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THE RISE OF
SUNITA KEJRIWAL

WORLD 8
ISRAEL'S WEST BANK OPERATION
KILLS NINE PALESTINIANS

MONEY 10
NIFTY GAINS marginally
TO HIT LIFETIME HIGH

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PATHAK NAMED
INDIA GOALKEEPER
IN TROPHY SQUAD
11 SPORTS

PRESIDENT MURMU READS THE RIOT ACT TO MEN: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu has voiced her dismay and horror in her first public remarks regarding the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata earlier this month and said "enough is enough." She urged society to confront the chronic issue of violence against women and should force honest self-inspection to uncover the roots of the malaise. In a statement, President Murmu said the gruesome incident of rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata has left the nation shocked. "I was dismayed and horrified when I came to hear of it. What is more depressing is the fact that it was not the only incident of its kind; it is part of a series of crimes

against women. Even as students, doctors and citizens were protesting in Kolkata, criminals remained on the prowl elsewhere. The victims include even kindergarten girls. No civilised society can allow daughters and sisters to be subjected to such atrocities. The nation is bound to be outraged, and so am I," she said. "On the occasion of Women's Day last year, I had shared my thoughts and hopes about women's empowerment in the form of a newspaper article. I remain an optimist, thanks to our past achievements in empowering women. I consider myself as an example of that spectacular journey of women empowerment in India. But I myself feel deeply anguished when I hear about brutality against women in any

part of the country," President Murmu said. "More recently, I was in a unique predicament when some schoolchildren who had come to celebrate Rakhi at the Rashtrapati Bhavan asked me innocently if they could be assured that there would be no recurrence of the Nirbhaya-type incident in future. I told them that though the State is committed to protect every citizen, training in self-defence and martial arts is essential for all, particularly girls, to make them stronger. But that's not a guarantee for their security as women's vulnerability is influenced by many factors. Obviously, the full answer to that question can only come from our society." President Murmu said, "For that to happen, what is needed first of all



is honest, unbiased self-introspection. The time has come when we as a society need to ask ourselves some difficult questions. Where have we erred? And what can we do to remove the errors? Without finding out the answer to that question, the half of our population cannot live as freely as the other half. "To answer it, let me explain it right at the beginning. Our Constitution granted equality to all, including women, when it was only an ideal in many parts of the world. The State then created institutions to establish this equality, wherever needed, and promoted it with a series of schemes and initiatives. Civil society came forward and supplemented the State's outreach in this regard. Visionary leaders in

all spheres of society pushed for gender equality. Finally, there were exceptional, feisty women who made it possible for their less fortunate sisters to benefit from this social revolution. That has been the saga of women's empowerment." She said, "Yet, this journey has not been without its obstacles. Women have had to fight for every inch of ground they have won. Social prejudices as well as some customs and practices have always opposed the expansion of women's rights. This is a rather deplorable mindset. I won't call it a male mindset, because it has little to do with the gender of the person: there are many, many men who don't have it. This mindset sees the female as a lesser human being, less powerful, less capable, less intelligent. Those

who share such views then go further and see the female as an object. "It is this objectification of women by a few that is behind the crimes against women. It is ingrained deeply in the minds of such people. Let me also note here that, regrettably, this is the case not only in India, but across the world. Difference between one place and the next is more of a degree than kind." President Murmu said "Countering this mindset is a task for both the State and the society. In India, over the years, the two have fought hard to change the wrong attitude. There have been laws and there have been social campaigns. Yet, there is something that continues to come in the way to torment us. Continued on Page 2

Cabinet approves massive boost to manufacturing horizons Bangla Bandh call by BJP unsettles West Bengal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a determined effort to boost domestic industry and create jobs, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved establishment of 12 new industrial cities in 10 States with an estimated investment of ₹28,602 crore. More than one million direct jobs will be created in these projects. Spanning 10 States and strategically located along six major corridors, these projects represent a significant leap forward in India's quest for enhanced manufacturing capabilities and rapid economic growth. These industrial areas will be located at Khurpia in Uttarakhand, Rajpura-Patala in Punjab, Dighi in Maharashtra, Palakkad in Kerala, Agra and Prayagraj in UP, Gaya in Bihar, Zaaheerabad in Telangana, Orvakal and Kopparthi in AP, and Jodhpur-Pali in Rajasthan. The Union Cabinet has approved 12 new project proposals under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) with an estimated



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw briefs the media over Cabinet decisions in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

investment of ₹28,602 crore, said Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw after the Cabinet meeting. The move will transform the industrial landscape of the country, creating a robust network of industrial nodes and cities that will significantly boost economic growth and global competitiveness. They will be developed as green field smart cities of global standards. The approach ensures that the cities are equipped with advanced infrastructure that

supports sustainable and efficient industrial operations. The NICDP is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, with an estimated 1 million direct jobs and up to 3 million indirect jobs being created through planned industrialisation. These projects will create an investment potential of about ₹1.52 lakh crore. The NICDP is designed to foster a vibrant industrial ecosystem by facilitating investments by large anchor

industries and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). These industrial nodes will act as catalysts for achieving \$2 trillion exports by 2030, reflecting the Government's vision of a self-reliant and globally competitive India, a Government statement said. It also said India will soon wear a grand necklace of industrial smart cities and termed the decision as landmark. The new industrial cities will be developed as green field smart cities of global standards, built "ahead of demand" on the "plug-n-play" and 'walk-to-work' concepts. This approach ensures that the cities are equipped with advanced infrastructure that supports sustainable and efficient industrial operations. Aligned with the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, the projects will feature multi-mode connectivity infrastructure, ensuring seamless movement of people, goods, and services. The industrial cities are envisioned to be growth centers for transformation of the whole region. Continued on Page 2

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
KOLKATA

Violent clashes marred the BJP-sponsored 12-hour shutdown in West Bengal on Wednesday, disrupting road and train services, and sparking scuffles between the police-ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) workers and bandh supporters at several pockets of the State. The BJP claimed the bandh was successful while the TMC said it has failed to evoke overwhelming response. Several BJP leaders, including former MPs Roopa Ganguly and Locket Chatterjee, Raja Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya and MLA Agnimitra Paul, were detained for blocking roads and urging people to enforce the bandh since morning. The most significant of these clashes was reported from Bhatpara in North 24 Parganas district where, the BJP alleged, TMC goons fired multiple rounds on its local leader Priyangu Pandey's car and shared a purported video of the crime on social media platforms. He claimed that the



BJP leader Rahul Sinha (sitting, 3rd from left) along with party workers raises slogans as security personnel stand guard during the party's 12-hour general strike in Bengal to protest the police action against participants of Tuesday's 'Nabanna Abhijan' rally which was held against the RG Kar incident, in Kolkata, on Wednesday PTI

Trinamool workers opened fire at him and hurled bombs when he was travelling in a car in Bhatpara. Four people have been arrested, the Kolkata Police said. The shutdown affected daily life in the State with many people choosing to remain indoors apprehending trouble on the roads. In Kolkata, the usual weekday flurry was missing with a lesser number of buses, auto-rickshaws and taxis plying. Private vehicles were also significantly fewer, even as

markets and shops remained open as usual. Schools and colleges were open, though the number of students was less. In many private offices, attendance was low with employees asked to work from home. However, attendance was as usual in Government offices. An Eastern Railway official said bandh supporters blocked tracks at 49 places under its jurisdiction in the State in both Sealdah and Howrah divisions. While the blockades were lifted at most

places, it continued for longer durations in nine stations, mostly in the Sealdah South section, he said. BJP workers demonstrated at various stations in North and South 24 Parganas, Hooghly, Nadia and Murshidabad districts in support of the bandh. Suburban railway services were also disrupted when bandh supporters dropped banana leaves on overhead electrical wires at various places, railway officials confirmed. The violence was followed by a showdown between local BJP leader Arjun Singh and his TMC counterpart Somnath Shyam, with both leaders and their supporters standing face to face in altercation further triggering tensions and the police finding it tough to disperse the warring groups. "Miscreants owing allegiance to the Trinamool Congress fired the shots. If police are not around we will show TMC what people's power looks like," Singh said. Shyam countered by saying that the BJP leader was trying to "incite violence in a peaceful area". Continued on Page 2



Noose tightens, 17 cases filed for Mollywood sleaze

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) consisting of women IPS officers commenced its probe into allegations of sexual abuse made by Malayalam film actresses against senior artistes like Mukesh, Siddique, Babu Raj, Manian Pilli Raju, Jaayasooriya and movie maker Ranjith (who quit as chairman of Kerala Chalachitra Academy, the Kerala Government-run institution for holding International Film Festival of the State). Sources in the SIT told *The Pioneer* that they would ask Mukesh and Ranjith to present themselves before the team for questioning. Bengali film actress Sreelekha Mitra has lodged a complaint against Ranjith by e-mail with the SIT about the harassment meted out to her by the movie maker in 2009. Minu Muneer, Sonia Malhotra and Revathi Sampath are the other artists who have complained against their male co-artists alleging rape, physical assault and violation of modesty. Muneer said in her complaint that Mukesh, who is a CPI(M) MLA asked her to sleep with him for a positive response to her application for the membership of Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA), a stepping stone to the film industry's welfare programme. Continued on Page 2

Bail for laundering funds remains the rule, says SC

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a judgment having significant implications, the Supreme Court on Wednesday reiterated that the principle of bail is the rule and jail is the exception applied even to money laundering cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) while granting bail to one Prem Prakash, an alleged aide of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in a money laundering case. This comes a day after the Supreme Court granted relief to Bharat Rashtia Samithi leader K Kavitha, who was arrested in March in a money laundering case linked to Delhi's now-scrapped liquor policy. Earlier this month, AAP leader Manish Sisodia was also granted bail in the same case. A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan held that liberty of individual is always the rule and deprivation of the same by procedure established by law, is the exception. The Bench made it clear that the stringent conditions for bail under PMLA will override this principle. "The appeal is allowed and impugned order dated 22.03.2024 of the High Court of Jharkhand at Ranchi is quashed



File photo: Ranjan Dimri

and set aside," the Bench said in its 44-page order. "...the appellant has satisfied the twin conditions under Section 45. Inasmuch as from the material on record, this Court is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the appellant is not guilty of the offence of money laundering as alleged under Sections 3 and 4 of the PMLA and the Court is further satisfied that the appellant is not likely to commit any offence if enlarged on bail," it said. The Bench referred to the August 9 verdict in the money laundering and corruption cases involving former Deputy Chief Minister

Sisodia to say that liberty of the individual is always the rule and deprivation of it by procedure established by law is the exception. The Bench said, "Relying on the judgment in Manish Sisodia case, we have said that even in PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act), bail is a rule and jail the exception." The Bench referred to Section 45 of the PMLA that mentions twin conditions for bail — there should be prima facie satisfaction that the accused has not committed the offence and that he is not likely to commit any offence while on bail. All that Section 45 specifies, the court said, is the conditions to be met for bail. "Liberty of the individual is always the rule and deprivation, by procedure established by law, the exception. Twin test does not take away this principle," it added. The bench clarified that any incriminating statement made by an accused in custody in a PMLA case before an investigating officer will not be admissible in court. "It will be extremely unfair to make such statements admissible as it will be against all canons of justice." Continued on Page 2

UP Government deals death blow to anti-national social media

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
LUCKNOW/NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh Government has come up with a new social media policy that will not only regulate content on platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and X but also encourage influencers to promote the State Government initiatives. Under the policy, posting objectionable, anti-national content will be considered a serious offence that carries penalties. The State Government will also pay up to Rs 8 lakh per month to influencers and holders of these accounts on different social media platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube depending on their followers and subscribers. Yogi Adityanath's cabinet approved the Uttar Pradesh Digital Media Policy, 2024, prepared by the State's Information Department, on Tuesday. "In case of uploading objectionable content on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and YouTube, legal action has been arranged against the concerned agency/ firm as per rules. Under no circumstances should the content be indecent, obscene and anti-

national," stated the Press note signed by Principal Secretary Sanjay Prasad. The police will also help create jobs, the statement noted. According to the digital media policy, posting anti-national content is a serious offence that will carry severe consequences including penalties ranging from three years' imprisonment to life term. Earlier, such actions were addressed under Sections 66E and 66F of the Information Technology (IT) Act, which deal with privacy violations and cyber-terrorism, respectively. Under the new policy, digital mediums like X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram and YouTube will also be encouraged to display content, videos, tweets, posts, reels based on the schemes and achievements of the State Government by listing the related agencies or firms and issuing advertisements. "With the release of this policy, the residents of the State who are residing in different parts of the country and abroad will be ensured to get employment in large numbers," it said. Continued on Page 2

ED slaps DMK MP with ₹908 crore penalty over FERA violation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday said a penalty of ₹908 crore has been imposed on DMK MP S Jagathrathchakan and his family members in a case related to the alleged violation of foreign exchange rules. The federal agency issued a statement which said properties worth ₹89.19 crore, seized in September 2020, have been confiscated following an adjudication order issued on August 26 under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). Jagathrathchakan, 76, represents the Arakkonam Lok Sabha seat in Tamil Nadu. He had earlier served as a Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting in the Union Government. The agency said a FEMA violation probe was initiated against the MP, a businessman from Tamil Nadu, his family members and a related Indian entity. This investigation, it said, resulted in the passing of seizure order, dated September 11, 2020, under section 37A of FEMA, for various movable and immovable properties in the name of the MP and his family members. These are valued at ₹89.19 crore. "The properties worth ₹89.19 crore which were seized in terms of section 37A of FEMA were also ordered for confiscation, and penalty of ₹908 crore is levied vide Adjudication Order dated 26/08/2024," the ED said. Continued on Page 2

Medal winning hockey player at Paris Olympics humiliated by Kerala Government

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The legendary hockey star of India PR Sreejesh (member of the Indian hockey team that won the bronze medal in Paris Olympics) and his family were humiliated by the Government of Kerala which has shocked the sporting fraternity in the State. The CPI (M)-led Kerala Government had invited Sreejesh to Thiruvananthapuram to felicitate him in a State function for his feat in the hockey field. The hockey star reached Thiruvananthapuram

accompanied by his family members. But what happened unknown to Sreejesh was the last-hour cancellation of the felicitation programme. It seems Sreejesh's act of speaking to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and attending the reception hosted by the latter had not gone down well with the Marxists and Muslim members in the Council of Ministers that may have led to the ungainly treatment meted out to the hockey icon. The reason why the reception was cancelled, according to sources in the State Secretariat,



was the differences between Education Minister V Sivankutty and Sports Minister V Abdul Rehman over who should foot the bill. While Sivankutty is a CPI (M) ideologue, Abdul Rehman is an erstwhile Congress leader who switched sides and joined the CPI (M) hours before the announcement of the 2021 election schedule. A business baron, Rehman wields enormous influence in the CPI (M). The sources would have us believe that both the ministers wanted to teach Sreejesh an

unforgettable lesson, and hence the last-minute cancellation of the programme. It was only on Tuesday morning that an unwary Sreejesh was informed that the felicitation stood cancelled and that he would be "summoned" to the capital city later on. Left in the lurch, Sreejesh and family decided to turn an unpleasant incident into a spiritually uplifting experience. They visited for "darshan" Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple and Lord Ganapathy Temple at Pazhavangadi where the hockey wizard came across Union Minister Suresh Gopi. Gopi was taken aback to hear about the sudden cancellation of the felicitation, and took Sreejesh and family to the former's residence and treated them to a sumptuous Onam lunch. Sreejesh's wife, children, father and mother had a nice time with the actor-turned-politician and took selfies before boarding the train to return home on Tuesday. Since he happens to be an employee of the Kerala Government, Sreejesh is not in a position to make his feelings public.

Doctors on strike refuse to listen to Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The striking doctors of the RG Kar Medical College Hospital and other medical colleges remained nonchalant to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's veiled threat on Wednesday asking them to resume work "as I do not want to take stringent action against you that might spoil your career."

Even as the doctors carried out long processions in various parts of Kolkata, Banerjee from a students' rally in central Kolkata said, that she too was sympathetic towards their cause and that she had done all that she could do to get justice for their departed colleague — a postgraduate lady doctor whose semi nude corpse was recovered from inside the seminar of the RG Kar Medical College in the morning of August 9 — but appealed to them to resume work as many poor people were getting affected by doctors' strike.

She said, "even the Supreme Court has given us the power to act ... unlike some authorities elsewhere we did not file any FIR against the doctors in Kolkata because we had been



very sympathetic towards their movement ... but we will have to consider that the greater cause is suffering ... the poor people are not getting their treatment ... already 16 days have passed since the incident took place ... now I request you to come back to work ...

"I do not want to register FIR and take action against the doctors who have long careers ahead of them ... we want them to shine and prosper in life ... we appreciate that ... but they will also have to understand the Government's compulsion ... so I request them to join work."

The doctors however remained adamant on their demand saying they would not join work till they get justice for their departed colleague.

"It is not only a heinous crime but an unprecedented crime that has taken place where a

lady doctor has been raped and murdered inside her work place ... which has hit everyone's confidence ... if justice is not delivered ... if the culprits are not arrested then there is no point creating these hullabaloo for these many days ... so we are not going to work ... we want justice to be delivered first," one of the agitating doctors said.

Meanwhile, in a parallel and related development the Indian Medical Association on Wednesday cancelled the membership of Dr Sandip Ghosh the ex-principal of RGMCH. The IMA step comes a day after the Enforcement Directorate registered a case of economic offence on the RG Kar issue.

"It is going to be a tough situation for Sandip Ghosh as he may get arrested soon and all his corrupt works will soon come to the fore," Akhtar Ali a former Assistant Superintendent of the medical college said.

His statement came almost in tandem with the Central Bureau of Investigation officials revisiting the RG Kar campus to inspect the accounts books, sources said.

Ghulam Nabi Azad not to campaign in Assembly polls, cites health reasons

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In his heydays in politics, Ghulam Nabi Azad was labeled the 'lucky mascot' and 'master strategist'. He won many difficult elections in his long political career. But ever since Azad severed his ties with the Congress party he has been struggling to find a foothold and consolidate his support base in his home state.

Azad launched his political party Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) in September 2022 and campaigned extensively across different corners of Jammu and Kashmir to prepare ground in support of the party.

The party's performance was not up to the mark in the recently held Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir. Azad was left stranded midway after several senior party leaders jumped the ship in search of greener pastures. The exit of leaders like Taj Mohiuddin, Haji Abdul Rashid Dar, Sham Lal Bhatt, Abdul Majeed Wani and Gulzar Wani among others had weakened the DPAP. Upset with these developments Azad was maintaining a low profile to avoid media glare.

Ironically, even before launch-



ing the poll campaign for the upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Ghulam Nabi Azad on Wednesday communicated to his party workers and senior leaders that he has decided not to campaign for his Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) owing to health reasons. He also advised party candidates that they could withdraw from the race due to his absence in electioneering.

In a statement issued to media houses in Srinagar, Azad said that on the night of August 25, he suffered acute chest pain in Srinagar.

"Following morning, I took the earliest available flight to

Delhi and was admitted to AIIMS hospital, where I stayed for two days," the statement added. While doctors assured him that there was no immediate danger, Azad said that he was dealing with other health concerns that require both medication and rest. "These unforeseen circumstances have forced me to step back from the campaign trail," he added.

Meanwhile, J&K BJP Chief Ravinder Raina is also facing tough times as party workers have come out in the open at several places in protest questioning the selection of candidates for the Assembly segments by the party's high command.

Maharashtra Government apologetic over Shivaji statue collapse

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a damage-control exercise undertaken ahead of the State Assembly polls, Maharashtra's deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar on Wednesday apologised publicly to "13 crore people of the people of the state" over the collapse of the 35-foot tall Shivaji statue in Sindhudurg district, even as the Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) and the ruling BJP workers had a face-off at Malvan where the statue crashed on Monday.

The political temperatures in the state rose in the state over the collapse of Shivaji's statue for the third consecutive day, as the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) announced its plan to hold a "Jode Maro" (hit with slippers) protest against the MahaYuti government in Mumbai on September 1.

The 35-foot tall Shivaji statue at 12.30 pm on August 26, within nine months after it was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 4, 2023 as part of the Navy day celebrations. In an apparent effort to blunt the continued protests by the Opposition, Ajit Pawar tendered apology to the people of

the state and said that the state government would initiate stern action against the contractor and state government officials responsible for the collapse of the statue of Marath king at Malvan in Maharashtra's coastal Konkan region.

Speaking at a public function held at Latur in Marathwada region, Ajit Pawar said: "Shivaji Maharaj is our deity. The collapse of the Shivaji statue at Rajkot fort in Sindhudurg has come as a big shock for us. On behalf of the MahaYuti government, I apologise to the 13 crore people of the state.... We will take stern action against the contractor and officials responsible for the erection of the Shivaji statue."

Ajit Pawar also said that the state government would re-erect Shivaji's statue at the same spot where it collapsed on Monday.

In a related development, the supporters of Union Minister and senior BJP leader Narayan Rane and Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aditya Thackeray virtually clashed at Malvan where both the leaders were on a visit to inspect the site where Shivaji's statue collapsed on Monday.

DU colleges hold orientation event

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Several Delhi University (DU) colleges conducted orientation programmes on Wednesday for The new batch of undergraduate students who are set to attend their first day of college for the academic year 2024-25 on Thursday.

However, DU's St. Stephen's College cancelled its orientation programme, which was scheduled for 10 am on Wednesday, without stating any reason.

"Please be informed that the orientation programme scheduled for 10 am on August 28 now stands cancelled. Regular classes will begin from August 29. Please be seated in the college hall at 9 am for the morning assembly," said a note from the college principal John Varghese.

Additionally, to help students acclimatise to their new environment, colleges held orientation programmes and provided an introduction to campus life and an opportunity to meet college officials. So far, DU has enrolled nearly 68,000 students across 1,559 undergraduate programmes offered by 69 colleges and departments, following two rounds of admissions.

This year, the university offered admission to 90,644 candidates—nearly 19,000 more than its sanctioned capacity of 71,600 seats—to ensure all seats are optimally filled. The admission



process is ongoing, with a third round scheduled to admit students through performance-based programmes and supernumerary quotas, including those for children/widows of armed forces personnel (CW), extra-curricular activities (ECA) and sports.

The schedule for this round will be announced soon. Moreover, around 27,554 candidates were able to secure their preferred college and course combination this year, aligning with their higher preferences. There was an air of uncertainty in the admission process this year due to a delay in the announcement of the CUET results which were deferred amid allegations of irregularities.

The session was originally slated to begin on August 1. Several student organisations and teacher associations have raised concerns over the delay in beginning the academic calendar.

They said it would shorten the students' vacation time and put an extra burden on teachers to finish the syllabus in less time.

Modi chairs PRAGATI meeting to review seven key projects progress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a PRAGATI meeting to review the progress of seven key projects which included two projects relating to road connectivity, two rail projects and one project each of the Coal, Power and Water Resources sectors, having a cumulative worth of around Rs 76,500 crore. All these projects are related to 11 States and UTs viz., Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Odisha, Goa, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Delhi. This was the first meeting in the third term.

Prime Minister Modi emphasised the fact that every official in the government, at Central or State level, must be sensitized about the fact that delay in projects not only leads to cost escalation but also deprives the public of the intended benefits of the project, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement.

Prime Minister Modi earlier on Wednesday chaired the meeting of the 44th edition of PRA-

GATI, the ICT-based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving the Centre and state governments. This was the first meeting in the third term.

Prime Minister Modi said that the 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' campaign can help safeguard the environment while undertaking project development. During the interaction, the prime minister also reviewed AMRUT 2.0 and public grievances related to Jal Jeevan Mission.

These projects together inter-alia address water issues in the urban and rural areas. Prime Minister Modi emphasised that water is a basic human need and quality disposal of grievances at the district level as well as state level must be ensured by the state governments, according to the statement.

Adequate Operation and Maintenance mechanism of Jal Jeevan projects is critical for its success and the prime minister suggested involvement of women self help groups where possible and skilling of youth in Operation and Maintenance works, the statement said.

PowerGrid acquires SPV project

PNS ■ GURUGRAM

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) - a Maharatna CPSE under Ministry of Power has on 28th August 2024, acquired the Project Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) viz. "Bhadla-III Power Transmission Limited" for establishing the transmission system associated with "Additional Transmission System for Evacuation of Power from Bhadla-III PS as Part of Rajasthan REZ Phase-III Scheme (20 GW)".

POWERGRID emerged as the successful bidder for the aforementioned project after competing with other private sector player and emerging as successful bidder in Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) process.



Noose tightens, 17 cases...

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Meanwhile Mukesh accused Muneer of blackmailing him and demanded a lakh of rupees for her silence. There is a complaint filed by Geeth Vijayan, a star of the yesteryears that she was molested by movie makers in 1991.

Minu Muneer alleged to the media that she has been receiving threat calls in her phone and the police had identified that the calls were made from Andhra Pradesh. Though Wednesday was by and large peaceful from the film fraternity, a silent war of nerves is going on among various camps of AMMA. Actor Jagadeesh said that the

decision of AMMA office bearers to quit en masse following the disclosures made by the actresses was shocking.

"They should have shown courage and presence of mind to tackle the situation," he told reporters.

Joy Mathew, a Leftist movie artist, demanded strong action by the law enforcing agencies against the perpetrators of the crime. But Shanthivila Dineshan, movie maker with more than three decades of professional experience in the movie industry told The Pioneer that there was nothing new in the allegations or disclosures made by the female artists.

Delhi Govt accused of hiding truth behind Delhi Jal Board 'scam'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, Vijender Gupta, has blamed the Delhi Government for attempting to hide the truth behind astounding financial irregularities in Delhi Jal Board. Citing a report by the Chief Secretary of the Delhi Government, Vijender Gupta pointed out that due to the rampant corruption in the Delhi Government, the balance sheets of the Delhi Jal Board for the years 2011-22 and 2022-23 have not been prepared, which has prevented the CAG from conducting an audit.

Gupta expressed surprise that this report, which exposes the irregularities of the Delhi Jal Board, was presented by the Chief Secretary on 15th March 2024, upon being called after a resolution passed in the assembly, but instead of presenting this report in the Assembly, it was kept hidden in the files.

According to the rules, if a report was requested from the Chief Secretary through the assembly and he provided it to the minister, then why was a

copy of this report not given to the opposition MLAs? The reason is clear: the government wanted to hide its corruption and malpractices.

He also mentioned that earlier, the Delhi government had not prepared the balance sheets for 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21. However, following an order from the High Court, the balance sheets for these three years were prepared, and due to the delay, the CAG audit was also delayed. It is evident from this that the Delhi Government's intention to not prepare the balance sheets was to hide its financial irregularities and corruption.

However, after these three years, the balance sheets for the next two years, i.e., 2021-22 and 2022-23, have again been stalled and are still pending. Gupta further stated that the current Water Minister, Atishi, often complains about not receiving funds, but the reality is that the Delhi Jal Board is not utilising the funds allocated to it in the budget.

He alleged that the Delhi Jal Board inflates its budget but is unable to use the allocated funds according to the sanctioned conditions.

ED slaps DMK MP with ₹908 cr..

From Page 1

The 2020 seizure order was "set aside" by the Competent Authority (under the FEMA) in February 2021 and the ED challenged it before the Appellate Tribunal where, the ED said, the "appeal is pending".

Later, the agency filed a complaint in December 2021 before the FEMA Adjudicating Authority against the MP, his family and a linked company "charging them for violations of various FEMA provisions, particularly in respect of their investment to the tune of Rs 42 crore in a shell company incorporated in Singapore in

2017". The accused were also charged by the agency with "acquisition and holding" of Singapore foreign shares and its subsequent transfer amongst the family members "in defiance of" extant provisions of FEMA, and also with regard to the investment of around Rs 9 crore made into a Sri Lankan entity.

This complaint was filed with a prayer to confiscate the properties seized under the order dated September 11, 2020, it said. The ED said the notices (Jagathrachakan and family) filed individual writ petitions before the Madras High Court.

UP Government...

From Page 1

For listing, each of X, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube has been divided into four categories based on subscribers and followers, it said. "The category-wise maximum payout limit for payments to account holders or operators or influencers of X, Facebook, Instagram has been fixed at Rs 5 lakh, Rs 4 lakh, Rs 3 lakh and Rs 2 lakh per month respectively.

"The category wise maximum payout limit for videos, shorts, podcast payments on YouTube has been fixed at Rs 8 lakh, Rs 7 lakh, Rs 6 lakh and Rs 4 lakh per month, respectively," it added.

While the BJP lauded the policy, saying it was an "innovative move" of the Yogi

Adityanath-led government by creating employment and also checking rumour-spreading on social media, the opposition parties called it an attempt to curb freedom of expression on social media and misuse of public funds.

BJP spokesperson Rakesh Tripathi said, "The Yogi Adityanath government moves forward with innovations.

"It pays attention to the changes happening in society. Digital media policy will create new jobs. "Those who play with law and order by spreading rumours on social media will be strictly punished. UP's social media policy will become an example across the country," he said.

The opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Congress said the state government's move is aimed at stifling freedom of expression.

Bail for laundering funds...

From Page 1

In a 13-page judgement on BRS leader K Kavitha, uploaded on the apex court website on Wednesday, a bench comprising Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan reiterated the well-established principle that "bail is the rule and refusal is an exception". Referring to various judgements, including in the case of Manish Sisodia, a former Delhi deputy chief minister and a co-accused, the verdict said, "The prolonged incarceration before being pronounced guilty of an offence should not be permitted to become punishment without trial."

"We had further observed that the fundamental right of liberty provided under Article 21 of

the Constitution is superior to the statutory restrictions (of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act)," the judgement said.

The 'bail is the rule, and jail is the exception' principle was first used in the 1977 landmark judgment of the 'State of Rajasthan vs Balchand alias Baliya' case. In 2019, the court granted bail to P Chidambaram in the INX Media case, despite the seriousness of economic offenses, affirming that the fundamental jurisprudence of bail remained unchanged. In November 2020, the Supreme Court extended interim bail to journalist Arnab Goswami, highlighting the critical nature of personal liberty and the principle of bail as the norm.

Bangla Bandh...

From Page 1

The 'Bangla Bandh', which began at 6 am, was called by the BJP in protest against Tuesday's police action on participants of 'Nabanna Abhijan' or march to the secretariat, organised by the newly formed students' group Chatra Samaj over the rape and murder of the doctor at RG Kar hospital.

Ganguly and Paul were detained from south Kolkata's Gariahat area when they were urging traders to down their shutters and requesting people to support the bandh. Chatterjee along with party leaders Rahul Sinha and Tamaghna Ghosh were detained from Shyambazar, while Bhattacharya was picked up in Salt Lake. Kolkata's councillor Sajal

Ghosh was arrested from his residence after BJP workers scuffled with TMC supporters while trying to enforce the bandh in the nearby Koley Market. His wife Tania Ghosh alleged that police held him without a warrant. Later, Deputy Commissioner (Central) Indira Mukherjee said Ghosh was arrested for making provocative comments.

State BJP president and Union minister Sukanta Majumdar led a procession at Baguihati in the northern fringes of the city and had an altercation with the police who tried to stop him. Former MP Debasree Choudhury and hundreds of party workers accompanied him. Majumdar later went to central Kolkata and blocked the CR Avenue outside the state BJP headquarters along with his supporters.

PRESIDENT MURMU READS...

From Page 1

In December 2012, we had come face to face with that element when a young woman was gang-raped and murdered. There was shock and rage. We were determined not to let another Nirbhaya meet the same fate. We made plans and devised strategies. These initiatives did make a difference to an extent.

Yet, our task remains unfinished as long as any woman feels unsafe in the environment where she lives or works.

"History often hurts. Societies scared to face history resort to collective amnesia to bury their heads in the sand like the proverbial ostrich. Now the time has come not only to face history squarely but also to search within our souls and probe the pathology of crime against women," President Murmu said.

"I am of the firm belief that we should not let amnesia prevail over the memory of such criminality. Let us deal with this perversion in a comprehensive manner so as to curb it right at the

beginning. We can do this only if we honour the memory of the victims by cultivating a social culture of remembering them to remind us of our failures in the past and prepare us to be more vigilant in future," she said.

"We owe it to our daughters to remove the hurdles from their path of winning the freedom from fear. Then we can collectively give a firm answer to the innocent query of those children in the next Raksha Bandhan. Let us collectively say enough is enough," President Murmu said.

and up to 3 million indirect jobs being created through planned industrialisation. This will not only provide livelihood opportunities but also contribute to the socio-economic uplift of the regions where these projects are to be set up.

The projects under the NICDP are designed with a focus on sustainability, incorporating ICT-enabled utilities and green technologies to minimise environmental impact. By providing quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure, the Government aims to create industrial cities that are not just hubs of economic activity but also models of environmental stewardship.

The approval of 12 new industrial nodes under the NICDP marks a

Cabinet approves massive boost to manufacturing horizons

From Page 1

The approval of these projects is a step forward towards realising the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' — a developed India. By positioning India as a strong player in the Global Value Chains (GVC), the NICDP will provide developed land parcels ready for immediate allotment, making it easier for domestic and international investors to set up manufacturing units in India.

This aligns with the broader objective of creating an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' or a self-reliant India, fostering economic growth through enhanced industrial output and employment.

The NICDP is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, with an estimated 1 million direct jobs

and up to 3 million indirect jobs being created through planned industrialisation. This will not only provide livelihood opportunities but also contribute to the socio-economic uplift of the regions where these projects are to be set up.

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The approval of 12 new industrial nodes under the NICDP marks a

significant milestone in India's journey towards becoming a global manufacturing powerhouse. With a strategic focus on integrated development, sustainable infrastructure, and seamless connectivity, these projects are set to redefine India's industrial landscape and drive the nation's economic growth for years to come.

In addition to these new sanctions, the NICDP has already seen the completion of four projects, with another four currently under implementation. This continued progress highlights the Government's commitment to transforming India's industrial sector and fostering a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive economic environment.

MCD to hold polls for chairman, deputy chairman of 12 zonal bodies on Sept 4

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi's (MCD) ward committee elections for appointment of the chairman and deputy chairmen for each of the 12 zonal bodies will be held on September 4.

According to the official order on Wednesday, the election will be held through secret ballot in accordance with the Delhi Municipal Corporation Regulations, 1958, it said.

The councillors have time till August 30 to file their nominations with the municipal secretary. The elections in six zones of the MCD namely City and SP Zone, Rohini Zone, Najafgarh Zone, West Zone, South Zone and Central

Zone will be held between 10 am to 4 pm at Hansraj Gupta Auditorium at the civic body headquarters.

In the remaining six zones, which include Karol Bagh Zone, Keshav Puram Zone, Shahdara South Zone, Shahdara North Zone, Civil Lines Zone and Narela Zone, the elections will be held parallelly at Satya Narayan Bansal Auditorium at the MCD headquarters.

As per the DMC regulations, every candidate for the election shall be nominated by a nomination paper in the prescribed form, which shall be signed by the candidate and two other members of the Corporation as proposer and seconder. The nomination has to be



delivered to the municipal secretary between 11 am and 5 pm at least three clear days before the date of meeting at which the election is to be held. This year they have to do it by Friday on August 30.

Any candidate may withdraw his candidature at any time before the election is proceeded within the meeting, the order states. The ward com-

mittees are essential for formation of the standing committee, the highest decision-making body of the MCD.

As per the provision of the DMC regulations, the ward committees in their first meeting each year, elects one of its members, who is a councillor, to be the chairman and another members as the deputy chairman of the zonal level body. It also nominates one member each for the standing committee.

The September 4 elections will be considered as the first meeting of the ward committees. Due to political deadlock between the ruling AAP and the opposition BJP, the elections for the ward committee and the subsequent standing

committee have been delayed by over one and a half years which has kept several key policy decisions, requiring the administrative approval of the standing committee, in doldrums.

Reacting to the order, Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor stated that the announcement of the ward committee elections is a victory for democracy in the city. "For the past approximately 19 months, AAP had suppressed the constitutional and democratic committees in the MCD. The BJP had been consistently pushing for the formation of these committees, and today, the rights of the people of Delhi and the BJP have triumphed," he said, adding that

SCHEDULE OF MCD'S WARD COMMITTEE ELECTION TO BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 4

Location	Zone	Timing
Hansraj Gupta Auditorium (First Floor), Civic Centre Building	City and S.P. Zone	10.00 am
	Rohini Zone	11.00 am
	Najafgarh Zone	12.00 pm
	West Zone	02.00 pm
	South Zone	03.00 pm
Satya Narayan Bansal Auditorium (Second Floor), Civic Centre Building	Central Zone	04.00 pm
	Karol Bagh Zone	10.00 am
	Keshav Puram Zone	11.00 am
	Shahdara-South Zone	12.00 pm
	Shahdara-North Zone	02.00 pm
	Civil Lines Zone	03.00 pm
Narela Zone	04.00 pm	

the maintenance of Delhi will improve, and start development work.

"The BJP will not only win the majority of ward committee elections, but we will also win

the upcoming Standing Committee election in a few days, and we will ensure that the stalled development work in Delhi resumes," Kapoor asserted.

Delhi BJP MPs submit memo to LG on issues plaguing rural areas

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A delegation of Delhi BJP MPs met with the Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Wednesday and submitted a memorandum concerning various issues related to the rural areas of Delhi.

The delegation included Northeast Delhi BJP MP Manoj Tiwari, South Delhi BJP MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, West Delhi BJP MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat and North West Delhi BJP MP Yogendra Chandolia. The Lieutenant Governor acknowledged the memorandum submitted by the BJP MPs and assured them that appropriate action would be taken.

The Delhi BJP MPs raised issues regarding mutation being stopped in villages. It said that about five to six years ago, 89 villages were declared urbanised, which led to the cessation of land reforms in these areas, and the villages were handed over to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for development.

"As a result, mutations were

stopped. Consequently, farmers are not able to sell their land, nor can agricultural land be transferred to their legal heirs, causing significant difficulties for farming families. We request your immediate intervention to resolve this issue," they said.

Further they raised the issue of alternate plots where in they alleged that in 2002-03, the Delhi government acquired agricultural land in Delhi's villages.

"According to the government's acquisition policy, farmers were to be compensated with monetary compensation, an alternate residential plot and a shop for employment. However, even after 20 years this provision has not been fulfilled," the BJP MPs stated.

"Until 2016, the Delhi government recommended the allocation of alternative plots, and DDA was allocating plots based on this recommendation. However, in 2019, farmers' applications for alternative plots were rejected based on the 2011 Supreme Court ruling in the "Delhi Administration vs. Jai Singh Kanwar" case," they



said. The delegation further claimed that in some instances, one brother received a plot under the same award, while another's application was rejected, and the farmers were not provided with a copy of the order.

"In 2022, through the efforts of the committee, some farmers were able to obtain a copy of this order under another name, but many farmers still do not have it. The committee also demanded an investigation into the conspiracy against farmers by the government, but no investigation was conducted. We request you to take cognizance of this matter and issue an order for the allocation of alternative plots and shops as per the Delhi government's policy in the interest of farmers," they claimed.

Further, they raised the issue of DDA No Objection Certificate (NOC) for Electricity Meters in front of Saxena and said, "As you are aware, under the Master Plan 2041 for Delhi and to prevent the creation of new colonies, the DDA, in a meeting with electricity companies on 26 June 2023, directed them to demand NOC from DDA for new electricity meter applications.

As a result, new houses being constructed in the 1,671 unauthorised colonies are not being provided with new electricity meters by BSES due to the NOC issue."

4,000 kids aged below 5 died in Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya from 2019 till June: RTI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Data from the Right to Information (RTI) showed that more than 4,000 children aged below five have died due to different illnesses like sepsis, pneumonia and septic shock at the Delhi government-run Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya from 2019 till June this year.

The highest number of these deaths were recorded in 2019 at 875, while the least number of fatalities were noted at 548 last year.

Total 314 deaths were reported this year until June. In 2020 and 2021, when the country grappled with multiple waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, the facility for children witnessed 866 and 626 deaths.

Calls and messages to the hospital authorities did not elicit any response.

The data was shared with Amit Gupta, a Right to Information (RTI) activist, who had sought data on children fatalities reported at hospitals run by the Delhi government.



However, Gupta received data only from the Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya, which said 4,095 children under the age of five had died at the facility between 2019 and June this year.

In 2022, the fatalities recorded in the age cohort stood at 866 while in the subsequent year, the number declined to 548, the data revealed.

The hospital cited the top causes of these deaths as sepsis, pneumonia, septic shock, and septicemia, according to the RTI response.

Gupta, who filed the RTI in June, said, "I was reading about some cases of children's deaths,

Stephen's cancels orientation event for freshers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University's St. Stephen's College has cancelled its orientation programme for the freshly admitted students ahead of the start of the new session from Thursday. The college cancelled its orientation programme, which was scheduled for 10 am on Wednesday, without stating any reason. "Please be informed that the orientation programme scheduled for 10 am on August 28 now stands cancelled. Regular classes will begin from August 29. Please be seated in the college hall at 9 am for the morning assembly," said a note from the college principal John Varghese.

It did not specify any reason. When contacted, Sanjay Kumar, the in-charge of admissions, declined to comment on the matter. The classes of the new batch for students for the academic year 2024-25 is slated to begin from August 29. Induction or orientation programme is a usual activity held to familiarise the newly admitted students with the college policies, officials and environment at large.

108 passengers booked, 32 fined for travelling in Metro ladies coaches

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to prevent the unlawful entry of male commuters into women coaches on weekdays, the Delhi Metro, as part of its special drive, booked 108 men and fined 32 passengers on the first day of the drive.

In a statement by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), it said, "Delhi Metro has started a special drive on all its lines to check/prevent unlawful entry of male passengers inside ladies coach during weekdays starting from Tuesday."

This special drive is being carried out by deploying ten flying squads each, comprising of personnel from Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Delhi Metro Rail Police (DMRP) and DMRC. "The squads will keep a vigil on unauthorized entry of male passengers into the ladies coaches or misbehaving by conducting surprise checks randomly throughout the day to ensure that women com-



muters feel safe and comfortable while travelling in the Metro," it added.

Those who are found breaking the rules, disobeying the instructions of the flying squads or refusing to pay the fine, amounting to Rs 250, will be deboarded from the train and will be handed over

to the Delhi Metro Rail Police. "On the first day of drive yesterday, a total of 108 male passengers were counseled and removed from ladies coach whereas, 32 male passengers were fined for Rs. 250 each under the Delhi Metro (O&M) Act. The DMRC has also conducted similar drives in the past also to ensure women safety," DMRC stated.

Additionally, women commuters can also inform DMRC 24x7 Helpline Number 155370 in case of any misbehavior or unauthorized entry into ladies coach by male passengers. "DMRC would also like to reiterate that first coach of all Metro trains in running direction is reserved for women passengers only and male passengers are advised to refrain from travelling in this coach, irrespective of metro services timings," it said.

The DMRC had booked 1,906 male passengers for entering women coaches between January and June this year, earlier data showed.

Govt to hold round-table talks to improve air quality in winter

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Wednesday announced that the AAP Government will organise a 'Round Table Conference' at the Delhi Secretariat on Thursday with participants comprising experts and various departments of the Government to improve the quality of air in winter in the national Capital.

Rai said the officers and representatives of departments and institutions such as Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), Environment Department, India Meteorological Department (IMD), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Centre



for Science and Environment (CSE), Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), Clean Air Asia, Greenpeace, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) among others will participate in the round table conference to be held at the Delhi Secretariat.

"This year the main objective of our government will be to control pollution through public participation. The future plan will be developed around dust pollution, pollution caused by vehicles, problem of stubble and garbage burning, industrial pollution, green war room and

Green Delhi app, hotspots, real-time apportionment study, e-waste eco park, increasing green areas, promoting public awareness and public participation, ban on firecrackers and other focus points, establishing dialogue with the central government and neighbouring states," he said.

He added that to discuss the focus points in detail, environmental experts from about 36 institutions and officials from 42 departments will participate in the conference and a "Winter Action Plan" will be prepared based on the suggestions from all environmental experts.

Dyal Singh Evening College inks MoU with Nam Can Tho University in Vietnam

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University's Dyal Singh Evening College has signed an agreement with the Nam Can Tho University in Vietnam to foster academic and cultural exchange.

According to an official statement, this collaboration aims to attract more Vietnamese students to the university.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Principal of Dyal Singh Evening College Bhawna Pandey and Vice Rector of Nam Can Tho University Tran Thi Thu.

The agreement was signed at the Indian Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City on August 26 during the Namaste Vietnam Festival.

Under the MoU both institutions plan to promote academics and research in economics, business, and information technology, the statement said. The agreement also includes provisions for developing and

exchanging educational resources, curriculum, best practices, joint research initiatives, academic publications, and technology transfer, it added.

During the event, Consul General of India, Ho Chi Minh City, Madan Mohan Sethi highlighted that every year, around 2,00,000 Vietnamese students seek educational opportunities abroad. This collaboration aims to attract more Vietnamese students to the Delhi University, he said.

The Namaste Vietnam Festival was started in 2022 to strengthen ties between India and Vietnam through educational and cultural exchange. This year's event saw participation from 28 universities in India and 17 universities in Vietnam.

Dyal Singh Evening College was the sole representative from the University of Delhi at the event and one of only two institutions to sign an MOU with a Vietnamese university, according to the statement.

Mohalla Bus service trial run on new routes begins

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gehlot on Wednesday announced the starting of trial runs on two new routes of the Mohalla Bus service for seven days from Kailash Colony Metro Station to PNB Geetanjali and Lok Kalyan Marg Metro Station to Vasant Vihar.

Trials are already underway on two other routes -- Pradhan Enclave Pushta to Majlis Park Metro Station and Akshardham Metro Station to Mayur Vihar Phase III Paper Market.

On the start of the trial run of Mohalla buses on two new routes, Gehlot said, "We are



providing efficient and convenient travel options to Delhiites by improving last-mile connectivity, so that more and more Delhiites can adopt public transport instead of private vehicles."

He added that they have also included major educational

institutions like Motilal Nehru College, Jesus and Mary College, Maitreyi College, Sri Venkateswara College, LSR College, Central School and Vocational College as stops in the trial of Mohalla buses on two new routes, so that the transport needs of the residents

living nearby as well as youth and students can be met.

After flagging off the Mohalla bus in his constituency, senior AAP leader and Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said for a very long time, there was a demand by the people from posh colonies such as Greater Kailash Part-1, Malviya Nagar to start a small-bus service, like the Mohalla Bus Service, for them.

"It covers many metro stations, Saket Mall, three big markets as well as big hospitals such as PSRI and Max. So, I think this is a good bus service and people were eagerly waiting for it. I thank our Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and our Transport Minister Kailash Gehlot for this," he said.

Man killed at eatery in fight over order delay

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 29-year-old man was allegedly killed early Wednesday following an altercation over a delayed order at an eatery in west Delhi's Rajouri Garden area.

According to the police on Wednesday, information was received from the hospital in the morning hours regarding a person being brought dead to which the local police responded immediately.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the victim, who has been identified as Harnet Singh Sachdeva, had visited a dhaba early in the morning and placed an order. Due to the delay in his order, an altercation ensued between Sachdeva and the eatery staff.

"On initial enquiry, it was found that the deceased

Harnet Singh Sachdeva, aged around 29 years, had gone to a dhaba named Kafilla and ordered something. Due to delay in his order, an altercation took place between him and the staff there," DCP West Vichitra Veer said.

The staff of the restaurant then contacted the dhaba owners, Ketan Narula and Ajay Narula, who arrived at the scene with some other people and a fight broke out between Sachdeva, his friends and the owners, DCP Veer said. "The injured was later taken to the hospital by his friends, where Sachdeva was declared dead on arrival," he added.

The owners have been apprehended and further investigation is underway. "We are also looking into how the restaurant was operating at that hour," he stated.

Minor girl raped in Rohini, accused held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A minor girl was allegedly raped by a 52-year-old man in a graveyard in west Delhi's Rohini area under the guise of performing occult rituals to cure her ailing father.

According to the officials said on Wednesday, the accused has been identified as Mohammad Sharif who was previously known to the minor girl. "On Tuesday, a PCR call regarding molestation of a girl child aged about 12 yrs was received at Kanjhawala police station," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Rohini) Guriqbal Singh Sidhu said.

According to the complaint filed by the 12-year-old victim, the accused lured her to the graveyard in Kanjhawala to perform 'tantra' (occult practices) to cure her father. "The local police

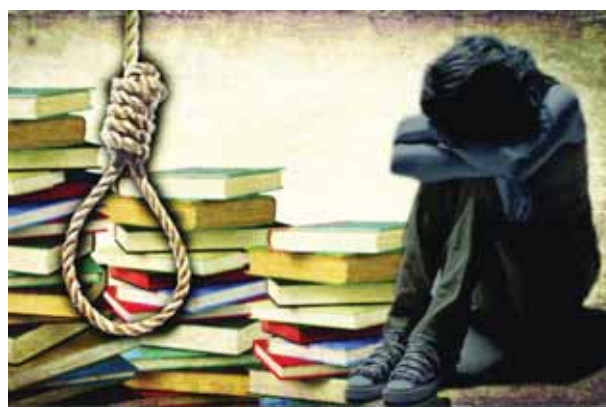
immediately reached in JJ Colony Sawda where the victim child named 'X' reported that the alleged allured her on the pretext of performing some Tantra for recovery of her father who is suffering from chronic disease and took her to graveyard and raped her," the DCP added. Based on the victim's complaint, an FIR under section 65(2) (rape on a woman under twelve years of age) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and 6 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Act was registered against the accused, the police said.

"We have arrested Mohammad Sharif. The girl was also medically examined at Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital. Further investigation in the matter is underway," the police officer said, adding that the girl is at her home.

Suicide by students surges by four per cent annually: NCRB data

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Incidents of student suicides in India have grown at an alarming annual rate, surpassing the population growth rate and overall suicide trends, according to a new report. Based on the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, the "Student suicides: An epidemic sweeping India" report was launched on Wednesday at the Annual IC3 Conference and Expo 2024.



The report pointed out that while the overall suicide numbers increased by 2 per cent annually, student suicides cases surged by 4 per cent, despite a likely "under reporting" of student suicide cases. "Over the past two decades, student suicides have grown at an alarming annual rate of 4 per cent, double the national average. In 2022, male students constituted 53 per cent of the total student suicides. Between 2021 and 2022, male student suicides decreased by 6 per cent while female student suicides increased by 7 per cent," noted the report compiled by IC3 Institute. "The incidence of student suicides continues to surpass both population growth rates and overall suicide trends. Over the last decade, while the population of 0-24-year-olds reduced from 582 million to 581 million, the number of student suicides

increased from 6,654 to 13,044," it added. The IC3 Institute is a volunteer-based organisation that provides support to high schools around the world through guidance and training resources for their administrators, teachers and counsellors to help establish and maintain robust career and college counselling departments. According to the report, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Madhya Pradesh are identified as the states with the highest number of student suicides, together accounting for one-third of the national total. Southern states and union territories collectively contribute 29 per cent of these cases, while Rajasthan, known for its high-stakes academic environment, ranks 10th, highlighting the intense pressure associated with coaching hubs like Kota.

"The data compiled by the NCRB is based on police-recorded first information reports (FIRs). However, it is important to acknowledge that the actual number of student suicides is likely underreported. This under-reporting can be attributed to several factors, including the social stigma surrounding suicide and the criminalisation of attempted and assisted suicide under Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code. Although the 2017 Mental Healthcare Act decriminalises suicide attempts for individuals with mental illness, the legacy of criminalisation continues to impact reporting practices, it said. "Moreover, there are significant data discrepancies due to the lack of a robust data collection system, particularly in rural areas, where reporting is less consistent compared to urban regions," it said.

Ganesh Kohli, the Founder of the IC3 Movement, said the report serves as a reminder of the urgent need to address mental health challenges within our learning institutions. "Our educational focus must shift to fostering the competencies of our learners such that it supports their overall well-being, versus pushing them to compete amongst each other. "It is imperative that we build a systematic, comprehensive, and robust career and college counselling system within each institution, while seamlessly integrating the same within the learning curriculum," he said. Additionally, the report noted a dramatic increase in student suicides, with male suicides rising by 50 per cent and female suicides by 61 per cent over the past decade. "Both genders have experienced an average annual increase of 5 per cent in the last five years. These alarming statistics underscore the critical need for enhanced counseling infrastructure and a deeper understanding of student aspirations. "Addressing these gaps is essential for shifting the focus from competitive pressures to nurturing core competencies and well-being, thereby supporting students more effectively and preventing such tragedies," the report said

India to commission its 2nd indigenous nuclear-powered submarine INS Arighat today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Giving a major boost to operation readiness and nuclear deterrence, India is likely to commission its second indigenously designed and manufactured nuclear powered submarine INS Arighat on Thursday. The first submarine INS Arihant was commissioned in 2016. As regards, INS Arighat, it was launched in 2017 at its manufacturing base, Ship Building Centre (SBC), Visakhapatnam. In fact, the SBC is building five nuclear powered submarines. While Arihant is already operational and Arighat to be commissioned on Thursday, work is now on the remaining two submarines. They are in advanced stage of construction, it was learnt. INS Arighat is 111.6 meters long and weighs 6,000 tonnes. It plays a crucial role in India's nuclear triad, enabling the nation to launch nuclear missiles from land, air, and sea. Powered by an 82.5 MW pressurized light water reactor developed with Russian assistance, INS Arighat can achieve a top speed of 24 knots submerged and 10 knots on the surface. Its primary armament consists of 12 K-15 Sagarika submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), each with a range exceeding 700 kilometers. These missiles are housed in four large vertical launch system (VLS) tubes

and are a testament to India's indigenous missile development capabilities. The submarine is divided into seven compartments, housing propulsion and combat management systems, a platform management center, and a torpedo room. Additional safety measures include two standby auxiliary engines and a retractable thruster for emergency power and mobility. INS Arighat follows in the footsteps of INS Arihant, India's first SSBN, which was commissioned in 2016. A third, yet-to-be-named SSBN was launched in 2021, further solidifying India's commitment to developing a credible sea-based nuclear deterrent. The commissioning of INS Arighat is expected to be attended by top defence, national security, and military officials. The Arihant class submarines, named after the Sanskrit word meaning "Destroyer of the Enemy," signify the strategic importance of nuclear-powered submarines. India is actively working on having five Arihant class boats along with six nuclear attack submarines to be built in three blocks.

Cabinet approves three railway projects worth ₹6,456 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved three railway projects with a total estimated cost of Rs 6,456 crore. According to a statement from the Ministry of Railways, the approved projects will improve logistical efficiency by connecting the unconnected areas, increase the existing line capacity and enhance the transportation networks, resulting in streamlined supply chains and accelerated economic growth. "The new line proposals will provide direct connectivity and improve mobility, providing enhanced efficiency and service reliability for the Indian Railways. The multi-tracking proposal will ease operations and reduce congestion, providing the much-required infrastructural development on the busiest sections across the Indian Railways," the ministry said. "The projects are in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a New India which will make people of the region 'Atmanirbhar' by way of comprehensive development in the area which will enhance their employment/self-employment opportunities," it added. According to the Ministry, the projects are result of PM-Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity which have been possible through integrated planning

and will provide seamless connectivity for movement of people, goods and services. "The three projects covering seven districts in four states i.e., Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 300 kms," the Ministry said. "With these projects, 14 new stations will be constructed, providing enhanced connectivity to two aspirational districts (Nuapada and East Singhbhum)," it added. Highlighting the benefits of the new line projects, the ministry stated these will provide connectivity to approximately 1,300 villages and about 11 lakh population. "Multi-tracking project will enhance connectivity to approximately 1,300 villages and about 19 lakh population," it said. The Ministry also emphasized the benefits to the freight traffic as these are essential routes for transportation of commodities such as agriculture products, fertilizer, coal, iron ore, steel, cement and limestone etc. "The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 45 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum)," the ministry said.

IAF launches comic book to motivate youth to join force

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Indian Air Force on Wednesday launched a comic book telling the story of legendary IAF Marshal Arjan Singh and the epic Battle of Boyra fought during the 1971 Indo-Pak war, aiming to educate the youth about the glorious history of the force and motivate them to join it. The 32-page 'Heroes of the Indian Air Force - Vol. I' was released by IAF Chief Air Marshal V R Chaudhari at an event held at the Vayu Bhawan here. Arjan Singh, who fought in the Burma campaign during the World War II and the 1965 Indo-Pak war, was the IAF officer to be conferred the rank of the Marshal of the Indian Air Force and he had also earned the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) before Independence. The project conceived last year was led by DISHA (Directorate of Induction and Selection in a Holistic Approach) Cell of the IAF under Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari's vision. The medium of comic books was chosen to reach young minds especially those in schools and motivate them to take up career in the Indian Air Force, according to a video played at the launch event. The first volume has two stories -- 'Find Your Calling' which tells the tale of a boy named Arjan Singh who

went on to become the first Marshal of the Indian Air Force; and 'Battle of Boyra' that narrates the story of the epic battle in the IAF's war history fought during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. The stories with compelling visuals aim to foster among the children better appreciation for values of courage, motivation and perseverance, and to let them learn to walk in his footsteps, said a senior official. The second story has "adrenaline-pumping action sequences" seen through the pilot's eyes. "This air combat engagement was a significant engagement of the fighting prowess and valour of young pilots of No.22 Squadron, the Swifts, which earned the squadron the moniker Sabre Slayers," he said. The comic book's purpose is to educate young readers and depict heroics embodied in an air combat, the IAF official said. "For youngsters, it is a direct call to action," he said. A pdf version of the book will be launched online and it will be available for "free sharing" on social media, the official added.

PM Modi: PMJDY personifies dignity, empowerment as it marks 10th year

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



As the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana completed 10 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the scheme personifies dignity, empowerment and the opportunity to participate in the economic life of the Nation. Modi also hailed those who worked to make the Jan Dhan Yojana a success, and said the scheme has been paramount in boosting financial inclusion. "Today, we mark a momentous occasion - #10YearsOfJanDhan. Congratulations to all the beneficiaries and compliments to all those who worked to make this scheme a success," the Prime Minister said in a social media post. The Jan Dhan Yojana has been paramount in boosting financial inclusion and giving dignity to crores of people, especially women, youth, and the marginalised communities, he said. Later, on a LinkedIn post, Modi said today marks a decade since the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana was launched and for him, this

initiative was more than just a policy it was an endeavour to build an India where each and every citizen, irrespective of one's economic background, has access to the formal banking apparatus. "Many of you, especially the youth, would be thinking -- why does this matter so much? After all, in this age, having a bank account would be very basic and even taken for granted. However, when we assumed office in 2014, the situation was very different. It was almost 65 years since Independence, but access to banking was a distant dream for almost half of our households," the Prime Minister said. Theirs was a world where savings were kept at home, vulnerable to loss and theft, he noted. "Access to credit was often at the mercy of predatory

lenders. The absence of financial security held back so many dreams," Modi said. "This problem becomes even more ironical considering the fact that four and a half decades ago, banks were nationalised by the then (Congress) Government and that too in the name of the poor! Yet, the poor never got access to banking," he said. "When the Jan Dhan Yojana was rolled out, I remember the scepticism that surrounded it too. Some people asked -- could it really be possible to bring such a large number of people into the banking system? Will this effort lead to any concrete changes? Yes. The scale of the challenge was enormous, but so was the determination of the people of India to ensure it becomes a reality," he said. The success of the Jan Dhan Yojana has two parts to it, Modi pointed out and said one is in the numbers with over 53 crore people who never imagined they would enter a bank having bank accounts now. These accounts have a deposit balance of over Rs. 2.3 lakh crore, he said.

Vice Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar takes reins of Project Seabird

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Vice Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar on Wednesday assumed duties of the Director General Project Seabird, with a charter to oversee largest defence infrastructure project currently progressing at the Karwar Naval Base, from Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, navy said here.

The change of guard took place at the Headquarters, Project Seabird, New Delhi. Dhankhar was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1990 and is a specialist in Navigation and Direction. The Flag Officer is an alumnus of the prestigious Naval Academy, Defence Services Staff College, and has undergone the Higher Command Course in Japan.

During his illustrious career spanning 34 years, the Flag Officer has tenanted specialist appointments onboard warships Pondicherry, Godavari, Kora and Mysore. The officer has also done instructional tenures in the erstwhile Project 15 Training Team, Navigation and Direction School and at the MIDS Wing Officer's Cadet School, Singapore.

SRF LIMITED
 Regd. Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Vihar Phase I, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi-110091
 Corporate Office: Block-C, Sector 45, Gurugram, Haryana-122 003
 Tel. No (Regd office) : (+91-11) 49482870; Fax : (+91-11) 49482900
 E-mail: cs@srf.com, Website: www.srf.com; CIN: L18101DL1970PLC005197

NOTICE
 Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert.No.	Dist.No.	Lost Shares
1	SRF0115633	Daya Kumari: Deceased	1139440	296723570-4569	1000
		Anil Bhatnagar: Joint Shareholder	90111508-9 90194015-7	9291470-569 15082000-149	100 150
2	S 0000722	Shah Himatall Chaturbhuj: Deceased	143540	5790585-620	36
		Sudha Gautam Shah: Claimant	1133912 90038004-5 90172688-9	295620086-949 7524070-149 13027020-119	864 80 100
3	SRF0039382	Rajesh Agarwal: Shareholder	1135669 90195516-7	295971270-669 15140235-334	400 100
		Rama Kant Maudgal: Deceased	386694-5	17331358-82	25
4	SRF0047626	Anju Maudgal Kalam: Joint Shareholder	535694-5 1126008 90201019	25351150-74 308427294-693 15350975-1024	25 400 50
		Love Kumar Gupta: Shareholder	41399 67785 129935 1134201 90162710	2471626-50 3429217-27 5429117-34 29567802-9037 12569755-84	25 11 18 336 30

Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

for SRF LIMITED
 Sd/-
RAJAT LAKHANPAL
 Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance) & Company Secretary

Place: Gurugram
 Date: 28-08-2024

punjab national bank
 ...the name you can BANK upon!
 CIRCLE OFFICE - SOUTH DELHI, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPT., UGF, BHAIKAJI CAMA PLACE

BREAK OPEN NOTICE FOR LOCKERS
 The Punjab National Bank has rented Safe Deposit Vaults (Lockers) through its different Branches to the respective locker hirers as mentioned in the table below. The rent has not been paid by hirers for more than three years and there are arrears of rent against them. The Bank has issued three notices to the respective locker hirers for payment of overdue locker rent in arrears, but the rent amount has still not been deposited.

Sl. No.	Locker No.	Customer Name	Sl. No.	Locker No.	Customer Name	Sl. No.	Locker No.	Customer Name
BRANCH NAME - 014700-JANGPURA			BRANCH NAME-015300-DELHI NEW, SANSAD MARG			BRANCH NAME - 015900-DELHI NEW, GREEN PARK		
1.	AC00341	RAJNI SURI	1.	AJ01822	SUNHALEEL RAZDAN	1.	AP01246	MADHU DUA
BRANCH NAME - 061200-DELHI NEW NAUROJI NAGAR			2.	BD03554	ANIL ANAND & SHASHI ANAND	2.	AP01715	RAVINDRA GOEL
1.	AA00023	BAKUL KAPOOR & REENA KAPOOR	BRANCH NAME - 146700-DELHI NEW GREATER KAILASH -2			BRANCH NAME-150400-DELHI NEW, CHIRAG DELHI		
2.	AN01132	KUMAR RAJESH & BEENA SINHA	1.	AN01314	DAYA RANI BAREJA & PREETI BREJA	1.	AA00011	SATISH GAMBIR & MEENAGAMBIR
3.	BB00320	PHOOLA RANI SHARMA, SUSAM KAMAL & POONAM SHARMA	2.	AP01420	CHARU SWARUP	2.	AP00164	B CHHABRA AND N CHHABRA
BRANCH NAME - 150900-DELHI NEW, MAHARANI BAGH			BRANCH NAME - 153000-DELHI, VASANT VIHAR D BLOCK			BRANCH NAME - 198800-DELHI NEW, BHAIKAJI CAMA PALCE		
1.	AB00667	INDER JEET WALECHA & MEENA WALECHA	1.	AH00009	KAMESHWAR NATH SINHA	1.	AD01167	DINESH CHAND
BRANCH NAME - 308700-DELHI NEW, VSC ALALNANDA			BRANCH NAME - 309000-NEW DELHI, JANGPURA EXT			BRANCH NAME - 309300-DELHI, MEHRAULI ROAD, HAUZ KHAS		
1.	AA00027	DISHO & SUNIL KUMAR	1.	AE00064	SANTOSH KUMARI, NUTAN DHINGRA, BRAHMAN DEV DEWAN & KAPIL DEV DEWAN	1.	PS00410	ALKA KHERG
2.	AM00054	SAMINDER SINGH SALLUJA & HARBIR SINGH SALLUJA	BRANCH NAME - 411400/-NEW DELHI, VASANT KUNJ					
1.	AJ00889	RAJENDRA SINGH JADON						

The notice is hereby given to the locker hirers that if the rent in above mentioned lockers is not received by the Bank within 3 months of this notice, then the lockers will be broken open at the risk and cost of the respective locker hirer in accordance with clauses of the rent deed and the Bank will realize its dues by the public or private sale of a part or the whole of the contents of the locker. Any amount and/or contents of the locker remaining after the Bank's dues have been satisfied will be held by the Bank at the entire risk, responsibility and cost of the respective locker hirer. In case, the proceeds of such sale be insufficient to recover the Bank's dues, the locker hirer will be liable for the deficiency.

Date : 29.09.2024
 Place : New Delhi
 CO : South Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED
 (See Section 82)
 Case No. 817/2019
PARVESH ARORA VS M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES
 To,
PRIYANKA RANA
 A-31/24, NETAJI GALI NO.1 MAUJPUR, DELHI-110053
 WHEREAS complaint has been made before me that Priyanka Rana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 138 NI ACT, and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Priyanka Rana cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Priyanka Rana has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Priyanka Rana is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint.
 By Order
 Ms. Sanghmitra Metropolitan Magistrate-01 Room No.54 KKD Court Shahdara Delhi-110032.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED
 (See Section 82)
 Case No. 817/2019
PARVESH ARORA VS M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES
 To,
PRIYANKA RANA PROP. OF M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES E-70, Block-E, AVANTIKA SEC-1, ROHINI DELHI-110085
 WHEREAS complaint has been made before me that Priyanka Rana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 138 NI ACT, and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Priyanka Rana cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Priyanka Rana has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Priyanka Rana is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint.
 By Order
 Ms. Sanghmitra Metropolitan Magistrate-01 Room No.54 KKD Court Shahdara Delhi-110032.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED
 (See Section 82)
 Case No. 823/2019
VIPIN ARORA VS M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES
 To,
PRIYANKA RANA
 A-31/24, NETAJI GALI NO.1 MAUJPUR, DELHI-110053
 WHEREAS complaint has been made before me that Daljit Singh Rana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 138 NI ACT, and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Daljit Singh Rana cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Daljit Singh Rana has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Daljit Singh Rana is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint.
 By Order
 Ms. Sanghmitra Metropolitan Magistrate-01 Room No.54 KKD Court Shahdara Delhi-110032.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED
 (See Section 82)
 Case No. 823/2019
VIPIN ARORA VS DALJEET SINGH RANA
 To,
DALJEET SINGH RANA
 A-31/24, NETAJI GALI NO.1 MAUJPUR, DELHI-110053
 WHEREAS complaint has been made before me that Daljit Singh Rana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 138 NI ACT, and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Daljit Singh Rana cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Daljit Singh Rana has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Daljit Singh Rana is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint.
 By Order
 Ms. Sanghmitra Metropolitan Magistrate-01 Room No.54 KKD Court Shahdara Delhi-110032.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED
 (See Section 82)
 Case No. 821/2019
VIPIN ARORA VS M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES
 To,
PRIYANKA RANA PROP. OF M/S SKY DROP WATER TECHNOLOGIES E-70, BLOCK-E, AVANTIKA SEC-1, ROHINI, DELHI-110085
 WHEREAS complaint has been made before me that Priyanka Rana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 138 NI ACT, and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Priyanka Rana cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Priyanka Rana has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Priyanka Rana is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint.
 By Order
 Ms. Sanghmitra Metropolitan Magistrate-01 Room No.54 KKD Court Shahdara Delhi-110032.

K'taka HC to resume hearing on CM's petition challenging GUV prosecution order

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court is set to resume hearing on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the legality of the Governor Thawar Chand's sanction for his prosecution in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case on Thursday.



The court proceedings will be keenly watched for its possible political impact. The Governor on August 16 accorded sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of Pradeep Kumar S P, T J Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna.

Parameshwara said there is hope that the HC will not consider the argument in favour of the Governor's decision. "There should be material about Siddaramaiah's involvement. If they (materials) are there, they can be taken into cognisance.

When there are no materials like -- his signature, his order, involvement and name... Even in the registration his name is not there. When such is the case, the court will look into all these things and will decide on it," he said.

Responding to a question on whether there have been any discussions by the high command regarding the next course of action, in case the developments in the court on August 29 go against Siddaramaiah, the Minister said: "What developments will happen cannot be speculated, once things happen let's discuss, this is what they have told."

My clients Janesh Kumar S/O Vir Singh and Geeta W/O Janesh Kumar both R/O H.No. A-3/122, Street No.A-3, Near Crimination Ground, Saboli, Extension North East Delhi-110093 has disowned their son namely Panjaj and their Daughter-in-Law namely Manju and their Grand-son namely Aarav Panchal from their movable and immovable assets, my clients will not be responsible for any kind of acts, done by them in future. DHRUV KUMAR (Advocate)

Rajasthan GUV calls for developing strong system of internal security on borders

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Governor Harihar Bagde on Wednesday called for making continuous efforts to develop a strong system of internal security along with vigilance and protection on the borders.

The Governor also emphasised on talking to the families living on the border and making efforts for their cooperation. He praised the families living

on the border and said they also have an important role in the security of the country on the borders.

Public Notice

This is to inform public that Mr. Vinod Kumar S/O Sh. I.D. Sharma R/O I-57-C, Dilshad Garden, Delhi is the owner of M.I.G House No. B-78, Sector-19, Noida. The aforesaid property was sold by way of registered General Power of Attorney & unregistered Agreement to sell.

Public Notice

This is to inform public that Mrs. Neelam Devi has acquired Land area measuring 100 sq. yds. comprising in sheet no 2694, Khata no 1584(4-10) ka 2900n share i.e. 2biswa, situated at warka shiv colony, kashia karnal, under nagar palika tehsil and district Karnal Haryana vide Sale Deed dated 01.06.2018 and same was duly registered with SRO Karnal as Doc. No. 2036, book no. 1 volume no. 59/13623 on pages 61-2598-97 dated 01.06.2018.

Change of Name

I, Sandhya kushwaha W/o Naresh Kumar, H.No.K-125 Gali number 5, 70 foot road, Prem Nagar, kirari, Suleman Nagar Delhi 86 declare that by mistake in my daughter's school record my name mention as Gudiya Devi but my actual name is Sandhya Kushwaha as per my all document.

Public Notice

Mrs. Kavita Ambwani and Mr. Naresh Jotwani have resigned from partnership firm M/s MAA PAARPATI MEENAKSHI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION: 12/25, East Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008 on closing of 06.05.2024.

Public Notice

Be it known to all that my client namely Mr. Ashok Kumar, S/O Late Sh. Shiv Dyal Arora, R/o 2-4/11 Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 is the owner of the built-up property bearing No. E-4/11, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 and intending to sell the same.

Public Notice

The General Public is hereby informed that I, Shri Rabin Nath Kher S/O Late Sh. Hanendra Nath Kher & Smt. Gitanjali Kher W/o Sh. Mukesh Singh D/o Late Sh. Narendra Nath Kher R/O B-103, Sector-55, Noida, are Jointly owner of Residential Plot No. B-103, Sector-55, Noida area 162 sq. mtrs. which is allotted by Noida. Smt. Gitanjali Kher has executed a GPA of her 1/2 share of above said plot in favour of her brother Rabin Nath Kher in the office of Sub-Registrar 303 Noida which is entered in B/N No. 4, Dtd No. 19/06/2024, R.No. 181/210, S.No. 24 on dt 16/02/2024. I am fully authorized to sale 1/2 share of Smt. Gitanjali Kher and to receive the sale money from the buyer, Rabin Nath Kher who wants to sale the above said plot to (1) Sh. Roop Lal S/O Late Sh. Ram Dass & his wife Smt. Sukanya Lal R/O B-104, Sector-55, Noida. I have submitted the all required documents in the office of Noida to get the TM. If any one has any objection, we can submit his complaint in the office of S.M. (Res. Plot) Noida within the period of 35 days after publication. After this period the registry of the above said plot will be executed in favour of both the buyers and I will not be responsible for any act, deed etc.

Form No. INC-26

[Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] Before the Central Government, (Regional Director, Northern Region, New Delhi) under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extraordinary general meeting held on Friday, 23rd August, 2024 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Haryana".

TENDER NOTICE

The Mass CGHS Ltd., Plot-24, Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075 invites Quotations from contractors having 5 years or more experience of similar works for Structural Strengthening & Repair Works, preferably of society buildings, valuing a minimum of Rs. 5 crores.

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government (Regional Director, Northern Region, New Delhi) under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extraordinary general meeting held on Friday, 23rd August, 2024 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Haryana".

Public Notice

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.sammaancapital.com; Contact No: 0124-6910910, +91 7065451024; E-mail id: auctionhelpline@sammaancapital.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in.

Public Notice

My clients Janesh Kumar S/O Vir Singh and Geeta W/O Janesh Kumar both R/O H.No. A-3/122, Street No.A-3, Near Crimination Ground, Saboli, Extension North East Delhi-110093 has disowned their son namely Panjaj and their Daughter-in-Law namely Manju and their Grand-son namely Aarav Panchal from their movable and immovable assets, my clients will not be responsible for any kind of acts, done by them in future. DHRUV KUMAR (Advocate)

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that Smt. Panna Devi is the owner Third Floor with roof rights area measuring 50 sq. yds. built on property No. D-19 out of Kharsra No. 19/3 & 20/10 situated at village Gharonda, Neem Ka Bangar alias Patarganj in the area of Pandav Nagar (Patarganj) R/O Delhi 110092. Under Sale Deed dated 11.07.2014 by No. Co. 3244 executed by Smt. Shashi Vadhani in favour of Smt. Panna Devi in respect of the said floor. FIR No. 2053/765/2024 was also registered at P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi on 23.08.2024. Anyone who finds the above-mentioned documents, kindly handover the same to the Manager of SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.), Faridabad.

Public Notice

Be it known to all that my client namely Mr. Ashok Kumar, S/O Late Sh. Shiv Dyal Arora, R/o 2-4/11 Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 is the owner of the built-up property bearing No. E-4/11, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 and intending to sell the same.

Public Notice

The General Public is hereby informed that I, Shri Rabin Nath Kher S/O Late Sh. Hanendra Nath Kher & Smt. Gitanjali Kher W/o Sh. Mukesh Singh D/o Late Sh. Narendra Nath Kher R/O B-103, Sector-55, Noida, are Jointly owner of Residential Plot No. B-103, Sector-55, Noida area 162 sq. mtrs. which is allotted by Noida. Smt. Gitanjali Kher has executed a GPA of her 1/2 share of above said plot in favour of her brother Rabin Nath Kher in the office of Sub-Registrar 303 Noida which is entered in B/N No. 4, Dtd No. 19/06/2024, R.No. 181/210, S.No. 24 on dt 16/02/2024. I am fully authorized to sale 1/2 share of Smt. Gitanjali Kher and to receive the sale money from the buyer, Rabin Nath Kher who wants to sale the above said plot to (1) Sh. Roop Lal S/O Late Sh. Ram Dass & his wife Smt. Sukanya Lal R/O B-104, Sector-55, Noida. I have submitted the all required documents in the office of Noida to get the TM. If any one has any objection, we can submit his complaint in the office of S.M. (Res. Plot) Noida within the period of 35 days after publication. After this period the registry of the above said plot will be executed in favour of both the buyers and I will not be responsible for any act, deed etc.

V.D.(VARUN DHAKA) INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Recognized by: NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NCTE) Affiliated to: STATE COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH & TRAINING, DELHI (S.C.E.R.T.)

V.D.(VARUN DHAKA) INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Recognized by: National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Affiliated to: State Council of Educational Research & Training, Delhi (S.C.E.R.T.)

Public Notice

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Public Notice

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.sammaancapital.com; Contact No: 0124-6910910, +91 7065451024; E-mail id: auctionhelpline@sammaancapital.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in.

Public Notice

Lost/Misplaced/Not Traceable GPA and ATS Dated 24.11.1986 Executed by Sudha Sikri W/o Shyam Lal Sikri in favour of Reena Murdihar W/o Murdihar Kewal Ram belongs to property no. C-575, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110065. also lost/misplaced/not traceable GPAs dated 10.05.1995 executed by Murdihar Kewal Ram and Jai Kumar Kewal Ram both S/O Kewal Ram in favour of V.K Gupta S/O PR Gupta belongs to first floor and second floor of property no. C-575, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110065. finder may inform V.K Gupta at 956033556.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301(U.P.) Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in

E-TENDER NOTICE

Table with 3 columns: S. No., Job No./Name of Work, Tender Amount (Rs. in Lacs). Includes items like 106/D(H)/DD(H)-2023-24, 22/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2024-25, 31/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2024-25, 37/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2024-25.

Which can be uploaded by date 04.09.2024 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 05.09.2024 at 11.00 AM.

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

Public Notice

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Sammaan Capital Limited (formerly known as Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd.) [CIN : L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 30.09.2024 from 04.00 P.M. to 05.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 24,53,927/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Fifty Three Thousand One Hundred Twenty Seven Only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLDP0021032, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 23.08.2024 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 24.08.2024 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from NAOREEM RONITA DEVI and MAYENGBAM YAIPIHABA MEITEI @ MAHENGAM YAIPIHABA MEITEI.

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that Smt. Panna Devi is the owner Third Floor with roof rights area measuring 50 sq. yds. built on property No. D-19 out of Kharsra No. 19/3 & 20/10 situated at village Gharonda, Neem Ka Bangar alias Patarganj in the area of Pandav Nagar (Patarganj) R/O Delhi 110092. Under Sale Deed dated 11.07.2014 by No. Co. 3244 executed by Smt. Shashi Vadhani in favour of Smt. Panna Devi in respect of the said floor. FIR No. 2053/765/2024 was also registered at P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi on 23.08.2024. Anyone who finds the above-mentioned documents, kindly handover the same to the Manager of SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.), Faridabad.

Public Notice

Be it known to all that my client namely Mr. Ashok Kumar, S/O Late Sh. Shiv Dyal Arora, R/o 2-4/11 Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 is the owner of the built-up property bearing No. E-4/11, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 and intending to sell the same.

Public Notice

The General Public is hereby informed that I, Shri Rabin Nath Kher S/O Late Sh. Hanendra Nath Kher & Smt. Gitanjali Kher W/o Sh. Mukesh Singh D/o Late Sh. Narendra Nath Kher R/O B-103, Sector-55, Noida, are Jointly owner of Residential Plot No. B-103, Sector-55, Noida area 162 sq. mtrs. which is allotted by Noida. Smt. Gitanjali Kher has executed a GPA of her 1/2 share of above said plot in favour of her brother Rabin Nath Kher in the office of Sub-Registrar 303 Noida which is entered in B/N No. 4, Dtd No. 19/06/2024, R.No. 181/210, S.No. 24 on dt 16/02/2024. I am fully authorized to sale 1/2 share of Smt. Gitanjali Kher and to receive the sale money from the buyer, Rabin Nath Kher who wants to sale the above said plot to (1) Sh. Roop Lal S/O Late Sh. Ram Dass & his wife Smt. Sukanya Lal R/O B-104, Sector-55, Noida. I have submitted the all required documents in the office of Noida to get the TM. If any one has any objection, we can submit his complaint in the office of S.M. (Res. Plot) Noida within the period of 35 days after publication. After this period the registry of the above said plot will be executed in favour of both the buyers and I will not be responsible for any act, deed etc.

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government (Regional Director, Northern Region, New Delhi) under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extraordinary general meeting held on Friday, 23rd August, 2024 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Haryana".

Public Notice

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.sammaancapital.com; Contact No: 0124-6910910, +91 7065451024; E-mail id: auctionhelpline@sammaancapital.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in.

Rungta Irrigation Limited

CIN: L74899DL1986PLC023934 Registered Address: 101, Pragati Tower 26, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008 Tel.: 91-(11)40453330, Website: www.rungtairrigation.com

GENERAL MEETING, REMOTE E-VOTING INFORMATION, RECORD DATE AND BOOK CLOSURE DATES

- 1. Notice is hereby given to the members of the Company that the 40th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Rungta Irrigation Limited (the Company) will be held on Friday, 20th September 2024 at 12.00 PM through video conferencing (VC) or through audio visual means (OAVM) to transact the business set out in the 40th AGM Notice ("Notice of the AGM"), in compliance with various circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and other laws/circulars. 2. The AGM is being held in compliance with Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 that the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Saturday, 14th September 2024 to Friday 20th September 2024 (both days inclusive), for the purpose of AGM. 3. In compliance with the Circulars, the Notice of the AGM and the Annual Report for the financial year 2023-24, along with all the documents required to be attached thereto, has been sent to all the Members of the Company on 16th August 2024 whose email addresses are registered with the Company/ Depository Participant(s). The aforesaid documents will also be available on the website of the Company (https://www.rungtairrigation.in/), on the website of the Stock Exchanges (www.bseindia.com). Members, who do not receive the aforesaid documents, may download it or may obtain the same by registering/ updating their KYC and email addresses in the manner as stated in the Notice for information regarding 40th Annual General Meeting published by the Company in the Pioneer (English) & the Pioneer (Hindi) Edition on 19th September 2024. Copy of the aforesaid Notice/NewsPaper is also available on the aforesaid Stock Exchanges & Company's website. 4. Pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, and other applicable law(s) the Company is pleased to provide its Members with the facility to exercise their right to vote by electronic means ("Remote E-Voting") to transact the business as set out in the Notice of the AGM through the Remote E-Voting facility provided by the Company's RTA, Beetal Financial Computer Services Pvt. Ltd. 5. The Remote E-Voting period commences on Tuesday, 17th September 2024 at 9:00 a.m. IST and ends on Thursday, 19th September 2024 at 5:00 p.m. IST. The E-Voting mode shall be disabled after the time prescribed in this clause. 6. A person, whose name appears in the Register of Members/ Beneficial owners as on the cut-off date i.e., Friday 13th September 2024 shall be entitled to avail the facility of Remote E-Voting. 7. Any person who becomes member of the Company after dispatch of the Notice of the AGM and hold shares as of the cut-off date i.e. 13th September 2024 may obtain the User ID and password by sending a request to beetalra@gmail.com. The detailed procedure for obtaining User ID and password has been provided in the Notice of the AGM. If the member is already registered with beetal for E-Voting then he/she can use his existing User ID and password to access the facility through Remote E-Voting. 8. The members who have not cast their vote by Remote E-Voting shall be able to vote at the AGM through electronic voting system by beetal. 9. The members who have cast their vote by Remote E-Voting may attend the AGM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again at the AGM. 10. In case of any query or grievance pertaining to e-voting and attending the AGM through VC/OAVM, Members may contact Amr Vishal, NSDL, Trade World A Wing, Kamala Mills Compound Lower Panel, Mumbai-400013. Email: evoting@nsdl.co.in, Toll free no: 1800 1020 990 and 1800 224430. Further, Members may also contact with Mr. Punit Mittal, General Manager, Beetal Financial Computer Services Pvt. Ltd., RTA at beetalra@gmail.com, or on Telephone No. 011-2961281-2 to 2050561-4. For details relating to remote e-voting, please refer to the Notice of the AGM. If you have any queries relating to remote e-voting, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting user manual for Shareholders available at the Downloads section of https://www.evoting.nsdl.com.

Place: New Delhi Date: 28th August, 2024

MORE SPECIAL TRAINS-2024

In order to clear extra rush of passengers, Railways have decided to run the following Festival Special Trains as per details given below:

Table for Train no. 05109/05110 Chhapra Jn.-Anand Vihar T.-22 Chhapra Jn. Festival Special Train. Includes arrival and departure times for stations Chhapra Jn. and Anand Vihar T.

Days of Run : 05109 Ex Chhapra Jn. on every Wednesday from 18.09.2024 to 27.11.2024 and 05110 Ex Anand Vihar T. on every Thursday from 19.09.2024 to 28.11.2024

Stoppages : Siwan Jn., Deoria, Gorakhpur Jn., Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal Jn., Sitapur Jn., Sitapur City Jn., Bareilly Jn. & Moradabad Jn. stations.

Table for Train no. 05023/05024 Gorakhpur Jn.-Anand Vihar T.-22 Gorakhpur Jn. Festival Special Train. Includes arrival and departure times for stations Gorakhpur Jn. and Anand Vihar T.

Days of Run : 05023 Ex Gorakhpur Jn. on every Sunday from 19.09.2024 to 24.11.2024 and 05024 Ex Anand Vihar T. on every Monday from 16.09.2024 to 25.11.2024

Stoppages : Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal Jn., Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn., Moradabad Jn. & Ghaziabad Jn. stations

Table for Train no. 05301/05302 Mau Jn.-Anand Vihar T.-22 Mau Jn. Festival Special Train. Includes arrival and departure times for stations Mau Jn. and Anand Vihar T.

Days of Run : 05301 Ex Mau Jn. on every Thursday from 19.09.2024 to 28.11.2024 and 05302 Ex Anand Vihar T. on every Friday from 20.09.2024 to 29.11.2024

Stoppages : Belthara Road, Bhatni Jn., Deoria Sadar, Gorakhpur Jn., Khalilabad, Basti, Mankapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Burhwal Jn., Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn., Moradabad Jn. & Ghaziabad Jn. stations

Table for Train no. 05005/05006 Gorakhpur Jn.-Amritsar Jn.-22 Gorakhpur Jn. Festival Special Train. Includes arrival and departure times for stations Gorakhpur Jn. and Amritsar Jn.

Days of Run : 05005 Ex Gorakhpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 18.09.2024 to 27.11.2024 and 05006 Ex Amritsar Jn. on every Thursday from 19.09.2024 to 28.11.2024

Stoppages : Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal Jn., Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn., Moradabad Jn., Saharanpur Jn., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cantt, Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar City Jn & Beas Jn. stations

Table for Train no. 05049/05050 Chhapra Jn.-Amritsar Jn.-24 Chhapra Jn. Festival Special Train. Includes arrival and departure times for stations Chhapra Jn. and Amritsar Jn.

Days of Run : 05049 Ex Chhapra Jn. on every Friday from 20.09.2024 to 29.11.2024 and 05050 Ex Amritsar Jn. on every Saturday from 21.09.2024 to 30.11.2024

Stoppages : Siwan Jn., Thawe Jn., Tamkuhi Road, Padrauna, Kaptanganj Jn., Gorakhpur Jn., Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal Jn., Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn., Moradabad Jn., Saharanpur Jn., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cantt, Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar City Jn & Beas Jn. stations

For detailed information regarding stoppages and timings of above trains, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Best of luck!

India sends largest ever contingent of 84 para-athletes for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games

The 2024 Paralympic Games opened in Paris yesterday where differently abled athletes from 164 countries would be participating. India has sent its largest-ever contingent of 84 athletes this year. This year's event is a testament to the unyielding spirit of athletes who continue to inspire the world with their incredible stories of perseverance and triumph over adversity. India's participation in the 2024 Paris Paralympics is a landmark moment for the nation. With 84 athletes across various disciplines, India is fielding its largest and most diverse contingent ever. This reflects the growing recognition and support for para-sports in India, as well as the increasing number of athletes who are challenging stereotypes and redefining excellence. The Paralympic Games have a rich history, dating back to 1948, when Sir Ludwig Guttmann organized a sports competition for World War II veterans with spinal cord injuries in Stoke Mandeville, England. This event is widely regarded as the precursor to the modern Paralympic Games. Over

the decades, the Paralympics have grown exponentially, becoming a global platform for athletes with disabilities to showcase their extraordinary talents and push the boundaries of what is possible.

Among the Indian athletes, one name that stands out is that of Sheetal Devi, a young archer who has defied all odds to compete at the highest level despite being born without hands. Sheetal's journey is nothing short of extraordinary. Using her feet to handle the bow and arrow, she has developed a unique technique that has made her one of the most promising archers in the world. Her story is a powerful reminder that limitations are often only in the mind, and with determination and



innovation, they can be overcome. Sheetal Devi's participation in the 2024 Paralympics is more than just a personal achievement; it symbolizes hope and resilience for millions of people around the world. Her ability to turn her perceived limitations into strengths has captivated audiences and earned her recognition as a true champion of the human spirit. The 2024 Paris Paralympics continue the tradition of celebrating the incredible capabilities of athletes with disabilities. The Games are not just about winning medals; they are about breaking barriers, challenging societal perceptions, and inspiring future generations. The inclusion of more sports and the increasing participation of countries like India signify a broader acceptance and encouragement of para-sports worldwide. As the athletes compete in Paris, their stories of courage, like that of Sheetal Devi, remind us of the power of sport to transcend physical limitations and bring people together in a shared pursuit of excellence. The Paralympic Games serve as a global stage where athletes demonstrate that with perseverance, anything is possible. India's largest-ever contingent and the inspiring story of Sheetal Devi exemplify the spirit of the Paralympic movement. As these athletes compete, they continue to inspire millions, proving that no obstacle is insurmountable when met with determination and heart.

PICTALK



A beautifully painted bus at display in the Heritage Transport Museum, in Gurugram

PANKAJ KUMAR

Dealing with the eternal conflicts

Conflicts have been an inevitable part of human experience throughout history.

Each of us faces them in our own unique way at different points in life

We face conflicts and dilemmas many times in our lives. We resolve a few of those, avoiding others to avoid confrontation.

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



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

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

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

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

Whoever thought the low-profile Sunita, wife of Delhi Chief Minister

Kejriwal, would emerge as an acceptable leader in the Aam Admi Party? Her increasing involvement is particularly significant after her husband has been jailed for a liquor scam since March. She has become a crucial link between her husband and the Party.

The recent Lok Sabha and Assembly elections provided her an opportunity to demonstrate her potential. It is still unclear whether she will continue working for the Party after Kejriwal is released on bail. Women from political families often enter politics as substitutes for their relatives. One successful example is Sonia Gandhi. She was the power behind the throne. Rabri Devi, the wife of former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav, served as the Chief Minister of Bihar from 2000 to 2005. Lalu had to resign due to his alleged involvement in a scam. Rabri was merely a rubber stamp while her husband was the de facto chief minister.

She may be a novice in politics, but Sunita brings a wealth of experience and a solid professional background. Her 22-year tenure in the income tax department, ending as I-T commissioner at the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), showcases her competence.

Sunita supported her husband, Kejriwal, keeping a low profile, even during India Against Corruption, when he became a political leader and activist. Kejriwal projected himself as a family man and campaigned with Sunita during the polls. Sunita's increasing involvement in the Aam Admi Party, particularly after Kejriwal's imprisonment, demonstrates her commitment and determination. Kejriwal is the only incumbent chief minister in Indian history who refused to resign his chief ministership even after his arrest. Speculations about her possibly succeeding Kejriwal if he resigns have been doing the rounds.

Secondly, Sunita's leadership is



KALYANI SHANKAR

The rise of Sunita Kejriwal

As Arvind Kejriwal remains behind bars, Sunita Kejriwal steps up to bridge the gap between her husband and the party, taking on the mantle of leadership in his absence



SUNITA HAS LAUNCHED HER CAMPAIGN WITH FIVE "KEJRIWAL'S GUARANTEES" FOR THE UPCOMING HARYANA ASSEMBLY POLLS

crucial. She has arrived at a when the Aam Admi Party grapples with a crisis. The Assembly elections in Haryana will be held next month, and Delhi polls are due in January 2025. Many senior leaders are facing allegations of corruption charges. The recent arrest of Kejriwal has added to the Party's challenges. The Centre gave him a long rope and did not dismiss his government based on a constitutional breakdown. Manish Sisodia, Kejriwal's deputy, says Sunita's role in the Party will end when Kejriwal is out of jail. Sisodia was also arrested last year in connection with an excise policy case. AAP MP Sanjay Singh claims Sunita's role as Kejriwal's messenger is growing. Still, Kejriwal says Sunita has no interest in politics.

While Sunita may be seen as a stop-gap replacement, her growing influence in the Party makes it challenging to sideline her. Sunita's role in the Party will remain significant even if Kejriwal returns. Fourthly, the Party faces a crisis of leadership. With the upcoming Haryana and Delhi polls, AAP needs a credible leader and a good campaigner. Sunita's role as a morale

booster is to fill the gap and give pep talk.

Fifthly, the AAP members have accepted Sunita as the link, though Sunita holds no official position in AAP. She has campaigned during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and has just begun campaigning in Haryana. She has been hard-hitting on the Modi government and the BJP. Her line of defence was that some political forces were involved in discrediting her husband.

The opposition coalition INDIA has acknowledged Sunita's increasing involvement and acceptability. She was seated in a prominent position alongside Sonia Gandhi at a recent rally in Ramliha Maidan.

Sunita has launched her campaign with five "Kejriwal's Guarantees" for the upcoming Haryana Assembly polls. They include free electricity, medical treatment, education, \$1,000 monthly aid for women, and youth employment. She lauded the AAP government for its initiatives and urged people to vote for AAP. Sunita has some downsides. Despite Kejriwal's political success, she is untested. Whether she can keep the Party intact is still being determined. Her limit-

ed purpose is to convey Kejriwal's message from prison and campaign for the upcoming elections.

Sunita is in talks with other parties like the Nationalist Congress Party and has gained access to top opposition leaders. Her strategy for selecting candidates and forming coalitions depends on the Aam Admi Party's future alliances. Overcoming anti-incumbency as AAP seeks a third term in Delhi is challenging.

When Kejriwal returns, he must ensure that the Party is under control. And that his image in public is not tarnished. He must also keep an eye on Punjab, where AAP is ruling. He must ensure a chain of command between the Party and the government. He must develop a second line of leadership, as he has not allowed any leader to emerge. He needs to keep his team united and realistically evaluate his promises of benefits. The results of the upcoming elections in Haryana and Delhi could significantly shape Delhi's future political landscape. The results will show whether Sunita succeeds.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remember the Hippocratic Oath!



Kudos to Mr. Sujit De for the letter titled "Don't make patients suffer" (August 26). Based upon professional fraternity (not human fraternity), the Doctors of the government hospitals are in strike in West Bengal! May it be asked what is the fault of the poorest of poor patients who have no option but to visit government hospitals during medical emergency! Why are they being denied medical treatment prolonging their suffering! Is providing treatment to patients and protesting against the murder mutually exclusive to each

other! Can't the two coexist together! What compensation would the Doctors provide to a family if their member passes away due to lack of treatment! How can the hypocrite Doctors make a cruel mockery of the Hippocratic oath! Hasn't any Doctor indulged in sexual atrocities in India previously!

What about that horrific incident (almost a decade ago) revolving around the poor mentally-retarded innocent Korpan Shah who was lynched to death by the trainee Doctors right within the campus of NRS Hospital Kolkata just on the baseless apprehension of stealing a cell phone! Will today's "revolutionary" Doctors dare to have a look at the mirror and indulge in a bit of self introspection! Of course Doctors must enjoy rights as entitled to human beings; but perhaps the last person in the queue like Korpan Shah was also entitled to the same human rights!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

about 90 nautical miles south of Sagar Island. With an immediate response, the Maritime Search & Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Chennai received a distress signal late on August 25.

The ICG immediately dispatched two of its ships, Sarang and Amogh, and also a Dornier aircraft outfitted with enhanced night-capable sensors, to locate and rescue the stranded crew. The Dornier aircraft was crucial in spotting drifting life rafts and identifying the crew's survival red flares. The aircraft guided the ICG ships to the coordinates where two life rafts had been found tied together, sheltering the survivors.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur

MIDDLE PATH ON PENSION

Madam — Government seems to have adopted the mid way approach amid the growing demand for the rollback of the OPS, the government has filled the gap between market returns and a 50% assured pension. Under the Unified Pension Scheme government contribu-

tion will increase from 14% to 18.5%. And it will take a stock of the situation after three years whether to increase this or not. What is really beneficial for the government employees who joined after 1st January 2004 is that UPS will provide them assured pension, inflation indexation and family pension.

At the moment it looks like that employees will be content with the new rolled out scheme but they may come on to the streets to demand the difference between OPS and UPS.

With life expectancy going higher and higher, how the government will be able to fund these expenses for such long durations would be a million dollar question. Employees should not forget that NPS has the unique advantage of having the equity exposure over a long period of time and invariably it will fetch far better returns over any other product or Pension scheme.

Bal Govind | Noida

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

CHOOSE DIALOGUE NOT DEBATE

By fostering a mindset of dialogue over argument, we contribute to a more harmonious society



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

There is a famous saying: "Two wrongs don't make a right," meaning it is not right to do something bad to someone just because they did something bad to you. In our day-to-day life, we end up doing many things that are wrong, but we still justify them as right by arguing well. Argument has always been a very powerful self-defense tool for people since ages. But one must know an important fact: behind every argument that we engage in, lies our ignorance towards truth and sometimes deceiving ourselves by knowing the truth. Hence, the best way to sort things out is through dialogues and healthy discussions. The beautiful part of a dialogue is that it's a mutual exploration for reaching an amicable resolution with an open exchange of views, as compared to an argument, which leads to a battle of opinions. In dialogue, there is much more listening than talking, and in an argument, there is war! A dialogue is possible only when two parties collaborate to uncover deeper wisdom and co-create a new understanding with a positive attitude.

We all argue in our day-to-day life because we have an opinion on almost everything, based on our beliefs. More so, when we see the beliefs of others as a personal threat, we either start defending or attacking, creating an environment of fear and aggression. There are many who are always armed with their opinions, prepared to defend their beliefs, and ready to do battle. The best way to avoid an argument with such people is first to support their beliefs positively to make them feel happy



from inside, and then after some time, make them realize their mistake with utmost love and care.

Many of us have experienced that if we do not have an opinion about important issues, then we are considered to be weak and conciliatory. But we must not forget that if our opinion is in defense of a position or against someone else's opinion, then it might result in a huge conflict that could lead to a war-like situation. History has shown that, at the root of the majority of wars fought were differences of opinion and clash of beliefs. Hence, it takes a lot of courage to have a point of view and yet be receptive to others' to the extent that you are prepared to shift your contention. This shows that you are flexible and acknowledge there are many other ways of looking at a situation. It also demonstrates that you have the humility to learn from others' points of view. However, to possess such courage, one needs to be enlightened with spiritual powers, for it is an enlightened soul that moves from an argument to a discussion to a dialogue, a process that is driven not just by the need, but by genuine curiosity and the intention to understand others to create a peaceful and harmonious environment.

In today's fast-paced world, arguments often arise from misunderstandings, impatience, and a lack of willingness to understand the other side. Technology, while connecting us globally, has also distanced us from face-to-face interactions where emotions and intentions are better understood. This digital age has made it easy to voice opinions without accountability, often leading to heated debates rather than constructive discussions. Moreover, the culture of instant gratification has diminished our capacity for patience, making us less tolerant of differing viewpoints. We must realize that true progress, both personally and collectively, comes from understanding and empathy. When we take the time to engage in dialogues rather than arguments, we open doors to new perspectives and solutions that we might not have considered otherwise. In doing so, we not only resolve conflicts but also build stronger, more meaningful relationships. Therefore, it is essential to cultivate the habit of active listening, where we fully engage with the speaker, seeking to understand before being understood. This approach can transform potential conflicts into opportunities for growth and learning.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist, views are personal)

A saga of violence and betrayal in Afghanistan



NILANTHA LLANGAMUWA

Kabul has long stood as a symbol of Afghanistan's resilience but conduct of many of its leaders like Hafizullah Amin remains shrouded in mystery and contention

Kabul, situated over a mile above sea level, is complemented by the Paghman Hills to the west, traditionally a retreat for Kabul's elite. Paghman, known for its pleasant climate and historical significance, was also the site of significant events, including King Amanullah's struggle for independence and the 1920 asylum of the Amir of Bukhara. The town symbolises Afghanistan's resistance to foreign dominance.

Hafizullah Amin, born in Paghman in 1929, rose to prominence as a staunch opponent of superpower influence. His brief tenure as leader, lasting only 104 days, ended with his assassination in 1979, marking a pivotal moment in Afghan politics. Amin's early education in Kabul and further studies at Columbia University, interrupted by political turmoil, solidified his political engagement. His relationship with Nour Mohammad Taraki and his subsequent return to Afghanistan via Moscow shaped his radical stance and political trajectory.

However, the accusation that Amin was a CIA agent, levied with equal fervour from the left, has been eagerly embraced by Babrak Karmal as a means to legitimise his own rule. Despite Karmal's claims of having known about Amin's alleged CIA ties since the 1950s and his assertion of possessing documentary proof, he has yet to present any credible evidence. Some foreign socialists privately dismiss this claim, suggesting that the new regime's intent was to tarnish Amin's reputation, particularly among the unassuming Afghan peasantry, by branding him as an American agent. A more nuanced explanation from a Karmal sympathiser posits that the Afghan populace, repelled by Amin's policies which they viewed as detrimental to the revolution, resorted to the CIA agent narrative as a simplistic justification. Although the USSR propagated this narrative domestically in an early 1980 film on Afghanistan, it has been notably cautious in its international communications.

An article on CIA interference in the Third World, published in International Affairs, notably omits any reference to Amin. As one commentator noted, "The uncomfortable reality for both Russians and Americans is that Amin resisted manipulation from either side." If Amin's portrayal as a genocidal dictator, a Soviet puppet, or a CIA operative is unsupported by evidence, what then is the truth? What was Amin's actual role in the Afghan revolution, and why did the Soviet Union deem it so crucial to eliminate him?

In August 1978, Nour Mohammad Taraki addressed the Islamic protest movement with a defiant stance, denouncing capitalist and reactionary forces for using religion to undermine his progressive agenda. He believed these tactics, driven by imperialistic ambitions, were outdated and doomed to fail. Despite his confidence, Taraki faced significant internal strife, particularly with Hafizullah Amin, whose ambitions threatened his leadership. Taraki's reliance on Soviet support proved insufficient as his political blindness and failure to address social realities created



opportunities for extremist groups. Taraki's plan to correct his previous mistakes and form a new government with Babrak was thwarted by Amin's swift action. Despite Taraki's efforts to arrest Amin and align with Babrak for national reconciliation, the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan necessitated external military intervention. Amin's quick consolidation of power and Taraki's subsequent political struggles illustrate the volatile and precarious nature of Afghan politics during this tumultuous period.

Hafizullah Amin was widely suspected of using Marxism as a political tool rather than adhering to its principles, while publicly presenting himself as a strict religious person. Despite his significant position as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, he faced substantial opposition, particularly from the Parcham faction. This internal discord delayed his rise to a full member of the PDPA's political committee. Amin's ability to navigate these challenges and become a prominent figure in Afghan politics, including his role in the Moscow friendship treaty, marked his personal success amidst a turbulent environment.

In September 1979, Taraki's visit to Cuba and subsequent meeting with his rival Babrak Karmal in Moscow remains enigmatic. There is speculation that Taraki sought to reconcile with Babrak to remove Amin and redistribute power, though Soviet influence likely played a crucial role in these negotiations. The depth of the animosity between Taraki and Babrak suggests that Soviet intervention was necessary to facilitate

any form of political reconciliation, particularly given Taraki's longstanding hatred for Babrak and Amin's role as a significant obstacle to his power. The political instability within the Khalq and Parcham factions weakened Afghanistan's administration, making it vulnerable to extremist support. With the security situation deteriorating and the Afghan army struggling, Taraki saw the need for Soviet intervention to restore order. Despite plans to arrest Amin and form a new government with Babrak, Taraki's efforts faltered, and Amin swiftly resolved his political predicament. The complexities of this period highlight the challenging dynamics of Afghan politics and external influences shaping its trajectory.

In early December 1979, Yuri Andropov alerted Leonid Brezhnev to Amin's covert activities, his pro-Western inclinations, and the potential end of communist rule in Afghanistan, which could threaten Soviet influence. Andropov emphasized the need for military aid to support Babrak Karmal and his allies, though he did not explicitly propose a full-scale Soviet invasion. However, Andropov's primary goal was to finalize plans for the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Following this, key figures including Andropov, Dmitriy Ustinov, Andrei Gromyko, and Boris Ponomarev, convened with Brezhnev and secured approval for Soviet military action. The Politburo authorized these officials to manage the invasion's execution in utmost secrecy. The documents related to the plan were handwritten by Politburo mem-

bers, and even typists were excluded from the process. Marshal Akhromeyev and the General Staff Operations Group established their base near the Afghan border, while KGB operatives traveled to Kabul to oversee Amin's removal, marking the commencement of Operation Agate.

The KGB's secrecy surrounding the assassination plan was intense. A covert team, including a chef planted in Amin's palace, was tasked with administering poison. The same toxicology laboratory that had been involved in previous assassinations, like that of Georgi Markov, handled the preparation of the poison. Talebov, an Azerbaijani operative, infiltrated Amin's kitchen and poisoned the food, ensuring the execution of the assassination plan without arousing suspicion.

On December 13, 1979, Babrak Karmal and key members of his future government secretly flew from Moscow to Bagram Air Base, positioning themselves to take control of Afghanistan immediately after Amin's removal. Meanwhile, on December 17, Asadullah Amin, Hafizullah Amin's son-in-law and head of the security service, fell gravely ill from food poisoning and was rushed to Moscow for treatment. The meal that led to his illness had been prepared for Hafizullah Amin, indicating that the poisoning attempt, orchestrated by Talebov, had not gone as planned. Despite Talebov's efforts, Amin's cautious behavior, including frequent changes in his food and drink, thwarted the poisoning plot.

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



HAFIZULLAH AMIN WAS WIDELY SUSPECTED OF USING MARXISM AS A POLITICAL TOOL RATHER THAN ADHERING TO ITS PRINCIPLES, WHILE PUBLICLY PRESENTING HIMSELF AS A STRICT RELIGIOUS PERSON

The impact of CHETNA: Saving lives and empowering communities

'CHETNA@40-Nurturing Dreams, Empowering Destinies,' chronicles four decades of transformative work in women's health and community empowerment across India

When Julkiben, a dai or a traditional birth attendant (TBA), received a call from a pregnant woman, she immediately swung into action. First, she dialled 108, the number of the state government emergency ambulance. After she reached the pregnant woman's house, she cut a clean cloth into pieces to be used at the hospital and kept an empty lota (water container) ready to fetch and store water. But when the woman's labour pains increased and it became impossible for her to climb down the hillock to reach the ambulance, Julkiben summoned young men from the neighbourhood to make a sling from a bed sheet and carry the pregnant woman to the ambulance. They had bare-



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

ly reached the hospital labour room when the woman delivered. Julkiben's presence of mind and timely action helped to save the lives of mother and child.

It was not just TBAs like Julkiben but women, their families and community members in 60 villages in Vansada and Chikhali, two tribal blocks of Gujarat's Navsari district, who learnt that maternal deaths could be

prevented by accessing the public health system's maternal healthcare services. In fact, the three-year initiative in these two blocks by the Centre for Health Education Training Nutrition and Adolescents (CHETNA), the Ahmedabad-based not-for-profit working to empower women, adolescents and children, led to remarkable changes. There was an increase in institutional deliveries from 58% to 82% in Vansada block. More importantly, of the 776 deliveries that took place during the last phase of the intervention, not a single maternal death was registered in the area.

How was this achieved? What was done differently that brought about behavioural change? Could this success be replicated in other districts

with poor health indicators for women?

Answers to all these questions and more have been given in the recently published coffee table book to mark their milestone of turning forty. Titled 'CHETNA@40-Nurturing Dreams, Empowering Destinies', the book chronicles the organization's four decades of collective efforts, its distinctive approaches and the impact made by its innovative communication strategies that transformed countless lives and communities in 78 districts, 124 blocks and 439 villages in seven states.

One of the biggest reasons behind its ability to make a difference has been its focus on incorporating a gender lens to all its work, says Pallavi Patel, co-founder and Director,



CHETNA. Being the country's first all-women health initiative helped make CHETNA a trendsetter in women's health, nutrition and gender. It's pioneering approaches and impactful communications material gave it an edge over others. The popularity of their resources can be gauged by the fact that in 2022-2023 alone, over 2,77,981 copies of CHETNA's materials were sought by various government and NGOs based in 11 states.

The book unpacks their hands on, people-centred strategies to tackle not just the challenges in dealing with child birth complications in remote tribal areas with minimal health facilities in Rajasthan and Gujarat, but widespread nutritional anaemia in Gujarat, Rajasthan and MP. It also reveals how CHETNA fostered a change in behaviour in getting 70 schools certified tobacco free in Ahmedabad as well as in mindsets especially in Mehsana, Gujarat, one of the districts with the worst child sex ratio (CSR) in the eighties and nineties. The deeply entrenched son preference psyche and practice of placing the blame on the woman when a girl was born was addressed through saas-bahu meetings, engaging with caste panchayat leaders

and innovative dal-chawal games to explain the role of the X and Y chromosomes in determining the sex of the child. At the centre of these efforts has been CHETNA's ability to be adaptable, flexible and, creative. Besides out of the box thinking, health messages have been tweaked according to local needs, traditions and practices. Their innovative anaemia kit has undergone several adaptations as has their unique and highly popular cloth aprons with several flaps that are worn by male and female trainers to show the reproductive organs in the two sexes. Songs, games and animation films have been created to share knowledge on child care, nutrition, puberty, menstruation, adolescent

health, anaemia and contraception. The book details how CHETNA, which works under the symbiotic umbrella of the Nehru Foundation for Development set up in 1966 by the eminent scientist Vikram Sarabhai, strategically used their scientific and inventive health communications to make a lasting impact. Whether it has been to break the silence on menstruation, or creating an enabling environment for girls, CHETNA has shown that the dream it began with 40 years ago, of making women the mistress of their own destinies, was not an impossible one.

(The writer is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views are expressed are personal)

Israel's West Bank major operation kills 9 Palestinians

AP ■ AL FARAA

Israel launched a large-scale military operation in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, with its forces killing at least nine Palestinians and sealing off the volatile city of Jenin, according to Palestinian officials.

Israel has carried out nearly daily raids across the West Bank since Hamas' October 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the ongoing war there. Israel says it is routing out militants to prevent attacks on its citizens, while Palestinians in the West Bank fear it intends to broaden the war and forcibly displace more of them.

Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, said "large forces" had entered Jenin, long a militant stronghold, as well as Tulikarem and the Al-Faraa refugee camp dating back to the 1948 Mideast war, all in the northern West Bank. He said the nine dead were all militants, including three killed in an airstrike in Tulikarem and four in an airstrike in Al-Faraa. He said another five suspected militants were arrested, and that the



Israeli police officers scuffle with ultra-Orthodox Jewish men during a protest against a potential new draft law which could end their exemptions from military service in Jerusalem, Wednesday. AP/PTI

raids were the first stage of an even larger operation. Palestinian militant groups said they were exchanging fire with Israeli troops. The governor of Jenin, Kamal Abu al-Rub, said on Palestinian radio that Israeli forces had surrounded the city, blocking exit and entry points

and access to hospitals, and ripping up infrastructure in the camp. The Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank said Israeli forces had blocked the roads leading to a hospital with dirt barriers and surrounded other medical facilities

in Jenin. Shoshani said the military was trying to prevent militants from taking shelter in hospitals. An Associated Press reporter saw army vehicles blocking all the entrances to Al-Faraa camp. Military jeeps and bulldozers entered the camp and soldiers were seen

patrolling its alleyways by foot. Water leaked onto the damaged streets from houses where fighting had damaged tanks and pipes. Shots rang out every few minutes. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz drew comparisons with Gaza and called for similar measures in the West Bank.

"We must deal with the threat just as we deal with the terrorist infrastructure in Gaza, including the temporary evacuation of Palestinian residents and whatever steps might be required. This is a war in every respect, and we must win it," he wrote on the platform X.

Shoshani said there was no plan to evacuate civilians. Hamas called on Palestinians in the West Bank to rise up, calling the raids part of a larger plan to expand the war in Gaza and blaming the escalation on US support for Israel. The militant group called on security forces loyal to the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, which cooperate with Israel, to "join the sacred battle of our people".

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud

Abbas, condemned the raids as a "serious escalation" and called on the United States to intervene. Abbas later announced he was cutting short a visit to Saudi Arabia and returning to the West Bank, where his government is based.

At least 652 Palestinians in the West Bank have been killed by Israeli fire since the war in Gaza began over 10 months ago, according to the Palestinian ministry. Most have died during raids, which often trigger gunbattles with militants. Israel says the operations are required to dismantle Hamas and other militant groups. Attacks on Israelis have risen since the start of the war.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said the bodies of seven people were brought to the hospital in Tubas, another West Bank city, and another two were brought to the hospital in Jenin. The ministry identified two killed in Jenin as Qassam Jabarin, 25, and Asem Balout, 39.

Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians want all three for a future state. Israel has built

scores of settlements across the West Bank, which are home to over 500,000 Jewish settlers. They have Israeli citizenship, while the 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank live under Israeli military rule, with the Palestinian Authority exercising limited control over population centers.

The war in Gaza erupted when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel and rampaged through army bases and farming communities, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250. The militants are still holding some 110 hostages, around a third of whom are believed to be dead, after most of the rest were released during a November cease-fire.

Israel responded with an offensive that has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many were militants. Around 90 per cent of Gaza's population has been displaced, often multiple times, and Israeli bombardment and ground operations have caused vast destruction.

Israeli strikes in Gaza overnight and into Wednesday killed at

least 24 people, including five women and five children, according to Palestinian health officials. AP reporters at two hospitals confirmed the toll.

One strike hit tents housing displaced people near the central town of Deir al-Balah, killing eight including two brothers, 6 and 17 years old. "He's alive!" their mother shouted as the teenager's body was carried to the morgue. She later sobbed and cradled both of them.

Israel says it tries to avoid harming civilians and blames their deaths on Hamas because the militants fight in dense residential areas. The military rarely comments on individual strikes in Gaza, which often kill women and children.

The US, Qatar and Egypt have spent months trying to mediate a cease-fire that would see the remaining hostages released. But the talks have repeatedly bogged down as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed "total victory" over Hamas and the militant group has demanded a lasting cease-fire and a full withdrawal from the territory.

Germany, UK seek new bilateral treaty as Starmer pursues 'reset' with EU

AP ■ BERLIN

The leaders of Germany and the United Kingdom announced plans on Wednesday to draw up a treaty meant to deepen the two nations' trade, defence and other ties.

The move comes as new UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer moves ahead with plans for a "reset" of relations with the European Union. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that he welcomes fellow centre-left leader Starmer's desire for a new beginning in relations with the EU, and "we want to take this outstretched hand".

Starmer took office in early July after the previous Conservative government was trounced in an election. Four years after the UK left the EU, he says he wants to rebuild ties strained by years of ill-tempered wrangling over Brexit terms. He said that he hopes to conclude the bilateral agreement with Germany,



which has Europe's biggest economy, by the end of this year. "That will be ambitious, it will be wide-ranging, covering trade, the economy, defence and many other issues," he told reporters. The two leaders are among Ukraine's biggest military backers and stressed their commitment to keeping up that support. Starmer said that the two countries also plan to draw up a "joint action plan to tackle illegal migration".

His government still faces pressure to stop migrants cross-

ing the English Channel in small boats, though it scrapped the Conservatives' contentious plan to send them on a one-way trip to Rwanda. Migration is also an issue on which Scholz's government has long been under heavy pressure, even more so since Friday's attack in Solingen in which a suspected extremist from Syria who had avoided being deported is accused of killing three people.

The proposed UK-Germany treaty is modelled in part on

agreements that Britain struck in recent years with France on defense, security and closer law enforcement cooperation against people-smuggling gangs.

Starmer sent a signal by visiting Berlin early in his term — unlike predecessor Rishi Sunak, who took 18 months. But his talk of starting anew with the EU has its limits.

He has ruled out many of the major possible steps to closer ties and has been cool to the idea of a youth mobility agreement with the 27-nation bloc. "I'm absolutely clear that we do want a reset ... with Europe, a reset with the EU," Starmer said in Berlin. However, "that does not mean reversing Brexit or reentering the single market or the customs union, but it does mean a closer relation on a number of fronts — including the economy, including defence, including exchanges, but we do not have plans for the youth mobility scheme".

Bdesh's interim govt lifts ban on Jamaat-e-Islami

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh's interim government Wednesday revoked a ban on the rightwing Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir, less than a month after it was imposed on the Islamist party by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who was forced to resign following massive protests against her government.

"(Lifting the ban) will come under effect immediately," the Home Ministry said in a gazette notification, noting that there was no particular evidence against the organisation.

The erstwhile Awami League government led by Hasina had imposed a ban on Jamaat on August 1, 2024, accusing the Islamist party as a "militant and terrorist" organisation. The government blamed Jamaat's student wing for inciting chaos over a quota system for government jobs.

The notification said the ban under the Anti-Terrorism Act 2009 has been lifted as there was no particular evidence against the organisation. The government believed that Jamaat and its associate bodies, including its student front Chhatra Shibir, were not involved in terrorist activities and violence.

The decision, formally published in a gazette notification on Wednesday, represents a significant change from the decision taken by the erstwhile Awami League government earlier this month, just days before its ouster.

The development came a day after Attorney General Mohammad Asaduzzaman urged the High Court to summarily reject a writ petition seeking an order on the government to ban Hasina's Awami League as a political party and scrap its registration.

"The current (interim) government has no intention to ban any political organisation," the government's top law officer told a two-judge High Court bench, which set August 29 for its decision on the writ filed by one Sarda Society as a public interest litigation. The interim government's law adviser, equivalent to a minister, Asif Nazrul

Jamaat-e-Islami leader denies party's role in attacks on Hindus

Dhaka (PTI): Jamaat-e-Islami supreme Shafiqur Rahman has said that his party was not involved in attacks on the Hindu community in Bangladesh and attributed the negative portrayal of the party to a "malicious" media campaign. He also refuted allegations that the party was involved in anti-India activities in Bangladesh and asked India to provide proof if any.

Replying to a query on allegations of attack on Hindus in Bangladesh by Jamaat activists, Rahman refuted the allegations as "baseless". The minority Hindu population has faced vandalism of their business and properties and devastation of Hindu temples in the students' violence that ensued for days following the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India on August 5.

"We don't believe in the concept of minority and majority, we believe in unity. We don't consider Hindus as minorities, they are our brothers and friends in Bangladesh. We are with our Hindu brothers and we will stand by them," Rahman said. Refuting allegations of attack on Hindu properties by the Jamaat cadres, Rahman said: "The activists and workers of Jamaat guarded the temples and houses of Hindus after August 5 so that no untoward incident takes place."

On Wednesday told reporters he was opposed to the call for a ban on Awami League or any other political parties unless there was any strong evidence of their involvement in terrorist activities.

"Awami League is the party which led Bangladesh's independence movement and contributed to different democratic movements. (But) what they did in the past 15 years does not go with their heritage, the spirit of the Liberation War," Nazrul said.

He said the party had established the "most barbaric fascism" in Bangladesh's history for which someone might have individual or its leaders might have collective responsibility "but I don't think it will be a wise decision to ban it as a political party." Secretary General of premier Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said that anyone should be able to form an independent political party, that is the main goal of democracy.

"We are not in favour of banning any political party; any party and any individual has the right to form an independent party. But

Woman TV journalist's body recovered from lake in Dhaka

Dhaka (PTI): The body of a 32-year-old woman TV journalist in Bangladesh was recovered from a lake here in the capital on Wednesday, according to media reports.

The deceased was identified as Sarah Rahanuma, a newsroom editor at Gazi TV, a Bengali-language satellite and cable television channel owned by Gazi Group.

Her body was found floating in Hatirjheel Lake in Dhaka, The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. Inspector Bachchu Mia, in charge of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) police outpost, confirmed the recovery of her body.

Deceased pulled the body from the lake and took it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where the doctor declared her dead around 2:00 am.

A man named Sagar, who brought Sarah to the hospital, said: "I saw the woman floating in Hatirjheel Lake. Later, she was brought to DMCH, where doctors declared her dead."

Before her death, Sarah posted a status on her Facebook on Tuesday night tagging one Fahim Faysal.

"It was nice having a friend like you. God bless you always. Hope, you'll fulfil all your dreams soon. I know we had a lot of planning together. Sorry, can't fulfil our plans. May god bless you in every aspect of your life," she wrote.

In an earlier post, she wrote: "It is better to die than to live a life akin to death." Inspector Bachchu Mia said the body was kept in the DMCH morgue.

Police have stated that an investigation will be conducted to determine the cause of her death.

However, deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's US-based son, Sajeb Wazed, gave a political colour to the journalist's death, saying that it was "another brutal attack" on the freedom of expression in the country.

Feds refine indictment in Trump Jan 6 case, charges unchanged

Washington (AP): Special counsel Jack Smith filed a new indictment Tuesday against Donald Trump over his efforts to undo the 2020 presidential election that keeps the same criminal charges but narrows the allegations against him following a Supreme Court opinion that conferred broad immunity on former presidents. The new indictment removes a section of the indictment that had accused Trump of trying to use the law enforcement powers of the Justice Department to overturn his election loss, an area of conduct for which the Supreme Court, in a 6-3 opinion last month, said that Trump was absolutely immune from prosecution.

The stripped-down criminal case represents a first effort by prosecutors to comply with a Supreme Court opinion likely to result in a significant revision of the allegations against Trump over his efforts to block the peaceful transfer of power. It was filed three days ahead of a deadline for prosecutors and defense lawyers to tell the judge in the case how they wanted to proceed in light of that opinion, which said former presidents are presumptively immune from prosecution for official White House acts.

The two sides will be back in court for a status hearing next week, the first such appearance in months given that the case had been effectively frozen since last December as Trump's immunity appeal worked its way through the justice system. In a statement on his Truth Social platform, Trump called the new indictment "an act of desperation" and an "effort to resurrect a dead Witch Hunt."

Far right's rise in eastern Germany hinders skilled worker recruitment

AP ■ JENA

When electrical engineer Preetam Gaikwad first moved to Jena in 2013, she was smitten by what the eastern German city had to offer: a prestigious university, top research institutions, and cutting-edge technology companies, global leaders in their field. Eleven years later, the Indian native takes a more sober view.

"I'm really worried about the development of the political situation here," Gaikwad, 43 said. Jena is in the eastern German state of Thuringia, which has elections on September 1.

The far-right Alternative for Germany party, or AfD, is currently leading the polls with about 30 per cent support, far ahead of the centre-right Christian Democrats (21 per cent) and the centre-left Social Democrats of Chancellor Olaf



Scholz (7 per cent). The AfD's anti-foreigner stance is the cornerstone of its campaign, raising concern among businesses like Jenoptik, Gaikwad's employer. The company, which supplied lens assemblies for Perseverance, the NASA remote vehicle on Mars, employs 1,680 people in Jena and more than 4,600 glob-

ally. Jenoptik, one of the few internationally successful businesses in Jena, depends on being able to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce, much of it from outside Germany. The rise of the AfD is making that more difficult, says Jenoptik CEO Stefan Traeger.

More and more prospective employees tell Traeger that while they would love to work for Jenoptik, they won't take a job there because they don't want to live in a state dominated by a hard-right party that ostracizes migrants or other minorities such as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Traeger, a Jena native who studied in the US, told the AP he hopes that after the election "we will still be as open, free and democratic a country as we are now. That's what we need in order to move the company forward".

Maduro taps hardline loyalist to oversee police forces, prompting fears of deepening crackdown

Caracas (AP): Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Tuesday appointed a ruling socialist party boss to oversee the country's police forces, empowering a hardline loyalist who has vowed to pursue government opponents as part of an ongoing crackdown that has alarmed human rights groups.

Maduro named Diosdado Cabello Interior Minister as part of a Cabinet shuffle following last month's contested presidential election. Along with Maduro, Cabello is one of the most fervent stalwarts of the so-called Bolivarian revolution started by the late Hugo Chávez and has long been considered the second most powerful person

in Venezuela after Maduro. A retired army lieutenant, he fought alongside Chávez in a failed military uprising in 1992 and later served as acting president when Chávez himself was removed in a brief coup a decade later. However, Chávez passed him over when he picked Maduro — a civilian with no military pedigree — as his successor shortly before he died of cancer in 2013. Since then, he's served in a number of roles, including National Assembly president and head of the ruling socialist party. Until now, he never served in Maduro's Cabinet, an omission that has long fuelled speculation of an unspoken rivalry between the two.

Human rights groups fear that Cabello's appointment to Interior Minister, with oversight of Venezuela's police forces, will intensify the government's heavy handed response to protests that erupted after last month's presidential election, when Maduro was declared the winner despite strong evidence presented by the opposition that its candidate prevailed by a 2-to-1 margin. More than 2,000 people — including journalists, politicians and aid workers — have been arrested since the July 28 election. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on Wednesday is expected to deliver a report in Washington at a special meet-

ing of the Organization of American States to discuss the crackdown.

"If the new Cabinet is a bellwether of what Maduro intends to do, Cabello's appointment is an indication of even more repression to come," said Juanita Goebertus, director for the Americas at Human Rights Watch.

Cabello, 61, has been among key insiders calling for a forceful response to those casting doubt on Maduro's victory. With deep roots in the security forces, he's seen his influence expand as Venezuelans have tired of Maduro, blaming him for wrecking the oil-rich economy.

Denmark creates three new ministers in govt reshuffle

Copenhagen (AP): Denmark's three-party centrist government said on Wednesday it will create three new ministries, including a government office in charge of emergency preparedness.

The government wants a minister in charge of European Union affairs ahead of Denmark's rotating EU presidency in the second half of 2025.

The shuffle means Denmark, like Sweden, will have a minister in charge of emergencies and preparedness for climate change or cyberattacks. The third new minister will be in charge of carrying out and coordinating Denmark's green policy.

"I hope this can inspire the rest of the world," Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen



said of the new green policy ministry. The Scandinavian country has a goal of 70 per cent emissions reductions by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050.

Frederiksen did not give any names nor say whether any of the current government's 23 ministries would be made redundant. She said the changes will be announced on

Thursday when the new government is formally presented to King Frederik X.

Also Wednesday, Frederiksen named 49-year-old Dan Jørgensen as Denmark's candidate for the new commissioner to the European Union's powerful executive arm which polices EU laws and negotiates trade on behalf of member countries.

Traders observe strike across Pak to protest new taxes

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Traders in Pakistan went on strike on Wednesday, shutting down their businesses in all major cities and urban areas to protest a rise in electricity costs and new taxes imposed on shop owners. The government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has steadily raised electricity prices since Pakistan last month struck a deal with the International Monetary Fund for a new USD 7 billion loan. The higher cost of living and price hikes have triggered widespread discontent and drawn protests. Most of the public markets across Pakistan were closed on Wednesday, though pharmacies and grocery stores selling basic food items



remained open. Kashif Chaudhry, a strike leader, said those were not closed so as not to inconvenience the general public. Stores were shuttered in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, the nearby garrison city of Rawalpindi, as well as in

associations. However, traders in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the southwestern Balochistan provinces observed a partial strike, keeping some stores open while closing others. The strike is aimed at forcing the government to reverse the recent hikes in power bills and the controversial tax that followed the recent talks with the IMF, which wants to see Pakistan broaden its tax base. The July deal was Pakistan's latest turn to the global lender for help in propping up its economy and dealing with its debts through big bailouts. Earlier this year, the IMF approved the immediate release of the final USD 1.1 billion tranche of a \$3 billion bailout to Pakistan.

'Working on identifying culprits in alleged financial coup'

PTI ■ MALE

Maldivian police on Wednesday said that they are working on identifying the possible culprits in an alleged 'financial coup', two days after President Mohamed Muizzu accused the opposition of plotting to topple his government using a decision by the national bank to suspend foreign transactions from Rufiyaa cards. On Sunday, the Bank of Maldives (BML) suspended foreign transactions for existing debit cards, as well as new debit and credit cards linked to MVR (the Maldivian rufiyaa) accounts. It also lowered the monthly standard and gold credit card limit to USD 100. However, it reversed the decision within hours, saying it was based on instructions

from its regulator, the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA). The police opened a criminal investigation on Monday, citing there's room to believe the opposition had attempted to topple President Muizzu's administration by stoking up fears of a financial crisis and inciting people to take to the streets. In a statement on Wednesday, the police said they are working on "collecting all necessary information and conducting a detailed review of everything that needs looking into" in their investigation, the Sun news portal reported. "We are also identifying the people who possibly need to be taken action against and all other works pertaining to the investigation," said the police. Speaking at a party meeting of the ruling People's National

Congress (PNC) on Monday night, President Muizzu said that he had worked to find a resolution for the Bank issue alongside his ministers as soon as he had become aware of the situation. He asserted that the bank's decision had been against his advice. Muizzu said that many had raised questions as to why a government-majority holding bank had made such a decision against government advice. However, most people were unaware that BML's Board of Directors does not have a government majority at this time, he said. Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, was sworn in as the President in November last year. "As of now, there's only four government directors there. The remaining five directors

are not government-aligned. So we don't have a majority yet. We have nominated two directors, but it will take a couple of weeks for them to be appointed through the existing procedures there. Even though the Chairman has not been appointed yet, the name has been sent," he said. Muizzu, who also heads the ruling People's National Congress (PNC) party, alleged that this was a calculated coup attempt by a select group of people and added that the Police have now commenced investigations into the matter. The main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) chairperson Fayyaz Ismail, however, said that the events show a coup brewing within President Muizzu's administration and not one instigated by outside forces.

Two killed in sectarian violence in Pak's Punjab province

Lahore (PTI): At least two Shia men were killed and over 30 others injured in a deadly sectarian clash in Pakistan's Punjab province, forcing authorities to deploy paramilitary forces in the area, police said on Wednesday. The clash between two sects — Shia and Sunni — took place in Kalabagh Town Mianwali district, some 400 km from Lahore starting on Monday evening and continuing through Tuesday till late evening. Tension was simmering between the two sects over taking out a procession in connection with the Chehlum of Imam Hussain, grandson of Prophet Muhammad, in Kalabagh Town through a certain route. A senior police officer told PTI on Wednesday that the Sunnis had objected that the Shias should not be allowed to take out a procession on a route which had their mosques. However, the Shias insisted that they would take out the procession in the town without caring about any restrictions.

The officer said that the Shias took out the procession on the 'certain route' that caused the sectarian clash. "The crossfire between the two sects started on Monday evening and lasted till late on Tuesday night. Some 33 people with bullet wounds were shifted to hospital where two Shia men succumbed to their injuries while the condition of three to four others is critical," he said. Some armed Sunni men first opened fire on the Shia procession which led to the armed clash. Besides the dead, most of the injured belong to the Shia sect.

The police officer further said elements of the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), an anti-Shai outfit, could be behind this incident. Punjab Inspector General Police Dr Usman Anwar rushed to the troubled town and imposed a ban on the assembling of four people, in the whole district of Mianwali.

Following the deadly clash, Pakistan Rangers were deputed to the area to maintain law and order and both rangers and police personnel deployed in Mianwali held patrolling in the town on Wednesday.

Ukraine seeks more US weapons support for Russia offensive

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Ukraine's daring ground offensive has taken the fight to Russia, but not nearly as much as its leaders would like because, they say, the United States won't let them. The U.S. restricts the use of long-range ballistic missiles it provides to Ukraine, which wants to aim them at military targets inside Russia. Ukraine's offensive, along with a barrage of drones and missiles that Moscow launched this week, has intensified pressure on the Biden administration to ease its cautious approach to the use of Western weapons in escalating Ukrainian attacks. The Biden administration says its careful deliberations, including which advanced weapons it supplies to Ukraine and when, are necessary to avoid provoking retaliation from Russian President Vladimir Putin. Some analysts agree Putin would take a Ukrainian strike by an American long-range ballistic

missile within Russia as an attack by the U.S. itself. But many other American and European supporters of Ukraine say the White House should see that Putin's threats of attacking the West, including with nuclear weapons, are bluster. Their fear is the U.S. support that has allowed Ukraine to withstand Russia's 2022 invasion comes with delays and caveats that could ultimately contribute to its defeat. "This war is going to end exactly how Western policymakers decide it will end," said Philip Breedlove, a retired U.S. general who led NATO in Europe from 2013 to 2016 and is among the retired U.S. military leaders and diplomats, Republican lawmakers, security analysts and others pushing for a loosening of restrictions on how Ukraine uses Western-provided weapons. "If we keep doing what we're doing, Ukraine will eventually lose," Breedlove said. "Because right now... we are purposely not giving Ukraine what they

need to win." Lifting such restrictions "would strengthen Ukrainian self-defense, save lives and reduce destruction in Ukraine," European Union foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell wrote Monday on the social platform X after Russia launched more than 200 missiles and drones at Ukraine. The next day, Russia launched 91 more. The push and pull is playing out during Ukraine's surprise offensive into Russia's southern Kursk region, the first ground invasion of Russia since World War II. Throughout the war, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has balanced copious thanks for U.S. support with frustrated appeals for more arms and ammunition. Upping the pressure this month, he again said Ukraine must fight the war as it sees fit with all the weapons at its disposal and appealed for the U.S. to drop a ban on using American long-range ATACMS missiles to strike deeper into Russia.

"A sick old man from the Red Square, who constantly threatens everyone with the red button, will not dictate any of his red lines to us," Zelenskyy said recently of Putin. The Biden administration this year allowed Ukraine to fire shorter-range U.S.-provided munitions across the border in self-defense, but not ATACMS. Security analysts say Ukraine is using U.S.-provided HIMARS rocket systems in its offensive. Ukraine also announced it has used a U.S.-supplied glide bomb against Russian forces and deployed its own prototype of a long-range drone-missile hybrid. Zelenskyy's military appeared to have launched the ground offensive on Aug. 6 without consulting American leaders. As Ukraine has claimed nearly 500 square miles (1,300 square kilometers) of Russian territory, it has taken a message from another U.S. ally that receives military support, said Roman Kostenko, a Ukrainian lawmaker and military commander.

'US military may escort Philippine ships in SCS'

AP ■ MANILA

The US military is open to consultations about escorting Philippine ships in the disputed South China Sea, the head of US Indo-Pacific Command said Tuesday amid a spike in hostilities between Beijing and Manila in the disputed waters. Adm. Samuel Paparo's remarks, which he made in response to a question during a news conference in Manila with Philippine Armed Forces chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., provided a glimpse of the mindset of one of the highest American military commanders outside the U.S. mainland on a prospective operation that would risk putting U.S. Navy ships in direct collisions with those of China. Chinese coast guard, navy and suspected militia ships regularly clash with Philippine vessels during attempts to resupply Filipino sailors stationed in parts of the South China Sea claimed by both countries. As these clashes grow increasingly hostile, resulting in injuries to Filipino sailors and damage to their ships, the Philippine government has faced questions about invoking a treaty alliance with Washington. Paparo and Brawner spoke to reporters after an international military conference in Manila organized by the US Indo-Pacific Command, at which China's increasingly assertive actions in the South China Sea were spotlighted. Military and defense officials and diplomats from the US and allied countries attended but there were no Chinese representatives. Asked if the US military would consider escorting Philippine ships delivering food and other supplies to Filipino forces in the South China Sea, Paparo replied, "Certainly, within the context of consultations."



"Every option between the two sovereign nations in terms of our mutual defense, escort of one vessel to the other, is an entirely reasonable option within our Mutual Defense Treaty, among this close alliance between the two of us," Paparo said without elaborating. Brawner responded cautiously to the suggestion, which could run afoul of Philippine laws including a constitutional ban on foreign forces directly joining local combat operations. "The attitude of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as dictated by the Philippine laws, is for us to first rely on ourselves," Brawner said. "We are going to try all options, all avenues that are available to us in order for us to achieve the mission... in this case, the resupply and rotation of our troops." "We will then seek for other options when we are already constrained from doing it ourselves," Brawner said. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has said there has been no situation so far that would warrant activating the treaty, which requires the allies to come to each other's aid if they come under external attack. President Joe Biden and his administration have repeatedly renewed their "ironclad" commitment to help defend the Philippines under the 1951 treaty if Filipino forces, ships and aircraft come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea. Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr said at the conference 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 disput-

ed Sabina Shoal in the contested waters. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said that "the label of undermining peace can never be pinned on China," blaming unspecified other actors for "making infringements and provocations in the South China Sea and introducing external forces to undermine the large picture of regional peace and stability." Teodoro 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 a UN Security Council resolution would be a strong step, but unlikely given China's security council veto. He also called for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to do more. 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 Sabina Shoal on Monday.

Ukraine first lady wants country's kids to see themselves as 'generation of winners'

Uzhhorod (Ukraine)(AP): Ukraine's first lady wants her country's children to view themselves not as a generation enduring a grinding war, but rather as "a generation of winners." On the sidelines of a day spent at a rehabilitation camp for Ukrainian children in the relatively safe western city of Uzhhorod, Olena Zelenska said Tuesday that working with the next generation was both a moral obligation and a "strategic priority" for Ukraine's future. Many of the children will return to front-line cities after spending a few weeks at the camp, barely enough time to overcome the trauma they face over and over. "This issue needs to be addressed immediately, as soon as it arises, before it grows into something more," Zelenska told The Associated Press in a brief interview at the camp.



The foundation that bears her name, which is funded entirely by foreign donations, created the camp along with the Voices of the Children charity. A study by the Olena Zelenska Foundation and the Kyiv School of Economics this year found that 44% of Ukrainian children show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. Dressed casually with white sneakers, black pants, a white

T-shirt and pearls around her neck, Zelenska blended into the camp's activities with the children. Since the start of the war, she has emerged as an unofficial ambassador for Ukraine globally. She was the first from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's family to leave the country after Russia invaded in February 2022 to promote Ukraine's cause. But she is

equally active within Ukraine, and easily recognizable to the displaced families and wounded soldiers she visits. At the camp, she joined an art therapy session midway, sitting beside a boy whose home was struck by an aerial bomb and who was later forced to evacuate from his hometown ahead of the Russian advance this summer. Zelenska smiled and engaged with the children, examining each watercolor they presented. She even joined in, drawing a pink flower, a star and a heart. The conversation stayed away from the war. "To ensure our children do not become a lost generation, we as adults must be not just active but also swift," Zelenska said. "It's difficult, but there is still the ongoing defense of the country. However, I am confident that political will combined with international cooperation can work wonders."

UN resolution on Myanmar condemns military attacks on civilians, urge peace

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

Renewed peace efforts, condemning attacks on civilians — especially by the Myanmar military — and calling for a halt to illicit arms transfers. The draft resolution obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press expresses "alarm at the increased violence across Myanmar," which is engulfed in civil war between the military-led regime and resistance forces. It calls for "safe, rapid, and unhindered humanitarian access at scale," expressing "grave concern" at the deteriorating humanitarian situation and restrictions on humanitarian access in the country that led to rising food insecurity and hunger. The proposed resolution warns that the current situation has the potential to further exacerbate discrimination, ethnically motivated violence, violations of international humanitarian law, human rights abuses, and con-

flict-related sexual violence. Myanmar's military ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, 2021. It was the day Parliament was to reconvene following November 2020 elections, which her National League for Democracy party won overwhelmingly — an outcome the military claims without evidence was based on fraud. Suu Kyi and party members remain under arrest. The takeover was met with massive public opposition, which has since turned into armed resistance and civil war. The military regime now faces its greatest challenge from the ethnic minority militias and people's defense forces who support the main opposition and have captured wide swaths of territory in fierce fighting in recent months. The draft resolution stresses the central role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the 10-country bloc whose 2021 peace plan has so far

been rejected by Myanmar's generals. It calls for an immediate end to the violence and dialogue among contending parties brokered through an ASEAN envoy. The draft resolution urges renewed efforts by the ASEAN special envoy to Myanmar, Alounkeo Kittikhoun, and new U.N. special envoy, Julie Bishop, "to engage all relevant stakeholders to seek a peaceful, inclusive solution to the crisis in Myanmar." Security Council negotiations on the draft resolution are expected to be tough. The 15-member council approved its first-ever resolution on Myanmar in December 2022 by a vote of 12-0 with three abstentions — Russia, China and India, who all have ties to the Myanmar regime. India's two-year term on the council ended that month, but Russia and China are veto-wielding permanent members of the council.

24 missing after floods in Yemen

Cairo (AP): Floodwaters swept through a village in northern Yemen, inundating homes and shops and leaving at least 24 people missing, authorities said Wednesday. Heavy rains over the past few days pounded the Melhan district in Al-Mahwit province, triggering floods that caved in seven homes and four shops, according to a statement. Yemen is already the poorest Arab nation before it was plunged into civil war in 2014, when Iran-backed Houthis rebels took control of the capital, Sanaa, and much of the country's north, forcing the government to flee to the south, then to Saudi Arabia. Seasonal monsoon rains in the late summer often turn into flooding in Yemen, but there are indications that the country is experiencing more extreme weather events due to climate change.

Haiti's army wants recruits to fight gangs, and youths jump at rare job offer

Port-Au-Prince (Haiti) (AP): The announcement that Haiti's military wanted recruits crackled through a small radio perched on a street stall in downtown Port-Au-Prince where Maurenceley Clerge repairs and sells smartphones. It was early morning, and the 21-year-old paused, eager to hear the details. He envisioned earning enough to afford his own food and rent. Two weeks later, he completed the required paperwork and stood in line with hundreds of other Haitians under a brutal sun for the chance to join up. "It's the moment I have been waiting for," said Clerge, who stays with a friend who also provides him with food. "I want to serve as a citizen of this country and also to move up and upgrade my life." Thousands of young Haitians are jumping at the chance to become soldiers as widespread gang violence creates a rare job opportunity in a deeply impoverished country where work is scarce.

Brushing aside the possibility they could be kidnapped, tortured or killed, Haiti's youngest generation is answering the call of a government seeking to rebuild a once-reviled military, reinstated just years ago with the aim to crush gangs. "I thought about it a lot because I know that being a soldier requires a lot of sacrifice," said Samuel Delmas, who recently applied. "Everything that you're doing is risky." The 20-year-old is taking computer repair courses but doesn't have a job. He heard about the recruitment via a Facebook group. "I have always wanted to be useful to my country," he said. Gangs forced Delmas and his family to flee their home two years ago, with only enough time to grab a handful of clothes amid a barrage of gunfire. "I want to protect citizens who are on the run like me," he said. Haiti's government has not said how many soldiers it aims to hire nor how many have applied so far, but documents published

online by the Defense Ministry show that at least 3,000 people were selected in mid-August and asked to submit documents as they await physical and mental tests. If all were hired, that would more than double the force strength of 2,000 of early last year. About 60% of Haiti's population of nearly 12 million people earn less than \$2 a day, with inflation soaring to double digits in recent years. "Most young kids are not working," said Emerson Celadon, a 25-year-old mechanic who applied and was selected for the next round. "I was making some money, but... that is still not enough for a family of four." It's not clear how much soldiers earn, Defense Minister Jean-Marc Bernier Antoine did not return messages for comment. However, Celadon said friends in the army told him they make about \$300 a month. On a recent afternoon, Celadon joined hundreds of mostly young men lined up outside a former U.N. base, a yellow envelope under his arm,

waiting to take the first of several required tests to join the army. Haiti's armed forces were once widely feared and hated, with soldiers accused of horrific human rights abuses. The military organized several coups in the second half of the 20th century, even after so-called "dictator for life" François Duvalier diluted its strength. After the last coup in 1991, to oust former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the government disbanded the armed forces in 1995. At the time, there were some 7,000 soldiers. "The decision to demobilize the army... proved to be one of the most catastrophic decisions in the country's history," said Michael Deibert, the author of two books about Haiti. He noted that, as a result, the first generation of politically-aligned gangs took root in the late 1990s and early 2000s. "They stepped into a security void left by what would have been a security force, one whose role the Haitian police have never been fully able to assume," Deibert said.

Nifty gains marginally to hit lifetime high

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Nifty rose marginally to hit a fresh lifetime high of 25,052 and Sensex gained over 70 points on Wednesday, helped by buying in IT stocks amid a largely positive global market. Recent foreign fund inflows and lower global crude oil prices also strengthened investor sentiments, traders said.

Rising for the tenth straight session, the NSE Nifty went up by 34.60 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 25,052.35. The benchmark surged 111.85 points or 0.44 per cent to hit a fresh intra-day all-time peak of 25,129.60. Extending its winning run to the seventh day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 73.80 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at 81,785.56. During the day, it jumped 327.5 points or 0.40 per cent to 82,039.26. Among the 30 Sensex firms,



Bharti Airtel, Infosys, IndusInd Bank, Sun Pharma, Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance and JSW Steel were the biggest gainers. Asian Paints, Maruti, Nestle, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Axis Bank and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled higher while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

European markets were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended with marginal gains on Tuesday. "The market has entered a consolidation phase with low volatility and this trend is likely to continue in the near-term. Falling bond yields in the US have restrained FII selling and they have even turned marginal buyers. Going by previous trends, DIIs are likely to sell if FIIs

continue to buy. "This trend will keep the market within a range with a slight upward bias. This is a desirable and healthy trend, given the elevated valuations in the market," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,503.76 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 604.08 crore. Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.82 per cent to USD 78.90 a barrel. After oscillating between highs and lows, the BSE benchmark eked out a marginal gain of 13.65 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 81,711.76 on Tuesday. 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.

SBI MD hopes market correction over time will get funds back to banking system

PTI ■ MUMBAI

SBI Managing Director Ashwini Tewari on Wednesday said a correction in the equity markets "over time" can help banks get back the deposits it has ceded. He also said the country's largest lender is betting on the small-ticket Prime Minister Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts to drive deposit growth. Speaking on the sidelines of the GFF, he told reporters that the capital markets rally has seen a shift of money away from the banks to the higher yielding alternatives. "As the market corrects over time, some of the money that was earlier with us, will come back," he said. Interestingly, he said the bank is also looking at the small-ticket deposits from the decade-old PMJDY across its vast network as well to drive its deposit growth. "(We are focusing) on the small-value, small ticket accounts to raise deposits. Jan Dhan is something we have not focused on (previously), which we will do," he said. It can be noted that for nearly



18 months, the credit growth has been racing ahead of the deposit growth, forcing lenders to raise rates and compromising margins, and has also led to fears of banks being forced to temper loan growth. The Indian markets have witnessed an impressive rally in the last few months and the banking system has been complaining about the shift of funds being one of the reasons for slower deposit growth. Tewari on Wednesday said the regulator's moves on higher risk weights on unsecured loans and proposals on higher provisioning for project loans

are a "signal" for tempering deposit growth. He also said if the market demands, the bank will have to raise deposit rates. The MD of the bank said nearly 90 per cent of the funds fuelling credit for the banking system used to come from deposits, and the share is coming down as the banks are forced to go for other instruments like infrastructure bonds. Meanwhile, Tewari said the bank is not seeing any higher delinquency on the micro loans portfolio. He also said there is a scope for the volumes on central bank digital currency to go up.

Family Offices AUM growth projected at 14 per cent over three years: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Family Offices in India projected for 14 per cent growth in Asset Under Management (AUM) and a 5 per cent increase in alternative investments over the next 3 years, a report said. AUM for mid to large-sized family offices in India will grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 14 per cent over the next three years, potentially increasing by 1.5 times, a report by Sundaram Alternates titled 'From Legacy to Leadership' said. This report highlights the significant evolution of family offices as they transition from wealth preservation to a growth-focused mindset. Indian family offices are increasingly embracing alternative investments, with a projected 5 per cent increase in allocations to 18 per cent over the next three years, it said. This aligns with a global trend, where family offices allocate more than 50 per cent of their assets to alternatives, it said.

GAIL says LNG under new pacts to flow from 2026, gets one more ship

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned gas utility SGAIL (India) Ltd will start importing LNG under two new contracts from 2026 and has added one more ship to transport the fuel, its Chairman Sandeep Kumar Gupta said on Wednesday. The company had in January this year signed back-to-back deals to import liquefied natural gas (LNG). It first signed deal to import 1 million tonnes of LNG from Dutch energy trader Vitol for 10 years and then another agreement to buy 0.5 million tonne per annum of LNG from UAE's ADNOC-Gas. "As a leading natural gas player, your company

recognises the importance of ensuring supply security. In this direction, we have signed two 10-year LNG supply agreements, starting in 2026: 1 million tonnes from Vitol Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore and 0.5 million tonnes from ADNOC Gas, UAE," he said at the company's annual general meeting. LNG is natural gas, extracted from below the surface, that has been cooled down to liquid form for ease and safety of non-pressurised storage or transport. GAIL will import LNG in cryogenic ships and turn it back into its gaseous state before piping it to users that may include power plants for generating electricity,

fertiliser units for producing crop nutrients or city gas operators for selling to automobiles as CNG or piping to household kitchens for cooking. India imports roughly half of its gas needs as local production is insufficient to meet demand. GAIL operates a 5 million tonnes a year LNG import facility at Dabhol in Maharashtra and has leased space at terminals in Gujarat and Odisha. It is scouting for a 26 per cent stake in a US-based LNG plant to source 1 million tonnes-a-year of LNG for 15 years. "Additionally, GAIL's volume of 4.5 million tonnes per annum is now renewed under LNG SPA signed between Qatar Energy LNG

and Petronet LNG Ltd, with supplies commencing in 2028 for a period of 20 years," he said. GAIL has hired the long-term LNG vessel, GAIL Urja, and has entered into a 14-year time charter party agreement for a newly built LNG carrier. "The time charter for this LNG carrier will begin in early 2025," he said, adding that GAIL's fleet of five LNG carriers will enable the company to meet the requirement of transporting contracted LNG volumes to India. Gupta said GAIL, which is India's largest gas transportation and marketing firm, is also solidifying its position as a

key player in the Indian petrochemical industry by establishing a diverse range of product offerings. "GAIL's 500,000 tonnes PDHPP project at Usar (in Maharashtra), 60,000 polypropylene plant at Pata (Uttar Pradesh), 1.25 million tonnes PTA plant at GMPL, Mangaluru and 50,000 tonnes Isopropyl Alcohol (IPA) Project at Usar will diversify and expand GAIL's existing petrochemical portfolio and provide robust growth in years to come," he said. "GAIL is also exploring the feasibility of setting up a world scale greenfield ethane cracker." It is also working on feasibility of coal gasification

project in a joint venture with Coal India Ltd to produce synthetic natural gas. Stating that GAIL was well-positioned to become a leader in the energy transition, he said the company board has approved the advancement of the net zero carbon emission target by five years from the earlier 2040 to 2035. "Advancing its endeavours to reduce its carbon footprint, GAIL has installed the country's first MW scale green hydrogen electrolyser in Vijaipur, Madhya Pradesh," he said, adding that the firm was also working on setting up of 500 kilo litres per day 1G ethanol plant.

Govt to soon launch scheme to train adolescent girls for non-traditional jobs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government will soon launch a scheme to train 14-18 years old girls in non-traditional job roles, a move aimed at increasing women's participation in the labour force, a top official said on Wednesday. The pilot of the scheme will be launched in the next 2-3 weeks, Secretary in Ministry of Women and Child Development Anil Malik said. The scheme, which is being launched in 27 districts in the pilot phase, will eventually be expanded to cover 218 districts across the country, he said. A non-traditional career is generally defined as a certain

role that has less than 25 per cent of a specific gender, either men or women. As part of the 'Introduction of Special Project for Empowering Adolescent Girls & Women, 14-18 years old girls would be provided training near their schools and homes while they continue their education. The secretary shared that the pilot will be launched in 2-3 weeks under which training in non-traditional job roles will be provided along with digital skilling, digital marketing and general personality orientation. This programme would ultimately lead to higher participation of women in the labour force, he added.

Rupee falls three paise to close at 83.96 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 3 paise to close at 83.96 (provisional) against the American currency on Wednesday, amidst strong dollar demand from importers particularly oil companies. Forex traders said a positive trend in domestic equities, foreign fund inflows and overnight decline in crude oil prices cushioned the downside.



Anuj Choudhary -- Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Choudhary further noted that rise in global risk sentiments amid dovish Fed speak and rising expectations of a rate cut by the US Fed in September may support the rupee. "Traders may remain cautious ahead of US GDP and core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) data from the US this week. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading

0.36 per cent higher at 100.91. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.93 per cent to USD 78.81 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 73.80 points, or 0.09 per cent, to close at 81,785.56 points. The Nifty closed 34.60 points, or 0.14 per cent, up at 25,052.35 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Tuesday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,503.76 crore, according to exchange data.

Fast cross-border payments to make it difficult to check money laundering, terror funding: Fed official

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Days after RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das sought to bring greater efficiency to trans-border transactions, a senior US Fed official on Wednesday said that frictionless cross-border payments will make it difficult to check money laundering and terror funding. Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest 2024 here, Christopher J Waller, a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, made it clear that "not all frictions that slow payments down are bad". The US Fed official overseeing payment systems said slowing down the speed at which payments are cleared and settled helps banks prevent money laundering and counter the financing of terrorism, detect fraud, and recover fraudulent or misdirected cross-border payments. He said unless new solutions are found, interlinking fast payment systems "might



increase" the risk-management burden for banks that participate in them. Acknowledging that consumers and businesses want cheaper and faster cross-border payments, Waller expressed his reservations. "I am not entirely convinced that interlinking arrangements will necessarily deliver," he said. Delivering a lecture in India's tech capital Bengaluru on Monday, Das advocated a faster interlinking of domestic payment systems to overcome the concerns of high costs and delays. "With the emergence of Fast

Payment Systems across countries and experimentation around CBDC, new possibilities are opening up to bring in greater efficiency to cross-border payments. Maximum efficiency gains in such initiatives would come from ensuring inter-operability as a key design element," Das had said. Waller, however, said that it may not be easier. "There is no silver bullet that increases speed and efficiency without tradeoffs," he added. He said certain frictions are built "purposely" into the global payment system for compliance and risk-

management reasons. The professor of economics said legal, compliance and operational considerations will have to be looked at, along with governance, oversight, data privacy and settlement arrangements when thinking about interlinking. He said the right incentives for the sender in a cross-border payment is essential, and also conceded that it exists in remittances. However, these are very small value transactions, he said, wondering whether the senders need to be incentivised at all. "We need to ask ourselves whether banks would find a central bank interlinking service more effective than their existing arrangements for cross-border payments, and if they would actually use it," Waller said. He also made it clear that having strong domestic networks is a necessity before one can embark on interlinking and added that the US Fed's system will take two years to be ready.

Gold prices remain steady; silver declines ₹400



Gold prices remained flat at Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday in scattered deals even as it weakened in the overseas markets. Silver prices, however, declined Rs 400 to Rs 87,800 per kilogram. It had ended at Rs 88,200 per kg in the previous session on Tuesday. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also ruled flat at Rs 74,000 per 10 grams. Traders attributed the fall in silver price due to poor offtake by industrial units and global influences. In the international markets, comex gold is trading at USD 2,542.20 per ounce, down USD 10.70 per ounce or 0.42 per cent. "Gold prices were slightly lower during European trading hours on Wednesday, due to a rebound in the US dollar," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. According to Kaynat Chainwala, AVP-Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, comex gold is trading above USD 2,500 per ounce, supported by the FOMC meeting minutes, which reinforced expectations of a September rate cut. Rising geopolitical tensions, particularly the escalating Israel-Hezbollah conflict, also bolstered gold prices as a safe-haven asset, Chainwala said. Silver was also quoting lower at USD 29.93 per ounce in the global markets.

Shipping Ministry approves wage structure revision for workers of major ports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has approved wage structure revision for workers at major ports, an official statement said on Wednesday. According to the statement, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Bipartite Wage Negotiation Committee (BWNC) and the Indian Port Association (IPA), averting an indefinite strike that was set to disrupt operations across 12 major ports in India. The MoU facilitates the revision of the wage structure and addresses other service conditions, including

potential anomalies, the ministry said. Additionally, the statement said, a special allowance of Rs 500 per month will be provided to working employees during the operative period of the settlement, from January 1, 2022, until December 31, 2026, or until the date of the employee's superannuation, whichever comes first. Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said the timely resolution of these issues reflects MoPSWs commitment to fostering a harmonious and productive working environment across all Indian ports.

A draft committee meeting, scheduled to convene on August 28, 2024, will prepare the settlement within ten days. This committee will include one representative from each federation as well as management representatives appointed by the IPA Chairman. "The management assured that the BWNC proceedings will be concluded, with the final settlement reached within 15 days," the statement said, adding that considering this development, the six federations have unanimously decided to defer the strike previously planned for August 28, 2024.

The total transaction volume on UPI is expected to increase to 439 billion by 2028-29 from about 131 billion in the last financial year and account for 91 per cent of overall retail digital payments, said a PwC India Report. The report titled "The Indian Payments Handbook -- 2024-29" also said India's digital payments landscape has witnessed remarkable growth over the past eight years and the industry is projected to expand more than three times in volume, from 159 billion transactions in 2023-24 to 481 billion by 2028-29. In terms of value of payment transactions, the market

UPI transaction volume expected to rise to 439 bn by FY29: PwC India report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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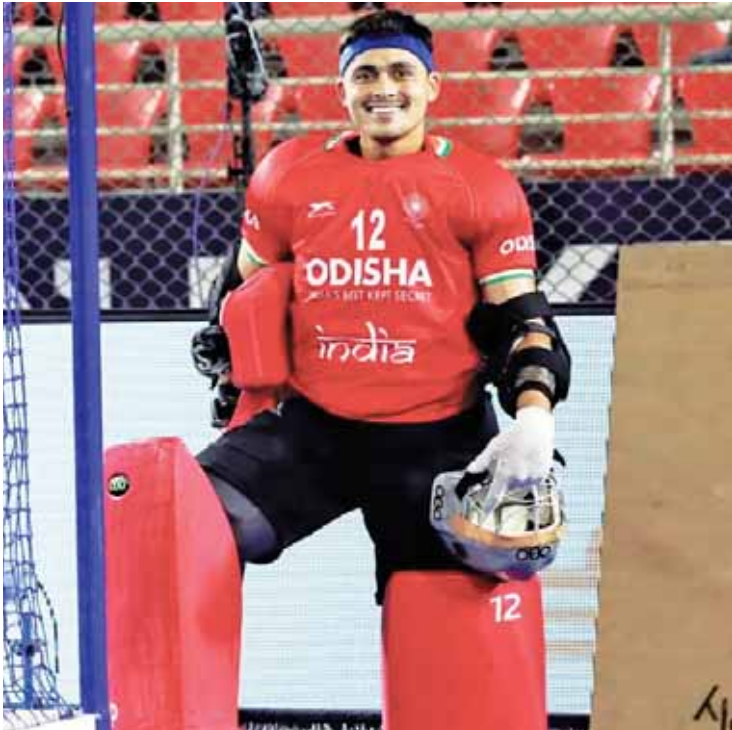
growth is expected to double, from Rs 265 lakh crore to Rs 593 lakh crore over the same period. The PwC India report said UPI continues its remarkable growth trajectory with a year-on-year growth in transaction volume of 57 per cent, it said. "In FY 2023-24, the total transaction volume was slightly over 131 billion and is

expected to grow to 439 billion by 2028-29. UPI now accounts for over 80 per cent of the overall retail digital payments in India and is expected to contribute to 91 per cent by 2028-29," the report said. It further said credit cards have witnessed a formidable growth in 2023-24 with the industry adding more than 16 million new ones. With the addition of new cards, the industry has also seen 22 per cent and 28 per cent surge in transactional volume and value, respectively. On the other hand, debit cards have seen a dip in both transactions volume and value owing to the shift in preferences by cardholders.

PATHAK NAMED INDIA GOALKEEPER IN ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY SQUAD

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Krishan Bahadur Pathak, on Wednesday named the main goalkeeper after the retirement of PR Sreejesh in the Harmanpreet Singh-led 18-member Indian team for the upcoming Asian Champions Trophy. The tournament will see defending champions India vie for top honours alongside Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Japan and hosts China at Hulunbuir from September 8-17. Sreejesh announced his retirement after India won a second successive Olympic bronze medal in Paris earlier this month. Pathak, who was India's standby goalkeeper at the Paris Olympics and in many tournaments prior to that, will now be the man in charge at the post, while Suraj Karkera will be the reserve custodian. Experienced midfielder Vivek Sagar Prasad has been made the vice-captain in place of Hardik Singh who has been rested along with Mandeep Singh, Lalit Upadhyay, Shamsher Singh and Gurjant Singh. The tournament will also be a big opportunity for India's promising drag-flicker Jugraj Singh who travelled to Paris Olympics as

standby and will look to prove his credentials alongside the brilliant Harmanpreet. A power-packed drag-flicker, Jugraj has proven his worth in the limited opportunities he got in the Pro League, and it will be up to him to cement his place in the side. Arajjeet Singh Hundal is the third drag-flicker in the team. The defence will be manned by Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay and Sumit. Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Manpreet Singh, and Mohammed Raheel will form the midfield, while a young forwardline featuring Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Hundal, junior India captain Uttam Singh, and debutant Gurjot Singh will lead the attack. Ten players from the Paris Olympics bronze medal-winning squad are part of this team. "This is an important campaign for us to ensure we build on our ranking points. The team has just returned to the camp after all the celebrations following our performance in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games," chief coach Craig Fulton said in a Hockey India statement. "The past few weeks have truly been incredible with all the love and



adulation for the team and we hope this support will continue all through our future campaigns. "The new Olympic cycle for us

begins with the Asian Champions Trophy and we are ready for the challenge. "While we have rested a few players from the squad that played in Paris, we have brought in a few youngsters who have done well in training and have earned the opportunity to play in Asian Champions Trophy. "We will have Gurjot making his international debut, and I believe this is a great opportunity for youngsters who have received a call-up to shine," Fulton added. The Indian team will begin its campaign against China on September 8, followed by a match against Japan the next day. After a day's rest, India will take on Malaysia on September 11 and play Korea the next day. Then, the Indian side will take on arch-rivals Pakistan on September 14. The semi-finals and final are slated on September 16 and 17 respectively.

SQUAD:
Goalkeepers: Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Suraj Karkera; **Defenders:** Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh (c), Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit; **Midfielders:** Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Vivek Sagar Prasad (VC), Manpreet Singh, Mohammed. Raheel Mauseen; **Forwards:** Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Uttam Singh, Gurjot Singh.



Gukesh draws with Giri; Praggnanandhaa holds Caruana

PTI ■ SAINT LOUIS (USA)
The American himself beats Giri. Even if he loses, Alireza will win the tour for the first time thanks to his superior points tally overall. "It's very tough to win a tour. Any tour is tough to win, but this is the strongest tour in the world. Very happy, but it's very tiring and feeling exhausted but, I'm very happy," Alireza noted. The third place is still shared by five players on four points apiece. They are Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa, Vachier-Lagrave, So and Abdusattorov. Nepomniachtchi and Liren come in next on 3.5 points, a half point clear of Anish Giri who is at the last spot. Gukesh had to work quite less out of a routine Ruy Lopez as black as Giri went for a couple of pawn grabs in the early middle game to shake hands vide repetition of moves. Praggnanandhaa started off with the English opening and faced one of Caruana's pet variation. The result here was a draw also through repetition of moves. Results round 8: Ian Nepomniachtchi (Fid, 3.5) drew with Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 5.5); Ding Liren (Chn, 3.5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Usa, 4); R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 4) drew with Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 4.5); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 4) drew with Wesley So (Usa, 4); Anish Giri (Ned, 3) drew with D Gukesh (Ind, 4).

AP ■ SAO PAULO (BRAZIL)
Uruguayan soccer player Juan Izquierdo died Tuesday at a hospital in Brazil five days after collapsing during a game at Sao Paulo. He was 27. Hospital Albert Einstein in Sao Paulo said in a statement that the Nacional defender died at 9:38 p.m. Local time following "cardiorespiratory arrest associated with his cardiac arrhythmia." Izquierdo was taken to the hospital after he collapsed late in a Copa Libertadores soccer match between Nacional and Sao Paulo at the Brazilian city's Morumbi Stadium last Thursday. The Uruguayan club posted a statement on social media saying Izquierdo's death is felt "in deep pain and impact in our hearts" and "all Nacional is in grief for his irreplaceable loss." South American soccer's governing body also posted a tribute. CONMEBOL president Alejandro

Uruguayan soccer player Juan has died, days after collapsing during a game in Brazil

Dominguez said he's "deeply sorry about the early departure of Juan Izquierdo. "South American soccer is in mourning," he said. Other federations, including Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina, also expressed their condolences. In a statement Monday, doctors at the hospital said Izquierdo was put into neurological critical care because of increased intracranial pressure. He had been on a ventilator since Sunday. Uruguayan media said Izquierdo's parents and Nacional executives were at the hospital in Sao Paulo. Izquierdo was married and had two children - the youngest, a boy, was born earlier in August.



Uruguayan national team players were among those expressing their condolences. "Pain, sadness, it is hard to explain," Inter Miami striker Luis Suárez said. "May he rest

in peace. I wish a lot of strength for his family and friends." Uruguay's first- and second-division soccer leagues were postponed last weekend due to concerns over Izquierdo's health. Sao Paulo players wore a shirt in support of the Uruguayan footballer before the team's 2-1 Brazilian league win against Vitoria on Sunday. The Brazilian club also posted a message after Izquierdo's death. "We had days of prayers, union and hope, and today we are in deep sadness with the news of the death of Juan Izquierdo," Sao Paulo's club statement said. "Our condolences to family, friends, teammates, Nacional fans and all the Uruguayan people in this moment of grief." Izquierdo's professional career began in 2018 at local club Cerro. He joined Peñarol the following year, but didn't get much playing time. "Peñarol is deeply sorry about the passing of Juan Manuel

Izquierdo. We express our heartfelt condolences and we embrace his family, his friends and Nacional in this moment of so much pain," Peñarol said in its social media channels. After leaving Peñarol, Izquierdo moved to Montevideo Wanderers. His athletic form and sharp tackles caught the attention of Mexico's San Luis in 2021, but he quickly returned to the Montevideo Wanderers. Izquierdo was signed by Nacional in 2022, played one match and then was transferred to the local Liverpool club. The defender was one of Liverpool's best players in the campaign that led to Uruguayan league title in 2023, the club's first in more than a century. Izquierdo returned to Nacional this year and was vying for a position in the starting lineup with veteran Sebastián Coates, who played for Uruguay's national team. He played 23 matches this year and scored one goal.

US OPEN 2024

Naomi gets her first top 10 win in more than four years by defeating Ostapenko

AP ■ NEW YORK
A year ago, still on maternity leave and still unsure when she would play elite tennis again, Naomi Osaka visited the U.S. Open to appear with Michael Phelps for a discussion about mental health. While at the site, she sat in the stands to watch one of Coco Gauff's matches. Osaka also already was thinking about being back on a court at Flushing Meadows, so much so that she was pondering what she might want to wear to compete. And there she was Tuesday at Louis Armstrong Stadium, overpowering No. 10 seed Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 6-2 while decked out, from her visor to her dress to the bows on her back and attached to her shoes, in lime green - the color of this "Brat" summer, as it happens (IYKYK) - and playing very much like a two-time champion at the place and a former No. 1-ranked star. "I feel like being able to be a part of (designing) my tennis outfits gives me, I would say, a different strength, especially the U.S. Open outfits. I feel like they are a little bit more flamboyant. When I was putting on my outfit today, I was, like, Ah, I hope this isn't too much," Osaka said with a smile. "Because I had the tutu, and then I had the bow jacket and it was green. I feel like everyone was staring at me." Another player asked for a photo, Osaka said, adding: "I hope it was a positive picture (and) it wasn't, like, Oh, my God, look at her. For me, when I put on the outfit, it's almost like a super suit, so I try to channel that." Did that well enough Tuesday to register her first victory against a top-10 opponent in more than four years. Osaka claimed titles in New



York in 2018 and 2020, along with a pair of trophies at the Australian Open in 2019 and 2021, and her matchup against 2017 French Open champion Ostapenko marked the first time two past major champs faced off in the opening round at the U.S. Open since Serena Williams defeated Maria Shrapova five years ago. Another such contest came Tuesday night, when 2020 Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin beat 2021 U.S. Open winner Emma Raducanu 6-1, 3-6, 6-4. "Having two wins here means a lot, and I think for me, I've been struggling with confidence throughout the year," said Osaka, who returned to action at the Australian Open in January, her first Grand Slam appearance in nearly 1 1/2 years because of mental health breaks and time away to have a baby. "This time now forces me to look in the mirror and say, Hey, you've done really well here. There's no reason why you can't do well again." How's this for doing well? Osaka did not make a single unforced error in the first set and finished with only five, 16 fewer than Ostapenko. "I do remember thinking, I need to win this match so I can wear my other color. That was very important to me," said Osaka, who is ranked 88th and

Evans outlasts Khachanov over 5 hours, 35 minutes in match that sets US Open record for length

AP ■ NEW YORK
A few hours into a match that eventually set a U.S. Open record for length, Dan Evans glanced over at the scoreboard. Not to see how he was doing, but to clarify exactly how long he had been playing. "In the fourth set, I had to check the set to see what set we were in," Evans said. "I wasn't entirely sure what set we were in." More than an hour later, Evans won the

longest match at the U.S. Open since tiebreakers were introduced in 1970, beating Karen Khachanov 6-7 (6), 7-6 (2), 7-6 (4), 4-6, 6-4 on Tuesday in 5 hours, 35 minutes. Evans trailed 4-0 in the fifth set before running off the final six games. The final point, fittingly, was a marathon 22-shot rally, with Evans on the defensive for much of the point before hitting a hard shot to the corner that set No. 23-seeded Khachanov couldn't get back over the net with his backhand. The previous record was 5 hours, 26



minutes, when Stefan Edberg beat Michael Chang in a five-setter in the 1992 semifinals. "I was hurting all over, really," said the

34-year-old Evans, who was grabbing at his lower legs and resting his hands on his knees in the final set. "I don't think I've played five hours, that long, in a day, ever - in two sessions, never mind in one. I was actually thinking that on the court. I've never practiced two hours, two hours. It's normally an hour and a half." Evans improved to 5-0 against Khachanov, a semifinalist at the 2022 U.S. Open, by emerging in a match in which the sets lasted 68, 67, 72, 67 and 61 minutes.

Jannik starts poorly at US Open but wins his first match since his steroids case emerged

AP ■ NEW YORK
If there were any boos directed Jannik Sinner's way at the U.S. Open, they were imperceptible amid the polite applause from the sparse crowd at Arthur Ashe Stadium when he was introduced Tuesday before the No. 1-ranked man's first match since his doping case emerged a week ago. After a sloppy and slow opening set, Sinner pulled away for a 2-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-2 victory against Mackie McDonald of the United States to reach the second round at Flushing Meadows. "The response from fans, I feel it has been great. Also throughout, when the news came out, in the practice sessions, there was a lot of support, which I'm very glad and happy about," Sinner said. "It is still a little bit not easy. You have to go through, day by day." There were no apparent signs in the stands or disparaging shouts making reference to what no one knew about for



months: Sinner tested positive twice for trace amounts of the anabolic steroid Clostebol in an eight-day span in March. Nothing was announced publicly until last week, when word came that the 23-year-old Italian was docked prize money and ranking points from the tournament where the first result appeared, but he escaped a suspension because it was ruled he was not at fault and the drug entered his system unintentionally, through a massage from his physiotherapist.

2021 champion Emma loses in first round to Sofia

AP ■ NEW YORK
Emma Raducanu wiped away tears at her post-match news conference after losing to Sofia Kenin 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 in the first round of the U.S. Open, keeping the 2021 champion winless at the tournament since her title. "I feel down. I feel sad," Raducanu said, pausing to find her words. "Obviously this is a tournament I really want to do well in." Three years ago, Britain's Raducanu was 18 at the U.S. Open when she became the first qualifier to claim any Grand Slam singles championship. She was eliminated in the first round by Alizé Cornet in 2022, then missed the trip to Flushing Meadows last year after having surgery on both wrists and an ankle. This time, Raducanu was outplayed down the stretch by Kenin, an American who won the Australian Open in 2020. "I'm mentally super tough, and I feel like that's something that I've always had," said Kenin, who had lost six of her past seven matches heading into the



U.S. Open. "I had confidence going into the match today, and of course I believed I could win." Kenin finished with 45 winners, nearly twice as many as Raducanu's 24. "She's a Slam champion for a reason. ... Credit to her," said Raducanu, who hadn't played a match on tour since a loss in Washington on Aug. 2. The lack of action might have been a mistake but was a result of a "collective" decision by her team, Raducanu said. Her next event will be the Korea Open, which starts in Seoul on Sept. 16.

KOHLI, JAISWAL MOVE UP IN TEST RANKINGS, ROHIT DROPS TO 6TH



PTI ■ DUBAI
Senior India batter Virat Kohli moved up two rungs to eighth place while his captain Rohit Sharma dropped a spot to sixth in the latest ICC Test rankings released here on Wednesday. Joining Rohit and Kohli in the top 10 is young Yashasvi Jaiswal, who has moved up a spot to seventh. Veteran England batter Joe Root maintained his place as the top ranked Test batter in the world following their success in the opening Test

against Sri Lanka in Manchester. But Root's teammate Harry Brook has made a massive jump on the back of scores of 56 and 32 during that Old Trafford contest. The 25-year-old has risen three places to fourth overall, leaping past Pakistan's Babar Azam, Australia's Steve Smith and Rohit. Babar has dropped a whopping six places to fall from shared third to ninth following a rare failure in the first innings of Pakistan's Test against Bangladesh in

Rawalpindi. But teammate Mohammad Rizwan gained seven spots, achieving a new career-high rating by moving inside the top 10 at a shared 10th following his century in the same match. Bangladesh's Mushfiqur Rahim has achieved a career-high rating as he climbed seven spots to move to 17th. Seasoned India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin continues to hold the top spot among bowlers while pacer Jasprit Bumrah and left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja have maintained their third and

seventh spots respectively. England seamer Chris Woakes, who is up four rungs to 16th, and Sri Lanka's Asitha Fernando (up 10 spots to 17th) have gained some ground while Pakistan's right-arm pacer Naseem Shah (up four spots to 33rd) and England's Gus Atkinson (up four places to 42nd) have attained career-best ratings following good returns from their recent appearances. Among all-rounders, Jadeja and Ashwin continue to occupy the top two spots while Axar Patel is ranked sixth.

LLC returns with Season 3 Takes legendary cricketers to Kashmir after nearly 40 years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Legends League Cricket, featuring retired swashbucklers like Shikhar Dawan and Dinesh Karthik among others, will return for a third season on September 20, criss-crossing Jodhpur, Surat, and Jammu before finally bringing the high-profile cricketers to Srinagar after close to 40 years. The league will kick off at the Barkatullah Khan Stadium in Jodhpur on September 20. A total of 25 matches will be played among six teams and the last two sides standing will play the final on October 16. The franchise-based tournament, which features a pool of over 200 players, will have its final at the Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar. "Legends League Cricket is back for another season and we are very excited to also be playing in Kashmir this season. This is a huge opportunity for the people of Kashmir to come to the stadium and



watch live cricketing action for the first time in almost 40 years," said Raman Raheja, Co-Founder, Legends League Cricket. "It also presents a unique opportunity for the cricketers to experience the beauty of Kashmir and enjoy the hospitality and

love of the wonderful people of Srinagar." The organisers stated that the league attracted a massive audience of 180 million across India during the previous season, spanning 19 matches. "With an extended schedule and a star-studded lineup, including the recently retired Dhawan and Karthik, the upcoming season is poised to surpass previous records," the organisers stated. In the previous edition held in India, former international stalwarts such as Suresh Raina, Aaron Finch, Martin Guttill, current India head coach Gautam Gambhir, Chris Gayle, Hashim Amla, Ross Taylor, and many others played alongside 110 other legendary cricketers. The league will kick off in Jodhpur and then make its way to the Lalbhai Contractor Stadium in Surat. The third leg will be played at the Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu. The players' auction for the event will be held here on Thursday.

Dawid Malan, former top-ranked T20 batter, retires from England cricket

AP ■ LONDON

Dawid Malan, the former top-ranked centuries for England in all formats, has announced his retirement from the international arena. The 36-year-old Malan told British newspaper The Times of London that he exceeded expectations with his success in the white-ball game but was disappointed that he couldn't

handle the intensity of Test cricket. Malan, a top-order batter, played 22 Tests as well as 30 ODIs and 62 T20 internationals. It was in the T20 game where he excelled, becoming No. 1 in the batting rankings in 2020 and winning the T20 World Cup in 2022. Malan was left out of the squad for the upcoming white-ball series against Australia and hasn't played for England in any format since the 50-over



World Cup last year. It was his inability to forge a career as a Test batter that leaves him with most regrets. "I took all three formats extremely seriously but the intensity of test cricket was something else - five days plus the days building up," Malan told the Times. "I'm a big trainer; I love hitting lots of balls and I'd train hard in the build-up, and then the days were long and intense. You can't switch off. "I found it very mentally draining, especially the long test series that I played, where my performances dropped off from the third or fourth test onwards.

Impact Player rule gives little more value for strategy and makes game fairer: Ashwin



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Seasoned India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin feels that the IPL's 'Impact Player' rule has made the game fairer and added "value for strategy" in the event. Senior India players like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have been critical of the rule as they feel it holds back development of Indian all-rounders and upsets the balance between bat and ball. However, Ashwin feels the rule, introduced in the 2023 season which allows all IPL teams to substitute a player -- batter or bowler -- during their respective innings as per the demands of the match, makes the game fairer. "Why I think the Impact Player rule is not so bad is because it gives a little more value for

strategy," 'ESPNCricinfo' quoted Ashwin as saying on former India captain Krishnamachari Srikkanth's YouTube show, which is in Tamil. "The other side of that argument is it doesn't encourage all-rounders. But no one is stopping them. In this generation, they don't do it (batters bowling and vice-versa). "It's not like they're discouraged because of the Impact Player rule. Look at Venkatesh Iyer, he's currently rocking for Lancashire. There's an opportunity for innovation and it makes the game fairer," Ashwin added. The 37-year-old backed his stance by citing the Qualifier 2 match in which Sunrisers Hyderabad replaced opener Travis Head with spinner

Shahbaz Ahmed against Rajasthan Royals at this year's IPL. Ahmed went on to become the player of the match, claiming three wickets including Ashwin's. "Sunrisers brought in Shahbaz Ahmed as an Impact Player (after hitting 175 for 9 batting first). He went on to become a match-winner. Ashwin argued that the rule can play a significant role in balancing matches when there is dew. "When dew has the potential to make games one-sided, teams bowling second get an extra option as a counter. If you're batting second, you can tactically make a substitution by off-loading the extra bowler for a batter," he said. "Games are tighter, an extra player is getting to play. Barring Kolkata or Mumbai, where scores skyrocketed, they haven't been a drastic change elsewhere. Like at Punjab Kings' home venue (Mullanpur), they were all 160-170 games." On the other hand, the rule has helped several players advance in their careers, even earning spots in the national team, reckoned Ashwin. "Shahbaz Ahmed, Shivam Dube most importantly, Dhruv Jurel... If not for the Impact Player rule, he may have never gotten the chance. So the emergence of a lot of players has happened. I'm not saying that's the only way for players to emerge, but it's not so bad," he said.

Five-wicket burst from Aayush secures Purani Dilli 6's win over North Delhi Strikers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Pacer Aayush Thakur's five-wicket haul powered Purani Dilli 6 to a 20-run win over North Delhi Strikers at the Delhi Premier League here. Aayush (5/27) wreaked havoc, blowing away NDS's top-order as they were restricted for 172/7 in their chase of 193. Aayush struck in his first over dismissing opener Sarthak Ranjan for a duck. He returned to get rid of Yash Dabas in the third over followed by Kshitiz Sharma in the fifth over. Opener Vaibhav Kandpal (57) and Yajas Sharma (41) stitched a 55-run partnership for the fourth wicket and looked on course to chase the target but the latter was run out.



Kandpal along with Vaibhav Rawal then took on the responsibility of chasing the target. The duo started finding boundaries at regular intervals keeping the run rate in their control.

However, Purani Dilli 6 got back in the game as Rawal was run out at a crucial time leaving NDS needing 58 runs off 32 balls. But Aayush swung into action get the key wicket of Kandpal. Aayush completed his five-wicket haul, dismissing Pranshu for a duck. Earlier, Purani Dilli 6 captain Arpit Rana (42) and Sanat Sangwan (47) put up a 94-run opening stand. With Rana back in the pavilion, Sangwan was next to take the long walk back as he was dismissed by Manan Bhardwaj. Arnav Bugga (39) and Lalit Yadav (9) stitched a 38-run partnership before Mayank Gusain blazed away to 40 off just 12 balls with the help of one boundary and five sixes to provide the final flourish.



Zaheer Khan set to join LSG as team mentor

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Lucknow Super Giants are set to appoint former India speedster Zaheer Khan as their mentor ahead of the IPL mega auction. The appointment marks the return of the 45-year-old left-arm pacer to the IPL fold after two years, having been associated with five-time champions Mumbai Indians from 2018-2022. A formal unveiling is scheduled at the RPSG Group Headquarters here on Wednesday. "Zaheer has been appointed as team mentor and the unveiling will happen later today," sources told PTI. Zaheer will thus take up the role left vacant by Gautam Gambhir last year when he went to join his former franchise Kolkata Knight Riders and guided them to the IPL title in 2024. Gambhir is now the Indian head coach. At Mumbai Indians, Zaheer first served as the director of cricket before taking on the role of head of global development. LSG currently do not have a bowling coach after the departure of South African speedster Morne Morkel, who has joined Gambhir's coaching staff. It is learnt that Zaheer will also be involved in scouting and player development programme during the off season. Before his coaching career, Zaheer played for three IPL teams -- Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore, and Delhi Daredevils. Over 10 seasons, Zaheer appeared in 100 matches for these teams, claiming 102 wickets with an economy rate of 7.58. His final appearance in the IPL was in 2017 when he captained the Delhi Daredevils, after which he retired from all forms of cricket.

Will ensure Test cricket remains priority as it forms bedrock of game: ICC chairman Jay Shah

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Newly-elected ICC Chairman Jay Shah says he will look to ensure that Test cricket forms the "bedrock" of the game in his tenure during which he will also try to "dismantle barriers that have hindered cricket's progress". The 35-year-old will relinquish his current position of BCCI secretary to succeed incumbent Greg Barclay on December 1 as the youngest ICC Chairman for a term of two years. "While the T20 is a naturally exciting format, it is equally important that Test cricket

remains a priority for everyone as it forms the bedrock of our game," Shah said in a statement issued by the BCCI on Tuesday. "We must see to it that cricketers are driven to longer format and our efforts will be channelised towards this goal," he added. Shah said he would also like to work towards setting up a separate program for talent search. He emphasised on lifting the standard of the game across the globe. "I want to assure you that I will do everything possible to elevate the standard of our game across the globe. As I



step into this pivotal role, I am resolutely committed to meeting your high expectations and dedicating myself to the beautiful game of cricket," he said. Shah, who is the son of union home minister Amit Shah, will

relinquish his position as the BCCI secretary at the board's Annual General Meeting likely to be held towards the end of next month or in October. Shah became the fifth Indian after the late Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N Srinivasan and Shashank Manohar to be elected for the high-profile job. "With cricket poised to make its historic debut at the Olympics in 2028, we stand at the precipice of a transformative era. This juncture is not merely a milestone, it's a clarion call for all of us involved in this magnificent sport.

West Indies beat South Africa by 8 wickets in 3rd T20, sweep series 3-0

AP ■ TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

Nicholas Pooran blasted 35 runs from 13 balls to lead the West Indies to an eight-wicket win over South Africa in the rain-shortened third Twenty20 cricket international, securing a 3-0 series sweep. Rain delayed the start of play by an hour and returned in the fifth over of the South Africa innings, reducing the match to 13 overs per innings. South Africa was 23-0 when the rain started and Tristan Stubbs dashed 40 from 15 balls to help the visitors post 108-4 after a slow start. Stubbs hit five fours and three sixes for 38 runs from boundaries. He finished the series with 144 runs at a strike-rate of 178. Pooran almost matched him, hitting two fours and four sixes. The West Indies was 60-2 when Pooran was out to the fifth ball of the fourth over

and coasted to victory with 22 balls remaining. Shai Hope made an unbeaten 42 from 24 balls and Shimron Hetmeyer scored 31 from 17 deliveries in an unbroken partnership of 56 for the third wicket. "Obviously coming out on top is what we wanted. We wanted to win the series 3-0," West Indies captain Roston Chase said in a television interview. "Before the match, at the team meeting after everyone had spoken, I just asked the boys to give me the victory because you want to start well and I just want to thank the guys for the support and the way they played with their heart today." No overs were lost when rain delayed the toss. The West Indies eventually won the toss and chose to bowl, with an eye on the threat of



further rain. South Africa began cautiously in humid conditions and the first boundary of its innings didn't come until the fourth over, hit by Ryan Rickelton from the bowling of Matthew Forde. The first six of the innings came from the next ball. The rain returned and forced the players from the field for 70 minutes, leaving South Africa on the back foot when it resumed. Reeza Hendricks was out three balls after the resumption, but that brought Stubbs to the crease and he did his best to blast South Africa to a competitive total. Stubbs hit 6, 4, 6 from consecutive balls in the 11th over bowled by Obed McCoy and 4, 6, 4 in the final over bowled by Forde. He was out with two balls left in the innings. Pooran then blasted the West Indies into an winning position with his brilliant 13-ball cameo. He finished

with a strike rate of 269. Hope hit four sixes in his innings and Hetmeyer hit four fours and a six as the West Indies completed a comprehensive win. The West Indies beat South Africa 3-0 in a Twenty20 series prior to this year's T20 World Cup, which it co-hosted with the United States, and now has swept South Africa again. But in between, South Africa eliminated the West Indies from the World Cup. "It was a tough one today. Obviously it was stop-start with the rain which hurt us quite a bit," South Africa captain Aiden Markram said. "Conditions changed quite a bit throughout the game as well. "I think we got the tougher of the conditions. That being said I think there are several areas we can improve on as a team to play better cricket in tough conditions.