each seeding pot, one to play at home and one away - will be allocated by a software program and displayed within seconds.

Match dates will be confirmed Saturday, to avoid city clashes with Europa League and Conference League games being drawn Friday in Monaco. Those lower-tier competitions also are a 36-team single-standings league. Conference League teams play just six games.

Billion-dollar prize money fund

Winning the Champions League title in 2023 earned Manchester City 135 million euros (USD 151 million) from UEFA. This season's winner can reach 150 million euros (USD 168 million), with total competition revenue boosted by selling 189 total games instead of 125.

Commercial strategy is managed by a UEFA-ECA joint venture, and new sponsors for the Champions League include a cryptocurrency trading platform and a betting site.

Each of the 36 teams gets a basic 18.6 million euros (USD 20.8 million), then 2.1 million euros (USD 2.4 million) for five total qualifying places