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MONEY 10 ADOPT GUIDANCE OVER INTIMIDATION: CBDT CHIEF

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DREAM TO COMPETE WITH STARS IN INDIA: NEERAJ 12 SPORTS

Manhunt for foreign terrorists

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A joint team of security forces continued to hunt down the group of foreign terrorists for the second day in succession in the Ahlan Gagar-Mandu forest area of Anantnag district to avenge the supreme sacrifice of their fellow soldiers.

Two soldiers sacrificed their lives in the firefight on Saturday while one critically injured civilian succumbed to his injuries during treatment on Sunday.

Despite carrying out massive searches, at an altitude of over 10,000 feet, the security forces could not track down the footprints of a group of battle-hardened Pakistani terrorists.

It is also suspected the foreign terrorists may have once again breached the tight cordon taking advantage of the thick foliage and inclement weather conditions prevailing in the area.

The soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice have been identified as Hav Dipak Kumar Yadav and L/Nk Praveen Sharma.

In a post on X, the Indian Army spokesman said, the Indian Army offers deepest condolences and stands firm with the bereaved families in this hour of grief.

"General Upendra Dwivedi COAS and All Ranks of the Indian Army salute the supreme sacrifice of Bravehearts Hav Dipak Kumar



Security personnel during an encounter with terrorists at Ahlan Gagar-Mandu forest area, in Anantnag district of South Kashmir, on Sunday

Yadav & L/Nk Praveen Sharma, who laid down their lives in the line of duty, in Anantnag, J&K". Meanwhile, Inspector General (IG) of Kashmir VK Birdi who visited the encounter site told reporters on Sunday that the operation that began a day ago is underway in the upper reaches of Gagar-Mandu area of Kokernag in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district.

"Security forces had information regarding the movement of terrorists in the upper reaches. A search operation was being conducted in the Gagar-Mandu area. Security forces spotted the movement of terrorists and there was an exchange of fire between the security forces and terrorists... Operation is underway..." IG Birdi told

reporters. He said the civilian killed in the encounter has been identified as Abdul Rashid Dar. Giving details of the current operation, a Srinagar-based defence spokesperson said that on August 5, it was confirmed through human and electronic means that terrorists responsible for atrocities in the Doda region in July have

sneaked across the Kishtwar range into the Kapran-Garol area in south Kashmir. "The Rashtriya Rifles and the Jammu and Kashmir Police have relentlessly tracked these terrorists and precise operations were launched on the night of August 9 and 10 in the mountains in the east of Kapran where these terrorists were reportedly holed up. Continued on Page 8

Kolkata doctor rape-murder: Shocking details surface

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The murdered lady doctor from a North Kolkata medical college was subjected to horrific brutalities, according to preliminary postmortem and inquest reports. Referred to as "Abhaya" by her colleagues, the victim suffered ten grievous injuries, evoking memories of the decade-old Nirbhaya case in Delhi, say fellow doctors at RG Kar Medical College, where she was pursuing her postgraduate studies in chest medicine.

"The autopsy report is chilling," said a fellow doctor, who is participating in the State-wide indefinite cease-work by medical staff. "She had a finger, collarbone, and pelvic bone broken. She was bleeding from her eyes, lips, abdomen, and private parts. Tufts of her hair had been torn out, and a clip was attached to her private parts," said the doctor.

Police sources revealed that the brutal attack took place within 30 to 35 minutes. The panel of doctors who conducted the postmortem suggested that she might have been raped after being killed, as it would have been nearly impossible for one person to inflict such extensive injuries in such a short time, said the police.

Family sources shared that the victim was scheduled to get married next year. A colleague from the same college,



Junior doctors and medical students stage a protest against the sexual assault and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor in RG Kar Medical College & Hospital, in Kolkata, on Sunday

Another lady doc threatened

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal Police on Sunday arrested another civic volunteer for threatening a woman doctor at Bharat State General Hospital in East Burdwan district with 'RG Kar-like consequences'. According to the lady doctor, the man, identified as Susanta Roy, threatened her after a heated altercation, warning, "You'll face an RG Kar-like consequence for your conduct... Do you even know what happened to the doctor there?"

Continued on Page 8

requesting anonymity, said the young doctor likely endured extreme pain before her death, as a healthy person of her age would not have succumbed quickly.

"The post-mortem reports are not fully out so that we can understand whether it was a gangrape or an act of an individual beast," she said.

Sanjay Das - a civic volunteer from the unarmed wing of Bengal Police, which operates on a daily wage basis - was arrested on Saturday in connection with the heinous crime. Reports indicated that Das confessed to the act, even pleading with his interrogators to hang him swiftly, a desperate request that has sparked suspicion among civil society members. Many are now questioning whether Das is being used as a scapegoat to shield others involved in the crime.

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Former External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh passes away

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh passed away on Saturday night after a prolonged illness, family sources said. He was 93. He breathed his last at Medanta Hospital in Gurugram near Delhi, where he had been admitted for the past couple of weeks, they said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday condoled the passing away of Natwar Singh, and said he made rich contributions to the world of diplomacy and foreign policy. In a social media post, Modi said, "Pained by the passing away of Shri Natwar Singh Ji. He made rich contributions to the world of diplomacy and foreign policy."

Continued on Page 8

Delhi rain fury claims lives of two teens

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

The rain in the national Capital on Sunday, while offering relief from the oppressive heat, also brought chaos, with traffic snarls, water-logging and tragedy. Amid the downpour, two children lost their lives - a seven-year-old drowned and a 13-year-old electrocuted - raising the toll of rain-related deaths to four in the last two days.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert for the city. In Delhi's Rohini Sector 20, a seven-year-old boy named Tarun drowned in a waterlogged park on Saturday evening around 6:30 pm while playing there. In another incident in the Ranhola area of outer Delhi, a 13-year-old boy lost his life after being electrocuted when he came into contact with an iron pole supplying electricity to a gaushala (cowshed) while playing cricket in Kotla Vihar Phase-2.

Meanwhile, the teen's mother Anita Devi has demanded strict action against the gaushala (cowshed) and the Power Department. Disruptions to flight



Photo: Ranjan Dimri

operations were also witnessed at Delhi airport on Sunday due to the bad weather. Delhiites who stepped out to enjoy their weekend were met with massive disappointment as their journey to hangout destinations turned into nightmares, with roads inundated and many people struggling to push their vehicles through knee-deep water. Many candidates who went out to write their NEET-PG 2024 examinations also faced difficulties reaching their centres due to waterlogged roads.

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Bangladesh interim Govt warns media over fake news

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bangladesh's interim Government on Sunday issued a stern warning to media organisations, stating that they will be shut down if they publish or broadcast false or misleading news, in a move aimed at curbing the spread of misinformation. "A nation falters when the media does not uphold the truth," the interim government's Home Affairs Adviser, Brigadier General (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hossain, said during his visit to injured policemen at Rajarbagh

Central Police Hospital. He warned that the media outlets would face closure if they provided misleading news, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. Meanwhile, Syed Refaat Ahmed was sworn in as Bangladesh's new chief justice on Sunday, a day after Obaidul Hassan stepped down as the top judge following an ultimatum by the protesters demanding a revamp of the judiciary. Hassan and five other judges of the apex Appellate Division on Saturday tendered their resignation,



Bangladeshi Army and navy officials stand guard in front of the Supreme Court area in Dhaka, Bangladesh

five days after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime amid massive street protests

Criticising the media for not presenting the truth, Hossain said, "A country deteriorates when the media fails to report honestly," and argued that had the media accurately reported events, the current situation involving the police might have been avoided.

"The media often ignores the truth... There is a lack of substantive discussion on talk shows, and the media fails to provide accurate information," he said.

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Hindenburg: Sebi chief, husband refute charges

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi Chairman Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband on Saturday denied allegations levelled against them by short seller Hindenburg as baseless and asserted that their finances are an open book. In a statement, Madhabi Puri Buch and Dhaval Buch also said it is unfortunate that Hindenburg Research against whom Sebi has taken an Enforcement action and issued a show cause notice has chosen

to attempt character assassination in response to the same. US short-seller Hindenburg Research alleged that Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puro Buch and her husband had stakes in obscure offshore funds used in the Adani money siphoning scandal. In a blogpost, Hindenburg said 18 months since its damning report on Adani, "SEBI has shown a surprising lack of interest in Adani's alleged undisclosed web of Mauritius and offshore shell entities."

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Har Ghar Tiranga



People wave the Indian national flags at Mubarak Mandi palace ahead of the Independence Day, in Jammu, on Sunday

Mullaperiyar Dam: A deluge waiting to engulf Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Close on the heels of the landslides and deluge in Wayanad that claimed more than 400 lives and devoured 300 houses, a disaster of higher magnitude is all set to befall on the State of Kerala. The Mullaperiyar dam built across River Periyar and dating back to 130 years is on the verge of collapse and this will wipe out the entire population in five districts of the State. Though the dam is situated in Kerala, the entire water in the catchment area is drawn by Tamil Nadu which shoots from all rooftops that Mullaperiyar dam is safe. But experts in dam construction and safety disagree.

away because of the snapping of the chain link by the floodwaters has jolted people in five districts of Kerala. Tungbhadra dam built in 1953 and Mullaperiyar in Kerala, built 130 years ago have a lot of similarities. Both are built with a combination of surki, mortar, mud and limestone making them the last surviving non-cement dams in India. The Mullaperiyar dam, constructed across River Periyar in Kerala with the sole purpose of providing drinking and irrigation water to the four districts in Tamil Nadu has become a modern day water bomb. People living in the districts of Idukki, P a t h a n a m t h i t t a, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Ernakulam would be drowned in the deluge that would occur



Search and rescue operation underway at a landslide-hit area in Wayanad district, Sunday

once the dam collapses. It can happen any time now because the dam has outlived its utility," said P C George, a seven-time MLA of the State who is waging a battle with the authorities to construct a new

dam. George, in his 35-year-long service as a law maker and chairman of the petition committee of the legislative Assembly had submitted three comprehensive reports to the authorities. "But the

governments of the day did not take any action on these reports," George told The Pioneer in the aftermath of the collapse of Mullaperiyar Dam. He said the impact of the collapse of Mullaperiyar Dam would be similar to the repercussions of 01,000 Wayanad landslides. "The old and children do not sleep well even for a single day as they fear that the dam would down any time. It is atop the Western Ghats and you cannot imagine the intensity of the water bursting out of the dam. There will not be any time for evacuation and rescue missions," he said.

Mullaperiyar Dam is 53.67 metre tall and 365.85 metre long. "The active capacity of the dam is 10.56 thousand million cubic feet (TMC ft). Geologists have cautioned us that the dam is

vulnerable to high intensity earthquakes as the fault line passes through the reservoir," said PNS Nambodiri, former revenue official in Kottayam district. While the Tamil Nadu government scoffed at reports about a possible collapse of the dam, it went many steps ahead in opposing the Indian Nutriro Observatory at Madurai under the pretext that the fault line passes through the area earmarked for the proposed project. But the fault line is dangerously close to the Mullaperiyar dam. Seismic experts and geologists have warned that the dam made of surki and mortar has outlived its utility and should be decommissioned at the earliest. Dr A K Gosain of IIT Delhi who had led a team of experts to study the safety aspects of

Woman who set herself on fire succumbs

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The woman from Unnao, who had set herself on fire on August 5 after being allegedly instigated by an advocate, succumbed to burns at KGMU on Sunday. She had suffered 90% burns injuries. Since the day she set herself ablaze near the chief minister's residence in Lucknow, the woman had been receiving government-funded treatment at the hospital. She had visited Lucknow after the advocate, who had been in frequent contact with her over the phone, allegedly incited her to take this drastic action if she wanted to compel the administration and police to act. The police had later found out that the advocate had made 57 calls to the woman on the day of the incident. Initially admitted to the Civil hospital, the woman was later referred to King George's

Medical University (KGMU). The police have arrested the advocate, Sunil Kumar from Unnao, and he has been sent to jail. On the fateful day, the woman, identified as Anjali, placed her child on the pavement before dousing herself with some flammable substance and setting herself on fire. Despite frantic efforts to save her, she suffered severe burns, estimated at more than 90%. Police attempted to help her, but the intensity of the fire hindered their efforts. In a video recorded at the scene, the woman is seen pleading for help and repeatedly looking at her child. She was transported to the Civil hospital by police car in critical condition. An application found with her revealed that she was dissatisfied with the police's response to her previous complaints and had expressed frustration with the Purwa police.

Youth found hanging in rented room

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth was found hanging in the rented room where he had been staying in Daliganj area. Residents noticed a putrid smell emanating from the house and alerted the police. When the police arrived, they discovered the body and brought it down. The stench was so overpowering that residents had difficulty remaining near the room. The deceased was identified as Rohit, from Ghosi in Mau district. He worked at a medical shop in Lucknow and was also preparing for a government job. Rohit had been feeling distressed after a conversation with his family on August 9. The police believe he may have hanged himself that day. Rohit had rented the room in Daliganj on August 7. Rohit's father Tribhuvan Yadav became concerned when the former's phone was switched off. On August 9, he travelled from Mau to Lucknow to check on Rohit but could not find him due to lack of information on his current address. The police have handed over the body to the family following the post-mortem examination. Rohit had been living in Lucknow for two years.

"After the strong odour was detected, nearby residents alerted the police. The gate was forced open, and Rohit was found hanging inside the room," a police spokesperson said. Tribhuvan Yadav stated that Rohit was the eldest of three siblings and had always encouraged his younger brother and sister to focus on their studies. Tribhuvan explained that Rohit worked at a medical store to support the family while also preparing for a government job. "We never imagined that he would take such a drastic step," he said, adding that he had supported all three of his children through farming, and Rohit had started contributing to the family by working at the medical store. "This incident has shattered all our hopes," Tribhuvan Yadav said. He requested that the Lucknow police obtain the call records from his son's phone to determine who he had been in contact with or if there were any updates from his employer. "Rohit was a promising young man who never showed anger towards family members. However, he had been acting differently of late. We need to understand the reasons behind his suicide," he added.

YOUTH KILLED IN ROAD MISHAP
A 20-year-old man died after his car crashed into a divider and fell into a ditch on the service lane of outer ring road in Dubagga area. The incident occurred around midnight, and the driver's body remained trapped in the car for approximately five hours before being found by locals who alerted the police in the early hours of Sunday. Dubagga SHO Abhinav Verma confirmed that the body was sent for autopsy. The deceased was identified as Vikas Rawat, a 20-year-old resident of Pahiya Azampur in Kakori. According to the police, Vikas had driven the family of village head Mohammed Mateen to a mall on Friday. After dropping them off in the evening, he was returning to his home in Bhitauli when his car ramed into a divider on the service lane of Mohaddipur outer ring road and fell into a pit approximately three feet deep. "When the police arrived at the scene after being notified by locals, they found Vikas's body on the back seat of the car. It is suspected that Vikas's head struck the steering wheel during the accident, which may have prevented him from escaping the vehicle," the

police said. No allegations have been made by the family at this time. The deceased's family includes his mother Sangeeta, brother Akash; and his two sisters, Khushi and Shivani, according to the SHO. Meanwhile, a 36-year-old man reportedly committed suicide at his house in Para police station area on Sunday. His father reported the incident to police. The man, identified as Sunil, was found hanging from a ceiling fan hook. In a separate incident, a 31-year-old man was found dead in a room at Kanshiram Colony in Para police station area on Sunday. Residents reported a foul smell emanating from the house, prompting a large number of them to gather and subsequently call the police. When the police broke open the doors, they discovered a body in an advanced state of decomposition. An Aadhaar card recovered from the scene identified the deceased as Ajay Gupta from Alambagh. His cousin Ayush Gupta confirmed the identity of the deceased in the presence of the police. The body appeared to be 2-3 days old and was sent for autopsy to determine the cause of death.

Man gives triple talaq to wife over dowry demand

Lucknow (PNS): A newly married man allegedly pronounced triple talaq over the phone over dowry demands, in Malihabad on Sunday. The couple had been married for just four months. Since their marriage, the husband had allegedly pressurised her to bring jewellery and money from her parents' home, and both he and his family had subjected her to harassment. The woman, who is three months pregnant, has filed a complaint with police. A case has been registered and an investigation is underway. Gausia, a resident of Syedabad in Malihabad, married a man from Saaadatganj in Lucknow on April 30 last. Since their marriage, her husband had reportedly been dissatisfied with the dowry, claiming it was of insufficient quality and value. Gausia told the police that her husband frequently pressurised her to bring money and jewellery from her parents. When she failed to meet these demands, she was reportedly beaten. Her mother-in-law, father-in-law, and brother-in-law also allegedly subjected her to abuse. According to Gausia, her husband and his family insisted she

either bring more money or leave their home. Despite her family's attempts to resolve the issue through discussions with her in-laws, the harassment continued. Four days ago, her in-laws evicted her from their home, threatening her with violence if she did not leave. Gausia recounted that her father-in-law demanded a motorcycle and a gold chain from her father as a condition for allowing her to stay. "I was told that if I didn't meet these demands, there would be no place for me in the house," she alleged. The victim told the police that despite being three months pregnant, her husband and in-laws continued their abusive behaviour with her. She said she had pleaded with them not to subject her to such treatment for the sake of her unborn child, but her pleas fell on deaf ears. On Saturday, her husband pronounced triple talaq via video call, during which he allegedly abused her as well. Based on Gausia's written complaint, the Malihabad police have filed a case of dowry harassment against her husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and brother-in-law. The investigation is ongoing.

Target 25% rise in student enrolment ratio, says Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday directed officials to target a rise in the gross enrolment ratio (GER) from currently 25 per cent to over 50 per cent in 10 years. He said Uttar Pradesh has been the country's leading state in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which helped the state improve its GER in the past three years. Adityanath's statement came during a review meeting on the policy's implementation in the state, at his official residence here, according to a statement. Giving directions to the officials in the meeting, Adityanath said, "The vision of the NEP is to provide quality, 'saarvabhaumi' (universal) and employ-

ment-oriented education using modern technology in higher education institutions." "UP has been the leading state to implement the NEP. In the last three years, the gross enrolment ratio has increased through this. The efforts made to improve the quality of education in universities and colleges have shown good results," he added. The chief minister also said, "Uttar Pradesh has achieved the goal of one divisional university and now we are moving towards one district-one university." "The establishment of these new universities is helping improve the gross enrolment ratio. At present, the GER in higher education institutions is around 25 per cent. Our target should be to increase it to more than 50 per cent in the

next 10 years," he added. The youth should be encouraged for entrepreneurship, he said, and added that these subjects should be considered while preparing the curriculum. Adityanath directed that a research centre should be established in the name of the great litterateur and thinker Rahul Sankrityayan at Maharaja Suheldev State University in Azamgarh at the earliest possible. This centre will provide a suitable platform for the youngsters to research and study the personality and works of Rahul Sankrityayan, he added. The CM said graduate and diploma holders are being provided the facility of apprenticeship in industrial organisations under the 'Mukhyamantri Shikshuta Protsaahan Yojana'.

Charbagh bus station likely to be shifted to Alambagh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Charbagh bus station is likely to be relocated to the Alambagh bus station due to the construction of a state-of-the-art bus terminal at Charbagh. An official from the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) stated that the process is underway to develop 23 major bus stations as modern terminals using a public-private partnership (PPP) model. "Concession contracts have already been executed with the selected developer firm for 11 of these bus stations. Concession contracts for the remaining 12 bus stations will be signed after approval from the Council of Ministers," he said. Minister of State for Transport (Independent

Charge) Daya Shankar Singh has directed the district magistrates of Ghaziabad, Agra, Prayagraj, Lucknow, Meerut, Aligarh, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya Dham, Bulandshahr, Bareilly, Rae Bareilly, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Kanpur, Mathura, and Hapur to make alternative arrangements for bus operations during the construction period. This ensures that essential transport services remain uninterrupted for the public. "These new bus stations developed under the PPP model will feature modern passenger facilities, retail outlets, multiplexes, and more, providing improved amenities for travellers. This initiative is part of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's ambitious plan to modernise the state's bus stations," the official said.

Youth threatened, ransom demanded

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Unidentified accused demanded a ransom from a youth in Sushant Golf City police station area, threatening to kill him if their demand was not met. Police registered a case based on the victim's complaint. The youth also approached the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) seeking protection. The victim, Monu Kumar Kashyap, originally from Sevai Post Barauna in Sushant Golf City, resides with his wife Pooja, who works as an ANM at the CHC in Trivediganj, Barabanki. Monu Kashyap told the police that he had been receiving threat calls from various mobile numbers over the past six months. "Each time, they demand money and threaten to kill my entire family if the demands

are not met," he said. In March, Monu received a WhatsApp message containing a photo of himself with his child, along with a ransom demand of Rs 5 lakh. The message included threats to kill both him and his child if the money was not provided. Inspector Anjani Kumar Mishra confirmed that a case had been registered and an investigation was underway. Meanwhile, a 60-year-old man named Ramkumar was found dead in his room at Kanshiram Colony in Para police station area on Sunday. Preliminary investigations revealed that Ramkumar had been living alone and had not been seen by neighbours for the past 3-4 days. It was reported that he consumed alcohol daily, and his wife had passed away about seven years ago.

March taken out to protest 'atrocities' on Hindus in Bangladesh

Sambhal (PTI): Hindu activists on Sunday took out a protest march in the Chandausi area here against the alleged atrocities on the community in violence-hit Bangladesh. The 'Janakrosh March', taken out by the Hindu organisation Sanatan Sevak Sangh, saw participation of around 50 people. The protestors raised controversial slogans against Rohingya refugees in India and "Bangladeshi jihadis". Kausal Kishore, a member of the organisation, said the way atrocities are being committed against Hindus after the coup in Bangladesh is "unfortunate". Kishore said, "We have taken out this march in protest against the atrocities being committed against Hindus." "We demand from the prime minister of the country that atrocities against Hindus living in Bangladesh should be stopped," he added.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I HAVE CORRECTED MY SON NAME SPELLING ABDULLA ASAD TO ABDULLAH ASAD (AFTER CORRECTION), D.O.B.- 10/01/2008 TO D.O.B. 01/10/2008 (AFTER CORRECTION), HIS MOTHER NAME SPELLING RABIA HABIB TO RABIA HABEEB (AFTER CORRECTION) AS PER DOCUMENT & AFFIDAVIT.

NOTICE

I have changed my son's name from Atharv Agarwal to Ikshit Agarwal. S/O Arpit Agarwal. R/O 1/48 Krishna Nagar Gt road, Kanpur Aadhaar no. 672181520696.in future he should be known by this name only.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from QURAISHA KHATOON to KURAISHA KHATOON w/o MOHAMMAD MERAJUDDIN for all future purposes, R/o H.No 116/930 ROSHAN NAGAR NAI BASTI RAWATPUR Kanpur Nagar, U.P.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from MOHAMMAD ILYAS to MOHAMMAD ILIYAS C/o MOHAMMAD NASIBDAR for all future purposes, R/o H.No 116/930 ROSHAN NAGAR NAI BASTI RAWATPUR Kanpur Nagar, U.P.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from WAHEED UDDIN AHMAD KHAN to WAHEEDUDDIN AHMAD S/O JALALUDDIN AHMAD KHAN R/o 101/181-C Gammu Khan ka hata, colonel ganj, Kanpur NAGAR, for all future purpose.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that my father's name is recorded as "Mohd Qadeer" in his Pan card. However, on my Aadhaar card, my father's name is recorded as "Mohammad Quadeer Khan." Both "Mohd Qadeer" and "Mohammad Quadeer Khan" same person. Mohammad Suhail Khan, S/o Mohd Qadeer, R/o 536/022, near Makkaganj Masjid, Khadra, Post-Nirala Nagar, Lucknow.

UP eyes over 80 crore tourists by 2028

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has set a target of a five-fold increase in tourist footfalls by 2028 and efforts are being made to attract more than 80 crore tourists to the state. Along with increasing world-class facilities at tourist places, emphasis is on branding and promotion and preparations underway to rejuvenate guest houses and tourist bungalows and increase the number of rooms and homestays. Official sources said the government was dedicated to promoting tourism in the state, focusing on revitalising tourist destinations and strengthening transport infrastructure over the past seven and a half years. This dedication has led to a significant increase in tourist visits, with more than 48 crore tourists choosing to explore the beauty of Uttar Pradesh last

year. Now, the government aims to increase the state's tourism sector fivefold. While the tourism sector's Gross Value Added (GVA) revenue was Rs 11,000 crore in 2017, the target is to boost it to Rs 70,000 crore by 2028. Additionally, the government aims to attract over 80 crore tourists to Uttar Pradesh by 2028. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is committed to boosting tourism alongside industrial development in the state. Uttar Pradesh has many significant religious sites, attracting millions of visitors daily. Over the past seven and a half years, tourism has surged in cities of spiritual importance, such as Kashi, Ayodhya, Mathura, Chitrakoot, Prayagraj, Naimisharanya and Gorakhpur. The government is enhancing world-class facilities in these cities and encouraging tourists to explore multiple destina-

tions. The One District, One Product (ODOP) initiative is crucial in promoting local products to visitors. Additionally, the government is focusing on expanding the availability of hotels, guest houses and homestays while also planning to rejuvenate government-run tourist and Rahi bungalows to accommodate the growing number of tourists. **BID TO MAKE STATE A WEDDING DESTINATION**
The Tourism department is preparing the ground to make Uttar Pradesh an important wedding destination. The wedding venues of the state will be equipped with more facilities. So far, a list of 1,077 marriage laws has been prepared. The number will increase further soon since instructions have been given to extend the benefits of the scheme to maximum businessmen by holding a meet-

ing at the district level. Special Secretary (Tourism) Isha Priya said a list of wedding venues had been prepared. "We have a policy under which a subsidy is provided on any kind of expansion in these marriage halls. We are intending to promote them and motivate them to expand into a better facility and we would be giving them a capital subsidy of 25 per cent on the investment," she said. Isha Priya said that in the National Capital Region area, post COVID-19, people were increasingly preferring to have weddings at places like farm houses or other areas where they could have a good gathering of family and friends. "The NCR is really picking up in the wedding sector. Last year we had one wedding destination event sponsored by the Tourism department in Agra and we intend to have more such events," she said.

CBMR research may pave way for innovative osteoarthritis treatments

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

A recent research conducted by the Centre for Biomedical Research (CBMR) has the potential to revolutionise the understanding of cartilage degradation in osteoarthritis and pave the way for innovative treatments. This groundbreaking study, conducted in collaboration with a laboratory in Florida, offers new insights into the mechanisms underlying cartilage damage and could lead to more effective therapies for cartilage regeneration or prevention of its degradation. Dean at CBMR, Prof Neeraj Sinha provided an overview of the research, explaining that cartilage is a soft tissue situated between two bones, serving as a crucial cushion that prevents the bones from grinding against each other. This cushioning effect is essential for maintaining joint health and mobility.

In cases of osteoarthritis, however, the cartilage deteriorates, leading to painful bone-on-bone contact that is a common issue among the elderly. Sinha elaborated on the complexity of cartilage, highlighting that it is a specialised tissue with unique structural properties that make its regeneration challenging. "Cartilage is not only a cushion but also plays a vital role in joint function. When it degrades, the bones start to rub against each other, causing severe pain and discomfort," he said. "Understanding the structure and function of cartilage is crucial for developing therapies to either regenerate it or prevent its loss," he added. One of the primary difficulties in studying cartilage lies in its soft and water-rich nature, as well as the presence of specific proteins such as collagen. Traditional methods have struggled to capture the complexity of these interactions.

"Cartilage contains various molecules, including collagen and glucosamine, whose interactions are fundamental to its function and flexibility," Sinha noted. "Our research has focused on examining these interactions in detail to gain a better understanding of how cartilage maintains its structural integrity," he said. The research utilised advanced technology at CBMR, particularly a solid-state NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance) instrument, which was installed with support from the Uttar Pradesh government. This equipment allows researchers to study the molecular interactions within cartilage with high precision. "The solid-state NMR machine has enabled us to analyse how glucosamine interacts with collagen protein in cartilage," Sinha explained. "These interactions are critical for the flexibility and function of cartilage. By understanding these molecular processes, we

can develop new strategies for cartilage repair and regeneration," he added. Director of CBMR Prof Alok Dhawan expressed enthusiasm about the research, emphasising its significance in understanding cartilage degradation. "This study provides valuable insights into the mechanisms through which cartilage in knee joints degrades over time," Dhawan said. "With this knowledge, we can explore potential dietary interventions that might help slow down cartilage degradation. For instance, identifying foods that support cartilage health could be an effective strategy for managing osteoarthritis," he added. Dhawan also highlighted the broader implications of the research. "By understanding the underlying problem, we can seek solutions not only through dietary changes but also through advanced therapeutic approaches," he said.

CITYBRIEFS



FOUNDER'S DAY
Founder's Day was celebrated at the Krishna Nagar branch of Red Rose Group of Schools on Sunday. The programme was inaugurated by former DGP Bhanu Pratap Singh and his wife Namrata Singh, school founder RC Misra himself, and all the members of the managing committee. Another former DGP, Vikram Singh, joined online. The main attraction of the programme was the unveiling of the book titled 'Ek Karmayogi Ki Sangharsh Yatra' based on the biography of school founder RC Misra, which describes the various ups and downs and challenges in his life. The programme was attended by school's managing director Prashant Kumar Mishra, president Smita Mishra, chief academic officer Anupama Shukla, and principals of all four branches. In the cultural programme, the students of the four branches enthralled the audience with their musical and dance performances.

Tagore Library digitises 8,742 theses

Lucknow (PNS): The Tagore Library at Lucknow University has successfully completed a significant digitisation project. A total of 8,742 theses have been scanned and uploaded to the 'Shodhganga' portal, a comprehensive repository for Indian theses and dissertations, Prof Keya Pandey said. "This achievement underscores our commitment to enhancing academic resources and ensuring that students, researchers, and academicians have seamless access to valuable academic content. With this initiative, users can now conveniently access thesis-related data from the comfort of their homes, thereby supporting their educational and research pursuits," she said. Pandey noted that this project represents a significant step forward in the digital transformation of academic resources, ensuring that the wealth of knowledge contained within these theses is preserved and made readily accessible to a global audience.

Mayawati attacks Cong for giving Nehru, Gandhi credit of Dalit quota

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party president and former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati, on Sunday, reacted to the Congress president's statement on the issue of sub-classification and 'creamy layer' within the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, saying the grand old party has given the credit of reservation to Nehru and Gandhi and there is not an iota of truth in it. The BSP chief said in a post on X, "Yesterday (on Saturday) after the BSP press conference, I came to know about the statement of the Congress national president in which the credit of reservation has been given to Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, but to Nehru (Jawaharlal Nehru) and Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi), which does not have even an iota of truth." Talking to reporters in Lucknow on Saturday, Mayawati had said that the Bharatiya Janata Party



government and the rest of the (political) parties should clarify their stand on this issue. Mayawati wrote on X on Sunday, "In fact, the entire credit for reservation goes to Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, whom the Congress people conspired to prevent from entering the Constituent Assembly; who was defeated in the elections and who was also forced to resign from the post of law minister."

Recalling the statement of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, she said, "The national president of Congress said that before revealing its stand regarding sub-classification of SC and ST classes in the country, his party will consult NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and lawyers etc., which makes it clear that Congress is in favour of sub-classification." Mayawati accused the Congress of talking in a roundabout way about the 'creamy

layer'. She said that despite the Congress having 99 MPs, no voice was raised in Parliament till the recess to nullify the Supreme Court's decision, while the Congress won these seats in the name of saving the Constitution and reservation. Expressing opposition to the Supreme Court's decision regarding sub-classification and 'creamy layer' within SC and ST, Kharge had said on Saturday that the government should have repealed the decision through Parliament as soon as it came. Kharge told reporters in Delhi, "Recently, seven judges of the Supreme Court have given a decision, in which they have talked about the 'creamy layer' along with the sub-classification of the SC-ST category people. In India, the people of the Dalit community got reservation through Baba Saheb's 'Poona Pact'. Later, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi continued the reservation policy."

UP bypolls: BSP to contest all seats

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Desperate to regain the party's lost ground in Uttar Pradesh, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati announced on Sunday that her party will contest all the 10 assembly seats going to by-elections in the state. Earlier, the BSP mostly did not contest bypolls. Mayawati took to X (formerly Twitter) to share details of a meeting she held with party officials in which a decision was taken to field BSP candidates in from 10 constituencies going to bypolls. She also revealed that the candidates for Phulpur and Manjhawa constituencies have been announced. During the meeting, Mayawati launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party-led governments at the Centre and in UP for neglecting vital issues and exhorted party workers to work wholeheartedly for victory in the upcoming bypolls. "The Central government has

not only failed to stem poverty, unemployment, price rise and backwardness, it has also not paid attention to these issues because of which there is immense anger among the public. To divert people's attention... it is indulging in bulldozer politics... and creating disharmony between castes and religions," she said. She also listed as "conspiracies" the government's attempts to bring in a new religious conversion bill, and to weaken the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through the creamy layer proposals. Her ire was also directed at the proposed amendments in the Waqf Act. She said the government was "unduly" interfering in the management of these properties. "The poor and hardworking janata is hungry... (and wants to) only to live with self-respect and dignity," she said. Addressing concerns over flood relief and law and order, Mayawati noted that the state government's efforts have been

largely superficial, with more focus on media statements rather than effective on-ground relief. She also criticised the government's approach to land management and lease policies, accusing it of bias and of creating chaos. Emphasising the BSP's commitment to the underprivileged, Mayawati also urged party members to fully commit their efforts to the campaign, stating that the success of the party would directly benefit the movement for the rights of the poor and exploited. She said the party officials should work with the motto of 'Bahujan Hitay, Bahujan Sukhay' (welfare for all). Significantly, with the bypolls approaching, the BSP is gearing up to strengthen its position in the state's political landscape, with Mayawati leading the charge. Mayawati said that as the BJP had made the bypolls a matter of prestige, her party would put up a strong fight on all seats. Mayawati urged BSP members to maintain their unwavering

support, emphasising that the party, dedicated to the welfare of the poor and marginalised, does not rely on wealthy benefactors or big capitalists like other parties. She said that since the public did not trust the BJP anymore, it was imperative for BSP to reaffirm its commitment to its core principles of social justice and equity to regain public trust, which she believed would also translate into electoral gains. Further, the meeting, attended by senior BSP office-bearers and district presidents from Uttar Pradesh, also deliberated over the party's preparations for the upcoming bypolls. Though the dates for by-elections to the 10 seats have not been announced, this is the BSP's second meeting for poll preparations. The meeting focused on assessing the progress of directives issued during the party's previous meeting on June 23, aimed at expanding BSP support base among marginalised communities.

BJP always tries to weaken fight for quota: AKY

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge criticised the 'creamy layer judgment' of the Supreme Court, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav targeted Bharatiya Janata Party, saying that its government always tries to weaken the fight for reservation through its vague statements and lawsuits. Without directly quoting the apex court's judgment that allowed states to have sub-groups within 15 per cent Scheduled Caste quota, the SP chief said in a post on X, "The main objective of any kind of reservation should be the empowerment of the neglected society and not the division or disintegration of that society, this disregards the basic principle of reservation itself," Yadav said. "The discrimination and unequal opportunities that have been going on for countless generations cannot be bridged by the changes that have come in a few generations. 'Reservation' is the constitutional way to empower and strengthen the exploited and deprived society, this is what will bring about change, there is no need to change its provisions." "The internal thinking of the BJP has always been anti-reservation. That is why the trust of 90 per cent of the PDA society on the BJP is continuously falling. The credibility of the BJP on the issue of reservation has become zero," he added in the same post. In a post on X on Saturday night, the SP urged the court to take cognisance of the assault on a group of people in Ghaziabad by members of a Hindu right-wing outfit, and asked if this was a new way to "vacate" land. Yadav said, "Even the government does not have the right to take the law into its own hands, then how can its associates and henchmen have the right to do so. The honourable court is requested to take suo motu cognisance of this violent matter." He said such incidents were tarnishing the image of UP.

Akhilesh treads cautiously

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After stellar performance in the last Lok Sabha elections, the Samajwadi Party is treading cautiously for the by-elections to 10 Uttar Pradesh assembly seats. The SP had won 37 Lok Sabha seats in the elections that concluded in early June this year. The SP is working on multiple options in selection of candidates for the bypolls to 10 assembly seats. In its strategy for the bypolls, the SP has factored in the signals of firm resolve of winning all 10 seats emanating from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has already completed the first round of preparations for the next political battle by constituting committees comprising ministers for each of the 10 assembly constituencies. In each committee three ministers have been entrusted with the responsibility of supervising the campaign, winning the trust of the electorate and fighting the false narrative of scrapping of Constitution and reservation spread by the opposition during the Lok Sabha elections. The ministers have been particularly asked to focus on social media for busting the fake narrative spread by the opposition. Sources in the SP said the party was not ready to take risks by bringing new faces. They said the party was focusing on family connections in its candidate selection. The party is preparing a mix of first and second-line leaders to ensure stability and continuity in its political strategy. The sources said that SP was

SP now targeting students, youths

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

With its 'PDA' strategy spelling success for it in the Lok Sabha polls, the Samajwadi Party is now targeting students and youths belonging to the backward and minority communities to strengthen its cadre base in Uttar Pradesh. The party has initiated a month-long campaign 'PDA-Chhatra, Navjawan Jagrukta Abhiyan' (students, youths awareness campaign) to focus on the youth. PDA is an acronym given by party pres-

ident Akhilesh Yadav for 'Pichhde' (backwards), Dalits and Alpsankhyak (minorities). Senior party leader Rajendra Chowdhury said in this campaign, students and youth would be made aware about issues of public interest, including paper leak, fee hike, employment, reservation, free education, digital divide, construction of libraries, restoration of student union, construction of new university/college, corruption in appointments in educational institutions and transparency in reservation."

signaling its intent to field relatives of current MPs for several seats. Ajit Prasad, son of Milkipur MP Awadhesh Prasad, and Chhaya Verma, daughter of Ambedkar Nagar MP Lalji Verma, are among those expected to be given the green light. Former MP Tej Pratap Singh Yadav is likely to be the party's candidate from Karhal, while a family member of Irfan Solanki is expected to contest from Sisau in Kanpur. Additionally, former MLA Haji Rizwan and former MP Qadir Rana are potential candidates for Kundarki (Moradabad) and Meerapur (Bijnor) respectively. Negotiations are continuing for the remaining four seats, with two possibly being allocated to Congress under the INDIA bloc. The list of candidates suggests

that the SP is strategically positioning second-generation leaders to take the helm in districts where first-generation members have moved to national roles. To strengthen its position, the SP is conducting surveys and research across these constituencies. The party aims to finalise its candidates before the official announcement of the by-elections schedule. A senior SP leader said the party was preparing for a close contest between the INDIA bloc and BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, adding to the significance of the by-elections. Following a strong showing in the recent Lok Sabha elections, the SP is eager to demonstrate its performance in this upcoming political test. The success of the new generation of leaders will be crucial for the party's future.

Govt not allowing Hindu refugees from B'desh to enter India: Rai

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Former minister and president of Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee Ajay Rai has criticised the Narendra Modi government at the Centre and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for their handling of Hindu refugees from Bangladesh. Rai accused the BJP government of deceit, claiming that

Hindu refugees trying to enter India are being turned away at the border, while Yogi Adityanath claims about their government protecting Hindus and also accuses the opposition claiming that they were 'silent' on the safety of the community. Rai expressed his discontent with Yogi Adityanath's "irresponsible statements" regarding the sensitive issue of Bangladesh. He highlighted that during a

multi-party meeting called by the government, the opposition unanimously supported action on the issue, with Rahul Gandhi raising concerns over attacks on minorities in Bangladesh and questioning the Indian government's measures to address the issue. Rai accused Yogi Adityanath of exploiting the situation for electoral gains by spreading religious animosity in Uttar Pradesh instead of

UP to commemorate Partition Horrors Remembrance Day on August 14

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government is set to commemorate Partition Horrors Remembrance Day on August 14. In a letter dispatched to all officers concerned, Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh said, "Like last year, paying homage to those who lost their lives during the partition of India, it has been decided to commemorate Partition Horrors Remembrance Day on August 14, 2024 in their memory." The letter further said that the partition of the country was no less than a tragedy. "Millions of Indians sacrificed their lives to achieve Independence, at such a time the pain of the country being divided into two parts struck millions of families like a wound. At the same time Bengal was also partitioned. In this, the eastern part of Bengal was separated from India and East Pakistan was formed; which became an independent nation in 1971 as Bangladesh," the chief secretary said in a letter. This geographical partition of India shook the people of the country socially, culturally, economically and mentally, the letter mentioned. The partition horrors memorial day not only

'Tiranga Yatra' flagged off

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The 'Tiranga Yatra' organised by Bharatiya Janata Party Lucknow Mahanagar Yuva Morcha at Balaganj crossing was flagged off by state vice-president and MLA Noida Pankaj Singh and Mahanagar President Anand Dwivedi on Sunday. Under the leadership of Yuva Morcha Mahanagar president Manvendra Singh, general secretary Abhishek Gupta, a large number of youth workers and residents of the area joined the 'Tiranga Padyatra' waving flags in their hands and raising slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. The yatra concluded at Bhagat Singh crossing Rajajipuram. The Uttar Pradesh unit of the BJP is organising a 'tricolour march' across all the 403 Assembly constituencies of the state from August 11 to 13 as part of its 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. A statement issued by the party on Saturday said the BJP will carry out the march at the Assembly constituency level.

The march will traverse through cities, villages, streets and neighbourhoods across the state, spreading the message of patriotism. The march will see the participation of state BJP president Bhopendra Singh Chaudhary, state general secretary (organisation) Dharampal Singh, state ministers, MPs, MLAs, party officials from the state, region, district, division and booth levels, along with local representatives and citizens, all carrying the national flag, it said. Sameer Singh, the state's co-ordinator for the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign and a BJP spokesperson, said Chaudhary would join party officials and workers in the tricolour march in Saharanpur on Sunday. He said in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call, the BJP has been promoting the "Nation First" message for years through the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign, involving various activities, such as hoisting the national flag on every house and organising the tricolour march.

reminds us to end discrimination, animosity and ill will but also inspires unity, social har-

mony and human empowerment," the chief secretary added. As in the past, the state

government will organise various events/programmes in the entire state on the occasion of Partition Horrors Remembrance Day on August 14 in all 75 districts of the state, including Lucknow. The letter stated that the members of families displaced during the Partition should be invited and a two-minute silence should be observed in memory of those who sacrificed their lives during the tragedy. The letter said that an exhibition related to Partition should be organised in a large auditorium in which photographs of the then events, newspaper clippings, literature, government records, preserved material of displaced families, etc. should be displayed. The chief secretary further said that the displaced families affected by the Partition should also be requested to come to the exhibition site so that they could share the sufferings their families had faced. "In all the 75 districts of the state, films/documentaries related to the Partition should be screened in schools/colleges/universities and at the exhibition sites. Students of various educational institutions should be taken on a tour of these exhibitions and they should be made aware of this historical event," the letter added.

CM reviews preps for UP International Trade Show

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh will organise the second edition of UP International Trade Show (UPTS) from September 25 to 29 at the India Exhibition Mart in Greater Noida. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday reviewed the preparations for organising the international trade show. Vietnam will participate as a partner country in the trade show. This significant event aims to showcase the rich craft, cuisine and culture of Uttar Pradesh to a global audience, drawing entrepreneurs, manufacturers and traders from around the world. UPTS 2.0 will witness buyers from more than 66 countries. As many as 2,500 exhibitors have already registered. The UPTS will be based on the theme 'Unique platform for sourcing'.

MSMEs, startups, education, agriculture, health, tourism, culture, energy, and the ODOOP (One District, One Product) initiative. He called for extensive preparations to ensure that the event was grand and impactful, underscoring its importance in providing a global stage for Uttar Pradesh's diverse industries and cultural heritage.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda Regional Office Kanpur Dehat Region: 118/330, 2nd Floor, Kaushalpur, Gumi No. 5, Kanpur - 208012

Premises Required on Lease Basis for Elite Chauraha Branch, Distt. Jhansi

The Bank of Baroda invites offers from the owners / Power of attorney holders of premises on ground floor with the area of 1730 Sq. Ft. to 2188 Sq. Ft. for housing its "Elite Chauraha Branch at Distt. Jhansi" with all facilities including adequate power. The premises shall be ready for occupation or likely to be ready for occupation within a period of 3-6 Months. The intending offers shall submit their offers in two separate sealed cover superscribed Technical bid and Price bid to Regional Office (Kanpur Dehat Region), Bank of Baroda 118/330, (Second Floor), Kaushalpur, Gumi No.5, Kanpur-208012 on or before 02/09/2024 upto 3:00 pm. Priority will be given to the premises belonging to Public Sector Units / Govt. Departments. (For details please log in on tender section of our web site: www.bankofbaroda.com). The bank reserves its right to accept or reject any offer without assigning reasons therefor. Regional Manager, Bank of Baroda (Kanpur Dehat Region), Kaushalpur, Gumi No. 5, Kanpur

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792 Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

PUBLIC NOTICE GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE

The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility against Gold ornament savailed by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 20/08/2024. In the event any surplus amount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Date without any prior notice.

Loan Account Number	Customer Name	Branch Name
145966915	AMAN YADAV	GORAKHPUR BRANCH

Auction will be conducted online through <https://egold.auctiontiger.net> on 20/08/2024 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 12/08/2024 Place: Uttar Pradesh

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Loan Account Number	Customer Name	Branch Name
119185768	AMIT KUMAR JAISWAL	VARANASI LANKA BRANCH

Auction will be conducted online through <https://egold.auctiontiger.net> on 20/08/2024 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 12/08/2024 Place: Uttar Pradesh

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Loan Account Number	Customer Name	Branch Name
111433559	SAKET SUMAN	AYODHYA MBL
109850872	SURAJ KUMAR	AYODHYA MBL
143543030	RAJEEV KUMAR VERMA	ALIGANJ LUCKNOW BRANCH

Auction will be conducted online through <https://egold.auctiontiger.net> on 20/08/2024 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 12/08/2024 Place: Uttar Pradesh

BJP launches cleanliness drive in Kashi under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Committed to national unity and integrity and to awaken national consciousness among the people, under the 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a cleanliness drive around the statue of 'Bharat Ratna' Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar located at Kutchery Golghar here on Sunday. The chief guest of the programme, regional BJP president Dilip Patel and special guest and city party's chief Vidyasagar Rai did extensive cleanliness in Ambedkar Park and the surrounding areas. They also garlanded Ambedkar statue and highlighted Dr Ambedkar's contribution in the freedom movement. On the occasion, tree plantation was also done inside the park under the name of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Baam'. While addressing the party workers present there, regional BJP chief said lakhs of people sacrificed their lives during the freedom movement. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is constantly working to increase the sense of loyalty, respect and dedication towards the country in the hearts of the countrymen. He



BJP launching cleanliness drive at Ambedkar Park in Varanasi on Sunday.

said to fulfil the 'sankalp' (resolution) of the PM to make India a developed India, 140 crore countrymen will have to make significant contribution. Patel said cleanliness is the dream project of the PM as the Swachhata Abhiyan started in 2014 has today taken the form of a mass movement. He said on Independence Day, everyone should hoist the tricolour, the pride of the country, in every house and inspire others to do the same. The city BJP president said the purpose of reminding people of the sacrifices of the martyrs

through various programmes being run by the party before August 15 (Independence Day) is to awaken the spirit of patriotism among the youth. He said under the leadership of the PM Narendra Modi, India's respect has increased in the whole world. Regional media in charge Navratan Rathi said the cleanliness campaign which started today will continue till August 14 under which cleanliness campaign will be run around the statue sites and monuments of great personalities in which the party office-bearers, workers and public

representatives will pay their respect by garlanding the statues of immortal martyrs and great men. On the occasion, regional co-media in charge Santosh Solapurkar, Jagdish Tripathi, Madhukar Chitransh, Arvind Singh, Shriprakash Shukla, Ashok Patel, Madhukar Pandey and many others were also present. Meanwhile, under the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Pakhwada' at Gopi Radha Primary School and Girls Inter College, Ravindrappuri, patriotic creativity was seen by the girl students on Sunday. While the intermediate girl students made tricolour badges, the primary school children tricolour wall hangings. The children gave the message of patriotism through craftsmanship. On the occasion, school director Dr Shalini Shah said India is a treasure of priceless artifacts. Many artists and craftsmen of the country have made the country proud with their creativity. School's Chief Administrative Officer Smriti Sah, Deputy Director Saloni Shah, Deputy Manager Dr Abhinav Bhatt and Coordinator Ratnesh Govind also appreciated the creativity of the young craftsmen.

Olympian Lalit offers prayers at KVT

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Lalit Upadhyay, a member of the proud Indian hockey team, which won bronze medal at Paris Olympics, along with father, brother, coach and others offered prayers at Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) here on Sunday. Lalit dedicated his medal to Lord Vishwanath (Shiva). Lalit was also a member of the Indian team that won a bronze medal at Tokyo Olympics in 2020. A speedy midfielder/forward Lalit belongs to this holy city which has produced several great hockey players like forward Mohd Shahid, back Vivek Singh, Naim and others who had brought laurels to the country as well as the city winning medals and trophies at the international level. India saw revival in hockey at Tokyo when after four decades, the team succeeded in standing at podium at Tokyo in 2020 after its gold medal at Moscow Olympics in 1980 when local Shahid was team's captain. When 30-year-old Lalit landed at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur he was given a red carpet welcome amidst the beat of dhol and nagaras. Lalit was promoted to DSP of UP Police in 2022 by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who himself handed over the same letter to Lalit. Later, when Olympian reached



Paris Olympics bronze medalist Indian hockey team member Lalit Upadhyay, along with his father, at KVT in Varanasi on Sunday.

Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham, he was warmly welcomed by the sports lovers, devotees and even Kanwariyas amidst the cheers of 'Har Har Mahadev' and 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. Apart from two Olympics, Lalit was also member of Indian team which won gold medals in 2022 Asian Games at Hangzhou, 2017 Asia Cup in Dhaka, Asian Champions

Trophy at Kuantan and Muskat, apart from silver medal at Commonwealth Games at Birmingham in 2022, bronze medal at World League at Bhubaneswar in 2016-17, Asian Games at Jakarta in 2018, Champions Trophy at Breda in 2018 etc. Meanwhile, elaborate security arrangements have been made to maintain peace in Dwadasa

Jyotirlinga KVT on the eve of fourth Monday in auspicious month of Shrawan. Proper barricades have been made both inside and outside the temple premises. As it is expected that lakhs of devotees, including saffron-clad Kanwariyas will turn up there to offer prayers, additional security forces have been deployed there. In view of the heavy rush, no vehicles will be allowed to move between Godowlia and Maidigan. To maintain law and order, the devotees will be checked at many places through metal detectors. All the activities will also be watched through various CCTV cameras. For the convenience of the devotees, at several places big LED screens have been installed to display the activities of garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum). Besides, heavy rush of devotees is also expected at Markandey Mahadev Temple apart from all famous Shiva temples including Mahamritunjaya Mahadev (Daranganar). Gauri Kedareshwar (Kedar Ghat), Jogeshwar Mahadev (Ishwargangi), Omkleshwar Mahadev (Chittanpura), Teel Bhandeshwar (Pandey Haveli), Sarangnath Mahadev (Sarnath), Vishwanath Temple in Banaras Hindu University and many others in the city areas and its outskirts including all Shiva temples located on Panchkoshi Marg.

IM-BHU conducts Footsteps-2024

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University (IM-BHU) conducted 'Footsteps-2024', the first extra curricular management event of academic year 2024-2026 which was organised by the student club 'Kalpavriksha' on Saturday. It witnessed active participation from the fresh batch, as well as enthusiastic involvement from the senior batch. The programme commenced with the traditional offering of flowers and lighting of lamps at the statue of Goddess Saraswati, the symbol of knowledge, wisdom and learning by IM-BHU Director Prof Ashish Bajpai and Dean Prof SK Dubey. Addressing the event Prof Dubey encouraged the students to engage not only in academic activities but also in co-curricular programmes, providing them a platform to showcase their talents and compete with students from across the country. He emphasised that such events not only allow young management students to exhibit their skills but also provide a glimpse of applying management principles in the real world. Student wellbeing coordinator Dr Shashi Srivastava also added that the programme offered an informal interaction between the junior and senior batches, pro-

viding the former with insights into the institute's culture. Dr Anindita Chakraborty, Club coordinator, praised the students for successfully organising the event on a large scale. She also informed the students about the upcoming activities of the club and stressed the importance of discipline alongside enjoyment throughout the event. Over 120 students participated in the event which featured 'Treasure Hunt' within the IM-BHU campus, aiming to familiarise first-year students with the university environment and scenic campus, followed by 'Money in Your Pocket', where participants attempted to attract a large crowd and gather funds by selling trifles and 'Pictionary' game where teams of 10 members each had to guess what another member was drawing. The event concluded with 'Ad-Mad Show' provided participants with a platform to exhibit their creativity and marketing skills by creating a short advertisement of FMCG products. The closing ceremony took place at 4.30 pm within the institute premises. Prof Ashish Bajpai awarded and felicitated all the winners. In his address, he said, "in comparison to winning competitions, rich experiences of participation hold greater value".

Ganga continues to recede in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The water level of Ganga river in the city continued to recede for the third consecutive day on Sunday, but slowly and despite this trend, the residents of low-lying areas not only in Varanasi but also in Ghazipur and Ballia in this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) are still facing flood-like situation, especially in some localities on both sides of river Varuna like Saraiya, Salarpur and others. During the last two days, District Magistrate S Rajalingam and other officers visited there to take the stock of situation and inspect the condition of flood relief camps. As per the report of Middle Ganga Division-III of Central Water Commission (CWC) the Ganga river was falling by 30 mm per hour but the water level was still at a high point as it was recorded at 68.48 metres at 8 am against 68.92 metres at the warning level (70.262 metres) in this holy city. Despite the receding trend, the situation in downstream Ghazipur and Ballia districts is still grim. In Ballia, the Ganga is still flowing above the danger mark but in Ghazipur it came down below

Ganga, Yamuna level starts decreasing in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The water level of Ganga-Yamuna has now started decreasing in Prayagraj. On Sunday morning the water level of Ganga reached 81.70 metres and Yamuna 80.73 metres. In the last 24 hours, the water level of the Ganga decreased by 12 centimetres and that of Yamuna by 41 centimetres. The danger level in Prayagraj

is 84.734 metres. Ganga river is flowing about three metres below danger level. The water of Ganga had entered the Bade Hanuman temple on Wednesday morning. The Lord Hanuman was bathed with the holy water of Ganga and aarti was performed here. After this, the temple was closed for four days. The devotees coming here were worshipping from outside the temple. 24 hours, Mirzapur received heavy rain of 74 mm. In Varanasi, as a large number of devotees, including saffron-clad Kanwariyas are arriving here daily in this auspicious month of Shrawan, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and River Police personnel are keeping a close watch on the bathers at Dashashwamedh and adjoining ghats. Dozens of low-lying temples located at internationally famous 84-odd ghats are either fully or partially submerged in water.

PMBJK stalls to be set up at Varanasi City, other stations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Indian Railways is setting up Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK) stalls in the circulating areas and concourses of stations to provide convenience to the passengers coming and going to the stations and to provide quality medicines at low rates. In the same sequence, Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra stall has also been established at Banaras station of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER). The railway passengers are getting benefited by purchasing quality medicines and consumables (Jan Aushadhi products) at affordable prices every day from the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra stall at Banaras station. As a result of the positive response received from the passengers, such stalls will also be opened at Deoria Sadar, Ballia, Chhapra and Varanasi City stations of Varanasi Division and the work of construction of PMBJK stalls is in progress at these stations, PRO Ashok Kumar said.

Woman, son die as ceiling caves in due to gas leak blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A woman and her son were killed while husband and daughter were seriously injured when the ceiling of their house caved in after a powerful blast took place due to a leakage in gas cylinder in Konch town of Jalaun district early on Sunday morning. At the time of the incident, all the family members were fast asleep in their house. They were crushed under the debris which led to killing of a woman and her son while the condition of her husband and daughter was stated to be critical at the hospital. Akhilesh Yadav (32), son of Awadhesh of Mehalua village lived with family in his pucca house. On Saturday night he was sleeping along with wife Mohini (30), daughter Aditi (12) and son Deo (6). They were not aware of the leakage in their gas cylinder. Around 5 am on Sunday, Mohini woke up and due to power cut, after she used lighter to light the lantern, a powerful blast took place. After cracks in walls, the ceiling of the house caved in on them crushing all the family members under the debris. In the incident, Mohini and Deo were killed on the spot. ASP along with force rushed to spot who, after sending the bodies for autopsy, sent the injured to the hospital. On the other hand, a youth was found floating in a reservoir near Kudhwa village under Gajner police station area of Kanpur Dehat on Sunday morning. With the help of villagers, police got the body out of the reservoir and sent it for autopsy. As nothing was recovered from the possession of the deceased, his identity could not be ascertained. Police and

villagers apprehended that the body appeared to have come floating with the water from some distant place. Inspector Pravin Yadav said on the left arm of the youth, a picture of snake and the word 'Om' were engraved. Two quarters of liquor were recovered from both the pockets of his pant. Despite efforts when police failed to ascertain the identity of the deceased, the body was sent for autopsy after panchnama as unidentified. Inspector said the body appeared to be many days old. Efforts were on to ascertain the identity. On receipt of autopsy report, further action will be initiated in the matter, he said. Meanwhile a youth committed suicide by hanging himself in Barakheda village under Hasanganj Kotwali police station area of Unnao on Saturday afternoon. Police sent the body for autopsy. Aman (19), son of Jitendra Yadav of Barakheda used to work a daily wager in Lucknow to support his family. On Saturday morning, he left the house on a bike and on return, went to a small at the room back. His family members presumed that he resting there. After two hours when mother Sheila Devi went to the room, she found Aman hanging with the help of his sister's dupatta. She raised an alarm and a large number of villagers assembled on the spot and informed the police. Kin were not interested in the autopsy but due to matter being suspicious, police had to initiate necessary action after investigations. Inspector Chandra Kant Mishra said on receipt of autopsy report, further action will be taken in the matter.

Massive tree plantation organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Taking forward the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Animesh Kumar Sinha, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, North Central Railway (NCR), Himanshu Badoni, Divisional Railway Manager, Prayagraj and Ashok Sachdev, Head, Sant Nirankari Mission under the leadership of Tech Machine

Training Centre, Subedarganj, organised a massive tree plantation and cleaning of campus here on Sunday. This was the first experiment of cluster plantation in railways under which more than 125 trees of jamun, mango, amla, jackfruit, neem, mulberry etc. were planted. The programme was organised by Shivaji Kadam, Chief Environment Manager and in which various officers and employees of Railways partic-

ipated. Atul Singh, Rolling Stock Engineer, Sanjay Asthana, Principal IRTMTC, Prayagraj and more than 100 people from Sant Nirankari Mission participated. The DRM also told many important things related to the environment. DUPED: A businessman was duped by cyber thugs in the Cantt area. A businessman living in a flat in New Cantt area told the police through a written complaint that a few days

ago he received a call from cyber fraudsters. The caller posing as a police officer claimed that they had evidence that he watched and uploaded porn videos. He was told that watching the banned porn video was a legal offence and he could be sent to jail. As a result the businessman got scared and transferred the money to the given account number. The Cantt police station in charge, Sunil Kanaujia said that the cyber thugs duped

businessman of more than ₹1.71 lakh by threatening him. A written complaint in this connection was given at the Cantt police station and the police is investigating the matter after registering a case. Meanwhile with the arrest of the accused, the Prayagraj police claimed to have worked out the murder of Shiva Prasad which took place on July 4. He was murdered by his nephew, police said.

New vocational course on cyber security launched

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University (CSJMU), in association with the CSJM Innovation Foundation and C3iHub IIT Kanpur, launched a new vocational course on cyber security on Saturday. This initiative aims to equip students with the essential skills required to defend against cyber threats and safeguard sensitive information. During the inaugural ceremony, Vice-Chancellor Prof Vinay Kumar Pathak emphasised the significance of this vocational course on cyber security. He acknowledged that while the development of such a programme is a commendable step, it is crucial to focus on its effective implementation. He also addressed concerns regarding students' queries and highlighted the necessity of meeting the needs of students, particularly those from affiliated colleges. Notably, he pointed out that this is the first cyber security course offered in Hindi. Director, IIT Kanpur, Prof Manindra Agarwal shared insights from an official in-



The CSJM University launched a vocational course on cyber security on Saturday.

the cyber security cell, revealing that financial cyber crime is significantly more prevalent than physical crime. This underscores the urgent demand for cybersecurity education, stressing that all students, irrespective of their field of study, should acquire fundamental knowledge on this critical issue. Dr Tanima Hajra, Chief Operating Officer and Interim Chief Executive Officer of C3iHub at IIT Kanpur, along with Prof Sandeep

Shukla, the programme director at C3iHub, said the development of a programme designed to enhance accessibility for students, ensuring a streamlined process with a smooth sailing experience throughout their online course. Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Sudhir K Awasthi took note of what he described as pervasive technology in the society at the current time and was particularly keen to draw the audience's attention to risks of

cybercrimes. He said the main objective of this course is to help students understand how to keep their data safe from malware and make sure it is encrypted. Further, he stated that according to the feedback given during the discussion, the course can be turned into a credit course and mentioned the course fee is ₹500 only. Prof RK Dwivedi, the CDC Director at CSJM University, emphasised that this initiative is not merely a philo-

sophy course but rather a moral science programme aimed at fostering an understanding of appropriate online behaviour. And thereby supporting the vision of a "Surakshit Digital Bharat." The course consists of six modules and has virtual labs that help apply the ideas studied in class. The lectures will be recorded and accessible on the Learning Management System (LMS) with an assessment after each module. It comes with 45 hours of recorded Hindi language lectures with Power Point presentations in English. Also, there will be doubt clarification sessions in every module for students to clear their concerns and provide technical support. On the occasion, a magazine was also launched that marked the introduction of a vocational course in cybersecurity, offering extensive information and insights into the cybersecurity domain. The dignitaries who attended the launch of the vocational course were felicitated with the shawl and memento as a gesture of appreciation. Registrar Dr Anil Kumar Yadva proposed the vote of thanks.

Varsha Mangal Utsav celebrated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Seth Anandram Jaipuria School here celebrated a vibrant and educational Varsha Mangal Utsav on Saturday to mark the arrival of the monsoon. This special event was designed to celebrate the importance of rain and promote environmental awareness among students and the community. Varsha Mangal Utsav commenced with a warm welcome by the students, they emphasized the significance of the monsoon season in sustaining agriculture and supporting the ecosystem. The chief guest on the occasion was PD Stephen (Chief Executive Officer, Cantonment Board) and The guest of honour Col Sunil Sachan (Station Headquarter, Kanpur Cantt.). Varsha Mangal Utsav is organised every year to celebrate the onset of the monsoon season, promoting

awareness about the importance of rainwater harvesting and environmental conservation. The event aimed to engage students in activities that highlight the significance of the monsoon in agriculture and daily life. Tree plantation was taken up by the guests setting an example that every sapling planted is a step towards a greener tomorrow. The guest of honour said as we plant the trees, we also plant the seeds of hope, kindness and empathy. This event was a wonderful opportunity for the students to learn about the natural world and its vital processes. Students celebrated Riturang and performed traditional dances and songs celebrating the arrival of the rains. The vote of thanks was proposed by Principal Shikha Banerjee. She expressed gratitude to distinguished guests, parents, and students for making the event a grand success.



PM releases 109 high-yielding, climate-resilient seed varieties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday released 109 high-yielding, climate-resilient and biofortified seed varieties of agricultural and horticultural crops, aiming to enhance farm productivity and farmers' income. Developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), these varieties span 61 crops, including 34 field crops and 27 horticultural crops. Modi unveiled the seeds at three experimental agriculture plots at Delhi's Pusa Campus, where he also interacted with farmers and scientists. The field crop varieties include cereals, millets, forage crops, oilseeds, pulses, sugarcane, cotton, and fibre crops. For horticulture, the PM released new varieties of fruits, vegetables, plantation crops, tubers, spices, flowers, and medicinal plants. According to an official statement, Modi stressed on the significance of value addition in agriculture while discussing the importance of these new varieties with farmers. Farmers



present on the occasion said that these new varieties would be highly beneficial to them because of lower input cost. The Prime Minister discussed the importance of millets and underlined how people are moving towards nutritious food. He also talked about the benefits of natural farming and the increasing faith of common people towards organic farming. Modi noted that people have started consuming and demanding organic foods. Farmers appreciated

the efforts of the government in promotion of natural farming. They also lauded the role played by Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) in creating awareness, the release said. Modi suggested that the KVKs should proactively inform farmers about the benefits of the new varieties being developed every month to create awareness about their benefits, the statement said. The Prime Minister also lauded the scientists for the development of these new crop varieties.

eties. The scientists informed that they have been working in line with the suggestion given by the Prime Minister to bring unutilised crops into the mainstream, the statement said. Since 2014, Modi has advocated for sustainable farming practices and climate-resilient methodologies to bolster farmers' income. He has consistently emphasised on the promotion of biofortified crop varieties, linking them to government initiatives like the Mid-Day Meal scheme and Anganwadi services to combat malnutrition in India. Later addressing reporters, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that today is a historic day for farmers as 109 varieties of 61 crops which have been released will help increase farmers' income, enhance production and reduce costs. Chouhan said that the seeds of these crops are climate-friendly and can yield good crops even in adverse weather. He also informed that these varieties are rich in nutri-

Hindenburg: BJP slams Opposition for creating financial instability in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Sunday alleged that the Congress and other Opposition parties are part of a conspiracy to create financial instability and chaos in India, as the ruling party rejected Hindenburg's charge against the SEBI chairperson as an attempt to discredit the financial watchdog. BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the short-selling firm, which last year levelled serious allegations against the Adani group, is facing scrutiny from Indian probe agencies. Opposition parties are echoing its allegation, and the conspiracy is now clearly visible that they want to create chaos and instability, especially in the financial sector, he said. Noting that many such critical reports emanating from foreign soil are released just ahead of or during Parliament sessions, he said opposition leaders were aware that the report was coming when Parliament was scheduled to meet. The Monsoon session of Parliament was scheduled to end on Monday but was cut



short by one working day and got over on Friday. BJP leader and former Union minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the short-selling firm has clearly attacked market regulator SEBI in an "obvious partnership" with the Congress and has an ominous motive and goal. It is to destabilise and discredit one of the world's strongest financial systems and create chaos in the world's fastest growing economy, he said on X. He said he has read the report which, he claimed, is a classic "Congress style innuendo and lies glued

together", aimed at discrediting the regulator and causing chaos and losses in markets for investors to slow down bullish sentiments. He alleged, "I have said often and say again -- many global forces with help of Congress dynasty want to slow down or trip up India's rise. We won't let them." Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia accused the Congress of spreading anarchy and controversies over the Hindenburg Research's allegations against SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Buch. The SEBI chairperson and her husband have rejected the allegations levelled against them as baseless and asserted that their finances are an open book.

"Congress's work is only to spread anarchy and entangle the country in controversial matters," said Scindia while responding to reporters' query on the Hindenburg Research report. The Guna MP said PM Narendra Modi and BJP workers are carrying the torch of development and progress, whereas the Congress has been trying to mislead the country and keep it in the dark for years. The Hindenburg Research on Saturday launched a broadside against market regulator SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch, alleging she and her husband had stakes in obscure offshore funds used in the Adani money siphoning scandal. In a blogpost, Hindenburg said 18 months since its damning report on Adani, "SEBI has shown a surprising lack of interest in Adani's alleged undisclosed web of Mauritius and offshore shell entities." The SEBI chairperson and her husband have rejected the allegations levelled against them as baseless and asserted that their finances are an open book.

NDA eyes clear majority in RS after bypolls on 12 seats

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP-led NDA is expected to achieve a clear majority in Rajya Sabha after bye-elections for 12 seats scheduled next month, which would help the party get the nod for key legislations such as the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. In the Upper House with the current effective strength of 229, the BJP has 87 MPs and with its allies the number is 105. Six nominated members, who usually cast their vote with the government, take the strength of the NDA to 111, four short of the half-way mark of 115. The Congress has 26 members in the Upper House and its allies add another 58, taking the Opposition alliance numbers to 84. Among the key fence-sitters are the YSR Congress Party with 11 members and BJD with eight members. Elections to the 12 vacant Rajya Sabha seats in nine states will be held on September 3. The Election Commission has announced 12 separate elections for each of the seats, handing over a clear advantage to the ruling party in the state. The BJP and its allies are expected to win 11 of the 12 seats in the elections, which will take the NDA past the half-way



mark to 122 seats in the 245-member house. Four seats from Jammu and Kashmir in the Upper House are vacant as the Union Territory is yet to get its first legislative assembly. This reduces the effective strength of the Rajya Sabha to 241. Ten Rajya Sabha seats fell vacant as the sitting members, including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Sarbananda Sonowal, and Jyotiraditya Scindia, were elected to Lok Sabha. Bypolls are also being held for two seats in Telangana and Odisha. K Keshava Rao from Telangana resigned recently from the House after quitting the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to join the Congress while Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP

Mamata Mohanta resigned from her Rajya Sabha seat and primary membership of the party. She has joined the BJP. Besides Goyal, Sonowal and Scindia, the other Rajya Sabha members who won the parliamentary polls and became members of Lok Sabha are Kamakhya Prasad Tasa (BJP), Misha Bharti (RJD), Vivek Thakur (BJP), Deepender Singh Hooda (Congress), Udayanraje Bhosle (BJP), KC Venugopal (Congress) and Biplab Kumar Deb (BJP). The BJP's allies in the Upper House include AIADMK, JD (U), NCP, JD(S), RPI (A), Shiv Sena, NCP, RLD, NPP, PMK, Tamil Manila Congress and UPPL.

11 Bangladeshi nationals caught trying to infiltrate into India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Eleven Bangladeshi nationals have been apprehended while trying to infiltrate into India through international border in West Bengal, Tripura and Meghalaya, the Border Security Force (BSF) said on Sunday. They are being questioned and will be handed over to State police for further legal action, a spokesperson said. He said the BSF was in regular touch with its counterpart BGB to sort out mutual issues, especially the prevention of atrocities on Indian nationals and people from minority communities in Bangladesh. The South Bengal Frontier of the force headquartered in Kolkata said in a statement that its eastern command head, Additional Director General (ADG) Ravi Gandhi, chaired an operational conference on Saturday to review security along the 4,096-km-long India-Bangladesh border "amid the current unrest in Bangladesh" and the upcoming Independence Day on August 15. It said, "11 Bangladeshi nationals have been apprehended on border while infiltrating into India. Two each were nabbed



from West Bengal and Tripura borders while seven were apprehended from Meghalaya border." They are being questioned and will be handed over to State police for further legal action, he said. The spokesperson said BSF ADG (eastern command) Ravi Gandhi chaired a meeting on Saturday to review security all along this border. "Detailed deliberations were held to further enhance border control, security and management. Besides, it was decided to continue the close collaboration with counterpart Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB)," he said. The BSF has been holding flag meetings with the BGB to sort out mutual issues amicably, especially for the prevention of atrocities on Indian nationals and people from minorities communities in Bangladesh and counterpart BGB has been responding well, he said.

SC to hear Kejriwal's plea against summons in defamation case today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal challenging a Delhi High Court order upholding the summons issued to him in a criminal defamation case for retweeting an allegedly defamatory video circulated by YouTuber Dhruv Rathee in May 2018. A three-judge bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Sanjay Kumar and R Mahadevan is likely to hear the matter in which Kejriwal has admitted that he "committed a mistake" by retweeting the alleged defamatory video. On March 11, the top court asked Kejriwal whether he wanted to give an apology to the complainant in the matter. Kejriwal had on February 26 told the apex court that he made a mistake by retweeting the allegedly defamatory video related to the BJP IT Cell. The counsel appearing for complainant Vikas Sankrityayan had told the top court that Kejriwal may issue an apology on social media platforms like microblogging platform 'X' or Instagram. On February 26, the apex court, without issuing notice on



Kejriwal's plea challenging the High Court order, had asked the complainant whether he wanted to close the matter in view of the petitioner accepting it was a mistake. The top court had asked the trial court not to take up the defamation case involving Kejriwal till further orders. In its February 5 verdict, the High Court said that reposting alleged libellous content would attract the defamation law. It said a sense of responsibility has to be attached while retweeting content about which one does not have knowledge and added that retweeting defamatory content must invite penal, civil as well as tort action if the person retweeting it does not attach a disclaimer. The High Court, while refusing to quash the trial court's 2019 order summoning Kejriwal, had

said when a public figure tweets a defamatory post, the ramifications extend far beyond a mere whisper in someone's ears. It had said if the act of retweeting or reposting is allowed to be misused as it is still considered to be a vacant grey area of law, it will encourage people with ill intentions to misuse it and conveniently take a plea that they had merely retweeted a content. The Chief Minister had said in the High Court that the trial court failed to appreciate that his tweet was not intended or likely to harm the complainant. Sankrityayan claimed the YouTube video titled 'BJP IT Cell Part II' was circulated by Rathee, who lives in Germany, "wherein a number of false and defamatory allegations were made".

Bone marrow transplants can reverse heart damage associated with SCD: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As India grapples with the challenge of eliminating sickle cell disease (SCD), a recent research offers a glimmer of hope. A new study published in 'Blood' highlights the potential of bone marrow transplants to reverse heart damage associated with SCD. The study, titled "Impact of Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation on Myocardial Fibrosis in Young Patients with Sickle Cell Disease," indicates that hematopoietic stem cell transplants (HCT) can significantly reduce myocardial fibrosis, a serious complication of the disease. Sickle cell disease, a genetic disorder causing abnormally shaped red blood cells, leads to chronic anemia and various complications, including heart damage. Traditional treatments, such as hydroxyurea, have been ineffective in reversing these complications, as per the study. However, HCT, which replaces a patient's faulty blood stem cells with healthy ones, appears to offer a new avenue for improving heart health in affected individuals. The study, conducted by St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, involved analysing cardiac MRI scans from patients undergoing HCT. Results showed a decrease in myocardial extracellular volume (ECV), a marker of heart muscle scarring, by 3.4% in the first year after transplantation, with further reductions observed in patients with two-year follow-up data. While these

findings are promising, they highlight the need for larger studies to confirm the long-term benefits of HCT and its potential role in addressing the broader challenge of sickle cell disease in India. The country continues to face significant hurdles in eliminating SCD, but advancements like these provide hope for improved treatment and management of the disease. The study holds significance in the context of India which has a large number of people with the blood disorder. In fact, India has launched a Sickle Cell Mission which aims to provide affordable, accessible and quality care to all patients with sickle cell disease (SCD), reducing the prevalence of the disease through awareness campaigns and targeting screening of 7 crore people aged 0-40 years in affected districts of tribal areas by 2025-26. While welcoming the outcome of the study and stressing that it was time that bone marrow transplant facilities are expanded in the country, Dr Lt CBS Dangi who has been working in the sector for the past several years also stressed on creating awareness and mobilising community efforts to combat sickle cell disorder and thalassemia. With a mission to eliminate sickle cell disease by 2047, Dangi has started screening the NCC cadets at the blood NCC donation camps also for the blood disorders at the endemic tribal belts of States like Madhya Pradesh under the State Health Mission.

Village courts face challenges due to manpower, fund shortages



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Conceived as a tool to deliver affordable and quick access to justice, gram nyayalayas or village courts are today finding it difficult to live up to their purpose due to manpower shortage and financial crunch. So far 481 gram nyayalayas have been notified by 15 States, of which 309 have been made operational in 10 States, the law Ministry told Parliament in the just-concluded Monsoon session. In 1986, the law commission had suggested setting up village courts to provide affordable and quick access to justice to citizens at their doorsteps. After years, The Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 came into effect from Gandhi Jayanti the next year. The Act provides for the establishment of gram nyayalayas at the grassroots level to provide access to justice to the citizens at their doorsteps and to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to anyone due to social, economic or other disabilities. Citing "certain studies", the law ministry said in

the parliament that the main reasons for slow progress in setting up of these village courts include non-filling of the post of 'nyayadhikaris' in many States, non-availability of public prosecutors, notaries and general shortage of first-class judicial magistrates. Limited pecuniary jurisdiction of gram nyayalayas, insufficient staff, inadequate financial backing from States, reluctance from legal and State authorities and lack of community awareness were the other reasons cited for the present state of affairs of village courts, the government said. Besides, the issue of overlapping jurisdiction with regular courts is another reason for "slow take off" of such courts in some States, it added. Many States have their own parallel systems of village courts functioning at panchayat level. As per guidelines, the Centre provides Rs 18 lakh per gram nyayalaya to meet non-recurring expenditure as a one-time measure and bears 50 per cent of the recurring expenses of these courts, subject to a ceiling of Rs 3.20 lakh per courts per annum during the first three years.

Chirag to convene meet of SC MPs of different parties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister and LJP (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan is planning to convene a meeting of Scheduled Caste MPs of different parties as he works to mobilise support ahead of his party filing a review plea in the Supreme Court against its judgement allowing sub-categorisation of reservation within the community. The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader has already expressed his disagreement with the verdict and said his party will file a review petition in the apex court. Paswan, sources said, has reached out to Scheduled Caste MPs to gauge their view over the verdict, a judgment of far-reaching political impact over which major national parties have maintained silence while engaging in internal stock-taking deliberations, and may convene a formal meeting soon. It remains to be seen, though, what the response of the Scheduled Caste MPs of different parties will be, many of whom have spoken in different voices depending on the mood of their constituencies. The parties like Paswan's or Mayawati-led Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which draw support from numerically strong SC communities which fare better than other Dalit castes on social and economic metrics, have come out openly against the judgement. However, another Dalit ally of the BJP and Union Minister



Jitan Ram Manjhi has lauded the verdict, saying that his community of Manjhis are "grossly under-represented" in the benefits brought by quota as better-off SC communities corner most of the positions in jobs and educational institutes on offer. The critics of the verdict have argued that a chunk of vacancies reserved for the SCs often remain open due to a lack of adequately qualified applicants, saying introducing sub-quotas for different castes within the larger quota will only worsen the problem. Both the ruling BJP and the main opposition Congress have not taken a categorical stand on the issue, leaving it to their state leaders to frame their responses based on regional sensibilities. A seven-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud had ruled on August 1 by a 6:1 majority that the further sub-classification of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by the states can be permitted to ensure grant of quota to more backward castes inside these groups.

Meghwal accuses Opposition of creating confusion over SC 'observation' on creamy layer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal has accused the opposition of creating confusion among people over the Supreme Court "observation" on creamy layer among SCs and STs, and asserted that the Constitution given by B R Ambedkar has no provision of a creamy layer. In an interview to PTI Videos, he said the BJP-led NDA government will follow Ambedkar's Constitution and will continue the reservation system for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as provided in it. Meghwal noted that though the opposition is aware that the top court had only made an "observation" on creamy layer, it is trying to create confusion among people. On Saturday, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had said that the idea of denying reservation to SCs and STs on account of the creamy layer concept is "condemnable". He also said the government should have brought a legislation in Parliament to nullify the part of the recent Supreme Court judgement that talks about the issue. Meghwal underlined that the top court has said that if the states want, they can do sub-classification. But SC has not made any decision on creamy layer. It is an observation, he asserted. "There is a difference between direction and observation," he



reminded the opposition. Earlier this month, a seven-judge bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud ruled in a 6:1 majority judgement that state governments were permitted to sub-classify communities within the SC list based on empirical data. Supreme Court judge B R Gavai had said states must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even among the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Schedule Tribes (ST) and deny them the benefit of reservation. Justice Gavai penned a separate but concurring judgement in which the top court by a majority verdict said the states are empowered to make sub-classifications of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for granting quotas within the reserved category to uplift those who belong to the more underprivileged castes. The Union Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, held a detailed discussion on the Supreme Court judgement on the sub-categorisation of reservation for SCs and STs as granted in the Constitution.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Catastrophe revisited

Prime Minister Modi visits Wayanad, pledges full Central Government support for recovery efforts

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently visited Wayanad, Kerala, which was devastated by landslides that left more than 200 dead. Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a review meeting after conducting an aerial and ground survey of the landslide-hit areas in Wayanad. Recalling the devastating 1979 Morbi dam disaster in Gujarat, Modi empathised with the affected residents, assuring them of full support from the central government. During his day-long visit to Wayanad, Modi surveyed the destruction caused by the July 30 landslides. Modi's visit included a trek through the severely impacted Chooralmala region, where he assessed the damage and interacted with rescue personnel, officials, and residents. He also visited a relief camp in Meppadi, offering comfort to survivors, including children who had lost family members. PM Modi emphasised the need for better preparedness and resilient infrastructure to mitigate the impact of such natural disasters in the future.



Wayanad is perhaps the worst hit as the incessant rains triggered landslides, damaging homes and infrastructure and causing extensive agricultural losses. The region's economy, heavily dependent on agriculture and tourism, has been severely impacted, with farmers facing significant losses and tourists staying away due to the adverse weather conditions. However, Wayanad is not the only place that has endured losses. This year's monsoon has brought unprecedented destruction across the country. From north to south, no region has been spared from the monsoon fury. The Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand have also endured losses. Torrential rains, landslides, and flash floods have resulted in significant loss of life and property. In Himachal Pradesh, an entire village was tragically wiped off due to a deluge after a cloudburst. The heavy rainfall has also caused rivers to overflow, leading to widespread flooding and disruption of daily life in the plains. Roads have been washed away, leaving many remote areas inaccessible, and thousands of people have been displaced from their homes. The increasing frequency and intensity of monsoon-related disasters in India can be attributed to a combination of factors, including climate change, deforestation, and unplanned urbanisation. India must continue to invest in and implement strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy sources. International cooperation is also crucial in addressing the climate change. Besides, ensuring that development projects, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas like the Himalayas must be properly evaluated before being commissioned. This includes stricter regulations on construction and deforestation. In the given scenario what is of utmost importance is preparedness—strengthening disaster management capabilities at the local, state, and national levels. This includes improving early warning systems, enhancing infrastructure resilience, and conducting regular disaster preparedness drills.

PICTALK



An elderly woman spins tricolour yarns ahead of the Independence Day in Nadia district

A Heartfelt reflection on the changing face of Nainital

Over the decades, relentless deforestation and unchecked construction have turned Nainital's once verdant landscapes into tinderboxes

Summers were harsh this year. Fire rained from the skies. Cities were burning. So were the mountains. My first holiday to the mountains was in the summer of 1970. We boarded the train in the evening, excited about the trip. The first glimpse of the distant mountains the next morning kept us awake for the remaining journey, as the faint outlines turned prominent. The bus ride from the railway station was equally exciting. Sometimes we travelled hugging the mountains, and at other times we looked down with fear, as the bus moved literally at the edge of the road.



After what felt like an impatiently long time, as we turned a bend, I gasped looking with awe at the majestic lake spread out before me. We had arrived at Nainital. I had fallen in love with the hills. I would return several times in the following years, till I realised that there were many other equally beautiful hills to explore. Things started changing fast. My first view in the summer of 1970 faded into a fond memory, which I would often draw upon to mourn a lost time. I still remember very vividly the green shades covering the hills, even in the summers, much before the onset of monsoons. There was not even a speck of brown visible beneath the thick curtain of foliage. I also do not remember the presence of fans, coolers, refrigerators, much less air conditioners. The only cooling devices were the soft ice-cream machines along the Mall road. The high and mighty of the land are seldom blamed. Wildfires in the mountains are not new; but not to the extent that they now rage. A trickle in the previous century is now a raging river. Fires in the Nainital region alone engulfed vast tracts of land even entering residential areas. Other mountains in the north also faced the same fate. Even the plains are not immune to the rapid march

of unplanned urbanisation and the greed of the unscrupulous. I remember going to view Ram Lila wearing half-sleeved sweaters. We would wait with baited breaths for Diwali. However warm it was the previous day, we would invariably take out heavier woollens from Diwali. With time, winters started setting in later than we were used to. Our beautiful planet is nudging us with innumerable omens to wake up and look after her. Hills are sinking under the heavy burden of unplanned construction of houses, hotels, and resorts. Sea levels are going up. Many coastal cities may submerge over the next few decades. Water tables are fast going down resulting in conflicts for drinking water. We need to act to live a better future for the coming generations. Let us remember British historian, explorer and activist Robert Swan, "The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

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



SANJAY CHANDRA

When heroes defy their legacies

History is a tapestry of contradictions and ironies, offering few clear heroes or villains. Instead, it presents figures whose actions and legacies are deeply intriguing



SANTHOSH MATHEW

History, much like a tapestry, is interwoven with threads of contradiction, paradox, and irony. It refuses to offer a simplistic narrative of heroes and villains, instead presenting us with figures whose actions and legacies are often at odds. Even as we try to categorize these individuals within neat labels, the complexities of their lives and the contexts in which they lived often defy such easy classifications. In delving into these paradoxes, we uncover the profound dichotomies that have shaped our world. Here, we explore some of the most striking examples of such contradictions.

The Pulitzer Prize is one of the most prestigious awards in journalism, representing the pinnacle of recognition for investigative reporting, public service, and literary achievement. It stands as a symbol of journalistic integrity and excellence. Yet, the man behind this esteemed award, Joseph Pulitzer, was a pioneer of "yellow journalism"—a style characterized by sensationalism, exaggeration, and a sometimes tenuous relationship with the truth. Pulitzer's newspapers, including the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and the New York World, became synonymous with this sensationalist style, prioritising scandal, shock, and spectacle over factual reporting. Pulitzer was, in many ways, a shrewd businessman who used his media empire to captivate, excite, and often inflame public opinion. Yet, despite his role in fostering yellow journalism, Pulitzer's legacy is paradoxically one of promoting journalistic excellence. The award that bears his name has honoured countless journalists who have exposed corruption, and stood as defenders of truth against tyranny. The irony is profound: a man who built his career on sensationalism is now celebrated as a patron of journalistic integrity. This duality highlights the complexities of human nature and the ever-evolving landscape of media. The Nobel Prizes, particularly the Nobel



Peace Prize, embody the highest aspirations of humanity. They honour individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the betterment of the world through science, literature, and the pursuit of peace. However, the man behind these prestigious awards, Alfred Nobel, accumulated his wealth from an invention that has caused immense destruction: dynamite. Nobel's invention revolutionized construction and engineering, but it also became a powerful tool in warfare. The devastating impact of dynamite weighed heavily on Nobel's conscience. It is said that his decision to establish the Nobel Prize was influenced by a premature obituary that labelled him "the merchant of death" after his invention became synonymous with violence and destruction. By creating the Nobel Prizes, particularly the Peace Prize, Nobel sought to reshape his legacy from one of destruction to one of hope and progress. Yet, the contrast between his contribution to the proliferation of powerful weapons and his desire to reward peacemakers serves as a poignant reminder of the paradoxes that can define a person's life. A recent example of this paradox can be found in the story of



JINNAH'S PERSONAL LIFE WAS FAR REMOVED FROM THE STRICT RELIGIOUS VALUES THAT WOULD LATER COME TO DEFINE THE COUNTRY HE FOUNDED. JINNAH WAS A HIGHLY WESTERNISED INDIVIDUAL WHO ENJOYED THE FINER THINGS IN LIFE

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019. Abiy was recognized for his efforts in resolving the long-standing conflict with neighbouring Eritrea, earning international acclaim as a peacemaker. However, within two years of receiving the prize, Abiy found himself leading his nation into a brutal civil war. The conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region has been marked by atrocities, displacement, and a humanitarian crisis of staggering proportions. The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights are celebrated as monumental achievements in the history of human rights, enshrining the principles of freedom, equality, and justice. Thomas Jefferson, one of the Founding Fathers and the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, played a crucial role in shaping these foundational documents. Yet, Jefferson was also a slave owner who, during his lifetime, owned over 600 enslaved people. This glaring contradiction between his public advocacy for liberty and his private practice of slavery has sparked intense debate among historians and scholars. Jefferson's writings espoused ideals of

freedom and human dignity, yet he continued to benefit from an institution that deprived others of these very rights. Similarly, Muhammad Ali Jinnah is revered as the founding father of Pakistan, the world's first Islamic republic. He is celebrated for his role in establishing a nation for Muslims in the Indian sub-continent, based on the idea of Muslim nationalism. However, Jinnah's personal life was far removed from the strict religious values that would later come to define the country he founded. Jinnah was a highly Westernised individual who enjoyed the finer things in life. He was known to smoke cigars, drink alcohol, and reportedly favoured pork—a practice contrary to Islamic teachings. His second wife, Maryam, was a Parsi, and his only daughter, Dina, married a Parsi as well, sparking considerable controversy given his public role as a Muslim leader. These episodes remind us that even the greatest leaders are not without their contradictions. In the end, history reminds us that even the greatest of icons are not immune to contradiction—it is in their complexity that their true humanity shines through. (The writer is an associate professor, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BAIL NOT JAIL SHOULD BE THE NORM

Madam — Recently, while an assistant director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was swiftly remanded to CBI custody over a bribery charge involving Rs 20 lakhs from a Mumbai-based jeweler, the ongoing case of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia raises serious concerns. Despite being accused of money laundering in the Delhi excise policy scam, Sisodia has languished in jail for 17 months without any progress toward a trial, as observed by the Supreme Court.

The Court emphasised that personal liberty is paramount, and delaying bail without commencing the trial is unacceptable, leading to Sisodia's release on bail. This case highlights a troubling disparity in the justice system: while some accused individuals evade legal consequences due to the laxity of investigative agencies and courts, others, potentially innocent, remain imprisoned for years, leaving their families to suffer. As we have seen in numerous cases, delayed justice is effectively denied justice. A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

HATS OFF TO INDIAN OLYMPIC SQUAD

Madam— Hats off to the Indian Hockey team for regaining its past international glory via winning a medal in the Paris - Olympics - 2024. Their defeating the great - proven - teams such as Australia and England elucidates their resolve, dedication, determination. It could not enter the final and had to settle for bronze (due to sheer bad luck of the day). This is the 13th Olympic medal for India in hockey (8 gold, 1 silver, 4 bronze). Arman Sherawat's bronze in wrestling, cooled the hearts of Indians, which otherwise wallowed in pain over the disqualification of Vinesh Phogat, (the gold medal sure shot). Hats off to the Indian magnificent 6, who won 5 bronze medals and 1 silver in the Paris Olympics - 2024. Also kudos to all the national and international participants of the prestigious grand gala Olympics (sports festival). Kudos to Indian winners: 3 shooters:

A world in turmoil



The world seems to be in flames. In the UK, violent clashes between communities are intensifying, with immigrants gaining

ground in the conflict. Across Europe, a similar surge sees immigrants clashing with native populations. But the most alarming development this week has been the chaos and coup in our neighboring country—once a close friend and an Islamic nation that upheld peaceful coexistence among all religions, now plunged into turmoil. These are difficult times where unrests and upheavals have become order of the day.

Amidst this global unrest, our own opposition leaders are calling for insurrection, openly demanding the removal of our elected Prime Minister. These are the same voices that champion democracy and preach about love. Yet, we believe that Indians will never tread that destructive path. We stood strong during the Emergency, showing our love for the nation and our willingness to fight for it if necessary. C K Subramaniam | Bengaluru

Manu, Sarabjot, Swapnil Kusale, wrestler Aman Sehrawat and the hockey team for the 5 bronze medals, star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra for the silver medal (for the athletic 89.45 m throw). PV Srinivas Sreelekha | Secunderabad

NEERAJ WINS SILVER

Madam — India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra clinched a silver medal at the Paris Olympics, performing in front of an enthusiastic crowd at Stade de France. Neeraj's throw of 89.45m earned him second place on the podium. Although it was his best performance of the season, it wasn't enough to secure gold, which went to Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem with a throw of 92.97m, (will be hard to beat in the near future) setting a new Olympic record. It's a pity for 145 crore Indian that we have not won a single gold but we plan to hold the Olympics in India! It is quite evident that Neeraj Chopra has given his best (though too much pressure of expectations was put on the guy). But the most important thing to note is that India is very poor in succession planning and finding alternatives,

not just in sports but in every field. If the sports administration could not find a single alternative between Tokyo and Paris then it's an utter failure (sadly Vinesh Phogat's golden hope mar by 100 gram over weight) for the sports authority. Among Indians Neeraj Chopra is a champion player but what he failed to do is to top his game and cross 90m during the last four years. It is a classic case of a person sitting on his laurels and not pushing himself. Last 4 years he has not even crossed 90m marks once and the government has spent (Rs. 5,21,72,457 crore) so much money on him. One has to agree that 8th August was the Pakistani's day but fact is that Nadeem crossed 90m earlier and today in the crucial moment he did it twice while winning the gold. He had not even half the support that Neeraj got. India stands behind Pakistan in the medal tally at Olympics. What else, wondering, though it's sports! Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

HAVE A INTREPID AND ROBUST MINDSET

Through spiritual practices, one can find strength to continue the journey of life



RAVI VALLURI

Always be associated with people who are good at heart. This is what Swami Vivekananda said. My mother shares her birthday with Swami Vivekananda who was born on 12th January 1863. Association, Sangha, and Satsang were her strong points. She nurtured strong bonds with all religious faiths and spiritually inclined people. She wanted to pursue medicine but life did not take that trajectory instead she became a qualified medical social worker. She used to tell patients and their children, 'Fear is only as deep as the mind allows.' Thus, patients afflicted with TB, but not bedridden, participated in the projects. This was what she called 'Diversionary Therapy'. The TB Hospital became a unique template for the methods adopted by doctors, para-med staff, social workers, government bodies and NGOs, all to contribute to the rehabilitation of the patients. Climate changes, civilizations collapse, governments change political affiliations alter and even the best possible model collapses. This is inevitable. As Buddha says, 'The only permanent thing in life is impermanence.' The lofty objectives were not approved by a new set of hospital administrators and the beacon of hope collapsed but she tried hard with a robust mindset. This was extremely traumatic for my mother and she became a patient of Paroxysmal Atrial Tachycardia (PAT). This is a type of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat).

Paroxysmal means that the episode of arrhythmia originates and terminates abruptly. Atrial implies the arrhythmia starts with the atria or in the upper chambers of the heart. The tachycardia results in a signifi-



cant increase in the heartbeat per minute. It abnormally increases the pace, like in an athlete on a treadmill. PAT significantly increases the heartbeat of an adult from the normal 60 to 100 to 130 to 230 and among infants and children, it shoots up from 100 to 130 to 220 beats per minute. It is accompanied by sweating, dizziness, palpitations, angina and acute breathlessness.

Normally, a patient suffers from such a condition owing to emotional upheavals, physical exhaustion, deep anxiety, and consumption of caffeine or alcohol. I saw my mother suffering from this condition on several occasions and being admitted to the ICU. It was a distressing and disturbing sight. While it is not a life-threatening affliction, it certainly disorients the psychology and attitude of the patient. During her suffering, we saw her clutching onto her rosary as a lifesaver, while we prayed fervently for her recovery. She was administered medication but it worked only to an extent. The real help came in the form of a pentagon-shaped talisman. That is through Siddha Healing, Pranial Healing, the ten-day Vipassana Course and the Part 1 and Part 2 Art of Living courses. This is the unique, amazing and scientific power of the breath.

Breathing techniques, meditation, medication, and proper diet changed the trajectory of the life of the patient and brought back the mojo in her life. 'When you take a breath in, let it become your meditation that all the suffering of all the beings in the world is riding on that incoming breath and reaching your heart, and see a miracle happen,' says Osho. Till her final days, she continued with these practices. Senior citizens, those in pain and agony and even the able-bodied should undertake the courses mentioned. Swami Vivekananda took Yoga to America and spread the Ramakrishna Mission. He was the Arjuna of Shri Rama Krishna Paramhansa. My mother imbibed the trait of service to mankind by reading extensively about Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda and the Almighty God blessed her with an intrepid mind.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Populism will not let food subsidy reforms take off



UTTAM GUPTA

Leakages can be curbed if the subsidy is given directly to the beneficiaries using 'direct benefit transfer' mode. The potential for reducing food subsidies is immense



In the full Budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on July 23, 2024, the government has pegged the budget estimate (BE) food subsidy for FY 2024-25 at Rs 205,250 crore which is no different from the estimate given in the interim Budget. Though slightly lower than the revised estimate (RE) of Rs 211,394 crores for FY 2023-24, this is no consolation as invariably, the RE for any financial year turns out to be higher than the BE. For instance, while presenting the budget for FY 2023-24, Sitharaman kept the BE for food subsidy at Rs 197,000 crore. Against this, RE has turned out to be Rs 14,394 crore more. The moot point is that the expenditure incurred by the Central government during the last five years under this head has been consistently over Rs 200,000 crore mark every year 2020-21: Rs 529,000 crore; 2021-22: Rs 372,000 crore; 2022-23: Rs 287,000 crore; 2023-24: Rs 211,394 crores and 2024-25: Rs 205,250 crore (BE).

During 2024-25, food subsidy will account for 4.2 per cent of its budget (Rs 4820,000 crore), 5.5 per cent of its revenue expenditure (Rs 3709,000 crore) and consume nearly 8 per cent of its estimated net tax receipts (Rs 2583,000 crore). Reining in food subsidy is no less important than the goal it seeks to achieve namely providing 'food security'. The uncontrolled rise in the former leads to an unsustainable increase in fiscal deficit (excess of total receipts over total expenditure) which can injure the economy in multiple ways through high inflation, high interest rates, a slowdown in growth, fewer jobs, low incomes and so on. This, in turn, can lead to a demand for higher financial assistance including food subsidies from the government thereby exacerbating the vicious cycle.

There exists a huge scope for reducing food subsidies. To assess this, at the outset, let us see how it is administered. Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), the Centre asks the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food from the farmers at MSP (minimum support price) and organize its distribution to around 820 million people for free.



REINING IN FOOD SUBSIDY IS NO LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE GOAL IT SEEKS TO ACHIEVE NAMELY PROVIDING 'FOOD SECURITY'. THE UNCONTROLLED RISE IN THE FORMER LEADS TO AN UNSUSTAINABLE INCREASE IN FISCAL DEFICIT (EXCESS OF TOTAL RECEIPTS OVER TOTAL EXPENDITURE) WHICH CAN INJURE THE ECONOMY IN MULTIPLE WAYS

The entire cost i.e. MSP paid to farmers plus handling and distribution cost (HDC) is reimbursed to the FCI/other state agencies as a subsidy. The money comes from the Union Budget's allocation for 'food subsidy'. While, the PMGKAY has been in force since January 1, 2023, before that, the Centre was giving food to 820 million persons (7 kg of cereals per person per month to 120 million poorest of the poor persons covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana or AAY families and five kg of cereals per person per month to the remaining 700 million) at a heavily subsidized price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). In addition, since April 2020, it has given 5 kg of food per person per month for "free" to all 820 million beneficiaries under PMGKAY to mitigate the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic. From January 1, 2023, it merged the free part of PMGKAY with the regular food security schemes under NFSA.

Now, food is available to all 820 million beneficiaries for free under the new incarnation of NFSA namely the PMGKAY. This arrangement will continue for five years till the end of CY 2028 as per the announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2023. Avenues for saving in subsidy First, fundamentally, subsidized food is meant for the poor. The number of poor isn't more than 15-20 per cent of India's population. Yet, the number of beneficiaries under the PMGKAY at 820 million works out to nearly 59 per cent of the population. Even as per the Shanta Kumar Committee (2015), the number of people eligible for subsidized food under NFSA shouldn't be more than 40 per cent. The excess of 19 per cent comes to around 270 million.

Further, during the last nine-and-a-half years of the incumbent government, 250 million persons have come out of poverty (as per a recent report by Niti Aayog). These persons can be excluded from the list of beneficiaries.

Doing a back-of-the-envelope calculation, giving free food to a million persons entails a subsidy of Rs 200 crore per annum. Excluding 250 million will help save Rs 50,000 crore. The existing beneficiaries list of 820 million is based on 2011 Census estimates while the Supreme Court (SC) has directed that the Centre should take into account the population during 2021. On this basis, it needs to give free food to an additional 100 million.

That will cost Rs 20,000 crore. Even after providing for this, it will save Rs 30,000 crore annually. Second, why every beneficiary should get free food? The Shanta Kumar Committee had recommended that non-AAY persons should pay 50 per cent of the MSP. Other than AAY are 700 million persons. Minus 250 million (who shouldn't get a subsidy at all) and adding 100 million (as per SC order), we get 550 million. Making them pay 50 per cent of MSP or Rs 11.4 per kg (wheat), will save Rs 37,600 crore annually. Third, the NFSA legislation enacted in 2013 required beneficiaries to pay Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals.

It froze these rates for three years. Since 2016, there has been no legal bar on increasing the price. Yet, far from increasing, the Modi-government has reduced the price to zero. Are they all (read: 820 million persons) so poor that they can't pay even a fraction of the cost (in the case of wheat at Rs 2 per kg, it is 1/15th)? Even if you make them pay a notional Rs 1 per kg, this will yield savings of Rs 5000 crore per annum. Fourth, the initial idea under the

Scheme was that FCI et al would buy only the quantity needed for meeting beneficiaries' requirements under NFSA plus maintain some 'strategic' buffer to meet emergencies.

It was never meant to be an 'open-ended' procurement which it has become today. This has also contributed to the avoidable increase in subsidy besides stocking problems. Shunning 'open-ended' purchases can yield significant savings. Fifth, currently, FCI/state agencies are paid HDC on an 'actual' basis. This leads to payment for inefficiencies in the system and even cost padding.

The stories of loaders being paid hefty salaries by the FCI are still fresh in memory. A shift from 'actual' to reimbursement of cost to agencies on a 'normative' basis can save a lot of subsidy. Finally, the availability of a mammoth of around 60 million tons (the quantity distributed under the PMGKAY) in the supply chain with zero price tag is an open invitation to dubious operators to siphon off and sell in the open market raking in a moolah.

The PDS scam in West Bengal involving the diversion of subsidized food grains worth tens of thousands of crore currently under investigation by the central agencies provides a classic example. This can be curbed if the subsidy is given directly to the beneficiaries using DBT (direct benefit transfer) mode. The potential for reducing food subsidies is immense. The government can go for any of the above measures or all of them depending on how much savings it targets. But, ALAS under the current political scenario, Modi won't dare to take even a baby step like charging a notional price of Rs 1 per kg.

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

Implications of upheaval in Bangladesh on its trade relations with India

The sudden turn of events have raised concerns about the potential impact on trade, economic stability, and the broader geopolitical dynamics of the region

Since Sheikh Hasina assumed office as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in 2009, the country has been a key ally of India. Her leadership has seen significant progress in bilateral relations, with a focus on infrastructure, connectivity, and trade. However, the recent political crisis in Bangladesh has raised concerns about the future of this partnership.



ADITYA PRATAP SINGH

On January 8, 2024, Sheikh Hasina declared that boosting the country's economy would be her top priority for the next five years. Yet, by August 2024, the nation was engulfed in violent demonstrations over a quota system for government positions, leading to a deepening domestic political crisis. As tensions escalated, Sheikh Hasina resigned and sought

refuge in India, raising concerns about the stability of Bangladesh and its impact on Indo-Bangladesh relations. **The Evolution of Indo-Bangladesh Relations** Over the past decade, India and Bangladesh have fostered strong economic ties, with infrastructure and connectivity projects playing a crucial role in strengthening their relationship. Since 2016, India has extended \$8 billion in

credit to Bangladesh for the development of road, rail, shipping, and port infrastructure. The two nations have also engaged in various areas of commerce, including medical tourism, business expansion, and the international garment trade. Bangladesh, a major player in the global garment industry, relies heavily on cotton imports from India. The textile and garment sectors account for 56 per cent of Bangladesh's total exports to India, making it a vital trading partner in South Asia. In the financial year 2023-24, bilateral trade between the two countries reached \$13 billion, according to the Union Ministry of Commerce. **The Impact on Trade** Sheikh Hasina's leadership saw a flourishing of com-

merce between India and Bangladesh, leading to a significant trade surplus for India. However, the ongoing political turmoil in Bangladesh threatens to disrupt this economic partnership. The civil unrest and worsening economic situation have created security concerns that could impact Indian exports, commerce, and infrastructure projects in the neighboring nation. One of the major challenges will be on the bilateral trade front. After reaching \$12.21 billion in 2022-23, India's exports to Bangladesh dropped to \$11 billion in 2023-24. Similarly, Bangladesh's imports decreased from \$2 billion in the previous year to \$1.84 billion in the most recent fiscal year. Indian exporters have



voiced concerns about the situation in Bangladesh, fearing that the instability in the country will negatively affect commerce between the two nations. A significant scarcity of dollars in Bangladesh, as noted by the think tank GTRI, has already curtailed the country's ability to import goods, particularly from India. **Uncertainty Surrounding the Free Trade Agreement**

In October 2023, India and Bangladesh discussed the possibility of a free trade agreement (FTA) during a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Trade meeting in Dhaka. An FTA could streamline regulations, encourage investment and commerce, and potentially remove customs tariffs, boosting trade between the two countries. According to a 2012 World Bank working paper, a full-product FTA could enhance Bangladesh's exports to India by 182%, while a partial FTA might grow them by 134%. This would contribute to strengthening Bangladesh's trade transport infrastructure and commerce links, leading to a significant rise in exports. However, the current political crisis has cast doubt on the

future of the FTA proposals. Sheikh Hasina's exit might slow or pause this development, affecting the expansion of commerce and trade in new areas between the two nations. **Challenges for the Textile and Garment Industry** The ongoing crisis in Bangladesh could also have a negative impact on other sectors, particularly the textile and garment industry. In the fiscal year 2021-2022, Bangladesh exported garments worth \$42.613 billion, solidifying its position as the second-largest apparel exporter globally. However, the recent incidents of factories being set on fire have raised concerns about the future of this industry. Many of these textile units are owned by traders associated with the

Awami League Party, making them particularly vulnerable in the current political climate. While India has the potential to step in and provide garments to developed economies, there are certain drawbacks to this shift. Bangladesh, as a Least Developed Country, benefits from zero-duty advantages, while Indian goods face tariff barriers. If borders remain closed and duty-free export-import activities are suspended, there is a possibility of increased demand for Indian garments. However, it is still too early to make definitive predictions about the opportunities and gains that might arise from this situation. (The author is a PhD scholar at HBTU, Kanpur; views are personal)

Kerala Minister breaks down while consoling kin of landslide victims

PTI ■ WAYANAD (KERALA)

Kerala Forest Minister A K Saseendran broke down while consoling people looking for their missing family members days after the devastating landslides in Wayanad district. The minister, who visited the landslide-hit areas, spoke to a father and son who were seen searching at the spot where their house once stood. Saseendran turned emotional while listening to the painful words and concerns of the hapless family and embraced the boy to console him. The minister himself was inconsolable while sharing their plight to the media later. "I never thought in my life that I would have to see such a sight. What reply should I give them? There is no answer to their questions..." Saseendran told reporters.



He urged everyone to work in unison to rebuild the lives of the victims. The minister also assured survivors that the entire state and the government stood by them in their most difficult time in life. An extensive search is continuing in landslide-hit Wayanad to trace those who are still missing in the aftermath of the calamity that hit the hill district

on July 30. On Saturday, Modi visited the landslides-hit Wayanad district and assured that the central government would "spare no effort" in helping Kerala in relief and rehabilitation while describing the tragedy as "nature displaying its furious form." According to the state government, the landslides killed 229 people, while over 130 are still missing.

Bihar: Tributes paid to Khudiram Bose at Muzaffarpur Central Jail

PTI ■ MUZAFFARPUR/PATNA

A large number of people gathered outside the Muzaffarpur Central Jail on Sunday to pay tributes to freedom fighter Khudiram Bose, who was hanged in the prison on this day in 1908. Bose was the youngest freedom fighter to have been hanged during the British Raj. Bose was sentenced to death for the attempted assassination of a British judge, Magistrate Douglas Kingsford, the then magistrate of Muzaffarpur, by lobbing bombs at a carriage he and his associate Prafulla Chaki suspected the British judge was travelling in. The incident led to the death of two British women. Divisional Commissioner of Tirhut Division, Mihir Kumar



Singh, Inspector General of Police Shivdeep Wamanrao Lande, District Magistrate of Muzaffarpur, Subrata Sen, and several people from Bose's ancestral village in Habibpur in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal and hundreds of others took part in paying tributes to the freedom fighter. Officials also garlanded a statue of the freedom fighter at the Khudiram Bose Memorial in Company Bagh where Bose had executed the

daring act, along with Prafulla Chaki. Prafulla Chaki fatally shot himself before the arrest. Khudiram Bose was arrested and put on trial for the murder of the two women and was sentenced to death. He became the youngest martyr in the history of the Indian independence movement. Meanwhile, Bihar Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, his deputy Samrat Choudhary and several other dignitaries paid homage to those who died while attempting to hoist the Indian tricolour near Patna Secretariat on this day during the Quit India Movement. On August 11, 1942, during the Quit India movement, seven people were killed by British forces while they were hoisting the flag near Patna Secretariat.

Pendharkar takes charge of Spear Corps, Manipur conflict top priority

PTI ■ DIMAPUR

Lieutenant General Abhijit S Pendharkar assumed command of the Indian Army's elite Spear Corps on Saturday, inheriting a significant challenge in the form of the ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur which has claimed more than 200 lives in the past year. Lt General Pendharkar succeeds Lieutenant General Harjeet Singh Sahi, who moves to the Army War College in Mhow as its commandant. Commissioned into the Assam Regiment in 1990, Pendharkar has held a variety of command and staff positions through an illustrious career spanning over 34 years, serving in all types of terrain and operational environment, a defence official said. His experience includes counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and

commanding formations along the Line of Control. Prior to taking over as the head of the Spear Corps, Pendharkar served as the Director General of the Territorial Army. He is a recipient of the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Yudh Seva Medal, and multiple commendation awards. Lt Gen Pendharkar has held important staff appointments at all levels including a tenure at Military Operations Directorate at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army), the official said. The Spear Corps, the largest in the Indian Army, is responsible for maintaining security in the majority of areas in the northeastern region including the state of Manipur where ethnic violence that first started in May 2023 has claimed more than 200 lives.

TN Congress to hold tricolour marches, flays BJP for 'attempt to appropriate' national flag

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President K Selvaperunthagai on Sunday tasked his party office-bearers with holding tricolour marches on two-wheelers and through padayatras and hit out at the BJP for what he described as an attempt to 'appropriate' the national flag by conducting Tiranga yatras. Selvaperunthagai said no force including the BJP can break the bond the Congress party has with the tricolour and everyone has a right to hoist the national flag on Independence day and celebrate. In a statement, the Congress party leader said the BJP is making attempts to appropriate the tricolour by holding tricolour rallies in states, which are not a usual practice, but based on PM Narendra Modi's recent appeal. From August 12 to 15, Selvaperunthagai said district Congress committee presidents should organise 'tricolour motorcycle rallies' in their respective district headquarter towns. In villages and talukas, padayatras should be conducted by holding the nation-

al flag. In such celebratory events, the connect and bond the Congress party has with the national flag should be explained to the people by tracing the freedom movement, the role played by Gandhiji and the party's pivotal role. The TNCC leader alleged that the RSS, the parent organisation of the BJP had not hoisted the national flag for 52 years. Only on August 15, 1947 and on January 26, 1950 the national flag was hoisted at the RSS headquarters in Nagpur, he said. After a gap of 52 years, the national flag was hoisted by the RSS only on January 26, 2001, Selvaperunthagai claimed. Therefore, the RSS boycotted and insulted the national flag and now the BJP is attempting to appropriate it and it is a 'conspiracy'. On August 9, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked people to make 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign a memorable mass movement. He also replaced his profile picture with the national flag and urged them to do the same. Following this, the BJP announced Tiranga yatras (Tricolour marches) from August 11 to 14.

Tripura's connectivity project with Bangladesh may be delayed: Minister

PTI ■ RANCHI

Tripura's connectivity project with Bangladesh - the Agartala-Akhaura rail link and Maitree bridge - may be delayed due to the political turmoil and change in government in the neighbouring country, state Transport minister Sushanta Chowdhury said. An interim government under Muhammad Yunus was formed in the neighbouring country after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5 following widespread protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. Chowdhury said most of the connectivity projects with Bangladesh were almost complete but now not sure when they will be started. "All the connectivity projects with Bangladesh... We are not sure when these projects which were almost completed will see the light of the day. The Agartala-Chittagong flight was to be started soon, but it has become uncertain now. The same is the condi-

tion of the Agartala-Akhaura rail link, Maitree Bridge, etc. Let us wait and watch," the Tripura Transport minister told PTI. The 12.24-long Agartala-Akhaura rail link being built at a total cost of Rs 972.52 crore is the first railway connectivity between India's North-East and Bangladesh to encourage trade between the two countries. The general manager of the Indian Railway Construction Company Ltd (IRCON), Raman Singh Singla said the 5.46 km long railway track was completed on the Indian side. A Railway Ministry official said 98 per cent work on the 6.78 km long track in Bangladesh was already completed and the project could see the light of the day any time, but with the political turmoil and change in government in the neighbouring country, the project may be delayed. The official said the work on the Indian side was funded by the Ministry of DoNER and the Bangladesh side work was implemented by the Bangladesh Railway and fund-

ed by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). This project was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina on November 1 last year. The Maitree bridge was inaugurated long back and movements of passenger and goods-laden trucks was supposed to start soon. However, representatives of the chamber of commerce and intergovernmentia in Tripura are of the view that trade and internal politics cannot be mixed up because international trade is beneficial for both countries. Prof Asish Nath of the Department of Economic, Tripura University said, "We should not always mix up internal politics with trade because it is beneficial for both countries. Sheikh Hasina resigned on Monday and the country witnessed unprecedented violence, but trade resumed on Thursday through land ports". Nath said all the Tripura-Bangladesh connectivity projects would be started, but it might take some time.

6 hospitalised after jumping from train in UP

PTI ■ SHAHJAHANPUR/NEW DELHI

Six passengers were hospitalised after they jumped out of a moving train in panic near Uttar Pradesh's Bilpur on Sunday following rumours of a fire, Government Railway Police (GRP) officials said. Earlier, Northern Railway spokesperson Kuldar Singh had said that "12 passengers have

been injured". The incident took place in a general coach of the Howrah-Amritsar Mail in the morning near Bilpur station, which falls under the Moradabad division, he said. GRP station in-charge Rehan Khan told PTI that when the train reached Bilpur station in Bareilly, a rumour spread that the train has caught fire. Someone pulled the emer-

gency chain to stop the train and some passengers started jumping from the moving train, he said. Six passengers, including two women, were injured, and they were admitted to the Shahjahanpur Medical College, the GRP official said. Khan said Anwari (26), Akhtari (45), Kuldeep (26), Ruby Lal (50), Shiv Sharan (40) and Chandrapal (35) were hospitalised.

Another lady...

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He is known to have confessed to the crime and even asked his interrogators to hang him as quickly as they could leading to suspicion among the members of the civil society whether the man was being made a scapegoat to save some other people. "He was in a drunken state and misbehaved with one of our doctors when she was in night duty

... this is very scary ... we have brought it to the notice of the police," a senior official of the hospital said. Roy was subsequently arrested. The police officials said, "We have learnt the accused went to Bhatar state-run hospital for treatment and threatened the lady doctor for being late to start his treatment. The lady accused the civic volunteer of threatening her, saying, 'Did you see what happened at RG Kar Medical College Hospital? It can happen to you too', adding the man had been arrested and investigation was on.

Civilian dies, terrorists...

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"Suspicious movement was observed at around 2 pm on August 10. Challenging (by security forces) was immediately responded to by indiscriminate, desperate, and reckless firing from terrorists in which two Army personnel and two civilians in the vicinity were injured," the spokesperson said. He said the terror antecedents of the injured civilians are being ascertained. "The area is at an altitude of above 10,000 feet, has thick undergrowth, large boulders, nallahs and reentrants that pose a serious challenge to operations. Security forces are moving deliberately and are in the process of hunting down the terrorists," the spokesperson said.

Bangladesh interim Govt warns media over fake...

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Meanwhile, Nahid Islam, adviser for Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Technology, said action will be taken against officials involved in the internet shutdown during the recent student protests. Talking to journalists on the first day of joining his office at the Secretariat on Sunday, Nahid emphasised that those responsible for the internet shutdown during the protests will face consequences, the Daily Star newspaper reported. He said access to the internet is a right and disrupting or shutting it down is a violation of human rights. Nahid asserted that the indiscriminate internet shutdowns will no longer be tolerated. Bangladesh witnessed frequent Internet shutdowns

during the recent protests against the Hasina government. The Information and Communication Technology Division plans to incorporate youth participation to fulfil the aspirations of the younger generation, Nahid said. Newly-appointed Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Mainul Islam said at least 42 members of the police force were killed and scores injured in clashes during the recent mass student movement in Bangladesh which led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government. Over 500 police personnel were injured and took treatment at the hospital, he was quoted as saying by the Daily Star newspaper. More than two dozen police personnel are still undergoing treatment, Islam added.

Kolkata doctor rape-murder...

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This, even as an unsubstantiated audio clipping went viral in the social media where a resident doctor is speaking to another person about efforts to hush up the matter. In the conversation the twosome are heard to be talking about how the CCTV footages could have been tampered and whether some fellow doctor with high connections could have been involved in the brutal act. The parents of the victim too said that they were not satisfied with the investigation adding, "there must be some other insider or insiders involved because my daughter used to regularly complain that she did not want to go to the RG Medical College ... she was under pressure for something ... she was raped and murdered and one person cannot do that alone." The Government on Sunday

removed the Hospital Superintendent and Vice Principal, whereas the junior doctors and the family members of the victim demanded removal of the Principal, and grilling of the fellow doctors including the Head of the Department of Chest Medicine. Meanwhile, Bengal BJP president and junior Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar on Sunday wrote a letter to Union Health Minister JP Nadda seeking his "prompt intervention" in getting justice for the deceased doctor. "I have written a letter to JP Nadda ji who is also the Health Minister and BJP president to see to it that Medical Council of India sends a team of experts to inspect the security and safety scenario of all the medical colleges and other hospitals of Bengal ... there is no security for the doctors

and the TMC men are controlling the entire thing," Majumdar said also demanding a CBI investigation into the matter. "There is a serious effort to hush up the matter apparently to save some influential person ... even this civic volunteer who has been arrested is a member of the police organization affiliated to the TMC," Majumdar said adding the BJP would continue to stand by the agitating doctors and go to any extent for getting justice to the victim. Incidentally, TMC national general secretary and party's second in command had on Saturday advocated "encounter" for such culprits involved in such heinous acts." He said, "I will appeal to the Centre to bring such laws that such accused can be arrested tried summarily and then encountered in a week's time to make it a lesson for the others."

Delhi rain fury claims lives of...

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A X user was left disappointed with the authorities and said, "I am 52. Was born in Delhi and lived in Delhi NCR throughout. If my conscious memory begins when I was 7, then I have 45 years of it. Never have I seen such a complete collapse of municipal infrastructure in Delhi NCR as I have seen this year during the rains." The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) received 25 calls regarding waterlogging and tree falling due to rains between 6 am and 6 pm. A total of ten complaints were received from different areas of Delhi regarding waterlogging including calls from Mangolpuri, Nawada, Mukherjee Nagar, Rohini's Sector 4 and Sector 15, Dwarka, shiv mandir Jain Nagar, Naraina, Pitampura, Uttam Nagar, Sagar Pur, and Najafgarh. Complaints related to tree falling were

reported from fifteen areas including Civil Lines, Mundka, Kalkaji, West Punjabi Bagh, two from Hari Nagar, Rajouri Garden, GTB Nagar, Rohini, Bindapur, Mandawali, Madipur, Uttam Nagar, Kamla Nagar and Greater Kailash. Other areas that were waterlogged include Najafgarh, Kashmir Gate ISBT, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi Gate, Ito, Zakhira, Connaught Place, Chirag Delhi, Sainik farms, Hauz Khas, AIIMS, Minto Bridge, Mundka, Savitri flyover and Sangam Vihar among others. The Delhi Traffic Police issued a series of alerts for commuters including on MB Road in the carriageway from Khanpur and Hamdard, on Outer Ring Road between Chirag Delhi and Nehru Place and Anuvrat Marg among others. Adjoining areas including Noida and Gurugram were

also heavily waterlogged after a heavy spell of monsoon rain. Gurugram's key roads, sectors and colonies turned into a river again exposing the district administration's preparations to deal with the waterlogging. Meanwhile, the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA), Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) and the irrigation department had decided to install more high-power pumps at waterlogging points along the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway, including at Narsinghpur. According to the met department, 2.9 mm rain was recorded in the last 24 hours in Safdarjung, city's primary weather station while Njafgarh recorded the maximum rain of 36.5 mm till 8:30 am. The maximum temperature was recorded at 31 degrees Celsius while the minimum settled at 26 degrees.

Hindenburg: Sebi chief, husband...

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Citing "whistleblower documents", it said, "Madhabi Buch, the current chairperson Of SEBI, and her husband had stakes in both obscure offshore funds used in the Adani money siphoning scandal." Responding to the allegation, Buchs said in their statement, "In the context of allegations made in the Hindenburg Report dated August 10, 2024 against us, we would like to state that we strongly deny the baseless allegations and insinuations made in the report." "The same are devoid of any truth. Our life and finances are an open book. All disclosures as required have already been furnished to SEBI over the years," the statement said. Buchs further said they have

no hesitation in disclosing any and all financial documents, including those that relate to the period when we were strictly private citizens, to any and every authority that may seek them. "Further, in the interest of complete transparency, we would be issuing a detailed statement in due course," the added. On Saturday, the Congress demanded the Centre act immediately to eliminate all conflicts of interest in the regulator's investigation of the Adani Group. The opposition party also said the "seeming complicity of the highest officials of the land" can only be resolved by setting up a Joint Parliamentary Committee to investigate the full scope of the "scam".

Former External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh passes...

From Page 1

A former Congress MP, Singh was India's External Affairs Minister for the period 2004-05 during the UPA-I government led by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He also served as ambassador to Pakistan and was attached to the office of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from 1966 to 1971. Singh also authored several books including, 'The Legacy

of Nehru: A Memorial Tribute' and 'My China Diary 1956-88'. His autobiography is titled 'One Life is Not Enough'. K Natwar Singh wore many hats as he straddled the worlds of diplomacy, politics and writing but what remained consistent across decades was his sharp-wit and plain speaking. The former Congress leader had a love-hate relationship with the party as while he had

a great equation with the likes of former prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, he had a fallout with Sonia Gandhi after allegations were levelled against him when he was part of the UPA-I Cabinet. Singh was selected into the Indian Foreign Service in 1953 but in 1984, he resigned to contest elections as a member of the Congress. He won the election and served as a Union minister of state

until 1989. He returned to the political forefront when he was made the external affairs minister in 2004 when the Congress returned to power. However, 18 months later, he had to resign after the UN's Volcker committee named both him and the Congress party to which he belonged as beneficiaries of illegal pay-offs in the Iraqi oil scam. He served as secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs

from March 1982 to November 1984. He was bestowed the third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 1984. In 1984, he joined the Congress and was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Bharatpur constituency in Rajasthan. Congress leaders on Sunday condoled Natwar Singh's demise with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge hailing his profound contribution to India's diplomacy and

external affairs. "Our deepest condolences on the passing away of Former Union Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh ji. An acclaimed intellectual and a Padma Bhushan recipient, he made a profound contribution to India's diplomacy and external affairs," Kharge said in a social media post. "Our thoughts are with his family, friends and followers," he said.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "A hugely engaging political personality. A distinguished foreign service officer. A cultured man of letters and noted author with a few classics to his credit. A walking encyclopedia of the worlds of Nehru and Indira Gandhi. A delightful conversationalist, storyteller and ready wit." "A man whose

correspondence with varied men and women are the stuff of history. A wonderful and generous friend with his hospitality and his ever-sharp memory and his deep archive. Natwar Singh was all this and much more," Ramesh said. "He has just passed away after leading a full and richly variegated life. He was truly someone who has left behind his 'footprints on the sands of time'," he said in a social media post.

Zelenskyy 'confirms' daring military incursion onto Russian soil

AP ■ KYIV

Days after Ukraine began a surprise military incursion into Russia's Kursk border region, Zelenskyy broke the government's silence on it late Saturday by indirectly acknowledging ongoing military actions to "push the war out into the aggressor's territory" in his nightly address. Overnight into Sunday, a Russian drone and missile barrage on Kyiv killed two people including a 4-year-old boy. In Russia, Kursk's regional governor said that a Ukrainian missile shot down by Russian air defences fell on a residential building, wounding 13 people. Russia attacked Ukraine with four ballistic missiles and 57 Shahed drones, Ukraine's Air Force said. Air defences shot down 53 drones. The bodies of a 35-year old man and his son were found under rubble after fragments of missiles fell on a residential area in Kyiv's suburban Brovary district, according to Ukraine's State Emergency Service on Sunday. Another three people

in the district were also injured in the attack. Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration said it was the second time this month Kyiv was targeted. Popko said ballistic missiles did not reach the capital but that suburbs took the hit, while drones aiming for the capital were shot down. Zelenskyy, citing preliminary information, said that Russia had used a North Korean missile in the strike. Ukraine and the US have previously said that Russia has used North Korean missiles in the war. Zelenskyy reiterated calls to Western allies to step up in assistance to Ukraine, and that "to really stop Russian terror, we need not only a full-fledged air shield that will protect all our cities and communities, but also strong decisions from partners — decisions that will remove restrictions on our defensive actions." Meanwhile, Ukraine's incursion into Russia continued for a sixth day. The largest such attack since the full-scale invasion and unprecedented for its



Russian Emergency paramedics roll a stretcher with a resident of an apartment building damaged after shelling by the Ukrainian side into an ambulance in Kursk, Russia, on Sunday. AP/PTI

use of Ukrainian military units on Russian soil, it caught Moscow unaware and was an

embarrassment to Russian military leaders who have scrambled to contain the breach.

The exact aims of the operation remain unclear and Ukrainian military officials have adopted

a policy of secrecy, presumably to ensure its success. Military experts have said that it is

likely intended to draw Russian reserves away from the intense fighting in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, while a presidential advisor suggested it may strengthen Kyiv's hand in any future negotiations with Russia. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Sunday that Ukraine "understands perfectly well" that the recent attacks "make no sense from a military point of view." "The Kyiv regime is continuing its terrorist activity with the sole purpose of intimidating the peaceful population of Russia," she added. Kursk acting governor Aleksei Smirnov said on Sunday that a "Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance group" entered the Belovsky district the previous day, but that the situation had been "stabilized." In Russia, the Defense Ministry said 35 drones were shot down overnight over the Kursk, Voronezh, Belgorod, Bryansk and Oryol regions. Ukraine has not commented on the Sunday drone attacks

inside Russia. But it comes as Ukraine has increased the pace of similar drone attacks largely targeting military infrastructure and oil depots in recent weeks. Meanwhile, Belarus said it was sending more troops to its border with Ukraine on Saturday, saying Ukrainian drones had violated its airspace as part of Kyiv's military incursion into Russia's Kursk region. Authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko said Belarusian air defense forces destroyed dozens of targets flying from Ukraine over the Mogilev region, which borders Russia, on Friday evening. "The Ukrainian armed forces violated all rules of conduct and violated the airspace of the Republic of Belarus. In the eastern direction, very close to us in the Kostyukovich district," Lukashenko said at a meeting in Minsk on Saturday. Belarusian Defence Minister Viktor Khrenin said Belarus regards the violation of its airspace as a provocation and is "ready for retaliatory action."

Israel broadens evacuation orders Bid to protect rights, religious freedoms of minorities in Pak

AP ■ DEIR AL-BALAH

The Israeli military ordered more evacuations in southern Gaza early Sunday after a deadly airstrike on a school-turned-shelter in the north killed at least 80 Palestinians, according to local health authorities. Israel said it targeted a militant command post, killing 19 fighters. Israel has repeatedly ordered mass evacuations as its troops have returned to heavily destroyed areas where they had previously battled Palestinian militants. The vast majority of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people have been displaced by the 10-month-old war, often multiple times. Hundreds of thousands have crammed into squalid tent camps with few public services or sought shelter in schools like the one struck on Saturday. Palestinians say nowhere in the besieged territory feels safe. The latest evacuation orders apply to areas in Khan Younis, including part of an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone from which the military said rockets had been fired. Israel accuses Hamas and other mil-

itants of hiding among civilians and launching attacks from residential areas. Khan Younis, Gaza's second-largest city, suffered widespread destruction during an air and ground offensive earlier this year. Tens of thousands fled again last week after an earlier evacuation order. Hundreds of families carrying their belongings in their arms left their homes and shelters early Sunday, seeking elusive refuge. "We don't know where to go," said Amal Abu Yahia, a mother of three, who had returned to Khan Younis in June to shelter in their severely damaged home. "This is my fourth displacement," said the 42-year-old widow, whose husband was killed when an Israeli airstrike hit their neighbours' house in March. She said they went to Muwasi, a sprawling tent camp along the coast, but could not find any space. Ramadan Issa, a father of five in his 50s, fled Khan Younis with 17 members of his extended family, joining hundreds of people walking toward central Gaza early Sunday.



"Every time we settle in one place and build tents for women and children, the occupation comes and bombs the area," he said, referring to Israel. "This situation is unbearable." Gaza's Health Ministry says the Palestinian death toll from the 10-month-old war is approaching 40,000, without saying how many were fighters. Aid groups have struggled to address the staggering humanitarian crisis in the territory, while international experts have warned of famine. The war began when Hamas-

Iran and its militant allies across the region. The strike on Saturday hit a mosque inside a school in Gaza City where thousands of people were sheltering. The Gaza Health Ministry said 80 people were killed and around 50 wounded. The Israeli military disputed the toll and said it killed 19 Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants in a precise strike, releasing what it said were their names and photos. Hamas and Palestinian activists disputed the military's claims, saying two of the 19 had been killed in earlier strikes and that others were known to be civilians or opponents of Hamas. Gaza City and the rest of the north have been surrounded by Israeli forces and largely cut off from the world since late last year, and it was not possible to independently confirm the accounts from either side. The UN human rights office says Israel has carried out "systematic attacks on schools," which have served as shelters since the start of the war, with at least 21 hit since July 4, leaving hundreds dead, including women and children.

Pakistan's top civil and military leadership on Sunday vowed to protect the rights and religious freedoms of minorities, urging all segments of the society to work for promoting interfaith harmony, the spirit of love, tolerance, brotherhood and unity. In 2009, Pakistan declared August 11 as the National Minorities Day to honour the historic speech made by its founder M A Jinnah who on August 11, 1947, promised to protect their rights. President Asif Ali Zardari in his message said that minorities in Pakistan enjoy all political, economic and social rights which have been guaranteed by the Constitution, according to state-run Radio Pakistan. "We reaffirm our commitment to the promise made by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, on 11th August 1947, to the country's minorities to protect their rights and religious freedoms," Zardari said, adding the government was taking several steps for the political, social and economic empowerment of minorities. The president urged all seg-

ments of the society to educate the people about their rights and work to promote interfaith harmony, the spirit of love, tolerance, brotherhood and unity to make Pakistan a strong country. Zardari expressed confidence that the minorities of Pakistan would continue to play a positive role towards the country's development. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to minorities for their outstanding role in the country's development and prosperity. "The purpose of celebrating the day is to express solidarity with the minorities living in Pakistan and to acknowledge their services for the state of Pakistan," he said. The prime minister said that "our minority community played a key role in the Pakistan movement and since the creation of Pakistan, has been contributing immensely to nation-building". Alluding to Jinnah's historic speech, Sharif said that complete religious freedom has been given to minorities. He expressed commitment to protect the rights of minorities and their overall development and

prosperity. Meanwhile, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the services chiefs acknowledged the indispensable contributions of minorities to the nation's progress, prosperity, and rich cultural heritage. According to an army statement, the army leadership, extending warm felicitations to the minority communities of the country, said, "This occasion serves as a poignant reminder of the diversity, inclusivity and harmonious coexistence that are the hallmarks of our great nation." The army said minority communities are an integral and vital part of the social fabric of the country and their rights and freedoms are sacrosanct as enshrined in the Constitution and Islam. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in 2021, there are 96.47 per cent Muslims in the country, followed by 2.14 per cent Hindus, 1.27 per cent Christians, 0.09 per cent Ahmadi Muslims and 0.02 per cent others. The minorities are often at the receiving end due to violence by extremist groups.

FS Misri meets Nepal's top leadership, discuss ways to strengthen bilateral ties

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Sunday met with Nepal's top leadership and discussed ways to provide an impetus to various sectors of bilateral cooperation. Misri, who is here on a two-day visit at the invitation of his Nepalese counterpart Sewa Lamsal, paid a courtesy call on President Ramchandra Paudel at the president's office Sheetalniwas in Kathmandu. "While conveying greetings of the Indian leadership, he discussed ways to further strengthen India-Nepal ties across all sectors," the Indian Embassy in Nepal said in a post on X. Misri also called on Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli at his office at Singhdurbar. "Foreign Secretary reaffirmed India & Nepal's civilizational, close and multifaceted relationship & discussed ways to provide an impetus to various

sectors of bilateral cooperation," the mission said in another post. Foreign Secretary Sewa Lamsal was also present on the occasion. Earlier in the day, Misri and Secretary of Nepal's Urban Development Ministry Maniram Gelal jointly inaugurated a new building of Nepal Bhasa Parishad in Kathmandu built under India's post-earthquake reconstruction grant. "Foreign Secretary @VikramMisri & Mr Maniram Gelal, Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Govt of Nepal jointly inaugurated the new building of Nepal Bhasa Parishad in Kathmandu, built under India's post-earthquake reconstruction grant," the Embassy of India said in a post on X. The building in the Naradevi area of the capital was damaged in the 2015 earthquake. Nepal Bhasa is the language belonging to the ethnic Newar community of

Kathmandu. In keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call of Ek Ped Ma ke Naam, Misri planted a sapling of Nili Gulmoohar at the Indian mission's complex. Launched by Prime Minister Modi, on World Environment Day this year, the campaign aims to plant 800 million trees by September 2024 and 1.4 billion trees by March 2025 through a collective effort involving the government and society in India. Misri was earlier received by his Nepalese counterpart Sewa Lamsal upon his arrival here. "Foreign Secretary of India @VikramMisri arrives in Kathmandu for an official visit from 11-12 August 2024. Warm reception by Nepal Foreign Secretary Ms Sewa Lamsal," the Embassy of India said in another post on X. "The visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level India-Nepal bilateral exchanges

& underlines India's commitment to its #NeighbourhoodFirst policy," it said. According to the Foreign Ministry, foreign secretaries of both countries would discuss a gamut of matters related to Nepal-India relations, mutual interests, and cooperation. This is the first visit of the Indian foreign secretary to Nepal after the formation of the Oli-led coalition government last month. This is a regular visit of the Indian Foreign Secretary to Nepal, the Foreign Ministry sources added. Misri will also meet Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Urban Development Prakash Man Singh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Bishnu Paudel and Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak. He will also hold a bilateral meeting with Foreign Secretary Lamsal and will attend a dinner reception hosted by Lamsal.

Two men shot before concert at raceway in Iowa

Iowa (AP): Two people were shot and killed at a raceway in Iowa just as a concert was about to begin, authorities said on Sunday. The shooting happened Saturday night at the I-29 Speedway in Pacific Junction, roughly 20 miles south of Omaha, Nebraska. An outdoor concert at the venue was about to begin when shots were fired in the parking lot, the Iowa Department of Public Safety said in an online press release. The victims were identified as Marcus L. Johnson, 28; and Charles A. Williams Jr, 27. Both were from Omaha, Nebraska. The Mills County Sheriff's Office is being assisted by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation, Iowa State Patrol, Omaha Police Department, and other law enforcement agencies. Authorities are asking anyone who has information about the shooting to contact the Mills County Sheriff's Office.

At least 18 dead after landfill site collapses in Uganda's capital

AP ■ KAMPALA

A vast landfill site in the Ugandan capital collapsed, killing at least 18 people, the Red Cross said. Fourteen other people were injured when the Kiteezi landfill, which serves as a waste disposal site for much of Kampala, collapsed late Friday. At least two of the dead were children, Kampala Capital City Authority said in a statement. The collapse is believed to have been triggered by heavy rainfall. The precise details of what happened were unclear, but the city authority said there was a "structural failure in waste mass". Irene Nakasiita, a spokeswoman for the Uganda Red Cross, said the toll reached 18 after more bodies were retrieved from the scene on



Sunday. "The assessment is not yet completed," she said, adding that rainfall was slowing the efforts of rescue teams digging through heaps of trash. The Kiteezi landfill is on a

steep slope in an impoverished part of the city. Women and children who scavenge plastic waste for income frequently gather there, and some homes have been built close to the landfill.

'Pure veg Indian dishes' - new trend among foodies in Karachi

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan's industrial and financial centre Karachi has become the food capital for the foodies of the cosmopolitan city, with the latest trend being an acquired taste for authentic and refined Indian vegetarian dishes such as 'soyabean aloo biryani', 'aloo tikki', 'vada pav', 'masala dosa' and 'dhokla'. For millions of people in the capital of Sindh province, Karachi's beauty is the food options ranging from the most expensive European and Italian cuisine to affordable Chinese food or a simple bun kabab as the food capital caters to the taste and pockets of everyone. The foodies in recent months have also developed a taste for "pure vegetarian" dishes. Mahesh Kumar, who owns the small Maharaj Karamchand

Vegetarian Foods Inn inside a historical old compound of the bustling M A Jinnah Road, says his business is booming as people have developed a taste for vegetarian dishes known in Karachi as "pure vegetarian Indian dishes". The Narayan compound, where before partition Hindus, Sikhs and Christians lived in peace and harmony, not only houses the restaurant but also the centuries-old Swaminarayan Temple and also a Gurdwara. Initially built for the inhabitants of the compound, the Maharaj Karamchand Inn is now a popular joint for the lawyers and visitors who show up every day at the city courts just opposite the compound or for other businesses in this commercially vibrant area of old Karachi. "Our Soyabean Aloo Biryani, Aloo Tikki, Paneer Karahi, and

Mixed Vegetables are famous and we witness a lot of rush during lunchtime with a lot of takeaways and deliveries as well," Kumar said. Kumar said his father started the restaurant in 1960 and there is nothing fancy about it with the same old wooden chairs and tables, but what attracts Muslim and non-Muslim customers is the home-made spices and the fresh vegetables and oil used in preparing the dishes. Kumar admits they do not publicise their restaurant because there are still some Muslim conservatives who consider it taboo for Muslims to eat food prepared by Hindus. "We have enough clientele who are happy with our food and service but don't like to promote it," he added. It is not just this Hindu-run

vegetarian restaurant that is doing a great job but, in other parts of Karachi, entrepreneur Hindu, Christian and Muslim women have set up food stalls specialising in refined Indian vegetarian dishes such as 'pav bhaji', 'vada pav', 'masala dosa' and 'dhokla'. Kavita, who started a food stall in the Cantt area on a side street eight months ago, sells Indian vegetarian dishes and can barely keep up with the rush at her stall. "What is surprising for us is that apart from walk-in customers, we have developed a clientele of regular customers who love our food," she said. What surprised Kavita and her family is the taste the meat-loving people of Karachi have developed for pure vegetarian dishes. Not only Kavita but her sister-in-law, Chandrika Dixit, brother Jeetendra and her

mother Nomita manage three stalls next to each other while a fourth stall which sells 'dhoklas', 'aam panna' and 'dal samosas' is run by a Christian lady Mary Richards. "We all live in the same compound close by and after hearing how people have taken to Indian vegetarian dishes we have decided to try our luck. We make these dishes regularly at home," Mary said. Muslim and non-Muslim customers, calling out her name "Kavita Didi", vibrate in the air as people coming in their cars also have to line up for their orders on the well-lit street. Kavita's food stall has already been covered by big media outlets in Pakistan and even BBC ran a story as to how a Hindu girl's food is selling like hot cakes among Karachiites. On the other side of the cos-

opolitan city, two sisters - Mahreen and Lubna - are also doing well with their food stall on a famous food street in the populous Hussainabad area. "We are unique in the sense that we sell Indian vegetarian food surrounded by restaurants and stalls selling traditional Pakistani meat dishes," chuckles Lubna. The two sisters have learnt how to make 'masala dosa', 'vada pav', 'vegetarian rice' and 'pav bhaji' from their elders who migrated from India after the partition in 1947. Both sisters talk at length as their hands remain busy preparing dishes and handing them out to eager customers. "People are now eating these dishes because they are not expensive, tasty and quick to prepare," Mahreen said. Far from the crowded

Hussainabad area, a Muslim Gujarati-speaking family that migrated from Junagadh in India has been selling different varieties of masala dosas in Bahadurabad for over five decades. "Come sunset and business begins," says Zafar, whose father started the masala dosa stall on a scrap Suzuki van proudly claiming that their food joint is among the first original places to sell pure vegetarian Indian dishes. Zafar and his team of cooks and helpers sell varieties of masala dosas but the aloo masala dosa remains their best-selling item despite being priced at 500 rupees. "I think Karachi has a lot of migrants from India who are more moderate or liberal in their choice of food and that is why there is an acquired taste for Indian vegetarian dishes,"

Zafar explained. On the other end of the spectrum are the upscale Rajdhani Delight and Nawab Dhanasthani restaurants in the posh Clifton area whose daily "pure vegetarian" and "chicken Thalis" are sought after by foodies. As soon as you walk into the Rajdhani Delight restaurant owned by a Gujarati family, the aroma of authentic Rajasthani and Gujarati food just gets into you, restaurant manager Jerome Earnest said. The 'navratan vegetarian thali' with its mixture of vegetable, paneer, dal dishes, chutneys, achar, spicy yoghurt, dhokla, rice, salty lassi and gulab jamuns is a steal for 1500 rupees with waiters attired in traditional Rajasthani costumes waiting to serve you fresh chapatis in the metal tray with small bowls.

Sebi proposed F&O norms to hit exchanges, brokers: Reports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Stock exchanges and brokers, catering to retail traders, could be hit hard by the regulator Sebi's proposed measures for Futures & Options (F&O) trading regulations, with market volumes slumping 30-40 per cent, according to reports. If these measures are implemented, the number of investors could decrease, it added.

Moreover, discount brokers, who depend heavily on retail investors, are expected to be more affected than traditional full-service brokers. Sebi, in its consultation paper in July, proposed seven measures, including increasing minimum contract size and upfront collection of option premiums, intra-day monitoring of position limits, rationalisation of strike prices, removal of calendar spread benefit on expiry day and increase in near contract expiry margin. Sebi stated that these measures are aimed at enhancing investor protection and promote market stability in derivative markets. According to a report by



Jefferies, Sebi's proposed measures to reduce the number of weekly option contracts from 18 to 6 could impact around 35 per cent of industry premiums. However, if trading shifts to the remaining contracts, the overall impact can be reduced to 20-25 per cent. Among its 7 proposed measures, IIFL Securities see the highest impact from the withdrawal of weekly options (only 1 per exchange allowed) as index Options account for 98 per cent of the volumes. IIFL Securities expects the National Stock Exchange

(NSE) to be more affected than the BSE because 60 per cent of NSE's revenue comes from options trading, compared to 40 per cent for BSE. It estimates that by the financial year 2026, NSE's earnings could be reduced by 25-30 per cent while BSE's earnings could drop by 15-18 per cent. Jefferies also believes that removal of Bankex weekly contract can impact BSE's earnings per share (EPS) by 7-9 per cent over FY25-27. It further said that BSE might see a small decline in earnings, but if trading

activity shifts from discontinued products, it could offset the impact or even lead to earnings growth. "We don't see any impact on MCX from these regulations. Within the value chain, discount brokers are likely to be more impacted than traditional full service brokers given former's dependence on retail investors," IIFL Securities said. Jefferies believes that clearing members like Nuvama, which caters to institutional players High-Frequency Traders (HFTs) and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are less impacted. Rationalizing weekly options to only one benchmark index per exchange will significantly affect the NSE because it currently has four weekly index expiries, with "Bank Nifty" being the most important, contributing to 50 per cent of its options volume. The change could reduce NSE's overall trading volumes by 30-35 per cent, IIFL Securities said. On the other hand, BSE is expected to be less affected since it only has two contracts, with Sensex making up 85 per cent of its volumes in FY24.

Adopt guidance over intimidation: CBDT chief Agrawal to I-T officials

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Income-tax department officials should make renewed efforts to come across as responsible, responsive, transparent apart from undertaking an approach of "guidance over intimidation" while dealing with taxpayers, the CBDT chairman has said. Ravi Agrawal, the head of the direct taxes administration body of the country, suggested a 'PRUDENT' approach to be followed by the taxmen as the income tax regime completed 164 years in India. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) chief recently spoke to his colleagues via an online video 'Samvaad' session -- The Chairman Speaks -- on the occasion of the 165th Income Tax Day that was observed on July 24. He said the tax department has undergone "transformational" change, adopted technology in its processes, increased taxpayer base and that its orientation has changed from being largely an "enforcement and adversarial" department to largely a service department facilitating taxpayer compliance through non-

intrusive tax administration. Agrawal said revenue under the direct tax category has been growing and there were about 65 crore PANs and more than 8.5 crore ITRs were filed during 2023-24 fiscal. "Our role as part of the tax administration is critical. It is incumbent on us to service the citizens as well as business with professionalism as we embark on our journey to fulfil honourable Prime Minister's vision of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 and with the beginning of 'Amrit Kal', I take this opportunity to present an approach to be adopted by each one of us irrespective of rank in the department," he said. The approach, he said, has been encapsulated under the acronym PRUDENT and it will guide the officials as they continue to navigate the "complexities" of tax administration. Explaining the acronym

PRUDENT, Agrawal said P stands for professionalism, R for being responsible and responsive, U for understanding transactions and businesses, D for dedication and due diligence, E for effective enforcement, N for non-intrusive administration and T for technology-based tax administration. He said the tax officials should enhance professionalism in the department by investing in capacity building, fostering adaptability, prioritizing taxpayer service, maintaining a judicious approach and ensuring ease of business on one hand, while ensuring data driven action. By being responsible and responsive, he said, the taxman has "to be decisive, rather than have an ad-hoc approach". "I would like to emphasize that any decision that we take has impact on the concerned taxpayer. As a responsible administration, we must commit ourselves to be transparent in our actions. This transparency builds trust and ensures that the administration is held accountable for its actions,"

Steel prices trade at 3-year lows on increased supplies: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic steel prices have dropped to a three-year low on account of increased imports, according to a report. Hot rolled coils (HRC) prices have fallen to Rs 51,000 a tonne from a peak of Rs 76,000 a tonne in April 2022, markets research firm BigMint said in a report. The rate of cold rolled coils (CRC) is trading at Rs 58,200 a tonne from the peak of Rs 86,300 a tonne in April 2022. The prices exclude the 18 per cent GST on the commodity. "The rates of HRC and CRC in India are trading at their three-year low graph. The surge in imports has impacted the domestic prices hitting the demand," BigMint said. According to the data, imports during the April-June quarter surged by 68 per cent to 1.93 million tonnes (MT) from 1.15 MT in the same period of 2023-24. Steel imports rose by 38 per cent to 8.319 MT in 2023-24, making India a net importer of the commodity. Steel players have raised the issue of increased imports from select countries with the government and sought measures to protect the domestic industry from rising shipments.

Global demand muted; gradual improvement expected in domestic market: Tata Motors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors expects demand to remain sluggish in overseas markets this fiscal while pinning hopes on a gradual bounce back in the domestic market on the back of new launches and the upcoming festive season. Earlier this month, the Mumbai-based automaker reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 5,566 crore and total income of Rs 1,09,623 crore for June quarter. "Overall, from a demand perspective, we do anticipate that as far as the global demand is concerned, it is likely to remain muted. It has been that way. It's likely to remain muted. No immediate changes there," Tata Motors Global CFO PB Balaji said in an analyst call. In the domestic market, the company expects a gradual improvement in demand during the rest of the year aided by government plans to invest on infrastructure, healthy monsoons, favourable overall economic macros, new launches and upcoming festive period, he noted.



"So there is a need for absolute reason why there is an optimism as far as the domestic demand buildup is concerned, how gradual it's going to be, we will have to wait and see," Balaji said. He noted that commodities are also likely to remain range bound and therefore, in this situation, the automaker is confident of sustaining the performance in the coming quarters, and delivering a strong year. "So financials wise, this business is on a strong wicket and is likely to remain that way in the coming quarters and the full year as well," Balaji said. Passenger vehicle industry retail sales witnessed decline for two consecutive months - May and June, this fiscal. Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles MD Shailesh Chandra cited high channel

inventory as a notable challenge. "We have an all-time high channel inventory with further buildup which happened in Q1, did add stress on the wholesales. Also, there has been moderation in the EV fleet segment demand due to the expiry of FAME II in March 2024," he stated. Outlining the company's strategy, Chandra said: "As far as we are concerned, in terms of actions, we focus on retail acceleration backed by effective marketing campaigns, micro market focus, targeted product interventions, which are going to come in the coming months." "There are new upcoming launches primarily to drive customer excitement and of course, it is also going to help the company improve footfalls in the showroom," he added. He also highlighted the company's focus on cost reduction. "We will continue the rigor on tight control on fixed cost and continued effort on structural cost reduction within the organization," Chandra said.

LIC to invest around ₹1.30 lakh crore in stock market in FY25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) MD and CEO Siddhartha Mohanty has said that the corporation is looking to make fresh investments of around Rs 1.30 lakh crore in equities during the current financial year. During April-June FY25, the insurance behemoth made an investment of about Rs 38,000 crore in shares as against Rs 23,300 crore in the same period a year ago. LIC earned a profit of Rs 15,500 crore from its investments in equity markets during the first quarter. The profit from its investment was higher by 13.5 per cent quarter-on-quarter. "We are surely looking at the markets and price movements...We are looking to invest a good amount at least whatever we had invested in last financial year...LIC made an investment of around Rs 1.32 lakh crore in FY24," he said. Market value of LIC's investment in stocks of various companies stood at

around Rs 15 lakh crore at the end of June, he said. LIC has exposure in 282 companies through investment in their shares as of June 30, 2024. The Assets Under Management (AUM) increased to Rs 53,58,781 crore as at June-end as compared to Rs 46,11,067 crore at the end of same quarter previous year, registering an increase of 16.22 per cent. Total investment grew by Rs 7,30,662 crore, from Rs 42,44,852 crore in March 2023 to Rs 49,75,514 crore as on March 31, 2024. Total equity investment portfolio constitute Rs 12,39,740 crore as against Rs 8,39,662 crore in 2022-23, whereas other investments constitute Rs 37,35,774 crore as against Rs 34,05,190 crore in 2022-23.

Macroeconomic data, global trends, Q1 earnings to drive market sentiments this week: Analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Macroeconomic data announcements, the last batch of Q1 earnings and global trends are the major factors that would influence trading sentiments in the equity market in a holiday-shortened week ahead, analysts said. Besides, trading activity of foreign investors would also be a crucial factor in dictating movement in the market. Equity markets would remain closed on Thursday for Independence Day. "This week, all focus will be on the global markets as we can see the extension of weakness after a long period of stability. The Indian equity market could also witness some bit of levelling off this week as investors process recent gains and contend with high prices. Geopolitical tensions are also escalating, but markets are not reacting significantly, which is reflected in the declining crude oil prices," said Praveesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst, Swastika Investmart Ltd. On the domestic front, the

last batch of Q1 earnings will drive stock-specific movements. Hero MotoCorp, Hindalco are some of the big corporate earnings this week, he added. "Additionally, institutional flows will play a crucial role in market dynamics," Gour said. Vodafone Idea, NMDC, IRCTC, SJVN and PC Jeweller would also announce their quarterly earnings during the week. From the macroeconomic front, industrial production data for June and inflation rate for July will be announced on Monday.

WPI inflation data will be out on Wednesday. Indian inflation data is due this week, said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. "Moving forward, the direction of the domestic market will be influenced by global markets," Nair added. Last week, 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. Stock markets globally faced a sharp correction last week triggered by the unwinding of the yen carry trade and recession fears in the US.

Financial strain of disability in India high, insurance aims to bridge gap

PTI ■ KOLKATA

A staggering number of Indians face financial hardship due to disability, with lakhs suffering temporary or permanent limitations each year and recognising this critical gap in financial security, insurance companies are stepping forward with innovative solutions, officials said on Sunday. A 2018 report by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) revealed that India, despite having only 1 per cent of the world's

vehicles, accounts for 6 per cent of all road crashes. According to experts, close to 5 to 7 lakh people in the country suffer from temporary or permanent disability each year due to the high rates of accidents and crippling diseases and lose their ability to work and earn a livelihood. "The onset of disability often brings substantial healthcare expenses, making comprehensive insurance coverage crucial to prevent social and financial decline," Future Generali India Insurance, Chief Distribution

Officer, Ramit Goyal said. A study titled 'Measuring the financial impact of disabilities in India' available on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) website, suggests around one-fifth (20.32 per cent) of the household's monthly consumption expenditure was spent on out-of-pocket expenses for disability. More than half (57.1 per cent) of the households were pushed to catastrophic health expenditure due to one of the members being disabled. Almost one-fifth (19.1 per cent) of the households that



were above the poverty line before one of the members was treated for disability were

pushed below the poverty line. According to R Garg, Head-

Term Insurance, Policybazaar.Com, in a country like India where there is no social security coverage like those in developed nations and where 2.2 per cent of the population is disabled, having disability income protection becomes prudent. FGI's said recently launched group health insurance product covers both temporary and permanent disabilities arising from physical or mental illnesses, accidents, and unforeseen events that result in income loss.

The plan provides a safety net by replacing up to 75 per cent of pre-disability income per month, along with potential coverage for loan EMIs and credit card minimum payments. Bajaj Allianz another leading insurer said it has seen a steady increase in personal accident insurance uptake, which includes disability income protection. Bhaskar Nerurkar, Head of the Health Administration Team at Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, noted that rising living costs and greater awareness of financial

security through insurance are driving this trend. He added that as accident rates climb, more individuals and companies are seeking disability and income loss coverage, leading to higher penetration rates. Continued support and favourable regulations from IRDAI can further boost this growth, Nerurkar emphasised. P Nanda Gopal, Founder and CEO of Upsure, emphasises the critical need for DIP plans among vulnerable groups like daily wage earners and gig workers.

Falling prices, imports challenges for lab-grown diamond industry: GTRI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Significant fall in prices, eroding consumer interest and competition with imports are some of the major challenges being faced by the domestic lab-grown diamond industry, think tank GTRI said on Sunday. It also said that while India faces the issue of production overcapacity, it continues to import lab-grown diamonds in large amounts and this issue needs deeper investigation. To address these challenges, the government needs to take certain steps such as setting clear and consistent rules to standardize quality, certification, and market practices; issuing a Quality Control Order to check quality of imports; and

investment in research and development to improve production processes, reduce costs, and enhance the quality of lab-grown diamonds. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that India's lab-grown diamond industry is facing a major challenge, with prices falling by 65 per cent in the past year,

from Rs 60,000 to Rs 20,000 per carat due to local overproduction and oversupply from abroad. This sharp decline points to problems like overproduction, high imports, and lack of regulation, which are hurting consumer confidence. Urgent corrective steps are needed to

get this high-growth industry back on track, it added. Meanwhile, natural diamonds cost around Rs 3.5 lakh per carat and this price drop is making it difficult for manufacturers to repay loans taken for purchasing lab-grown diamond making machines, putting them under financial strain, it said. Lab-grown diamonds, as the name suggests, are created in laboratories replicating the natural high pressure, high temperature conditions under which diamonds are formed in the Earth's mantle. These diamonds are chemically, physically, and optically identical to natural diamonds. Natural diamonds come in various shapes, while lab-grown diamonds are usually square or rectangular. Lab-grown diamonds are

produced in a rough form and need to be cut and polished, just like natural diamonds. The value of a cut and polished lab-grown diamond is 6-8 times higher than its rough form. "The industry faces several challenges, including falling prices, intensifying competition both from local and imports, and the lack of clear regulatory frameworks. These issues pose potential risks to the sustained growth and profitability of India's lab-grown diamond sector," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. He said that the number of units producing lab-grown diamonds in India has increased to 10,000 units, leading to over supply and competition.

Major cement companies report volume growth in June qtr, revenue remains muted due to lower price

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading cement manufacturers reported single-digit volume growth in the June quarter, though their topline was muted on account of the continued downtrend in the price. Listed manufacturers such as UltraTech, Ambuja Cements, ACC, Shree Cements, and Dalmia Bharat - in their latest quarter earnings reported gains in volumes, ranging from 3 to 9 per cent and increase in capacity utilisation. However, soft cement prices have put their topline under pressure in the April-June period. Besides, raw material costs went up marginally due to an increase in the cost of fly ash and slag.

The all-India average cement price was at around Rs 348 per 50 kg bag in June 2024, down around 3 per cent year-on-year. However, this was higher when compared to Rs 335 per bag in May 2024. For the first two months of FY25, the average cement price was at Rs 340 per bag, down 8 per cent YoY. In FY24, the average price was Rs 365 per bag and Rs 375 per bag in FY23, according to the report. Moreover, intense heatwave and general elections also slowed the pace of construction activities in April-May. UltraTech Cement reported a flat consolidated net profit of Rs 1,696.59 crore for the June quarter. The leading cement maker's revenue from

operations was up 1.87 per cent at Rs 18,069.56 crore for the period. Volume sales were up 7 per cent to 31.95 million tonne (MT), said the Aditya Birla Group firm which has announced an open offer for the South-based rival India Cements Ltd after acquiring the promoter's stake. Adani Group firm Ambuja Cements Ltd reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 789.63 crore and its revenue from operations was at Rs 8,311.48 crore. Though its results were not comparable due to past acquisitions of Sanghi Industries and ACCPL, its consolidated revenue from operations was at Rs 8,712.90 crore in the corresponding June period of FY24.



A REFRESHING TWIST ON PROBIOTIC HEALTH

Yakult Light Mango Flavour combines the benefits of probiotics with the delicious taste of mango. This new variant supports gut health and boosts immunity with every sip. Enjoy a tasty and healthy addition to your daily routine, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



In today's fast-paced world, maintaining good health is a top priority, especially with increasing lifestyle disorders linked to poor nutrition, stress and inadequate sleep. A robust immune system is essential for combating these challenges and ensuring overall well-being. One effective way to support immunity is through probiotics, which are known for their ability to enhance gut health. Recognising this, Yakult Danone India Pvt Ltd, a leader in the probiotic industry, has launched an exciting new product Yakult Light Mango Flavour. Probiotics are live bacteria that are beneficial for gut health. They work by increasing the population of good bacteria in the gut, which helps reduce harmful, disease-causing

bacteria. This balance is crucial for proper digestion, nutrient absorption and overall immune function. A healthy gut is often linked to a strong immune system, which is essential for fighting off infections and maintaining overall well-being. Yakult has long been a trusted name in probiotics and its latest offering, Yakult Light Mango Flavour, continues this legacy. The new product contains the same unique probiotic strain, *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota (SHIROTA strain), as the original Yakult. This strain is scientifically proven to survive the journey through the digestive tract and reach the intestines alive, where it can impart its health benefits. The story of Yakult begins with Dr. Minoru Shirota, a Japanese medical doctor who was

deeply moved by the poor health conditions in Japan during the early 1900s. Witnessing the deaths of children due to infections caused by inadequate hygiene and poverty, Dr. Shirota dedicated his life to preventive health. He believed in using probiotics to prevent diseases rather than curing them after they occur. This philosophy led to the development of the SHIROTA strain, which has now been helping people maintain gut health for over 90 years. Yakult Light Mango Flavour combines the health benefits of probiotics with the delightful taste of mango, a favourite fruit among Indians. This new variant is a sister product to the original Yakult, offering the same 6.5 billion beneficial bacteria in every bottle. The

mango flavour adds a refreshing twist, making it an enjoyable choice for those who love the fruit and want to incorporate probiotics into their daily routine.

Dr. Neerja Hajela, Head of Science and Regulatory Affairs at Yakult Danone India Pvt Ltd, emphasises the importance of probiotics in daily life: "Lactobacillus casei Shirota is backed by more than 100 human studies conducted across the globe, including India. Probiotics increase the good bacteria in the gut, reducing the harmful ones. This balance ensures better digestion, proper absorption of nutrients, and stronger immunity, reducing the risk of infections." In today's environment, where factors like pollution, stress and poor diet can easily disrupt gut health, incorporating probiotics into your diet is a proactive step toward better health. A decrease in probiotic bacteria, coupled with unhealthy lifestyle choices, can lead to poor gut health and weak immunity, manifesting as fatigue, poor growth, malnutrition, and repeated infections.

Therefore, introducing scientifically validated probiotic products like Yakult into your daily routine is essential for maintaining a healthy gut and a strong immune system. Yakult Light Mango Flavour is more than just a tasty drink; it's a step toward better health. By incorporating this probiotic-rich beverage into your daily routine, you can support your gut health and boost your immunity. As Yakult Danone India continues to innovate and expand its offerings, the new mango flavour is an attestation to its commitment to improving the health and well-being of its consumers. Whether you're a longtime fan of Yakult or new to probiotics, Yakult Light Mango Flavour is a refreshing way to support your health goals.

Revolutionising Fitness and Wellness

Renowned fitness expert **SUMAYA DALMIA** highlights the importance of balanced lifestyle habits, emphasising nutrition, exercise and daily activity for sustainable health

At the recent FDCI Manifest Wedding Weekend, renowned fitness and wellness expert Sumaya Dalmia delivered a masterclass focused on practical health and fitness advice. The session, designed for brides, grooms and wellness enthusiasts, aimed to promote sustainable fitness habits rather than quick fixes or superficial transformations. Sumaya's approach emphasised the importance of a balanced lifestyle, combining nutrition, exercise and daily physical activity for long-term health benefits.

Sumaya began the masterclass by addressing common fitness myths that often mislead people. She debunked the idea that weightlifting leads to unwanted bulk, especially for women. Instead, she encouraged attendees to embrace strength training, highlighting its role in building muscle, improving metabolism and boosting confidence. Sumaya stressed that fitness is not an instant achievement but a lifelong journey requiring consistency and dedication. She pointed out that while exercise is crucial, nutrition is equally vital in achieving fitness goals, stating, "99.9% of anything to do with gut health, losing weight or aesthetics is about nutrition."

The masterclass delved into the importance of understanding individual dietary needs, focusing on protein intake. Sumaya explained how to calculate daily protein requirements and stressed the significance of distributing protein consumption throughout the day for optimal absorption. Rather than categorising foods as "good" or "bad," Sumaya advocated for balanced eating, integrating proteins, healthy fats and carbohydrates based on personal needs. This approach, which promotes moderation and mindful eating, resonated well with the audience.



Sumaya also addressed the role of daily physical activity beyond structured workouts. She acknowledged that modern lifestyles often involve less natural movement, contrasting this with the more active routines observed in other cultures. By encouraging simple activities like walking, taking the stairs and doing housework, Sumaya illustrated that even basic physical engagement significantly contributes to overall health. Her message was clear, while structured workouts remain essential, daily physical activities are equally important for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The masterclass provided valuable insights into

creating a balanced fitness routine that includes strength, flexibility, mobility, cardiovascular and core exercises. Sumaya's approach to fitness reflects the lessons learned during the pandemic, emphasising that effective workouts can be achieved at home with minimal equipment. This perspective encourages individuals to find ways to stay active, regardless of their environment or access to gym facilities.

Another significant aspect of Sumaya's masterclass was the discussion on diet, nutrition and lifestyle adjustments tailored for specific needs, such as PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome). She stressed the importance of mindful eating and clean eating, especially as one ages. For those following vegetarian diets, she recommended high-quality protein sources like nuts, seeds, quinoa, paneer, soya and sprouts. Proper cooking methods and using spices like hing and ginger were suggested to aid digestion. For individuals with PCOS, she recommended a diet high in protein, healthy fats and fibre-rich vegetables to help regulate hormones. Sumaya also touched on the topic of supplementation,

explaining the difference between Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) and Optimum Daily Allowance (ODA). She highlighted the importance of tailoring supplement intake to individual needs, considering factors such as menopause, perimenopause and specific conditions like PCOS. Essential supplements like Vitamin D3, magnesium glycinate and B12 were recommended, noting that even with sun exposure, many people, including Indians, often require D3 supplementation. She cited studies showing a link between low D3 levels and severe COVID-19 cases, underscoring its importance for overall health. Sumaya Dalmia's masterclass offered attendees a comprehensive guide to achieving and maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Her focus on debunking fitness myths, promoting sustainable habits and encouraging a holistic approach to health and wellness inspired participants to adopt practices that support long-term well-being. Sumaya's insights serve as a reminder that true fitness is about balance, consistency and personalisation, empowering individuals to take control of their health journey.

No one is immune to antimicrobial resistance

SHOBHA SHUKLA

"Even the healthiest amongst us could face a life-threatening situation through a minor injury, routine surgery, or common lung infection, if antimicrobials fail," said Dr Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to Nepal. "For those with pre-existing conditions like cancers, HIV, or diabetes, an untreatable infection can become an unexpected and deadly adversary."

Why do infections become difficult to treat or untreatable?

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites change over time and become resistant to (or no longer respond to) medicines, making infections harder (or impossible) to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. Misuse and overuse of medicines fuels AMR. It is important to remember that it is the disease-causing microbe (and not the human being, animal or plant which is being treated) that becomes resistant to medicines. Therefore, even if a person uses antimicrobial medicines responsibly, they are still at risk of acquiring a drug-resistant infection. Resistant microbes can pass between animals, plants and food, and in the environment. A "One Health" approach which recognises that the health of animals, humans, plants and the environment are interlinked is therefore essential to respond to AMR.

No one is immune to AMR

AMR threatens to unravel a century of medical progress, turning once treatable infections into untreatable life-threatening conditions, said Dr Pandav. "AMR is identified by the WHO as one of the top 10 global health threats facing humanity. AMR is making infections harder to treat, leading to prolonged hospital stays, higher medical costs, and increased disability, morbidity, and mortality. AMR has a real and devastating impact on individuals,

families, environmental health, agricultural and food productions, and livelihoods." Dr Pandav was speaking as a Guest of Honour at the South Asia Sub-Regional Media Workshop to prevent Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) held in Kathmandu, Nepal. The workshop was organised by Health TV Online along with co-hosts, including the Ministry of Health and Population of government of Nepal, Nepal Health Research Council of government of Nepal, Global AMR Media Alliance (GAMA), and partners.

Almost 5 million people died of AMR in a year

"In 2019 it was estimated that almost 5 million deaths were associated with bacterial AMR including 1.27 million deaths being directly caused by it. Raising awareness is our first line of defence against AMR. It is a collective responsibility, and the media plays a crucial role to shape public opinion, influence policy, and dispel myths and misinformation. Public messaging on AMR in the media needs to be simple, consistent, and clear," said Dr Pandav. "Four quadripartite agencies that have joined hands to combat AMR globally include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WHO, World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In a meeting in 2022, they had identified working with the media as one of the top four priorities. South Asia Media Workshop to prevent AMR was organised to raise awareness among media personnel and increase their active engagement on AMR and addressing it with One Health approach," said Kalpana Acharya, Organising Chairperson of South Asia Media Workshop to prevent AMR, Editor-in-Chief of Health TV Online, and founding Board Member of Global AMR Media Alliance (GAMA).

Nepal's response to AMR challenge

"I would like to commend Nepal government's Ministry of Health and Population for their leadership and initiatives already taken to tackle the AMR challenge. Nepal has successfully endorsed the National Action Plan on AMR. At the 77th World Health Assembly two months back, governments, including that of Nepal, endorsed the resolution to accelerate national and global responses to AMR," informed Dr Pandav. "In Nepal in 2019, there were 6400 deaths attributable to AMR and 23200 deaths associated with AMR. Nepal has the 153rd highest death rate per 100,000 population associated with AMR across 204 countries. AMR was the third biggest cause of death in 2019 in Nepal (after cardiovascular diseases and chronic respiratory diseases). The number of AMR deaths in Nepal is higher than deaths from neoplasms, respiratory infections and TB, digestive diseases, maternal and neonatal disorders and diabetes and kidney diseases," said Dr



Madan Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief of Quality Standards and Regulation Division, Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal. He also Chairs AMR National Technical Working Committee and serves as a Member Secretary of AMR National Steering Committee of government of Nepal. Discovery of penicillin was a breakthrough moment in 1928 but resistance against penicillin was reported in the 1940s - soon after it came into the market. Methicillin resistant *S.aureus* (MRSA) was reported in 1961. Microbes are becoming resistant to the medicines we have - due to their misuse or overuse. And now it is 30 years since a new class of antibiotics was last introduced, shared Dr Upadhyaya. Nepal is a signatory to Jaipur Ministerial Declaration on AMR 2011 when the South-East Asia region of the WHO became the first WHO region to adopt it.

Dr Upadhyaya shared that Nepal's National Action Plan on AMR (2024-2028) is currently awaiting the endorsement from the cabinet. It has already been endorsed by the National Technical Working Group on AMR, Finance Ministry of Nepal, National Planning Commission of Nepal, and the Social Committee of Nepal's cabinet. The National Action Plan on AMR (2024-2028) of Nepal has five strategic priorities, each with its time-bound activities, managed by a government agency (focal point) with supporting partners.

- Improve awareness and understanding of AMR through effective communication, education and training
- Strengthen the knowledge and evidence through surveillance and research
- Reduce the incidence of infection through effective infection prevention and control
- Optimise the use of antimicrobial agents in human, animal and food, and
- Promote investments for AMR activities, research and innovations.

The Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal is the national focal point for AMR. Nepal's Department of Drug Administration is the national focal point for antimicrobial consumption. Nepal's Veterinary Standards and Regulatory Laboratory is the national focal point for antimicrobial use in the animal health sector. Nepal's National Public Health Laboratory is the national focal point for AMR surveillance in human health. Nepal's Central Veterinary Laboratory serves as the focal point for AMR Surveillance in animal health. Nepal's Department of Food Technology and Quality Control serves as a focal point for AMR surveillance in the food sector, and the Department of Environment is the focal point for AMR in the environment, said Dr Madan Kumar Upadhyaya. "Implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan on AMR is

challenging with limited technical capacity and budgetary resources. Limited access to diagnostic microbiology facilities (at subnational level) and access to antimicrobials is another challenge," said Dr Upadhyaya.

Right and timely diagnosis and right treatment is key

Good plan has to be followed by a greater implementation on the ground. "We have to find an effective strategy to implement the National Action Plan on AMR. More importantly, we have to take it to the local level and ensure that the right antimicrobials are prescribed, the right amount of medicines are taken and for the right disease," said Dr Roshan Pokhrel, Health Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal. "We need to make progress in combating AMR and measure the progress too (with right data) to ensure that we are preventing AMR."

World leaders will convene on 26th September 2024 at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on AMR. This is the second such meeting. The first UN High-Level Meeting on AMR was held in 2016 which resulted in significant global and national actions to address AMR with One Health approach. Participants in Nepal called upon the world leaders for stronger commitments matched with concrete actions to prevent AMR. Later this year, the World AMR Awareness Week (18-24 November 2024) will be observed worldwide on the theme: Educate, Advocate and Act Now. (Shobha Shukla is the award-winning founding Managing Editor and Executive Director of CNS (Citizen News Service) and is a feminist, health and development justice advocate. She is a former senior Physics faculty of prestigious Loreto Convent College and current Coordinator of Asia Pacific Regional Media Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT Media) and Chairperson of Global AMR Media Alliance (GAMA).

It's a dream to compete with other international stars in India: Neeraj

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra hoped to compete with other prominent international names in India sooner than later following his silver medal-winning effort in the Paris Olympics.

Chopra bagged the silver at the Paris showpiece with a throw of 89.45m behind Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who hurled the javelin to 92.97m, an Olympic record. Anderson Peters of Grenada came third with a throw of 88.54m among the field that included some high-profile javelin throwers like Julian Webber, Jakub Vadlejch and Julius Yego.

"It's a dream of mine to compete with other international stars in India. Hopefully, there will be an international competition soon in India and I can do that," Chopra said during an interactive session with fans organised by the Olympics.Com. But before that, Chopra, whose silver was his second successive Olympics medal after the gold in Tokyo, said he wanted to work on certain areas of his game.

"I am entering a new season now. So, I don't have that much time to change training



methods or technique. But I hope to improve upon a couple of areas, especially the line of the javelin.

"You know, the correct angle of throwing so that I get more power in my throw. I will certainly work on it," he said.

Chopra said he wanted to give it all in the Paris Games final despite being below his best physically.

"The body conditions (of his) were tough. But when Arshad made that throw...I was able to hit my season's best

because the thought was set in my mind that I had to give the best throw because the competition had already become very tough."

Mothers of Chopra and Nadeem had taken the social media by storm as they showered affection on each other's son.

Chopra said his mother always spoke from her heart as she to date remained a simple rural soul.

"My mother...she always stayed in a village before and

after her marriage. She is not familiar with social media and things like that. She often speaks from her heart. But she understands what families of athletes, even from different countries, feel towards them."

Praise for Sreejesh, Manu Chopra lauded shooter Manu Bhaker for showing perseverance to grab two bronze medals in the Paris Games after experiencing the utter disappointment in the

Tokyo edition. "The way Manu Bhaker prepared her mind and came from her Tokyo setback is impressive. Her mindset appeared to be very strong this time while taking part in back-to-back competitions. I think it's just a start for her because I saw even people over 50 (age) were participating in shooting.

"I hope Manu will play in a lot more competitions, bring a lot more medals for the country and change the colour of the medal too," he said.

The 26-year-old also hailed Indian hockey team's goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who retired from top-level competition with a bronze at Paris.

"Sreejesh is a very relaxed and funny person. He motivates younger players a lot. Sreejesh bhair had said that he would retire after the Olympics. The players, I think, also felt that they should win it for Sreejesh bhair after doing so many great things for the team."

Chopra said Sreejesh offers a fine example in tackling pressure situations. "He has so many years of experience and he knows how to tackle the pressure situations. He seemed to be in his zone when I met him before the bronze medal match," he added.

After another gold, US men's basketball programme will now catch its breath

PTI ■ PARIS

The first practice for the US men's Olympic basketball team after arriving in Paris was one of those workouts that those who were there, watching behind closed doors, will talk about for a long time.

Players were split up evenly. Go play, they were told. What happened next set the tone for the rest of the team's time at the Paris Games.

"We warmed up and then it became competitive," US assistant coach Erik Spoelstra said. "And, that's when you realized, one, that this team really cares and that it felt the responsibility to play and compete at the highest level. And then secondly, the level of talent on that floor ... we knew it could exceed all expectations."

A couple of weeks later, they won gold. The mission was completed Saturday night when the U.S. won gold for the fifth consecutive Games, holding off France - in Paris, no less - 98-87.

Stephen Curry scored 24 points, all on 3-pointers, while Kevin Durant won his fourth Olympic gold and LeBron James won his third gold and fourth medal overall.

And then, the party started. Before long, it'll be time to start thinking about how to do it again in 2028 when the Olympics return to Los Angeles. Grant Hill will be



back as managing director for the men's national team, and he's already excited about what is looming.

"I've done a lot of things in my life," Hill said. "And, this is a thing that certainly consumes you, but it is incredibly rewarding." Especially when the team wins. There will be changes between now and 2028. James will be 43 and likely retired by then (though with James, never say never).

It might seem iffy for Curry and Durant to still be playing in four years, but again, who knows? Some players like Anthony Davis and Bam Adebayo already have said they want in; others like Anthony Edwards, Devin Booker, Jayson Tatum and Tyrese Haliburton seem to be locked in if they want to continue.

No decisions are set, and that won't change for a while. Hill is going to take a well-earned break. The next major international tournament is

the World Cup in Qatar in 2027. It's safe to say that it'll be sometime in 2025 when he even starts getting serious about putting together a group for that.

"Over four years, a lot can and will happen," Hill said. "Now, getting away from it a little bit, just letting things play out and see how guys continue to develop and see what kind of season guys have over the next year or so. And then, at some point, you start that process all over again."

When he took over, Hill said he wanted a pipeline for both players and coaches. People leave the program, others move up.

Steve Kerr made clear when he agreed to replace Gregg Popovich as US coach, it would be for the 2023 World Cup and the Paris Olympics. It would seem likely that the next national team coach will be either Spoelstra or Tyrone Lue, given how both were assistants under Kerr the last two summers.



Gymnast Jordan must return bronze medal after court mandates score change: IOC

PTI ■ PARIS

American gymnast Jordana Chiles must return the bronze medal she won in the Paris Olympics floor exercise after sport's highest court said her score was judged improperly, the International Olympic Committee confirmed Sunday.

The IOC announced early Sunday it was reallocating the bronze from Monday's women's floor final to Romanian Ana Barbosu after the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) said Saturday night it would respect the court's decision and elevate Barbosu to third.

The decision came less than 24 hours after the Court of Arbitration for Sport voided a scoring appeal made by Team USA coach Cecile Landi during the competition that had vaulted Chiles onto the podium.

CAS ruled Saturday that the on-floor appeal by Landi to have 0.1 added to Chiles' score came outside the 1-minute window allowed by the FIG. The ad hoc committee wrote that

Landi's inquiry came a minute and four seconds after the score was posted. The IOC said in a statement it will be in touch with the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee regarding the return of Chiles' bronze and will work with the Romanian Olympic Committee to discuss a reallocation ceremony honouring Barbosu.

CAS wrote Saturday that the initial finishing order should be restored, with Barbosu third, Romanian Sabrina Maneca-Voinca fourth and Chiles fifth.

The organization added the FIG should determine the final ranking "in accordance with the above decision," but left it to the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) to decide who would get the medal behind gold winner Rebeca Andrade of Brazil and silver medalist Simone Biles of the US.

The FIG said it was the IOC's call on whether to reallocate the medal. The IOC confirmed Sunday it would respect FIG's decision and seek to have Chiles' medal returned.

After coach's life was saved backstage, Uzbekistan dominate Olympic boxing

PTI ■ PARIS

Uzbekistan's beloved head boxing coach was revived from apparent cardiac arrest by two members of Britain's training staff after celebrating his team's first gold medal of the Paris Olympics, his fighters confirmed.

The Uzbek team went on to win five golds - more than any Olympic team in the last 20 years - in tribute to Tulkin Kilichev, who is recovering in a Paris hospital.

"(Kilichev) is more than a coach or a father, in fact," Bakhodir Jalolov said after winning his second super heavyweight gold medal. "He

has raised us. He educated us. He has transmitted the sports spirit to us. He has been with me in my heart, and tomorrow we will be going to visit him in the hospital."

Kilichev fell ill backstage after flyweight Hasanboy Dusmatov won Uzbekistan's first gold medal Thursday.

According to GB Boxing, team doctor Harj Singh and physical therapist Robbie Lillis found Kilichev in life-threatening distress. They performed CPR on the coach, and Lillis also used a defibrillator, the team said. Jalolov said Kilichev remained in contact with the team over the past two days while recovering, and his



fighters responded with a historic performance. Jalolov was the last of Uzbekistan's five Paris champions to climb the podium Saturday night in the

best Olympic performance since Cuba also won five golds at the 2004 Athens Games. Uzbekistan won the final five men's gold medal bouts contested at Roland

Garros, starting with Dusmatov on Thursday - a victory followed by that frightening moment for Kilichev.

"This is history for Uzbekistan, and I'm emotional because becoming a two-time Olympic champion was my dream," Jalolov said. "Now I feel very happy, and I will continue my career as a professional boxer."

Lazizbek Mullojonov won the heavyweight title Friday night, joining a remarkable Olympic lineage at that weight including Joe Frazier, George Foreman, Teofilo Stevenson, Felix Savon and Oleksandr Usyk.

"We are building a new generation of boxers," Mullojonov said. "This is the result of all the federation's work."

Indeed, Uzbekistan has responded sharply to its twisting fortunes in the past two Games under Kilichev's leadership. The team claimed three gold medals in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 to signal its arrival as an international power, but won just one gold medal - Jalolov's first - five years later in Tokyo.

With Jalolov and Dusmatov returning alongside a new crew of gifted young boxers, Uzbekistan has returned to dominance.

Sifan wins women's marathon

PTI ■ PARIS

Sifan Hassan traded elbows with Tigst Assefa with 150 meters left in the women's marathon, then passed her along the railing to win the race for her third distance medal of the Paris Games on Sunday.

Hassan finished in an Olympic record time of 2 hours, 22 minutes, 55 seconds. She also won bronze in the 5,000 and 10,000. By simply completing the marathon, she ran more than 62 kilometres.

She now has six Olympic medals. In Tokyo, Hassan won the 5,000 and 10,000 and finished third in the 1,500. Assefa got silver, and Kenya's Hellen Obiri took the bronze. Breaking



tradition, the women's Olympic marathon was held on the final day instead of the men's race. Hassan, an Ethiopian-born

racer who runs for the Netherlands, used the same tactic in the hilly, 26.2-mile course as on the oval. She lingered behind the leaders for most of the race before summoning up the energy for a late-race kick that would go down as one of the best of the sport has seen.

This one, amazingly, had more the look of a crowded race on the oval down the stretch. As Hassan gathered to make her last pass, Assefa, from Ethiopia, tried to block her path. Hassan moved to the inside around a bend. Assefa tried to squeeze her against the barrier separating the course from the cheering fans. The runners traded elbows, and then, Hassan took off past Assefa and sprinted in for the win.

World Boxing to announce major increase in membership after Paris Olympics

PTI ■ PARIS

The nascent governing body fighting to keep boxing in the Olympics is about to get a major membership boost.

World Boxing expects to expand its membership base to 50 national federations or more in the weeks after the conclusion of the tumultuous Paris Olympics, President Boris Van Der Vorst told The Associated Press. The organization already has 37 members, including most of the top Western national federations.

Van Der Vorst said he is leaving Paris even more confident his sport can pull off "the greatest comeback story ever in the Olympic



movement." Van Der Vorst has spent the Games speaking to boxing leaders and federation officials as World Boxing attempts to unify the sport under the only practical alternative to the Russian-dominated International

Boxing Association, which has been banished from the Olympic movement.

World Boxing must court each federation individually to accomplish this seismic change to the sport - and the clock is ticking.

Boxing is not currently on the program for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, and the International Olympic Committee has repeatedly said the sport must find a suitable new governing body - likely by early 2025 - to be restored to the lineup for the Games. An IOC unit ran the past two Olympic boxing tournaments.

"There's only one reason to join (World Boxing), and that's to save our sport," Van Der Vorst told the AP on Saturday.

Boxer Lin Yu-ting wins gold, concludes an Olympics filled with scrutiny

PTI ■ PARIS

Lin Yu-ting fought to remain poised and calm throughout the Paris Olympics boxing tournament, even when it seemed like most of the chattering world was maligning her, misrepresenting her and questioning the very nature of her being.

The flyweight shut off her social media, kept up her training and focused on earning one proficient victory after another.

But when she heard Taiwan's

anthem while standing on the top podium at Roland Garros with a gold medal around her neck, Lin suddenly broke down in cathartic sobs.

She cried not only for the tumult of the past two weeks, but for a lifetime in boxing that culminated in this gold-medal victory over previously unfathomable challenges.

"I saw images flashing, and I thought about the beginning of my career when I started boxing," Lin said. "All the difficult practices, the times that I got injured, the competitors I fought against.

All these images flashed in my head. There are times of great pain. There are times of great joy. I cried because I was so touched."

Lin completed her domination of her division Saturday night, following Imane Khelif's lead a day earlier by giving a glittering response to the intense scrutiny faced by both fighters inside the ring and around the world over misconceptions about their womanhood.

Lin routed Julia Szeremeta of Poland 5-0 in the final, capping her four-fight unbeaten run



through Paris by winning Taiwan's first Olympic boxing gold medal.

On Friday, Khelif won Algeria's first women's boxing medal with a decisive victory in the welterweight division final, beating Yang Liu of China.

Both fighters persevered through an avalanche of criticism and uninformed speculation about their sex during the Paris tournament to deliver the best performances of their boxing careers.

"Every fight is not easy," Lin said. "Winning 5-0 might seem easy, but behind that is a lot of

practice and hard work." World leaders, celebrities and online critics attempted to make it about something other than the boxers' years of work.

The detractors either questioned their eligibility to be in women's competitions or falsely claimed they were men, forcing both women to take unwanted starring roles in a debate over changing attitudes toward gender identity and safety regulation in sports.

Lin said she minimized this potentially enormous distraction by managing to avoid learning about it almost

entirely. She also said she'll speak with her team about whether to take legal action against some of the claims.

"As an elite athlete, during the competition it's important to shut myself off from social media," she said. "That's extremely important. Some of the noises or some of the news articles, of course I heard some of the information through my coach, but I didn't pay too much mind to it. And I was invited by the IOC to participate in the Games. This is what I focused on."