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BHAKER ARRIVES HOME TO ROUSING WELCOME
12 SPORTS

HEARTBREAK FOR INDIA AT PARIS OLYMPICS

PTI ■ PARIS

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

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

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

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

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

"It is with regret that the Indian contingent shares news of the disqualification of Phogat from the women's Wrestling 50kg class. Despite the best efforts by the team through the night, she weighed in a few grams over 50kg this morning," the IOA stated.

"No further comments will be made by the contingent at this time. The Indian team requests you to respect Vinesh's privacy. It would like to focus on the competitions on hand," it added.

International rules stipulate that any grappler found overweight at the time of weigh-in ends up at the bottom of the final standings.

She had taken down defending champion Yui Susaki of Japan en route the finals on Tuesday in a remarkable performance and was to face American Sarah Ann Hildebrandt in the summit bout this evening. Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who lost to Vinesh in the semifinals, replaced the disqualified Indian in the final.

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

Continued on Page 2

PM Modi crowns Vinesh Phogat Champion of Champions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

Usha met teary-eyed Phogat at hospital. "Phogat, you are a champion among champions! You are India's pride and an inspiration for each and every Indian. Today's setback hurts.

Reformed Waqf Bill on Lok Sabha table

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

According to its statement of objects and reasons, "Based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee under the chairmanship of Justice (Retired) Rajinder Sachar and the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf and Central Waqf Council and after having detailed consultation with other stakeholders, comprehensive amendments were made in the Act in the year 2013.

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

Continued on Page 2

Chopper crashes in Nepal, 5 killed

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Four Chinese tourists and a Nepali pilot were killed on Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains northwest region of Kathmandu. The crash took place in the border area between Kathmandu and Nuwakot districts.

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

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

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

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

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

Supreme Court notes Constitution is Supreme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

Observing that no court including the High Courts and the Supreme Court is "supreme", the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, Surya Kant and Hrishikesh Roy, said such observations were wholly unnecessary for the conduct of the proceedings before the high court and moreover, the Constitution is "supreme".

It, however, did not issue a notice and initiate proceedings against the high court judge for his "scandalous" observations at this stage.

"We, accordingly, expunge the observations which have been made by Justice Sehrawat in the order dated July 17, 2024 and expect a greater caution should be exercised in future while dealing with orders of the Supreme Court and for that matter, the orders passed by a division bench of the high court," the bench said.

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

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

Eyeless in Dhaka, Bangladesh gropes for normalcy

PTI ■ DHAKA

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

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, General Waker said the interim government is likely to be sworn in at 8:00pm on Thursday.

He also said the advisory council may have 15 members.

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

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

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

Additional Inspector General of Police (AIG) AKM Shahidur Rahman, who was appointed as the focal person of the Bangladesh Police on Tuesday to handle the current crisis, called on every member of the police force to resume their duties gradually and maintain public safety and law and order.

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

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

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

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

Away from home, they pray for peace

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

"How can we go back home because both Maitryee and Bandhan Express have been suspended and the buses too are not plying … if we have to go we have to make break journey first by crossing the border on foot and then by taking auto-rickshaws, local buses… and even that is not certain," says Saheb Kamal (name changed) a Bangladesh tourist who had come to India to visit relatives.

"I am waiting for peace to return so that I can go back home," he said, adding even flights have been cancelled between the two countries.

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

Continued on Page 2

India brings back non-essential staff from Dhaka mission, P4

Kejriwal present in CM house during Maliwal assault: Delhi Police

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

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

Kumar, who is in judicial custody, is accused of assaulting Maliwal on May 13 at the CM's residence. "The complainant, in her subsequent/supplementary statement recorded after the bail hearing qua the accused before the Delhi High Court on July 10, 2024, had stated that the manner in which the entire AAP leaders and workers came in support of the accused (Kumar), against one of their own MP, shows that there is a larger conspiracy behind the attack and had urged the police to probe into it," the final report said.

Continued on Page 2

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

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Jailed in Tihar in the alleged excise policy-linked money laundering case, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday reportedly wrote to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena informing him that Cabinet Minister Atishi will hoist the national flag at the city Government's Independence Day function on August 15.

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

"Kejriwal has written to the L-G from jail saying Atishi will hoist the Tricolour on his behalf on August 15," an AAP statement said. Every year, the Delhi Government's Independence Day function is held at Chhatrasal Stadium where Kejriwal has been unfurling the national flag and addressing the gathering since taking the reigns of Delhi.

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

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

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

"In the Independence Day programme organised by the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister can hoist the flag. If Kejriwal wants Atishi to hoist the flag, he should first resign from the post of Chief Minister and then nominate her in his place," he stated.

"This is not a personal choice of the CM to nominate someone or any of his Ministers to hoist the national flag in his place," Bidhuri said.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the letter proves that the AAP and its leaders were anarchists yesterday and remain anarchists today. "Perhaps the framers of the Constitution and the national flag protocol never imagined that one day, there would be a stubborn Chief Minister who would not resign even after going to jail," he claimed.

The Delhi BJP chief called the letter 'anarchic' and said, "It brings back the horrific memories of his declaration to disrupt the Republic Day celebrations on Rajpath in 2014 by staging a sit-in protest." He said Kejriwal tarnished the dignity of Republic Day in 2014 and has now tarnished the dignity of Independence Day in 2024.

"During the Independence Day celebrations of the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister of Delhi can hoist the flag. If he is unable to do so, then traditionally, the LG will hoist the flag. From 1991 to 1993 and in 2014, when there was no Chief Minister in Delhi, the LG hoisted the flag," said Sachdeva, adding that if he wants his Minister Atishi to hoist the flag, then he should trust her and resign, allowing her to take the oath as the Chief Minister.

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

SC judgement on aldermen calls for introspection by AAP Govt: LG's office

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's office on Wednesday said the Supreme Court judgement on aldermen appointment in the MCD calls for "soul searching and introspection" by the city Government even as it expressed hope that the civic body will expedite the process of formation of the standing committee. This is the first reaction from the LG's office after the Supreme Court gave its verdict, which had been reserved for 15 months, on Monday.

A bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and justices P S Narasimha and J B Pardiwala on Monday rejected the Delhi government's plea that the LG is bound to act on the aid and advice of the council of ministers in nominating 10 aldermen to the MCD.

"The Lt. Governor V.K. Saxena has expressed the hope that with the Three-Judge Bench of the Supreme Court having categorically ruled in the matter of appointment of Aldermen, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will expeditiously take steps to put into place statutorily required bodies and processes, hitherto lying pending for the past about 19 months," a statement from the LG Secretariat said. Accusing the Delhi government of getting into "pointless litigation", the LG office said that the government not only wasted the time of the apex court but also "deliberately" crippled the MCD.

"This judgement calls for a soul searching and introspection by the government in power and its leaders. Public interest is paramount and cannot be sacrificed on the altar of turf battles," the statement added. The LG office said the works pending in the corporation due to the non-formation of the standing committee, the highest decision making body of the MCD, could have cleared if the statutory committees were put in place well in time after the LG's decision on the appointments in January last year.

It said that the LG had noted in his file on the matter that he made the appointments in pursuance of the power vested upon him as per the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, (1957), adding that the same was observed by the apex court in its ruling. "The Lt. Governor in his noting on file in the matter of appointment of Aldermen had expressly written, "in pursuance of Section 3(3)(b)(i) of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, read with Article 239AA of the Constitution… I nominate following 10 persons in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi.

"The Supreme Court while dismissing the Writ Petition filed by GNCTD against the office of the Lt. Governor, has observed "we are of the opinion that the section of the DMC Act is a parliamentary enactment vesting the power of nomination… with the Lt. Governor," the statement read.

"It is a matter of concern that despite the point of law and constitutional position being as clear as it were, the GNCTD decided to get into pointless litigation, in the process not only wasting the time of the Court and public money in terms of litigation fees, but also deliberately crippling the MCD, which could have done the required works had the statutory committees been put in place well in time after the LG's decision in January, 2023," the statement said.

The LG Secretariat further alleged that the ministers of the Delhi government have also engaged in similar "violations of due processes" by means of "motivated and pointless litigation" in the apex court in various others routine matters. It said that the constant "shadow boxing" by the Delhi government has brought crucial public services to a "grinding halt". "Similar violation of due processes by means of motivated and pointless litigation in the Apex Court, have also been done by Ministers of the current Government in various other routine matters, wherein the position of law has been clear ever since NCTD came into existence in 1993.

West Bengal flags border traffic from Bangladesh

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There being a likelihood of the ripples of Bangladesh spreading to this side of the hedge the Bengal Government has directed the district administrations along the international border to keep a close track of people entering and leaving India via border points.

"A list of the identity of all the people crossing the border — coming in and going out — must be maintained … the Government has told the district administration, particularly along the border," a senior official said.

The instructions were issued following a review meeting held by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday. Top bureaucrats including the Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and the Director General of Police were present in the meeting and were asked to "collect continuous feedbacks on a daily basis," officials said adding the State administration was vigilant and was strictly following the instructions issued by the Centre.

Earlier the Chief Minister had asked the people of the State to "act responsibly despite provocations" and "maintain peace and harmony in Bengal."

She said "with folded hands I request the people not to maintain a communally peaceful behavior… we all are brothers and sisters and so we should keep peace and harmony in spite of the concern that we have for the situation in Bangladesh," adding "She said, "if our brothers and sisters are in trouble then the Government of India will look into it … the national government is will take decisions and we will abide by those decisions … but in any case there should not be any breach of peace and people should not spread disinformation neither they should get provoked by such campaigns."

Hours after Banerjee's statement the Trinamool Congress reacted sharply to Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari's "loaded statements" on possibilities of one crore displaced Hindus entering India in the backdrop of the present crisis.

"Suvendu Adhikari's political compulsions are understandable but there could have been different occasions for such statements and not this one," said TMC leader Kunal Ghosh. "The leaders must hold their tongues in this hour of crisis … there is no reason why internal politics should fall prey to political opportunism at the cost of safety, security of the people of the country … certain provocative statements are better avoided," he said.

Double shifts by bus drivers will be prevented at any cost, says Gahlot

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Wednesday said double shifts by bus drivers will be prevented at any cost by implementing Aadhar-Based duty allocation and Biometric Monitoring and breathalyser tests for deterring drunken driving will be taken to avoid bus accidents.

Addressing a press conference, Gahlot said that in the last few days, there have been some bus accidents, including fatal ones, and he has taken serious note of them and meetings were held on bus safety measures. "Some drivers are doing multiple duties that lead to fatigue. All drivers of the Delhi government buses will have an Aadhaar-based duty chart. A database is being created. Double shifts by drivers will be prevented at any cost," he added.

The AAP leader said that to address the recent incidents that have raised concerns that some drivers may be performing multiple duties in a day, it was discussed and decided that Aadhar card-based duty allocation will be implemented to ensure no driver is assigned double duty. "A biometric face recognition system will also be installed in all depots to monitor drivers performing multiple shifts," Gahlot said.

He added that periodic training of drivers on simulators is another key measure. "The procurement of two simulators is in progress by Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), with the financial bid already finalized. Training sessions are currently being conducted at the Nand Nagri Depot," he added.

Further, a common pool of DTC drivers will be created, allowing concessionaires to appoint drivers as needed. "This pool will be linked with Aadhaar numbers to monitor driver activity across DTC and DIMTS. This measure will ensure that drivers blacklisted by one department or operator are not hired by another," Gahlot stated, adding that to prevent drunk and driving, breathalyzer tests will be implemented at each depot and drivers will be required to undergo these tests before commencing their duties which will be done at Delhi government hospitals only.

Modi Govt's responsibility is to save Hindus in Bangladesh, claims Uddhav

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the chain of events in Bangladesh, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray said that if India could give temporary shelter to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, it was equally the BJP-led NDA Government's responsibility to intervene and protect the Hindus in the neighbouring country from the ongoing atrocities on them.

Talking to media persons in the national capital where he is currently on a three-day visit, Uddhav said: "We have not heard anything from Modi over the developments in Bangladesh. He was not present at the all-party meeting on Bangladesh held yesterday. If he could stop the war between Russia and Ukraine, he should display courage, intervene in the situation in Bangladesh and stop the ongoing atrocities on Hindus there".

"Since India gave shelter to Hasina Shaikh after she fled Bangladesh, it is equally the responsibility of New Delhi to take necessary steps to protect the Hindus from being killed and attacked in Bangladesh," the Sena (UBT) chief said.

Uddhav said that the recent events in Bangladesh, Israel and Sri Lanka had proved that "the common people are strong and powerful and the powers-that-be should not test their patience"

"If we see what is happening around the world, we are realising that the patience of people is fast running out. Thousands of people came out on the streets in Israel recently to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. We witnessed similar people's unrest in Sri Lanka. We saw similar developments in Bangladesh," he said.

"The common people are supreme. The rulers should not do any such thing that would erode their patience. Ultimately it is the people's court that matters most. Just a few days ago, we witnessed what happened in Bangladesh. The people have delivered their verdict…people were called 'aatankwadis' and 'razakars'. There is a limit to the patience of people," Uddhav said.

"Such things can happen anywhere, anytime.. Hence, the powers-that-be must take serious note of what's happening around the world and not consider themselves as above God," the Sena (UBT) chief said.

"The situation in Bangladesh is akin to the problems in Kashmir and Manipur. The Hindus are being killed and subjected to atrocities by majority Muslims. If Modi and Shah cannot go to Manipur, they should show courage and at least go to Bangladesh now to ensure the well-being of our Hindus there, and stop the violence in that country," Uddhav said.

"If late Indira Gandhi could extend military support to people during the 1971 liberation war against Pakistan, and paved the way for the creation of Bangladesh, what's holding the Modi government from protecting the affected Hindus in Bangladesh?," the Sena (UBT) chief asked.

Meanwhile, during his ongoing visit to the national capital, Uddhav will meet all leaders of the Opposition INDIA block, including Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi.

Raj Niwas asserts all medical vacancies filled

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the accusations made by Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj against Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena of sabotaging health services and not filling up vacant positions, officials of Raj Niwas have claimed that the process for appointment of nearly 3,000 doctors and medical staff has already been initiated through Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB) with intervention of Saxena.

"Further, on LG's initiative, the DSSSB had also begun the hiring of para-medical and nursing staff in Delhi Government hospitals. In all, the process for appointment or hiring of nearly 3000 Doctors and Medical Staff has already been initiated through UPSC or DSSSB, with intervention of LG," an official stated.

Calling Bharadwaj 'Delhi's Press Conference (PC) Minister', an official said that he has been weaving a web of lies on a daily basis to hide his and his government's colossal failures. "This is being done very deliberately and as a premediated exercise to not only mislead the people of Delhi, who are suffering due to malgovernance over a decade, but also the judiciary, which has started taking suomotu cognizance of mal-governance in various fields, especially health, sanitation and education," he added

He said, "The minister on January 2 wrote to Chief Minister Kejriwal proposing to "recruit / hire Doctors (Specialists and Medical Officers) and paramedics against their respective vacant sanctioned posts on contractual basis for a period of one year or till regular incumbents join through UPSC / DSSSB, whichever is earlier"." He requested Kejriwal to take up the matter with the LG to expedite the selection and appointment of Doctors and Paramedics and sought LG's direction to the Health Department for hiring the Doctors on contractual basis.

Stating that this task of appointment of doctors is exclusively within the domain of the National Capital Civil Services Authority (NCCSA), he said that Kejriwal is the chairperson of the authority and if he had the intention to hire he would have immediately convened a meeting of the NCCSA and done the needful.

AAP party sources said that had Saxena hired the doctors and paramedics as is being claimed, there would have been no need for the Sarin Committee to recommend the hiring on Contractual basis.

Congress confident of defeating BJP-led ruling alliance in Assembly polls

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maintaining that the people had not forgotten the MahaYuti's "sin of selling Maharashtra to Gujarat", State Congress president Nana Patole expressed confidence that "they will defeat the BJP-led ruling alliance in the Assembly polls to be held in October this year". Talking to media persons after a meeting of senior Congress leaders held at Gandhi Bhavan here, Patole said that despite the fact the "self-proclaimed Vishwaguru" (Modi) addressed as many as 17 public rallies, the BJP-led NDA suffered a big blow in the recent Lok Sabha polls.

"Deputy Chief Minister and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis is now saying that people forget the LS poll outcome, but the self-respecting people of Maharashtra have not forgotten the sin of selling Maharashtra to Gujarat committed by the Mahayuti government. The people will teach the BJP-led Mahayuti a lesson in the Assembly polls as well," Patole said.

On the ongoing seat adjustment talks among the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders, Patole said: "There is no big or small brother in the Mahavikas Aghadi. The decisions on seat allocation will be based on merit. We are contesting this election as the Mahavikas Aghadi, and the decision on the chief ministerial post will be made after the election," he said.

"Our ally NCP President Sharad Pawar has also taken the same position. Today's meeting included preliminary discussions on seat allocation and various issues in the state," he said.

Patole said that former Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan, who is the chairman of the manifesto committee, would prepare a manifesto that would meet the expectations of the people of the state, after consulting with various sections of society.

On Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray's ongoing visit to New Delhi, Patole said: "This is not for the first time that Uddhav Thackeray has gone to Delhi. He has visited before as well".

Defending Uddhav's proposed meeting with former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Patole said: "He (Uddhav) is meeting senior Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, in Delhi. There is no need to interpret this meeting differently. Sonia Gandhi is an important leader in the country, a symbol of sacrifice who refused the prime ministerial position. Under her leadership, the Congress-led UPA government was in power twice in the country".

Reformed Waqf Bill…

From Page 1

Sources said the government's priority was to get the legislation passed in the Lok Sabha unanimously, and it was also open to sending it to a joint committee for further discussion. There is a strong possibility that the government may agree to refer the Bill, which is being opposed by some Muslim organisations, to a parliamentary panel. Sources said some parties, which have been supportive of the government's agenda, have also expressed their reservation over the proposed legislation.

While the All India Muslim Personal Law Board has termed the proposed move as "unacceptable", Opposition parties on Wednesday demanded that the Waqf (Amendment) Bill be sent to Parliament's standing committee for scrutiny after it is introduced, with the government saying the Business Advisory Committee will take a call after assessing the sense of Lok Sabha.

Notably, the department-related standing committees of Lok Sabha are yet to be constituted. The House may form a separate panel in the absence of the standing committee to scrutinise the Bill in case the government decides on such a course of action. In the last two months, the government has consulted about 70 groups on the bill, sources said. The bill is aimed at providing justice to poor Muslims and Muslim women apart from freeing Waqf properties from illegal occupation.

After lands owned by government entities, including Railways and defence, Waqf accounts for the third-highest number of properties. However, the value of these lands and the revenue generated do no match. With properties valued in crores, the annual revenue does not cross Rs 200 crore.

The bill also proposes the establishment of a separate Board of Auqaf for the Boharas and Aghakhanis. The draft law provides for the representation of Shias, Sunnis, Bohras, Agakhanis and other backward classes among Muslim communities. The bill also aims to clearly define "'Waqf' as Waqf by any person practising Islam for at least five years and having ownership of such property". Any government property identified or declared as Waqf property, before or after the commencement of this Act, shall not be deemed to be a Waqf property," reads the new Bill.

MP Anil Desai visits 'The Cottage'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking out time from the ongoing Parliament Session, Member of Parliament Anil Desai visited the Cottage on August 1, 2024 and appreciated the variety of Gift Options curated by the Central Cottage Industries Corporation ltd from the offerings of Artisans and Weavers for PSUs, Corporates, Ministry officials.

During his visit, options to increase sales from Maharashtra were also discussed with Manoj Lal, Managing Director, The Central Cottage Industries Corporation Ltd.

"The Cottage" has been at the forefront of "corporate gifting" and creating combo packs, customising the gifts as per the client requirement thereby enabling them an "awesome" experience.

Heartbreak for India…

From Page 1

"Repechage Yui Susaki vs Oksana Livach (Ukraine) will become Bronze Medal Match," it added

This means, that the 50kg category will offer only one bronze medal in the Games as against the usual four, which are decided after bouts between the losing semifinalists and the two repechage round winners.

Vinesh was not the only weight-related disqualification in the 50kg category.

On Tuesday, Italy's Emanuela Liuzzi was also forced to forfeit her preliminary bout after being found overweight.

According to UWW (United World Wrestling) rules, wrestlers have the right, each in turn, to get on the scale as many times as they wish throughout the weigh-in period.

"If an athlete does not attend or fail the weigh-in (the 1st or the 2nd weigh-in), he will be eliminated of the competition and ranked last, without rank," the rule states.

The Indian wrestling contingent was expectedly distraught. Vinesh had stated before the Games that it would be her final outing in the quadrennial showpiece and it remains to be seen if she would change her mind after this setback.

"Everyone here is feeling as if someone in the family has died. We don't know what has struck us. Everyone is shocked," India's national women's coach Virender Dahiya said.

Cutting weight is a painful process that wrestlers have to endure if their natural body weight is higher than the division in which they compete.

Vinesh's natural body weight is about 56-57kg and it takes massive effort for her to get down to 50kg.

While in invitational tournaments, UWW allows for a grace of upto 2kg, no such relaxation exists for showpieces like Olympics, the world championships and the Asian Championships.

Athletes competing in contact sports go without food and even water two days before the weigh-in.

Kejriwal present…

From Page 1

It said her statement was "relevant for the present investigation in view of the complete U-turn being publicly taken by two responsible persons of the party regarding the same incident in the days following the commission of the crime".

The charge sheet, which runs into around 500 pages and has statements of about 50 witnesses, was filed in a city court on July 16 and its cognisance was taken on July 30. "Investigation has brought out the fact that the accused and the CM were together at the scene of crime i.E, the CM, Delhi residence, immediately after the commission of the crime for a significant period of time and, as such, the contrarian public stands taken by responsible public servants in the following days, also needs to be examined in its correct perspective to decipher if there was a larger conspiracy behind the brutal assault on the complainant/victim at the hands of the accused," it said.

The final report said that "selective footages" of CCTV cameras were leaked to the media before the relevant recording devices could be seized and this necessitated a probe to find whether there was a "conspiracy" behind the offence.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Delhi Police to file its response by August 21 on the plea of Kumar for grant of bail in the assault case. Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the Delhi Police, told a bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan that he needed three weeks' time to file a reply. Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Kumar, opposed the grant of three weeks and said charge sheet has already been filed in the case. The apex court then asked Raju to file response by August 21 and posted the matter for hearing on August 27.

The top court had earlier come down heavily on Kumar saying "Is this kind of goon supposed to work in the CM's residence?" The bench said it was shocked with the details of the incident recorded by the Delhi High Court. Kumar has challenged the July 12 order of the Delhi High Court denying him bail in the case and claimed that the allegations against him are false. He has also said his custody is no longer required as the probe is over.

Away from home, they…

From Page 1

Rehman come to India for treatment of his mother a heart and kidney patient.

With money drying up steadily he only hopes peace to return fast. "Still I can bank on my Hindu friends' relatives who have assured to host us but what about those who are putting up in hotels," he wonders appealing to powers that be for peace. "Here they are hosting us and there we are killing them … it is shameful," he says.

But Ajit Biswas (name changed for the purpose of security) a member of Bangladeshi minority community is not so confident. He has left his kin back in Dhaka and wants to meet them urgently but there is no way he can go back lest he is killed en route.

"I want to return home immediately but I fear for my life … the train and bus services have stopped and I have to cross over via Gede or Petrapol border and take auto-rickshaws and buses to Jessore or Khulna wherefrom I will be able to get a conveyance for Dhaka … but that is too long a journey fraught with risks as I have come to know that some of my friends have already gone missing … either they are underground or they have been killed. Now I am standing nowhere."

Abdul Rehman Bulbul of Satkhira is a staunch baiter of Sheikh Hasina and is immensely happy about her fall but he too feels stranded now. "I was happy but now with the situation going out of control in Bangladesh I too am not sure of reaching my home safely … I don't know how our minority friends or those from the Awami League are," he says insisting "not all Awami League people are bad but the regime they backed was really, really dictatorial."

Fatima Biswas (name changed) is another student from Narayanganj who had come to see her friend in Kolkata too wants to return as "my tourist visa will end in a week's time," but is not sure how to get it extended as "it is extremely difficult to return as protestors have become animals … If being a Muslim I am afraid to return home alone how must the minorities be feeling there … I can only imagine their situation … I have many of them."

India's third largest tiger reserve to come up in C'garh

Chhattisgarh decides to integrate Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla Sanctuary

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

India's third largest tiger reserve will come up in Chhattisgarh as the state has decided to integrate the Guru Ghasidas National Park and the Tamor Pingla Sanctuary.

The decision to notify the "Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve", integrating an area of 2,829.387 sq km, was taken at a meeting of the cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai.

These areas are located in the districts of Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Koriya, Surajpur and Balrampur.

The new integrated reserve would be the fourth tiger reserve in Chhattisgarh.

The Guru Ghasidas National Park was made a tiger reserve in 2021 but it could not be notified due to opposition. Due to many mines in this area, the notification to declare the park as a tiger reserve was stuck.

The previous BJP government had sent a draft to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to make a tiger reserve by combining the Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla Sanctuary.

The NTCA approved the idea. But the Congress government did not let it proceed due to the coal block located in the region as well as the area having oil block and methane gas block. With the BJP government returning to power in the state, the way for the formation of a tiger reserve has been cleared.

The step was necessary to take up the number of tigers. The new tiger reserve will preserve the natural habitat of tigers and promote their safety.

Locals will get economic benefits from guides, tourist vehicle operation and operation of resorts as well as other tourism related services.

Additional budget will be received from the National Project Tiger Authority, which will be useful for the development of the area and livelihood improvement.

Guru Ghasidas – Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve would be the country's third largest tiger reserve spread over an area of 2,829.387 sq km.

The Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve of Andhra Pradesh is the country's largest tiger reserve with 3,296.31 sq km. Assam's Manas Tiger Reserve is the second largest tiger reserve with an area of 2,837.1 sq km.

CGPSC Scam: CBI raids multiple locations

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday carried out raids at 16 locations including Raipur, Bhilai, Durg, Bilaspur and Kurud in connection with the Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission (CGPSC) recruitment scam.

The raids were carried out at the residences and offices of several high-ranking officials, including police officers and politicians.

A CBI FIR filed last month named 16 people who were appointed as deputy collectors, deputy superintendents of police and other lucrative positions, alleging that CGPSC officials favoured them for the appointments.

The agency alleged that there were manipulations in the examination held in 2022, the results of which were declared on May 11, 2023.

The CBI in its FIR had named former Chhattisgarh governor Biswabhusan Harichanan's secretary Amrit Kumar Xalxo's son Nikhil and daughter Neha, who became deputy collectors; Chhattisgarh police Deputy Inspector General KL Dhruv's daughter Sakshi (deputy collector); Congress leader Sudhir Katiyar's daughter Bhumika and son-in-law Sashank Goyal (deputy collectors); and Congress leader Rajendra Shukla's daughter Swarnim (deputy collector).

The raids were carried out at the residences and offices of several high-ranking officials, including police officers and politicians.

The FIR also named five more candidates linked to Congress leaders without naming the politicians.

The Chhattisgarh government handed over the matter to CBI in the month of February after coming back to power.

A special Bharat Gaurav Train on Wednesday departed for Ayodhya and Varanasi from Bilaspur to take pilgrims to the holy places under the Ramlalla Darshan scheme sponsored by the Chhattisgarh government.

Divya Kala-Shakti fair from August 16

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

The National Divyang Finance and Development Corp will hold the Divya Kala Shakti Cultural Programme in Raipur from August 16 to 22, an official communiqué said on Wednesday.

People with disabilities will present their talents in arts, music, dance, acrobatics and more.

The goal is to provide platforms for persons with disabilities to contribute towards the socio-cultural and economic development of the country.

Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar Khatik will inaugurate the programme.

People with disabilities will present their talents in arts, music, dance, acrobatics and more.

The Rajnandgaon Integrated Regional Centre will coordinate with government special schools, NGOs and disabled persons for the distribution of various assistive devices and other activities of the CRC.

Collective efforts needed to fight climate change, pollution: Governor

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Governor Ramen Deka on Wednesday stressed the importance of collective efforts to combat climate change and environmental pollution.

"Everyone will have to make efforts to save energy. Avoid wasting electricity and its unnecessary use. Minimize the use of plastic water bottles to prevent plastic pollution, and ensure that you keep your surroundings clean," he said.

The Governor said this while chairing an orientation meeting with officials and employees at Raj Bhavan.

At the meeting, he encouraged participation in the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" mega tree-plantation campaign, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Deka also called for increased activities by the Red Cross, particularly in tribal areas, to improve the health care services for women. He inquired about the progress of the 'Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan' in Chhattisgarh.

"More efforts will have to be made to promote organic farming in the state. The work going on in the aspiring districts of the state should be monitored regularly", he added.

The Governor also directed universities in the state to expedite recruitment for vacant positions to ensure quality education for students.

He also highlighted the need for digitization, including the creation of a digital library within the office. He urged everyone to remain vigilant against cyber crimes and to raise awareness about them.

After learning about a courageous girl who saved her father's life from Naxalites in Narayanpur district, as reported in newspapers, the Governor instructed that she be invited to Raj Bhavan and honoured for her bravery.

Governor's Secretary Yashwant Kumar, Deputy Secretary Hina Animesh Netam, Legal Advisor Bhishma Prasad Pandey and other officers and employees of Raj Bhavan were present at the meeting.

C'garh earns Rs 13K Cr from minerals

A growth 30 times since state's formation

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Mineral Resources Department Secretary P. Dayanand said on Wednesday that the state has generated Rs 13,000 crore revenue from minerals in 2023–24.

He was addressing the 24th meeting of the Chhattisgarh Geological Programme Board in Raipur.

This is a growth of 30 times since Chhattisgarh's formation, he said.

Minerals play a key role in the development of any country or state. They must be explored to establish new industries, he said.

He emphasised using modern equipment to explore mineral resources. The meeting finalised the plans to explore mineral reserves for 2024–25.

Director of Geology Sunil Kumar Jain said that this year, a total of 1,050 million metric tonnes of limestone and 179 million metric tonnes of iron ore were extracted.

Officials from both the Central and state governments delivered presentations on the progress of exploration work in Chhattisgarh. The Directorate of Geology and Mining in Chhattisgarh has approved 12 projects for survey-prospecting in 2024–25. Also, approval was granted for survey-prospecting on 44 projects to various institutions.

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कार्यालय सिविल सर्जन सह मुख्य अस्पताल अधीक्षक, जिलाचिकित्सालय, दन्तेवाड़ा
जिला -दक्षिण बस्तर, दन्तेवाड़ा (छत्तीसगढ़)
दूरभाष / फैक्स कांक 07856-252830 ई मेल-cs.dantewada@gmail.com

क्रमांक/सिस/अ.प्र./2024/868 दन्तेवाड़ा दिनांक 05/08/2024

-:: संशोधित निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना ::-

कार्यालयीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना पत्र क्रमांक / सिस./अ.प्रब./2024/539 दन्तेवाडा दिनांक 01.07.2024 सफाई कार्य हेतु निविदा डाली गई थी एवं कार्यालयीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना पत्र क्रमांक/सिस./अ.प्रब. /2024/542 दन्तेवाड़ा दिनांक 01.07.2024 में सुरक्षा सेवाएँ कार्य हेतु निविदा जारी किया गया था तथा कार्यालयीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना पत्र क्रमांक/सिस./अ.प्रब. / 2024/799 दन्तेवाड़ा दिनांक 30.07.2024 में सफाई कार्य एवं सुरक्षा सेवाएँ कार्य हेतु निविदा जारी किया गया था जिसमें आंशिक संशोधन करते हुए सिविल सर्जन सह मुख्य अस्पताल अधीक्षक, जिला चिकित्सालय दन्तेवाड़ा (छ.ग.) की ओर से वर्ष 2024-25 के निविदा खुलने की तिथि से एक वर्ष के लिये सुरक्षा सेवाएँ एवं सफाई कार्य हेतु इच्छुक सुरक्षा एजेंसी से मुहरबंद लिफाफा में निविदा आंमत्रित की जाती है। पृथक-पृथक का निविदा प्रपत्र अद्योहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय से आवेदन सहित रू. 500.00 (पॉच सौ रूपये) डी.डी. जीवन दीप समिति जिला चिकित्सालय दन्तेवाड़ा के नाम से जमा कर प्राप्त की जा सकेगी। निविदा सूचना Online "dantewada.nic.in" में भी देखी जा सकती है। कार्यालयीन अवधि में दिनांक 08.08.2024 से दिनांक 20.08.2024 तक निविदा फार्म प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।

01. निविदा फार्म प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि 20.08.2024 दोपहर 2.00 बजे तक ।
02. निविदा फार्म जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 20.08.2024 संध्या 5.00 बजे तक ।
03 . निविदा फार्म खोलने की तिथि 21.08.2024 दोपहर 12 बजे जिला कार्यालय दन्तेवाड़ा के सभागृह में।

सिविल सर्जन सह मुख्य अस्पताल अधीक्षक
जिला चिकित्सालय दन्तेवाड़ा (छ.ग.)

G-242501669/4

CAVEAT NOTICE

That, the Collector, District Dhamtari being the Chairman of District Toursim Committee, has accorded its approval on the proposal of the Forest Management Committee Gangrel / Maradeo with respect to developing the area of Gangrel District Dhamtari vide order no. 5271 dated 09/07/2024 as Eco- Tourism Zone. For the development of the said area, it is necessary to organize the small shops/ stalls / Gumtees in a proper manner and further there is necessity to make adequate arrangement for organized parking. There is every apprehension that writ petitions accompanied with the application for grant of interim relief may be filed challenging the action taken by the District Administration pursuant to the resolution to develop Gangrel as Eco-Tourism Hub. In the event of filing of such a petition, it would be imminent in the interest of justice to afford an opportunity of being heard to the Caveator/State Government before passing any order whatsoever, in the ends of justice.
The address for notice to the caveator is being given hereinbelow.

"The Advocate General,
Office of the Advocate General,
Chhattisgarh High Court Campus,
Bodri, Bilaspur (CG.)"

BILASPUR DATED: 05/08/2024

(SHASHANK THAKUR)
DY. ADVOCATE GENERAL
COUNSEL FOR THE CAVEATOR / STATE

G-242501688/3

Homemade recipes for liver detoxification unscientific: IMA

AGENCIES

Homemade recipes claimed on social media to be liver detoxifiers have no scientific validity, said Dr Rajeev Jayadevan, Chairman of the Kerala State IMA Research Cell on Wednesday.

In his address at the 32nd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Indian National Association for the Study of the Liver (INASL-2024), being held in Kochi, Dr Jayadevan said there is no need for such artificial means or shortcuts to protect the liver as it emphasised the organ's capability to rid the body of its own waste products as well as ingested substances.

"Many people use the term detox in modern times because it is associated with the ancient belief of cleansing the mind of toxic thoughts, but it is not possible to cleanse the liver through such shortcuts," the gastroenterologist said.

"The liver is perfectly capable of cleansing itself. It is more important to avoid intake of substances that damage the liver, such as alcohol," he emphasised.

The health expert also warned against relying on self-proclaimed health experts on social media, who often lack proper knowledge or have commercial interests.

As the largest organ in the body, the liver functions like a chemistry lab, efficiently sorting beneficial and harmful substances that enter the stomach. However, early-stage liver disease often shows no symptoms.

Among the rise of lifestyle-related diseases, fatty liver diseases, including Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) and Non-Alcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH), are becoming alarmingly prevalent in India.

Last month, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh who is himself a nationally renowned diabetologist, said that every third Indian has fatty liver, which predates Type 2 diabetes and other metabolic disorders.

Meanwhile, health experts at the convention highlighted the increasing prevalence of fatty liver disease due to alcohol consumption and unhealthy lifestyles, and advised to take early preventive lifestyle measures rather than rely on scams and shortcuts. Key recommendations included giving up alcohol, maintaining a healthy weight, controlling sugar intake, exercising regularly, and adopting a balanced diet.

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WAVE OF SYMPATHY FOR VINESH PHOGAT

President, VP, MPs back wrestler

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar expressed strong support and admiration for Vinesh Phogat who was disqualified at Paris Olympics.

President Murmu lauded Phogat's achievements and resilience saying her "extraordinary feats at the Paris Olympics have thrilled every Indian and done the country proud." She said "While we all share her disappointment at the disqualification, she remains a champion in the hearts of 1.4 billion people. Vinesh embodies the truly indefatigable spirit of Indian women, and her epic fortitude and resilience are already inspiring future world champions from India. I wish her many laurels in the future," in a social media post.

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

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

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

Speaking outside Parliament, RLD MP Jayant Choudhary said, "It was very saddening to see Vinesh Phogat being disqualified. Watching her yesterday...All the hard work and dedication she has put in to reach this point". "The effort and dedication that athletes and soldiers put in is beyond the reach of ordinary people. The entire nation is with her, and I believe the Indian Government is also prioritising this. The Prime Minister has taken notice of it and has given directions. The appeal process will be carried out," he said.

Congress MP Selja raised questions about the team management, saying, "Managers are there, it is their job. All our athletes and sportspersons go there, and every little thing of theirs is monitored." "Their diet is watched over, what they are drinking, what they are eating and the type of food they are consuming. So, what was the reason for this girl's weight increased? Who didn't pay attention? This has to be answered," she said. "We were hoping since morning that this girl would bring home the Olympic gold medal, who has struggled on the streets, and today, this has happened to her. Why did it happen? How did it happen?" the Congress leader asked.Congress MP Deepender Hooda called for a review of the decision that led to Phogat's disqualification. "When the entire nation was sitting for Vinesh's final bout, hoping for her to win the gold medal, the whole country was stunned. Everyone feels the pain in their hearts, but Vinesh was, is, and will remain a champion for the entire nation. She worked very hard to reach the final," he said. "While all the other players were practicing, she was sitting in a protest for justice, and then worked hard to reach here. In the eyes of the nation and the world, she is a true champion," the MP said. Hooda said yesterday, her weight was correct in all three bouts, so she should be considered for the silver medal in the final.

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

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

Support pours in

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

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

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

Cricketer Sunil Gavaskar and wrestler Sakshi Malik, among others, have called the situation "unfair" and "devastating," while AAP MP Sanjay Singh has demanded a boycott of the Olympics, labeling the incident as a grave injustice to India. Anand Mahindra, Chairman of the Mahindra & Mahindra group, expressed shock as he wrote: "NO! NO! NO! Please make this a bad dream that I will wake up from and find it isn't true…." Bollywood stars like Farhan Akhtar and Taapsee Pannu have also expressed their solidarity, praising Phogat's achievements despite the disheartening end to her Olympic journey.

India brings back non-essential staffers from Dhaka mission

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

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

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

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

It is learnt that non-essential staffers at other Indian missions in Bangladesh are also likely to return to India. In addition to the High Commission in Dhaka, India has Assistant High Commissions in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet. Sources said around 20-30 senior staff are left at the High Commission in Dhaka.

Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin dissolved Parliament on

Tuesday and appointed Nobel laureate Mohammad Yunus as the head of an interim Government.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Establish Sri Nankana Sahib Corridor, clean public utilities: MPs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Raghav Chadha (AAP) on Wednesday demanded establishment of a corridor to Sri Nankana Sahib in Pakistan's Punjab province to facilitate the visit of Sikh devotees to the sacred birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev.]

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

He suggested that the Governments of the two countries work together in establishing Sri Nankana Sahib corridor, on the lines of Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor. Also, there should not be any mandatory requirement of passport, visa, and cumbersome forms for the devotees. Chadha also said that no fee should be charged from the devotees. The third suggestion related to a safe road passage starting from Amritsar (Attari-Wagah Border) till Sri Nankana Sahib

in Pakistan.

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

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

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

Referring to women representatives visiting various constituencies during elections and public works, she said they have faced challenges to find access to clean toilets.

Constitution's Preamble not dropped from NCERT books: Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday said the Preamble to the Constitution is very well there in NCERT textbooks of Class VI as he refuted charges made in this regard by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge.

Earlier, Opposition Congress party raised in the Rajya Sabha the issue of dropping Preamble from certain NCERT textbooks, saying this was an attempt to impose communal ideology on the country a claim which Union Minister JP Nadda countered saying the Government was committed to protecting Constitution.

During Zero Hour, Leader of the Opposition and Congress President Kharge said Preamble, which is the soul and foundation of Indian Constitution, used to be published in NCERT textbooks. Soon after Zero Hour, Pradhan said Kharge has made certain remarks regarding NCERT books of the education department.

"I want to humbly put the facts in the House," he said.

The Minister informed the House that till now textbooks for classes up to 7th have been published.

"Leader of the Opposition was saying that earlier there used to be Preamble (in the textbooks).

In the new textbooks of Class VI, there is Preamble. Not only Preamble, there is Fundamental Duties, Fundamental Rights, and National Anthem (in the books). These also represent core values of the Constitution and they are in the books. What he said was not a fact," Pradhan said.

In Zero Hour, Kharge said, every citizen especially the future generation needs to be educated about foundational principles and values of Indian democracy and Constitution as well as the sacrifices made by freedom fighters such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, BR Ambedkar, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

He then went on to make a Statement on shifting of statues of Gandhi and Ambedkar in the Parliament complex -- which was objected to from the treasury benches, and Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said Kharge was deviating from the subject.

"RSS and BJP are trying to impose their communal ideology on people by tampering with curriculum. And the step taken by NCERT is not right," he said amid protests from the ruling side.

At this point, Dhankhar ordered that nothing will go on record and he would "look into what has to be deleted... Last four minutes to be deleted."

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

Leader of the House and BJP President JP Nadda said though he has not seen either NCERT textbook or the change but can with all authority State that there is no question of any needling of the Constitution.

Appropriation Bill 2024 introduced in RS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

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

Initiating the discussion on the bills, Digvijaya Singh (Congress) Stated that the focus of the Government should be on reducing the disparity between rich and poor, tackling price rise and generating employment. Attacking the Government, he said for the last decade the Government has just worked for the benefit of big corporations.

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

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

Derek O'Brien (TMC) also asked the Finance Minister to roll back 18 per cent GST on health insurance and life insurance. "This was a provision introduced in 2017. Our humble appeal to the FM through you. No one saw this maybe from 2017 to 2024. In the last two weeks it has been brought up in Parliament.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal has written a letter. Yesterday there were 350 MPs from 20 parties, we all are together in this," he stated. A senior cabinet Minister has also written a letter to the Finance Minister in this regard, O'Brien said. O'Brien commenced his speech by lauding wrestler Vinesh Phogat. "Medal or no medal, we salute you. You are our hero Vinesh Phogat. Thank you for what you have done for India," the TMC leader Stated in the Upper House.

V Vijaysai Reddy (YSRCP) asked the Government to make pension tax free. He also pointed out that the interest on small saving schemes like PPF remain low thereby encouraging people to invest in risky stock markets. Bhubaneswar Kalita (BJP) cited various developmental works taken up by the union Government, especially in the North East region.

INS Tabar conducts maritime partnership exercise with German Navy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

ARCHANA JYOTI NEW DELHI

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

This troubling increase follows a period of significant decline in reported cases from 2019 to 2021.

The issue has gained prominence in Parliament too, with Ghaziabad MP Atul Garg recently highlighting alarming figures: 30.5 lakh dog bites and 286 deaths nationwide. "If this figure is correct, then in Ghaziabad alone, 35,000 people have been bitten by dogs in a year. Small kids are becoming victims of this…", said Garg urging the Government to form a panel to address the imbalance between animal welfare laws and human safety, emphasising the growing terror among children and families. Garg said that if a pet dog bit someone, a person could be held responsible but no dog lover came forward to save the person being attacked if it was a stray dog. "... Children cannot play, an atmosphere of terror has been created within the city. So it is my request that a committee be formed and the matter be taken up," he said, adding that there is an imbalance in the laws between love for animals and human freedom, the MP noted.

Dr Khyatee Arora, a physiotherapist from Ghaziabad who has been actively raising awareness

about basic life support in such situations, emphasised that it is crucial to educate people on how to handle such mishaps. "If bitten by a dog, clean the wound with soap and water, apply antiseptic, and seek immediate medical attention for potential rabies treatment. Check the dog's vaccination status and report the bite to authorities if the dog is stray or its status is unknown. If unvaccinated, get 5 doses on Days 0, 3, 7, 14, and 28," said Dr Arora, ex-senior research officer with AIIMS Delhi.

So much the menace has spread across the States, that in a first-of-its-kind compilation of startling figures, Chhattisgarh State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) recently took cognisance of the issue as it noted that a total of 1,19,928 dog bite incidents registered across the State in 2023. It has asked the State to collate information on the number of dog bite cases registered in each district of Chhattisgarh, the vaccinations carried out and if the deaths were reporting.

The Centre on its part has asked the State health authorities to provide quality data on the number of animal bites from all primary health centres, community health centres, district-level hospitals and tertiary care facilities with specific details on bites by pet dogs and stray dogs. Separate records have to be maintained for new and follow-up patients in the animal bite exposure register.

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

CPM ideologue raps State Govt for Wayanad coverup

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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

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

"The hour-long speech delivered by Home Minister in Parliament is an excellent proof of how the Centre has been alerting the State administration about an impending disaster days before the landslide struck Wayanad. The way the Prime Minister and the Home Minister responded to the mishap shows the Centre cares and Modi deserves full credit for the kind of help being offered to the State," said Shakthidharan with a plea to the journalists and intellectuals in the State not to categorize him as a Sanghi (part of the RSS Parivar).

He was blunt in stating that no other Central Govts have shown the kind of attention and care the Modi Govt is showering in Kerala. "But the Vijayan-led government, enmeshed in corruption, favoritism and misdeeds of all kind wants to save its skin from charges of mismanagement and carelessness," he said .

The Marxist ideologue asked what prevented the Government from having a discussion with Prof Madhav Gadgil who headed the UPA Government appointed Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel that made serious study of the status of the ecologically fragile Western Ghats of which Wayanad is a part. Prof Gadgil had warned of major natural disasters if the State government wemt ahead with quarrying, mining and construction activities. Pinarayi Vijayan, while briefing the media on 30th July, the day the district was devastated by the landslide scoffed at the WGEE Panel report and described the same as trash.

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

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

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

PTI ■ RAIPUR

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

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

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

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

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) began searching more than a dozen locations in Dhamtari, Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur districts over the alleged recruitment scam, official sources said.

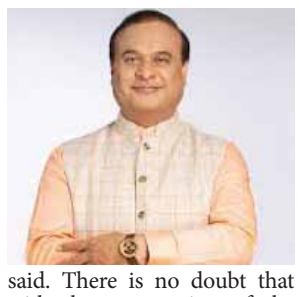
Last month, the CBI took over the probe into the two cases registered in the state for alleged favouritism in the selection of deputy collectors, deputy superintendents of police and other senior government posts through the Chhattisgarh PSC during 2020-2022, the agency had said.

As per the two cases, the then CGPSC chairman Taman Singh Sonwani, former secretary Jeevan Kishore Dhruv, the then controller of examinations and many public servants and politicians misused their positions to get their children, relatives and acquaintances recruited.

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

Bangladesh turmoil matter of concern for NE: Himanta

PTI ■ GUWAHATI



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

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

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

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

'During Sheikh Hasina's regime, insurgents from the northeast region were forced to leave Bangladesh. It will be a matter of concern for us that the neighbouring country may again become a hub of insurgents," the chief minister said. There is no doubt that with the cooperation of the previous Bangladesh government, 'we have been successful in curbing extremist activities in North East India. I have full confidence that the new government in the neighbouring country will also maintain this cooperation', he said.

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

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

Kailashnathan takes oath as Puducherry LG

PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY

Former IAS officer K Kailashnathan was sworn in as Lt Governor of Puducherry at a ceremony in Raj Nivas here on Wednesday.

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

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

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

PTI ■ SHIMLA

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

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

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

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

The family members of the missing persons who have been camping at the site for the past seven days have now lost hope and are praying for the recovery of bodies to perform last rites.

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

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

The Met also said that monsoon activity is likely to intensify in the next five to six days with fairly widespread rains .

So far 16 deaths have been reported due to flash floods and cloudbursts in three districts of Himachal Pradesh on July 31 midnight and over 35 people are still missing in Kullu's Nirmand, Sainj and Malana, Mandi's Padhar and Shimla's Rampur subdivision.

BJP MP Kangana Ranaut who visited Samej village on Tuesday and other parts of Shimla and Kullu accused the state Congress government of doing "nothing" to help the victims.

According to the officials, 410 rescuers from teams of the Army, NDRF, SDRF, ITBP, CISF, Himachal Pradesh Police and home guards are involved in the hunt and rescuers have intensified the search operation by deploying more machinery, sniffer dog squad, drones and other equipment.

A total of 93 people were killed in rain-related incidents between June 27 and August 6 and the state suffered losses amounting to Rs 748 crore.

6-year-old Dalit boy found locked in classroom in UP

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

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

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

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

She alleged that due to the negligence of the teachers, her son remained locked in the classroom for more than an hour after the school closed. When her son did not reach home after the closure of the school, she inquired about him with other students, who expressed ignorance, she added. She said she found the school closed when she went there, and heard the cries of her child, after which the villagers and her family members called the principal. Later, teacher Ravita Rani's husband reached the school with the keys and opened it.

Rani's husband said the child might have fallen asleep in the class.Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) Sandeep Kumar told PTI that the principal has been suspended and teacher Rani has been given an adverse entry.

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

Kumar said that all staff have been asked to check the classrooms before closing the school.

Principal Jain said that "injustice" was done with her as the class teacher was responsible for this. "Even if the child was sleeping, the classroom should have been checked before locking it," she said.

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

PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

One more arrested in BSP leader murder case

PTI ■ CHENNAI

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

The arrested has been identified as N Aswathaman.

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

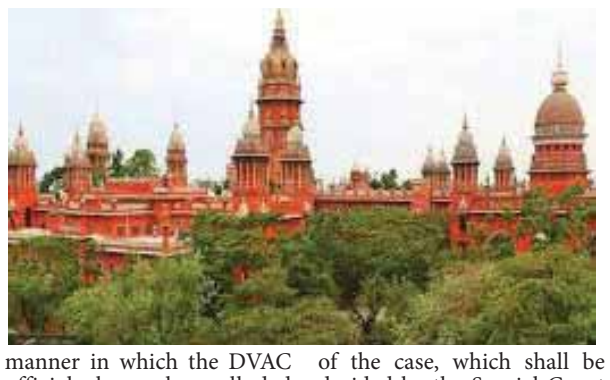
One accused person was gunned down by the police last month when he tried to attack them and flee, while being taken to a city location to unearth some weapons allegedly hidden there by him.

Armstrong (52), state chief of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was hacked to death by a group of assailants last month, sending shockwaves.

Political parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, besides BSP supremo and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati, have demanded a CBI probe into the killing.

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

PTI ■ CHENNAI



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

Passing an order on the criminal revision petition initiated by him, Justice N Anand Venkatesh set aside the orders of the Special Court for MPs and MLAs cases, Virudhunagar, dated July 20, 2023 and December 12, 2022 respectively, discharging Ramachandran and Thennarasu from the disproportionate wealth cases.

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

As prima facie materials were available to frame charges, the Special Court shall proceed to frame charges and thereafter proceed in accordance with law.

The judge said that one of the most striking aspects of these two cases was the meticulous manner in which the DVAC officials have also colluded with each other to ensure that criminal trials against two sitting ministers were "quietly and indecently buried within the precincts of the Special Court."

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

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

The judge made it clear "this Court has not examined or commented upon the merits of the case, which shall be decided by the Special Court on merits, without being influenced by any of the observations made herein above".

Narrating various principles, the judge said tested on the touchstone of the aforesaid principles, the conclusion was that the orders of the Special Court deserves to be set aside on the short ground that it had committed a manifest jurisdictional error in discharging the accused in the face of relevant material, the correctness of which could not be the subject matter for inquiry at the stage of discharge. Additionally, the very fact that the Special Court has not assigned a shred of independent reasoning was another reason warranting interference in exercise of revisional powers, he added.

Bridge over Kali river collapses in Karnataka, traffic disrupted

PTI ■ PANAJI/KARWAR

An old bridge across Kali river in Uttara Kannada district collapsed in the small hours of Wednesday, resulting in heavy traffic along National Highway 66, connecting Goa to Karnataka.

A large portion of the bridge near here caved in around 1.30 am when a truck was crossing it, leaving the driver of the vehicle injured as he fell into the river, Karwar police said.

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

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

The local fishermen along with our team managed to rescue the driver," Superintendent of Police (Karwar) M Narayana said. "He is admitted to Karwar Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital. The truck driver is stated to be stable and is recovering," he said.

Traffic on the new bridge was stopped for some time following the incident. Later, vehicles, except heavy ones, were allowed to pass through, the Karwar police said.

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

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

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

RAIPUR | THURSDAY | AUGUST 8, 2024

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Finance Minister yields

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

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

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

PICTALK

Fishermen cast their nets in the Arabian sea, at the Kochi coast PTI

The evolution of Rahul Gandhi

KALYANI **SHANKAR**

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

It might be too soon to judge how well Rahul Gandhi is doing as the new Leader of the Opposition. The current budget session ends in just a few days, so we'll need more time to understand his leadership fully. But he has begun well.

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

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

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

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

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

When Rahul spoke as the Leader of the Opposition for the first time, he said, "While the government has political power, the Opposition also represents the voice of the Indian people. This time, the Opposition represents significantly more of the Indian people's voice than it did last time."Rahul Gandhi's criticisms of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have caused strong reactions from the ruling party. During Rahul's maiden speech as LOP, PM Modi spoke up for the first time in 10 years.

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

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

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

His use of the Constitution helped him gain support from reservation beneficiaries.

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

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

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

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

Renewable energy: Paving the way for a sustainable future

GAURAV **PRABHUMIRASHI**

By 2030, India plans to achieve 500 GW of installed capacity from non-fossil fuels, marking a significant shift towards sustainability and energy security

India's growth story over the past two decades has been marked by vibrant economic progress, largely driven by service exports and rising domestic consumption. As of 2024, the economy appears robust, poised to replicate its service sector success by transforming into a global manufacturing hub to leverage its demographic dividend.

A robust manufacturing sector necessitates significant resources, with power being a crucial component. Despite this, India's per capita electricity consumption remains low compared to global averages. As the country embarks on its manufacturing-focused era, electricity demand is expected to rise significantly. To meet this demand while adhering to climate commitments, India plans to add new electricity generating capacity primarily from non-fossil fuel sources. The goal is to achieve 500 GW of installed non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.

By May 31, 2024, India's non-fossil fuel-based power generation capacity stood at 201.7 GW, with renewable energy, including small hydro projects, contributing 146.6 GW.

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

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

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

The government has also introduced schemes to promote distributed solar generation at the household level in both rural and urban areas. The PM-KUSUM scheme aims to reduce the agricultural sector's reliance on diesel and boost farmers' incomes by providing central government subsidies of up to 50% for installing standalone solar pumps and solarizing existing grid-connected agricultural pumps. Farmers can alsoinstall grid-connected solar plants on barren land and sell electricity to local distribution companies (DISCOMs). In the interim budget for FY 2024-25, the government announced the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, which offers subsidies covering up to 40% of solar panel installation costs. This scheme aims to equip 10 million homes with solar panels, saving INR 75,000 crores in electricity costs.

(The writer is a manager-investments at AMPIN Energy Transition, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT

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

Avinash Godboley| *Dewas*

BLINDING HEADLIGHTS CAUSE ACCIDENTS

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

It has become a fashion for several youngsters, especially in small towns and cities with none to keep a hawk's eye on them, to use ornamental illumination like flashy headlights. Flickers, Light emitting diodes(LED), and its variants, are freely used by irresponsible drivers. Section 177 of the Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) has explicitly detailed the proper and improper use of headlights. Many drivers, especially the non-professional ones, are oblivious to the correct usage of headlights and this can mainly be blamed on poor quality of driving schools and doling out licences without proper application of mind.

Ganpat Bhat |*Akola*

TURMOIL IN BANGLADESH

Madam — Sheikh Hasina's resignation as Prime Minister of Bangladesh is a result of socio-political upheaval of her own making. Every nation is an enterprise owned and run by its people who elect a government to run it as also simultaneously place an Opposition as the auditor. So long as the auditor is facilitated by the government to put up dissenting notes and is willing to correction, the shareholders let the checks and balances play out. When the government fails to give credence to the opposition, a plethora of public fora and institutions come in to press an alternative narrative. Should the government resort to suppressing them too , the people step in as suo- moto auditor. The likes of social media then expound dissent and if this too goes unheeded, people act as regulators leveraging electoral platforms to tone down aberrations in governance by impinging on electoral standing of the ruling dispensation. Should a government seek to neutralise the process of such franchise itself, as has been in many nations across the globe, people take to roads to convey the message. An extremely recalcitrant government could then compel people to set up tribunals and don the robes of judge and jury. Bangladesh has apparently slipped into this unhappy final phase. It's military may yet be sagacious enough to restore law and order and enable the nation to reclaim governance and eschew going the Myanmar way. There is a lesson for every progressive democratic nation. Stifling the elected opposition and relentless and heavy handed suppression of dissent per se in hubris of power, is bound to heavily set back economic progress while the socio political fabric stands frayed beyond repair.

R Narayanan | *Mumbai*

Justice delayed is justice denied

This is wtih reference to your editorial "Justice Delayed". The Chief Justice of India's deep concern over the excessive delay in disposing of cases, as noted in the editorial is a concern shared by all. The staggering fact that 44 million cases are pending and could take 300 years to resolve at the current pace should prompt the ruling government to seek a tangible solution. Currently, filing a case itself feels like a punishment for both parties involved.

Even after winning a case, the appeals process undertaken by the losing party makes the entire affair extremely frustrating. There is a pressing need to increase the capacity of courts at all levels to handle and dispose of cases in a timely manner. However, it is unfortunate that even the existing courts are forced to operate with severe manpower shortages. Simply changing the Acts and their names is not the change people desire; what is urgently needed is systemic and infrastructural improvement.

A G Rajmohan | *Anantapur*

Send your feedback to: **letterstopioneer@gmail.com**

FIRST COLUMN

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

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

AJIT KUMAR **BISHNOI**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Negligence and tragedy: The price of complacency

RAJDEEP **PATHAK**

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

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

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

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

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

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

> REGULATORY LAPSES, SUCH AS ISSUING NO-OBJECTION CERTIFICATES WITHOUT THOROUGH VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE CHECKS, FURTHER POINT TOWARDS SIGNIFICANT ENFORCEMENT SHORTCOMINGS

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

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

Accounts from traumatized students reveal harrowing experiences. Whether it is Aishwarya Rai, a 30-year-old UPSC aspirant from Kanpur, Nakul Tiwari, or Shreya, the very fact that they have been rescued from the terrifying moment of being drowned to death will linger in their psyche for years to come. The question arises: why does it take such disasters for the administration to take action?

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

The commercialization of education, characterized by the increasing influence of profit-driven motives, brings both benefits and drawbacks to student welfare. On the positive side, it often leads to improved infrastructure, better resources, and innovative teaching methods that enhance the learning experience. Private institutions do attempt to provide advanced facilities and extracurricular activities, fostering a more dynamic and engaging educational environment.

This recent incident must become an eye-opener. It critically highlights the need for enhanced regulatory oversight and stricter enforcement of building codes and safety regulations, emphasizing regular inspections and audits to ensure compliance. Investment in infrastructure, particularly drainage systems, is crucial to mitigate flooding risks, especially in flood-prone areas like Old Rajinder Nagar.

Additionally, educational institutions, particularly coaching centres, should be mandated to develop and regularly practice emergency evacuation plans, as safety drills can significantly improve preparedness and reduce panic during emergencies. Increased public awareness about safety regulations and accountability mechanisms is necessary, encouraging students and residents to report violations and demand action from authorities.

Moreover, the process for obtaining necessary permits and NOCs should be transparent and stringent, with severe penalties for deviations from approved plans.

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

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

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

Indian cardiologist sparks global debate on mind-based medical protocols

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

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

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

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

KUMAR **CHELLAPPAN**

medical constitution in your body gets deteriorated," he told The Pioneer."Although there has been a lot of thinking going on in medical circles about the role of the mind in psychological disorders, much needs to be done in the field of physical ailments.

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

As there is no big money involved in this kind of research unlike the gold rush in the field of epidemiology and interventions, the field did not until very recently attract good researchers," writes Prof Hegde, who is also the chief editor of the "Journal of Science of Healing Outcomes", a super peer-reviewed scientific publication.Interestingly, Prof Hegde, a former visiting professor of cardiology at, the University of London, always had strong reservations about the treatment protocol for cardio vascular diseases and cancer. In the editorial of the July 2024 issue of the JSHO, he quoted from the Journal of American Medical Association which has published a large study on the connection between life stresses and their role in the causation of coronary artery diseases.

He said the JAMA study focused on the immediate and long-term effects of various emotional stressors that are a part of life in the modern rat race of the monetary economy.Prof Hegde with more than five decades of medical research and practice to his credit has found that hostility, anger, frustration and bereavement come up on top among the negative emotions.

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

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

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

This is what we should learn to stay cool and free of ailments," he said.For the uninitiated, Prof Hegde is the author of many books and has written the preface for medical books published by medical scientists. His seminal work "What Doctors Don't Get to Study in Medical School" is widely read in the world of medicine and many doctors rate it as the Holy Bible of Modern Medicine. If we stay away from unhealthy competition for wealth and power, we can keep serious ailments like heart disease and cancer miles away from us.

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

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

Professor's journey to becoming Bangladesh head

PTI ■ DHAKA

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

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

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

Yunus, who started as a Professor at national and international Universities, earned the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for women's empowerment through poverty alleviation, and received multiple national and international awards over the years. But back home, he faced harsh scrutiny by the Hasina government for more than a decade due to obscure reasons while authorities initiated a series of investigations against him after she came to power in 2008.

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

Many people believe Hasina became enraged when Yunus announced that he would form a political party in 2007 when the country was run by a military-backed government and Hasina was in prison.

Yunus, however, did not follow through on the plan but at that time he criticised Bangladeshi politicians alleging they were only interested in money.

Meanwhile, over the years, he was charged under dozens of cases. In January, Yunus was sentenced to six months in jail by a court on charges of labour law violation.

On June 10 this year, a Dhaka court prosecuted Yunus and 13 others - currently out on bail - for embezzling as it rejected a plea for the dismissal of charges by the accused. The prosecution accused Yunus and the others of embezzling Taka 250 million (about USD 2 million) from the workers welfare fund of Grameen Telecom, which owns a 34.2 per cent stake in Bangladesh's largest mobile phone operator, Grameenphone, a subsidiary of Norway's telecom giant Telenor.

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

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

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

In 1984, the then 44-year-old Yunus was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership for "his pioneering efforts in enabling rural men and women to become economically self-sufficient through sound group-managed credit."

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

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

Born in pre-Independence India in 1940 in Chittagong, Yunus first studied at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, which was then East Pakistan; went as a Fulbright scholar to study economics at Vanderbilt University in the US and obtained PhD in economics in 1969.

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

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

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

Published on January 1, 1991, his autobiography, 'Banker to the Poor: Microlending and the Battle Against World Poverty,' has been translated into at least a dozen languages including French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Gujarati, Chinese and Arabic.

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

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

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

For a person who had dreamed of a poverty-free Bangladesh, Yunus perhaps never had imagined that one day he would be heading his country.

Turkey to join genocide case against Israel in UN court

AP ■ ANKARA

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

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

Turkey, one of the fiercest critics of Israel's actions in Gaza, becomes the latest nation to seek to participate in the case.

"No country in the world is above international law," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Oncu Keceli said in a post on X. "The case at the International Court of Justice is extremely important in terms of ensuring that the crimes committed by Israel do not go unpunished."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused Israel of genocide, called for it to be punished in international courts and criticized Western nations for backing Israel.

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

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

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

Nicaragua, Colombia, Libya, Mexico, Spain and Palestinian officials have sought to join the case. The court's decision on their requests is still pending. If admitted to the case, the countries would be able to make written submissions and speak at public hearings.

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

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

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

Tropical Storm Debby swirls over Atlantic, still dumping rain on Carolinas before moving north

AP ■ CHARLESTON (US)

Tropical Storm Debby was swirling over coastal Georgia and Carolinas on Wednesday, its wide bands of rain swelling inland waterways before it slowly marches north.

Debby was expected to restrengthen a little and turn north toward the South Carolina coastline before its centre makes a second landfall late Wednesday or early Thursday, weather officials said. The meandering storm -- moving forward at just 4 mph (6 kph) Wednesday morning -- has already drenched coastal cities in Georgia and South Carolina with more than a foot (30 centimetres) of rain in places, stirring up tornadoes and submerging streets with waist-high floodwaters.

But its core was surrounded by drier air and the worst rainfall was falling hundreds of miles to the north, into eastern North Carolina before spreading into southeast Virginia. Both declared a state of emergency.

Forecasters warned 5 inches (13 centimetres) of rain could fall from South Carolina to Vermont through this weekend.

The area of most concern Wednesday was in southeastern North Carolina, where Hurricane Matthew caused a historic billion-dollar flood in 2016. Two years later, many of

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

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

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

Charleston Mayor Williams Cogswell said the closures avoided the need for water rescues and kept "yahoos" from damaging properties by driving through flooded streets and pushing water over sandbags.

In one Savannah neighbourhood, firefighters used boats to evacuate some residents and waded through floodwaters to deliver bottled water and other supplies to those who refused to leave.

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

"It was hell all night," Jones said.

Debby's centre was about 90 miles (145 kilometres) east of Savannah on Wednesday morning, according to a bulletin from the National Hurricane Center. It had maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (73 kph).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

UK police prepares for more clashes

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

"We're doing everything we can to ensure that where a police response is needed, it's in place, where support is needed for particular places, that is in place," Starmer told reporters after the Cabinet Office Briefing Room A (COBRA) meeting. "Obviously it's a difficult situation with disorder going on in a number of different places at the same time, but that is precisely why I held my second COBRA meeting to coordinate the response and to get the assurance that I want and need that we do have adequate police in place, that we are able to cope with this disorder," he said.

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

"That should send a very powerful message to anybody involved, either directly or online, that you are likely to be dealt with within a week. Nobody, but nobody, should be involved themselves in this disorder," added Starmer, who pledged that all communities "will be safe".

Stephen Parkinson, England's director of public prosecutions, has warned rioters that they could face terrorism charges.

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

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

Act responsibly, UK govt tells Elon Musk

AP ■ LONDON

The British government has called on Elon Musk to act responsibly after the tech billionaire used his social media platform X to unleash a barrage of posts that officials say risk inflaming the violent unrest gripping the country.

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

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

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

Khaleda Zia gets renewed passport

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh's former prime minister Khaleda Zia, who was released from jail after the ouster of her arch-rival Sheikh Hasina, has received a renewed passport, her party said on Wednesday.

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

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

The renewal process for her passport was completed on Tuesday. Subsequently, Zia's personal secretary ABM Abdus Sattar received her renewed machine-readable passport on her behalf later that night, it said.

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

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

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

Deeply concerned about B'desh violence: US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

"We are monitoring the situation in Bangladesh very closely. We have long called for respect of democratic rights in Bangladesh, and we urge that the interim government formation be democratic and inclusive," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference.

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

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

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

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

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

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

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

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

Aurangzeb said the USD 12 billion cash deposits by China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates would be rolled over for one year, like last time. Earlier, he had said that the IMF had asked for the rollover for three to five years before the Executive Board meeting.

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

The IMF announced a staff-level agreement for USD 7 billion last month subject to the approval of the Executive Board and securing financing commitments from the bilateral and multilateral creditors.

The finance minister said there was no point in asking for an increase in the interest rates on these loans when the country's foreign exchange reserves had strengthened compared to a year ago.

The IMF, he added, had identified only a USD 3-5 billion financing gap over the three-year programme period, which was quite manageable.

"Pakistan has also received an offer from a foreign commercial bank but we are waiting for the IMF Board approval to ask the lender to cut the offered interest rates," said Aurangzeb.

The offer had come from a non-Gulf and non-Chinese commercial bank, he added, without disclosing the name.

A finance ministry official said that Standard Chartered Bank had offered a less than USD 400 million loan but it was asking for a double-digit interest rate that the government could not afford to pay. Aurangzeb said the government would wait for the IMF Board's approval to get the commercial bank to cut its offered interest rates. The finance minister said two important developments had taken place in the last few days which showed that Pakistan was well on its way to achieving macroeconomic stability. He described the Fitch rating agency's decision to improve Pakistan's credit rating by one notch and the central bank's decision to cut the interest rates by 1% as "very critical elements for achieving macroeconomic stability".

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

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

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

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

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

The finance minister also said that to cut expenditures, the government had undertaken the privatisation programme and an exercise was ongoing to close ministries or merge them.

"It is about time to right-size the federal government," Aurangzeb said.

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

AP ■ TOKYO

US Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel will skip this year's atomic bombing memorial service in Nagasaki because Israel was not invited, the embassy said Wednesday.
Emanuel will not attend the event on Friday because it was "politicized" by Nagasaki's decision not to invite Israel, the embassy said.
He will instead honor the victims of the Nagasaki atomic bombing at a ceremony at a Buddhist temple in Tokyo, it said.
An atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, destroyed the city, killing 140,000 people. A second bomb dropped three days later on Nagasaki killed 70,000 more. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, ending World War II and the country's nearly half-century of aggression in Asia.
Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki had indicated his reluctance in June to invite Israel, noting the escalating conflict in the Middle East. He announced last week that Israel was not invited because of concern over "possible unforeseen situations" such as protests, sabotage or attacks on attendants.
Nagasaki hoped to honor the atomic bomb victims "in a peaceful and solemn atmosphere," he said.
Suzuki said he made the decision based on "various developments in the international community in response to the ongoing situation in the Middle East" that suggested a possible risk that the ceremony would be disturbed.
In contrast, Hiroshima invited the Israeli ambassador to Japan to its memorial ceremony on Tuesday among 50,000 attendees who included Emanuel and other envoys, though Palestinian representatives were not invited.
Nagasaki officials said they were told that an official of the US Consulate in Fukuoka will represent the United States at Friday's ceremony. Five other Group of Seven nations — Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the UK — and the European Union are also expected to send lower-ranking envoys to Nagasaki.
Envoys from those nations signed a joint letter expressing their shared concern about Israel's exclusion, saying treating the country on the same level as Russia and Belarus — the only other countries not invited — would be misleading.
The envoys urged Nagasaki to reverse the decision and invite Israel to preserve the universal message of the city's ceremony.
The exclusion of Israel would make their "high-level participation" difficult, they said.
British Ambassador to Japan Julia Longbottom, who attended the 79th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Tuesday, told Japanese media that she planned to skip the Nagasaki ceremony because the city's decision to exclude Israel could send a wrong message.

Namal Rajapaksa announced as candidate for Lanka presidency

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Namal Rajapaksa, the 38-year-old heir to the Rajapaksa dynasty, was on Wednesday named as the SLPP candidate for the presidential election, thus officially ending Rajapaksa family's backing to the incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe.
Sagara Kariyawasam, the general secretary of the Sri Lanka People's Front (SLPP, also known locally by its popular Sinhalese name, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna), announced the younger Rajapaksa's candidacy early on Wednesday morning at a ceremony at the party headquarters. Namal's entry has made the election a four-cornered contest. Besides, President Wickremesinghe, the main opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and the Marxist JVP leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake are already in the fray.
The Rajapaksas – Mahinda, Basil and Gotabaya – were instrumental in Wickremesinghe winning the parliamentary vote in July 2022 to take over Gotabaya's remaining term. It was soon after the unprecedented development of mid-April 2022 when the island nation declared its first-ever sovereign default since gaining independence from Britain in 1948 and almost civil war-like conditions followed as unrest spread amid locals over inflation and other economic stress that had led to Gotabaya's ouster.

Helicopter with 5 people on board crashes in Nepal

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Four Chinese tourists were among five people killed in Nepal on Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains northwest region of Kathmandu.
Police have recovered five dead bodies from the crash site in Ward No 7 of Shivapuri Rural Municipality, Nuwakot, Myrepublica newspaper reported.
Nepal-based Air Dynasty helicopter, 9N-AJD, was en route to Rasuwa from Kathmandu when it crashed.
The helicopter departed from Kathmandu at 1:54 PM and was en route to Syaphrubensi when it crashed.
According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), a Prabhu helicopter (9N-ANL) was dispatched to the crash site immediately after the incident.
There were five individuals on board, including four Chinese tourists, the paper said. The helicopter lost contact with the tower just three minutes after takeoff from Tribhuvan International Airport, according to the CAAN.
Citing a police official, the paper said that the bodies of two men, one woman and the pilot, identified as Arun Malla, were recovered from the crash site.
One body has not been identified yet as it is charred beyond recognition, Myrepublica reported.
Superintendent of Police (SP) Shantiraj Koirala, at the District Police Office, Nuwakot, who reached the crash site, confirmed that five bodies had been recovered.
This crash comes just weeks after the Saurya Airlines plane crash at the Tribhuvan International Airport on July 24.

Putin accuses Ukraine of 'large-scale provocation'

AP ■ KYIV

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday described a Ukrainian incursion into the country's southwestern Kursk region as a "large-scale provocation" as his officials asserted that they were fighting off cross-border raids for a second day. Ukrainian official remained quiet about the scope of the operation.
Putin told Cabinet officials he would meet with top defense and security officials to discuss what he called the "indiscriminate shelling of civilian buildings, residential houses, ambulances with different types of weapons." He instructed the Cabinet to coordinate assistance to the Kursk region.
The head of the region urged residents to donate blood due to the intense fighting. "In the last 24 hours, our region has been heroically resisting attacks" by Ukrainian fighters, acting Gov. Alexei Smirnov said on Telegram, adding that all emergency services were on high alert.
Smirnov also said authorities had evacuated more than 200 people from areas under shelling, while several thousand others left in their own vehicles.
If confirmed, the cross-border foray would be among Ukraine's largest since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, and unprecedented for its deployment of Ukrainian military units.
Kyiv's aim could be to draw Russian reserves to the area, potentially weakening Moscow's offensive operations in several parts of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region where Russian forces have increased attacks and are advancing gradually toward operationally significant gains.
But it could risk stretching outmanned Ukrainian troops further along the front line, which is more than 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) long.
Even if Russia were to commit reserves to stabilize the new front, given its vast manpower and the relatively small number of Ukrainian forces engaged in the operation, it would likely have little long-term impact.
However, the operation could boost Ukrainian morale at a time when Kyiv's forces are facing relentless Russian attacks and are expected to face more in coming weeks.
Several Ukrainian brigades stationed along the border region said they could not comment. Ukraine's Defense Ministry and General Staff said they would not comment.
Russian forces have swiftly repelled previous cross-border incursions, but not before they caused damage and embarrassed authorities.
The Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday that up to 300 Ukrainian troops, supported by 11 tanks and more than 20 armoured combat vehicles, had crossed into Russia and suffered heavy losses.
It said Wednesday that military and border guard troops "continued to destroy Ukrainian military units in the areas alongside the border in the Kursk region."
The ministry said Russian forces backed by artillery and warplanes "didn't allow the enemy to advance deeper into the territory of the Russian Federation."
It wasn't possible to verify the Russian claims.
Open-source monitors have also not been able to verify the claims. The US-based Institute for the Study of War could not verify whether damaged and abandoned armoured vehicles shown in geolocated video 7 kilometres (4 miles) north of the border west of Lyubimovka in the Kursk region were Ukrainian.
The think tank also cast doubt on video shared by Russian military bloggers claiming to show the aftermath of the Ukrainian raids. Most of the damage shown "appears to be the result of routine Ukrainian shelling and does not indicate that there was ground activity in the area," it said in its daily report.
Responsibility for previous incursions into Russia's Belgorod and Bryansk regions has been claimed by two murky groups: the Russian Volunteer Corps and the Freedom of Russia Legion, which are made up of Russian citizens and have fought alongside Ukrainian forces.
Disinformation and propaganda have played a central role in the war, now in its third year.
Some Russian war bloggers who have proved knowledgeable about the war said that Ukrainian soldiers were in Kursk.
Rybar, a Telegram channel run by Mikhail Zvinchuk, a retired Russian Defense Ministry press officer, said Ukrainian troops had seized three settlements in the region and continued to fight their way deeper into it.
Another pro-Kremlin military blog, Two Majors, claimed that Ukrainian troops had advanced up to 15 kilometres (9 miles) into the region.
Neither claim could be independently verified.
The Kursk region's border with Ukraine is 245 kilometres (150 miles) long, making it possible for saboteur groups to launch swift incursions and capture some ground before Russia deploys reinforcements.

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

AP ■ WASHINGTON

NASA is delaying its next astronaut launch to buy more time at the International Space Station for Boeing's troubled new crew capsule.
The space agency said Tuesday it's bumping SpaceX's four-person flight from this month to next. It's now targeted for Sept. 24 at the earliest. Officials said that will give them more time to analyze thruster and leak problems that hit Boeing's Starliner capsule after its June liftoff, its first with a crew on board.
Tuesday marked the two-month point at the space station for Starliner's test pilots, Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who should have been back by mid-June. NASA is weighing all its options for returning the two veteran astronauts, including a ride home in a SpaceX capsule.
"NASA and Boeing continue to evaluate the spacecraft's readiness, and no decisions have been made regarding Starliner's return," NASA said in a statement. Further details were expected at a news conference set for Wednesday.
Only two docking ports at the space station can accommodate U.S. astronaut capsules and, right now, both are occupied. So one will need to be vacated before the next SpaceX crew can arrive. Russia has its own parking places for its Soyuz capsules.
The latest setback means the four astronauts who flew up with SpaceX in March now also face a longer mission than planned.
Over the past several weeks, Boeing has conducted thruster test firings on the ground as well as in space to better understand why five thrusters failed ahead of Starliner's June 6 arrival at the space station. All but one came back online. Helium leaks in the capsule's propulsion system also cropped up.
Citing the testing, the company late last week said: "Boeing remains confident in the Starliner spacecraft and its ability to return safely with crew."
Boeing and SpaceX topped NASA's list for astronaut taxi service to and from the space station, after the shuttles retired in 2011. NASA signed contracts worth billions with both companies in order to have a backup in case one of them got sidelined by an accident.
SpaceX launched its first crew in 2020; the upcoming flight will be its 10th astronaut flight for NASA. It's also sent a few private crews into orbit.
Boeing has had to overcome multiple Starliner problems over the years. The company had to launch an empty Starliner twice before committing to a crew, repeating the initial flight test because of bad software and other issues. The delays have cost the company more than $1 billion.

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

Tunisian Oppn figure Moussi sentenced to prison

AP ■ TUNIS

A potential presidential candidate in Tunisia has been sentenced to two years in prison, marking another setback to the country's fledgling opposition challenging President Kais Saied as he seeks a new term.
Abir Moussi, a 49-year-old lawyer and the head of the right-wing Free Destourian Party, was arrested in October after criticizing the electoral process and presidential decrees guiding it, alleging a lack of transparency.
Following a complaint by the North African nation's election authority, she was found guilty of violating a controversial anti-fake news decree outlawing spreading information that slanders or harms others. The law has been widely used to prosecute those who criticize authorities.
Moussi's lawyer Nafaa Laribi told The Associated Press on Tuesday that she still intends to run in the Oct. 6 presidential election, and that, unlike other candidates, nothing in Monday's sentence prevents her from running. Laribi said Moussi's morale remained high, and he planned to appeal.
The sentence is the latest in a growing crackdown that observers have said is politically motivated against Saied's critics, regardless of political affiliation.
With Moussi and other leading opposition figures in prison, Saied is expected to face little election competition in what was once the Middle East and North Africa's most progressive democracy. Moussi appeals to parts of the population nostalgic for Tunisia's pre-revolutionary era. A strong critic of Islamists such as imprisoned Ennahda leader Rached Ghannouchi, Moussi was an official in longtime President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's ruling party. Over the years, she became one of the country's most popular and contentious political figures.

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

AP ■ BANGKOK

A court in Thailand on Wednesday ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party, which finished first in last year's general election, saying it violated the constitution by proposing an amendment of a law against defaming the country's royal family.
The Constitutional Court said it voted unanimously to dissolve the party because its campaign to amend the law was considered an attempt to overthrow the nation's constitutional monarchy.
The Move Forward Party was unable to form a government after topping the polls because members of the Senate, at that time a conservative military-appointed body, declined to endorse its candidate for prime minister.
The Election Commission had filed a petition against the Move Forward Party after the Constitutional Court ruled in January that it must stop advocating changes to the law, known as Article 112, which protects the monarchy from criticism with penalties of up to 15 years in jail per offense.
The ruling also imposed a 10-year ban on political activity on those who held the party's executive positions while it campaigned for the proposed amendment. Among them are its charismatic former leader, Pita Limjaroenrat, and current chief Chaithawat Tulathon.
It remained unclear what will happen to the rest of its non-executive lawmakers, although Pita said in an interview with The Associated Press that the party will ensure they have a "smooth transition into a new house", or a new party.
Lawmakers of a dissolved political party can keep their seats in Parliament if they move to a new party within 60 days.
Move Forward and its reform agenda shook up Thai politics by winning the most seats in the 2023 elections even though afterward it was blocked from taking power. The latest legal action is one of many that have drawn widespread criticism and are seen as part of a years-long attack on the country's progressive movement by conservative forces trying to keep their grip on power.
The party was denied power after the Senate refused to accept its then-leader Pita's nomination as prime minister. Senators, who were given power to veto prime ministerial candidates by the constitution adopted in 2017 under a military government, said they opposed Pita because of his intention to reform the royal defamation law. Move Forward was later removed from a coalition formed with the now-governing Pheu Thai party and became head of the opposition.
In its arguments submitted to the court, Move Forward said the Constitutional Court does not have jurisdiction to rule on the case and the petition filed by the Election Commission did not follow due process because Move Forward was not given an opportunity to defend itself before it was submitted to the court.
The court said in its ruling that it has the authority to rule on the case, and that its previous ruling in January was enough of an evidence for the Election Commission to file the case without having to hear more evidence from the party.
Human rights organisations have expressed concern about the case. Amy Smith, executive director of the human rights group Fortify Rights, ahead of the ruling called the attempt to disband Move Forward "a direct attack on democratic principles" that "severely undermines Thailand's commitment to human rights".
The chairperson of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Ben Cardin, sent a letter to Thai Foreign Minister Maris Sangiampongsa to express his concern. He said that dissolving a party that "secured a significant victory" in the 2023 elections would "disenfranchise millions of voters who called for progressive change and democratic reform".
Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has maintained that the Thai justice system is fair and impartial, and that the government cannot interfere with the judicial process.
Move Forward's predecessor, the Future Forward party, was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in 2020 on charges of violating election laws on donations to political parties.
Thailand's courts, especially the Constitutional Court, are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them and nominally independent state agencies such as the Election Commission to issue rulings to cripple or sink political opponents.
The dissolution of Future Forward, whose promises of reforms were particularly attractive for younger people disillusioned after years of military rule, further highlighted the struggle between the progressive movement and conservative forces in Thailand.
It was one of the triggers for youth-led pro-democracy protests that sprang up across the country in 2020.

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Appointment of Resource Persons on Contract Basis

Bank intends to engage two Resource Persons on contract basis @ consolidated remuneration of Rs. 75,000/- per month per resource person plus incentive as applicable for a specific period of the project ie. 3 years with a performance review on yearly basis, for establishment of Business Diversification and Product Innovation Cell (BDPIC) in The Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd. Chandigarh. The detailed terms and conditions, eligibility criteria experience, age, etc, can be accessed from the bank website **www.harcobank.org.in**
The interested candidates may apply and submit their applications either personally or by post on the prescribed Performa duly filled, in the office of The Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd., Sector-17B, Bank Square, Chandigarh by **21.08.2024 till 4.00 P.M.** The envelope should be super scribed with "Application for the Post of Resource Person". The applications if received after the due date will not be entertained. The Managing Director reserves the right to cancel appointment process without assigning any reason.

-sd-
Managing Director
The Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd.,
Chandigarh

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website- www.pspscl.in
Mobile No. 96461-22067

Short Term E-Tender Enq. No. 7586/P-1/EMP-12751 dated 05.08.24
Dy.Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-1) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2024_POWER_124984_1 for Procurement of Special purpose Welding Electrodes for the year 2024-25. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **06.08.24/ 02.00 PM** onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**
RTP-80/24
76155/12/3240/2023/36455 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website- www.pspscl.in
Mobile No. 96461-22067

E-Tender Enq. No. 7591/P-3/EMP-12761 dated 06.08.24
Dy.Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2024_POWER_125048_1 for Procurement of MSRL tank for Storage of HCL acid in DM Plant Stage-II at GGSSTP, Rupnagar. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **07.08.2024/ 01.00 PM** onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**
RTP-81/24
76155/12/3254/2023/36472 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203
Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

ADMISSION NOTICE-CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA COURSES, SESSION 2024

Online applications are invited w.e.f **08.08.2024 to 25.08.2024** through University website alongwith requisite fee from eligible candidates for admission to various CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA Courses, i.e. six month/one year Certificate courses and two/three year Diploma courses, session 2024. The Last date for submission of Online Fee through payment gateway is **27.08.2024.** Note: For Schedule/ Eligibility/ detail/ Fee/ Prospectus visit University website i.e. **www.bfuhs.ac.in.** The detail of courses is mentioned in Prospectus.
sd/-
REGISTRAR
NIL/12/207/2023/36429 Dated CHD :- 8/7/2024

Stock markets snap 3-day slump

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty bounced back sharply on Wednesday after three straight days of slump following a rally in global peers and value-buying in metal, IT and oil shares at lower levels.

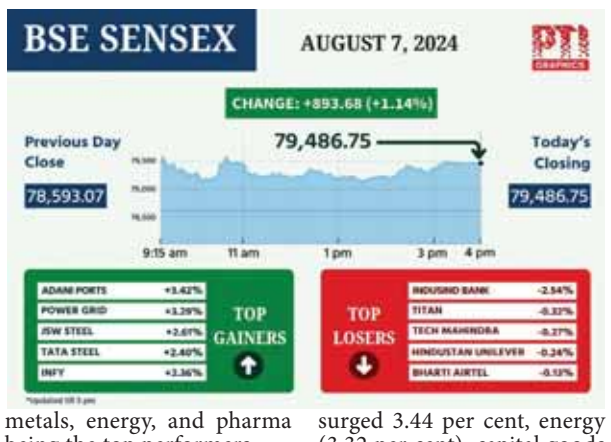
The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 874.94 points or 1.11 per cent to settle at 79,468.01 with 25 of its constituents ending with gains and five with losses. During the day, it jumped 1,046.13 points or 1.33 per cent to 79,639.20.

The NSE Nifty jumped 304.95 points or 1.27 per cent to 24,297.50. Intra-day, it surged 345.15 points or 1.43 per cent to 24,337.70.

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

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

Most sectors contributed to the upward movement, with metals, energy, and pharma being the top performers.



"Global markets experienced a notable rebound after the BoJ's Deputy Governor reassured that the central bank would not raise interest rates during a period of financial instability. The Indian market also witnessed broad-based buying across sectors, with the realty sector seeing a relief rally due to the reinstatement of indexation benefits," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 2.63 per cent and smallcap index climbed 2.39 per cent.

All indices ended in the positive territory. Oil & Gas jumped 3.75 per cent, metal surged 3.44 per cent, energy (3.32 per cent), capital goods (2.89 per cent), telecommunication (2.80 per cent), services (2.53 per cent), commodities (2.49 per cent), healthcare (2.03 per cent). Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said that markets experienced a breather after the recent decline, gaining over a percent, driven by strong global cues.

As many as 2,985 stocks advanced while 948 declined and 98 remained unchanged.

Asian markets settled in the positive territory, where Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended significantly higher.

European markets also rallied.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

In its fresh notice, the regulator has directed KSBL and Parthasarathy to pay Rs 15.21 crore and Rs 9.36 crore, respectively, which includes interest and recovery cost, within 15 days.

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

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

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

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

Rupee settles 4 paise lower at 83.96 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 4 paise at 83.96 (provisional) against US dollar on Wednesday, weighed down by a recovery in the US dollar and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Forex traders said the Indian rupee depreciated on Wednesday on a strong US dollar and positive crude oil prices. However, strength in the domestic markets cushioned the downside.

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

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

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

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

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

Any further intervention by the Reserve Bank may also support the rupee. Investors may watch out for RBI's monetary policy decision.

USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.20, Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, gained 0.31 per cent to 103.28 points.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 1.22 per cent higher at USD 77.41 per barrel in futures trade.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 874.94 points, or 1.11 per cent, to close at 79,468.01 points, while the Nifty advanced 304.95 points, or 1.27 per cent, to 24,297.50 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Tuesday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 3,531.24 crore, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel started its three-day deliberations for the next set of bi-monthly monetary policy on Tuesday amid expectations of no change in benchmark interest rate in view of concerns on inflation and economic growth remaining steady.

The decision of the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will be announced on Thursday.

Goyal urges BIMSTEC group to relook at progress of FTA talks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday suggested the seven member countries of the BIMSTEC bloc to relook at the progress of Free Trade Agreement talks which are moving at a very slow pace.

He said that the members can think of negotiating a preferential trade agreement instead of a full-fledged free trade pact.

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

The bloc has been negotiating a proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) since 2004. So far over 20 rounds of talks have been held. The last one was held in 2018.

"I would like to raise a few fundamental issues about where we stand and what are the possibilities of making this FTA a reality," Goyal said here at CIIs BIMSTEC Business Summit 2024.

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

The last round of negotiations took place some six years ago, which means something is holding back this FTA.

The reasons for slow progress can be the non-trade barriers or trade barriers coming in the way of normal trade, he said adding the possible impact of other regional FTAs on the BIMSTEC region could be the cause of the delay.

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

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

"I would urge business leaders also to give honest feedback of what you feel about the potential BIMSTEC FTA. Do you see merit in it, Do you see value in it," he said

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

"Maybe, we can begin with a PTA (preferential trade agreement) if not a full flown FTA...But let's examine the realistic possibility and move forward on a fast track basis," he said.

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

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

On Bangladesh, Goyal said, "We are all deeply concerned about the evolving situation in Bangladesh and we wish the people of Bangladesh well and we will convey our best wishes for a smooth transition and bright future for the people of Bangladesh".

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

The date was later extended till May 15.

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

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

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

The manufacturers of such tobacco products are required to furnish the details of packing machines being used for filling and packing of packages in Form GST SRM-I, electronically within 30 days of the notification coming into effect i.E., April 1, 2024.

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

service providers (telcos) and their delivery telemarketers.

The immediate action sought includes implementing technical solutions for traceability and preventing bulk calling by enterprise customers using 10-digit numbers.

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

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

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

Jio's share of data traffic in India rises to about 60% in FY24: RIL annual report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom major Jio's share in the overall data traffic in India increased to about 60 per cent in 2023-24, according to the annual report of parent firm Reliance Industries Limited.

Jio's ahead-of-the-curve investments in next-generation network and digital technologies would sustain a competitive edge and market share gains, it said and added this will ensure strong and consistent shareholder return over the coming years.

In the annual report, Reliance Industries' Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said Jio turned a "Data Dark India" into a "Data Rich" nation with affordable, high-speed 4G data, and followed it up with a 5G network rollout across India in world-record time.

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

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

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

An extraordinarily large unit of digital data, one exabyte is equal to one billion gigabytes.

"Jio has built enough data capacity to serve over a billion Indians for their digital needs at homes, offices, and on-the-go. Jio's share of data traffic in India has increased to about 60 per cent, making it the most preferred broadband network," the RIL annual report said.

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

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

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

On the threats landscape, the annual report said that disruptive technological changes could make current technologies obsolete and that entry of a new disruptive player or price competition could impact long-term returns.

"Jio's ahead-of-the-curve investments in next-generation network and digital technologies would sustain a competitive edge and market share gains. This will ensure strong and consistent shareholder return over the coming years," the report said.

The company is also making concerted efforts in building capabilities in evolving technologies such as AI/ML (Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning), AR/VR (Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality), robotics, natural language recognition and processing.

Ambani said the world is increasingly recognising India as an innovation hub, and asserted that Jio will continue to play a stellar role in building the nation's digital infrastructure and capabilities.

"With the launch of Jio 4G in 2016, we set out on a journey to make digital inclusion in India a reality. Jio turned a Data Dark India into a Data Rich nation, supplying every Indian home with affordable, high-speed 4G data, and this year, Jio has further enhanced the country's digital infrastructure by rolling out its True5G network across India in world-record time," he said.

Bangladesh unrest: Buyers hesitant to place orders in India unless Govt tweaks policies, says AEPC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

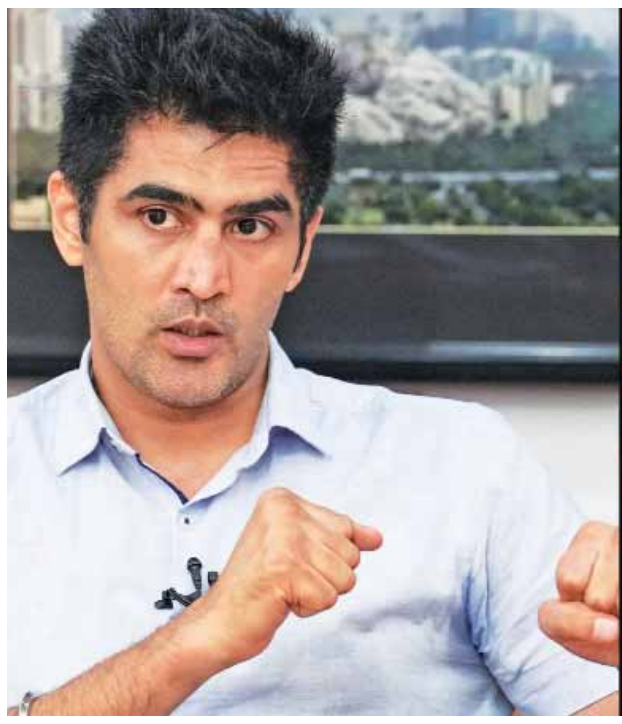
"In the long term, buyers will remain skeptical of being overly dependent on Bangladesh. Even before the current turmoil in Bangladesh, buyers were already looking for capacities elsewhere, due to capacity saturation in Bangladesh. The recent turmoil will expedite their plans. Indian factories will get a piece of the cake only if they ramp up capacities," Sekhri stated.

Bangladesh is facing its worst political crisis since Independence in 1971. The neighbouring country has plunged into uncertainty after street protests over job quota forced Sheikh Hasina to quit as prime minister and flee.

"Buyers are very concerned with the escalation of the civil unrest in Bangladesh. In the short term, fast fashion buyers have no option but to pull out their orders from Bangladesh and place them elsewhere," the AEPC Chairman said.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Athletes who compete in contact sports, where fights are held as per weight categories, have to go through the painful process of staying within their divisions.

It involves going hungry for hours, avoiding even liquids and in some desperate situations, stay huddled inside layers of blankets to sweat out the extra weight.

"There have been times when I have spat out saliva continuously so that nothing goes inside, you know. One can't imagine this extreme exercise. There are special Sauna suits that we wear, they feel like a furnace and there are times we run wearing them to shed weight," he explained.

It's an extraordinary exercise that takes a physical and mental toll on athletes and in 2018, six-time world champion woman boxer M C Mary Kom, in an interview to PTI, had revealed how she lost 2kg in a matter of four hours.

Mary Kom had landed in Poland for a tournament, where she eventually picked up her third gold of that year. But hours before she was to take the ring, she had gone through the strenuous process of shedding weight just to be eligible to fight.

"We landed in Poland at round 3-3:30 in the morning and the general weigh-in was at around 7:30am. I was a couple of kilograms above 48kg, the category I compete in, at that point," she had said.

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

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

Tough challenge awaits Chopra in bid for another piece of history

PTI ■ PARIS

His stunning monster throw of 89.34m in the qualification round made quite a statement but a tough challenge awaits defending champion Neeraj Chopra as he seeks another piece of history in the Paris Olympics men's javelin throw final round here on Thursday.

Just like he did at the same stage in the Tokyo Olympics three years back, Chopra needed just a few seconds to top the qualification round with his opening throw but the similarity ends there.

This time, the quality of the field is better than Tokyo with nine throwers crossing the automatic final round qualification mark of 84m in Paris as against six in Tokyo. Out of the nine, five made it to the final round with their first throws and thus will have a lot in their tanks for the medal round.

The 26-year-old Chopra knows it too well, having been in the global circuit for more than eight years.

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

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

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

Eric Lemming (Sweden; 1908 and 1912), Jonni Myyra (Finland; 1920 and 1924), Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic; 1992, 1996 and 2000) and Andreas Thorkildsen (Norway; 2004 and 2008) are the only ones to have defended the men's javelin gold medals in the Olympics.

If he wins gold, and for that matter a medal, he will become the most decorated Indian in Olympics in individual sport.

Shuttler PV Sindhu (one silver, one bronze), wrestler Sushil Kumar (one silver, one bronze) and shooter Manu Bhaker (two bronze) have won two Olympic medals each post Independence.

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

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

But there were some ominous signs coming out from the qualification round which Chopra will have to be wary of.

The peaking of two-time world champion Anderson Peters (personal best 93.07m) of Grenada as well as immediate hitting of form by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem may indicate that the final round at Stade de France could be a classic contest.

Peters, of the same age as Chopra, was beaten up and thrown off a party boat in his native country just a few days after winning a silver medal at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. A month before that incident, he had won the World Championships gold in Eugene, USA, after beating Chopra with a monster throw of 90.54m.

The Grenadian, who interestingly finished third when Chopra won gold in 2016 World Junior Championships in Poland, has gone past 90m four times in his career and he is one of the few who have beaten the Indian superstar. His season's best of 88.63m in the qualification round could be a precursor to something bigger.

Nadeem, who beat Peters to win the 2022 Commonwealth Games gold with 90.18m, is unpredictable and he has pulled off big throws earlier also. After coming back from an elbow surgery, he claimed silver behind Chopra in the 2023 Budapest World Championships with a throw of 87.82m.

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

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

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

Kellie of Ireland wins second boxing gold and retires

AP ■ PARIS

Kellie Harrington is an unusual boxing champion. She is passionate only about the amateur version of her pro-dominated sport, and she has long claimed to have no ambitions of being paid to fight.

Minutes after she stepped onto the podium at Court Philippe Chatrier to have her second gold medal hung around her neck Tuesday night, Harrington announced her retirement from boxing. The money to be made from being a two-time Olympic gold medalist in a passionate fight nation like Ireland still isn't enough for Harrington to change her plans after her magical run at the Paris Games.

"I'm done and dusted," Harrington said. "I'm going to go out a champion. That's the way I want to go out. I don't want to go out and lose a fight and then retire. I'll retire happy."

Harrington is the first Irish woman to win gold medals at two Olympics, and she is just one of four Irish athletes to retain an Olympic title. After winning three years ago in Tokyo, she clinched her second gold with a remarkable charge through the Paris field, capped by her 4-1 victory over China's Yang Wenlu at Roland Garros.

Harrington pressured Yang more than enough to get the victory despite losing the third round. The champion's most impressive win in Paris likely was in the semifinals, when she spectacularly outboxed Brazilian IBF lightweight champion Beatriz Ferreira, whose physicality and aggression had made her look like a gold-medal favorite.

Harrington isn't the fastest or the most powerful woman in the lightweight division, but she might be the best ever to fight at the weight in the four Olympics with women's boxing.

"It has been four fights with absolutely fantastic opponents," Harrington said. "Everyone who is here is the best of the best. Everyone deserves respect."

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ PARIS

A heart-wrenching defeat in the semifinals, notwithstanding, a demoralised Indian men's hockey team will have to regroup quickly and aim for a second consecutive podium finish at the Olympics when it takes on Spain in the bronze medal play-off here on Thursday.

The Indians played bravely against Germany, putting their defence under pressure from the start and in the process took the lead in the seventh minute through a penalty corner conversion by skipper Harmanpreet Singh.

But the Germans came back strongly in the second quarter and fourth quarters to secure the close win, courtesy some silly defensive lapses from the Indians, especially Jarmanpret Singh.

The Indians too were guilty of wasting too many scoring chances, including as many as 10 penalty corners, while converting two, one directly and another through variation.

The opposition teams seemed to have found out a way to deny one of the world's best drag-flicker Harmanpreet as he managed to be on target just once on Tuesday.

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

But the return of Amit Rohidas, who missed Tuesday's match after being shown the red card against Great Britain in the quarterfinal, should bolster the Indian defence and also give more chances from penalty corners as he is second best option from set pieces after Harmanpreet.

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

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

A place in final would have at least assured India a silver medal after 1960 Olympics but that also slipped out of hands.

But all is not lost for the Indians as they still have a chance to claim a podium finish if they beat Spain on Thursday in the bronze medal match.

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

Veteran India goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who is playing his last international tournament, reminded his teammates that all is not lost.

"It's a heartbreaking loss for us (against Germany). We had the chance to win gold, but now, we have to forget this semifinal and focus on the bronze medal match," he had said.

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

"These 19 players should play like this is our last opportunity as a player to get a medal for our country."

Going by form and world ranking, the Indians are clear favourites to win the tie against Spain but in the end it will all boil down to the mental aspect of the side.

While India lost a close semifinal, Spain were thrashed 0-4 by Netherlands.

In world ranking too, Spain are placed eighth while India are currently at the fifth spot.

But it would be easier said than done for the Indians as Spain, while not matching India's Olympic achievements, has made significant strides in recent decades.

The Spanish team has secured two European Championship titles and has consistently participated in World Cups since 1971.

US rolls into semifinals of basketball tournament, eases past Brazil 122-87

AP ■ PARIS

All the favored teams in the first three men's basketball quarterfinals at the Paris Olympics had problems. Canada lost to France. Serbia erased a 24-point deficit to beat Australia. Germany had to shake off a double-digit deficit before beating Greece.

So, going into the fourth and final game of the night, the U.S. Knew what it had to do.

"We wanted to come out and make sure we were the aggressor," U.S. Coach Steve Kerr.

They made it look easy, too. Devin Booker led a balanced front with 18 points and the Americans had little trouble with Brazil in the quarterfinals of the Paris Olympics, winning 122-87 on Tuesday.

The U.S. (4-0) moves on to face Serbia (3-1) in Thursday's semifinals, while Germany (4-0) takes on France (3-1) in the other semifinal. Winners of those games will play Saturday night for the gold medal; Thursday's losers will play Saturday morning for the bronze medal.

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

If there was one issue, it was this: LeBron James left in the third quarter after catching an elbow around his left eye, struck by Brazil's Georginho de Paula while going for a rebound. James went down, eventually pressed a towel over the eye and left for the locker room area later in the third. Kerr said James needed four stitches.

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

Anthony Edwards scored 17 points, while Joel Embiid - booed again in France, of course - had 14 points and seven rebounds in 12 first-half minutes for the Americans. Anthony Davis finished with 13 points and eight rebounds for the U.S. James had 12 points and nine assists.

Kevin Durant scored 11 points and passed Lisa Leslie as the U.S. Olympic career scoring leader, men's or women's. Leslie had 488 points in her four Olympic appearances, all of which ended with gold medals. Durant is trying to go 4 for 4 on the gold front as well; he's two wins away from getting that done. "He's incredible. He was born to play ball and he's simply incredible," James said. "I'm happy for him. Congratulations to him. I'm super proud of him. And he's got more to go."

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

Echikunwoke changes countries and wins a hammer silver for US

AP ■ SAINT-DENIS

This time at the Olympics, hammer thrower Annette Nneka Echikunwoke got to compete. Not only compete, but win a medal - for the United States.

Three years ago, Echikunwoke arrived at the Tokyo Games ready to represent Nigeria, but she wound up needing to leave before even getting to take a throw. Nigeria was among a handful of countries deemed "high risk" by track's anti-doping regulators in the lead-up to those Olympics - forcing its athletes to be subjected to more drug testing.

Echikunwoke was among those from Nigeria who did not meet the requirement and so was not allowed to participate. The 28-year-old was born in Ohio and originally decided to represent Nigeria because that's where her parents are from. But after the issues in 2021, she switched her Olympic country to the U.S., and on Tuesday night became the first American woman to earn Summer Games medal in the hammer, getting a silver.

Echikunwoke was in the early lead before Canada's Camryn Rogers won the gold on her second-to-last throw.

"I think (this medal) could have happened three years ago, but I'm happy it's happening now," Echikunwoke said. "I feel like everything happens for a reason, even if it's bad or good or ugly or whatever the case may be. This is beautiful."

She remembers that time in Tokyo so vividly, such as not being able to walk in the opening ceremony.

"Not the best feeling, as you could imagine," said Echikunwoke, who went to the University of Cincinnati.

Echikunwoke's application to change what country she would compete for finally came through at the last minute before the U.S. Nationals in 2022, and she earned a spot for the world championships that year.

Now, she's an Olympic medalist for the red-white-and-blue.

"It doesn't feel real right now," she said. "I can't really put it into words."

Echikunwoke led after the third round Tuesday with a throw of 75.48 meters (247 feet, 7 inches). Rogers, though, threw the hammer 76.97 (252-6) on her second-to-last attempt to overtake her. Bronze went to Zhao Jie of China.

HISTORY-MAKING BHAKER ARRIVES HOME TO ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star pistol shooter Manu Bhaker landed back in the country on Wednesday after her historic feat of winning two medals in a single edition of the Olympic Games and was welcomed by hundreds of supporters and her family, who braved a steady drizzle to give her a memorable reception here.

The Air India flight (AI 142), which brought Bhaker from Paris to Delhi, landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at around 9:20am, delayed by one hour.

Hundreds of people, who waited at the airport long before her arrival despite the morning drizzle in the city, accorded her — and her coach Jaspal Rana — an enthusiastic reception.

The 22-year-old Bhaker won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event — where she had paired with Sarabjot Singh — to script Olympic history for the country.

Before her, only British-Indian athlete Norman Pritchard had achieved the rare landmark for the country with his two silver medals in 200m sprint and 200m hurdles at the 1900 Olympics but this happened in the pre-Independence era.

Before leaving for India, Bhaker had stated that she was looking forward to a grand welcome and she was not disappointed on Wednesday.

The youngster was greeted with bouquets, garlands, and celebratory dhol after emerging from the airport exit. Flower petals were showered on her and Rana as soon as they came out amid significant police presence to manage the crowd.

Among those present were Bhaker's parents — Ram Kishan and Sumedha — and sports enthusiasts and officials from her home state Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, the state to which Rana belongs. Rana's father was also there at the airport.

"It is a matter of pride for us that a daughter of India is coming back after creating history by winning two medals in an Olympics. It has never happened before. She is only 22 years old," said former Uttarakhand Sports Minister and Rana's father, Narayan Singh Rana.

"She is coming along with her coach Jaspal Rana. He is my son. He brought glory playing for India in shooting. Jaspal Rana and Abhinav Bindra started it all," he added.

People gathered at the airport long before her arrival and they celebrated her feat with song and dance, holding banners with photos of Bhaker and Rana.

Bhaker will be meeting sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya in the afternoon. She will head back to Paris on Saturday to participate in the closing ceremony on Sunday where she will be one of India's flag-bearers.

Top surfers converge in Kovalam for final National Surfing Championship

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The Covelong Classic, the final National Surfing Championship of the year, is set to kick off at Kovalam near here on Thursday, with over 75 surfers from across the country competing for top honours.

The event will happen across four categories — Men's Open, Women's Open, Junior Boys & U-16, and Junior Girls & U-16.

The 2024 season started with the International Surfing Festival Kerala Varkala, followed by the Indian Open of Surfing in Mangalore, and the third stop — Mahabs Point Break Challenge — happening earlier this month in Mahabalipuram.

Covelong Classic will be a three-day surfing carnival organised by the Tamil Nadu Surfing Association under the aegis of the Surfing Federation of India, to be hosted by Surf Turf. The competition has also received significant support from the Tamil Nadu Government and the Ministry of Youth Welfare and Sports Development.

Among the top surfers to participate will be Ajeesh Ali, Srikanth D, Harish M and Ramesh Budihal in the Men's

Open categories.

Recently, Ajeesh, Harish and Srikanth were named in the Indian squad for the Asian Surfing Championship happening next week in Maldives. Additionally, Srikanth D will be looking to defend his title.

In the Women's Open category, Kamali P (ranked first) has already secured the overall championship title, making her performance at the Covelong Classic irrelevant. However, she is anticipated to face stern competition from fellow surfers Sandhya Arun (ranked second), Shrishti Selvam (ranked third), and Sugar Shanti Banarse (ranked fourth).

Kamali and Sugar have also been selected for the Indian squad competing in the Asian Surfing Championship, representing the Women's Open and Junior U-18 categories, respectively.

Local surfers Tayin Arun and Kishore Kumar will grab eyeballs, thanks to their recent performances and national rankings in the Junior Boys & U-16 category.

Additionally, fellow local surfer Harish P, having gained recognition for his impressive surfing skills, will aim to defend his Covelong Classic championship title with determination.

In the Junior Girls & U-16 category, defending champion Kamali P will look to secure a double victory, as she is a strong contender for both the Women's Open and Junior Girls & U-16 titles at the Covelong Classic.

Meanwhile, Dhamayanthi Sriram (ranked second) and Saanvi Hegde (ranked third) will be putting forth their best efforts to claim the title.

Surfing Federation of India's president, Arun Vasu said, "As the surfing calendar culminates with the year's final national championship, the Covelong Classic, the best surfers are set to compete in the Asian Surfing Championship. I would like to extend my best wishes to all the surfers participating in this prestigious national championship."

Refugee athlete's dream of taekwondo medal cut short

AP ■ PARIS

Having overcome so many hurdles, the disappointment was immense for refugee athlete Hadi Tiranvalipour as his dream of winning an Olympic medal was cut short when he lost in a taekwondo qualification bout on Wednesday at the Paris Games.

Tiranvalipour was up against Omar Ismail of Palestine in the men's under 58 kilograms competition and was handed a 2-0 loss in a lopsided match at the lavish Grand Palais venue on the first day of taekwondo events. "I'm not satisfied with my performance, I don't have an answer for this. I wanted a good result, it's not happening," he said.

Before making the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, Tiranvalipour fought for eight years as a member of the Iranian national team, winning the gold medal at the 2015 Asian Junior championship back in 2015.

But Tiranvalipour, who also worked as a TV presenter and studied sports science, was forced to leave his country after speaking out in favour of women's rights, losing his job.

In October 2022, he travelled to Turkey, then to Italy where he lived in a forest for 10 days and then slept three months on a sofa in a shared accommodation that Iranian students had helped him find.

"Our journey is too difficult," he said after his loss to Ismail. "Not for me, for all the refugee athletes. It's too difficult for each of us to be here."

Athletes from the refugee team compete under the same flag and come from different parts of the world. The team was created for the Rio Olympics in 2016 as a symbol of hope and to call attention to the plight of refugees worldwide.

After training alone in a park, Tiranvalipour finally approached the Italian federation, which helped him apply for asylum and settle for good in the country.

In the build-up to the Games, he trained at the Olympic Sports Center in Roma with the likes of Vito Dell'aquila, the defending Olympic champion.

After missing out on Olympic qualification during the European qualifiers in March, he was selected by the refugee Olympic team and had big expectations in Paris.

"I'm not satisfied because I had too much sacrifices about my losing weight process, my training. I'm really sad," he said.

"We passed so many difficult journeys. If you have a target, you have to keep going. Life is like this.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Home Finance

Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059
Branch Office: 1st Floor, Indira Tower, A-26, Zone II, Main Road Vyapar Vihar Bilaspur (C.G.)- 495001

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Umesh Kumar Dewangan (Borrower), Preeti Dewangan (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001328720.	P.H. No. 36 Mauja Juna Bilaspur Ward No.35 Nagorao Shesh Nagar Ward Bilaspur CG Juna Bilaspur P.H. No. 36 Bilaspur- 495001 (Ref. LAN No. LHBSR00001328720). Bounded By- North: H/o Manikpuri, South: Nistari Road, East: Shiv Mandir, West: H/o Manmohan Kaushik./ Date of Possession- 02-Aug-24	15-03-2023 Rs. 17,77,711/-	Bilaspur -B
2.	Ahsan Ali (Borrower), Nazra Begum (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001414220.	Mouja Tarbahar Mouja Junabilapsur PH 36 Khasra 817 Abadi Khasra Ward No. 19 Gandhi Nagar Ward Tarbahar Municipal Corporation Bilaspur RNM Bilaspur Tahsil And Dist Bilaspur CG- 495001 Tarbahar 817 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001 (Ref. LAN No. LHBSR00001414220). Bounded By- North: Boundary of Masjid, South: Road And House of Sulli, East: House of Hussain, West: Open Land of Hssan./ Date of Possession- 02-Aug-24	10-04-2023 Rs. 17,99,863/-	Bilaspur -B
3.	Prem Kant Verma (Borrower), Prashant Kumar Verma (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001514105.	Freehold PH No. 21 KH No. Part of 970/4 27 Kholi Mangla Near Royal Orchid Rnm Bilaspur Block Bilha Dist Bilaspur CG Bilaspur 970/4 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh 495001 (Ref. LAN NO. LHBSR00001514105). Bounded By- North: House of Arun Verma, South: Snehakant Verma, East: House of C P Mishra, West: House Of Arun Verma./ Date of Possession- 02-Aug-24	19-04-2024 Rs. 5,14,184/-	Bilaspur -B

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : August 08, 2024, Place: Bilaspur **Authorized Officer, ICICI Home Finance Company Limited**

ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL

PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING
Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited

Registered Office: Indian Rayon Compound, Veraval, Gujarat 362266
Branch Office: Aditya Birla Housing Finance,Sky Park, Unit Nos. 402 & 403, 4th Floor, Adjacent G E Road, Ravi Nagar ,Opp. Rani Sati Mandir, Raipur, Chattisgarh-492001
Contact No: 1. ABHFL: Authorized Officer Dineshwar Nishad (9303990002) / Mahendra Jaiswal (9981126600) / Girijesh Maurya (9811892607), **2. Auction Service Provider (ASP):-** M/s. Globe Tech Infosystems Private Limited - Mr. Samir Chakravorty

CORRIGENDUM

A Sale Notice under Rule 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 was Published by Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited in relation to the sale of properties belonging to Ayyub Raza Mohd. and Nasreen Bano (hereinafter referred to as "The borrowers") in the News Paper Pioneer & Samvet Sikhar in Raipur Edition on 07-08-2024, wherein the reserve prices of the properties were not mentioned separately.

The corrected details are as below:

A. For Property 1, being

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF 1 KITA LAND BEARING HOUSE NO. OLD 3/774(PART), NEW 19/774(PART), AREA 3650 SQ. FT., SHANKAR NAGAR, WARD NO. 31, P.C. NO. 109, SITUATED AT MOHALLA NEW SHANTI NAGAR, MOUZA RAJA TALAB, R.I.C. RAIPUR, TAH. & DIST. RAIPUR, CHHATTISGARH – 492001

The Reserve Price for aforesaid property will be **INR 3,08,12,500/- (Rupees Three Crore Eight Lacs Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Only)** and EMD will be **INR 30,81,250/- (Rupees Thirty Lacs Eighty-One Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Only**

AND

B. For Property 2, being

ITEM - 1

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PART OF KHASRA NO. 68/1, PLOT NO. 146, MUNICIPAL HOUSE NO. 32/146, P. H. NO. 113, ADMEASURING 1500 SQ. FT., GROUND FLOOR MEASURING 750 SQ. FT., FIRST FLOOR MEASURING 750 SQ. FT., PART OF 2ND FLOOR MEASURING 300 SQ. FT. AND REMAINING PART IS OPEN GROUND, SHAHID VEERNARAYAN SINGH WARD NO. 32, BHAGAT SINGH CHOWK, DHAMTARI RAILWAY CROSSING, G.E. ROAD, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE BUILDING SOCIETY LIMITED, REGISTRATION NO. D.R. (P)/ .-11 OF 61-62, GRAM TELIBANDHA, RNM RAIPUR-2, TEHSIL & DISTRICT RAIPUR, CHHATTISGARH - 492001, AND, BOUNDED AS:

EAST: PROPERTY BEING PURCHASED BY THE BUYER, WEST: HOUSE OF SMT. SAVITA SINGH, NORTH: RASTA, SOUTH: MAIN ROAD (G.E. ROAD)

ITEM - 2 : ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PART OF KHASRA NO. 68/14, CONVERTED LAND KHATA NO. 718, PLOT NO. 146, MUNICIPAL HOUSE NO. 32/146, P. H. NO. 113, ADMEASURING 1200 SQ. FT., GROUND FLOOR MEASURING 650 SQ. FT., FIRST FLOOR MEASURING 650 SQ. FT., PART OF 2ND FLOOR MEASURING 300 SQ. FT. AND REMAINING PART IS OPEN GROUND, SHAHID VEERNARAYAN SINGH WARD NO. 32, BHAGAT SINGH CHOWK, DHAMTARI RAILWAY CROSSING, G.E. ROAD, GRAM TELIBANDHA, RNM RAIPUR-2, TEHSIL & DISTRICT RAIPUR, CHHATTISGARH - 492001, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: HOUSE OF MR. ASHOK GURNANI, WEST: PROPERTY BEING PURCHASED BY THE BUYER, NORTH: RASTA, SOUTH: MAIN ROAD (G.E. ROAD)

The reserve price of the aforesaid Property - 2 (**ITEM – 1** and **ITEM – 2**) will be **INR 6,21,00,000/- (Rupees Six Crore Twenty-One Lacs only)** and EMD will be **INR 62,10,000/- (Rupees Sixty-Two lacs Ten Thousand only)**

The rest of the contents of the Auction Sale Notice dated 07.08.2024 published shall remain unchanged.

Date: 08.08.2024 **Authorised Officer**
Place:- Raipur **Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited**

ESAF
ESAF SMALL FINANCE BANK

REGD. OFFICE: ESAF Bhavan, Mannuthy, Thrissur- 680 651, Kerala.

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with ESAF Small Finance Bank and not redeemed by borrowers, despite repeated reminders and notices, of our branches, are listed below. This will be auctioned as per the details given below:

DATE OF AUCTION : **13-08-2024** TIME : **2 PM TO 5 PM**
AUCTION VENUE : **THROUGH E-AUCTION**
AUCTION ADDRESS : **https://egold.auctiontiger.net**
Contact No. **6351896640**

To register as bidder for the e-Auction with terms and conditions, and full details of e-Auction please visit the above site

BRANCHES & LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Akaltara: 75230001386444, 75240000033548 **Bagbahara:** 63230000284331, 296668, 75230001455345, 1510033, 1612891, 1635877 **Balod:** 75230001487624, 1535675, 1554259, 75240000017179 **Bhatapara:** 63230000271125, 287995 **Bhilai:** 63230000269140, 317041, 321423, 336144, 337673, 75230001398532, 1515453, 1651676, 75240000004414, 6670, 6690, 56744, 59559, 61564, 61654, 61764 **Bilaspur:** 63230000606827, 75230001395487, 1413085, 1499382, 1592246, 1600983, 1662585 **Champa:** 75230000258543, 1374227, 1535615, 1548851, 1555337, 1557263, 1560097, 1652764 **Chandigarh:** 63230000335656, 587191, 75230001633221 **Dhamdha:** 75230001630446 **Dhamtari:** 75240000007038, **Donagargarh:** 63230000580463, 63240000008104, 8484, 9512, 9662, 75230001370834, 1433257 **Durg:** 63230000268292, 270887, 288773, 301161, 313238, 328540, 1357720 **Katghora:** 63230000575323 **Kawardha:** 75230001608959, **Kharsia:** 75230001564410, 1599703 **Korba:** 63230000304435, 75230001571486, 1578843 **Mahasamund:** 63230000307850, 343021, 478466, 479274, 512653, 518053, 519421, 579876, 580013, 600748, 612095, 75230000714636, 714686, 1227435, 1227575, 1227675, 1227945, 1275273, 1306867, 1397393, 1551334, 1581517, 1598225, 1598295, 1660449, 1674163 **Mungeli:** 75230001438938, 1651006 **Pakhanjore:** 63230000280028, 302799, 326513, 335046, 336154, 75230001485148, 1514545, 75240000008156 **Pithora:** 63230000267603, 282894, 75230001446383, 1487474, 1554279, 1635177 **Raigarh:** 63230000581422, 595135, 75230001482713, 1498183, 1539168, 1551814, 1672526, 1673254, 1675791 **Raipur:** 75230000944483, 1529117 **Rajnandgaon:** 63230000281386, 518393, 573477, 573657, 581742, 607415, 608923, 63240000004841, 75230000109515, 1209030, 1221946, 1493223, 1573023 **Sarangarh:** 63230000312080, 322871, 324497, 333310, 576622, 587421, 63240000003543, 75230001444766, 1576637, 1632473, 1632963 **Shivrinarayan:** 63230000315924, 75230001665810, 75240000043309.

Customers who are interested to release the ornaments by paying the total due amount may do so, at the respective branches, on or two days before the date of the auction.

Bidders who wish to participate in the auction shall produce their KYC documents. GST No. is mandatory for registered firms/companies. Bidders shall deposit a sum of Rs.50,000 as EMD before participating in the auction.

Thrissur **Sd/-**
Date: **08-08-2024** **Authorized Signatory**

AUTHUM **AUTHUM INVESTMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED**

Registered Office: 707, Raheja Centre, Free Press Journal Road, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400 021. Ph.: (022) 6747 2117 Fax: (022) 6747 2118 E-mail: info@authum.com

APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6)] | Public Notice For E-Auction Cum Sale (Appendix -IV A) (Rule 8(6))

That pursuant to the approved resolution plan of the Reliance Home Finance Limited. (RHFL) by its Lenders in terms of RBI Circular dated June 7, 2019 on Prudential Framework for Resolution of Stressed Assets, the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated March 3, 2023 and the Special Resolution passed by the Shareholders on March 25, 2023, RHFL has entered into the agreement to transfer its Business by way of a slump sale on a going concern basis, to Reliance Commercial Finance Limited ("RCFL")and whereas all the rights and liabilities pertaining to the loan account (s) of the Borrower has/have also been transferred to RCFL.

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited ("AIIL") (Resulting Company pursuant the demerger of lending business from Reliance Commercial Finance Limited ("RCFL") to AIIL vide NCLT order dated 10.05.2024) having Corporate Office at The Ruby 11th Floor, North-West wing, Plot No.29, Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar(west), Mumbai- 400028 .(Maharashtra) and Branch Office at:- :- **C 246/6 VALLABH NAGAR, NEAR SANT GYANESWAR SCHOOL, RAIPUR, CHHATTISGARH-492001** under the **Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002(hereinafter "Act").**

Whereas the Authorized Officer ("AO") of Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited had taken the possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS & AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** for realization of Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited dues, The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.bankeauctions.com.

Borrower(s) / Co-orrower(s) /Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Date of Physical Possession / Total Outstanding	Reserve Price, Earnest Money Deposit / Bid Increment Amount
LOAN ACCOUNT NO: RHAHBHI000069073 Branch: Kolkata 1) Chandresh Kumar Patel, 2) Shefali Patel R/O House No 21 Ward No 29 Kailash Ward Near Raipur Naka Shivnath Colony Rajnandgaon - 491441 Also At Flat No T-2/201 2nd Floor Building No 02 Tulsi Tower Khno72/2 Phno34 Raipur Naka Ward No 12 Mouja Lakholi Ramadhin Marg Rnm Rajnandgaon - 491441	**29th May 2019 & Rs. 2341059/-** (Rupees Twenty-Three Lakhs Forty-One Thousand & Fifty-Nine Only)	**14-09-2019. Total Outstanding Rs.41,86,553/-** (Rupees Forty-One Lakhs Eighty Six Thousand Five Hundred & Fifty Three Only) As On 04-07-2023 Plus Interest And Costs Etc. Of Rcfl Per Annum From 05.07.2023, Along With All Cost, Charges & Expenses Until Payment In Full.	**Rs. 16,20,000/-** (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Twenty Thousand Only) **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 1,62,000/-** (Rupees One Lakh Sixty-Two Thousand Only) **Bid Increment Amount : Rs. 30,000/-** (Rupees Thirty Thousand only)

Description Of The Immovable Property/ Secured Asset : Schedule of Property : Flat no T-2/201 Multi storied Residential building no. 02 Tulsi tower sheet no -2 plot no /KH no. 72/2 Ph no. 50 Balram das ward no. 15 Raipur Naka FCI Road Rajnandgoan being bounded and butted as under: - On the East : Lift Area, On The West : Flat No 202, On The North : Open Passage, On The South : Open Land.

Date of Inspection of property: 19th August 2024	EMD Last Date 23rd August 2024 till 05:00 PM	Date/Time of E-Auction:- 26th August 2024 11:00 -13:00

Mode Of Payment: - All payment shall be made by demand draft in favour of **"Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited" payable at Raipur or through RTGS/NEFT** The accounts details are as follows: a) Name of the account: **Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited CHD A/C b) Name of the Bank: HDFC Bank Ltd, c) Account No: - 99999917071983, d) IFSC Code: HDFC0001119.**

PLEASE REFER THE WEBSITE FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Use Code: 174086 and see the NIT Document) (https://www.bankeauctions.com)

LOAN ACCOUNT NO : RHLPBHI000025322 & RHLPBHI000025324 Branch: KOLKATA 1) RAJESH KUMAR SONI, 2) SEEMA SONI, 3) VINOD KUMAR SONI, 4) SWAPNIL SONI, All R/O C/O Uphar Jewellers Manav Mandir Chowk Rajnandgaon Rajnandgaon – 491441 And Also At Plot No.81/1,81/5,81/6 Nazul Sheet No. 48a Deewan Para Ward No.22 Rajnandgaon – 491441	**11th July 2017 & Rs. 1,42,07,205/-** (Rupees One Crore Forty-Two Lakh Seven Thousand Two Hundreds Five Only)	**03-10-2019 TOTAL OUTSTANDING Rs. 9,83,24,394/-** (Rupees Nine Crore Eighty-Three Lakh Twenty-Four Thousand Three Hundreds Ninety-Four Only) As On 10-07-2023 Plus Interest And Costs Etc. Of Rcfl Per Annum From 11.07.2023, Along With All Cost, Charges & Expenses Until Payment In Full.	**Rs. 2,06,10,000/-** (Rupees Two Crore Six Lakh Ten Thousand Only) **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 20,61,000/-** (Rupees Twenty Lakh Sixty-One Thousand Only) **Bid Increment Amount: Rs. 100000** (Rupees One Lakh only)

Description Of The Immovable Property/ Secured Asset : The Said Property Is Bounded As Follows: - All That Part And Parcel Of Property Bearing Plot No. 81/1,81/5,81/6 Nazul Sheet No. 48a Deewan Para Ward No.22 Rajnandgaon–491441, Chhattisgarh

Date of Inspection of property: 19th August 2024	EMD Last Date 23rd August 2024 till 05:00 PM	Date/Time of E-Auction:- 26th August 2024 11:00 -13:00

Mode Of Payment: - All payment shall be made by demand draft in favour of **"Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited" payable at Raipur or through RTGS/NEFT** The accounts details are as follows: a) Name of the account: **Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited CHD A/C b) Name of the Bank: HDFC Bank Ltd, c) Account No: - 99999917071983, d) IFSC Code: HDFC0001119.**

PLEASE REFER THE WEBSITE FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Use Code: 174088 and see the NIT Document) (https://www.bankeauctions.com)

Loan Account Number: RHAHBIL000032068 Branch: KOLKATA 1)RAMESHWAR PRASAD UPADHYAY 2) RAJANI UPADHYAY Address – S/O Jagdish Prasad Upadhyay Housing Board Khamtari Vill Mig 1/4 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh-495001 Also At, C G Housing Board Em Zone-06 Ews Flat No 262 Chilhati Bilaspur Nder Atal Vihar Yojana Bilaspur Chhattisgarh-495001.	**31st May 2021 & Rs.4,32,001/-** (Rupees Four Lakhs Thirty-Two Thousand & One only)	**15-05-2023 TOTAL OUTSTANDING Rs.6,60,477/-** (Rupees Six Lakhs Sixty Thousand Four Hundred & Seventy-Seven Only) As On 25-07-2023 Plus Interest And Costs Etc. Of Rcfl Per Annum From 26-07-2023, Along With All Cost, Charges & Expenses Until Payment In Full.	**Rs. 3,20,000/-** (Rupees Three Lakhs Twenty Thousand only) **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 32,000.00/-** (Rupees Thirty-Two Thousand Only) **Bid Increment Amount: 10,000** (Rupees Ten Thousand only)

Description Of The Immovable Property/ Secured Asset : Schedule of the Property : Residential plot measuring 312.04 sq. ft. built on land measuring 435.78 sq. ft., Flat no.- EWS-262, EM Zone-06, Atal Vihar Yojana, Chhattisgarh Housing Board, P.H no-19, Khatian no- 267/1, 317/3 & 318, Mouza- Chilhati, Tehsil & District- Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh- 495001. The property is butted and bounded by - On North- Road, On South- EWS- 275, On East- EWS-261, On West- EWS-263

Date of Inspection of property: 19th August 2024	EMD Last Date 23rd August 2024 till 05:00 PM	Date/Time of E-Auction:- 26th August 2024 11:00 -13:00

Mode Of Payment: - All payment shall be made by demand draft in favour of **"Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited" payable at Raipur or through RTGS/NEFT** The accounts details are as follows: a) Name of the account: - **Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited CHD A/c b) Name of the Bank: - HDFC Bank Ltd, c) Account No: - 99999917071983, d) IFSC Code: - HDFC0001119.**

PLEASE REFER THE WEBSITE FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Use Code: 174089 and see the NIT Document) (https://www.bankeauctions.com)

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER: RHLPBHI000066655 & RHLPBHI000066665 Branch: KOLKATA 1) SUNNY JAIN, 2) SURBHI JAIN, 3) REKHA JAIN, 4)SUNNY BORWELLS R/O H No Ward No 38 Near Shiv Mandir, Hiramoti Line Rajnandgaon Rajnandgaon – 491441 Also At, Part Of Plot No 151/1& 151/3 Nazul Sheet No 49b Durga Devi Ward No.37 Mohalla Hiramoti Line Basaipara Rajnandgaon Bhilai-490020	**30th July 2019 & Rs.1,31,42,164/-** (Rupees One Crore Thirty-One Lakh Forty-Two Thousand One Hundred & Sixty-Four Only)	**13-02-2023 TOTAL OUTSTANDING Rs.2,83,82,563/-** (Rupees Two Crores Eighty-Three Lakhs Eighty-Two Thousand Five Hundred & Sixty-Three Only) As On 30-10-2023 Plus Interest And Costs Etc. Of Rcfl Per Annum From 31-10-2023, Along With All Cost, Charges & Expenses Until Payment In Full.	**Rs 72,25,000/-** (Rupees Seventy-Two Lakh Twenty-Five Thousand Only) **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 7,22,500/-** (Rupees Seven Lakh Twenty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Only) **Bid Increment Amount: Rs.2,00,000/-** (Rupees Two Lakh only)

Description Of The Immovable Property/ Secured Asset : The said property is bounded as follows: All That Piece And Parcel Of Part Of Plot Measuring About 1136.34 Sqft Bearing No. 151 (Part Of Plot No 151/3) Nazul Sheet, No 49b Durga Devi Ward No 37 Mohalla Hiramoti Line Baspaipara Rajnandgaon Being Bounded And Butted As Under: North: Behind of Shiv temple Baspaipara Road to Hiramoti Line, South: Land of Ramratan and Kotadiya, East: Part of seller land, West: Land of Bhaghirathi And
All That Piece and Parcel of Part of Plot measuring ABOUT 262.50 SQFT BEARING NO. 151 (PART OF PLOT NO 151/3) NAZUL SHEET, NO 49B DURGA DEVI WARD NO 37 MOHALLA HIRAMOTI LINE BASPAIPARA RAJNANDGAON being bounded and butted as under : North: Behind of Shiv temple Baspaipara Road to road of Choukhadiyapara, South: Land of Bhagirathi, East: Part of seller land, West: Land of Kejar and Sevak

Date of Inspection of property: 19th August 2024	EMD Last Date 23rd August 2024 till 05:00 PM	Date/Time of E-Auction:- 26th August 2024 11:00 -13:00

Mode Of Payment: - All payment shall be made by demand draft in favour of **"Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited" payable at Raipur or through RTGS/NEFT** The accounts details are as follows: a) Name of the account: **Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited CHD A/C b) Name of the Bank: HDFC Bank Ltd, c) Account No: - 99999917071983, d) IFSC Code: HDFC0001119.**

PLEASE REFER THE WEBSITE FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Use Code: 174091 and see the NIT Document) (https://www.bankeauctions.com)

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF ONLINE E- AUCTION SALE:-

1. The Property is being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS, WHATEVER THERE & WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS". As such sale is without any kind of warranties & indemnities.
2. For details, help, procedure and online bidding on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the Service Provider **M/S C1 India Pvt Ltd ,Plot No- 68, 3rd floor Sector 44 Gurgaon Haryana -122003 (Contact no. 7291981124,25,26)Support Email – Support@bankeauctions.com , Mr. Bhavik Pandya Mob. 8866682937. Email: Gujarat@c1india.com**
3. **For further details and queries, contact Authorised Officer: Mr. Rajdip Mukherjee - Mobile No. 9123073556**
4. **This publication is also 15 (Fifteen) days notice to the Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantors of the above said loan account pursuant to rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, about holding of auction sale on the above-mentioned date / place.**

Place : Raipur **Sd/-**
Date : 08.08.2024 **Authorised Officer**