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WORLD 9 BRITISH AUTHORITIES STILL ON ALERT FOR FURTHER UNREST

MONEY 10 SENSEX BOUNCES BACK

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NEERAJ A STAR WITHOUT PRETENSION 12 SPORTS

SISODIA WALKS TO FREEDOM

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Friday night was released from jail after 530 days as the Supreme Court granted him bail earlier in the day in the excise policy scam case saying he is entitled to a "speedy trial" and that returning him to a trial court would be like making him "play snakes and ladders". A bench of Justice BR Gavi and Justice KV Viswanathan also said keeping the AAP leader in jail for an "unlimited time", without a trial, is in violation of his fundamental rights. Listing the conditions for his bail, the top court directed Sisodia to furnish a bail bond of ₹10 lakh with two sureties, surrender his passport and not make any attempt to either influence witnesses or tamper with evidence. Besides, he will have to report to the investigating officer every Monday and Thursday between 10 and 11 am. "We find that, on account of a long period of incarceration running to around 17 months and the trial having not commenced, the appellant (Sisodia) has been deprived of his right to speedy trial," the bench said. The apex court had reserved its order in the case on August 6. Minutes after the bail order, celebrations broke out at the AAP office as well as



AAP leader Manish Sisodia waves to supporters after being released from Tihar jail following his bail granted by the Supreme Court in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, in New Delhi, on Friday

residence of Sisodia. Hours later, Special Judge Kaveri Baweja accepted the bail bonds and surety bonds submitted by the advocates representing Sisodia. The AAP hailed the SC

decision as "victory of truth" and added that it hoped that other jailed leaders of the party "will also get justice." The AAP further said the order is a "tight slap" on the dictatorship of the BJP-led

Centre but rued that the relief came after a year's delay. Sisodia, who was wearing a maroon shirt, greeted the party workers and leaders, who showered rose petals on him as he walked out of the jail around 6.50 pm. Addressing the supporters and media after his release, Sisodia expressed his deep gratitude towards Dr BR Ambedkar, saying, "Ever since this order came in the morning, every inch of my skin has been feeling indebted to Babasaheb. I don't understand how I will pay off this debt to Babasaheb." "We have brought this legal battle to its logical end through the Constitution. I thank you all for being with me," Sisodia said and added that he had many of admirers but their numbers have increased in the last 17 months. "Not only me but every Delhi resident, and children of the country were with me emotionally in jail. I thank the SC from the bottom of my heart for using the power of Constitution to give a hard slap to the dictatorship in the country," he said. The AAP leader said it was an emotional moment for everyone and hoped that the power of Constitution and democracy will pave the way for release of Kejriwal. He raised the slogan, "Bhrasthachaar ka ek hi kaal, Kejriwal, Kejriwal".

Holding aloft flags and cheering loudly, crowds of AAP supporters waited to welcome Sisodia as stepped out of jail. Senior AAP leaders Sanjay Singh, Atishi, and Saurabh Bharadwaj were present outside Tihar to receive Sisodia. Sisodia is a founding member of the AAP and a close confidant of party chief Kejriwal. The bail to Sisodia is a shot in the arm for the beleaguered party, which is gearing up to contest the Haryana Assembly polls and the Delhi elections in the next few months. His release comes as a big win for the AAP. This is because of the three big AAP leaders who were arrested in the liquor policy case, just Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal remains behind bars. Sisodia's release also comes as the AAP struggles to govern Delhi and counter Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. According to experts, Sisodia will have to wait to join the Delhi Cabinet as there are several issues that need to be dealt with since the Chief Minister himself is in jail. "For Sisodia to be inducted in his Council of Ministers, Kejriwal needs to send his recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor from Tihar Jail, which seems difficult currently," experts said.

Continued on Page 8

Government alert on India Bangladesh front

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi Government on Friday constituted a high-level committee, headed by a top Border Security Force (BSF) official, to monitor the situation along the Indo-Bangladesh border in view of the ongoing state of affairs in the neighbouring country, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said. He said the committee would be in touch with counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus and other minority communities living there. "In the wake of the ongoing situation in Bangladesh, the Modi Government has constituted a committee to monitor the current situation on the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). The committee will maintain communication channels with their counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus, and other minority communities living there. The committee will be headed by the ADG (Additional Director General), Border Security Force, Eastern Command," Shah said in a social media post. Apart from the BSF ADG, the four other members of the committee are the BSF's



FILE PHOTO

Hundreds clamour to cross the border

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ GEDE/NADIA

Abdul Hakiq Rumel, Farshatulla Khan, Apurba Sarkar, Mrinal Deb Roy, Achintya Biswas may be from different religions but they share the same ill-fate and nationality. These Bangladeshi nationals are stranded in the no-man's land at various entry points of the Indo-Bangla border of Sitalkuchi in Cooch Behar district,

Fulbari in Jalpaiguri district, Hili in Dinajpur and Gede in Nadia district. "We are returning to the mango orchards or paddy fields in the night and returning to this place during the day time as we fear for our lives... many of our friends and relatives are missing... some have been killed and their houses looted, women raped by the members of BNP and Jamaat," said one of them at Gede border.

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Inspector General of Police (IGP) for the South Bengal frontier, the IGP for the Tripura frontier, member (planning and development) of the Land Ports Authority of

India (LPAI), and secretary of the LPAI. The BSF has increased vigil along the borders adjoining Bangladesh.

Continued on Page 8

Aman wins bronze in wrestling

Paris (PTI): Wrestler Aman Sehrawat won the bronze medal, defeating Puerto Rico's Darian Cruz in the men's 57kg free-style category at the Paris Games here on Friday. India now have five bronze medals and a silver, which javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra bagged on Thursday. Aman won the bout 13-5 to keep the tradition of wrestlers returning home with a medal since 2008 Beijing Games, where Sushil Kumar had finished third. On Thursday, Aman had lost to Japanese top-seed Rei Higuchi in the semifinal bout to set up a bronze-medal bout with Darian Cruz.



Centre expands CAA for more inclusivity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has expanded the ambit of the rules issued under the citizenship law Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) through which Indian nationality will be given to persecuted minorities coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan. The Union Home Ministry announced that "any document" issued by the Central or State Governments or quasi-judicial body in India proving that either of the parents, grandparents or great-grandparents is or had been a citizen of one of the three countries will be



acceptable. The clarification of the Home Ministry came after many applicants seeking Indian nationality under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 were reported to be facing difficulties due to a particular clause of the Citizenship (Amendment)

Rules, 2024.

"Any document that shows that either of the parents or grandparents or great grandparents of the applicant is or had been a citizen of one of the three countries i.e. of Afghanistan or Bangladesh or Pakistan," the earlier clause of the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 says. In its latest clarification, the home ministry said: "It may be clarified that the documents under Sr No. 8 of the Schedule -1A may include any document issued by the central government/ state government/ any judicial or quasi judicial body in India such as land record, judicial

order etc., identifying or representing that the applicant or the parents or grandparents or great grandparents had been a national of Afghanistan or Bangladesh or Pakistan." "The above clarification may be taken note of while deciding any citizenship application under Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), it said. The CAA was enacted in December 2019 for granting Indian nationality to persecuted Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who came to India on or before December 31, 2014.

A mother beats all Olympic records

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Elated for her son's silver medal, Neeraj Chopra's mother Saroj Devi also expressed happiness for Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who broke the Olympic record to beat the Indian defending champion in Paris, saying the latter is also like her "child". Chopra clinched the silver medal at the Paris Games with a season's best throw of 89.45m after Nadeem pulled off an Olympic record-breaking effort of 92.97m on Thursday night. With the silver win, Chopra became only the third Indian and the first in track-and-



field to win back-to-back individual Olympic medals. "We are very happy with the silver, the one who got gold is also our child and the one who got silver is also our child... All are athletes, all work hard," Saroj told PTI Videos in Khandra, Panipat, where the family is based. "Nadeem is also good, he

plays well, there is no difference between Neeraj and Nadeem. We got gold and silver there is no difference for us," she added in the interview given on Thursday night. Both Chopra and Nadeem are good friends off the field despite being rivals on it. Chopra's fondness for "desi khana" is well-documented and his family is planning to welcome the two-time Olympic medalist with his favourite dish "Churma". "He did really well. We will welcome him with churma which is his favourite. I am delighted, people are lighting firecrackers, we are making ladoos," Saroj added.

Chopra's performance is credible also because of the highly-competitive field in which as many as seven athletes went beyond the 86m mark. "We are very happy. He produced his season's best. All were near 88-89m so competition was very tough. It's not about winning a gold or silver, but about winning a medal, and he did his best," Chopra's aunt Kamlesh said. Chopra is one of India's most decorated athletes, having won the gold at every tournament including the Olympics, World Championships, Diamond League, Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games.

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6 students hurt as school van overturns

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Six students, including a 9-year-old girl, were injured when the school van transporting them overturned after a tyre burst and rammmed into a road divider near Palassio Mall on Shaheed Path in Sushant Golf City police station area. The girl is in critical condition and, along with another injured student, has been admitted to Medanta Hospital. The remaining students are receiving treatment at RML hospital. DCP (South) Tej Swaroop said that a second vehicle, an SUV (Thar) carrying students from another school in Gomti Nagar, also overturned. The SUV lost control after the van overturned but fortunately, the students in the SUV were not injured. According to Swaroop, the van's tyre burst on Shaheed Path, causing the driver to lose control, hit the road divider, and overturn. The SUV, coming from behind, attempted to avoid the overturned van but ended up on the divider as well.

Six children travelling in the van sustained injuries. Passersby alerted the police, who quickly arrived at the scene and transported the injured to RML hospital. However, as the condition of two of the students, including the girl, were serious, they were transferred to Medanta Hospital for further treatment. The police also cleared the accident site by removing the van and SUV with the help of a JCB, and traffic on Shaheed Path was resumed. Inspector Anjani Kumar Mishra noted that the van was en route to school from the Khurdahi market area with 12 children when the tyre burst in front of Palassio Mall, leading to the van's loss of control and subsequent collision with the divider. The Thar, trying to avoid the van, also ended up on the divider. The injured children, all from the school's Gomti Nagar Extension branch, include Nandini (9), Arth Kanaujia (6), Sarthak Shukla, and Ashutosh Gupta (15).



The van's tyre burst on Shaheed Path, causing the driver to lose control, hit the road divider, and overturn

Pioneer

Mother files murder case after engineer's mysterious death

Accuses wife, friends and resort staff

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The mother of Pratik Tiwari, a 35-year-old engineer who drowned in a hotel and resort swimming pool in Lucknow under mysterious circumstances on August 4, has filed a murder case against the resort's employees, as well as against Pratik's friends and their spouses who were present there at the time of the incident. Pratik's mother Malti Tiwari has also implicated Pratik's wife, alleging negligence in his care. Pratik's father KK Tiwari emphasised that a thorough investigation of everyone present is crucial to uncovering the truth behind his son's death. He suggested that it remains to be seen whether Pratik's death was an accident or part of a larger conspiracy. Pratik Tiwari, a mechanical engineer who resided in Rajajipuram, had attended a party at the hotel and resort in Daroga Kheda with family and friends on August 4. His body was found in the resort's swimming pool later that evening. KK Tiwari, a sub-inspector stationed in Barabanki, is adamant that his son was murdered. The complaint filed by Pratik's mother has added a new twist to the case. It has emerged that Pratik's friend had booked the resort rooms for the party. According to sources, the booking was made online, and Rs 5,000 was paid for five rooms (numbers 908, 909, 910, 912, and 915). The group, consisting of

11 people, including children, arrived at around 10:30 am on August 4. After settling in, they moved to the poolside. The guests had been drinking and eating before arriving at the resort. Once at the pool, Pratik, along with friends Sandeep Kumar, Raghavendra Singh, Ram Marandi, Shivanshu Singh, Riyansh, Kalpana, Divya, and Namita, began bathing in the pool and drinking wine and beer, with music and dancing. Around 4:30 pm, some members of the group went back to their rooms. It was at this point that they discovered Pratik had drowned in the pool. They first called an ambulance and then the police. Pratik's friends, along with a security guard, pulled him out of the water, but it was unclear if he was still alive. He was taken away in an ambulance, and the police arrived shortly afterwards. They conducted an investigation, asked Pratik's wife to inform the family, and collected statements from those present. The pool was closed for further investigation, and police returned the next day to recover Pratik's mobile phone from the pool and to collect CCTV footage from the resort. The manager stated that due to privacy concerns, there were no CCTV cameras installed at the poolside. However, footage from other cameras showed normal activity. Family members of Pratik began arriving after learning about the inci-

dent. There were no visible signs of dispute or altercation before or after the event. Pratik's mother, devastated by the incident, has been hospitalised due to her deteriorating health. A murder case has been filed based on her complaint, which also includes allegations against Pratik's wife, Monika, who had been staying at her maternal home for the past five months but was present at the resort on the day of the incident. KK Tiwari expressed disbelief that his son, who knew how to swim, could have drowned accidentally and called for a thorough investigation to uncover any potential conspiracy. He promised to discuss the case with the police after completing the last rites. Inspector Anwar Ahmed, leading the investigation, confirmed that a murder case had been registered based on Malti Tiwari's complaint. He noted that the viscera was being sent for laboratory examination to determine the cause of death. Statements from approximately 13 individuals connected to the incident had been recorded, and CCTV footage collected. Further actions will be based on the evidence and the viscera report. During the investigation, Pratik's wife Monika explained that she was in the room at the time of the incident because the women had retreated there due to their children crying and asking for food.

Bareilly serial killer held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A serial killer, responsible for the murder of 11 women over the past 13 months, was arrested in Bareilly on Friday. The suspect, identified as Kuldeep Gangwar of Nawabganj was caught following a detailed investigation that unveiled a pattern of crimes linked to him. According to the police, Kuldeep, 40, confessed to strangling the women. The murders followed a consistent pattern - victims were strangled with their own clothing, and the crimes occurred in isolated areas or forests. The case remained unsolved until recently, when authorities shifted their focus to the possibility of a serial killer. The breakthrough came through a significant operation named 'Talash', which involved the creation of a dedicated task force and extensive surveillance. Police examined 150 places, tracked 1,50,000 mobile phone numbers and reviewed

Bank manager arrested for taking bribe to sanction loan

Lucknow (PNS): The sleuths of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) claimed to have arrested two accused, including branch manager of Gramin Bank, Bijnor, and a private person while demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 30,000 from a complainant. The CBI arrested the two accused, namely branch manager of Prathama Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank, Kotkadar branch, Bijnor, and his associate private person while they were demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 30,000 as first instalment of the bribe amount of Rs. 60,000 demanded from the complainant to sanction loan. The CBI registered a case against the accused branch manager based on a complaint alleging that the accused had demanded illegal gratification of Rs 60,000 from the com-

plaintain for sanctioning a loan of Rs 6 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). The CBI laid a trap and caught the accused (bank servant) and his associate (private person) red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 30,000 from the complainant (the bribe amount was the first instalment of Rs 60,000) on Friday. A case was registered in this regard and further investigations are on. Meanwhile, searches were conducted at the residential premises of both the accused in Bijnor, during which incriminating documents/material were recovered. The arrested accused will be produced in the court of Special Judge for CBI cases, Ghaziabad on Saturday.

Beautician, accomplice arrested in elderly woman murder case

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the arrest of a beautician and her accomplice, the Sarojinagar police on Friday claimed to have worked out the murder of a 72-year-old woman, Sarla Kaka, who was done to death in her home on August 5. The arrests followed a thorough investigation led by the local police. Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Tej Swaroop said that the accused, Sooraj and Archana Sharma, were driven by financial desperation. Archana, a beautician living near Sarla Kaka's residence, was well-acquainted with the victim's daily routine and the staff who frequented her home. This knowledge facilitated the planning and execution of the crime. "Archana and her lover Suraj were in dire need of money. They meticulously planned the crime, entered Sarla's house, committed the murder, and then stole valuables before fleeing the scene," Swaroop stated in a video briefing. The gruesome incident came to light when a neighbour arrived at the house and alerted the police. Inspector Shaileendra Giri explained that the breakthrough in the investigation came from reviewing CCTV footage. The footage showed Suraj Yadav wearing a towel in one camera frame, which was later found tied around Sarla's neck, significantly deepening the suspicion against him. The police also tracked a mobile phone stolen from Sarla's home using

its IMEI number. Suraj, who had stolen the phone and its box, inadvertently left behind a receipt that facilitated tracing the phone's location and verifying his involvement. Suraj, originally from Auras in Unnao, was residing in a rented house in Para. Archana, from Basti, worked at a local beauty parlour and lived near the deceased's residence. During questioning, Suraj revealed that he previously drove a car for a hotel owner and had accumulated significant gambling debts, losing lakhs of rupees on IPL cricket matches. To repay his debts, which also included a mortgaged car and motorcycle, Suraj involved Archana in the robbery. Archana had requested Rs 16,000 from him, which prompted him to include her in the criminal plan. Suraj and Archana decided to rob Sarla Kaka to settle their financial troubles. After the maid left, Archana entered the house, followed by Suraj. Suraj overpowered Sarla, who was sitting in the drawing room, tied her hands and legs with a dupatta, and strangled her with a towel while Archana held her legs. They then stole jewellery and cash before fleeing the scene. Archana, who did not leave Sarla's neighbourhood after the murder, pretended to be unaware of the crime, which initially helped avoid suspicion. She closely followed the police investigation and provided Suraj with updates on the progress. The police have recovered the stolen items.

PM to release CISH mango, guava varieties

Lucknow (PNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release three popular climate resilient and nutraceutical rich varieties of mango and promising varieties of guava developed by ICAR-Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture, Lucknow, at NASC Complex in New Delhi on August 11. "CISH, a premier ICAR institute, has been working on improvement of subtropical fruit crops for the last five decades. It has developed two mango and four guava varieties. It is the largest germplasm repository of mango in the world. Out of 109 ICAR varieties of different crops to be released, three varieties of CISH (Lucknow) have found a place, which include nutraceutical rich mango varieties, one of which is 'CISH Arunika'. Besides, 'CISH Ambika' is well accepted in the market," Director T Damodaran said. PM Modi will also be releasing a guava variety called 'CISH Lalit'.

All-women biker rally to promote tourism

Lucknow (PNS): An all-women biker rally celebrating women's empowerment was launched from the Directorate of Tourism and Culture on Friday. Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture, Mukesh Kumar Meshram flagged off the rally, which will see the group of women bikers travelling from Lucknow to Prayagraj, Mirzapur, Chandauli, Sonbhadra, and Jaunpur. The rally aims to promote eco-tourism destinations, highlight Maha Kumbh 2025, and advocate for women's empowerment. It also marked the 100th anniversary of the Kakori train action. Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh emphasised the significance of women's involvement in advancing tourism. "Women's participation is crucial in elevating Uttar Pradesh's tourism sector. They should travel and benefit from the employment opportunities created by tourism, thereby empowering

themselves," he said. "Tourists need a safe environment to visit. The effective governance in Uttar Pradesh has set a standard and positively impacts the tourism sector," he added. The rally, led by Navya Singh and Priya Singh, will visit various tourist spots and raise awareness among women, encouraging them to explore Uttar Pradesh's destinations.

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General public is hereby informed that Mr. Itikhar Ahmad s/o Late Mr. Israr Ahmad owner of Residential Plot of land, area measuring 443.309 Sq. Mtr. out of Khassra No. 218 A, Situated at Village Gharhankala (Ward Dilhwa), Pargana Mirampur, Tehsil Sadar, Dist. Sultanpur, U.P. vide Gift Deed dated 25.08.2023 executed by Mrs. Sarwan Begum w/o Israr Ahmad vide SRO-Sadar, Sultanpur. Vide Doc No 8658, vol no 10829 pages 381-406 dated 25.08.2023, in the property chain Mrs. Sarwan owner of property vide Will dated 07.08.2014 executed by Mr. Israr and no any legal heirs & SMC of late Mr. Israr not available said deed is to be financed by CHOLAMANDLAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LTD., if anybody has any charge/interest in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present, failing which I am aware that in case default with the mortgage property that Itikhar Ahmad is responsible for the same.
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I, Dharmendra Pratap Singh S/O Hira Singh, residing at 23, Alok Nagar, Kanchana Bihari Marg, Kalyanpur, Lucknow (UP) 226022, have changed the name of my minor son MRITYUNJAY PRATAP SINGH aged 15 years and he shall hereafter be known as ADITYA PRATAP SINGH.

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I have changed my name from Abdul Shahid Abdul Sattar to Abdul Shahid S/o Abdul Sattar R/o 41/2, near Bakarganj Idgah Ajeetganj Kanpur nagar. I would be known & recognised by this name only.

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My Father Late Daya Sagar Katiyar Service No.- 285283-L JVO (AF) In the service record my name is erroneously mentioned as Pankaj & the DOB is 20/11/1980, Whereas my correct full name is Pankaj Kumar Katiyar & correct DOB is 20/11/1982, which is as per my High school certificate, Aadhar card & PAN card & in future I will be known by this name.

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In my service book my daughter's name is recorded incorrect as Rupali, whereas in all other records my daughter's name is recorded as Rupali Mishra which is correct. Now my daughter should be known as Rupali Mishra. Shri Bhagwan Mishra, son of Late Devi Prasad Mishra, Resident of 216/14 Bandhuhar Civil Line Unnao

1,500 CCTV footage. They also enlisted the help of experts from Mumbai who specialise in such cases.

A major lead emerged when a sketch of the suspect, matching Kuldeep's description, was confirmed in a tip-off and previously prepared sketches and videos. Kuldeep's arrest followed his admission of guilt in police custody.

He revealed that his mental

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In my service book my wife's name is recorded incorrect as Pammii, whereas in all other records my wife's name is recorded as Pammii Mishra which is correct. Now my wife should be known as Pammii Mishra. Shri Bhagwan Mishra, son of Late Devi Prasad Mishra, Resident of 216/14 Bandhuhar Civil Line Unnao

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"Anurag Gupta S/o Sri Jagan Prasad Gupta R/o MIG- 43 Block-C, Indra Nagar Kanpur Nagar, He is owner of KDA Free Hold Bhawan No.- 43, Block - C, Indra Nagar, Distt.- Kanpur Nagar which Admeasuring Area -166.50 Sq. Mtr. and of Original Doc.- KDA Free Hold Deed vide Doc.- 2569 ,Original Allotment Letter & Original Possession Letter, dated 28/07/2005 have been lost in the train during journey time and the use of the above document will be illegal

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instability and personal issues, including a troubled relationship with his wife, drove him to commit the murders. The police investigation also focused on the Shahi and Sheeshgarh areas, where the murders were concentrated. The murders, all committed in a similar manner, involved strangulation with victims' sarees or dupattas. The women were aged between 40 and 62 years. The arrest of Kuldeep marks a significant development in resolving such heinous crimes. The police have now completed their investigation and will present their findings in detail.

Startup by LU student gets financial help from govt

Lucknow (PNS): A startup founded by Yash Tiwari, a BBA (International Business) student at Lucknow University, has been recognised by the Uttar Pradesh government for financial support. Launched in early 2023, the startup, named 'Hawkar', aims to revolutionise shopping and travel in India with its innovative tech platform. According to Lucknow University spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava, 'Hawkar' simplifies travel and shopping for groceries, dining, and more. The platform provides tech solutions and security for small and local businesses, aiming to bridge the gap between street vendors and residents, transforming the unorganised sector into a more structured entity. Under the mentorship of the Lucknow University incubation cell, 'Hawkar' has developed its product blueprint and prototype. The startup recently secured initial funding from a UP government sustenance allowance grant and is now focused on advancing its prototype to a minimum viable product (MVP) for an official launch. Meanwhile, LU will host a new unit of the senior division of the Air Wing of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) - 5 UP Air NCC. The addition of the Air Wing, starting in the 2024-25 academic session, complements the existing Army and Naval Wings at the university.

Question on wealth annoys AKY

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party Member of Parliament Akhilesh Yadav faced an embarrassing situation on Friday when during a show in a TV channel he was asked about his income by an audience. However, the SP chief shot back that all details of his income and wealth were with the CBI and Income Tax Department. A video clip of Akhilesh Yadav's reaction has gone viral on social media. When asked whether his family's income had changed during his political career, Akhilesh Yadav responded, telling the person

to "stop the bulls**t" and "go to the CBI". Akhilesh Yadav, who was a guest in the TV show, is heard saying in the video, "I have been under the CBI investigation for 20 years. So, if you have to check my balance sheet, go to the CBI office and the Income Tax office." He added, "Whether you ask me about my income or not, please do ask those people their income who say that 'mein apna jhola lekar chala jaunga' (I will leave with my bag)." The statement was an apparent dig at a speech given at a rally by Prime Minister Narendra Modi where he referred to

himself as a "fakir", who would walk away with his few belongings, as he had no assets. Akhilesh Yadav and the other panel members also questioned why his income was being asked when they were at a conclave to discuss a vision for India's growth. In the TV show, Akhilesh Yadav also pointed out that the balance sheet of India's transactions with China needed to be examined as those within the country were not getting opportunities. "Traders in our country are not able to develop because we are importing from China; why are we doing business with China?" he said.



Aryavart, the cultural club of department of history, Navyug Kanya Mahavidyalaya, organised a speech and patriotic song competition on Friday to mark the beginning of the centenary celebrations of Kakori Train Action which took place on August 9, 1925. The students talked about the meticulous planning of revolutionaries to capture the government money being transferred by the train passing through Kakori. They clarified the propaganda and misconceptions about the act spread by the Britishers. Principal Manjula Upadhyay and faculty members paid floral tribute to the martyrs.

Chief Secy stresses on water conservation

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh on Friday said that water was very important and stressed on its conservation. Addressing a workshop on Clean Water Clean India here on Friday, Singh, who was chief guest, said that groundwater was used the most for agriculture. He said 10 per cent of the groundwater in the world, 45 per cent in India and 75 per cent in Uttar Pradesh was used for agriculture as UP was a powerhouse in the agriculture sector. Singh claimed that in the last few years, due to increase in paddy cultivation area in the state, exploitation of groundwater has increased further. He focused on the need to convert data into action to promote efficient use of water and water reuse. He said that farmers need to be made aware of water conservation and they need to be informed about the latest technology. Giving the example of Israel, he said that Israel received 300 millilitres of rainfall and there was acute shortage of water there. Farming is done there in greenhouses and sheds. During farming, a mixture of fresh and salty water is used there, he added.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website- www.pspcl.in
Phone no. 01881-275289 E-mail- se-hq-ggssst-ropar@pspcl.in

Press (Open) Tender Eng. No. 55/P-3/EMP-W-12765 dated 08.08.24
Dy.Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTP, Roonagar invites Press Tender for Erection of MS pipes used for supply of water to fire hydrant system at GGSSTP, Roonagar. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to PSPCL website www.pspcl.in from 08.08.24 from 05:00 P.M. onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at PSPCL website www.pspcl.in
RTP-84/24

76155/12/3269/2023/36555 Dated CHD :- 8/9/2024

FORM A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017) FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF STANDARD ORGANO CHEMICALS PRIVATE LIMITED

1. Name of corporate person	Standard Organo Chemicals Private Limited
2. Date of incorporation of corporate person	17th December 2012
3. Authority under which corporate person is Incorporated/ registered	Registrar of Companies, Kanpur
4. Corporate identity number / limited liability Identity number of corporate person	U24233UP2012PTC054183
5. Address of the registered office and principal Office (if any) of corporate person	127/219-A, JuhI Katan , Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur-208014
6. Liquidation commencement date of corporate Person	August 09,2024
7. Name, address, email address, telephone Number and the registration number of the Liquidator	SARVESH S. SRIVASTAVA IBBI/IPA-002/IP-No0989/2020-2021/13218 Communication Address: 117/0/454, 209 Indrapuri, Sharda Nagar, Kanpur-208025, U.P. Email :-cmasarvesh1963@gmail.com Mob: 9839084865 Registered Address: 117/0/454, 209 Indrapuri, Sharda Nagar, Kanpur-208025 U.P. India
8. Last Date for submission of claims	September 08, 2024

Notice is hereby given that the Standard Organo Chemicals Private Limited has commenced voluntary liquidation on August 09, 2024. The stakeholders of Standard Organo Chemicals Private Limited are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before September 08,2024 to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7. The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other stakeholders may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means. Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.

Date: August 09, 2024
Place: Kanpur

Sd/-
Sarvesh S. Srivastava
Liquidator
IBBI/IPA-002/IP-No0989/2020-2021/13218
117/0/454,209, Indrapuri, Sharda Nagar, Kanpur-208025 U.P. India
Email: cmasarvesh1963@gmail.com, Mob: 9839084865

CM: No force can prevent India from becoming superpower

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that India's time has come and no global force can prevent the nation from becoming a superpower.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath offering floral tribute at the statue of a martyr at Kakori Shaheed Smarak on Friday

The chief minister launched the 'Veeron Ko Naman' programme in Veer Bhoomi Kakori. He stated, "Our collective commitment to the nation's interests will be the truest tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for India's freedom."

During the event, CM Yogi released a booklet prepared by the Postal and Culture departments. He also interacted with children outside the Kakori Shaheed Mandir and took selfies with them.

result of persistent struggles over time," he remarked. Highlighting Uttar Pradesh's role in the freedom movement, Yogi recalled significant events from Mangal Pandey's 1857 rebellion to the 1857 First War of Independence in Bithoor, Kanpur, led by Nana Sahib and Rani of Jhansi.

He also noted that Uttar Pradesh had recently commemorated the centenary of the 1922 Chauri Chaura incident and is now observing the centenary of the Kakori action, which provides a profound moment to honour the martyrs who sacrificed for India's freedom.

Although the amount seized was just Rs 4,679, the British spent Rs 10 lakh on the subsequent trial. The revolutionaries were sentenced to death without fair hearings, with the British showing cowardice by executing them a day early. Yogi acknowledged the bravery of those who were hanged or sentenced to 'Kaala Pani' and praised their steadfast resolve despite British temptations.

Over a dozen govt doctors face dismissal for 'negligence'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has initiated a crackdown on negligent Health Department employees. As part of this campaign, action has been taken against approximately 15 doctors across various districts in the state.

health centre, Udi, Etawah; Dr Ajit Kumar Chaudhary, posted in CHC, Balua, Kushinagar; Dr Rajveer Singh posted in CHC, Budaun; Dr Bharat Kumar Singh, posted in CHC, Parsendi, Sitapur; Dr Ritika Sachan, District Women's Hospital, Unnao and Dr Radheshyam Saini, CHC, Rampur Maniwaran, Saharanpur Dr Arshad Jamal, posted in CHC, Adda Bazar, Maharajganj, had already been suspended as he too was missing from duty for a long time.

Chaudhary, Dr Pawan Awasthi, Dr Mohammad Shabab Khan, Dr Uma Shankar Dixit, Dr Pawan Pratap Singh, Dr Ajit Kumar Chaudhary, Dr Rajveer Singh, Dr Bharat Kumar Singh, Dr Ritika Sachan and Dr Radheshyam Saini. Pathak also addressed the issue of Dr Rekha Sinha, a surgeon at CHC, Uska Bazar, Siddharthnagar, who has reportedly not performed any surgery for the past four to five years despite being a qualified surgeon.

Gujarat delegation praises UP's education model

Lucknow (PNS): A delegation of Gujarat Education Department is in Lucknow to study the Uttar Pradesh model of education. The Yogi Adityanath government said in a statement that the states across India were taking note of the remarkable strides made in education in UP, with many sending delegations to study the success of UP's education model, refined over the past seven years.

Composite School Parharup in Lucknow, where they met headmasters, teachers and mentors. The delegation reviewed the Nipun Bharat Mission's teaching materials and received detailed explanations of mentoring processes, reviews, monitoring and training. They also observed live classroom teaching and demonstrative supervision demonstrations, satisfying their curiosity and providing valuable insights for future planning.

Man kills daughter Bareilly (PTI): A man strangled his pregnant 17-year-old daughter over her love affair and later turned up at a police station here to confess his crime.

Man kills daughter Bareilly (PTI): A man strangled his pregnant 17-year-old daughter over her love affair and later turned up at a police station here to confess his crime.

4 IPS officers given fresh assignments

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government, on Friday, gave fresh assignments to four IPS officers, including those who returned from central deputation.

Ram Nayan Singh, who was posted in the security of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and was promoted from PPS to IPS cadre, was posted as Deputy Commissioner of Police in Lucknow police commissionerate. IPS officer Keshav Kumar was also transferred as Deputy Commissioner of Police in Lucknow commissionerate police. Apart from this, IPS officer Mahendra Pal Singh, who was posted in Lucknow police commissionerate, was transferred as Superintendent of Police (Crime) in DGP Headquarters and IPS officer Shivaji was transferred as Superintendent of Police, Technical Services. All four IPS have been instructed to take charge of the new posting immediately.

FIR after letters of ministers, lawmakers forged

Lucknow (PNS): Deputy Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Sanjeev Srivastava has filed a complaint with Hazratganj police against an unidentified accused for forging letterheads in the names of several prominent officials.

The complaint names Suresh Kumar Khanna, Minister of Finance and Parliamentary Affairs; Manohar Lal (Mannu Kori), Minister of State for Labour and Employment; Dr GS Dhamesh, MLA for the 87th Cantonment Assembly in Agra; and Palturam, MLA for the 294th Balrampur Sadar constituency. According to the complaint, the accused used these forged letterheads to request the transfer of Abhishek Kumar, a review officer in the Medical and Health department.

2 drown in pond Sultanpur (PTI): Two minor brothers drowned in a pond during Nag Panchami celebrations in the Kadipur Kotwali area on Friday, the police said.

The incident occurred in the Banke village. Anshik Yadav (12) and his eight-year-old brother Ansh Yadav, had gathered along the pond with other children to participate in a fair.

FORM A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017) FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF STANDARD VENTURES LIMITED

CONTINENTAL CHEMICALS LIMITED UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30th JUNE, 2024

Case against SP media cell incharge for post against Modi, Yogi

Lucknow (PNS): A complaint was filed at Hazratganj police station against the administrator of the Samajwadi Party's media cell.

The complaint alleged that the administrator, Vijai Kumar Bhurgi, claimed that the statements in question were part of a larger conspiracy by Samajwadi Party leaders to incite distress, discord, and unrest among communities in Uttar Pradesh. He attached a copy of a post from August, which he alleged contained false and malicious statements about PM Modi and CM Adityanath.

Adityanath, and other BJP office-bearers. The complainant, Vijai Kumar Bhurgi, claimed that the statements in question were part of a larger conspiracy by Samajwadi Party leaders to incite distress, discord, and unrest among communities in Uttar Pradesh. He attached a copy of a post from August, which he alleged contained false and malicious statements about PM Modi and CM Adityanath.

PUBLIC NOTICE ICICI Bank Registered Office: ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakki Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodra- 390 007 Corporate Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex Mumbai 400051 GOLD E-AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE

Kakori Action important event in freedom struggle: Rajbhar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Uttar Pradesh Labour and Employment Minister Anil Rajbhar said that Kakori Train Action is an important event in the struggle for freedom. He, along with Mayor Ashok Tiwari, District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam and Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal paid floral tributes to the Amar Shaheed Memorial in Udayan Park (Sagra) here on Friday in the series of 'Kakori Train Action Centenary Festival' programme. The minister said the Kakori Train Action was a historic incident of looting the treasury of the British government to buy weapons with the desire to wage a fierce war against the British Raj, which was done by the revolutionaries on August 9, 1925. "Due to that action, the foundations of the rule of the British government were shaken", Rajbhar said. He also planted a sapling of an Amla plant in the memory of the martyrs. Meanwhile Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Registration Fees Ravindra Jaiswal, while laying special emphasis on



UP Minister Anil Rajbhar planting a sapling at Shahid Udayan, Sagra in Varanasi on Friday

celebrating the Har Ghar Tiranga programme to be organised from August 13 to 15 on the occasion of the upcoming Independence Day with full enthusiasm and joy, directed the departmental officers to complete the necessary preparations on time. He also talked to public representatives and others in this direction and asked them to motivate people to hoist the

national flag in all the houses of the district as well as government/ semi-government offices, commercial establishments, industrial, educational, Anganwadi centres, hospitals and public places under the campaign. The minister was holding a meeting with departmental officials at Circuit House here on Thursday regarding the preparations for the 'Har Ghar

Tiranga' programme. He said that the tricolour should be hoisted in every house during the programme. "Flag marches will be taken out from various places of the district on August 12, 13, 14 for creating an atmosphere of patriotism", he said, adding that the Yogi government is celebrating the centenary year of Kakori Train Action, which is considered a milestone in the freedom struggle. For this programmes will be organised across the state for a week from August 9. He laid special emphasis on ensuring people's participation in the patriotic programmes being organised in honour of the brave martyrs of the Kakori train incident. District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam said that district level officers have already been instructed regarding the programme and availability of national flags in sufficient numbers is being ensured. People have also been instructed to officially use flags made of Khadi cloth. Zila Panchayat Chairperson Poonam Maurya, MLA (Rohania) Sunil Patel, city Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Vidyasagar Rai, Vice-Chairman of Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) Pulkit Garg, Chief Development

Shaheed Smriti Yatra taken out in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The 100th anniversary of the Kakori Train Action was observed here on Friday. The Shaheed Smriti Yatra was taken out from Subhash Chowk in Civil Lines. It reached Gate No 3 of Chandrashekhar Azad Park, where various programmes were organised. Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister (DyCM) Keshav Prasad Maurya attended the programme as the chief guest. Maurya called for hoisting the tricolour in every house from August 13 to 15. This tricolour will answer those who conspire against India. India is united against terrorism, he added. He said that there will be no shortage of tricolour. The Deputy CM called upon

everyone to take a flag and hoist it at their home. He said that Prayagraj was the centre of independence, many important decisions were taken here and we all have to take a pledge to protect our country by following the footsteps of freedom fighters. Maurya said that 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' has been created on the portal on which everyone must upload their photo with the tricolour. He said that a committee has been formed under the chairmanship of district magistrate in all the districts, wherever there is any problem, it will be resolved. Earlier, the deputy chief minister garlanded the statue of Chandrashekhar Azad located in Azad Park and paid homage to him.

Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal, Additional Municipal Commissioner Dushyant Maurya, Deputy Director

(Tourism) RK Rawat, DCNRLM and other departmental officers were prominently present in the meeting.

4 killed in mishap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Four persons were killed and another injured when a DCM truck rammied into a stationary container from behind on the roadside at the Junedpur cut under Gursahaiganj Kotwali police area of Kannauj on early on Friday morning. The injured was sent to the district hospital by ambulance. The identity of three of the deceased had been ascertained. Efforts are being made to identify the fourth deceased. The DCM truck coming from Delhi rammied into a stationary container near a dhaba at Junedpur cut on Friday morning. On hearing a loud sound people rushed to the spot and informed the police. The people trapped in the DCM truck were rescued. Four of them were found dead while another seriously injured. From the documents recovered from the possession of the deceased, police have ascertained the identity of three of them as Pawan Kumar (34), son of Lalji of Maithli Mathura, Machhli Shahar, Jaunpur, Sonu Sharma (25) of Ramaipur, City Kotwali, Amethi, and Prashant Kumar Singh (23), son of Pawan Singh of Dulapur under Shahganj police station, Amethi. Their kin had been

informed about the accident. All the bodies have been kept in the mortuary. Meanwhile a 28-year-old man, Prashant, was found hanging in his room at Jange Nagar chauraha under Makhli police station area of Unnao on Friday morning. His kin suspect his killing. On getting information police sent the body for autopsy after investigation. Station House Officer Sandeep Kumar Mishra said on receipt of autopsy report, exact cause of his death will be ascertained, he said. **ELOCUTION COMPETITION:** On the occasion of 100th anniversary of Kakori Train Action, a documentary on Kakori Train Action and an elocution competition were organized by the Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar, on Friday, under the directives of the state government. In this, the revolutionaries who made sacrifices in the freedom movement were discussed in detail. The main objective of this programme was to inspire patriotism among the girl students through the story of sacrifice of the revolutionaries who sacrificed everything in the freedom movement. Principal Prof Anju Chaudhary addressed the students. The entire college family participated in this programme.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION OF PLEDGED ASSETS BEING GOLD ORNAMENTS						
THE BORROWERS, IN SPECIFIC AND THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT PUBLIC AUCTION OF THE GOLD ORNAMENTS PLEDGE IN THE BELOW ACCOUNTS IS PROPOSED TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE AXIS BANK AT THE BELOW MENTIONED BRANCH. THE BELOW MENTIONED BORROWERS HAS AVAILED THE CREDIT FACILITY FROM THE AXIS BANK LIMITED AGAINST THE PLEDGE OF GOLD ORNAMENTS ('GOLD LOAN FACILITY') IN FAVOUR OF THE BANK TOWARDS THE SECURITY. THE DEMAND NOTICES WERE ISSUED TO THE BORROWERS/GUARANTORS CALLING UP THE BORROWERS/ GUARANTORS TO PAY THEIR OUTSTANDING AMOUNT TOWARDS THE GOLD LOAN FACILITY. AS THE BORROWERS/ GUARANTORS HAVE FAILED TO REPAY THE OUTSTANDING LOAN AMOUNT, THE BANK IS CONSTRAINED TO INVOKE THE PLEDGE AND PROPOSED TO CONDUCT AN E-AUCTION SALE OF PLEDGED GOLD ORNAMENTS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY HEREUNDER ON 20-AUG-2024 AT 12.30 PM TO 03.30 PM ON "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", "WHATSOEVER THERE IS" AND "NO RECOURSE BASIS".						
DETAILS OF BORROWERS AND OUTSTANDING AMOUNT						
Sr. No.	CUSTOMER NAME	LOAN A/C NO.	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING (IN Rs.)	DATE OF RECALL NOTICE	GROSS WEIGHT	NET WEIGHT
B.O.: AASHIANA LUC UP						
1	SURAJ SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX3695	Rs. 86,854.00	20-07-2024	25.720	24.520
2	PREM KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX6713	Rs. 26,665.00	20-07-2024	7.100	7.000
B.O.: AGRA [UP]						
3	RUPAM SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX7350	Rs. 29,170.00	20-07-2024	11.900	11.000
4	NARENDRA KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX3920	Rs. 1,17,531.00	02-04-2024	36.700	34.200
5	SAJIYA	XXXXXXXXXXXX6237	Rs. 81,465.00	20-07-2024	24.400	23.100
B.O.: AKBARPUR KANPUR KANP UP						
6	DEEPAK SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX1520	Rs. 41,375.00	20-07-2024	11.400	11.000
B.O.: ALAMBAGH, LUCKNOW [UP]						
7	MEENAKSHI	XXXXXXXXXXXX0777	Rs. 1,04,882.00	15-02-2024	37.200	36.000
8	BAJUNATH KAUSHAL	XXXXXXXXXXXX7537	Rs. 3,61,550.00	29-09-2023	76.800	75.600
9	ASHISH SRIVASTAVA	XXXXXXXXXXXX3348	Rs. 2,45,452.00	29-09-2023	58.700	57.300
B.O.: ALLAHABAD [UP]						
10	MANOJ KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX1807	Rs. 78,200.00	20-07-2024	23.000	21.500
11	MOHD SHAKIB	XXXXXXXXXXXX4321	Rs. 58,484.00	02-04-2024	24.900	22.500
B.O.: AMROHA [UP]						
12	PARVEJ ALI	XXXXXXXXXXXX3738	Rs. 1,26,712.00	20-07-2024	32.200	32.200
B.O.: BAHERI [UP]						
13	VED PRAKASH	XXXXXXXXXXXX1087	Rs. 2,08,949.82	05-12-2023	89.700	89.700
B.O.: BAHRACH [UP]						
14	DEEPAK GUPTA	XXXXXXXXXXXX2994	Rs. 33,026.00	20-07-2024	11.390	10.000
15	DEEPAK SHRIVASTAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX8715	Rs. 27,023.00	20-07-2024	8.000	7.800
16	ANASH KHAN	XXXXXXXXXXXX8648	Rs. 26,610.00	20-07-2024	20.310	20.200
B.O.: BALLIA [UP]						
17	MAMTA DEVI	XXXXXXXXXXXX8248	Rs. 58,634.00	20-07-2024	17.200	16.400
18	JUHI PANDEY	XXXXXXXXXXXX1649	Rs. 40,308.00	20-07-2024	12.900	12.100
B.O.: BARABANKI [UP]						
19	MAYA DEVI	XXXXXXXXXXXX5990	Rs. 64,900.00	20-07-2024	22.800	21.900
20	ROHIT KUMAR YADAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX9290	Rs. 29,127.00	05-12-2023	10.400	8.900
B.O.: BASTI [UP]						
21	MUKESH KOHLI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9436	Rs. 1,19,128.95	20-07-2024	32.910	30.740
B.O.: BHARWARA LUC UP						
22	NEHA AWASTHI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9199	Rs. 45,191.00	29-09-2023	12.800	12.700
B.O.: BILNOR [UP]						
23	NAKUL KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX7148	Rs. 42,088.00	29-09-2023	9.200	9.000
B.O.: BISALPUR BISA UP						
24	NAZRA BI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9038	Rs. 1,90,181.00	29-09-2023	46.300	46.000
25	SAHAV JAHAN	XXXXXXXXXXXX4087	Rs. 1,23,901.00	29-09-2023	29.700	29.400
26	SHABUDDIN	XXXXXXXXXXXX4582	Rs. 1,23,901.00	29-09-2023	29.700	29.400
B.O.: BULANDSHAHR [UP]						
27	AJAY SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX4731	Rs. 53,936.00	20-07-2024	13.600	12.870
28	ADITYA CHAUDHARY	XXXXXXXXXXXX4200	Rs. 1,28,242.00	20-07-2024	34.100	32.570
B.O.: CHOWK LUCKNOW LUC UP						
29	CHANDRA PRAKASH	XXXXXXXXXXXX4271	Rs. 1,62,481.41	07-06-2024	51.200	50.000
B.O.: CHOWK, ALLAHABAD [UP]						
30	MANISH PANDEY	XXXXXXXXXXXX3774	Rs. 61,357.00	09-11-2023	16.800	16.100
B.O.: DADRI DDR UP						
31	RAJEEV KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX7729	Rs. 69,176.13	20-07-2024	17.400	16.400
32	RINKU DEVI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9490	Rs. 49,093.00	20-07-2024	13.700	12.600
B.O.: DEEN DAYAL PURAM, BAREILLY [UP]						
33	GAURAV PATEL	XXXXXXXXXXXX6549	Rs. 52,776.14	20-07-2024	15.700	15.000
B.O.: DELHI ROAD, MOR MDD UP						
34	ARVIND KUMAR MISHRA	XXXXXXXXXXXX9995	Rs. 65,407.00	15-02-2024	18.300	18.000
B.O.: DEOBAND DOB UP						
35	MOHD MAJID	XXXXXXXXXXXX8614	Rs. 46,900.00	20-07-2024	13.900	12.900
36	RAHUL KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX2325	Rs. 52,586.00	20-07-2024	21.000	17.000
37	MUSTAFA	XXXXXXXXXXXX8981	Rs. 42,525.00	20-07-2024	11.700	11.100
B.O.: DEORIA [UP]						
38	GEETA DEVI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9778	Rs. 96,500.00	15-02-2024	29.630	29.590
39	KHUSHBU MISHRA	XXXXXXXXXXXX8274	Rs. 2,37,140.00	02-04-2024	67.690	66.760
B.O.: FAIZABAD [UP]						
40	ABHISHEK YADAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX4304	Rs. 65,045.95	15-02-2024	19.800	19.600
41	ARVIND PANDEY	XXXXXXXXXXXX5176	Rs. 1,07,974.00	07-06-2024	30.200	29.500
B.O.: FARRUKHABAD [UP]						
42	ANKIT KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX9117	Rs. 1,03,235.00	20-07-2024	28.700	28.600
43	ROHIT SHARMA	XXXXXXXXXXXX5327	Rs. 76,242.00	20-07-2024	23.100	22.300
44	DHARMENDRA KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX3153	Rs. 61,096.00	25-08-2023	14.000	13.900
B.O.: GARH ROAD, MEERUT [UP]						
45	JATIN KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX5545	Rs. 54,999.00	20-07-2024	13.680	13.180
46	SALIM ALI	XXXXXXXXXXXX8113	Rs. 88,264.91	20-07-2024	27.020	25.120
47	FIRUJ KHAN	XXXXXXXXXXXX8974	Rs. 1,10,273.00	15-02-2024	62.590	57.000
B.O.: GHAZIPIUR [UP]						
48	SUNIL KUMAR SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX3402	Rs. 1,41,941.00	20-07-2024	51.400	41.100
49	MANIL KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX2333	Rs. 48,739.82	20-07-2024	14.300	14.300
50	SUSHMA SRIVASTAVA	XXXXXXXXXXXX9502	Rs. 1,05,646.00	20-07-2024	38.600	29.500
B.O.: GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW [UP]						
51	JAIPRAKASH VERMA	XXXXXXXXXXXX4189	Rs. 1,60,906.81	02-04-2024	48.390	44.490
52	ANKIT KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX9299	Rs. 1,13,272.44	20-07-2024	33.160	32.060
53	PRASHANT SHEKHAR SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX2482	Rs. 74,063.00	20-07-2024	22.020	20.620
B.O.: GONDA [UP]						
54	BIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX4934	Rs. 1,86,603.03	25-08-2023	47.570	46.970
55	RAM GIRI	XXXXXXXXXXXX8649	Rs. 1,53,703.00	29-09-2023	38.940	38.000
B.O.: GORAKHPUR [UP]						
56	USHA SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX2093	Rs. 84,285.07	20-07-2024	27.400	25.500
57	MANISH KUMAR DWIVEDI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9161	Rs. 65,912.00	20-07-2024	20.100	19.600
58	SHILA DEVI	XXXXXXXXXXXX0989	Rs. 81,268.00	20-07-2024	26.800	25.100
59	DEEPU MISHRA	XXXXXXXXXXXX0720	Rs. 79,723.30	20-07-2024	21.100	18.900
B.O.: GT ROAD, KANPUR [UP]						
60	SHABANA	XXXXXXXXXXXX7025	Rs. 94,448.00	20-07-2024	28.100	28.200
61	SONI	XXXXXXXXXXXX8974	Rs. 78,622.00	08-05-2024	31.700	22.200
B.O.: HAPUR [UP]						
62	RIHAN	XXXXXXXXXXXX6186	Rs. 9,85,518.00	28-12-2023	315.040	285.540
63	RIZWAN CHOUDHARY	XXXXXXXXXXXX5885	Rs. 1,01,335.00	20-07-2024	28.070	26.970
B.O.: HARDOI [UP]						
64	SHUBHAM TRIVEDI	XXXXXXXXXXXX0772	Rs. 78,268.00	25-08-2023	41.000	39.500
B.O.: JAUNPUR [UP]						
65	INDRA DEO YADAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX5995	Rs. 50,924.04	02-04-2024	15.800	15.200

66	RAGINEE SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX5558	Rs. 1,04,593.00	20-07-2024	31.200	29.600
B.O.: JEWAR GBNAG UP						
67	YOGESH KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX8281	Rs. 1,31,797.00	20-07-2024	35.000	33.600
B.O.: JHANSI [UP]						
68	ARUN KUMAR SAHU	XXXXXXXXXXXX9537	Rs. 81,289.00	20-07-2024	22.300	20.600
69	LUCKY AHIRWAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX8877	Rs. 74,921.21	20-07-2024	19.400	18.220
B.O.: KAKADEO, KANPUR [UP]						
70	SAURABH SHARMA	XXXXXXXXXXXX4537	Rs. 54,801.00	28-02-2024	17.500	17.000
71	SHW PRASAD YADAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX0541	Rs. 76,868.00	20-07-2024	22.200	21.600
72	DEEPAK SINGH YADAV	XXXXXXXXXXXX8871	Rs. 87,582.00	20-07-2024	22.400	21.700
B.O.: KANPUR [UP]						
73	AMIT JAISWAL	XXXXXXXXXXXX2234	Rs. 1,53,591.94	28-02-2024	43.400	42.300
74	ROBIN GUPTA	XXXXXXXXXXXX1256	Rs. 58,942.00	20-07-2024	15.400	14.800
75	GAURAV RASTOGI	XXXXXXXXXXXX9589	Rs. 86,400.00	20-07-2024	24.600	23.700
76	ATUL PRATAP SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX2099	Rs. 2,22,491.44	20-07-2024	76.200	64.600
77	KULDEEP KULDEEP	XXXXXXXXXXXX6197	Rs. 47,100.00	20-07-2024	15.200	14.700
B.O.: LAKHIMPUR-KHERI [UP]						
78	ATUL KUMAR	XXXXXXXXXXXX5899	Rs. 56,334.00	15-02-2024	17.900	16.400
B.O.: LALGANJ RAI UP						
79	AMERENDRA BAHADUR SINGH	XXXXXXXXXXXX5687	Rs. 85,688.00	10-10-2023	33.800	24.000
80	AJAY PAL	XXXXXXXXXXXX1194	Rs. 64,300.00	20-07-2024	18.800	17.700
B.O.: LUCKNOW [UP]						
81	PRIYANK AWASTHI	XXXXXXXXXXXX0984	Rs. 50,388.00	28-12-2023	18.000	17.100
82	RAHUL CHAURASIA	XXXXXXXXXXXX2185	Rs. 36,841.00	07-06-2024	12.100	11.400
B.O.: MAHOBA MHO UP						
83	ANAND	XXXXXXXXXXXX3735	Rs. 85,667.00	20-07-2024	31.670	23.500
84	HARSH	XXXXXXXXXXXX0018	Rs. 47,605.00	20-07-2024	12.120	11.420
B.O.: MASOODABAD UP						
85	RAJNI AGRAWAL	XXXXXXXXXXXX1658	Rs. 1,63,217.00	20-11-2023	48.990	47.990
B.O.: MATHURA [UP]						

Opp silence on threat to Hindus in Bangladesh unfortunate: BJP



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

BJP MPs on Friday criticised Opposition parties, saying their silence on the situation of Hindus and other minority communities in Bangladesh is unfortunate. Several Hindu temples, households and businesses have been vandalised in violence in Bangladesh since Monday when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to India. During the Zero Hour of the Lok Sabha, BJP MP Anurag Thakur tried to corner the Leader of Opposition and Congress MP, Rahul Gandhi, by alleging that he has not spoken on ensuring the safety of minorities in

Bangladesh. "When the interim Government of Bangladesh took over, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated them but at the same time he asked them to ensure the safety of minorities," he said. "It is unfortunate that the Leader of Opposition extended congratulations to the interim Government (of Bangladesh) but did not mention the safety and security of Hindus and the minorities. What was the compulsion? You spoke about Gaza but not about minorities in Bangladesh," Thakur said. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus took oath as the head of the interim Government of

Bangladesh on Thursday, replacing Hasina. BJP MP from Odisha's Dhenkanal Rudra Narayan Pany, while raising the issue of Hindu temples being attacked in Bangladesh, said the Government of India should interfere to ensure their safety. "Hindu temples have been attacked in Bangladesh, and the photos that have come out show that the statue of Lord Jagannath was attacked. This is unfortunate, condemnable and painful..." Pany said. "What is this mentality behind damaging Hindu temples?" he asked. Pany said this has hurt not just the people of Odisha but people all across India. "The Government of India should

talk to Bangladesh to ensure that the guilty are punished," he said. BJP MP from Assam's Darrang-Udalguri Dilip Saikia also raised concerns over the situation in Bangladesh and urged the Government to strengthen security along the India-Bangladesh border. "India wants peace to be restored in Bangladesh. India has a 4,096-kilometer border with Bangladesh," he said and added that security along the Indo-Bangladesh border should be as strong as that along the India-Pakistan border. He also said the Indian Government should ensure that minorities are protected in Bangladesh. BJP MP from Andaman and Nicobar Islands Bishnu Pada Ray said, "My father came to West Bengal in 1946 from East Pakistan to save his life. Then he went to Andaman... What is happening in Bangladesh today..." Congress, CPI(M) and TMC should condemn what is happening in Bangladesh. They are sitting quietly," he said and added that they are quiet due to their "votebank". He also said that the Parliament should pass a resolution on the situation in Bangladesh.



Parliament adjourned sine die

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Both the houses of Parliament on Friday were adjourned sine die, one sitting ahead of the scheduled end of the session. The current session was scheduled to end on August 12. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla adjourned the House sine die (for an indefinite period). The Rajya Sabha was also adjourned sine die. During the session, the Finance Bill was passed. A Bill to amend the Waqf law was also introduced and referred to a joint committee of Parliament amid protests over its provisions. Birla said the productivity of the House was above 130 per cent. After multiple adjournments in the post-lunch session, when the Upper House reassembled at 1530 hrs, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar expressed his concern over the manner in which Opposition members conducted themselves in and outside the House. He later adjourned the House sine die at 1554 hrs.

Parliament marks 82nd anniversary of Quit India Movement

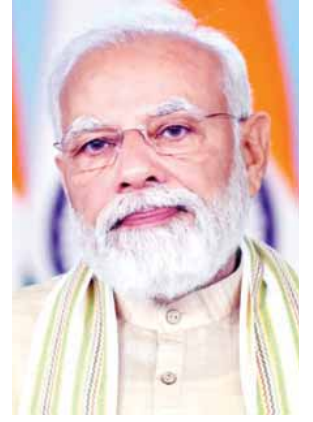
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament on Friday commemorated the 82nd anniversary of the Quit India Movement, with Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha paying homage to the martyrs. Both Houses stood in silence for a brief moment as a mark of respect for those who sacrificed their lives. Before the start of proceedings, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar recalled the historic day when Mahatma Gandhi launched the movement in 1942. "Today marks the 82nd anniversary of the historic day when Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement in 1942. His clarion call of 'do or die' ignited the nation and ultimately led Bharat gaining independence from colonial rule," Dhankhar said. The Chairman highlighted the movement's continued relevance, describing it as a "testament to the power and will of the people and their determination to overcome any challenge." As India enters the 75th year of its Constitution's adoption, Dhankhar emphasized that the movement's foundational principles remain crucial in shaping the nation's destiny.

Modi assures BJP MPs on SC/ST reservation policy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A delegation of BJP MPs on Friday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and expressed concern over the Supreme Court's observation on identifying the creamy layer among the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the Schedule Tribes (ST). After the meeting, Modi said in a social media post, "Met a delegation of SC/ST MPs today. Reiterated our commitment and resolve for the welfare and empowerment of the SC/ST communities." On August 1, Supreme Court Judge Justice B R Gavai had said States must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even among the SCs and STs, and deny them the benefit of reservation. BJP Rajya Sabha member Sikander Kumar, who was part of the delegation, said "All of us were concerned over the Supreme Court's observation. We were getting phone calls from people expressing concern over the matter." "A delegation of MPs representing SCs and STs met the Prime Minister this morning and expressed their concern in this connection," he said in the Parliament complex.



The Prime Minister held a serious discussion with the MPs and assured that the Government will not let the apex Court's observation be implemented, Kumar said. "We express our gratitude towards the prime minister for this," he said. BJP MP Faggan Singh Kulaste said the delegation in its memorandum to the Prime Minister urged that the apex Court's observation on the issue of creamy layer should not be implemented. "The Prime Minister was also held a similar view. He assured us that he will look into the matter and asked us not to worry, saying it will not be implemented in the SC and ST category," he told.



SC stays HC order on college ban on hijab

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday partly stayed a Mumbai college circular banning 'hijab, burqa, cap and naqab' on the campus and said girl students must have the freedom to choose what they wear. Educational institutions, it said, cannot force on them their choice. A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar issued notice to the Chembur Trombay Education Society, which runs the 'N G Acharya and D K Marathe College', and sought its response by November 18. "Girl students must have freedom of choice in what they are wearing and college cannot force them... It's unfortunate that you suddenly wake up to know that there are many religions in the country," the bench told the college administration at the centre of a fresh row over a dress code for Muslim students. It added why the college did not ban 'tilak' and 'bindi' if it intended the religious faiths of the students to not be revealed. "Will the students' names not reveal their religious identity?" the bench asked Senior Advocate Madhavi Diwan, appearing for the educational society. The Court, however, said no burqa can be allowed to be worn by girls inside the classroom and no religious activities can be permitted on the campus. The bench said its interim order should not be misused by anybody and granted liberty to the educational society and the college to approach the Court in case of any misuse. The top Court was hearing a plea challenging a Bombay High Court verdict upholding the college's decision to ban hijab, burqa and naqab inside the campus. Senior advocate Colin Gonsalves and advocate Abiha Zaidi, appearing for the petitioners, including Zainab Abdul Qayyum, submitted that students were not able to attend classes because of the ban.

Bill introduced to expand bank nominees, safeguard depositors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Bill seeking to provide for four nominees by a bank account holder was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Friday to ensure better protection of depositors and enhance customer convenience. Introduced by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary in the Lower House, the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, has a provision for simultaneous and successive nominations to bank accounts, lockers etc. As per the provision of the Bill, a bank account holder can nominate up to four persons. The Bill also seeks to transfer of unclaimed dividends, shares, and interest or redemption of bonds to the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF), allowing individuals to claim transfers or refunds from the fund, thus safeguarding investors' interests. As the banking sector has evolved over the years and with a view to improving bank governance and investor protection, it has become necessary to make certain amendments to five Acts, according to Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill. The Bill, which was approved by the Union Cabinet last week, proposes to amend the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, the State Bank of India Act, 1955, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970, and the Banking



Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980. The proposed Bill seeks to improve governance standards, provide consistency in reporting by banks to the Reserve Bank of India, ensure better protection for depositors and investors, improve audit quality in public sector banks, bring customer convenience in respect of nominations and to provide for increase in the tenure of the directors in co-operative banks. Therefore, it was felt necessary to amend the said enactments and for that purpose to introduce the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 in Parliament. Another proposed change relates to redefining 'substantial interest' for directorships, which could increase to Rs 2 crore instead of the current limit of Rs 5 lakh, which was fixed almost six decades ago. Congress member Manish Tewari opposed the introduction of the Bill saying the power to legislate with regard to cooperatives vests with State Governments. RSP member N K Premachandran opposed

amending five legislations through one Bill, while TMC member Saugata Roy termed the Bill "superfluous" saying the amendments proposed in the Bill could have been done through administrative decisions. Responding to Opposition's remarks, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the various amendments done in Banking Regulations Act with respect to cooperative banks are not just one or two but several. "Simple understanding is we are not touching any aspect of the cooperatives other than that which claims under the name of banking. The sections which have been brought in for amendments, as also the Court verdicts, have repeatedly reinforced the point that Banking Regulation Act and the Cooperative Banks do have this relationship and therefore it has to be taken through this route," she said. Otherwise, there is no attempt to undermine the cooperatives, particularly cooperatives dealing with everything other than banks, she said defending the Bill. The Bill proposes to increase the tenure of directors (excluding the Chairman and whole-time director) in cooperative banks from 8 years to 10 years, so as to align with the Constitution (Ninety-Seventh Amendment) Act, 2011. Once passed, the Bill will allow a director of a Central Cooperative Bank to serve on the board of a State Cooperative Bank.

Cong accuses RS chairman of partisanship, Opp walks out

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday accused Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar acting in a "partisan" manner against the entire Opposition. Soon after Opposition walked out of the Rajya Sabha protesting against what they termed as "unacceptable" tone and disrespect shown by Dhankhar, the Congress held a press conference to claim that the Chairman was not giving the Opposition the importance it deserves in the Upper House. "Opposition parties feel that the Chairman's approach is partisan. The Rajya Sabha is a House that sets parameters for other legislatures. In that House, the Chairman should not be seen partisan. The Congress alone does not feel that way, all Opposition parties feel his behaviour is partial towards one side," Congress Leader Ajay Maken said at a press conference. The Opposition is not getting the importance it deserves in the Upper House, he said. "If the Opposition's voice does not resonate in Rajya Sabha, where else will it resonate," he asked. Congress' Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha Pramod Tiwari claimed that Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge is not allowed to speak, he is frequently interrupted and his microphones are often shut. "It is not about one party. Two-three days ago Ghanshyam Tiwari used such words for the Leader of Opposition which were not



right and were insulting and unacceptable. We had given notice for privilege motion. We wanted to know the ruling on it, the ruling has not come, it has to be in writing," he said. Earlier, the Opposition walked out of the House, with Congress parliamentary party Sonia Gandhi and other senior leaders in tow. The walkout came after Samajwadi Party MP Jaya Bachchan and Vice President Dhankhar were engaged in a heated exchange in the Upper House. "Main kalakar hoon, body language samajhti hoon, expression samajhti hoon... Par sir, mujhe maaf kariyega magar apka tone jo hai is not acceptable. We are colleagues sir, you may be sitting on the chair," she said. Dhankhar hit back, saying, "Jaya ji, you've earned a great reputation. You know, an actor is subject to director. You've not seen what I see from here. I don't want schooling. I am a person who has gone out of the way, and you say my tone...enough of it." After the walkout, Bachchan told reporters that she objected to the tone used by the Chair. "We are not school children. I was upset with the tone and especially when the

LoP stood up to speak, his mic was switched off. How can you do this? If he is not going to be heard in the House, then what are we doing? On top of that, every time (they are) using words which are unparliamentary," she said. Congress General Secretary in-charge communications Jai Ram Ramesh told reporters that Ghanshyam Tiwari had insulted the Leader of Opposition in the House in front of everybody. "Today it was said that Ghanshyam Tiwari came and in a closed door meeting praised Kharge ji. So what he said privately, we demanded that he should say it in the House. He insulted Kharge ji, he should say that what I said was wrong and I respect him and by mistake I said what I said," Ramesh said. "He (Chairman) keeps interrupting me, I have no objection to that but LoP is not allowed to speak. LoP has been insulted. The dignity of a constitutional post has been lowered. We are against this. Jaya Bachchan had gotten up for this issue only that the Leader of Opposition is being repeatedly insulted and not being allowed to speak," he said. "Issue was that Tiwari made serious allegations against Kharge which we wanted wanted should be erased from records," he said. Addressing the Rajya Sabha, Bachchan, a Samajwadi Party MP, expressed her disapproval of Dhankhar's tone in the House which led to an exchange of words between the two.



Jaishankar updates LS on 69 Indians in Russian army

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said in the Lok Sabha the Government is awaiting the release of 69 Indians recruited into the Russian army and that in many cases there are indications that the Indian Nationals were misled into joining that country's army. On action taken with respect to misleading of people and getting them recruited into the Russian army, the Minister told the house that the CBI has registered a criminal case against 19 individuals and entities while evidence has surfaced against 10 human traffickers whose identities the Government knows. Two of the accused were arrested on April 24 and two more on May 7. "We should not jump the gun and say Russians are not serious on this matter. I think it is important to hold the Russian Government to their word and most important for us, we are not here to score points or enter into debates. We are here to get back those 69 people because Indian citizens should not be serving in the army of foreign countries," he said during the Question Hour. He was responding to queries from AIMIM member Asaduddin Owaisi on action being taken against individuals who are misleading youth to join the Russian army and whether India will stop buying discounted oil from Russia if it does not act on releasing Indians recruited into that country's army. So far, the Minister said there are a total of 91 cases of Indian Nationals being recruited into the Russian army. Out of them, eight have passed away, 14 were discharged or in some manner have come back with the Government's assistance and "there are 69 Indian citizens awaiting release from the Russian army," he added. Out of the eight who died, the mortal remains of four have been sent back to India and in two cases one from Haryana and Punjab DNA samples have been sent to the Russian side.

Lucknow lab finds herbal way to manage gout

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant advancement in the management of gout, a prevalent form of arthritis affecting many, particularly those above 35, scientists from the Lucknow-based CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) have developed a herbal formulation to target the condition caused by elevated uric acid levels that leads to severe pain, swelling, and inflammation in joints, most commonly the big toe. Unlike many existing herbal products which lack rigorous scientific backing, "NBRI-Gout Out", has undergone extensive testing. Its efficacy has been evaluated through a range of in-vitro and in-vivo assays, demonstrating its effectiveness in reducing uric acid levels by 80 per cent and inflammatory mediators by about 70 per cent. The herbal remedy is developed by Dr Ankita Misra under the mentorship of Dr. Sharad Srivastava (Chief Scientist and Head) at Pharmacognosy Division of CSIR-NBRI. It has been found synergistically efficacious in



gout/gouty arthritis, at par with standard drug colchicine. This highlights its potential as a reliable alternative or adjunct to conventional treatments. "The bio-efficacy of combination was tested through a battery of in-vitro and in-vivo assays under the laboratory conditions and further, the safety and toxicity of NBRI-Gout out was also established in animal models. Studies showed a significant reduction in uric acid (80%) and about 70 per cent reduction in inflammatory

mediators, the primary causes underlying the pathogenesis of gout," said Dr Misra. Additionally, it showed a significant reduction in pain, and stiffness in joints and improved locomotion. It is completely water soluble with no solvent residue. The raw materials used are widely available in the herbal drug market and do not threaten biodiversity. The product has been developed in AYUSH mode and is cost-effective, and two companies have shown interest in commercialization. The herbal remedy can also be used as an adjuvant therapy along with existing line of treatment in gouty arthritis, gouty flare, prophylaxis cases and idiopathic cases having gout symptoms, she added. "There are few herbal products available in the market specifically targeting gouty arthritis to address the problem. However, many of the existing products with claims like alleviating pain and inflammation of joints, lack scientific validation and are marketed, based on traditional claims only. "Besides, the number of ingredients in existing products is also quite high. The problem could be addressed through the development of a natural plant-based supplement which can be used as an adjuvant therapy to the existing line of treatment for the management of conditions," said an official from the Union Science and Technology. The CSIR-NBRI initiative was funded under the "Scheme for Young Scientists and Technologists", SEED Division of the Ministry.

Lightest bulletproof jacket unveiled



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed the Bullet Proof Jacket (BPJ) consisting of lightest Front Hard Armour Panel (FHAP), Minister of state for defence Sanjay Seth in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Friday. Giving details, he said this jacket has been developed in two configuration viz. In-Conjunction-With (ICW) and Standalone with different areal density of FHAP.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Reaching out

PM Modi congratulates Muhammad Yunus, expresses concerns over the plight of minorities in Bangladesh

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reached out to Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Laureate from Bangladesh, to congratulate him on heading the interim government of Bangladesh. PM Modi took to X, to express concerns over the situation of Hindus and other Minorities in Bangladesh amidst the ongoing political turmoil. Muhammad Yunus, on his part has emphasised his commitment to restore law and order. Meanwhile, the Indian government, through various channels has reiterated its concerns about the situation of minorities for regional stability. Hundreds of people trying to cross over to India but have been sent back by the Border Security Force. The situation in Bangladesh is rather fluid as the students, the initial protesters have been overshadowed by the rogue elements who are taking advantage of the situation and indulging in looting and arson while attacking minorities to garner popular support. Slowly but surely the political tension has also exacerbated communal tensions within Bangladesh. The Hindu minority,



which makes up about 8-10% of the population are worst hit. Recent reports have indicated a surge in attacks on Hindu temples, businesses, and homes, triggering fear and insecurity within the community. Prime Minister Modi's outreach to Yunus can be seen as a calculated move to engage with a respected figure in Bangladesh who has international credibility and influence. By engaging with Yunus, Modi may be signalling India's support for democratic values and human rights in Bangladesh, while also voicing concerns about the security and well-being of the Hindu community. India is at the moment in a quandary. It has all along supported Sheikh Hasina and continues to do so but

things have changed drastically. Sheikh Hasina is now unpopular while her opponents are all powerful. She may be called to join the investigation against her which may put India in dilemma. The silver lining is that Yunus is now in command, and he is widely regarded as an honorable man with an impeccable track record, even though he is an outsider in the corridors of power. He is India's best bet as China and Pakistan who have allegedly supported the movement to oust Hasina would like to subvert Indo Bangladesh relationship. He could be persuaded to be neutral. The political instability and potential for communal violence could lead to a refugee crisis, with many Hindus and other minorities seeking asylum in India. This could complicate India's domestic political landscape, especially in the bordering states of West Bengal and Assam. Meanwhile, the trade with Bangladesh has already nose-dived and the refugee crisis is growing. Bangladesh is a key partner in maintaining security in the Bay of Bengal region. This is a time for serious diplomacy. Prime Minister Modi would do well to engage with Muhammad Yunus at the earliest opportunity. While Twitter diplomacy is a good starting point, it needs to be followed up with direct engagement. A lot is at stake for India in Bangladesh's future direction.

PICTALK



Military aircrafts during the multinational air exercise 'Tarang Shakti 2024', in Sullur

Gender rights and reality: Bridging the gap



GURDEEP KAOUR

Gender equality in India remains a distant dream, as deep-rooted gender norms continue to impede the nation's progress towards women emancipation

Gender equality is not just a fundamental human right but a crucial component of a peaceful, cohesive, and sustainable world. It demands equal opportunities, treatment, and access to resources for all individuals, regardless of gender. Historically, women have faced discrimination on multiple fronts, from limited educational opportunities to restricted participation in decision-making processes. However, after years of struggle, women today have made significant strides, becoming prominent members of the workforce and key decision-makers in various fields. This progress aligns with the goals set by 193 countries that signed the Beijing Platform for Action, the most comprehensive global plan to eliminate systemic barriers and achieve women's human rights across social, economic, political, and environmental domains. Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform, much has been achieved. Women now serve as heads of state, entrepreneurs, educators, scientists, judges, and administrators, excelling in many unconventional careers. This paints a promising picture of the progress toward gender equality. However, a closer examination of statistics from government reports, non-governmental organizations, and local surveys reveals a grim reality: significant challenges remain. This is particularly true in India, a country where women have historically been revered as goddesses and have played crucial roles as scholars, rulers, and warriors. Despite this rich history, modern India continues to struggle with deeply entrenched gender inequalities. India, in the 21st century, is a country with progressive laws and robust institutions rooted in its Constitution. The Indian Constitution, one of the world's finest legal documents, guarantees equal rights for men and women. Rights such as personal liberty, freedom of speech and expression, free movement and association, and the freedom to choose one's residence and occupation all imply that Indian women, like



men, have the right to make decisions about their personal and professional lives. However, these constitutional rights do not always translate into practice, especially in rural areas, where customary and religious laws often override legal protections. In rural India, where a significant percentage of the population resides, gender equality remains elusive. Here, rigid customary practices contribute to a skewed sex ratio, early marriages, and limited educational opportunities for women. Women are often married off at a young age, without receiving proper education or being informed about their rights. Even when they are aware of their rights, they frequently lack access to opportunities for personal and professional growth. Legislation like the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act has helped improve the sex ratio in India, but the harsh reality remains that many women face discrimination in basic survival needs. In many families, women and girls eat last and least, while boys and men are given nutritionally rich diets. Women who cook for their families often do not cook for themselves, and from a young age, they are conditioned to prioritize the needs and preferences of men. The average age at which an Indian woman



ONE OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF PERSONAL FREEDOM IS THE ABILITY TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER ONE'S BODY AND SEXUALITY. SADLY, THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHOICES ABOUT INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS, WHETHER OR WHEN TO HAVE A CHILD, AND THE USE OF CONTRACEPTION IS STILL DENIED TO MANY WOMEN IN INDIA

has her first child is 22 years, but in rural areas, this age is often much lower, with many girls married off before they turn 18. These young women are not physically or mentally prepared to handle the responsibilities of marriage and family life, making them vulnerable to physical, sexual, and verbal abuse for perceived failures in their duties. In urban households, gender stereotypes are beginning to shift, with men taking on more household chores. However, they are not held to the same standards of diligence and regularity as women. Most women, regardless of age, class, caste, or community, remain vulnerable to domestic violence for reasons as trivial as poorly prepared meals or wearing a dress of their choice—issues that men rarely face. One of the most fundamental aspects of personal freedom is the ability to exercise control over one's body and sexuality. Sadly, the right to make choices about intimate relationships, whether or when to have a child, and the use of contraception is still denied to many women in India. According to a survey, a significant percentage of women aged 18-49 have experienced forced sex or sexual abuse at least once in their lives. This gendered expression of power has severe consequences for the mental

and emotional well-being of women, who are often reluctant to share their ordeals. Despite advancements in healthcare, many Indian women do not enjoy the right to health. In conservative settings, cultural norms discourage men from addressing the health needs of their female family members, and women themselves often do not recognize or report health issues. The presence of male doctors in rural areas further restricts women from undergoing necessary examinations and checkups. The literacy gap between men and women in India remains significant, particularly in rural areas where deeply entrenched gender norms discourage girls from pursuing education. Girls are often pushed into work at a much earlier age than boys, with little or no control over their earnings. Even in urban settings, working women are often not financially independent, either bearing the burden of family expenses or having no say in how their money is spent. Achieving gender equality in India requires a fundamental shift in attitudes among both men and women. Only through such changes can the goal of true gender equality be realized. (The writer is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, DU; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The role of technology in driving financial literacy

With the power to democratise financial literacy, it can bring people from every stratum of society onto a level playing field

Financial literacy is no longer just a useful skill. It is now essential knowledge required to traverse the modern economic landscape. Studies have shown financially literate individuals can use their money wisely to plan for a secure future.

Today, technology is an important enabler of access to resources required to cultivate financial literacy, democratise the sector, and empower people to improve their lives. However, despite the increasing penetration of the Internet and technology, a 2021 survey found only 27% of Indians are financially literate. Furthermore, only 16.7% of students have a general understanding of finances. With India projected to become one of, if not the leading, global economies by 2030, our society must be educated on the best practices for handling funds and making smart financial decisions. Online platforms such as YouTube, Skillshare, Udemy, and others are invaluable tools in the pursuit of



knowledge. YouTube has tutorials and explanations for practically every subject under the sun. Not only does it boast a vast catalogue, but everything on the site is free to access. This is a critical requirement in India where the common man is looking to save as much money as possible. Channels such as Khan Academy are great starting points for everyone's financial literacy journey. It's not just about breaking down complex information. While the concepts should be easy to understand, the modules must also be presented engagingly to retain the person's interest. No one enjoys being lectured with a barrage of informa-

tion in a boring manner. Social media and digital channels have also made it easier for educators and financial experts to share information. Instagram, TikTok, and X are now filled with financial gurus offering their opinions on the latest economic trends, up-and-coming investment opportunities, and the state of the global economy. Keep in mind that advice from such channels shouldn't be taken at face value. But they do offer a macro perspective of the economy and break down complex information into easily digestible pieces. Advancing technology also allows financial institutions such as banks and NBFCs to offer financial literacy directly to their customers. Bank apps can utilize push notifications, pop-ups, bank representatives, and even AI avatars to offer pertinent and timely advice. NBFCs can leverage subscription services to reach out to their customers via messengers to advise them on how to manage funds effectively. Artificial intelligence is going to significant-

ly improve access to and delivery of financial literacy. With just a smartphone, one can access tools such as ChatGPT to help answer common questions regarding finances. While it should not be used to gain investment advice, the current models of AI tools can offer practical knowledge regarding financial literacy and point the curious reader towards additional sources to gain more knowledge. It's no wonder that AI in BFSI is expected to hit a whopping \$100 billion by 2032. Technology is a powerful tool in the hands of those with an understanding of how to use it. With the power to democratise financial literacy, it can bring people from every stratum of society onto a level playing field. However, as technology evolves, so must we to enjoy the benefits of its advancement. This is a crucial step not just for society but also for our personal and financial well-being. (The writer is a MD at StoxBox; views are personal)



YUVRAJ A THAKKAR

A COURT IS A COURT

Madam — The special feature of Indian judiciary is the relative non-interference in its functioning from either the executive or the legislature. Also, the hierarchical system of judiciary has ensured that no litigant goes unsatisfied with a particular court's verdict. The Supreme Court has time and again reiterated that no court in the country is above another. Besides, the SC has made it clear that although its judgments are binding on every court in India under Article 141 of the Constitution, the High Courts are in no way inferior to it because the former's administrative control is independent of the top court. SC has consistently refused to direct High Courts to clear cases in a time bound manner for the same reason. Justice Abhay Oka of the SC, during the course of a hearing, had succinctly remarked that "a court is a court". Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, in 2022, had decried the tendency to refer to the district courts as subordinate judiciary because there was no definition of the word "subordinate" although the world is frequently used in the Constitution.

Ganpathi Bhat | Akola

VINESH PHOGAT HAS BEEN WRONGED

Madam — In an unfortunate turn of events, Vinesh was disqualified from a crucial Olympic match due to a minor weight discrepancy, sparking outrage and disappointment across the nation. This incident, which resulted in the loss of a potential medal for India, raises serious questions about the handling and management of the situation by the coaches and officials. Vinesh Phogat, who had successfully won three bouts in a single day, found herself disqualified just 24 hours after her semi-final victory. The controversy stems from the fact that it is highly improbable for an experienced athlete like Vinesh to gain 100 grams of weight in such a short period, leading many to suspect foul play. This suspicion casts a shadow over the transparency and fairness of the Olympic Games, prompting Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Economics should not be politicised



This refers to the editorial "Finance Minister yields" (Aug 8). Facing a backlash from the people, Members within NDA and the Opposition over changes to the property transaction taxation, the Finance Minister has given some concession to home owners, by way of two options. The tax payers can now choose to calculate their tax on long term capital gains either at 12.5% without indexation under the new scheme or at 20% with indexation under the old scheme. This is akin to income tax options. She

also stated in her speech on reduction in the income tax on annual income of Rs. 15 lakh. But the budget is not only taxes, it deals with development of the people as well as the country. People are burdened with high GST rates and fuel prices, no relief in them as they have cascading effect on overall inflation, which affects the poor most. On one hand government provides free ration & electricity to poor, on the other hand they are burdened with high taxes which nullify the former. FM did not mention about decreasing the fiscal deficit, decreasing the borrowings, increasing foreign investment in the country, boosting employment generation, rationalizing the subsidies & subsidies that are affecting economy etc. which are equally important components of a budget. Development of the country should be the high priority in the budget and it should not be compromised by keeping people happy.

Dr O Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

to urge the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President, P.T. Usha, to explore every possible avenue to ensure that justice is served for Vinesh. There is also a need to investigate whether Vinesh was unknowingly given a weight-gain substance during the 24 hours between the semi-final and the final weigh-in, as a similar incident reportedly happened to another wrestler from a different country. These concerns raise serious questions about the integrity and transparency of the Olympic Games' management. While human error is possible in such a vast sporting event, the circumstances surrounding Vinesh Phogat's disqualification do not appear to fall into the category of innocent mistakes. If it is determined that Vinesh was wronged, India should strongly consider appealing the decision

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

BANGLADESH: A WARNING FOR INDIA

Madam — Bangladesh, which had seemed politically stable for the past 15 years under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, is now showing signs of distress. Hasina's extended

tenure, while initially successful, has led to growing concerns about her increasingly autocratic behavior. This shift has resulted in the imprisonment of political opponents and numerous legal battles against figures like Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, who gained significant popularity for his work with Grameen Bank. Could similar public discontent emerge in India? The government's actions, particularly over the past two terms, have shown tendencies toward authoritarianism. This has been evident in the public backlash against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), prolonged farmer protests against agricultural reforms, and discontent among youth over the Agriweaver recruitment scheme. Rising inflation, unemployment, and corruption, coupled with selective legal actions against opposition members, contribute to a growing sense of frustration.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

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FIRST COLUMN

DO NOT LET SKY BE YOUR LIMIT

Stay resilient in the face of adversity, and you'll find that there's no limit to what you can achieve



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

In the realm of corporate success, there is a fundamental truth: the sky is not your limit, but merely the starting point. With a powerful drive and unwavering determination, ambition propels you to surpass all perceived boundaries. Just like a high-performance engine, achieving your dreams requires proper focus and direction. Today, we all have unique goals and dreams, both in our personal lives and careers. Nevertheless, the journey from having a vision to making it a reality can be challenging and draining. It calls for unwavering dedication, relentless effort, and occasionally, the need to ignore those who doubt you. In our business environment, having a strong drive and steadfast determination is not just a cliché, but a crucial factor in setting ambitious goals and relentlessly striving for excellence. We must connect these grand aspirations to careful planning, unwavering commitment, and consistent hard work. Only then will the aspiration reveal its magic. Many times, the biggest obstacles we face are a result of the actions of others.

There will always be those who view our dreams as unattainable or doubt our abilities. It's crucial to remember that our potentials are not defined by external voices. Throughout history, countless individuals have faced ridicule and scepticism, only to prove their doubters wrong ultimately. The proper environment can truly make a difference in our pursuit of success. It is an environment that fosters growth by providing opportunities to use our skills and allow-



ing for energetic and unwelcome ambition, which drives change and advancement. Surround yourself with mentors and peers who share your vision and are there to support you on your journey. Embrace growth opportunities and always value the feedback of others to refine your approach. Equally crucial is the art of expressing our goals. Make sure to communicate your goals and progress with both supervisors and colleagues. It's important to keep everyone in the loop and stay motivated.

When you openly express your aspirations and the steps you're taking to achieve them, not only do you attract valuable encouragement, but you also establish a sense of personal responsibility. However, the true basis of ambition stems from the constant trust within oneself. It is important to have a strong belief in your abilities and to acknowledge the unique qualities that you bring to the table. Recognising and celebrating the small victories along your journey to greater success is crucial. Embrace challenges as chances to grow and learn.

Stay resilient in the face of setbacks. Ambition is a potent force. When properly harnessed, it has the potential to unlock remarkable outcomes. Despite facing obstacles and encountering negativity, you will always choose to embrace a positive mindset. And getting encouragement from prominent individuals will help you hugely achieve your goals.

After all, everyone deserves a chance to shine. So set the bar high, work, and let the ambition catapult you to new heights. The sky is not the limit in the corporate world; it is just the beginning of your journey toward success.

(The author is a freelance writer and a motivator; views are personal)

Bangladesh: Uncertainty and chaos grip the nation



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

As the nation grapples with a rising wave of Islamist extremism and escalating violence, the future of its democracy and regional stability hangs in the balance



The turmoil in Bangladesh, which led to Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister and departure to India, raises two questions. Why could she not prevent it? What lies ahead for Bangladesh and India? She should have reached out to the students—trying to win over the bulk of them who are moderates, and isolating the Islamist fundamentalist extremists—before their Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement (ADSM), had snowballed. She could have argued that her government did away with 30 per cent reservation for the descendants of the freedom fighters of the 1971 liberation war in 2018, which was their demand to start with. Bangladesh's High Court restored it following a petition by several descendants. Indeed, her government had appealed to the Supreme Court against the High Court's order.

In fact, the appellate division of the Supreme Court had, on July 21, 2024, ordered the allocation of 93% of government jobs on the basis of merit, reserving five per cent for freedom fighters and their descendants, and one per cent each for tribes, the differentially abled and sexual minorities. There could have been two reasons for the agitation continuing even after that. First, the rancour created by the government's harsh response to the agitation, which had led to a large number of deaths of students and others, was too great for the students to call a halt. They now wanted Sheikh Hasina's resignation. Second, Islamist terrorist organisations like Ansar al-Islam, linked to Al-Qaeda in the Indian Sub-continent (AQIS) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), as well as the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJeI) and its students' wing, Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (BICS), closely tied to them, had joined the movement and tried to steer it to serve their own agenda—ousting Hasina and the Awami League Government, and installing a fundamentalist Islamist and pathologically anti-India dispensation in its place.

Sheikh Hasina knew all this, and should also have known the convulsive impact students' movement has in Bangladesh on at least four occasions. The first was the language



STUDENTS ALSO PLAYED A PROMINENT ROLE IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE AGAINST PAKISTAN'S COLONIAL RULE, WHICH EXPLAINS THE PAKISTAN ARMY'S SAVAGE ATTACKS ON THE CAMPUS AND HOSTELS OF DHAKA AND OTHER UNIVERSITIES ON THE NIGHT OF ITS NOTORIOUS CRACKDOWN

movement which demanded that Bengali along with Urdu, and not the latter alone, should become Pakistan's official language, and not Urdu alone, which Pakistan's ruling establishment, based in West Pakistan, wanted. Defying police repression, the movement peaked on February, 21, 1952, when there was a country-wide general strike. Police firing led to the deaths of four students, whose names—Rafiq, Barkat, Jabbar and Salam—shine prominently in Bangladesh's martyrs' pantheon. The movement continued to swell and compelled Pakistan's acceptance of both Bengali and Urdu as the country's official language. Again, students were at the forefront of the movement against General Ayub Khan's coup in 1958 and establishment of a military dictatorship, whose character could not be disguised by the fraudulent representative government introduced on March 23, 1962.

Students also played a prominent role in the liberation struggle against Pakistan's colonial rule, which explains the Pakistan Army's savage attacks on the campus and hostels of Dhaka and other universities on the night of its notorious crackdown, codenamed Operation Searchlight, killing hundreds of students, on the night of March 25, 1971. Finally, there was the massive Shahbag Square movement in Dhaka (February-May 2013) demanding death penalty to the war criminals of 1971. The government agreed to move the International Crimes Tribunal, set up by an amendment in 2009 to the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, to investigate and prosecute personnel of the Pakistan Army and Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams, accused of committing genocide during the 1971 liberation war.

Given all this, Hasina should have

tried to diffuse the latest movement at the beginning. Be that as it may, what now in Bangladesh? What should India do now? Things do not look good. Hindu temples, including the emblematic Dhakeshwari temple, from which Dhaka derives its name, have been attacked and vandalised. Hindus shops, business establishments and homes, have been attacked, a Hindu municipal councillor aligned with the Awami League, has been killed. Many have been injured. Women have been assaulted.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statues have been pulled down and/or vandalised. Awami League ministers, leaders and activists are under attack, as are many of their homes and establishments. In Khulna, three persons, including an Awami League functionary, Mohsin Reza, have been lynched. Film producer Selim Khan, who made a movie on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's life, has been murdered along with his son, Shanto Khan. A hotel owned by an Awami League politician was set ablaze, causing 24 deaths, in Jashore. The house of Mashrafe Mortaza, Awami League MP and former Bangladesh test cricketer, has been destroyed.

These are just a few instances indicating the kind of open season that has been declared on the minorities, supporters of the Awami League and civil society elements opposed to Islamist fundamentalists. The question is whether things will improve or become worse. Much would depend on whether the interim government, headed by Nobel laureate, Muhammad Yunus, is able to establish order, or whether supporters of the BJeI, BICS and Ansar al-Islam, who are behind the current violence along with sections of Begum Khaleda Zia-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), are contained or allowed to escalate their campaign of vio-

lence and terror.

Yunus is neither a fundamentalist nor known for his pathological hatred for India. The backgrounds of some of his colleagues, however, raise questions. The Army's role is of critical importance. The report that it is being purged of those perceived to be pro-Sheikh Hasina, should worry those who want a peaceful, democratic and tolerant Bangladesh. Looking beyond the interim government, of critical importance is how free and fair are the parliamentary elections, that would have to be held now that Bangladesh's national parliament has been dissolved. New Delhi is rightly watchful. The BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government ruling Bangladesh from 2001 to 2006, was pathologically hostile to India and actively sheltered and armed the secessionist groups active in the north-eastern parts of this country. A hostile Bangladesh, engaged in a repeat performance, is not what New Delhi wants.

Meanwhile, External Affairs' Minister, S. Jaishankar, has said that he does not rule out the machinations of a foreign hand behind the Bangladesh developments. Given his official position, he has to be circumspect with his words. But it is prima facie clear that Pakistan's ISI, and perhaps even China, have been involved.

Pakistan, which is having serious problems with the Taliban which it had once wet-nursed, and China, which has its troubles with Islamists, should remember William S. Baring-Gould's limerick, "There was a young lady of Riga/ Who went for a ride on a tiger/ They returned from the ride/ With the lady inside/ And a smile on the face of the tiger."

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

Integrative health approaches for mental wellbeing

The road to mental well being doesn't have to be paved with pills alone; sometimes, it is as simple as finding our breath and practicing Yoga

There is enough scientific evidence to validate that the mind, body, and soul are interconnected on a subtle level. This connection influences our thoughts and emotions, hence, our physical reality and our physical state impact our mental health and processes.



ISHAN SHIVANAND

True health is signified by a harmonious balance between mind and body. Even a minor imbalance can lead to a range of issues, from physical illnesses and mental health challenges to a sense of unfulfillment with oneself and life. As per the WHO, nearly 80% of mental health cases arise in low- and middle-income countries. Conditions like depression and anxiety affect approximately 9% of the world's pop-

ulation and account for over 10% of years lived with disabilities. **The Drawbacks of Traditional Approaches** Pharmaceutical treatments have long been a cornerstone of mental healthcare, aiding in the management of severe cases and stabilisation. These targeted therapies address specific disease mechanisms based on biomarkers, leading to more personalised treat-

ment. Medical technology advancements enhance the efficacy of these treatments and improve patient outcomes. However, the reliance on medication alone often overlooks the holistic nature of mental well-being.

Embracing Integrative Health Approaches

Integrative health approaches, particularly those rooted in Indian Knowledge Systems such as yogic modalities, offer a promising complement to traditional pharmaceutical treatments.

A combination of breathwork and meditative protocols helps individuals penetrate a heightened state of non-judgemental awareness. They enable a physiological state of rest and digestion or relaxation, which is opposite to the flight-or-fight

stress response. This interruption in the stress response helps foster a sense of balance and union between the mind and body.

Yogic practices are also underpinned by a few principles: The human body is a holistic entity comprising various interrelated dimensions inseparable from one another. The health or illness of any one dimension affects the others. Secondly, every individual's needs are unique and must be approached with tailored practices that acknowledge this individuality.

Yogic modalities empower individuals: to be their healers, actively engaging in their journey toward health, and fostering autonomy. Also, the quality and state of an individual's mind are crucial to heal-



ing. A positive mind-state accelerates healing, while a negative mind-state can prolong it.

The Science Behind the Practice: A consistent yogic practice has been shown to alleviate depression, leading to significant increases in serotonin levels and decreases in monoamine oxidase, an enzyme that breaks down neurotransmitters and cortisol. Yoga-based interventions also

help manage depressive disorders, stress, and anxiety by inhibiting the sympathetic area of the hypothalamus. This inhibition optimizes the body's responses to stressful stimuli and restores autonomic regulatory reflex mechanisms associated with stress. Moreover, yogic practices inhibit areas responsible for fear, aggressiveness, and rage, while stimulating the pleasure centres in the brain, resulting in a state of bliss and reduced anxiety. Regular practitioners of yoga and meditation experience lower heart rates, respiratory rates, blood pressure, and cardiac output.

Broader Health Benefits: Beyond mental well-being, yogic protocols improve cardiorespiratory performance, psychological profiles, and

plasma melatonin levels. It significantly reduces systolic and diastolic blood pressure, mean arterial pressure, and orthostatic tolerance. Yoga also enhances cardiovascular efficiency and homeostatic control, leading to better autonomic balance, respiratory performance, and overall well-being. Studies have shown that yoga-based lifestyle modifications can even aid in the regression of coronary lesions and improve myocardial perfusion in patients with coronary artery disease (CAD).

Integrating Yoga into Modern Healthcare: An integrated approach to mental health care leverages insights from traditional Indian knowledge systems, combining pharmaceutical treatments with non-pharmaceutical medita-

tive practices. This synergy not only addresses the immediate symptoms but also promotes long-term recovery and well-being. As we navigate the complexities of modern life, it's crucial to embrace the wisdom of ancient practices. By integrating yoga and other non-invasive approaches into our mental health toolkit, we can achieve a balanced state where the mind and body work in harmony. The road to mental well-being doesn't have to be paved with pills alone; sometimes, it's as simple as finding our breath and grounding ourselves in practices that connect us to our core.

(The writer is mental health researcher and the founder of Yoga of Immortals (YOI) meditative program; views are personal)

Vinesh's Olympics exit echoes of Shiny 1986 heartbreak

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The whole of India is yet to recover from the shock disqualification of Vinesh Phogat from the 50 kg wrestling event in the Olympics being held at Paris. Notwithstanding the histrionics displayed by our politicians and "intellectuals" which was similar to adding insult to injury, there are many facts that remain undiscussed. In international events like Olympics, laws are not for breaking.

The judges are intransigent when it comes to rules and regulations. Questions like whether the Prime Minister would congratulate Vinesh Phogat are, to make it blunt, simply childish and premature. In the melee that followed a la Vinesh Phogat affair, our sporting organisations and followers of the game forgot an event that happened during the 1986 Asian Games in Seoul. (Thankfully, there were no private satellite TV news channels dishing out cacophony round the clock). Shiny Wilson, an ace athlete from Kerala who reigned supreme in the 800 meter race was participating in the event



and was on her way to set a new Asian record. She was well ahead of all other contestants when she inadvertently cut into the inner lane, which was an error and mistake. Though there were no runners anywhere near Shiny, the organizers disqualified her. The entire nation was shocked and the entire news rooms across the country were stunned. But there were no political discourse and channel discussions as sports had not degenerated into the level which we saw when Vinesh Phogat was disqualified. No prime minister or sports minister rang her up to

console her. Shiny had courage in her and she was not the kind who ran away from battlefield. In the Asian Track and Field Events of 1989 she won her favorite item with a gold medal. The story is not yet over. Within months of her having a baby, Shiny ran the 800 meters in a career best time of 1 minute 59.85 seconds in the New Delhi edition of South Asian Federation Games in 1995 and raced with the gold medal to cuddle her baby. The saying during those days was that Shiny ran better and faster after the child birth. Vinesh Phogat, are you reading this?

'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative now mass movement: Maha CM

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Friday said the Centre's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative has become a mass movement and invokes a spirit of nationalism and patriotism among the younger generation. Launching the campaign at the August Kranti Maidan in south Mumbai on the occasion of the 82nd anniversary of the Quit India movement, Shinde said the national flag will be hoisted atop 2.5 crore houses, offices and commercial establishments in the state. "The Har Ghar Tiranga initiative which started three years ago has turned into a mass movement. It evokes a sense of nationalism and patriotism among the younger generation," he said. The campaign which began on Friday will continue till August 15, he added. People are encouraged to display the national flag at their homes and other establishments during the run up to the Independence Day on August 15 as part of the



'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. "The Quit India call given from the August Kranti Maidan was the final struggle for independence and the new generation should be made aware of the sacrifices of the freedom fighters," Shinde said. Programmes like 'Tiranga March' and felicitation of freedom fighters will be held across the state, he said. On the occasion, Shinde administered a pledge to citizens that they will hoist the national flag in their homes, and also flagged off a cyclathon and a padyatra (foot march) of students and youth. Shinde paid floral tributes to martyrs at the August Kranti Maidan to mark the 82nd anniversary of the Quit India movement.

Andhra CM promises to uplift tribals through all-round development

PTI ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday greeted the tribal community on the occasion of World Tribal Day here and promised to empower them through development on fronts such as education and health. The Chief Minister said his government will explore all possibilities to raise the income of tribal people. "On this World Tribal Day, I not only extend my greetings to all of you but with a definite plan, I will take the responsibility to develop tribal people," said Naidu, addressing a large gathering at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram. Noting that the per capita income of tribal people in the state was only Rs 1.25 lakh per annum, the CM said the government would focus on this aspect to enhance it. Assuring to promote tribal products, which include organic agricultural produce, Naidu said the state government will use the Centre's Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform for this purpose. He



observed that ONDC can enable tribals from villages to directly sell their products to consumers in cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad. Referring to GI-tagged Araku coffee, cultivated in the southern state, the CM said steps would be taken to promote it. Pointing to the absence of proper infrastructure in tribal villages, Naidu said Rs 2,373 crore will be spent to supply tap water to over 16,000 tribal homes while roads will be laid in 2,191 hamlets without road connectivity. He also promised to build the necessary infrastructure for the community to get access to medical facilities.

Students strip-searched in school: HC issues notice to MP Govt

PTI ■ INDORE

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Friday issued a notice to the state government in connection with an incident in a school in Indore where some students were allegedly strip-searched by a teacher to find out who among them brought a mobile phone to class. Justices Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Duppala Venkata Ramana of the Indore bench of MP HC issued notice to the state government on a PIL filed by social activist Chinmoy Mishra. The notice sought a report within a week from the state government on the steps taken in connection with the alleged incident. During the hearing, Mishra's lawyer Abhinav Dhanodkar claimed Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act provisions have not been complied with in the case as yet, though parents filed a police complaint on August 2.

Gujarat Congress launches 'Nyay Yatra' for victims of major tragedies in State



PTI ■ MORBI (GUJARAT)

The Gujarat Congress on Friday launched a 14-day 'Nyay Yatra', a foot march, here to seek justice for the victims of four major tragedies that took place in the BJP-ruled state over the last five years. The Bharatiya Janata Party was shielding the real culprits of these incidents including the recent Rajkot game zone fire, it alleged. Congress Legislative Party leader in the assembly Amit Chavda, Seva Dal president Lalji Desai and MLA Jignesh Mevani launched the campaign. The march will cover nearly 350 kilometers before reaching Gandhinagar on August 23, said party spokesperson Manish Doshi. Family members of the deceased from these tragedies -- 2019 Takshashila fire incident in Surat, Morbi bridge collapse of 2022, and this year's Vadodara boat capsizing incident and TRP game zone fire in Rajkot -- will join the Yatra, he said. Mevani said that nearly 200 people died in these incidents

due to the rampant corruption under the BJP government. "We are taking out this Nyay Yatra because people do not trust ongoing investigations. Victims of Morbi bridge collapse demand that the probe be conducted by the CBI, or some non-corrupt officers. We will get justice the day all the real culprits, be it IAS, IPS officers, businessmen or BJP leaders, are behind bars," said the MLA who is the working president of Gujarat Congress. "We demand that all the cases be tried in fast-track courts. The kin of the victims must get a minimum compensation of Rs 1.5 crore because the compensation of Rs 4 lakh is too meagre. The Morbi Nagarpalika office-bearers should be booked for murder," Mevani added. On July 6, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had visited Ahmedabad and met the family members of some of the victims, promising to raise their grievances in Parliament.

Mizoram, Assam hold border talks after 20 months

PTI ■ AIZAWL

Mizoram and Assam discussed the border issues on Friday, twenty months after the two northeastern neighbours held a meeting to find an amicable solution to the inter-state boundary dispute, an official said. The meeting between delegations of both states is being held in Aizawl. The two states held the last round of talks in November 2022 in Guwahati. During Friday's meeting, the Assam delegation is led by Border Protection and Development Minister Atul Bora while the Mizoram side is headed by Home Minister

K Sapdanga, the official said. This is the fourth ministerial-level talks between the two neighbouring states since August 2021 and the first meeting after the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) came to power in December last year. Three Mizoram districts - Aizawl, Kolasib and Mamit - share a 164.6 km border with Assam's Cachar, Karimganj and Hailankandi districts. The dispute mainly stemmed from two colonial demarcations - 1875 and 1933. Mizoram claims that 509 square miles area of the inner line reserved forest, notified in 1875 under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation



(BEFR) 1873, falls within its territory. Assam, on the other hand, regarded the map prepared by the Survey of India in 1933 as its constitutional boundary. Vast areas within the inner line reserved forest now fall

Assam ex-BJP MLA Sarma joins Congress

PTI ■ NALBARI

Former BJP MLA Ashok Sarma on Friday joined Congress along with hundreds of his supporters. At a joining programme here, the senior BJP leader took the membership of Congress in the presence of its deputy leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi, state president Bhupen Kumar Borah, Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia along with AICC leaders Prithviraj Sathe and Vikas Upadhyay. "On this day, the Quit India movement started to get Independence from the British. I chose this day to join the Congress in recognition of the sacrifice made by the party and its leaders," Sarma said, addressing the huge crowd. He said it was a tough decision to join the Congress as his family, including all three brothers and two sisters, was associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). "My political existence was at stake in the BJP. The party's arrogance to destroy Congress was also not well accepted by common party workers. After Himanta Biswa Sarma joined the BJP, the downfall started. Because of such an attitude, Congress will form a government again next time," he claimed. During the Congress regime in Assam, the society was never divided and it was also



not so during former CM Sarbananda Sonowal's tenure, he added. "However, we are seeing only Hindu-Muslim politics in the last three years. I do not agree with the politics of division in society," Sarma said. Along with him, scores of Nalbari district BJP leaders and workers also joined the Congress. Borah said, "We are really happy to welcome Sarma into the Congress. We are happy that this joining programme is taking place at the Nalbari Congress office and we are not able to accommodate the supporters. It shows our growing popularity." Gogoi said Sarma's joining Congress will create a "tremor" in BJP in lower Assam districts and more leaders will come to the opposition party in coming months.

Gujarat Govt school teacher remains on payroll despite settling in US in 2016; probe ordered

PTI ■ PALANPUR

The Gujarat government has ordered a probe against a government schoolteacher who allegedly continues to be on the payroll despite settling in the US and remaining absent from duty for nearly eight years, an official said on Friday. The in-charge principal of a primary school in Panchha village in Banaskantha district claimed the teacher, Bhavna Patel, has been on the school's payroll despite reporting to duty only for a month every year and going on

unauthorised leave as she lives in the US. On learning about the principal's allegations, Gujarat Education Minister Kuber Dindor ordered a probe. Talking to reporters, Dindor said, "I have ordered an inquiry and sought a report from district officials. We do not allow such practice. If found guilty of unauthorised absence, we will punish the teacher and recover the salary she was paid." Minister of State for Education Praful Pansheriya asserted that the teacher had

not been paid since January. "She is one of 11 teachers in Danta taluka of Banaskantha. As per a primary report submitted by officials, she has been taking leaves at regular intervals. However, the report clearly stated that she has not been paid a single rupee since January. We will take action if she is found guilty of availing any other benefits despite living abroad," Pansheriya said. The issue came to the fore after Parul Mehta, the in-charge principal of the school, informed local media that despite settling in the US in

2016, Patel continues to be on the payroll. "Bhavna Patel settled in the US in 2016. But, to ensure her service continues, she comes to school once a year and serves for a month. This has been going on for several years. Children are suffering because of her long absence. She should either resign or join duty," Mehta told reporters. She also shared a letter dated July 18, wherein she urged District Education Officer Vinubhai Patel to take action against the teacher, who will retire in 2027.

Government...

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The security agencies have reportedly warned BSF that several prisoners including terrorists have escaped jails in Bangladesh and could attempt to infiltrate into India. The BSF has asked locals residing along the 4,096 km-long India-Bangladesh international border to not undertake unnecessary movements in the frontier areas, especially during the night. While addressing Parliament, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had said the government was monitoring the situation in Bangladesh with regard to the protection of minorities. While extending greetings to Muhammad Yunus, who took oath as the head of an interim government in Bangladesh on Thursday, Prime Minister Modi expressed hope for early return of normalcy and sought safety of Hindus and other minority communities in that country.

Hundreds clamour to cross...

From Page 1

"Trains are not running, bus services have been discontinued ... we have taken auto rickshaws or even ambulances ... or hidden ourselves in hey-laden bullock carts taking village roads to reach this place and the BSF is not letting us in ... where will we go ... either shoot us or take us in," cried Shamsher Alam Biswas a panchayat level leader of Awami League of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. "The reach people are able to save their lives but giving protection money to the local youths across districts of Rajshahi, Satkhira, Pabna, Khulna Barishal, Kumilla ... only Dhaka and Chittagong are marginally safer ... the local youths are charging lakhs of rupees to provide protection to the Hindu families ... but what about us lesser mortals ... we have either to spend the nights in the paddy fields or rush towards the borders," said

Haldar who did not want to disclose his full name and sneaked through Gede and went towards Krishnagar. According to sources, Awami League youth wing leader Md Rubel Islam too has sneaked into India via Fulbari in North Bengal and is presently hiding at some place for the fear of his life. "They were searching for him and may ... he was hiding in a Lichhi (soapberry) garden the whole night before managing to give the BSF and the Bangladesh Rifles the slip ... he has left back his daughters and wife ... one wonders what will happen to them," said one of the persons who know him. Binod Biswas whose cousin Santan Biswas (name changed) has been a staunch Awami League leader and close to the topmost leadership of that party too is trying to sneak into India and has been standing somewhere near Gede or Petrapole border.

Sisodia walks to...

From Page 1

The AAP leader was arrested in February 2023 by the CBI followed by the ED a month later after a case was registered based on a complaint by the Delhi L-G in July 2022 alleging

irregularities in the excise policy. Prior to his arrest on February 26 last year, Sisodia was not only the key face of the Delhi Government, but also the party's go-to man in terms of firefighting during critical times and highlighting its stand on political and national issues. Thus his arrest was a bolt from the blue for the party, which somehow managed to brave the situation but could never fully recover from his

absence. It was no wonder that various party leaders, at different points in time, remembered him saying had he been out, things would have been different. Party leaders feel Sisodia's presence will bolster its election campaign, especially in Delhi where it is looking for a third consecutive term and aiming for a performance similar to that of 2015 and 2020 when it won 67 and 62 seats

respectively. "Incarceration of 18 months... Trial not having even commenced and appellant has been deprived of right to speedy trial," Justice Gavai said as he asked questions of the lower courts. "Keeping appellant behind bars for unlimited time will deny fundamental right. Appellant has deep roots in society... no apprehension of fleeing. Anyway... conditions can be imposed..."

ISIS terrorist caught by Delhi Police

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell has averted a possible terrorist attack in the national Capital ahead of the Independence Day on August 15 by arresting a most wanted terrorist — a member of the Pune module of the ISIS, carrying a reward of ₹3 lakh. The accused has been identified as Rizwan Abdul Haji Ali who was on the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) most wanted list and the probe agency had announced a reward for information leading to his arrest following his escape from the custody of the Pune Police since July 2023. According to a senior police officer, Rizwan was planning an attack ahead of I-Day as he and his associates were doing recte of many VIP areas of Delhi. It is suspected that he was preparing for a possible attack on some Delhi-NCR-based VIPs, an officer said, adding that he was being interrogated. The Delhi Police Special Cell police station has filed an FIR in this regard. Ali, who is a resident of Delhi's Daryaganj, was arrested by a team of Special



Cell from near Ganga Baksh Marg near Biodiversity Park following a tip-off received from the Delhi-Faridabad border at around 11 pm. An unlicensed star pistol .30 bore and three live cartridges were recovered from his possession. Two mobile phones were also recovered from him, and authorities are analysing the data on these recovered devices to uncover further details about his activities and potential associates. In October 2023, the Special Cell had arrested seven terrorists of the ISIS Pune module including Shah Nawaz and Mohammad Arshad

Warsi. Rizwan, who was one of those arrested, managed to escape along with two others. The NIA placed a reward on his arrest along with others and had been searching for him since long. Rizwan's involvement with the terrorist organisation ISIS had already led to his being booked under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Explosive Act. Rizwan's previous two cases include one registered in Mumbai under various sections of Arms act, Maharashtra Police Act and UAPA while the other one is registered in Delhi under sections of Explosive Act. Both are being investigated currently by the NIA. In light of the wanted terrorist's arrest, the police has intensified vigilance across Delhi and put up posters of terrorists linked with ISIS and Al Qaeda in various locations. However, this is not limited to Delhi as similar measures are being taken to prevent any potential attack in Punjab. In the year 2015-16, Rizwan Ali got inclined towards radical ideology through

social media. In 2017, he met with terrorist Shah Nawaz, a native of Jharkhand, who had come to Delhi for studies in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi and gradually they became good friends. Shah Nawaz and Rizwan wanted to go for Hijrat and to collect funds for Hijrat, Shah Nawaz got involved in crime. In 2018, Rizwan got connected with an ISIS handler over a social media application. Since then, he and his associates were deeply involved in ISIS ideology and were making plans and preparations for committing terrorist acts. In April 2022, Rizwan and Shah Nawaz came in touch with Imran and Yunus Saaki (arrested by Pune Police). Together, they started collecting materials for preparation of IEDs. After the arrest of Imran and Yunus, Rizwan and Shah Nawaz was subsequently arrested, Rizwan remained out of the reach of law as he kept changing his locations and kept taking all precautions in his communications with ISIS handlers, till being arrested by Special Cell.

Israeli troops launch new assault as mediators push for cease-fire

PTI ■ DEIR-AL-BALAH

Israeli troops launched a new assault Friday into the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, targeting Hamas fighters who the military claims still operate there despite repeated offensives, as American, Qatari and Egyptian mediators renewed their push for Israel and Hamas

Haniyeh, was assassinated in a presumed Israeli blast in Tehran on July 31. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office confirmed Thursday that it would send negotiators to talks that mediators have called for on August 15, to be held in either Qatar's capital of Doha or Egypt's capital of Cairo.

the expectations of all parties." It did not elaborate on what that would look like. A key question hanging over the talks is the impact of Sinwar's elevation to Hamas' top leadership post. Seen as a hard-liner within the group, Sinwar has been in deep hiding in Gaza throughout the war as Israel vows to kill him.



to reach a cease-fire deal. Israeli evacuation orders triggered yet another exodus of Palestinians from the heavily destroyed eastern districts of Khan Younis, where many had just returned less than two weeks ago — after the Israeli military's last incursion into the city in July. Thousands fled Thursday, carrying essentials like small gas cylinders, mattresses, tents, backpacks and blankets. Officials from Israel and the United States have said they believe Yahya Sinwar, Hamas' newly named top leader and one of the architects of the October 7 attack on Israel, could be hiding in tunnels under Khan Younis. The military said Friday its warplanes struck 30 Hamas targets in the city, including fighters and weapons storage sites. It said troops were searching for Hamas tunnels and other infrastructure while engaging in combat "above and below ground." After 10 months of war in Gaza, the mediators' push aims to resume indirect negotiations for a cease-fire that have been on hold since Sinwar's predecessor, Ismail

There was no immediate response from Hamas, which announced Tuesday that Sinwar, the group's leader in Gaza, would replace Haniyeh as the group's top leader. Haniyeh previously served as the key interlocutor in the negotiations. Haniyeh's killing and that of a top Hezbollah commander in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut brought vows of retaliation from Hezbollah and Iran. International diplomats have been scrambling to prevent an escalation and to seal a deal to stop the fighting in Gaza and release the hostages still captive in the enclave. In a joint statement, the United States, Egypt and Qatar called for the new round of talks, to be held either in Doha or Cairo, and pressed both sides to move ahead. "There is no further time to waste nor excuses from any party for further delay," they said, adding that the negotiators have already finalized a framework for the deal. They said mediators were prepared to present a final compromise "that resolves the remaining implementation issues in a manner that meets

Sinwar has already been closely involved in negotiations from behind the scenes. Hamas officials and mediators have said Hamas negotiators regularly sought his approval on the group's positions as it pressed for guarantees that a deal would bring a complete end to the war and withdrawal of all Israeli troops from Gaza, in return for the release of all hostages. Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas after the Oct. 7 attack, in which militants from Gaza stormed into southern Israel, killing around 1,200 people and abducting 250 others. After a round of release exchanges in November, Israel says 111 hostages remain in Gaza, including 39 bodies. Its campaign in Gaza has killed more than 39,600 Palestinians and wounded more than 91,700 others. More than 1.9 million of Gaza's pre-war population of 2.3 million have been driven from their homes, fleeing repeatedly across the territory to escape offensives. Most are now crowded in ramshackle tent camps in an area about 50 square kilometers (19 square miles) on the Gaza coast.

Bangladeshis welcome interim govt with hope for normalcy

PTI ■ DHAKA

People in Bangladesh have welcomed the new interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, hoping it would restore order, end repression and hold a fair election to facilitate a democratic transition of power. Yunus, 84, on Thursday took oath as the head of an interim government, replacing Sheikh Hasina who abruptly resigned and fled to India leaving the country in turmoil following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. He was sworn in as the chief advisor - a position equivalent to prime minister. Women's rights activist Farida Akhtar, right-wing party Hefazat-e-Islam's deputy chief AFM Khalid Hossain, Grameen Telecom trustee Nurjahan Begum, freedom fighter Sharmeen Murshid, chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board Supradip Chakma, Prof Bidhan Ranjan Roy and former foreign

secretary Touhid Hossain are among the advisory council members. Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury said that one of the duties of the interim government would be to restore order, which has been disrupted over the last few days following the fall of Hasina. "The other task is to ensure the safety of citizens," The Daily Star newspaper quoted Choudhury as saying after the oath-taking of the interim government. The government would also need to eliminate all forms of oppression and the culture of fear prevailing across the country, he said. However, the main responsibility of the government, he emphasised, would be to hold a fair and acceptable election to facilitate a democratic transition of power. Eminent jurist Kamal Hossain said, "The change that has happened was welcomed by everyone. There has been an extraordinary turnout at the event. Everyone feels that

change has come. "We hope they [members of the advisory council] will be able to address the new crises. People will expect a meaningful change — let this be that change," he said. Barrister Sara Hossain said: "My main expectation from this government is that it will enable substantial reforms to institutions in Bangladesh and clear the path for truth-telling about what has happened not only in the immediate past or the past few weeks but even over the last 14 years and before that." The students' anti-discrimination movement was for reforms and against repression and these should be the interim government's main themes, she told the newspaper. "What I perhaps am a bit troubled by is that, unlike previous years, there is no balance of political background and police. We obviously have no representation from (Hasina-led) Awami League. This absence of balance could cause a problem," she said,

Bangladesh has a secular Constitution, history and tradition, which has not denied any faith but encouraged pluralism, but the swearing-in today did not reflect that, she said, expressing hope that "it is not a sign of things to come." The inclusion of students is of course unprecedented, she said, adding, "But I think it can only add energy to the whole process... I believe they can be a part of keeping the interim government in the right direction and keep it within the demands of the students and general people. We need to remember that even post-Liberation in 1971, we had many young leaders." Samina Luthfa, associate professor at Dhaka University, said, "While I welcome the interim government, it is to be noted that many of them are from non-government organisations and require a specific kind of skill set. However, there is much work to be done to reform the nation, whether they have the skills for that remains a question. I think

including the students [leaders of the anti-discrimination student movement] in the government brings hope." Asked whether minority and women representation were enough, she said, "I believe those could be higher. Many other women and actors from religious minority backgrounds are skilled and have been supporting the movement, they too could have been included. More people from these segments of society could have ensured a higher possibility of a 'discrimination-free' country." She added that since the Jamaat-e-Islami was banned, the Hefazat Ameer may have been included to balance out participation from all religious backgrounds. "We are in an extraordinary situation and of course, we cannot expect everything to be perfect already, it will all take time. "However, at this moment, the first thing the interim government must look after is the safety of all citizens, justice, the economy, and restoring law and order."

UN concern over racially-based attacks in B'desh

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

Amid violence against the minority Hindu community in Bangladesh, a spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he stands against any racially based attacks or incitement to violence. "What we've made clear is we want to make sure that the violence that has been occurring in Bangladesh in recent weeks is tamped down. Certainly, we stand against any racially based attacks or racially based incitement to violence," Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, said here on Thursday. He was responding to a question on the Secretary-General's reaction to attacks on Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh. Several Hindu temples, households and businesses have been vandalised, and at least two

Hindu leaders affiliated with former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League party have been killed in the violence since Monday, when Hasina resigned and fled to India. Since Hasina fled the country, media reports from Bangladesh have flagged more and more cases of violence against minorities, including the massive vandalism and destruction at popular folk band Joler Gaan's frontman Rahul Ananda's residence on Monday, prompting the singer and his family to go into hiding. However, it is not just Hindus that are targeted. At least 232 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on Monday, taking the death toll to 560 since the anti-quota protests first started in mid-July.

Police stations reopen with military support in Dhaka

PTI ■ DHAKA

Police stations in Bangladesh, which were deserted during the peak of the anti-government protests, are slowly resuming their normal activities with the assistance of the military, according to media reports on Friday. Following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on Monday due to student-led protests, all police station activities came to a halt. Several police stations were attacked, looted and set on fire, leading to many officers evacuating their stations and going into hiding due to the threat of more attacks. More than 400 people, including police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the students' movement. After about four days, activities resumed at some 29 police stations with the assistance of the military, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported, quoting military and police officials. On Thursday, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was sworn

in as the head of Bangladesh's interim government, vowing to restore law and order in the country. Company Commander Shakawat Khandakar from 25 East Bengal Regiment said: "Seeing how criminals were killing people, including the police, we decided that it was critical to save the police members. They serve the people; we needed to give them a chance to reform. "Many weapons are in the Tejgaon police station. If these fell into the hands of criminals, the country would be in grave danger. That is when we took measures to reinforce the security of the station," Khandakar said. Tejgaon Deputy Police Commissioner Azimul Haque said, "We are grateful to the members of the military who came forward to save our policemen and played an important role in protecting the lives and properties of the people. Today, we have started all police activities with the help of the military. I request all citi-

zens to come to the police station. We are ready to serve you." He added that out of six police stations in Tejgaon division, three police stations have been fully operational. "Work is underway on a small scale at the affected police station. In the meantime, many policemen have joined work in the police stations. The others are starting to arrive. We hope that all our policemen will join the workplace by afternoon," Haque said. On Wednesday, the newly-appointed Inspector General of Police, Md Mainul Islam, ordered officers to join their respective units within the next 24 hours. People from all walks of life, including different political parties leaders and students, are extending all-out necessary support to the returnee police personnel so they can come to their workplaces safely, according to a press release issued by police headquarters on Thursday.

British authorities still on alert for further unrest

AP ■ KONDON

British authorities said Thursday they were preparing for the possibility of further unrest, even as they applauded the efforts of anti-racism campaigners and police officers who largely stifled a threatened wave of far-right demonstrations overnight. Prime Minister Keir Starmer sounded the note of caution after a week of anti-immigrant violence that has scarred communities from Northern Ireland to the south coast of England. Starmer spoke to reporters at a mosque in Solihull, near Birmingham, where demonstrators shut down a shopping center on Sunday. "It's important that we don't let up here," Starmer said. At an emergency meeting with law enforcement officers at his office, Starmer said on Thursday evening that police need to remain on "high alert," Britain's Press Association

reported. He credited strategic police staffing and swift justice for rioters in the courts for creating a deterrent that kept trouble at a minimum the night before. Police across the United Kingdom had braced for widespread disorder on Wednesday, after far-right activists circulated a list of more than 100 sites they planned to target, including the offices of immigration lawyers and others offering services to migrants. But those demonstrations failed to materialize as police and counter-protesters filled the streets. Carrying signs saying "Refugees Welcome" and chanting "Whose streets? Our streets," people turned out in force to protect asylum service centers and the offices of immigration attorneys. The government also declared a national critical incident, putting 6,000 specially trained police on standby to respond to any disorder. Police said that protests and counter-protests

were largely peaceful, though a small number of arrests were made. "The show of force from the police and, frankly, the show of unity from communities together defeated the challenges that we faced," said Commissioner Mark Rowley, the head of London's Metropolitan Police Service. "It went off very peacefully last night, and the fears of extreme right disorder were abated." But tensions remain high after right-wing agitators fueled the violence by circulating misinformation about the identity of the suspect in a knife attack that killed three young girls in the English seaside town of Southport last week. The last child hospitalized in the July 29 stabbing has been released, police said Thursday. Nearly 500 people have been arrested around the country after anti-immigrant mobs clashed with police, attacked mosques and overran two hotels housing asylum-seekers.

3rd person in custody over foiled plot targeting Swift show

AP ■ VIENNA

A third teenager has been arrested in connection with a foiled attack on now-cancelled Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna, Austria's interior minister said Friday. Austrian Interior Minister Gerhard Karner said an 18-year-old was taken into custody Thursday evening in Vienna after allegedly being in contact with the main suspect. Karner announced the arrest during an unrelated news conference Friday. Investigators are scrutinizing the "networks" of the suspects, the Austrian interior ministry told The Associated Press on Friday, adding in a statement that investigators have turned to evaluating physical and electronic evidence. The 19-year-old main suspect and a 17-year-old were arrested Tuesday, while a 15-year-old was also interrogated but was not arrested. Officials said Thursday afternoon that no additional suspects were being sought. They did not immediately offer further details Friday.

Authorities say the plot appeared to have been inspired by the Islamic State group and al-Qaida. Investigators found bomb-making materials at one of the suspects' homes. Officials say one suspect has confessed to planning to "kill as many people as possible outside the concert venue." Officials say the main suspect and the 18-year-old arrested Friday both pledged "oaths of allegiance" to the Islamic State group. "He had been in contact with the main perpetrator, but is not directly connected to the attack plans," Karner said. "But, as was found out a few days ago, he took an oath of allegiance specifically to the IS on August 6." The 18-year-old "comes from the social environment" of the main suspect, Karner said. Three sold-out concerts were cancelled Wednesday because of the plot, devastating Swifties from across the globe. Many of them had dropped thousands of euros (dollars) on travel and lodging in Austria's expensive capital city to attend the

Eras Tour shows at the Ernst Happel Stadium, which sat empty Thursday morning. Europe is enamoured with the American superstar: The German town of Gelsenkirchen renamed itself "Swiftkirchen" before its mid-July concerts. Concert organisers in Austria said they had expected up to 65,000 fans inside the stadium at each concert and as many as 30,000 onlookers outside, where authorities said the suspects planned to strike. The foiled attack was planned for Thursday or Friday, according to Austria's interior minister, Gerhard Karner. Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer defended the decision to cancel the concerts, saying the arrests of the suspects took place too close to the shows, scheduled for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. "I understand very well that those who wanted to experience the concert live are very sad," Nehammer told a news conference Thursday. "Moms and dads are looking after their daughters and sons, who were full of enthusiasm and

anticipation for this concert. But it's also important that in such serious moments as now, it's inevitable that safety comes first." Swift is also scheduled to perform at London's Wembley stadium in five concerts between August 15 and 20 to close the European leg of her record-setting Eras Tour. London Mayor Sadiq Khan said that while he understood Vienna's reasons for canceling, "We're going to carry on." Khan said the capital's authorities were prepared for shows there following lessons learned from a 2017 attack at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, that killed 22 people. A suicide bomber had set up a knapsack with explosives in Manchester Arena. The bomb detonated at the end of Grande's concert as thousands of young fans were leaving. Last month, an attacker in England killed three girls and wounded 10 people in a knife attack during a Taylor Swift-themed dance and yoga class. Swift at the time said she was "completely in shock" over the

violence. In Austria, the main suspect confessed that he had started planning the attack in July, authorities said. The 19-year-old just a few weeks ago uploaded to the internet an oath of allegiance to the current leader of the Islamic State group. He was "clearly radicalised in the direction of the Islamic State and thinks it is right to kill infidels," said Omar Hajjawi-Pirchner, head of the Directorate of State Security and Intelligence. Hajjawi-Pirchner added that the suspect "wanted to carry out an attack in the area outside the stadium, killing as many people as possible using the knives or even using the explosive devices he had made." During a raid of the suspect's home in Ternitz, south of Vienna, investigators found chemical substances and technical devices that indicated "concrete preparatory acts," said Franz Ruf, director general for public security at the Ministry of the Interior.

Iran accelerating cyber activity to influence US poll: Microsoft

AP ■ NEW YORK

Iran is ramping up online activity that appears intended to influence the upcoming US election, in one case targeting a presidential campaign with an email phishing attack, Microsoft said Friday. Iranian actors also have spent recent months creating fake news sites and impersonating activists, laying the groundwork to stoke division and potentially sway American voters this fall, especially in swing states, the technology giant found. The findings in Microsoft's newest threat intelligence report show how Iran, which has been active in recent US campaign cycles, is evolving its tactics for another election that's likely to have global

implications. The report goes a step beyond anything US intelligence officials have disclosed, giving specific examples of Iranian groups and the actions they have taken so far. Iran's United Nations mission denied it had plans to interfere or launch cyberattacks in the US presidential election. The report doesn't specify Iran's intentions besides sowing chaos in the United States, though US officials have previously hinted that Iran particularly opposes former President Donald Trump. US officials also have expressed alarm about Tehran's efforts to seek retaliation for a 2020 strike on an Iranian general that was ordered by Trump. This week, the Justice Department unsealed criminal charges against a Pakistani

man with ties to Iran who's alleged to have hatched assassination plots targeting multiple officials, potentially including Trump. The report also reveals how Russia and China are exploiting US political polarisation to advance their own divisive messaging in a consequential election year. Microsoft's report identified four examples of recent Iranian activity that the company expects to increase as November's election draws closer. First, a group linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard in June targeted a high-ranking US presidential campaign official with a phishing email, a form of cyberattack often used to gather sensitive information, according to the report, which didn't identify which campaign

was targeted. The group concealed the email's origins by sending it from the hacked email account of a former senior adviser, Microsoft said. Days later, the Iranian group tried to log into an account that belonged to a former presidential candidate, but wasn't successful, Microsoft's report said. The company notified those who were targeted. In a separate example, an Iranian group has been creating websites that pose as US-based news sites targeted to voters on opposite sides of the political spectrum, the report said. One fake news site that lends itself to a left-leaning audience insults Trump by calling him "raving mad" and suggests he uses drugs, the report said. Another site meant

to appeal to Republican readers centres on LGBTQ issues and gender-affirming surgery. A third example Microsoft cited found that Iranian groups are impersonating US activists, potentially laying the groundwork for influence operations closer to the election. Finally, another Iranian group in May compromised an account owned by a government employee in a swing state, the report said. It was unclear whether that cyberattack was related to election interference efforts. Iran's UN mission sent The Associated Press an emailed statement: "Iran has been the victim of numerous offensive cyber operations targeting its infrastructure, public service centres, and industries. Iran's cyber capabilities are defensive

and proportionate to the threats it faces. Iran has neither the intention nor plans to launch cyber attacks. The US presidential election is an internal matter in which Iran does not interfere." The Microsoft report said that as Iran escalates its cyber influence, Russia-linked actors also have pivoted their influence campaigns to focus on the US election, while actors linked to the Chinese Communist Party have taken advantage of pro-Palestinian university protests and other current events in the US to try to raise US political tensions. Microsoft said it has continued to monitor how foreign foes are using generative AI technology. The increasingly cheap and easy-to-access tools can generate lifelike fake images, photos

and videos in seconds, prompting concern among some experts that they will be weaponised to mislead voters this election cycle. While many countries have experimented with AI in their influence operations, the company said, those efforts haven't had much impact so far. The report said as a result, some actors have "pivoted back to techniques that have proven effective in the past — simple digital manipulations, mischaracterisation of content, and use of trusted labels or logos atop false information." Microsoft's report aligns with recent warnings from US intelligence officials, who say America's adversaries appear determined to seed the internet with false and incendiary claims ahead of November's

vote. Top intelligence officials said last month that Russia continues to pose the greatest threat when it comes to election disinformation, while there are indications that Iran is expanding its efforts and China is proceeding cautiously when it comes to 2024. Iran's efforts seem aimed at undermining candidates seen as being more likely to increase tension with Tehran, the officials said. That's a description that fits Trump, whose administration ended a nuclear deal with Iran, reimposed sanctions and ordered the killing of the top Iranian general. The influence efforts also coincide with a time of high tensions between Iran and Israel, whose military the US strongly supports.

Sensex bounces back

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded 1 per cent each on Friday following buying in blue-chips such as Reliance and Infosys amid a rally in global equity markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex bounced back 819.69 points or 1.04 per cent to settle at 79,705.91 with 28 of its constituents closing in green and two in red. The index opened higher amid gains in Asian markets and later surged 1,098.02 points or 1.39 per cent to hit a high of 79,984.24. The NSE Nifty soared 250.50 points or 1.04 per cent to 24,367.50. During the day, it rallied 302.75 points or 1.25 per cent to 24,419.75. "Positive US jobless claims data eased the fears of recession and provided a favourable broader market reaction," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. Most of the Sensex firms settled in the positive territory. Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Tech Mahindra, JSW Steel, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies, Reliance Industries and Infosys were the biggest gainers. Kotak Mahindra Bank and



Maruti were the laggards. "The markets started strong, gaining over a per cent, buoyed by positive global cues," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.21 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.79 per cent. All the indices ended in the positive territory, with IT surging 1.59 per cent, consumer discretionary by 1.57 per cent, realty by 1.56 per cent, auto by 1.51 per cent,

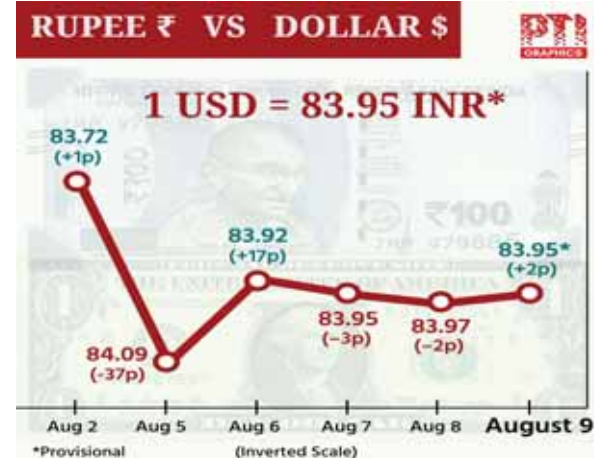
teck by 1.41 per cent and capital goods by 1.37 per cent. On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark slumped 1,276.04 points or 1.57 per cent, while the Nifty declined 350.2 points or 1.41 per cent. A total of 2,330 stocks advanced while 1,579 declined and 97 remained unchanged on the BSE. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Seoul and Hong Kong ended higher while Shanghai settled lower. European markets were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended

significantly higher on Thursday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,626.73 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.03 per cent to USD 79.18 a barrel. The BSE benchmark declined 581.79 points or 0.73 per cent to settle at 78,886.22 in a volatile trade on Thursday. The NSE Nifty retreated to settle lower by 180.50 points or 0.74 per cent to 24,117.

Rupee rises two paise to close at 83.95 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 2 paise at 83.95 (provisional) against US dollar on Friday, supported by gains in the domestic markets. Forex traders said the rupee edged up slightly on gains in the domestic markets. However, a surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains for the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.95 and touched an intraday low of 83.96 and a high of 83.88 against the dollar during the session. It finally settled at 83.95 (provisional) against the American currency, higher by 2 paise from its previous close. The local unit had slumped 37 paise to settle at an all-time low of 84.09 against the US dollar on Monday. On Thursday, the rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 2 paise at 83.97 against US dollar. Forex traders said post the



Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy announcement, markets now wait for the US CPI data, India CPI, WPI and IIP data, and India's trade data, all scheduled to be released next week. The Jackson Holes Symposium to be held after next week will also remain in focus, traders said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.05 per cent to 103.15, on better-than-

expected weekly unemployment claims data. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.18 per cent higher at USD 79.30 per barrel in futures trade. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on selling pressure from foreign investors and a positive US dollar. Ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East may also pressurise the rupee," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Choudhary further noted that

positive global markets after easing worries over the yen carry-trade may support the rupee at lower levels. "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.20," he said. In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 819.69 points, or 1.04 per cent, to close at 79,705.91 points, while the Nifty jumped 250.50 points, or 1.04 per cent, to 24,367.50 points. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,626.73 crore, according to exchange data. Meanwhile, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank kept the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent. Announcing the bi-monthly monetary policy review RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said Indian rupee remained largely range-bound so far this financial year. Das further noted that the country's forex reserves touched a record high of USD 675 billion as on August 2.

Enabling framework needed to help companies issue ESG bonds domestically: RBI official

PTI ■ MUMBAI

There is a need to create an "enabling framework" to help Indian companies issue environmental, social and governance (ESG) bonds locally, a senior RBI official said on Friday. Underlining that capital markets regulator Sebi which looks after the regulations for the bond markets has done significant work, Dimple Bhandia, the chief general manager in RBI, also ruled that the development in the repo for corporate bonds has not been satisfactory. "...We find that lot of our companies are going overseas and issuing ESG bonds. This is an area where we need to look at an enabling framework," Bhandia said, speaking at an event organized by industry lobby grouping Assocham here. Another disappointment has been the "non-starter" credit derivatives market, she said, recalling that very limited number of trades have taken place in it. She, however, said that the overall secondary market activity in corporate bonds is



not as bad as one would think. Bhandia said even though its base is lower, the the growth in corporate bond issuances has been higher than banks' credit growth in the last decade and added that the broadly stable spread on corporate paper over G-sec is illustrative of the maturity. She also welcomed foreign portfolio investors' response to the voluntary retention route facility, pointing out that 99 per cent of the money under it is on corporate bonds and added that the increased interest forced the RBI to revise its upper limits twice. The move to allow banks to hold corporate bonds under the held-to-maturity category has met with a success, she said, adding that banks are giving a feedback about it giving a boost to demand for corporate bonds.

Equity mutual funds' inflow drops in July; industry AUM touches ₹65 lakh cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Inflow in equity mutual funds declined 9 per cent month-on-month to Rs 37,113 crore in July owing to the drop in fund infusion in large-cap, small- and mid-cap categories. Despite the dip, the quantum of net inflows witnessed in July was the second highest flows ever received in a month. Also, this was second only to the flows of Rs 40,608 crore received in June. The latest flow also marks the 41st consecutive month of net inflows in equity funds, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed on Friday. Moreover, monthly contributions from Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) rose to an all-time high of Rs 23,332 crore in July as against Rs 21,262 crore in the preceding month. This reflects the growing financial discipline among retail investors, helping them build wealth systematically over time, Venkat Chalasani, Chief Executive, AMFI, said. Overall, the mutual fund industry has witnessed an



inflow of Rs 1.9 lakh crore in the month under review as compared to an outflow of Rs 43,637 crore in June. The inflow was due to investment in equity as well as debt schemes. With these inflows, the industry's net assets under management rose to an all-time high of Rs 65 lakh crore in July-end from Rs 61.15 lakh crore in June-end. "The share of financial assets has been increasing rapidly and within financial assets, mutual fund market share is relatively high. Mutual funds play a key role in enabling wealth creation for individual investors and providing tools

for long-term financial planning. I am sure that the mutual fund industry will surpass the milestone trillion AUM and 100 million investors in the next 3 to 4 years; time," Hitesh Thakkar, Acting CEO of ITI Mutual Fund, said. According to the data, except for the focused and equity-linked saving schemes (ELSS) categories, all the other categories witnessed good net inflows. "Inflows into equity mutual funds witnessed a dip after two months of record surges, as the flows in the large-cap category slumped by 31 per cent Rs 670.12 crore. Equity

Forex reserves jump by USD 7.533 bn to record USD 674.91 bn

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's forex reserves jumped by USD 7.533 billion to a new record high of USD 674.91 billion for the week ended August 2, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. The overall kitty had dropped by USD 3.471 billion to USD 667.386 billion in the previous reporting week ended July 26. The previous high for the reserves had stood at USD 670.857 billion, reached on July 18. For the week ended August 2, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 5.162 billion to USD 592.039 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound



and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves increased by USD 2.404 billion to USD 60.099 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 41 million to USD 18.161 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was up by USD 8 million to USD 4.62 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Sebi asks mutual fund industry to proactively conduct stress test

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has asked the mutual fund industry to proactively conduct stress tests, a key component of risk management for the financial sector, which will help strengthen the ecosystem, its whole-time member Ananth Narayan Gopalakrishnan said on Friday. The regulator's stress testing emphasizes the need to assess and manage liquidity risks, especially in small and midcap equity schemes. Speaking at a mutual fund event, Gopalakrishnan highlighted the importance of modelling stress scenarios not just for individual schemes or fund houses but for the entire

mutual fund ecosystem. "It is also important to model stress scenarios for the entire composite mutual fund ecosystem. I would strongly encourage the industry and AMFI to take the lead and proactively conduct objective and credible industry wide stress tests. Themselves," Gopalakrishnan said. He also emphasized the need to find better ways to communicate the risks associated with different mutual fund schemes. The Sebi official mentioned that while the current risk measurement system is straightforward and has had a significant impact, it doesn't fully capture the differences in risks among various

investment schemes. According to him, many schemes are just labelled as high risk, even though they have different kinds of risks. The goal is to improve this system to better reflect those differences while keeping it simple and easy to understand. One possible approach is to consider the portfolio's volatility and liquidity from stress tests to give a clearer picture. "While ensuring simplicity and ease of understanding remains a key objective, perhaps the underlying volatility of the portfolio along with the liquidity of the portfolio from stress tests could be used to provide better colour all around," he added.



This comes at a time when the holdings of mutual funds by Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) and individuals have risen from about 54.3 per cent of free float of all mid cap and small cap companies as of March 2020 to 60.6 per cent as of March 2024. Several fund houses have proactively stopped lump sum investments in some small-cap schemes and also capped the amount that can be invested

through Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) into small-cap schemes. He also highlighted the potential mismatch between the demand for paper and the supply of fresh paper coming into the ecosystem. Gopalakrishnan said the industry can make more progress in streamlining operations and improving efficiency for investors. "At a time when instantaneous

fund transfers have become ubiquitous in our country, perhaps we should look to improve our internal processes and the security settlement ecosystem to ensure that funds are passed on to investors on the day of the settlement itself rather than a day after or two days after," he added. Over the last few years, the mutual fund industry has made impressive strides and is now playing a crucial role in channeling financial savings towards risk capital formation. This was driven by stable macros, increased formalization, robust corporate earnings, digitisation and user friendly access. Moreover, the number of mutual fund investors has

grown significantly from about 2 crore as of March 2019 to nearly 4.7 crore as of June 2024, an impressive compounded annual growth rate of 18 per cent during that period. Gopalakrishnan mentioned that several exciting initiatives are in the works, developed with input from all stakeholders. These include a proposed low-ticket SIP, further breaking down regular SIPs into smaller, more accessible units (sachetisation and tokenization), and the introduction of "mutual funds lite" regulations. These new regulations will simplify rules for passively managed funds, reducing the compliance burden and encouraging competition and innovation.

LIC shares climb 3% after earnings announcement

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) climbed 3 per cent on Friday after the company reported a 10 per cent rise in net profit to Rs 10,461 crore in the June 2024 quarter. The stock jumped 3 per cent to Rs 1,159.60 on the BSE. At the NSE, it climbed 3 per cent to Rs 1,160 apiece. The state-owned life insurance behemoth had a net profit of Rs 9,544 crore in the year-ago period. The total income increased to Rs 2,10,910 crore during the latest June quarter as against Rs 1,88,749 crore in the year-ago period, LIC said in a regulatory filing on Thursday. LIC MD and CEO Siddhartha Mohanty said the Assets Under Management (AUM) increased to Rs 53,58,781 crore as on June 30, as compared to Rs 46,11,067 crore at the end of same quarter previous year, registering an increase of 16.22 per cent. The total premium income for the quarter increased by 16 per cent to Rs 1,13,770 crore, as compared to Rs 98,363 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Asked about entry into the health insurance business, he said, LIC is exploring the option of picking up majority stakes in a standalone health insurance company.

PFC secures long-term loan from Japan bank for wind energy project

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

PFC, a Maharatna company and leading NBFC in Indian power sector, has secured a long-term loan of JPY 25.5 billion from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). This loan is part of JBIC's 'Global Action for Reconciling Economic Growth and Environmental Preservation' ("GREEN") initiative. In addition to JBIC's contribution, the loan is co-financed by Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation and other Japanese Banks. JBIC will also



provide a guarantee for the portion of the loan co-financed by these private financial institutions. The loan proceeds will be used to finance 300.3 MW Wind Energy Project of Ostro Kannada Power Private Limited (OKPPL) in Karnataka, India.

Gold jumps ₹1,100; Silver bounces ₹1,400

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold price rallied Rs 1,100 to Rs 72,450 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, taking cues from the global market and a rise in domestic demand. In the previous session, the precious metal had settled at Rs 71,350 per 10 grams. Silver prices also jumped Rs 1,400 to Rs 82,500 per kilogram on Friday against Rs 81,100 per kg in the previous trade, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity bounced by Rs 1,100 to Rs 72,100 per 10

grams from the previous close of Rs 71,000 per 10 grams. Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to fresh demand from local jewellers and a firm trend in the international markets. Globally, Comex gold is trading higher at USD 2,468.90 per ounce, up by USD 5.60 per ounce from the previous session. Experts said the rise in metal price occurred despite a strong US dollar and rising Treasury yields, driven by a broader market rally. "The metal gained traction even though China's central bank abstained from gold



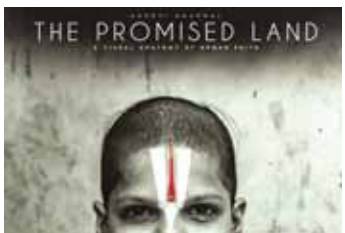
purchases for the third consecutive month," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP-Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, said.

In the international markets, Comex silver marginally declined to USD 27.60 per ounce. "Gold traders are advised to

closely monitor the upcoming CPI data next week, as it will likely confirm the trajectory of interest rate cuts going forward, setting a clearer tone for the market's direction," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said. On the outlook, Prathamesh Mallya, DVP- Research, Non-Agri Commodities and Currencies, Angel One Ltd, said that gold is likely to remain buoyed by safe-haven demand and expectations of a US Federal Reserve policy rate cut amid ongoing geopolitical tensions.



A POWERFUL PORTRAIT OF FAITH THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY



The Promised Land: A Visual Anatomy of Human Faith by Aashvi Agarwal and Kounteya Sinha offers a profound exploration of Ayodhya's spiritual heritage, capturing the raw emotions and devotion of millions in striking black-and-white photography, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

At just 14 years old, Aashvi Agarwal from Kolkata has created something truly remarkable. Her collection of over 350 black-and-white photos goes beyond simple documentation, offering deep emotional insight into the city's visitors. Under the mentorship of Kounteya Sinha, a renowned journalist and photographer, her work captures the essence of Ayodhya with both historical depth and artistic flair. This coffee table book provides a unique perspective on the profound spiritual connection that draws millions to Ayodhya, a city imbued with cultural and religious significance. Agarwal's ability to depict the essence of Ayodhya's spiritual landscape is particularly noteworthy. Her images reveal the intense faith that envelops the city, especially in the wake of the Ram Mandir's inauguration. One can almost feel the reverence and awe emanating from the crowds of pilgrims captured in her lens. The monochrome format highlights the intricate details and emotions, making each image a powerful window into the heart of the city's devotion. Her use of light and shadow brings out the nuances of human expressions, highlighting moments of personal connection with the divine.



The book skillfully balances the grandeur of Ayodhya's architecture with the intimate stories of the individuals who visit. For instance, the images of devotees gathered at the Ganga ghats, their silhouettes etched against the flowing river, symbolise the eternal journey of faith. Another poignant photograph of a mother and child in the temple's soft glow captures the intimate bond between the sacred and the everyday. While the book focuses on the spiritual essence of Ayodhya, it consciously avoids delving into

political or religious controversies. Instead, Agarwal's lens is focused on the human element - the pilgrims, priests and children who bring life to the city. This approach makes the book accessible and engaging to a diverse audience, inviting viewers from all walks of life to appreciate its universal themes of faith and humanity. Uma Nair, one of India's top art curators and critics, describes the book as "historic and unparalleled," commending Agarwal for capturing the essence of faith without political bias or personal agenda. Nair's praise of the book as a "masterclass in storytelling and documentation" highlights its significance in the visual art world. Her contribution to the preface further enriches the book with her insightful perspective on its artistic and cultural value. Kounteya Sinha's influence as a mentor is evident in the disciplined yet expressive composition of the photographs. His guidance has helped shape Agarwal's natural talent into a sophisticated artistic voice, capable of conveying complex narratives through a single frame. The result is a collection of images that are not only beautiful but also deeply meaningful. *The Promised Land: A Visual Anatomy of Human Faith* is more than just a coffee table book. It is a profound exploration of faith, culture and the human spirit, captured through the lens of a young photographer with an extraordinary gift. Aashvi Agarwal's debut work is a monument to her talent and a powerful reminder of the enduring power of visual art to touch the human soul. **Self - Published**
Price - 4500

A POIGNANT PORTRAIT OF SRINAGAR'S BEAUTY AND STRUGGLE

Sadaf Wani's *City as Memory* is a heartfelt exploration of Srinagar, where breathtaking beauty and deep-rooted pain exist side by side. Wani shares her personal experiences, creating a vivid picture of a city that is both fascinating and deeply scarred

TEAM VIVA

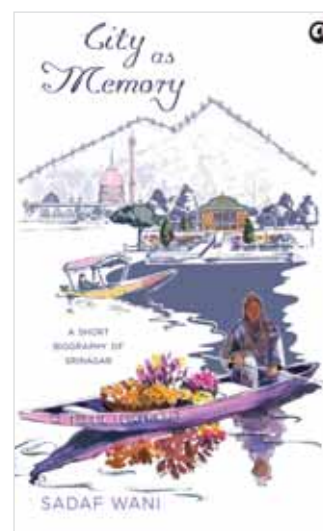
Sadaf Wani's *City as Memory* - A Short Biography Of Srinagar offers a deeply personal and insightful look into Srinagar, Kashmir - a city where breathtaking landscapes are often overshadowed by ongoing conflict. Wani blends personal stories with historical context to present a nuanced portrait of Srinagar, revealing how its natural beauty is entwined with its troubled past. The book begins by delving into Srinagar's rich historical backdrop. Founded in 250 BCE by the Buddhist king Ashoka, the city's history is marked by conquest and foreign rule. Wani uses this historical context to set the stage for understanding Srinagar's contemporary struggles. Her childhood memories from the mid-1990s, a period of waning insurgency and increasing militarisation, illustrate how historical forces



have shaped the city. The beautiful gardens and serene lakes of Srinagar are persistently overshadowed by the heavy presence of military forces, which are a constant reminder of the city's ongoing issues. As Wani transitions to her

teenage years in the early 2000s, the focus shifts to a time of intensified violence and civilian unrest. Her personal experiences during this period offer a close-up view of life in a conflict zone. The contrast between the picturesque Dal Lake and the

harsh realities of military checkpoints becomes a powerful symbol of Srinagar's contradictions. Wani's descriptions of restricted access to public spaces and tourist sites shed light on the psychological and emotional impact of living



under constant surveillance. This juxtaposition highlights the deep scars left by ongoing conflict on both the city and its people. Wani's writing seamlessly weaves personal memories with broader historical and political analysis. Her stories reveal how conflict influences both individual identities and public spaces, providing a thoughtful

commentary on how political strife shapes a city's character. The contrast between Srinagar's scenic beauty and its troubled reality underscores the city's profound contradictions. Through vivid descriptions and reflective insights, Wani captures a place that is both enchanting and beleaguered. The cover of the book, illustrated by Zainab Tambawalla, truly brings Srinagar to life. It features a charming cityscape with a mosque, majestic mountains and a serene lake dotted with traditional boats. A delightful "Flower Man" in a shikara adds a touch of local character. The illustration's gentle, watercolor-like style creates a warm, nostalgic feeling, while the subtle barbed wire design hints at the region's complicated past. This artwork beautifully complements Wani's story, offering a vivid, heartfelt glimpse into Srinagar's captivating blend of beauty and struggle. *City as Memory* is more than a

recounting of events; it's a profound exploration of Srinagar's complex character. Sadaf Wani's portrayal offers readers a deeper understanding of how beauty and conflict coexist, shaping the lives of its inhabitants. This book is a significant addition to the literature on Kashmir, providing both personal and political perspectives on a city at the crossroads of history and identity. Adding this book to your bookshelf is not just a literary choice but a way to appreciate the intricate relationship between place and memory. Wani's work is a must-read for anyone interested in the interplay between historical conflict and personal experience. It offers a compelling narrative and valuable perspectives that will resonate long after the last page is turned.

Publisher - Aleph Book Company
(Rs 399)

LEGENDARY ATHLETE ON FIELD, A SUPERSTAR SANS PRETENSIONS

PTI ■ PARIS

Neeraj Chopra is all about greatness without pretensions. A fierce competitor, a superstar of Indian sports, a humble human being who would make no bones about his limitations or desires, the double Olympic medalist from India, is all rolled into one. He may want the top prize for himself but would not be envious if the rival pips him. He would tell himself to accept what he got, and work harder to achieve what he desires. He would not pretend that he does not care for brand endorsement. He certainly wants it, money matters, but would not compromise on his training for that. The 17-minute interaction with the Indian media after winning a silver medal in the Paris Olympics was more than just a routine question-answer session. "Your first throw was foul then in the second... the scribe had not even completed his question before Chopra quipped, "Saari throw fouls hi thi sir sirf doosri hi theek thi (All throws were foul, except the second one)," he said, chuckling, and the 50-strong group joined him in laughter.

It was not a great deal for him to say he fouled five of his six attempts. The long Q and A session was largely in Hindi with Indian and Pakistani journalists asking questions, but when the volunteer requested an answer in English for the benefit of few foreign scribes, Chopra laid bare his simplicity. "Now I need to motivate myself to speak in English, the way I motivate myself for competition," he said with a smile, as the gathered group burst out in laughter. "Can you describe the competition between you and Nadeem, India and Pakistan," the foreign scribe asked again, requesting the answer in English. Well, he explained pretty well, effortlessly. "It was a really great competition. Maybe one of the greatest competitions in history. Arshad threw really well. I was also in good shape. But I don't know. My runway was not that good today," he responded quickly, without having to think much. It was inevitable that he would be asked about the missed competitions in the 2024 season, leading up to the Paris Games. It led to speculations whether he was carrying injury into the Paris Games.



NEERAJ CHOPRA

He had skipped the Paris Diamond League in July, just before the Games, though he later clarified that the event was not part of his competition calendar. He revealed how difficult it becomes for him to say no to the organisers despite fitness concerns. With a wide grin, he said, "Of course I need to play more but then I send those carefully drafted messages that I have suffered a strain and I won't compete. "In few competitions I have played just for the sake of organisers so that they don't feel bad. I keep thinking that I have entered the competition and if I don't go, they will say I am making excuses. Personally I love to compete as much as possible. "I make plans but then you tell your team, let's draft a good message, saying sorry for pulling out," he said, laughing, but the pain of missing the event was writ large. "No happiness is greater than playing. You work hard to compete only. Whatever strength God has given me I do. Then came a tricky one. He was asked about the pressure of sponsors in the Olympic cycle. How he finds that balance

between brand endorsements, obligations and training? Again, he came up with an honest answer. "I put my game on top priority after Tokyo and after Tokyo Games only I got the opportunity to get associated with brands. It is difficult for us that brands come after you, and if you get it, why will you leave that opportunity. Just do it," he said, with all honesty. "It also opens the way for kids (next generation), 'nahi to shree hi tootega khel khel key, last mein kuch nah rahega.' How many athletes say that so openly? "So I balance it. Priority is sport. This was an Olympic year, so whatever commitments I had, I fulfilled in the first half. "You have seen I have been training outside since Tokyo." He could be upset inside for not being able to defend his title but accepted that Thursday was Nadeem's day. Lastly, volunteers did their best to push him out of the mixed zone but he would keep coming back either to sign autographs or honour the request for selfies. After all, he knows how to find a balance between different things and saying no is the most difficult thing for him.

Sreejesh to join Bhaker as India's flag-bearer in closing ceremony

PTI ■ PARIS

Celebrated hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh will join star shooter Manu Bhaker as the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent in the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games here on Sunday, a fitting honour and recognition for his contributions to the team. Before homing in on Sreejesh, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) chief PT Usha spoke with Neeraj Chopra, and she said even the superstar javelin thrower wanted to see the retiring legend as flag-bearer. Chopra claimed a silver here to become the first Indian track and field athlete to win two Olympic medals. He won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition three years ago.



"I spoke with Neeraj Chopra and appreciate the spontaneity and grace with which he agreed that Sreejesh should be the flag-bearer at the Closing Ceremony," Usha said in a statement. "He told me 'Ma'am, even if you had not asked me, I would have suggested

Sree bhai's name'. It is reflective of the immense respect Neeraj has for Sreejesh and his contribution to Indian sport," she revealed. Usha said Sreejesh was "both an emotional and popular choice" within the IOA leadership, including Chef-de-Mission Gagan Narang, and the entire Indian contingent. The legendary Sreejesh retired from the game after India's bronze medal-winning feat at the ongoing Games, bringing to an end a glorious career spanning 18 years. "The Indian Olympic Association is delighted to announce the nomination of hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh as the joint flag-bearer with pistol shooter Manu Bhaker at the Closing Ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games," the IOA said in a

statement. The 2-1 triumph over Spain, in the bronze medal playoff match here on Thursday, was a fitting farewell for the 36-year-old custodian who has served the team with distinction for so long. "Sreejesh has served Indian hockey in particular and Indian sport in general admirably through more than two decades," Usha said. Sreejesh was also the flag-bearer in the closing ceremony of the Hangzhou Asian Games last year. The IOA had earlier named Bhaker as the female flag-bearer after she became the first Indian athlete post Independence to win multiple medals in a single Olympic Games. She won bronze medals in the women's 10m air pistol and the 10m air pistol mixed team (with Sarabjot Singh).



AP ■ PARIS

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif is one victory away from wrapping up her tumultuous Paris Olympics with a gold medal around her neck - a potential prize that she has called the best response to a cascade of online abuse she has endured over misconceptions about her sex. Khelif fights Yang Liu of China on Friday night in the final of the women's welterweight division at Roland Garros. Khelif has yet to lose one round on a judge's scorecard in her first three fights in Paris, going on the most dominant run of her boxing career while facing an extraordinary amount of scrutiny. It stems from Khelif and fellow two-time Olympian Li Yu-ting of Taiwan getting disqualified from last year's world championships by the Russian-dominated International Boxing Association, which claims both fighters failed a murky eligibility test for women's competition. The International Olympic Committee took the unprecedented step last year of permanently banning the IBA from the Olympics following

Boxer Imane fights for Gold to cap Olympics filled with misinformed scrutiny

years of concerns about its governance, competitive fairness and financial transparency. The IOC has called the arbitrary sex tests that the sport's governing body imposed on the two boxers irretrievably flawed. The IBA did nothing to help its argument this week at a shambolic news conference in which its leadership contradicted itself about the tests and declined to answer basic questions about them, citing privacy concerns from the Olympic committees of Algeria and Taiwan. The IOC repeatedly reaffirmed the two boxers' right to compete in Paris, with President Thomas Bach personally defending Khelif and Lin while calling the criticism "hate speech." "We have two boxers who are born as women, who have been raised as women, who have a passport as a woman and have competed for many



years as women," Bach said. That hasn't stopped the international outcry tied to misconceptions around the fighters that have been amplified by Russian disinformation networks, but neither has it slowed the two. Khelif has dominated all three bouts. But, she faces her most significant test in Yang, the 2023 world champion and the No. 2 seed in their weight class. Khelif told SNTV, a sports video partner of The Associated Press, that the wave of hateful scrutiny she has received "harms human dignity," and she called for an end to bullying athletes. She also said a gold medal would be "the best response" to the backlash against her. The crowds in Paris, however, have embraced both Khelif and Lin, who have heard nothing

but cheers during their bouts. A huge contingent of flag-waving Algeria fans greeted and serenaded Khelif throughout her semifinal victory Tuesday night, and she's become a hometown hero in her North African country. Khelif has already secured Algeria's first Olympic medal in women's boxing. She will attempt to become only her country's second boxing gold medalist, joining Hocine Soltani (1996). The gold medal fight is the culmination of Khelif's nine-day run through an Olympic tournament that began with a bizarre event. Khelif's first opponent, Angela Carini of Italy, abandoned their bout after just 46 seconds, saying she was in too much pain from Khelif's punches. An already brewing story suddenly became major international news, with the likes of former US President Donald Trump and "Harry Potter" author JK Rowling weighing in with criticism and false speculation about men competing with women in sports. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni personally visited with Carini to share her condolences and to cast doubt on Khelif's eligibility. Carini later said she regretted her actions and wished to apologize to Khelif. The Italian newspaper La Stampa detailed Carini's mindset in the days leading up to the bout, describing pressure from both inside and outside her team to avoid the fight amid the growing speculation over Khelif's status. The IBA later offered to pay winner's bonuses to Carini and the Italian Boxing Federation despite Carini's abandonment of the bout. The Italian federation and Carini rejected the money from the IBA, which volunteered the payments to all Paris winners and their teams despite having nothing to do with the Olympics. Lin also fights for a gold medal on Saturday on the final card of the Olympics. She takes on Julia Szeremeta of Poland with a chance to win Taiwan's first boxing gold.

COVID-hit Lyles misses out on a double

AP ■ PARIS

Sprinter Noah Lyles revealed he had COVID-19 after missing out on another gold medal for the United States at the Paris Olympics. Elsewhere, French basketball star Victor Wembanyama moved closer to his dream of a first gold after helping Les Bleus beat Germany to set up a dream final against the U.S. Team after the Americans edged Serbia 95-91. On the same Stade de France track where he won the historically close 100 meters by five thousandths of a second, Lyles was third behind gold medalist Letsile Tebogo of Botswana and U.S. Teammate Kenneth Bednarek. Medics tended to a tired-looking Lyles and took him off in a wheelchair. Wearing a mask as he spoke with reporters, Lyles later said he had COVID. "It definitely affected my

performance," said Lyles, adding that he tested positive early Tuesday morning but was cleared to compete. The U.S. Track federation said it and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee adhered to all Olympic and Centers for Disease Control guidelines. Over at Bercy Arena, with former NBA stars Dirk Nowitzki and Tony Parker watching their respective countrymen, France held on to win 73-69. Wembanyama, the NBA rookie of the year, clenched his fists at the buzzer and teammate Evan Fournier jubilantly threw the ball into the crowd. The 20-year-old star didn't play three years ago in Tokyo, when the French lost the final to the U.S. They meet again Saturday, when Wembanyama hopes to give France its first Olympic gold in men's or women's basketball.

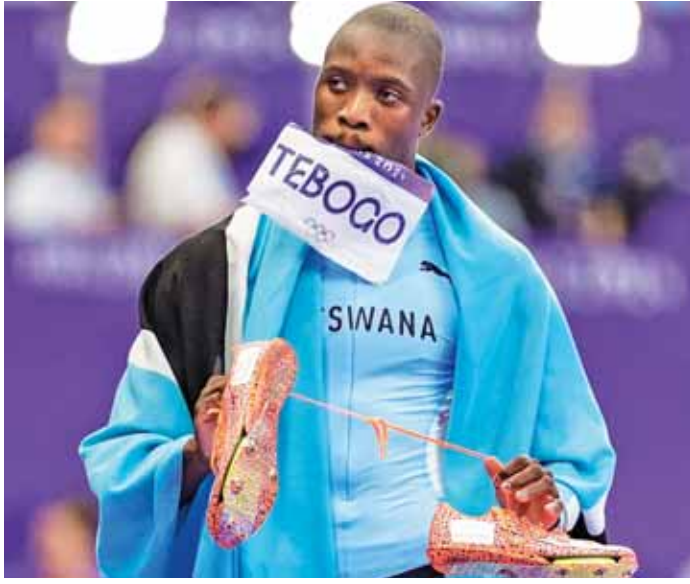
Letsile makes a case for African sprinters with thrilling victory in 200 metres

AP ■ PARIS

Letsile Tebogo is from Botswana in southern Africa, a continent with a rich history of producing world-class runners. Just not like the kind Tebogo does for a living. He's hoping 20 seconds of greatness - check 19.46 seconds of greatness - might change that. The 21-year-old pulled off a stunner (sort of) in the men's 200 meters at the Paris Olympics on Thursday night, producing the first-ever Olympic gold by an African runner in the distance. American Kenneth Bednarek got out to an early lead, but Tebogo said he was confident he had more than enough to track him down. By the middle of the stretch, Tebogo was in front and waited for a challenge from American star Noah Lyles that never came - perhaps in

part because Lyles is dealing with COVID-19 - to win going away. "When I saw Kenny fade I knew Noah was far, far, far away behind us," Tebogo said. "So, that means I'm the Olympic champion." One who is also a three-time world champion. Lost amid the chaos of Lyles collapsing briefly on the track in the aftermath and his revelation that he tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday was this: Tebogo's time was the fastest by anyone in the world this year. Lyles included. Heady territory for an athlete who gets himself amped up before a race by playing traditional songs he learned growing up in Kanye, Botswana, not far from the landlocked nation's border with South Africa. The ritual allows Tebogo to relax, drawing a stark contrast between him and the relentlessly amped

Lyles. While Lyles roared onto the purple track at Stade de France preening, Tebogo was one lane to Lyles' right mentally preparing for the race of his life. And when Tebogo ran it, he draped the blue, white and black flag of his country over his shoulders, hung his orange cleats around his neck presented his right shoe to a nearby camera to reveal a tribute to his mother, Elizabeth Seratiwa, who died in May. "She always dreamed of making it to here," Tebogo said. So did his younger sister, who was somewhere in the sea of seats that roared during the race, a roar that grew louder when it became obvious Lyles wasn't going to track Tebogo down the way he had to just about everyone since Tokyo in his signature event.



Not this time. While there may not be an official rivalry between Tebogo and Lyles, the seeds may have been planted somewhere between Lyles' preening and Tebogo's decisive victory. Asked afterwards if he envisions himself becoming one of the standard bearers in sprinting, Tebogo threw a dash of shade in his answer. "I can't be the face of athletics because I'm not an arrogant or a loud person like Noah (Lyles)," he said. Maybe. Tebogo's biography in the official Olympics media program quotes him as saying he wants "to be remembered as one of the best athletes who ever lived." He's probably already there back home, a largely rural country of 2.63 million roughly the size of France that serves as a popular destination

for tourists going on African safaris. The pace of life in Kanye isn't typically hectic. Maybe that makes Tebogo's triumph of a young man in a hurry ironic in a way. Tebogo fought off a balky hamstring to win bronze in the 200 behind Lyles and his US teammate Erriyon Knighton in the 2023 athletics world championship. He finished ahead of Lyles in their 200 semifinal on Wednesday. Lyles' camp said he Lyles was fine afterwards, indicating he was saving himself for the final. Perhaps he was. Yet when Tebogo took off, Lyles saw only the bib on the back of Tebogo's race shirt. Lyles never saw the bib on the front. Not until the end anyway, when Tebogo unpinning it, grabbed each end and presented it for all the world to see. The people of Africa most of all.

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