**OPINION 6** 

J&K GEARS UP FOR

HISTORIC ELECTIONS

WORLD 8

MICHELLE OBAMA ATTACKS

TRUMP ON 'BLACK JOBS'

MONEY 10

**MARKETS** 

**EXTEND GAINS** 

Late City Vol.13 Issue 229



# Modi to discuss with Zelenskyy ways to end war

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said he was looking forward to sharing perspectives with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine

Prime Minister's comments came on Wednesday shortly before he embarked on a two-nation trip to Poland and Ukraine. Modi on Wednesday said his

maiden visit to Poland will add momentum to the bilateral friendship and benefit the people of the two countries as he arrived here on the first leg of his twonation visit during which he will also travel to the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

Modi, who will meet Poland's President Andrzej Sebastian Duda and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, said he was looking forward to the various programmes in the Polish capital here.

Landed in Poland. Looking forward to the various programmes here. This visit will add momentum to the India-Poland friendship and benefit the people of our nations," Modi said in a post on X soon after his arrival at the Warsaw military airport

On the first leg of the visit, Modi is visiting Polish capital



Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives his autograph on a portrait presented to him by the Indian community members upon his arrival at a hotel, in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday

Modi will be in Kyiv for around seven hours on August 23 in the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991. In a departure statement, Modi, referring to the Ukraine conflict, said as a "friend and partner", India hopes for an early return of peace and stability in the

'From Poland, I will be visiting Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. This is

Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine," he said.

"I look forward to the opportunity to build upon earlier conversations with President Zelenskyy on strengthening bilateral cooperation and share perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing Ukraine conflict," he said. "As a friend and partner, we hope for an early return of peace and stability in the

region," he added. Modi said he was confident that his visit to Warsaw and Kyiv "will serve as a natural city of Warsaw on August 21 the first-ever visit by an continuation of extensive

contacts with the two countries and help create the foundation for stronger and more vibrant relations in the years ahead".

The Prime Minister will travel to Kyiv from Poland in a 'Rail Force One' train that will take around 10 hours. The return trip will also be of the same duration.

A number of world leaders including US President Joe French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited Kyiv by train after the Russian invasion of Modi's visit to Kyiv comes nearly six weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow which drew criticism from the US and some of its Western allies. India has been calling for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

In his summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow last month, Modi said "a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs and bullets." Ministry of External Affairs

(MEA) on Monday said Modi's visit to Ukraine would be a "landmark and historic"

"Lasting peace can only be achieved through options that are acceptable to both parties. And it can only be a negotiated settlement," said Tanmaya Lal, Secretary (West) in the MEA. "On our part, India continues

to engage with all stakeholders," he said. "My visit to Poland comes as

we mark 70 years of our diplomatic relations. Poland is a key economic partner in Central Europe," he said. Our mutual commitment to

democracy and pluralism further reinforces our relationship. I look forward to meeting my friend Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Andrzej Duda to advance partnership," he said.



# NDA's push for majority mark in Rajya Sabha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n **NEW DELHI** 

BIP leader Choudhary, former Union Minister Upendra Kushwaha, Supreme Court lawyer Manan Kumar Mishra, renowned Kudumi community leader Mamata Mohanta, Union Minister George Kurian, nominees of BJP and NCP, Dhairyasheel Patil and Nitin Patil, Mission Ranjan Das and Rameshwar Teli and Union Minister of State Ravneet Singh Bittu were among those who filed their nomination papers for election to the 12 vacant seats in the Upper House on Wednesday. For the BJP, the by-poll is

crucial for pushing the NDA's Rajya Sabha tally past the majority mark, a key factor in passing of Bills.

The current effective strength of Rajya Sabha is 229. Of this, the BJP has 87 MPs, with the NDA allies taking the number to 105. support of six nominated MPs takes the NDA's strength further up to she resigned from the

The Opposition has 84

members — Congress 26 and allies 58. Several of the 12 seats fell vacant as the sitting members, including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Sarbananda Sonowal and Jyotiraditya Scindia, were elected to the Lok Sabha. From Haryana, BJP leader Kiran Choudhry filed her

nomination for the Rajya Sabha by-poll on Wednesday, with some JJP rebel MLAs also extending support to her candidature. Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, State BJP President Mohan Lal Badoli, several party MLAs, the party's coin-charge for the State Biplab Kumar Deb and some JJP rebels were among those present when Choudhry submitted her nomination

Wednesday was the last day for filing of nominations for the Rajya Sabha by-poll. The BJP named Choudhry as its nominee shortly after

111, four short of half-way Assembly on Tuesday, nearly two months after she left Congress. She represented the Tosham seat in the Haryana Assembly.

The by-poll for the lone Rajya Sabha seat in Haryana was necessitated after Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda was elected to the Lok Sabha from Rohtak. His Rajya Sabha term was to end in April 2026.

In Jaipur, Union Minister Ravneet Singh Bittu filed his nomination as a BJP candidate for the Rajya Sabha by-poll from Rajasthan.

He was accompanied by Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, Deputy Chief Ministers Premchand Bairwa and Diya Kumari, and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel. Before submitting his nomination paper, Bittu, during a meeting of the BJP Legislature Party, expressed gratitude for his selection as the Rajya Sabha candidate from Rajasthan. Rajasthan has a total of 10 Rajya seats,

one of which is vacant. **Continued on Page 2** 



Firefighters douse a fire which broke out following an explosion in a reactor pharma unit of pharmaceutical company Escientia, in Anakapalle, Andhra Pradesh, on

# **13 killed in Andhra** pharma unit fire

PTI n ATCHUTAPURAM (ANDHRA PRADESH)

The death toll in the fire accident at a pharmaceutical unit here on Wednesday rose to 13, officials said. Anakapalli District Collector Vijaya Krishnan said the fire broke out at 2:15 pm at Escientia Advanced Sciences Pvt Ltd at Atchutapuram in Anakapalli

"The factory operates with 381 employees in two shifts. The blast occurred during lunch time. Therefore, staff presence was less, Krishnan told PTI, adding that the explosion is suspected to be electricityrelated. As many as 33 injured people were shifted to different hospitals in Anakapalli and Atchutapuram while the Fire Department is engaged in rescue operations, deploying six fire tenders. Further, the collector said 13 people trapped in the unit were rescued. Meanwhile, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed grief over the loss of lives. The CM assured that the Government will stand by the families of the workers who died, said an official press release.

# WB icons join march for justice in Kolkata horror case

SAUGAR SENGUPTA n KOLKATA

rolkata continued to remain Kloyal to its age old insignia — Michhil Nagari or City of Processions — with players and engineers, IT personnel on Wednesday joining the doctors in their ongoing protest movement against the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case. from myriad fields like football swimming, athletics etc joined the march for "Justice" for the 31-year-old lady doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered in the wee hours

Chess Grand Master Dibyendu Barua, swimmer Bula Chowdhury, sprinter Jyotirmoyee Sikdar and national soccer player Gautam Sarkar.

"We have joined not to get justice for the young lady doctor but also for the whole society... enough is enough we cannot breathe anymore in this vitiated system where everything is rotting... tomorrow it can be my family members or anyone else's... you need a foolproof system in place," said Chowdhury.

Sarkar too lent his voice saying, "It is not the culprits that have to



which they flourish that has to go to the gallows... this rule of the corrupt, by the corrupt and for the corrupt must end because in the mire of this corruption these devils are born... who else than the State can do it... we demand justice for the State... if a doctor is not safe inside her own hospital ... if a journalist is not safe inside omice... policewoman is not safe inside

the police station... if a player is not safe inside the camp... or for that matter if a politician is not who is safe in which place."

"It is the voice that has risen from within the society and that has to be addressed or else it will turn into a volcano... society is scared... I am a father of a girl who too is in a profession that I won't name and I want her safe... "I can just imagine what the old

parents of the ill-fated doctor who was killed so brutally must be going gradually this fire will subside but the pain of losing an 'aulad' (offspring) that is burning the old parents by the hour will never subside... so it is the duty of safe inside the legislature then the society to see the end of it." **Continued on Page 2** 



PTI n NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday decided to resume its hearing on the legal question of whether a person holding a driving licence for a light motor vehicle is also entitled to drive a transport vehicle with an unladen weight not exceeding

7,500 kg. A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud took the decision after Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, said though the consultations to amend the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act 1988 were "almost complete", but the proposed amendments are yet to be

tabled before Parliament. The top most law officer said

# Google, Meta in trouble over ads linked to fake lotteries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala police have issued a notice to Google to remove apps from its Play Store that are selling fake lotteries online in the name of the lottery run by the state. A similar notice was issued to

remove advertisements of such fake lotteries from social media platforms Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram managed by it, the State Police Media Centre (SPMC) said in a release on Wednesday. Police took the action after cyber patrolling revealed that 60 fake Îottery apps, 25 fake Facebook profiles and 20 websites are connected to the scam, the



SPMC release said. It said that stringent legal action will be taken against those who are behind the fraud.

Giving details of the scam, the said that fake advertisements in the name of 'Kerala Megamillion Lottery' and 'Kerala Summer Season Dhamaka' have circulating on social media

Telegram and Instagram for some time stating that lotteries run by the state government can be bought online. People also get messages on

their phones stating that the Kerala government has started an online lottery, and on spending `40 rupees there is a chance to win up to `12 crore, it said. When a person sends 40 on the number mentioned in the message, they get a fake lottery ticket image on WhatsApp. Later, when the draw time is over, the fraudsters send artificially fabricated results that show that the ticket held has won a prize of `5 lakh, the release

Continued on Page 2

#### Bharat Bandh against SC's quota ruling evokes mixed response eyeballs after a policeman accidentally

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n NEW DELHI

Amid protest against the Supreme Court's decision to permit the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), a daylong nationwide strike called by Dalits and Adivasi communities led to partial disruption in rail and road services in the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Rajasthan on Wednesday, evoked a mixed reaction. The response was tepid in other parts of the country.

The bandh was by and large peaceful with some sporadic incidents of violence. Several videos of cops lathicharging protesters were doing the rounds on the Internet. One such video from Bihar's Patna has grabbed

hit a Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) with a baton while managing law and order in Patna. The bizarre incident occurred at the

busy Dak Bangla square in Bihar's capital city. Having broken barricades at the JP Golambar intersection, the protesters reached Dak Bangla, where, to control the situation, security forces resorted to a lathi-charge. In a viral video, the policeman is seen hitting Khandekar, who was in civil dress, with a stick. While the SDM is taken aback, the erring policeman is taken away by his colleagues, who tell him about the mistake. The SDM identified as Shrikant Kundlik

Continued on Page 2

#### the amended Bill can be presented before Parliament in the Winter session and suggested the bench either defer the hearing till it is cleared by the House or proceed with the matters. Continued on Page 2 Greed for big catch poses risk to fish eaters

### Dosa, butter chicken, Indian street food popular in Poland PTI n WARSAW

Dosa, butter chicken and mango lassi, an unlikely combo for some perhaps but topping the list of favourites for Polish diners who say the dishes remind them of their travels to the country. More than 45

restaurants are offering a variety of traditional Indian food across Poland, with the capital Warsaw City having at least a dozen of them, as per the listing of the Embassy of India in Poland here. And not just dining out, Indian food is popular as a

takeaway option too across



Warsaw is excited to receive

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, who will arrive here

for his two-day visit on

This will be the first official visit of an Indian Prime Minister to this country in 45 Ín Warsaw, Chetan Nandani,

a Gujarati businessman, recently opened a restaurant called 'Chaiwala', possibly alluding to the moniker that has stuck with Modi since

Nandani, who already ran a restaurant called 'Curry House, opened the 'Chaiwala' owing to the popular demand for Indian food. He claimed to have introduced Indian street food Continued on Page 2

Several fishermen are illegally using commonly fishermen are pesticides,

ARCHANA JYOTI n NEW DELHI

particularly synthetic pyrethroids to harvest highvalue crustaceans or prawns in the lower stretches of the River Ganga in West Bengal. The practice may cause significant harm to the river's ecosystem in the long run, scientists from ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI) have sounded alarms. 'Research has shown that

pesticide residues are present in fish tissues from the River Ganga, although concentrations are currently below levels deemed hazardous to human health.

"However, long-term exposure to these chemicals can impact reproductive health in fish and pose risks to wildlife and human populations dependent on the river for drinking water and livelihood," the researchers warned, calling for urgent stringent regulatory actions and community awareness. The illegal fishing practice is particularly prevalent in areas extending from Nabadwip to Balagarh in the State, said the Also, as per the representation of the local

communities in the studied area, the scientists found that illegal intruders appear from neighbouring specifically the adjacent to the river.



(Macrobrachium spp.), which commands high prices in the market. Apart from this, a "They target the lucrative variety of Small Indigenous Salmostoma," said Ajoy Saha,

Fish species are caught

rampantly as the bye catch, including Puntius spp., Gudusia chapra, from ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), Barrackpore, and Vikas Kumar from ICAR-CIFRI, Prayagraj. Presently, majority of the fish are harvested using gill nets,

Mondal, Basanta Kumar Das

Archisman Ray,

cast nets, passive fish traps, or occasionally plant-based fish poisons, pesticides rampantly used despite being "Indiscriminate synthetic pyrethroids, such as

cypermethrin deltamethrin, aquatic ecosystems by causing imbalances populations and damaging aquatic flora.

Continued on Page 2

# Ram Madhav appointed BJP poll in-charge in J&K

Ending the four-year-long the from active politics, Ram Madhav, a senior RSS functionary and former BJP General Secretary is all set to play an active role in bringing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) closer to the corridors of power in Jammu Kashmir.

Late Tuesday evening, Party President JP Nadda sprung a surprise when he appointed Ram Madhav in charge of the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir along with Union Minister G Kishan Reddy.

Expressing his gratitude Ram Madhav posted on the microblogging site X, "I am extremely grateful to the Prime Minister for the assignment given to me as the BJP's Election Incharge for I&K. From conversations, I realized that PM's singular and statesmanly mission is to continue to provide good governance to the people of J&K after the historic abrogation of Art 370 by fulfilling his commitment of handing over reins of power to them through free and fair elections, just like the ones he conducted for the parliament a few months ago'

Madhav also thanked Home Minister Amit Shah, party President JK Nadda, and his



parent organization RSS for extending their support in the new assignment.

According to insiders in the party, Ram Madhav was brought back to the party fold at the behest of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to iron out differences within the Jammu Kashmir party unit and explore the possibilities of stable government formation after the culmination of the poll

His entry into the political landscape of Jammu Kashmir at this juncture is set to change the poll matrix after the culmination of the poll process. His contacts in the regional parties may come in handy during the government formation.

Ram Madhav was earlier removed as general secretary in September 2020. After the vot-

Walkathon towards marine plas-

tic pollution in collaboration

with local youth organisations,

initiative "Puneet Sagar Abhiyan'

and enhancing international

outreach. In a maiden initiative,

two women ICG officers

embarked onboard for the

Overseas Deployment will also

be representing "Women in

Maritime Security and Safety'

while interacting and partici-

pating in bilateral cooperative

engagements.ICG signed a

Cabinet Committee on Security

(CCS) approved Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) with BAKAMLA on 06 Jul 2020

towards enhanced maritime

cooperation and institution-

alised its cooperative engage-

The overseas deployment is in line with the Indian Coast

Guard's commitment to foster-

ing bilateral relationships under

the ambit of MoU and holds sig-

nificance in reinforcing bilater

al relationships with key mar-

itime agencies, crucial for ensur-

ing safety, security, and envi-

ronmental sustainability of the

seas in the region, while address-

ing contemporary maritime

contributing to the GoI

mandate during the 2014 Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir, Ram Madhav along with Haseeb Drabu of the Peoples Democratic Party came together to stitch an alliance after which Mufti Mohd Sayeed took the oath of office as Chief Minister. After Mufti's demise

Mehbooba Mufti. Meanwhile, Leader of the opposition Rahul Gandhi also arrived in Srinagar late Wednesday evening ahead of finalising a pre-poll alliance with the top brass of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. He is accompanied by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal, and others. Rahul is scheduled to address party workers and senior leaders on Thursday at a private hotel while the party leaders may take time off to formalize the con-tours of the pre-poll alliance on the sidelines of the day-long meeting. Rahul Gandhi is also scheduled to visit Jammu later in the day to address a workers convention before heading back

on January 7, 2016, Ram

Madhav again negotiated on

behalf of the party with the PDP

leadership to form the govern-ment headed by PDP Chief

# Petition filed in HC for ED probe into irregularities in Kolkata RGK Hospital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

Even as the Central Bureau Fof Investigation (CBI) subjected former principal of the RG Kar Medical College Sandip Ghosh to marathon grilling for sixth consecutive day on Wednesday trouble continued to pile up for him with a former Superintendent of the Hospital moving the Calcutta High Court seeking and order for the Enforcement Department to investigate the financial irregularities that had been taking place in the medical college for the past several years.

The petition was filed by Dr Akhtar Ali a former superintendant of the hospital who has claimed that he had brought the alleged financial issues before the vigilance commission and the State Health Department but nothing happened.

'Sandip Ghosh has so much of clout that he was transferred twice and was reinstated in his post within a matter of days" adding "as I raised my voice I was transferred out of the college and at present I fear for my life after moving the High Court as I am receiving threats."

Incidentally after about an year of such issues being raised the State Government formed a Special Investigation Team comprising several senior IPS officers on Monday to look into the alleged complaints of financial irregularities. The SIT has issued summons to Sandip Ghosh to appear before

"This is a ploy to take him into custody and destroy evidence before CBI or any other agency can get hold of him ... so this petition has been filed before the High Court so that this medical scam that has plagued the entire Health Department and all the State-owned hospitals gets brushed under the carpet like the previous scams this has to be unearthed because the doctors murder

is not a one-off case ... it should be found out whether some people were trying to silence her. said one of the lawyers of Ali

adding the scam could run into hundreds of crores and that Ghosh was only one of many fixers that was working for a Statewide "medical

Health scam of crores exposed, Delhi Govt Minister should resign: Vijender

STAFF REPORTER n **NEW DELHI** 

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta reacted sternly over the corruption in the construction of hospitals exposed in a note sent by three senior officers of Delhi Government to the Health Minister of Delhi regarding the lack of health services and has demanded resignation of the Health Minister. He said that the note sent by the officers of Delhi Government to the Minister has exposed the claims of the Delhi Government which is boasting about the health services of Delhi all over the world. Corruption worth crores of rupees has taken place.

According to Gupta, the construction of 24 hospitals, including major facilities like LNJP Hospital and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital, has seen cost escalate by up to 100 per cent. Many of these projects are severely behind schedule. For instance, the new block at LNJP Hospital is only 60 per cent complete after nearly 4 years, despite an initial 30-month timeline.

The misuse of funds extends to the polyclinic project as well. Out of 94 planned polyclinics, only 52 have been constructed, despite expenditures

exceeding the sanctioned bud-

get. He mentioned that the Delhi government had planned the construction/renovation of 94 polyclinics, for which a sum of Rs 168.58 crore was sanctioned and given to PWD. However, PWD spent Rs 220 crore on constructing only 52 polyclinics.

Similarly, there has been massive corruption in the construction works carried out in 24 hospitals of the Delhi government, including LNJP Hospital, Satyawadi Harishchandra Hospital, Bhagwan Mahavir Hospital, Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital, Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Acharya Shri Bhikshu Hospital, Rao

Tula Ram Hospital, Dada Dev Hospital, Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya, Aruna Asaf Ali Hospital, Deepchand Bandhu Hospital, etc. Gupta mentioned that the cost of these 24 underconstruction hospitals has increased by 100 per cnt , and the construction work has come to a standstill.

Gupta highlighted a specific case study of the LNJP Hospital new block project, which was initially contracted at Rs 465.52 crore but has now seen costs spiral to Rs 1125 crore. "This scandal exposes the hollow claims of the Delhi government about world-class nealthcare," Gupta stated. "The note from senior officials to the Health Minister reveals corruption worth hundreds of crores of rupees."

In response to these findings, the Delhi BJP leadership plans to meet with the anti-corruption branch (ACB) chief to file an official complaint. They are demanding a thorough investigation into all aspects of this multi-crore scam and calling for the immediate resignation of Delhi's Health Minister. Gupta added, "The people of Delhi deserve answers and accountability. We will pursue this matter to ensure that those responsible for this gross mismanagement

and potential corruption are

# ICGS Sujay makes port call at Jakarta



Indian Coast Guard's Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) ICGS Sujay with integral helicopter made a port call at Jakarta, Indonesia on Wednesday as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to East Asia. This marks a pivotal milestone in diplomatic maritime engagements.

During the two-day visit, the crew of ICGS Sujay will engage in professional interactions focusing on Marine Pollution Response (MPR), Maritime Search and Rescue (M-SAR) and Maritime Law Enforcement. Activities include professional interactions with BAKMALA (Indonesia Coast Guard), Cross deck training, joint

yoga sessions, friendly sports events and Passage Sea Exercise (PASSEX) with the BAKAMLA. The visit aims not only to strengthen ties between the Indian Coast Guard and their Indonesian counterparts but also to showcase India's shipbuilding capabilities, supporting the concept of "Atamnirbhar

Additionally, the 10 National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets aboard ICGS Sujay will partici-

### **Bharat Bandh against** SC's quota ruling...

to New Delhi.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rajeev Mishra described the incident as a human error, and said the police officer did not recognise the official. The Patna District Administration later confirmed that the incident was an honest mistake and said no disciplinary action will be taken against the police

Meanwhile, the response to the Bharat Bandh or pan-India shutdown has been largely mixed; its maximum impact was seen in Bihar, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. As many as 21 organisations including the National Confederation of Dalit and Adivasi Organisations (NACDAOR) have called for Bharat Bandh against the Supreme Court's decision to permit the subclassification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). Left parties, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Bahujan Samajwadi Party have extended support to the nationwide bandh.

In Jehanabad district, clashes occurred between protesters and security personnel on National Highway-83 near Unta Chowk, leading to the detention of five persons. In other districts, including Madhepura, Muzaffarpur, Saran, Begusarai, Hajipur, and Purnea, protesters attempted to block traffic and burned tyres, but were quickly dispersed by security forces.At Darbhanga and Buxar railway stations, a large number of protesters halted the Bihar Sampark Kranti and Farakka

Express trains, following which the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and district police were deployed to cleared the stations. East Central Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Sharswati Chandra confirmed that train services were disrupted in Ara, Chausa Darbhanga, (Buxar), Begusarai, and Rajgir, but the promptly situation was controlled.

The bandh had little impact on normal life in Uttar Pradesh, even as Dalit groups and political parties demonstrations and marches in parts of the state. A group of protesters held a march and raised slogans in Agra. BSP workers disrupted traffic on MG road, climbed atop the gate of the collectorate and raised slogans.

They also tried to shut shops in the city. The protesters presented a memorandum to the district magistrate. In Lucknow, traffic was affected on key routes in and near Hazratganj as BSP workers held a demonstration. In Kanpur, some shops near the BSP's office were closed while public buses plied as usual. Similar scenes were witnessed Aligarh, Unnao, Muzaffarnagar, Sambhal, Jalaun, Etawah, Mathura, Hathras and Gorakhpur, among other districts.

The bandh has voked a mixed response in Chhattisgarh, tribal-dominated barring regions. Several shops and commercial establishments remained closed in parts of Bastar and Surguja divisions, largely inhabited by tribals, Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki Dhamtari districts.

# SC resumes hearing on LMV...

The bench, also comprising justices Hrishikesh Roy, P Narasimha, Pankaj Mithal and Manoj Misra, said as it has already heard the matter for some time and hence, it will proceed with the hearing waiting without Parliament amendments in the MV Act. The legal question has given rise to various disputes over payment of claims by insurance companies in with the legal question. accident cases involving transport vehicles being driven by those having licences to drive LMVs. Earlier on April 16, the bench had deferred the hearing on

the issue after the attorney general submitted a note indicating that consultations carried out by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways have culminated in proposals for amending the MV Act that will be put before the newlyconstituted Lok Sabha following general elections. "By its communication dated April 15, 2024, the Ministry has placed on record the details of the proposed amendment to the statute.

"In view of the impending General Elections, the Attorney General for India that requests these proceedings may be deferred until the last week of July 2024 so as to enable the Union government to bring forth a proposal for the amendment of the Motor Vehicles Act 1988 before the newly constituted Parliament following the General Elections," the bench had

The impact, if any, of the amendments which are

will be decided in the course of the hearing, it had said while deferring the hearing. Prior to this, the apex court had asked the Centre if a change in law is warranted on the legal question of whether a person holding a driving licence for a light motor vehicle is entitled to legally drive a transport vehicle of a particular weight. It had also sought the assistance of the attorney general in dealing

Observing that these are policy issues impacting "the livelihood of lakhs of people", the court had said the government needs to take a fresh look" at the matter, which needs to be taken up at the policy level.

Whether a person holding a driving licence in respect of a light motor vehicle (LMV) could, on the strength of that licence, be entitled to drive a transport vehicle of light motor vehicle class having unladen weight not exceeding 7,500 kg," reads the legal question being dealt with by the court.

bench had The ascertaining the position of the union ministry will be necessary after it was told that the apex court's 2017 verdict in the case of Mukund Dewangan versus Oriental Insurance Company Limited was accepted by the Centre and rules were amended to align those with the

judgment. In the Mukund Dewangan case, a three-judge bench of the top court had held that transport vehicles, the gross weight of which does not exceed 7,500 kg, are not excluded from the definition of an LMV.

## INBRIEF

**QR CODE MACHINES FOR TICKETS AT NFR** 

Maligaon: In order to promote the vision of 'Digital India' and facilitate cashless transactions at booking counters across the railway stations over Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), a total of 191 QR code machines have been provided at 422 locations over five divisions at Katihar, Rangiya, Alipurduar, Lumding and Tinsukia. 587 counters at these locations have been covered till date. Further, 189 additional QR code machines are in advance stage of procurement, and will soon be installed at selected stations.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND GREEN HYDROGEN WORKSHOP

Amritsar: An open-door workshop titled "Energy efficiency and green hydroger for rural India of 2047 and beyond" was organised by the Department of Chemistry, Guru Nanak Dev University, in collaboration with Brunel University

GNDU RELEASES EXAM FORM, FEE SCHEDULE

London, UK. Expert lectures were delivered by leading global experts

Amaravati : The online examination form submission and fee payments for December 2024 exams of under graduate Semester 1,3,5,7,9 and post graduate Semester 1, 3 (except BEd Sem-1st and Law TYC/FYIC Sem-1st) for regular and private students through online portal

collegeadmissions.gndu.ac.in/loginNew.aspx has been scheduled as per below mentioned dates. Examination forms for annual system examinations (special chance/additional subject, re-appear, improvement) will be submitted manually at university cash counter, said Prof Shalini Bahel, Professor Incharge Examination

#### RPF OF NFR NABS 225 ILLEGAL MIGRANTS

Maligaon: Continuing the fight to detect illegal migrants (Bangladeshis and Rohingyas) the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway has nabbed 225 illegal migrants and 16 Indian agents during checks across various stations of N.F. Railway from January 1 to



August 15, 2024. In the present month itself till 15 th of August, RPF of N. F. Railway has detained 22 illegal migrants. In an incident on 01 st of August 2024, RPF team of Agartala jointly with GRP/Agartala conducted a routine drive at Agartala Railway Station.

#### PRITHVI AWARDS 2024 ON SEP 14

New Delhi: Prithvi Awards 2024 and ESG Global Conference is a groundbreaking initiative by ESG Research Foundation, (Section 8 Not for Profit organisation registered with Govt. of India) to recognise sustainability icons and leaders in ESG and bring together ESG experts to have evocative discussions related to

#### RAJ IV-A POWER HANDED OVER TO APRAAVA

Gurugram: REC Power Development and Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL), a wholly owned subsidiary of REC Limited, the Maharatna CPSU under the aegis of Ministry of Power, handed over a project specific SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle). viz, Rajasthan IV-A Power Transmission Limited to M/s Apraava Energy Private Limited (AEPL). The project will facilitate evacuation of power from Rajasthan Renewable Energy Zone Ph-IV (Jaisalmer/Barmer Complex).

#### NMDC STEEL FIRST MAJOR PRODUCTION MILESTONE

Hyderabad: NMDC Steel Limited (NSL) proudly announces a landmark achievement of its production capabilities. Today, this ultra-modern, state-of-the-art plant has successfully produced 1 Million Ton (MnT) of Hot Rolled Coil (HRC), reaching this milestone four days ahead of the first anniversary of commencement of HR Coil production. These achievements highlight NSL's commitment to operational excellence and

innovation. The company continues to push the boundaries by aspiring to be a leader in the steel manufacturing sector with a sole focus on efficiency, sustainability,

and technological advancement.

#### Google, Meta in trouble over ads linked to fake lotteries

Subsequently, claiming to be a government representative calls on the phone and asks the 'ticket holder' to transfer a certain amount to a bank account towards 'GST' and 'stamp duty' to receive the prize money, it said. After the demanded amount is transferred, they ask for more money claiming that the RBI

is holding on to the prize. 'Victims are provided with artificially produced documents and videos to make every step seem believable," the SPMC release The police have urged the

public to be careful not to fall prey to such online lottery scams and to immediately call on the number 1930 if they suspect that a financial fraud is taking place.

# WB icons.

Elsewhere at the College Street a swarm of retired and working engineers joined a procession ' demanding "justice." One of them who worked with the State Government for 35 years said, "I retired in 2005 ... went through the hoodlum years of the 1970s when Bengal lost hundreds of young people to naxalite movement and police atrocities ... but not like this ... I was not scared then as I

am scared now." Samar Mahapatra another mechanical engineer who worked on a top post with the Indian Railways said he had severe arthritis and could not walk properly "but see the dead doctor has brought me here and I am walking with a stick to demand justice for her ... my daughter is in the US

... I hope she remains safe there... my solidarity with the family ... and when this hue and cry subsides I will visit the family of the victim and continue to be by their side till I die."

Meanwhile, even a day after the Supreme Court ordering deployment of Central

Industrial Security Force for the security of RGKMCH there was no sign of the ongoing medical strike ending with the several thousand junior doctors on Wednesday marching to the Swasthya Bhawan (Health Headquarters).

"We came to seek solution to a number of issues like foolproof security, inquiry into complains of corruption in all the State-run medical colleges and hospitals and appointment of full-time principals in medical colleges but there was no assurance coming from the authorities it seems that the Health Department is under serious pressure from higher authorities," said an agitating

doctor from the RG Kar

Hospital.

The doctors' march came in tandem with a DIG of the CISF on Wednesday visiting the Hospital with a posse of security personnel. "The CISF officials had come to make a survey and inspect the hospital premises before they take charge ... they visited the principal's chamber and some other areas and then left," a source in the hospital said.

# NDA's push for majority mark...

Of the nine seats, BJP has four and Congress has five. Bittu, grandson of former Punjab chief minister Beant Singh, joined BJP in March this year and contested the Lok Sabha polls. He lost, but was appointed as the Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways. Former Union minister Upendra Kushwaha and Supreme

Court lawyer Manan Kumar Mishra, filed their nomination papers for the by-polls to two Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar. Top leaders of the NDA in the State, including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his deputies, Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, were present at the Vidhan Sabha secretariat during the filing of nomination papers by the two candidates. The by-polls have been necessitated by the election to the Lok Sabha of sitting Rajya Sabha MPs Vivek Thakur (BJP) and Misa Bharti (RJD). Mishra, who began his political career with the 2009 Lok Sabha election he contested unsuccessfully from Valmiki Nagar on a BSP ticket, switched over to the BJP five years later and canvassed in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Kushwaha, who heads Rashtriya Lok Morcha, is seeking election to the Upper House after having lost the recently held Lok Sabha polls. He asserted that as a member of the Upper House, he will press for judicial reforms and doing away with the Collegiums System

Notably, in the last 10 years, despite enjoying a comfortable majority in the Lok Sabha, the NDA numbers have remained short in the Rajya Sabha compelling the Government to rely on neutral' parties such as BJD and YSRCP to get Bills passed. With the two parties having changed tack - the BJP defeated BJD in Odisha this time, and allied with YSRCP's rival TDP in Andhra Pradesh - a boost in the Upper House will provide the NDA much-needed relief.

# **Greed for big...**

From Page 1

"These chemicals trigger a effect knock-down crustaceans, leading to their immediate death and impacting other aquatic life forms, the authors said adding that there is an urgent need for stringent regulatory actions and continuous outreach programs to curb the illegal use of pesticides.

"They might also cause mutations in amphibians and insects. Moreover, juvenile fishes are more susceptible to these chemicals, and such detrimental effects fishes reproductive adults may threaten river fish population dynamics. The threat of bioaccumulation looms as birds and otters consume poisoned fish while wild animals drink water from and poisoned rivers," said the "Raising awareness about the

harmful effects and enforcing laws against toxic fishing practices is crucial to preserving the Ganga's ecological integrity.

Also, the scientists suggested that "further research is needed to quantify the extent use, pesticide

gathered from the fishermen, the researchers revealed that there is continuous poaching in the lower and some areas of the upper Hooghly estuary, using pesticides belonging to the synthetic pyrethroid

Our study also demonstrated that long-term exposure to cypermethrin, even at an environmentally relevant dose, may affect the reproductive potential of fish. Therefore, fishermen have been warned to be vigilant avoid contaminated fish, noted the

added.

environmental and health impacts, and to develop effective strategies monitoring and controlling this destructive practice." Based on the information

authors.

Measures like strict fishing regulations and continuous outreach programmes are necessary to maintain the natural river system, they

# e-office system launched in C'garh to ensure transperancy in administration

In a major move towards transparency and good governance, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister on Wednesday launched the e-office system, Swagatam, and his office online portals at the Mahanadi Mantralaya in Raipur.

Home Minister Vijay Sharma and Food Minister Dayaldas Baghel were

Sai said his government was promoting the use of IT in all departments for transparency and zero tolerance against corruption in

The Swagatam Portal will provide appointments to common people in the ministry through an online application facility for redressal of their grievances.

They won't have to face inconveniences like long queues and



delays. They will be informed about the time of appointment through SMS and e-mail. This will save them

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) portal will provide information about welfare schemes. People will be able to know about the of Chhattisgarh.

The e-office system has been launched to make government functioning transparent and

Sai launched this system by issuing online instructions to Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain to implement it in all government departments.

It will be first implemented in the General Administration Department. An official communiqué said that the documents will be digitised for convenience and time efficiency.

It will eliminate the possibility of document manipulation, documents getting lost or missing, and improve Issues will be resolved within the

time limit, and monitoring work progress will be easier.

It will also be easy for the general public to know about the status of their applications.

# 'Rang Parab' cultural event from today

The Chhattisgarh Culture Department will organise a three-day 'Rang Parab' drama series from Thursday at the Mahant Ghasidas Museum in Raipur to provide a glimpse of folk culture.

The aim is to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the state.

Artists will portray the tribal and folk culture of Chhattisgarh through plays.

On the first day, the 'Godna' play will depict the lifestyle of the Dewar tribe. On the second day, 'Kalankar' will present the true events from the lives of local folk artists.

On the concluding day, the 'Adigatha' play will present the ancient history of Sitabengra and art culture based on Kalidas' Meghdoot.

Bharat Bandh evokes mixed response in C'garh



# Sick pigeon fails to fly at I-Day function, SP seeks action

After a pigeon which was possibly sick failed to fly when it was released as a symbol of peace and freedom, the Superintendent of Police in Mungeli in Chhattisgarh sought action against officials responsible for the lapse.

At the Independence Day function, BJP MLA and chief guest Punnulal Mohle, Mungeli Collector Rahul Deo and Superintendent of Police Girija Shankar Jaiswal were handed pigeons to release them.

The birds released by the MLA and the Collector flew off. However, when the SP released the pigeon, it fell to the

The video of the bird falling on the ground went viral on social media.



Official sources on Wednesday said Jaiswal has written to the Collector, seeking disciplinary action officials

"This (happened) as a sick pigeon was presented," Jaiswal wrote. "Certainly, the officer responsible for this work has not discharged responsibility properly."

#### STAFF REPORTER n

hhattisgarh gave a mixed response to a Bharat Bandh called on Wednesday. Shops and schools were shut in the tribal pockets of regions like Bastar and Surguja which also saw major traffic jams on major highways.

The shutdown was called by Dalit and Adivasi organizations in protest against the Supreme Court ruling permitting the principle of the creamy layer within Scheduled Castes (SC) and ST reservations.

While the Congress extended moral support to the protest, business communities in Chhattisgarh were divided. The Bastar Chamber of Commerce supported the bandh but the Raipur Chamber of Commerce did not back the



In Raipur, the bandh had minimal impact. Most schools remained open in the Chhattisgarh capital.

However, activists went around urging residents in various neighborhoods to participate in the shutdown.

Durg and Bhilai also experienced little disruption, with routine activities continuing largely unaffected.

districts Gariyaband, Mungeli, and Kanker, the shutdown evoked a mixed response. Public transport was cripped and schools, colleges and markets were shut.

In Ambikapur, the Sarva Adivasi Samaj took out a rally from the Collectorate Chowk, in support of the bandh. But transport services were operational. The most pronounced impact was observed in the Bastar division where there were major disruptions on key highways in southern Chhattisgarh, with significant traffic jams reported.

The Jagdalpur-Sukma route, a vital link between Chhattisgarh and the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, was blocked by protesters, leading to long

Similarly, the Jagdalpur-Bijapur National Highway 63 was jammed. Members of the Adivasi community took to the streets and blocked the road, bringing traffic to a

In Kanker district, protesters entered the Shaheed Ram Kumar Yadav Government Girls Higher Secondary School, dismissing students for the day. Demonstrators also blocked a section of the National Highway by felling trees, causing major traffic disruptions.

In Kondagaon, SC-ST community members gathered at the Ambedkar members statue and enforced the closure of shops.

The bandh received support from several political parties including the Bhim Army and the Bahujan Samaj



knowledge about freedom fighters from Chhattisgarh.

# Urban bodies to get Rs 900 crore for augmenting civic amenities: Sao

STAFF REPORTER n

Tn a bid to augment civic Lamenities in urban areas, the Urban Administration Department in Chhattisgarh is going to allocate Rs 900 crore to urban bodies.

Minister for Urban Administration Arun Sao on Wednesday said the allocations were made as per the demands of people in Jandarshan programmes and proposals given at the 'public grievances' fortnight.

To strengthen the urban

infrastructure, Rs 450 crore has been allocated while Rs 450 crore is to be approved under the 15th Finance Commission, he said. A total of around 1,30,000

applications during the redressal fortnight, and 48,000 were sorted out at the camps itself, said the Minister.



construction works have not commenced due to the rainy

'Inculcating family values needed

The complaints received about door-to-door garbage disposal, cleaning of drains, water logging and issues of

To strengthen the urban infrastructure, Rs 450 crore has been allocated while Rs 450 crore is to be approved under the 15th **Finance** Commission

cleanliness were resolved on the spot, he said.

#### कार्यालय आयुक्त

आदिम जाति तथा अनुसूचित जाति विकास ब्लाक-डी, भू-तल, इन्द्रावती भवन, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर छत्तीसगढ़

22.08.2024 दोपहर 12:00 बजे से

युवा कैरियर निर्माण योजना (यथा संशोधित २०२१) के अंतर्गत वर्ष २०२४-२५ में प्री. इंजीनियरिंग एवं प्री. मेडिकल की प्रवेश परीक्षाओं की तैयारी हेतु प्रतिष्ठित कोचिंग संस्थाओं से ऑनलाईन ''रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति'' का तृतीय आमंत्रण कार्यालयीन ''रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति'' क्रमांक/०७/पीएमटी-पीईटी/२०२४-२५/४५०४, दिनांक

31.07.2024 निविदा क्रमांक 155726 में प्री. इंजीनियरिंग एवं प्री. मेडिकल प्रवेश परीक्षाओं की तैयारी हेत् कोचिंग कराने के लिए कोचिंग संस्थाओं से ऑनलाईन ''रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति'' के द्वितीय आमंत्रण के तहत् दिनांक १६.०८.२०२४ तक आवेदन केवल ०२ संस्थाओं से प्रस्ताव प्राप्त हुए है। चुंकि छ.ग. शासन भण्डार क्रय नियम २००२ (यथा संशोधित २०२२) अनुसार कम से कम ०३ संस्थाओं से प्रस्ताव प्राप्त होने पर ही प्रस्ताव खोलने की प्रक्रिया की जावेगी। अतः उक्त रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति के तहत ऑनलाईन प्रस्ताव प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि में निम्नानुसार वृद्धि की जाती है।

निर्धारित प्रपत्र में प्रस्ताव ऑनलाईन प्रेषित करने की अंतिम तिथि 02.09.2024 सार्य 5:00 बजे तक ऑफलाईन स्टडी मटेरियल एवं एफ.डी.आर. जमा करने की तिथि | 03.09.2024 सार्य 5:00 बजे तक प्राप्त प्रस्ताव को समिति के समक्ष खोला जाना ०४.०९.२०२४ दोपहर ०३:०० बजे

तकनीकी मुल्याकंन एवं अन्य कार्यवाही/जानकारी की सूचना पृथक से दी जावेगी

पूर्व में जारी ''रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति'' में नियम / निर्देश यथावत् रहेंगे

रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति का ऑनलाईन प्रदर्शन की तिथि

G-242501932/4

(नरेन्द्र कुमार दुग्गा) नवा रायपुर अटल नगर (छ०ग०)

#### **UBI's U Genius Quiz Competition tomorrow**



STAFF REPORTER n

The Union Bank of India (UBI) will hold the U Genius Quiz Competition for school students at the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Auditorium in

About 800 students from 84 schools in Chhattisgarh will participate. UBI is organising this competition nationally. One winner will be selected from each city, and

the final round will be held in Mumbai. The winners will be awarded Rs 2 lakh as first prize and Rs 1 lakh as second prize.

#### to stop women's harassment' STAFF REPORTER n **BILASPUR**

The Vice Chancellor of Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Prof Alok Kumar Chakrawal, on Wednesday said that promoting family values was essential to avert sexual harassment of women at the workplace.

He said this at a workshop on sexual harassment. This was held at the university auditorium under the joint aegis of the Women's Study Centre and the Internal Complaints Committee of the central university.

He highlighted that there was a tradition in India of propagating values that each individual should uphold. It is



the responsibility of families to ensure that children learn not only academics but also social values and respect for women.

At the workshop, Naushina Ali, an advocate at the Chhattisgarh High Court, provided information about various acts available to ensure women's safety and stressed the need to remain vigilant and sensitive to sexual harassment.

Annapurna Tiwari, another advocate at the High Court, said both women and men were equal and there should be mutual respect and cooperation

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

# 16 MPs, 135 MLAs face charges of crimes against women, WB tops: ADR

As many as 151 sitting MPs and MLAs have declared cases related to crimes against women in their election affidavits, with West Bengal having the highest number of lawmakers facing such cases, according to a recent report by a poll rights body.

For the report, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) examined 4,693 out of 4,809 affidavits of sitting MPs and MLAs submitted to the Election Commission of India during elections between 2019 and

The organisation identified 16 MPs and 135 MLAs facing cases related to crimes against

West Bengal tops the list with 25 sitting MPs and MLAs facing charges related to against women, followed by Andhra Pradesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will review the inter-

state coordination among the

Naxal-affected States at a high-

level meeting to be held in Chhattisgarh's Raipur on

At a separate meeting on the

same day, Shah will also review

security and development

initiatives in Maoists-hit areas

of Chhattisgarh, sources said

The Chief Secretaries and

Directors General of police of

Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and

Maharashtra, besides top

security officials of the central

Government are expected to

During his three-day tour of

Chhattisgarh, Shah will also visit the Mahaprabhu

Vallabhacharya Ashram in

Raipur, review the functioning of the Narcotics Control

Bureau (NCB) in the State

Capital and attend a meeting

related to the Ministry of

Cooperation. Earlier, Shah had

said after a Bharatiya Janata

Party (BJP) Government

assumed charge in the Central

Indian State late last year, about

125 Naxals were killed, more

than 352 arrested and about

175 had surrendered in just

personnel gunned down 29

Naxals, including some senior

cadres, in Chhattisgarh's

Kanker district. This was the highest number of fatalities

suffered by the red ultras in a

security

On April

coordination meeting.

Jharkhand,

here on Wednesday.

**NEW DELHI** 

Shah to review Naxal

coordination, security at

meeting in Chhattisgarh



according to the report that comes amid the nationwide protests over the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor in a State-run hospital in Kolkata and sexual assault of two children in Thane.

According to the report, there are 16 sitting MPs and MLAs who have declared cases with 21 and Odisha with 17, related to rape under Indian

single encounter in the history

of the State's fight against left-

According to the Union Home

Ministry's data, the number of

incidents of left-wing extremism has reduced from

14,862 in the decade from 2004

to 2014 to 7,128 from 2014 to

The number of deaths of

security forces personnel due

to left-wing extremism has

declined by 72 per cent, from 1,750 in the 2004-to-2014

period to 485 between 2014

and 2023, and the number of

civilian deaths has declined by

68 per cent, from 4,285 to

1,383, in the said period. The

number of districts with

violence was 96 in 2010. It

declined by 53 per cent to 45 in

Along with this, the number of police stations reporting violence decreased from 465 in

In the last five years, more than

5,000 post offices were set up

in 90 districts that has Maoists

presence or where the ultras

had presence in the past. As

many as 1,298 bank branches

were opened and 1,348 ATMs

made operational in the 30

A total of 4,885 mobile towers

were constructed at a cost of Rs

2,690 crore in the Naxal-hit

areas and 9,356 km of roads

were laid at a cost of Rs 10,718

Local youngsters are being engaged by setting up 121 Eklavya residential schools, 43

ITIs and 38 skill-development

centres in the Naxal-affected

areas, the officials said.

districts,

2010 to 176 in 2022.

most-affected

wing extremism.

Penal Code (IPC) section 376, which carries a minimum sentence of 10 years and can extend imprisonment. Of these, two are MPs and 14 MLAs. The charges include repeated offences against the same victim, further underscoring the gravity of these cases.

Among political parties, the

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

n order to maintain the

level playing field and to ensure that no undue advan-

tage is accrued to anyone,

the Election Commission

(EC) has directed the Haryana

Government not to declare

the results of these recruit-

ments till completion of

The Assembly elections in

Haryana will be held in a

single phase on October 1

and results will be declared

The EC's model code

instructions do not bar the

promotion through the

UPSC, the State public

service commission or the

staff selection commission

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

Senior IAS officer Govind Mohan on Thursday will take charge as the new Union

Home Secretary from Ajay

Kumar Bhalla, who completes

his five year tenure at the sen-

sitive post, official sources said.

Mohan, a B.Tech from

Banaras Hindu University

and PG Diploma from IIM,

Ahmedabad, was serving as

Union Culture Secretary before his appointment to the

top bureaucratic post, next

only to the Cabinet Secretary.

**NEW DELHI** 

regular

Govind to succeed Ajay

as Union Home Secretary

on Special Duty.

and known for his diligence.

He had earlier served the

Home Ministry as additional

Secretary handling several

key divisions, including

A seasoned bureaucrat,

Mohan was also the Government's key officer during the COVID-19

pandemic and tasked with

overseeing implementation of

decisions taken for various

protocols and ensuring

smooth coordination with

Union territories.

process

on October 4.

continuing

recruitment

Assembly polls in the State.

has the highest number of representatives (54 MPs and MLAs) with declared cases related to crimes against women, followed by the Congress with 23 and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) with 17, according to the report. Both BJP and Congress have five sitting lawmakers each facing rape

The ADR has issued strong recommendations response to these findings. It stressed on the need for political parties to refrain from giving tickets to candidates with criminal backgrounds, especially those with charges of rape and other crimes against women.

The report called for the fast-

EC halts recruitment results in

Haryana until Assembly polls

authority. But States that

take "recruitments through

non-statutory bodies will

require prior clearance of the

cognisance of a complaint

from Congress Leader

Jairam Ramesh regarding violation of the MCC in the

process of recruitment

against 5,600 vacancies for

the post of constable in the

Haryana Police, 76 posts of

two categories of teachers by

the HSSC and recruitment

for various posts by the

HPSC. After ascertaining the

facts from the State

Government and in view of

the existing Model Code of

instructions, the commission

found no violation of the

commission took

commission".

tracking of Court cases against MPs and MLAs, countries. ensuring professional and thorough investigations by police. The ADR urged voters to avoid electing candidates

during Rajnath's four-day visit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

India and the US will review the entire gamut of their defence ties during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's fourday visit there commencing Friday, Defence Ministry announced here on Wednesday. The forthcoming visit will further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two

In Washington, Rajnath will hold talks with Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan among others.

recruitment processes by the Haryana Staff Selection Commission (HSSC) and the

Haryana Public Service Commission (HPSC). The

commission has found that

the recruitment processes

were initiated before the

announcement of the

election on August 16 and is

within the existing MCC

instructions as stated above,

where statutory authorities

However, in order to maintain level playing field

and to ensure that no undue

advantage is accrued to anyone, the EC has directed

that announcement of results

of these recruitments by the

authorities concerned (HSSC

and HPSC) will not be

released till completion of

the Assembly poll in the

can continue their work.

**India-US to review defence ties,** 

also discuss the issue of nonstate players using drones to target merchant shipping after the Israel military action in Gaza. India's plan to procure 31 MQ-9B Predator

co-production of GE F414 engines in India are likely to figure prominently in Rajnath's parleys with US defence establishment, officials said.

"The visit is expected to further deepen and broaden the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership," the Defence Ministry said announcing Singh's trip to the US from August 23 to 26. "The visit comes in the backdrop of the growing momentum in India-US relations and defence engagements at multiple defence

levels," it said. Rajnath will also chair a highlevel roundtable meeting with the US defence industry on

He will also interact with the Indian community during the visit. US has emerged as one of the biggest defence exporter to India in the last two decades with figures touching 15 billion dollar



# now fully operational

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

**T**ndia's second home-built  $oldsymbol{1}$ 700 MW nuclear power reactor at Kakrapar Atomic the plant operator said.

at KAPS had been operating at 90 per cent capacity before raising it to full power of 700

KAPS-4 after the smooth operation of its twin unit KAPS-3 at full power demonstrates the strength of the first of a kind indigenous 700 MW Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) design," the NPCIL said. The KAPS-4 unit achieved

The power level of the unit, commenced commercial operation on

the regulatory authority, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). India is building 14 more 700 MW nuclear power reactors of the same design

commence progressively by 2031-32. The NPCIL presently operates a fleet of 24 reactors with a total capacity

of 8180 MW and has eight units with a capacity of 6800 MW under construction. In addition, 10 more

of 7000 MW are in preproject activities.

#### He is also likely to review the situation in the Indo-Pacific during talks with Austin, sources said. China is flexing its muscle in this strategically

crucial region and has all along opposed Quad combine claiming it will leading to militarization of the zone. Quad comprises, India, US, Australia and Japan. Sources also said Rajnath may

drones, the proposed joint touch manufacturing of Stryker mark.

the ongoing and future defence collaborations.

# **Desi** 700 MW reactor

**NEW DELHI** 

Power Station (KAPS) in Gujarat on Wednesday started operating at its full capacity, The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) said Unit 4

"The full power operation of

first criticality on December 17 last year and commenced

commercial operations on March 31.

March 31, 2024 was raised in line with the permissions of

reactors with a total capacity

These are expected to be completed progressively, taking the installed nuclear power capacity in the

## Brazilian Navy chief visits India for talks on maritime, cooperation, training

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

dmiral Marcos Sampaio Admirat Marcos output Brazilian Navy is on an official visit to India from August 19-24, The visit aims to enhance maritime cooperation between the two countries as well as showcases the commitment of like-minded navies to collaborate and cooperate on shared challenges in the maritime secu-

He called on Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi here on Wednesday and held discussions on various encompassing aspects operational engagements, technical cooperation, and training.
Indian Navy cooperates with

the Brazilian Navy through various initiatives, which operational interactions, training cooperation and other maritime avenues. The two navies have also been interacting in multilateral forums like MILAN and

Maritime (IBSAMAR).

through the Joint Defence Committee, steered respective Ministries Defence. As part of his official

Cooperation between the

two countries is conducted

engagements, Commander of Brazilian Navy is also scheduled to meet Defence Secretary,

National Maritime Security

Coordinator, and Vice Chief

of Army Staff in Delhi. During this visit, Admiral Marcos Sampaio Olsen would also visit Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Gurugram and will hold interaction with various

Defence

representatives. In addition to New Delhi, the Commander of Brazilian Navy, would also visit Mumbai, where he would be interacting with Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, as well as visit indigenous warships and submarines, Naval Dockyard and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders

# **Empowering women in tribal Odisha** linked to improved child nutrition: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI n NEW DELHI

The adage 'Educate a woman, and you educate an entire family' holds good in the realm of child nutrition too, as has been confirmed by a team of researchers who in their recent study found that empowering females women in tribal areas of Odisha, India, significantly improved child nutrition and reduced underweight and wasted children. The study is crucial given India's pressing health challenge as highlighted by the 2023 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) which reports that over 40 per cent of tribal children are underweight and stunted, and about 30 per cent are Published in PLOS ONE, the

study analysed the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) to measure empowerment among 1,900 farm households.

It found that women's empowerment in agricultural decision-making, income, and access to resources led to better household dietary diversity and higher weightfor-age and weight-for-height scores in children.

However, the study also suggested that complementary interventions

are necessary to enhance dietary diversity further. Sylvester Ogutu, a researcher for the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and

the paper's lead author, explained that by using this score and then comparing it access a variety of foods dietary diversity - the study to outcomes like the number of different foods found in found



of children for their age, a clear picture emerged. "As primary care-givers, the empowerment of women

contributes to improved child nutrition, health, and education," he said and empowerment in agricultural input use, sales, income, and other (access to credit, group membership employment)

making domains associated with with fewer underweight and wasted Jonathan Mockshell,

agricultural economist at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, study lead, and a coauthor of the paper chipped in saying that in terms of the effects of women's empowerment on the household dietary diversity score (HDDS) - a snapshot of the economic ability of a household to

women's

improved food production and dietary diversity. "The magnitude of the effect

of women's empowerment on

dietary diversity was relatively small, which suggests that complementary interventions may be required to achieve higher household dietary diversity, he said in the study, "Women's empowerment, household dietary diversity, and child anthropometry among vulnerable populations in Odisha, India". The researchers also measured the height and weight of children and discovered that women's empowerment significantly increased children's weightfor-age z-scores (WAZ), and weight-for-height z-scores (WHZ), but not their height-

"The improvements in the zscores contributed to reduced prevalence of underweight and wasting in children with mother's with a higher empowerment

for-age scores (HAZ).

### Congress blames hydel projects for Sikkim landslides, environmental damage PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

NEW DELHI

 $I^{
m n}$  the wake of landslides in Sikkim, the Congress on Wednesday hit out at the Government and said hydel projects in ecologically fragile regions have been coming up over the past few years without giving adequate thought to their cumulative environmental impact. The Opposition party also asserted that dams on the Teesta river are the prime example of how ecology is being fundamentally altered with grave consequences for this and future generations.

A massive landslide struck east Sikkim on Tuesday, damaging parts of a 510-mw hydroelectric project on the Teesta river.

The landslide happened at Dipu Dara near Singtam in Gangtok district around 7.30 am, causing significant



damage to the powerhouse of Teesta Stage hydroelectric project of the

In a statement, Congress General Secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said a series of landslide disasters in Sikkim has substantially damaged the Teesta V, a 510 MW hydel power station on the Teesta. This disaster comes on the heels of the Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) and riverine floods in the Teesta River basin in October 2023, caused massive devastation in Sikkim and Kalimpong, West Bengal, he noted. The Union Budget, unveiled in July 2024, had a section dedicated to 'Irrigation and Flood Mitigation,' where Finance

Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

details of funds for Sikkim, he said. "In a classic case of the Government's confrontational federalism, the Budget was indifferent to the areas in West Bengal which were equally affected," Ramesh said. The obvious vendetta politics

aside, announcements insufficient - what the entire region needs is for a development framework that centres ecological dimensions, the case for which has become apparent from the cascading series of disasters in the last year," the former Environment

Minister argued. National Highway 10, the lifeline of Sikkim and Kalimpong, runs along the Teesta and has been in a precarious State with frequent landslides and closures, he

#### A 1989 batch IAS officer of Sikkim cadre, Mohan has already joined the Union Home Ministry as an Officer He has a wide experience of serving both the Sikkim and the Central Governments in various capacities. Mohan is IAF aircraft considered to be one of the brilliant officers presently serving in the Government

# malfunctions, drops air store at Pokhran

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n

An IAF fighter aircraft on Wednesday reportedly faced a technical malfunction resulting in the inadvertent release of an "air store" near the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan, officials said. The incident occurred earlier in the day, prompting air force authorities to initiate an investigation to determine the cause of the technical issue that led to the inadvertent

No casualties or damage to property has been reported in the incident.

"An inadvertent release of an air store from an Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter aircraft took place near Pokhran firing range area, due to technical malfunction, today. An enquiry by the IAF been ordered to investigate into the incident. No damage to life or property has been reported," ÎAF said in a social media

an unexpected malfunction led to the accidental deployment of an air store, which generally includes munitions, bombs, or other military equipment carried by aircraft. IAF, however, has not disclosed the specific type of air store involved in the household and the weight empowerment contributes to

During a routine operation,

# **Will resign willingly if need arises: Union Minister Kumaraswamy**

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Wednesday said he will willingly resign if the need arises unlike Chief Minister Siddaramaiah who found Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's permission to investigate and prosecute him in the Mysuru Development Authority land allotment

to the Chief Reacting Minister's allegation that the Governor was not giving consent to prosecute him, Kumaraswamy asked what stops Siddaramaiah from approaching the Supreme Court against him in connection with the alleged scam related to Sri Sai Venkateshwara Minerals.

Lokayukta's Special Investigation Team has once again submitted a proposal to the Governor on Monday seeking permission to file a Kumaraswamy in the alleged

illegal mining lease case. The SIT had first requested Gehlot's nod in November last year to prosecute the Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, who had allegedly granted mining some



lease to the private firm when he was the Chief Minister in 2007 in violation of law.

The Chief Minister on Wednesday reiterated that the Governor sanctioned in haste investigation and prosecution against him.

Accusing the Governor of discriminating against him, Siddaramaiah Lokayukta's recommendation

to prosecute Kumaraswamy has been pending with Gehlot since November 2023.

Kumaraswamy, the Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, said he has seen the statements of Virajpet MLA and legal advisor to the Chief Minister A S Ponnanna and other

"I will willingly resign if needed, unlike you needed, (Siddaramaiah) who found fault with the Governor's permission to prosecute you and commented about the Governor in a derogatory

The Karnataka ministers should be ashamed for using such words against the Governor," he said.

He said: "Don't you think I could have closed the cases against me in 2018 when I was the Chief Minister?" Stating that the ruling

Congress is opening another case against him, he said he is not afraid of it.

Install CCTV cameras in one month, schools told after Badlapur incident

 $F^{\text{ollowing the incident of}}_{\text{sexual abuse at a school in}}_{\text{Badlapur, the Maharashtra}}$ government on Wednesday ssued a directive to all the schools in the state to install CCTV cameras on their premises within a month. The failure to comply with

the order may result in severe consequences such as revocation of the permission to operate, said the order issued by School Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar. Protests have broken out in many parts of the state following the alleged sexual abuse of two kindergarten girls at a school in Badlapur near Mumbai.

A school attendant was arrested in the case.
"All private schools in the

state are required to comply with new guidelines from the department, mandating the installation of CCTV cameras at appropriate locations within school premises. Failure to comply may result in actions such as withholding financial grants or revocation of the school's comprehensive camera network is a proactive measure to enhance the safety and security of students, teachers and staff, it said.

The school education department has also permitted the use of five per cent of the funds allocated for schools in the District Planning and Development Council to establish CCTV camera networks in state-run

and aided schools. Further, the CCTV footage should be examined at least three times a week, and it would be the principal's responsibility to contact police if any concerning incident is captured by the cameras, the order said.

department instructed managements to conduct thorough background checks of all employees with the assistance of the local police station. Schools should provide the local police station the details and photographs

# Hema panel report: UDF demands apology from CM

PTI n THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

 $T^{\text{he Opposition Congress-}}_{\text{led UDF on Wednesday}}$ rejected Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's claim that Justice Hema had herself requested that the expert panel's report on the film industry not be made public, calling it a 'blatant lie' and 'hypocrisy'.

Addressing a press conference here, opposition leader V D Satheesan said Justice Hema, who helmed the threemember panel, had never asked the government not to release it. The CM tried to mislead

everyone by telling lies, and his reply that the government had always been with the victims was nothing but "hypocrisy", he alleged.

The Leader of the Opposition also released the purported letter Justice Hema reportedly sent to the government.
Accusing the government of

protecting the "hunters" for the last four and a half years after the panel submitted its report, he further charged that Vijayan's expectation was that the letter would never come out.

"In the letter, the Hema committee had not asked the government not to release the report but to follow the directions of the Supreme The LoP further alleged that a Court while releasing it," he series of crimes had taken place, and there is evidence to The direction of the apex prove the same.

officers should investigate the names of victims, but it is not an obstacle to taking action case, he demanded. But the CM is "lying" without being prepared for an investigation, he charged. "This is nothing new. This is not a bar to taking action on the report. There are

The LoP called on Chief Minister Vijayan to apologise references to incidents in the report that require prosecution even under POCSO Act," Satheesan said. for his allegedly misleading claims about the letter penned

So, a team of women IPS

by Justice Hema. He warned the government of street protests if it doesn't act upon the report findings. Satheesan also urged the CM and the Law Minister to explain what the legal hurdles were in registering cases when there are statements of

# PMLA case: Hearing on Senthil's appeal adjourned to Aug 28

The Madras High Court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing on former Tamil Nadu Minister V Senthil Balaji's appeal against a sessions court order refusing to discharge him from a money laundering case. A division bench comprising

Justices S M Subramaniam and V Sivagnanam adjourned to August 28, the hearing on the appeal at the request of appearing for Senthil Balaji. When the case came up for hearing, Additional Solicitor General A R L Sundaresan submitted charges had been framed against Senthil Balaji in the money laundering case by Principal Sessions Judge S tne triai aiso commenced by examining a was posted to August 22 for cross examination, he added. Gouthaman, appearing for Balaji, sought



Posting the case to August 28, the bench said the trial which has already commenced may

was arrested on June 14, 2023 by the Enforcement with a money laundering case linked to a cash-for-jobs scam when he was the Transport Minister during an earlier AIADMK regime.

### Bihar decides to launch 'social register' to create database of beneficiaries

The Bihar government on Wednesday decided to launch a family-based 'social register' to create a database of beneficiaries of welfare schemes of the state.

The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

The council of ministers approved a proposal by the Information Technology Department to launch the 'social register' which will act as a Unified Service Delivery Cabinet Secretariat's Additional Chief Secretary S Siddharth told reporters after the meeting. The department will prepare

a unified platform, which will be called 'Bihar-One', for the purpose, he said. The aim of launching this register is to develop a

database of all beneficiaries government welfare schemes in the state," Siddharth said. In future, those who want to avail benefits of such welfare schemes will have to first register themselves with the portal and each individual



will be allotted a specific registry number, he said. 'With the help of that number, the government can

find out details about benefits of the schemes that are being availed by an individual in the state," the official said. The social registry system will

also reduce fraud and duplication of beneficiaries and provide a monitoring mechanism for the living The department will spend Rs

'social register', he said, adding that the process will start very soon.

The cabinet also decided to reduce registration charges on new vehicles to prevent loss of revenue, said the ACS, adding that the decision has been taken in view of the lower motor vehicle registration charges in the neighbouring

It was also decided in the

cabinet meeting that the government will soon launch vaccination for girls in the age group of 9 to 14 years for the prevention of cervical cancer. such vaccines at all government health facilities

The state government will invest Rs 150 crore in the procurement of such vaccines for the purpose, he said.

# 28 children died of Chandipura virus since July in Gujarat: Minister

court is not to disclose the

It is also a criminal offence if

a person, who knows that a

crime has been committed,

conceals it or fail to report it,

he pointed out and accused

the Chief Minister and other

ministers of committing the

offence by sitting on it silently

without taking any action.

on the report.

Chandipura virus has claimed the lives of 28 children under the age of 14 in Gujarat since the first case was reported in July, the state legislative assembly was informed on Wednesday.

Responding to a 'short notice question' by AAP MLA Umesh Makwana, health minister Rushikesh Patel told the House that Gujarat has so far reported 164 cases of viral encephalitis, caused by certain pathogens including the Chandipura virus, with 101 children succumbing to the infection.

Of these 164 cases detected so far, 61 were caused by the Chandipura virus, he said.

Chandipura virus causes fever, with symptoms similar to flu, and acute encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). It is transmitted by vectors sandflies.

He said the sandfly, which carries the Chandipura virus, lives in the cracks of mud houses that are very common in the hinterland. "So far, 101 children under



acute encephalitis. Of these, 28 have died due to Chandipura virus infection, while 73 succumbed to encephalitis caused by other viral infections," said Patel. The minister said 63 children were discharged after treatment, while four were

still under medical care. The situation is under control, he said and stressed case nas been reported in the past week and no death has been reported for the last 12 days.

According to the minister, the government has launched a drive across the state for

Chandipura virus. Under this drive, health teams surveyed over 53,000 houses in areas from where viral encephalitis and Chandipura

cases had emerged. Malathion powder, a pesticide, has been sprinkled Malathion in over 7 lakh mud houses in villages for disease control, he said, adding that liquid pesticide was also sprayed in

.58 lakh houses. neariy Since children are more vulnerable to this virus, Malathion powder and liquid pesticide were also sprayed in nearly 40,000 schools and over 36,000 Anganwadis in affected districts.

# Lay proper motorable roads in Kalvarayan Hills: HC to TN Govt

The Madras High Court I on Wednesday directed the Tamil Nadu government to ensure proper motorable roads were Hills Kalvarayan Kallakurichi district.

A division bench comprising Justices S M Subramaniam and V Sivagnanam gave the directive while passing further interim orders on proceedings initiated by it, pursuant to the Kallakurichi ĥooch tragedy that left over 60 persons dead.

The bench said the State government should also ensure adequate doctors and nurses were available in Primary Health Centres in hearing of the case.

Kalvarayan Hills, besides teachers in schools.

When the case came up for Additional Advocate General Ravindran submitted a status report and said the state government was taking steps to provide all infrastructure facilities to the people living in Kalvarayan hills After it was pointed out that

people living there were not provided with ration cards, the bench directed the state government to conduct a special camp within four weeks and provide ration cards, Aadhar Card and Voter ID cards to them. The bench posted September 19, fur

## Assam to table Bill for compulsory registration of marriage, divorce of Muslims: Himanta

 $T^{\text{he Assam government will}}_{\text{introduce a bill in the}}$ upcoming Autumn Session of Assembly for compulsory government registration of marriage and divorce of Muslim people, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. Addressing a press conference after a cabinet meeting, Sarma said the government will table the Assam Compulsory Registration of Muslim Marriage and Divorce Bill, 2024 during the upcoming session, which will begin on

'Earlier,' Muslim marriages were registered by the Kazis. However, this new bill will ensure that all marriages of the community will be registered with the government," he Sarma also claimed that mar-

riages of minors were also registered by the Kazis earlier, but the proposed bill will prohibit any such move.

Now, minor marriage registration will not happen at all. We want to end the menace of child marriage. So, the marriages will be registered at the Sub-Registrar's Office," he added, citing cabinet decisions. Sarma said that there will not be any restriction on the rituals followed by Muslims during the marriage ceremonies, but only the registration by the Kazis has been

### **MP Govt transfers** nine IAS officers

PTI n BHOPAL

 $I^{
m n}$  yet another bureaucratic reshuffle this month, the Madhya Pradesh government has transferred nine Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officers with Sukhveer Singh being appointed as the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of the

The government issued the transfer order on Tuesday night. Sukhveer Singh, a 1997-batch IAS officer posted as the Principal Secretary of Horticulture and Food Processing till now, will replace Anupam Rajan. Rajan, a 1993 batch officer, has been transferred as the Principal Secretary of Higher Education Department. Amit Rathore, a 1996 batch officer, has been appointed as the Principal Secretary of the Finance Department.



He was holding the charge of Commercial Department. Shriman Shukla, a 2007 batch officer, has been transferred as the Divisional Commissioner of Shahdol

On August 10, the state government had carried out a major bureaucratic reshuffle, transferring 26 IAS officers, including eight district collectors and 21 Indian Police Services (IPS) officers.

#### Monsoon to remain active in east Rajasthan for another week PTI n JAIPUR

Monsoon will remain active in eastern parts of Rajasthan for one more week, meteorological department here said on Wednesday.

Heavy rains pounded many districts, including the capital Jaipur, in the last 24 hours, it

Radheshyam Sharma, incharge Meteorological Centre, said a low pressure area was formed on Wednesday, raising a strong possibility of monsoon being active in many parts of eastern Rajasthan over the

next one week. During this period, moderate to heavy rains are likely in some parts of Bharatpur, Jaipur, Ajmer, Kota, and Udaipur divisions.

There is also a possibility of heavy rains at some places in

Kota and Udaipur districts and Jaipur division for the next 5-6 Sharma said light to moderate

rains are likely in some parts of Jodhpur and Bikaner divisions of western Rajasthan for the next two-three days.

According to weather data in the past 24 hours till 8:30 am on Wednesday, Jaipur tehsil was the wettest in the state recording a maximum rainfall of 85 mm, followed by 78 mm rains in Rajakheda of Dholpur, 65 mm in Gangdhar of Jhalawar, 42 mm in

Mizoram yet to collect biometric data of refugees taking shelter in State: Minister Mizo, have been taking

The Mizoram government is yet to collect biometric data of refugees from neighbouring countries taking shelter in the state, Home Minister K Sapdanga told the assembly on Wednesday. In a written reply to a query of opposition Mizo National Front (MNF) MLA Robert Romawia Royte, the Home minister said that the matter is being discussed with

The state government is Ministry of Home Affairs over the collection of biometric data of the refugees," the Home minister

Sapdanga said that 33,724 Myanmarese nationals and 2,014 Zo ethnic people from Bangladesh took shelter in the state as per the record of state home department, as of



people from Manipur also took refuge in mostly from the Chin state,

The Myanmarese people

2021, while the Bawm people, one of the Mizo tribes, from Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) migrated to the northeastern state November 2022, officials said. The Kuki-Zo people from Manipur, who also share ethnic ties with Mizos, have been taking shelter in Mizoram since May 2023 due

neighbouring Manipur, they said. shelter in Mizoram since the military takeover in February Earlier, Chief Minister Lalduhoma had said that biometric enrollment portal

has been in place for collection of the data and it will be utilised in near future. He had said that the biometric enrollment portal was prepared in accordance with the advice of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home minister Amit Shah.

Ministry of Home Affairs had in their states. In June, it directed the states

that the campaign be completed by the end of September and directed both to prepare a plan and initiate

directed the governments of both Mizoram and Manipur, which share borders with Myanmar, to capture the biometric and biographic details of "illegal immigrants'

Kushalgarh of Banswara.

www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

-PAPER WITH PASSION-

# The Govt steps back

The Government withdraws lateral entry into bureaucracy amid opposition from its allies

he government has decided to withdraw its initiative on lateral entry into the civil services. This decision comes in the wake of mounting opposition from its political allies, who raised concerns over the potential implications of such a policy shift. However, this withdrawal would put the clock back on the Government's desire to infuse the bureaucracy with fresh talent from the private sector and other domains, aiming to bring specialised skills and perspectives into the administration. Lateral entry, as a concept, was introduced to bridge the gap between the skills required for contemporary governance and the traditional expertise within the civil services. By allowing professionals from various fields—such as finance, technology, and social sciences—to enter the bureaucracy at senior levels, the government aimed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration. This initiative was seen as a way to inject new ideas and innovation into a system often criticised for being slow, rigid, and out of

touch with modern realities. But it was not well taken by the Opposition and the BJP allies alike.

Critics argued that lateral entry could undermine the foundational principles of the Indian civil services, which have historically emphasised neutrality, continuity, and a deep understanding of the country's socio-political landscape. This policy, they claimed, might lead to a dilution of these values, creating a disconnect between the administration and the people it serves. This is indeed a valid point as the professionals in the private sector do not have the training and mindset to serve the people, they are more focused on achieving targets and making profits. This does not go well

with the public office which has to be more sympathetic to people's aspirations even if the cost is high. Another major concern, and that is more pronounced in the Indian context, was that lateral entry could become a tool for political patronage. It was feared that the process could be manipulated to favour individuals with political connections, thus compromising the meritocratic nature of the civil services. Surely, it could lead to the politicisation of the bureaucracy, further eroding public trust in the system. Besides, bypassing the traditional recruitment process could create resentment among career bureaucrats. The decision to withdraw the lateral entry initiative reflects a pragmatic recognition of the political realities at play. While the government may have been convinced of the merits of the policy, the need to maintain a cohesive and supportive alliance outweighed the potential benefits of pushing forward with a contested reform. For now, the Government's retreat on lateral entry is a reminder of the delicate interplay between policy and politics. While the idea of bringing in fresh talent from outside the civil services is laudable, the concerns raised by political allies cannot be ignored. Moving forward, any attempt to reform the bureaucracy will need to address these concerns head-on, ensuring that innovation does not come at the cost of values.



eople perform Shravani Purnima rituals while taking bath in the Ganga river, in Varanasi

# J&K gears up for historic elections



For the first time since the revocation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, the region is set to hold its Assembly elections

ammu and Kashmir will have Assembly elections from September 18 to October 1 to elect 90 legislators, the first after the vocation of Article 370 and the state's bifurcation in August 2019. The delay in holding new elections has been a contention for years. However, a recent Supreme Court directive was crucial in setting the timeline. Now that the elections are announced, political parties of all shades welcomed it. Kashmir has been a significant source of conflict for long between India and Pakistan. Both countries claim Kashmir, although they only govern a part of it. Pakistan has even internationalised the issue, which has been brought to the United Nations. In 2019, mixed reactions followed Modi's decision to divide

This decision led to Kashmir losing its flag, criminal code, and constitutional protections. Government job opportunities for Kashmiris decreased and are now open to non-residents. Despite challenges, the state has seen both positive and negative changes. The Prime Minister's initiatives have spurred development, and the growing interest of Gulf countries in investing in Jammu and Kashmir signals a promising future, bringing hope to the residents. The Ministry of Home Affairs reports decreased security force casualties from 80 in 2019 to 33 in 2023 and a drop in civilian deaths from 44 in 2019 to 12 in 2023. The last state elections were in 2014. The high voter turnout in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls has led to Assembly polls. In Kashmir, there was a historic 58.46% voter turnout in the recent parliamentary elections, a 30-point increase from the 2019 general election. The government completed a delimitation exercise after the 2019 revocation of Article 370 and the bifurcation. The assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir increased from 87 to 114 after the 2022 delimitation, including 24 seats for Pakistanoccupied Kashmir (PoK). This increase in seats could potentially shift the balance of power and influence the strategies of politi-



tions. The BJP claimed that the scrapping of Article 370 and their subsequent policies in Kashmir had developed the region for the better. The recently concluded Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir were a significant victory for Indian democracy. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the NC and PDP saw a resurgence.

The election allowed them to revitalise their membership and bring long-standing issues to the forefront. Although the Congress did not secure any seats, the NC won two out of three, presenting a strong challenge for the third seat.

Despite the region's history of terrorism and allegations of rigged elections, the polls were widely celebrated for the conduct of free and fair polls. The upcoming election will test the central government's efforts to integrate Jammu and Kashmir more fully into the Indian Union after revoking the region's special status under Article 370.

It is also a test for the Election Commission to conduct polls without any violent incidents, The political parties have started preparing for the upcoming assembly elections, including campaign strategy, alliances, and candidate selection. The People's Conference, Congress,



THE UPCOMING

**ELECTION** 

WILL TEST THE CENTRAL **GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO** INTEGRATE JAMMU AND KASHMIR MORE FULLY INTO THE INDIAN UNION

**REVOKING THE REGION'S** SPECIAL STATUS **ARTICLE 370** 

Peoples Democratic Party, and National Conference met to plan for the elections. The political parties have started preparing for the upcoming assembly elections, including campaign strategy, alliances, and candidate selection.

The People's Conference, Congress, Peoples Democratic Party, and National Conference have all met at their party level to plan for the elections. If the assembly elections are held as scheduled, the Valley will see a contest between the NC and the PDP. Moreover, the polarisation and separatist narrative that gained traction during the Lok Sabha elections will only intensify and peak during the assembly elections.

The PDP leader and daughter of Mehboobha Mufti echoed the others. Other political parties, including the Congress, the BJP, the CPI(M) and the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), welcomed the EC's announcement. In the 2014 Jammu and

Kashmir elections, no party won a majority. Governor's Rule was imposed for 49 days until PDP's Mehbooba Mufti was appointed chief minister with BJP's support. 2018, the BJP withdrew from the ruling alliance, leading to the Governor's Ruleagain. The

assembly was dissolved in November 2018, and President's Rule was imposed in December 2018 . Since then, the governor's Rule has been in the state.

The government needs to decide whether to intervene in the Kashmir Valley to address soft separatism or consider a reorganisation plan before the elections. During the parliamentary elections, Congress and the NC allied. The NC contested three seats in Kashmir, while Congress contested in Jammu and Udhampur. PDP, part of the INDIA Alliance, was not accommodated and fielded candidates on three seats in Kashmir against the National Conference. For the upcoming Assembly polls, the scene is not explicit. Congress and NC might go together. Omar mentioned that allying with the PDP would be difficult because they ran against each other in the parliament elections. If the regional parties want to improve, they must unite, and the INDIA Bloc must collaborate. The Kashmir elections are crucial, and the entire country will observe a

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

popular government's rise after

# Raj Kapoor's deep bond with Delhi: A legacy of cinema



cal parties in the upcoming elec-

Raj Kapoor's relationship with the capital remains an enduring part of his legacy, etched in the memories of cinema halls and the city's cultural fabric

brate the birth centenary of Bollywood's legendary showman Raj Kapoor on December 14th, it is essential to remember his deep-rooted connection with Delhi—a city that was almost like a second home to him. Kapoor's association with Delhi was profound, and this bond will be celebrated in a grand event in the capital on his birth anniversary.

Raj Kapoor's final days were also tied to Delhi, where he passed away on June 2, 1988. Just a month before his death, on May 2nd, 1988, he was honored with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award by President

Venkataraman at the Siri Fort auditorium. Unfortunately, his health deteriorated shortly after the ceremony, leading to severe breathing difficulties. He was admitted to AIIMS, where doctors, led by Dr. J.N. Pandey, tried their best to save him, but his condition did not improve, and he passed away due to complications from asthma. Delhi, the city that played such a significant role in his life, also became the place of his final farewell.



Kapoor had a special affinity for Delhi's iconic cinema halls, particularly Regal and Moti, where he preferred his films to be premiered. Regal, one of New Delhi's first cinema halls, held a special place in his heart. It was here that some of his most celebrated films, including "Sangam," "Mera Naam Joker," "Satyam Shivam Sundaram," "Boot Polish," and "Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai," were

The RK Banner films consistently performed well in the capital, further cementing Kapoor's connection with the city. As Pandit J.P. Sharma 'Trikha,' a close family friend, recalls, even Kapoor's father, Prithviraj Kapoor, had acted in plays at Regal, which showcased both English and Hindi productions in its early days. Sadly, Regal closed its doors suit shortly after.

Shashi Kapoor, Raj Kapoor's younger brother, fondly remembered his visits to Regal with his elder brother. For Shashi, Regal was more than just a cinema hall; it was a place filled with memories of Raj Kapoor. Raj Kapoor's connection with

Délhi was not limited to cinema alone. His tryst with the city began in 1957 when he produced the film "Ab Dilli Door Nahin.' The film also marked one of

the early appearances of a young Amjad Khan, who would later become famous as Gabbar Singh. "Ab Dilli Door Nahin" captured various iconic locations in Delhi, including the old iron bridge over the Yamuna, Daryaganj, and Connaught Place.

Kapoor's relationship with Delhi deepened further in 1970 when his eldest daughter, Ritu, married Rajan Nanda, son of H.P. Nanda, the founder chairman of the Escorts Group. Raj Kapoor would often visit his daughter's home in Jor Bagh whenever he was in town, strengthening his bond with Delhi. The Kapoor family's connec-

in 2017, with Moti following tion with Delhi extended beyond Raj Kapoor. His younger brother, Shammi Kapoor, had a different association with the city's cinema culture. In the mid-1960s, Shammi Kapoor became a partner in Plaza Cinema in Connaught Place, along with film producer F.C. Mehra. While he later sold his stake, Shammi Kapoor remains the only member of the Kapoor clan to have held a stake in a cinema hall.

Raj Kapoor's fondness for his younger brother Shashi was evident, with the former often treating the latter as a son. Shashi Kapoor's early film "Householder," directed by James Ivory and produced by Ismail Merchant, was primarily shot in a large house near Times House in Daryaganj. "Householder," written by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, featured two of Delhi's iconic landmarks, Jantar Mantar and Jama Masjid. The Kapoor family's connection with Delhi is deeply rooted, with their memories continuing to be

cherished in the city. (The writer is a journalist and a columnist; views are personal)

#### **CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR RAPE**

Madam — All eyes may be on Supreme Court hearings with respect to the Kolkata case but time shouldn't die down and the government can't be numb further on this issue. The pains undergoing by the parents of the victim as well as the fear in the minds of the medicos when they enter into a hospital for their work need to be realised by the law making authorities. It's time to burn the culprits and not the candles. The time has come for the government to pass a bill for capital punishment for rapists. When currency can be changed overnight, when special session can be called to increase the salary of politicians, when parliament can remain open all night for trust votes, wondering what is delaying to pass a stringent

law against rape. The State of West Bengal must be taught a lesson by enforcing the President's role till the case gets cracked and culprits taken to task. Only drastic change like this will also become a lesson for other states to adhere caution and to protect the women from this society. The female MPs in the parliament must take this up as a cause of their own and today it may be somebody's and tomorrow this can happen at their own house can't be ruled out.

A.P. Thiruvadi | Chennai

Madam— Amid the dance of death and destruction in Wayanad, humanity dawned. Darkness gets a relief when the sun softly touches it at dawn. Our pessimism and doubt in goodness in human beings similarly got a relief. It was when we read the report that some people on their own rushed to the danger zone in Wayanad and saved others at the cost of their lives.

Sharath saw that the roof of his home had been blown away after landslides hit Chooramala on July 30. Immediately, he took his parents to a safer place. But he did not stop there. He rescued 18

#### Saga of champai Soren!

THE EDITOR



ixty eight year-old Champai Soren, who was the Chief Minister of Jharkhand for a few weeks, is in the headlines of newspapers these days. Some are saying that he will join BJP, some are predicting that he will form a new party, some are assessing that he will join JDU. But three days have passed since this news break but it has not come to fruition yet. He is still silent, yes, his intention has definitely become clear that after four decades, the people of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, with whose help he became famous,

before he went missing.

Prajeesh ventured up the hill with his jeep the moment the first landslides hit Mundakkai at the small hours. It was pitch dark as landslides thrashed electricity connections. He made the second trip after rescuing many lives in his first mission. After his successful second trip, rescuing several lives, he was last seen in his jeep, setting off for his third

They have reiterated the scientific discovery that says all living human beings are relatives and have originated from one woman. Research has shown that fragments of the mitochondrial genome carried by all humans alive today can be traced to a single woman ancestor living an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 years ago. This woman, known as "Mitochondrial Eve", lived in Africa. You and I, irrespective of our religion, race, class, caste, country, colour, or gender carry the same genome of that mother. The whole humanity is one!

Sujit De | Kolkata

a decade.

insulted him. He should remember very well what was the fate of Geeta Koda, Congress MP from Singhbhum parliamentary constituency, when she jumped to BJP at the last moment in the last Lok Sabha elections? She was neither here nor there. The mystery of Champai Soren's future is going on for a long time because he played the game of rebellion thinking that all the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLAs of Kolhan will come with him . But nothing like that happened. Nor is it going to happen in the future.

It is quite possible that he may lose the election from his constituency Saraikela as well. Because in the last assembly elections in the entire Kolhan, BJP was wiped out. Therefore, even though the people here call Champai the 'Tiger of Jharkhand'. they will never tolerate rebellion against JMM. Therefore, for the time being, it seems that Champai Soren's political life has come to an end. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

#### **SAFETY AT SCHOOLS**

Madam — Schools are noble and honorable places where students learn humility, humanity, compassion, benevolence, respect for others, and how to abandon violence and corruption. They foster unity, peace, and a spirit of togetherness.

Unfortunately, today, schools have become places of fear and distress. Instances of student suicides due to teachers' cruelty, conflicts among students, vandalism on campus, and incidents like the recent Udaipur stabbing have left parents frightened and apprehensive about sending their children to school. Why is this happening? Why aren't government schools especially peaceful anymore?

We heard a lot about shooting in the US schools and wondered why that happens but now it is happening in our own country. A close look is needed.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

# **FIRST COLUMN**

#### THE DIVINE **JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Aligning with this divine justice system is essential for realising true justice and harmony in life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

long with the Creation, God has set in place a perfect justice system. This is overseen by the Divine Authority under the superin-Atendence of God. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 9.10) The Divine Authority is required to record all our acts by the mind, words and the body 24x7. Obviously, they have access to them. They are required by God to decide awards and punishments according to the guidelines given by Him. God does not interfere in this, and we keep on getting rewards and punishments as deserved life after life according to the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is: "what we sow we reap." Going into details, there are three parts of this.

There is 'prarabdha' (acts done earlier), 'kriyamana' (acts currently being done) and 'svabhava' (nature). What was done earlier including past lives, which has not been acted upon is carried forward till rewarded or punished. This process goes on eternally. The timing of rewards and punishments are decided by the Divine Authority. God knows what is being done, but does not interfere in it.

God gets into the act only if someone, mostly a devotee having God's consciousness, approaches Him for relief/pardon. If the request is found appropriate, God helps those approaching Him in order to deal with their punishments, i.e. makes them tolerable. (18.58) In this connection, it is necessary to point out that nature of all souls are also results of past karmas (deeds), as determined by the Divine Authority. It is very difficult to change one's nature by self-help. For example, if someone is lusty,



he or she will continue to be so during his entire life, unless God intervenes and helps in improving it. Again, we have to pray for it. These are the basics. Now let us see how it turns out practically. Take up a soul as an example. He has past karmas, which are due for rewards and punishments in this life. They manifest at their appointed times.

A man gets into an argument with his brother for his share in the paternal property. He decides to seek legal help. This is stage one of the justice system. Now it is 'Panchayat' at the village level or a court of justice. Such courts deliver justice based on man-made laws. These authorities deliver justice expeditiously, i.e. not taking too much time. But they must do justice, in which 'dharma' (highest religious principles) is the basis, wherever they have some latitude. Failing which, they create their faulty destiny; they just act as mediums. Whatever happens to a person has been decided long ago. That is how astrologers can predict what

At every stage of the legal process, rewards and punishments, as destined only, keep coming. If the person concerned is fated to get relief, it will happen in a higher court. Vice versa is also true. God has no preconceived or prejudiced notion towards anyone, except if someone takes His shelter, as mentioned earlier. Like all of us, nations have also destiny. This is a cumulative total of fate of all its residents. Let me take up India for example.

The 21st century is likely to be dominated by India. If it is true and India will become a developed nation by 2047, then, its judicial system has to be functioning smoothly. It must have been streamlined. There will be no delay in the delivery of judgements, i.e. there will be time-bound at every stage. Justice delayed is justice denied will be a thing of the past. There will be adequate judicial infrastructure with sufficient resources. But for this miracle to happen, some people in authority have to become mediums. For this, they will be rewarded personally according to the karmaphala principle. The divine justice system is foolproof. Are people in authority listening? It will be a shame if an opportunity like this is squandered; whatever is destined will surely happen. The question is: who would become mediums and get credit? This has been left to individuals.

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

# Streamlining Punjab's administrative web



To unlock the State's true potential, there is an urgent need for structural reforms that prioritise smooth operations, accountability and stakeholder engagement

t's time for the complex web of multiple organisations of the Punjab government to take cues from the Indian Army's well-structured organisational hierarchy, which prioritises efficient command, control, and operational efficiency to maintain readiness. From a Havaldar leading a section, the smallest unit comprising ten soldiers, to the Chief of the Army Staff, the Army meticulously ensures cohesive functioning, distinct roles, and responsibilities, enabling the 14.55 lakh personnel to effectively ful-fil defence and security roles. In contrast, the Punjab government's organisational structure (4.15 lakh personnel, including contractual and outsourced) requires an overhaul. In total, 50 parent departments and 163 affiliated organisations, each with its administrative head, aim for seamless result-oriented operations, which are below expectations. In the current government, the Chief Minister, who also oversees the industry sector, plays a pivotal role. However, the current structure, with around 20 administrative secretaries heading 17 departments, corporations, boards, and regulatory authorities, is not conducive to growth. By fostering a culture of collaboration, we can overcome these hurdles and drive efficiency and accountability towards a single goal of industrial growth, which has the potential to exceed the current stagnation of around 3% over the past 20 years in Punjab. Unfortunately, the complexity of multiple departments cannot achieve the single target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. Rather, numerous channels breed corruption at various levels, and coercion can easily be gauged as the Punjab government scrapped 1498 mandatory compliances for industries three years ago. Therefore, it is high time to further ease the parent department as a single unique point, focusing on the singular target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. It's impractical for any chief sec-retary to closely monitor 50 parent depart-ments and their 163 affiliated organisations, which around 75 administrative secretaries head.

Assigning an Apex officer, preferably at an additional chief secretary (ACS) level, is crucial to overseeing and synchronising each key sector. This officer will provide guidance, ensure alignment of goals and CHIEF SECRETARY strategies, and streamline human resources operations effectively. Industries and other key sectors, such as Education, Health, urban development, Rural Development, and Agriculture, also need help navigating the complex web of 15 parent departments and their 69 affiliated organisations, which hampers good governance in Punjab. However, these challenges also present an opportunity for policymakers to reassess and reform, driving efficient and accountable human resources and paving the way for a vibrant Punjab.Industries: In Punjab industries are overseen by over 20 administrative secretaries who manage 17 departments and affiliated organizations. This large organizational structure, instead of collectively achieving the goal of growth, is currently engaged in assessing around 2000 compliances, posing a significant challenge for entrepreneurs. The need for an efficient and accountable administrative setup is urgent to create a conducive and thriving business environment.Initially, the Department of Punjab Industries and Commerce and its



**IMPRACTICAL** FOR ANY TO CLOSELY **MONITOR 50 PARENT DEPARTMENTS** AND THEIR 163 AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS, WHICH **AROUND 75** 

**ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIES**  seven affiliated organisations oversaw the industrial sector.

However, three additional departments were later established - the Department of Investment Promotion, the Department of Employment Generation and Training, and the Department of Technical Education and Industrial Training - along with their ten organisations to fulfil the same objective. To fetch new investment, "Invest Punjab" was established under the Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion (PBIP) as a single access point to streamline processes. It is claimed that this entity has been empowered to provide over 34 regulatory approvals, clearances, and compliances related to more than 30 organisations. This streamlined approach is crucial for existing industries, as they face challenges in directly dealing with 17 departments- the Punjab Industries & Commerce Department, Pollution Control Board, Chief Electrical Inspector, Commissioner, Labour Department of Factories, Department of Industries, Employment Generation and Training, Skill Development Mission, Punjab Bureau of

Corporation etc. This complex web of multiple departments is directionless and unfocused; enormous human resources can be utilised in a single merged service provider entity. In 2012, the idea of merging The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation (PSIDC) and Punjab Financial Corporation (PFC) into the Punjab Small Industries and Export Corporation (PSIEC) was also

Investment Promotion and Punjab

State Industrial Development

proposed but has yet to materialise. Punjab, with 99.7 per cent of MSMEs, is a promising hub for growth. However, the most significant roadblock for these enterprises is dealing with multiple departments and keeping track of their compliance. Despite the implementation of ten policies since the first industrial policy was formulated in 1078 the good for action lated in 1978, the need for actionable governance reforms is still pressing. It is necessary to explore various measures to significantly improve services and make Punjab an attractive destination. Policymakers must urgently reimagine the state. Agriculture: In Punjab, agriculture is overseen by five distinct departments: the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries, Department of Horticulture, and Department of Soil & Water

Eighteen additional organisations support these departments. Despite the involvement of multiple organisations, the state's agricultural growth has consistently declined, resting at around three per cent from 1990 to 2000 and further declining to less than two cent from onwards.Education: The government greatly emphasises education and considers it a top priority.

There is a critical need to revamp the administrative structure, as there are currently two separate departments, with six organisations and a school education board. The Department of Higher Education and Languages manages organisations in education and languages, while the Department of School Education oversees the six organisations. Despite these efforts,

it is essential to address that Punjab's secondary school dropout rate was 17.2% in 2022, exceeding the national average of 12.6%. The Way Forward: The reforms have the potential to significantly improve the functioning of key sectors in Punjab, creating a more accessible, transparent, efficient, responsive and accountable system to achieve a single goal collectively. Therefore two steps may be taken: First, Empowering Apex Officials: To achieve seamless collaboration among departments, empower at least five to six apex officers who will oversee the overall administration of their respective departments and have to report to the chief secretary. Each apex officer should have the support of five to six officers as direct

This approach aims to improve responsiveness, ensure transparency in decision-making processes, and hold apex officials accountable for their actions. Second, Stakeholder Engagement: The active participation of stakeholders is not just important, it's integral to the success of the proposed reforms. Encouraging stakeholder participation through feedback mechanisms and regular interactions to understand their needs and concerns is a key part of inclusive growth.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman(Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association(TMA). Views *expressed are personal*)

# A bold leap towards 'Viksit Bharat' with historic push for education and skilling

This budget allocation of Rs 1.48 lakh crore for education and skilling along with digital learning will help build a robust, future-ready workforce

nion Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the 2024-25 budget as a pivotal milestone on India's path to becoming a developed nation by 2047. Prioritising education, skilling, employment generation, research and innovation like never before, #Budget for Viksit Bharat paves the way for strengthening Bharat's credentials ....."

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan posted on X. He noted that these are comprehensive and concrete measures taken up by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman that will be a win-win for all stakeholders—students, academia, and

The budget allocation for Education, employment, and skilling has been increased by



30% to Rs 1.48 lakh crore. India has the largest educational system with 265 million students in schools, 43 million in higher education and more than 10 million learners enrolled in skilling institutions. The Budget Allocation for 2024-25 of Rs 73,498 crores is the highest ever for the Department of School Education & Literacy. Autonomous bodies such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya

Sangathan and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti have also received their highest-ever allocations. The Flagship Schemes like Samagra Shiksha, POSHAN and PM-SHRI have got Rs 3,250 crores. The budget includes strengthening the skilling and apprenticeship ecosystem, skill development and internship opportunities for one crore youth by India's top companies, and providing employment-linked incentives to first-time employees across the sector. The government has introduced a revamped 'Model Skill Loans Scheme' from 1.5 lahks to 7.5 lahks to 25000 students annually and education loans up to 10 lahks for pursuing education in higher domestic educational institutions to one lakh stu-

dents every year with an annu-

al interest subvention of 3%. The step will certainly promote enrolment in domestic institutions as well as reduce the financial burden on the students. In addition to this, the finance minister also outlined several initiatives for the Skill Development sector.

These include the upgrading of 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in line with the skill requirements of the industry. The internship opportunities for one crore youth in 5 years by the government is a welcoming step, this will provide youths with an engagement and enhance employabil-

ity and practical skills. In the scheme 'National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS), an allocation of Rs 600 crore has been made. There has been an over-



all increase of Rs. 3525.15 crore (7.99%) in the budget allocation of the Department of Higher Education in this

Deemed Universities, IITs NITs, IISERs, and IISc have got hefty allocations, considerably high in comparison to the previous budget. In higher education, areas like Digital e-learning, Research and Innovation, teacher training, the Centre of

Excellence in Artificial Intelligence and some specific institutions have received higher allocations. Under Digital e-learning, the government is looking forward to tapping the potential of virtual learning and aligning it with the Academic Bank of Credits with the view of increasing portability and flexible study

In the scheme 'National Mission in Education through ICT', an allocation of ?480 crore has been made in 2024-25 and this is ? 80 crore more than the allocation in 2023-24.The increased budget for Research and Innovation is to focus on academic and research collaborations in science, engineering and technical education. To improve the quality of education being

imparted at the school level it requires a revamped pedagogical structure, so, the Teacher Training segment has got its due share. The scheme Establishment of 3 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) has got an allocation of? 255 crore in the budget. The Major Schemes For Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) erstwhile known as Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)], the budget has been kept at Rs1814.94 crore An allocation of Rs 1800 crore has been allocated for Institutions of Eminence. In the scheme 'Multi disciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education EAP (MERITE), an allocation of Rs 200 crore has been made and

this is a 100% increase over the

The NEP 2020 says that the aim of the policy must be for India to have an education system by 2040 with equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background. Recognising the crucial role of education the government has designed an ambitious package for education for it to be growth-oriented, inclusive and progressive. However, the most important aspect is its implementation. The features of the budget meant for education will play a crucial role in guiding India towards becoming a Viksit Bharat' by 2047 as stated by the Education Minister. (The writer is an educationist and a freelance writer; views expressed are personal)

last year's budget.

Iran's parl

# 'Commercial ship drifts, ablaze after attacks in Red Sea'

commercial ship travel-Aing through the Red Sea came under repeated attack Wednesday, leaving the vessel "not under command" and drifting ablaze after an assault suspected to have been carried out by Yemen's Houthi rebels, the British military said.

Few details were immediately available about the attack, though it comes during the Houthis' monthslong campaign targeting ships over the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

The attack saw men on small boats first open fire with small arms some 140 kilometers (90 miles) west of the rebel-held Yemeni port city of Hodeida, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) center

Four projectiles also hit the Sea or failed to reach their tarship, it added. It wasn't immediately clear if that meant drones or missiles.

"The vessel reports being not under command," the UKMTO said, likely meaning it lost all power. "No casualties

Later, the UKMTO warned the ship was drifting while on fire in the Red Sea. The Houthis did not immedi-

ately claim the attack, though it can take them hours or even days before their acknowledge one of their assaults. The Houthis have targeted

more than 80 vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October. They seized one vessel and sunk two in the campaign that also killed four sailors.

Other missiles and drones have been either intercepted by a US-led coalition in the Red

gets.The rebels maintain that they have targeted ships linked to Israel, the United States or the UK to force an end to Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran. The Houthis have also launched drones and missiles toward Israel, including an attack on July 19 that killed one person and wounded 10 others in Tel Aviv. Israel responded the next day with airstrikes on the Houthi-held port city of

and wounding a number of people, the rebels say. After the strikes, the Houthis paused their attacks until August 3, when they hit a Liberian-flagged container ship traveling through the Gulf

Hodeida that hit fuel depots

and electrical stations, killing

of Aden. A Liberian-flagged oil tanker came under a particularly intense series of attacks, beginning August 8, likely carried out by the rebels. A similar attack happened Aug. 13 as

As Iran threatens to retaliate against Israel over the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, the US military told the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group to sail more quickly to the area. America also has ordered the the USS Georgia guided missile submarine into the Mideast, while the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier strike group was in the Gulf of Oman.

Additional F-22 fighter jets have flown into the region and the USS Wasp, a large amphibious assault ship carrying F-35 fighter jets, is in the



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

### approves all members of president's **Cabinet**

Tehran (AP): Iran's hard-line parliament on Wednesday approved all members of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's Cabinet, the first time in over two decades a leader has been able to get all of his officials through the body. The approval marks an early win for Pezeshkian, a longtime lawmaker who found himself catapulted into the presidency after a helicopter crash in May killed his hardline predecessor. Getting his officials approved shows Pezeshkian picked a Cabinet of consensus with names palatable to all of the power centres within Iran's theocracy, as opposed to going for controversial choices as well.

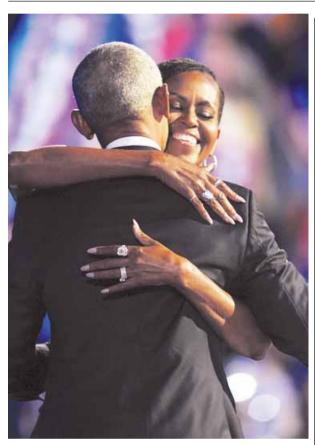
Former Foreign Minister Mohamamad Javad Zarif, who campaigned for Pezeshkian in his election, later resigned as a vice president for the new leader over the Cabinet selec-

Underlining that point, Pezeshkian immediately posted an image online with him standing next to Iran's judiciary chief, a Shiite cleric, and the country's parliament speaker, a hard-liner he once faced in the election. "Consensus for Iran," he wrote in the caption.

Among those in Pezeshkian's Cabinet is Abbas Araghchi, 61, a career diplomat who will be Iran's new foreign

Araghchi was a member of the Iranian negotiating team that reached a nuclear deal with world powers in 2015 that capped Tehran's nuclear programme in return for the lift-

In 2018, then-President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the deal and imposed more sanctions on Iran. Pezeshkian said during his presidential campaign that he would try to revive the nuclear deal. The candidate who received the most support from lawmakers was the country's new defence minister, Aziz Nasirzadeh, who received 281 votes out of 288 present law-



Former President Barack Obama hugs former first lady Michelle Obama as he is introduced during the Democratic National Convention Tuesday, in Chicago. AP/PTI

# Michelle Obama attacks Trump on 'Black jobs' to take us to the top," she said. Lest anyone think she was

In perhaps her boldest words ever against Donald Trump, Michelle Obama, the former first lady took a swipe at the former president for attacking her family because of their race, saying that the top job he is seeking once again "might just be one of those Black jobs." Delivering a forceful endorsement of Kamala Harris during the second night of the Democratic National Convention, Michelle said former president Trump, the Republican candidate in the race for the White House, will try and attack the US Vice President, the Democratic Party's nominee — something she said she and her husband have personal experience with."For years Donald Trump did everything in his power to try to make people fear us. His limited narrow view of the world made him feel threatened by the existence of two hard-working, highly educated, successful people who happen to be Black," she said in her

nearly 20-minute address on Tuesday in Chicago, her home-

Voicing her hope that Harris will win the November 5 election - and Trump's repeated use of the term - "Black jobs" - she chided him for promoting birtherism and other racist

"Who is going to tell him that the job he currently is seeking might just be one of those Black jobs?" the 60-year-old former first lady said, referring to Barack Obama, America's first Black president. The Obamas were targets of unfounded claims by Trump and other Republicans that Barack Obama's birth certificate was a

Her powerful statement was a jab at Trump's comments at the June presidential debate and while speaking last month to the National Association of Black Journalists, where he said that immigrants are taking If Harris is elected, she will

become America's first woman

and first Indian-origin politician — to win the presidency. Michelle, the wife of the country's first Black president, predicted that Trump would launch attacks on Harris' race and gender. She warned that the race to the White House was still close, and asked the Democratic Party to continue working in the days ahead to

ensure the victory of Harris. Michelle, in her address, described Vice President Harris, 59, as one of the most qualified presidential candilates who worked her way up from a middle-class background, drawing on lessons from the two women's late

"Even though our mothers grew up an ocean apart, they shared the same belief in the promise of this country. That's why her mother moved here from India at 19," she said of Shyamala Gopalan, the mother of Harris.

She'd often tell her daughter: 'Don't sit around and complain, do something," Michelle said.She also recounted how

University — a historically black university — and then attended law school.

"And then she went on to work for the people," Michelle said, "from a middle-class household, Kamala worked her way up to become vice president of the United States of America. My girl Kamala Harris is more than ready for this moment. She is one of the most qualified people ever to seek the office of the presidency."

Michelle was earlier greeted by long standing ovation from the crowd as he arrived to address them during which she delivered a series of not-sosubtle digs at Trump — evoking his name to critique what she described as his "ugly, misogynistic, racist lies."

No one has a monopoly on what it means to be an American," she said in an apparent reference to Trump's recent remarks on Harris' background as a child of immigrants."If we see a mountain in front of us, we don't expect called Trump out by name. Michelle Obama's speech, "delivered with a clear voice as she looked straight into the camera to address Americans watching at home, was not saccharine. She began her time

being ambitious, Michelle

onstage by framing her remarks

in the context of reaching for hope through despair," the

Chicago just minutes after his

wife, the former first lady

Michelle Obama, told the same

crowd that, "Something won-

derfully magical is in the air,

New York Times commented Kamala Harris rallied thousands of voters in one packed arena as former President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama energized millions ng of sanctions. more on Harris' behalf inside another on a Tuesday night designed to demonstrate the energy and breadth of the Democratic nominee's evolving coalition. "I am feeling hope," Obama told the Democratic National Convention in

#### Congo reports more than 1k new Mpox cases in a week

Cape Town (AP): Congo reported more than 1,000 new mpox cases in the last week up to Tuesday as African health authorities asked for desperately needed vaccines to help fight its "growing" threat on the continent. The World Health Organisation has declared the outbreaks in Africa a global emergency.

Mpox belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox but causes milder symptoms like fever, chills and body aches, and mostly spreads through close skin-to-skin contact, including sexual intercourse. People with more serious cases can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

While mpox has been reported in 12 of Africa's 54 countries during these outbreaks, the vast central African nation of Congo has recorded by far the most cases this year. Out of a total of 18,910 cases in 2024, 94% — or 17,794 - were in Congo, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said, with 535 of the 541 deaths reported.

The figures are likely an underestimate, as only about one in five suspected cases in Congo are being tested for mpox. Africa CDC director-general Dr. Jean Kaseya said many affected African countries had limited testing and surveillance capabil-

Over the last seven days, Congo recorded 1,030 of the 1,405 new cases in Africa according to statistics provided late Tuesday by the Africa CDC. Only 16% of the cases have been confirmed by virus tests, but the infections meet the agency's definition of the disease. The rising mpox case count in Africa and a new form of the virus identified in Congo that might be more easily transmitted led the WHO to declare it a global health emergency last week. Some hope this will encourage donors to share vaccines and other help to curtail the outbreaks in Africa before cases spread internationally as Sweden recorded a case of the new mpox variant first seen in eastern Congo.

# UK steps up action against Mpox in Democratic Republic of Congo

⁵he UK on Wednesday announced new GBP 3.1 million funding to work with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to bolster the regional African response to outbreaks of Mpox and cholera in the country. The funding announcement follows a declaration from the World Health Organisation (WHO) that the upsurge of Mpox in the DRC and a growing number of countries in Africa constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

During a visit to the Institute National de Recherche Biomedical (National Institute of Biomedical Research) in the DRC, minister Lord Ray Collins announced the funding for a new partnership with UNICEF aimed at benefiting over 4.4 million people in affected communities and preventing the further spread of Mpox to neighbouring countries. "Working together, with our partners and including those at the worldleading research centre I have visited in DRC, our support will play an important role in ensuring global health security for all," said Collins, UK Foreign, Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) minister in charge of Africa.

By protecting the health and

wellbeing of communities across

DRC, and by helping contain these outbreaks, we reduce the risk of diseases spreading further afield. This will ultimately benefit us all," he said. There have been more than 17,000 Mpox cases and 571 deaths in Africa this year, following the emergence of a new clade 1b variant of the disease first spotted in the DRC. Mpox, previously referred to as monkey pox, causes blisters on the face and elsewhere, and mainly spreads when fluids from these lesions are passed on during sexual contact. But it can also be spread through other types of skin-to-skin contact, as well as an

using the expertise and dedica- infected person coughing or , nearby, and can even be spread by touching clothing, bedding, or towels used by someone with Mpox. The smallpox vaccine is used to protect against its spread. The UK said it remains in reg-

ular contact with the WHO and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention on developments of the outbreak and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is closely monitoring the situation. India is also on high alert over the disease, which has reportedly been detected outside Africa in Sweden and Pakistan.

The UK's support to the DRC, in partnership with UNICEF, on the Mpox response, will contribute to saving the lives of affected populations by aligning with the DRC's national Mpox preparedness and response plan," said Professor Christian Ngandu, Public Health Emergency Operations Centre Coordinator at DRC's National Public Health

### **Bus carrying Shiite pilgrims from Pak** to Iraq crashes in Iran, killing 28

bus carrying Shiite pil-Agrims from Pakistan to Iraq crashed in central Iran, killing at least 28 people, an official said Wednesday. The crash happened Tuesday night in the central Iranian province of Yazd, said Mohammad Ali Malekzadeh, a local emergency official, according to the staterun IRNA news agency.

Another 23 people suffered injuries in the crash, 14 of them serious, he added. He said all the bus passengers hailed from

There were 51 people on board at the time of the crash outside of the city of Taft, some 500 kilometers southeast of the Iranian capital, Tehran. Iranian state television later broadcast images of the bus, turned upside down on the highway with its roof smashed in and all its doors open. Rescuers stepped gingerly through the broken glass and debris littering the road. In the state TV report, Malekzadeh



aftermath of a bus crash near Taft, Iran, early Wednesday. A bus carrying Shiite pilgrims from Pakistan to Iraq crashed in central Iran, killing multiple people, an official said Wednesday

blamed the crash on the bus brakes failing and a lack of attention by its driver. In Pakistan, authorities described those on the bus as coming from the city of Larkana in Pakistan's southern Sindh province.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was "deeply saddened" by the crash and that diplomats were providing assistance to those

"My thoughts are with the bereaved families," Sharif said

on the social platform X. Iran has one of the world's worst traffic safety records ally. The grave toll is blamed on wide disregard for traffic laws, unsafe vehicles and inadequate emergency services in its vast

The pilgrims had been on their way to Iraq to commemorate Arbaeen.Arbaeen — Arabic for the number 40 — marks the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Hussein, at the hands of the Muslim Umayyad forces in the Battle of Karbala, during the tumultuous first century of Islam's history. Hussein was seen by his followers as the rightful heir of the prophet's legacy. When he refused to pledge allegiance to the Umayyad caliphate, he was killed in the battle, cementing the schism between Sunni and Shiite Islam. Pilgrims gather in Karbala, Iraq, in what's regarded as the largest annual public gathering in the world. The event draws tens of millions of people each year.

# From blind date to 'Momala': Kamala Harris' husband shares their love story

PTI n CHICAOGO

amala Harris' husband Kamaia manis made Monday Emhoff shared his love story and recalled how he met his wife on a blind date in 2013 and left an awkward voice message for her which she plays for him every year on their wedding anniversary. Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff took to the stage at the Democratic Convention here on Tuesday night with this deeply personal story to drum up support for Harris, who is of Indian and

African heritage. He said he loved working as a lawyer, became a dad to son Cole and daughter Ella, got a divorce and then "something unexpected happened" — he was set up on a blind date with



tentious client meeting. We worked through the issue and, by the end of the meeting, the now happy client offered to set me up on a blind date—which is how I ended up with Kamala Harris's phone number," he

Emhoff, 59, said he left a long and awkward first voicemail which Harris, also 59, now plays for him every year on their anniversary.

'For generations, people have debated when to call the person you're being set up with, and never in history has anyone suggested 8:30 am. And yet, that's when I dialled," he said. "I got Kamala's voicemail, and I just started rambling." "I remember trying to grab the words out of the air and put them back in my mouth. After what seemed like far too many minutes, I hung up. By the way, Kamala saved that voicemail, and she makes me listen to it every anniversary. That mes-

sage wasn't the only unusual thing about that day," he said, drawing laughs and cheers from the Democratic Party supporters.

'Kamala, who normally would have been working hard at the

office, just happened to be waiting at her apartment for a contractor to do some work on her kitchen. I was eating at my desk, which was not a regular occurrence for a busy lawyer like me who appreciates a good business lunch," Emhoff said. "That's when she called me back. We talked for an hour. We laughed. You know that laugh. I love that laugh. Maybe that counted as our first date, Or, maybe it was that Saturday when I picked her up and told her "Buckle up-I'm a really bad driver"," he said.

He called his wife a "joyful war rior" and a loving co-parent to his kids. Emhoff, a Los Angeles attorney who took leave from his firm when Harris became vice president, has two nowgrown children from his first

### UK to deploy specialist officers, speed up returns in illegal migration crackdown

PTI n LONDON

The UK government on Wednesday announced a new set of illegal migration crackdown measures that include the immediate recruitment of up to 100 new specialist intelligence officers and the reopening of detention centres to speed up returns to countries of origin. Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said the new officers will be deployed at the National Crime Agency (NCA) to target, dismantle and disrupt organised immigration crime networks. She also announced a "surge" in immigration enforcement, with plans for the next six months to achieve the highest rate of removals of those with no right to remain in the UK, including failed asylum seek-

In addition, a new "intelligence-driven" illegal working programme will be rolled out to target, investigate and take down "unscrupulous employers" who illegally employ those with no right to work in the

We are taking strong and clear steps to boost our border security and ensure the rules are respected and enforced," said Cooper.

"Our new Border Security Command is already gearing up, with new staff being urgently recruited and additional staff already stationed across Europe working with European enforcement agencies to find every route into smashing the criminal smuggling gangs organising dangerous boat crossings, which undermine our border security putting lives at risk. And by increasing enforcement capabilities and returns we will establish a system that is better controlled and managed, in place of the chaos that has olighted the system for far too long," she said.

As part of the measures unveiled this week, the Home Office expects a "large surge" in enforcement and returns flights, with the aim of putting removals at their highest level since 2018

There will also be increased detention capacity, including 290 added beds at Campsfield and Haslar Immigration Removal Centres, and redeployment of staff to drive the process of returning migrants entering the UK illegally from a country deemed as safe.

the pioneer

# Another case filed against Hasina, her aides in B'desh

Acase was filed on Wednesday against AWednesday against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 86 others on charge of attacking a procession in Sylhet citywhich left several people shot and injured during the recent mass protests on August 4, taking the number of cases against her after her ouster to 33.

Juber Ahmed, acting president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal's Sylhet city unit, filed the case with the court of Sylhet Metropolitan Magistrate Suman Bhuiya. Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana is

also an accused in the case. According to the case statement, the accused attacked a peaceful rally, brought out by Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its associate organisations in Sylhet City's Bandarbazar area on August 4, which left

Daily Star newspaper said. Awami League's general secretary and former road transport minister Obaidul Quader, forhome Asaduzzaman Khan, former foreign minister Hasan

several shot and injured, The



Mahmud, former law minister Anisur Rahman, and former advisor to the prime minister Salman F Rahman were among people named in the case.

With this case, Hasina is now facing 33 cases against her, including 27 for murder, four for crimes against humanity and genocide, and one for abduction, the paper said. Hasina fled to India on August 5 after resigning from her post amidst unprecedented anti-

The Hasina-led government was replaced by an interim government, and 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was named its Chief

government student-led

Bangladesh's interim govern-

involved in the killings during the recent mass movement of the students against the Hasina-led government in the International Crimes Tribunal. Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government, taking the death toll to more than 600 since the massive protest by students against a controversial

jobs first started in mid-July. On Tuesday, she along with five other was implicated in a case lodged over the murder of private company employee Firoj Talukder in indiscriminate shooting from a heli-copter by Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) during recent anti-discrimination students'

quota system in government

Earlier Hasina, her son Sajeeb, daughter Saima and sister Rehana and 17 others were sued in a case filed over the killing of a fruit seller in the capital's Jatrabari on August 5. The victim's father, Sultan Miah, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shakil Ahmed.

Hasina and 49 others over the death of Md Omar Faruque, a student of Kabi Nazrul Government College, at Laxmibazar of Sutrapur on July 19.

Hasina and 24 others were sued for the death of 18-yearold garment worker Sohel Rana in the city's Adabor area on August 5.

In Savar, Hasina and 75 Awami League men were sued over the murder of a barber shop worker on August 5. In Narayanganj, a case was filed

against Hasina, seven former ministers and lawmakers and 179 others for killing a bus helper in the Kanchpur area of Sonargaon upazila. In Rangpur, Hasina, her sister

and 49 were sued over the killing of a vegetable trader during the quota reform movement on July 19. In Joypurhat, a murder case has

been filed against Hasina along

with 216 others in connection with the death of an auto driver in front of a police station on August 5.In Bogura, Hasina and Obaidul Quader have been sued for the murder of a rickshaw puller on August 4.

# Moscow faces massive Ukrainian drone attack but destroys all

AP n MOSCOW

Moscow came under one of the largest attacks yet by Ukrainian drones since the start of fighting in 2022, Russian authorities reported Wednesday, saying they destroyed all of those headed

toward the capital. Russia downed 45 Ukrainian drones overnight, the Ministry of Defense said. It said 11 were destroyed over the Moscow region, 23 over the Bryansk region, six over Belgorod, three over Kaluga and two over

"This was one of the biggest attempts of all time to attack Moscow using drones," Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanin said on his Telegram channel. He said strong defenses around the capital made it possible to shoot down all the drones before they could hit their intended targets.

Some Russian social media channels shared videos of drones apparently being destroyed by air defense systems, which then set off car

Alexander Bogomaz, the governor of the Bryansk region, which borders Ukraine, report-



ed a "mass" attack on his region but that 23 drones were

While Ukraine has been bogged down in a land conflict in eastern Europe in which the Russians have been driving forward slowly at a heavy cost to both sides, Kyiv has also been attacking Russia with drones. Ukraine has targeted oil refineries and airfields in an attempt to weaken Russia's fighting potential, and also has targeted the capital several times.

The drone attacks come as

Ukrainian forces are continu-

ing to push into Russia's west-

ern Kursk region.

The daring incursion into Russia has raised morale in Ukraine with its surprising success and changed the dynamic of the fighting. But it's uncertain how long Ukraine will be able to hold the territory it has seized in Kursk.

It has also opened up another front in a fight where Ukrainian forces were already badly stretched. The gains in Kursk come as Ukraine continues to lose ground in its east-

ern industrial region of

The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank based in Washington, said in its daily report late Tuesday that the Ukrainians had made additional advances in their incursion, now in its third week.

The Russian state news agency Tass reported that 31 people had died since Ukraine's attack on Russia began Aug. 6, citing an unnamed source in the medical service - figures which are impossible to verify It said 143 people had suffered injuries, of whom 79 were hospitalized, including four chil-

Ukraine's attacks on three bridges over the Seym River in Kursk, in areas in does not control, could potentially trap Russian forces between the river, the Ukrainian advance and the Ukrainian border. Already they appear to be slowing down Russia's response to the Kursk incursion.

Ukrainian forces appear to be striking Russian pontoon bridges and pontoon engineering equipment over the Seym in an area west of the Ukrainian advance point, the Washington think tank said.

## Unrest impact: Hospitality sector hit in Dhaka, rooms empty at hotels

The recent anti-government protests that rocked Bangladesh for over a month have hit the hospitality sector hard in the capital Dhaka with the majority of rooms at several luxury and economy hotels here going empty in the aftermath of the unrest. Dhaka is both the political

and financial capital of Bangladesh and home to several landmark commercial properties managed by international hotel chains which cater largely to business travellers. Senior managers at many of these hotels say, the "heaviest impact" was felt in July when huge booking cancellations took place resulting in a "big

PTI spoke to front office employees, managers and restaurant staff at some of the luxury chains as well as economy hotels located in plush areas, and they all painted a sombre picture of the current condition of the hospitality

financial loss".

"The situation is now a bit better, dut still far from normal in our sector as the majority of the rooms are still empty. While a certain section of business travellers are still coming, after the

unrest in the country, the number of guests occupying rooms have dramatically shrunk," a senior manager in the sales department of a luxury hotel told PTI on the condition of

This five-star hotel operating under the current brand name for a year-and-a-half is located in a towering building near Gulshan enclave — an affluent area which also houses several diplomatic missions of foreign countries in Bangladesh. "We have 150 rooms of different categories - standard, premium, junior suite and executive suite. Currently, about 35 rooms are occupied. The numbers are slowly increasing," the senior manager said.

He recalled the situation in the area on August 4-5 when the unrest had reached its peak leading to the ouster of embattled Bangladeshi leader Sheikh Hasina as the prime minister, plunging the country into a

Several hundreds of people have been killed in the protests in Bangladesh, triggered by the reinstatement of a quota system for the allocation of jobs in civil services, and injuries

The protests began in July and local residents and staff at

multiple hotels still talk in a hushed tone about the police action that took place in the third week of July and later days to halt the protests. However, the police crackdown only infuriated the masses which eventually led to the fall of the Hasina-led government.

"For July, the mass cancellations of booking for rooms, food and beverage services and banquet and catering services led to the loss of Taka 1.2-1.3 crore, and the financial loss suffered in the first week of August was about Taka 35 lakh," the senior manager at the five-star hotel added.

As the situation had escalated,

the hotel administration had asked its women staff to stay at home on August 4-5 while arrangments were made for the stay of male staff within the premises of the hotel building which is a huge landmark in the area with Gulshan Avenue and Kemal Ataturk Avenue being major thoroughfares. Recalling the challenges faced on August 5, the day the Hasina government fell, he said, on that day there were Germans, Swiss, Indian and Bangladeshi people among the guests and some members of the diplomatic community, at

# Imran demands open court trial of ex-ISI chief

PTI n ISLAMABAD

Tailed former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday demanded an open court trial of former Pakistan spymaster Lt Gen (retd.) Faiz Hameed if his links with the May 9 violence were established as then "it would not be an internal military affair." These remarks came just two

days after Khan on Monday expressed his fear that authorities were coercing the arrested former spymaster to become a state witness against him (Khan) in the May 9, 2023 riots. After Khan was arrested in an accountability case last year, hundreds and thousands of his followers and workers of his party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTÍ) vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), Mianwali Airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad on May The Army head-

quarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi too was attacked by the mob for the first The arrest of Hameed, the former chief of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was disclosed by the military last

During an informal conversation with journalists at the Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi, where he has been lodged since last



s "indeed the mastermind behind the May 9 conspiracy, then the trial should be held openly," adding that the incident was a local issue rather than a matter of national security. Earlier in one of the similar informal talks with the media soon after Hameed was arrested, Khan had said it was an internal matter of the army. 'They'll make Faiz Hameed turn state witness against me," he told reporters and added, "The army chief should faciliate a transparent trial for Faiz Hameed." Hameed, who served as direc-

tor general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) from 2019 to

# 2021 when Khan was the prime minister, was arrested following action in the complaint of

a private property developer over alleged misuse of official authority. He denied that he had any association with the ex-spy chief since the latter retired in November 2022. "General Faiz became insignificant after retirement. How could he benefit me in any way?" Khan questioned, dismissing the notion that he was in contact with the former ISI chief.The former premier also wno oraerea "my arrest" and this person was "number one and the Badshah and the super King' but didn't name anyone.

### Pak police charge man with cyber terrorism

Lahore (AP): Pakistani police have arrested a man and charged him with cyber terrorism for his alleged role in spreading misinformation that led to widespread rioting in the UK earlier this month, a senior police investigator said Wednesday.

The suspect was identified as Farhan Asif, 32, a freelance web developer, said Imran Kishwar, deputy inspector general of investigations in Lahore, the capital of eastern Punjab province. The man is accused of spread-

ing misinformation from YouTube and Facebook about the British teenage suspect in a stabbing attack that killed three girls and injured 10 other people July 29 at a dance class in Northwest England. The false information claimed that the suspect was a recently arrived asylum-seeker and had a name that suggested the teen was Muslim. After the misinformation led to a violent mob attacking a mosque near the site of the stabbing the next day police took the unusual step of clarifying that the suspect was born in the UK. It's been widely reported in British media

that his parents are from Rwanda and said to have Christian beliefs. Channel3 Now, an account on the X social media platform that purports to be a news channel, was one of the first outlets to report the false name, Ali Al-Shakati. A Facebook account for the channel said it is managed by people in Pakistan and the

The site's editor-in-chief posted an apology July 31 for "the misleading information published in a recent article on our website, Channel3 NOW. We deeply regret any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused." But the false reports were widely disseminated and are blamed for fueling more than a week of rioting that broke out across the United Kingdom and has led to more than 1,000 arrests.

Authorities have blamed farright agitators for stoking the violent unrest by continuing to spread misinformation and promoting the violent demonstrations online. At a news conference in the eastern city of Lahore, police said Asif was arrested at his house in the city for questioning.

### Indonesia searches for ways to balance domestic industries with surging Chinese imports

**AP n** JAKARTA

A flood of Chinese products into Indonesia has hit local manufacturers hard, prompting the government to look for ways to placate domestic producers while avoiding angering the country's biggest trading partner. Garment makers both home-based piece work producers and factories — have appealed for help as they lose market share to low-cost apparel and textiles from China. A surge of products bought online has added to the problem.

A protest by workers in Jakarta prompted Indonesian Minister of Trade Zulkifli Hasan to announce in July that the government will impose import tariffs of up to 200% on some products from China, particu-Îarly textiles, clothing, footwear, electronics, ceramics and cosmetics, to try to protect local businesses and prevent layoffs."The United States can impose a 200% tariff on imported ceramics or clothes, so we can do it as well," Zulkifli said, to ensure micro, small, and imports. It's an urgent matter, Hasan said,

given the flood of imported products that has caused closures of textile factories and mass layoffs. From January to July 2024, at

least 12 textile factories shut down operations, causing more than 12,000 workers to lose their jobs, according to the Nusantara Trade Union Confederation.

medium-sized enterprises and induBut China is Indonesia's largest trading partner, with two-way trade exceeding \$127 billion in 2023. Imposing higher tariffs could prompt Chinese manufacturers to invest in more in factories in Indonesia, but could also backfire, leading Beijing to retaliate. As a result, the government announced in July that it was setting up a task force to monitor and handle problems related to certain

In Bandung district in Indonesia's West Java province — an area famous for textiles

such as batiks, handwoven fab-

rics and silks - imports of Chinese products have left thousands of workers idle and without regular incomes, said Neng Wati, a manager at manufacturing company Asnur Konveksi.

"Now they take turns. The number of workers stays the same, but the work is divided up and not all get some. Some of them have been off for two weeks, some of them haven't gotten work for a month," Wati said. That's a hard blow coming after the slow days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many workers were shifted to ecommerce to make ends meet, said Nandi Herdiaman, head of a local organization of smalland medium-sized entrepreneurs. Only 60% of the 8,000 members of the association kept working after the pandem-

Now, the biggest challenge is cheap imports from China. In the past two months, output from home-based industries has fallen by 70%, the industry

Sirisena settles compensation for Easter Sunday bombings victims

The uptick in imports of Chinese products is partly seen as the result of trade friction between the U.S. and China, which has led to increased American tariffs on Chinese goods. But it also reflects rising trade within Asia as the region implements various free trade pacts, as well as weakening demand in Western markets for Chinese exports. Industry groups in Thailand have also expressed increasing concern about an influx of cheap products from China, which they say have greatly hurt sales by domestic producers who are unable to compete. In what it called an urgent measure, the Thai government imposed a 7% value-added tax on all imported products, a change from the previous rule that only collected taxes on imported products that cost more than 1,500 baht (\$44). The policy is only in effect from July until December this year to give the government time to study the issue before a longer-term solution can be

#### School employee kills at least 3 in Bosnian town

Sarajevo (AP): A school employee shot and killed three people Wednesday in a town in northwestern Bosnia, police said The shooter was severely injured after trying to kill himself. The shooting took place around 10a.m. local time in a secondary school building in Sanski Most, about 300 kilometers northwest of Bosnia's capital, Sarajevo, said regional police spokesman Adnan Beganovic.Beganovic told The Associated Press that the man used a "military weapon, an automatic rifle." He then attempted to kill himself and is in serious condition in a hospital in nearby Banja Luka. The victims include the school principal, a secretary and a teacher, said Beganovic.

Regional N1 television reported that the man had a dispute with the school management.

No other details were immediately available. Bosnian schools are closed for the summer holiday, but Beganovic said there were people in the school as repeat examinations were under-

#### the latest target in a simmering trade war with China. The Chinese Commerce Ministry said Wednesday that it would launch an investigation into subsidies given by

**AP n** BEIJING

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
e-TENDER CALL NOTICE

the European Union and EU

 $E_{\rm producers\ have\ become}^{\rm uropean\ milk\ and\ cheese}$ 

Name of the Work "Hiring of another 01(one) no. of Truck Mounted Conveyorised

\$d/- Executive Engineer (M) Workshop Division-II, Paradip Port Authority

e-TCN No.EM/WS-23/2024

Mechanical Road Sweeping Machine for a period of (03+02) years inside port prohibited area". Estimated cost: Rs.6,40,20,000/- excluding GST and cost of Diesel. Last date & time of Submission of bid: Dt.05.09.2024 up to 18:00 Hrs. Refer our website for details https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.

PPA/PR/29/2024-2025

member countries for dairy been denounced by the Chinese

China opens investigation into EU

exports as trade tensions flare

products that could lead to government and automakers and tariffs on their export to threaten to set back the industry's efforts to go global.

RTP-94/24

The announcement came one The dairy investigation will cover day after the EU released a a range of products including draft decision to finalize tar- fresh and processed cheese, blue iffs on electric vehicles made cheese and milk and cream with in China, in a follow-up to a fat content of more than 10%, provisional tariffs announced a Commence Ministry notice last month. The tariffs have said.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD. (Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001) Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website- www.pspscl.ir (Phone No. 01881-275289) E-mail: se-hq-ggsstp-ropar@pspcl.in E-Tender Enquiry No. 7585/P-2/EMP-12755 Dated 05-08-2024 Dy

Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-2) GGSSTP, Roopnaga invites E-Tender ID No. 2024\_POWER\_124940\_1 for procurement of differential pressure switches for Stage-II & III.

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 14.08.2024 onwards. Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

76155/12/3322/2023/36870 Dated CHD :- 8/21/2024



Tender

pecification

Number

MD/MK/

04/1079

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.

(Govt. of Madhya Pradesh Undertaking) Nishtha Parisar, Bijlinagar, Govindpura, Bhopal-462023 Phone No. : 0755-2602033-34, Fax No. : 0755-2589821, E-mail : dgmp2.cz@mp.gov.in Website: https://mptenders.gov.in, CIN Number: U40109MP2002SGC015119 No. MD/MK/04/Abgd.NIT/1364 Bhopal, Dated: 21.08.2024

**TENDER NOTICE** 

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal invites following bids through e-tendering.

Tender Fee Date of **Particulars** opening of Value including GST Pre-Bid (Rs. Cr. Conference @18% (in Rs.) tender Survey, Supply and Installation of ACDB, 29.08.2024 10.09.2024 DCDB and Marshalling Box along with 3:30 pm at 3:30 pm Replacement of Defective OTI, WTI, MOG and Switches, Indication Lamp, Ammeter Voltmeter and Other Panels Equipments etc. at various 33/11KV Substation Under Substation Renovation Work on Semi Turnkey

Contract Basis in MPMKVVCL, Bhopal. Other details are available on Company website https://portal.mpcz.in & https://mptenders.gov.in M.P. Madhyam/116024/2024 CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

#### Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka's former president Maithripala terror strikes despite having many luxury hotels on April Sirisena has settled in full the credible information of an 21, 2019, killing nearly 270 people, including 11 Indians, SLR 100 million compensation imminent attack His lawyers said the full payand injuring over 500. for the victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that Sirisena was also the minister

killed 270 people, including 11 Indians, during his tenure. Sirisena, 72, was ordered by the Supreme Court to pay SLRs 100 million as compen-Jamaat (NTJ) linked to ISIS sation to victims for his negcarried out a series of devasligence in preventing the tating blasts that tore through

ment of rupees 100 million was completed on August 16. Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed



of defence at that time. The attack stirred a political storm as the then President Sirisena and Prime Minister

42 million. A presidential panel of inquiry Ranil Wickremesinghe were

prior intelligence being made In mid-July, Sirisena reported

to the court that he had already paid SLR 58 million and pleaded for six more months to pay the balance of

appointed by Sirisena after the attacks ironically found the blamed for their inability to then-president guilty of his prevent the attacks despite failure to prevent the attacks.

# Markets extend gains

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Wednesday, helped by gains in FMCG, consumer durables and healthcare stocks amid strong buying support from domestic institutional

However, foreign capital outflows amid a cautious trend in global equities ahead of the release of US Fed minutes restricted the gains in domestic markets, traders said.

In a range-bound trade, the 30share BSE Sensex gained for the second day in a row, rising 102.44 points or 0.13 per cent to close at 80,905.30. During the day, it rose 149.97 points or 0.18 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 80,952.83.

Rising for the fifth straight session, the NSE Nifty went up by 71.35 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 24,770.20.

"The Indian market traded on a tight range with a positive bias supported by strong DII flows. While defensive sector outperformed due to a continued shift in portfolio towards FMCG, consumer, commodities, and pharma.

'Global markets exhibited a mildly cautious tone ahead of the release of the FOMC minutes later today. Currently, the expectation of a rate cut



remains high, given the fall in US inflation and moderation in overall growth," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among the Sensex firms, Titan, Asian Paints, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Nestle India, Bajaj Finserv and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers.

In contrast, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Power Grid, HDFC Bank, HCL Technology, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank were the

Shares of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, beauty and personal care brand Nykaa, bounced 9.42 per cent on Wednesday. During the day, it rallied 18.6 per cent to hit its 52-week high

of Rs 228.50.

GE T&D India stocks fell 5 per cent — its lower circuit limit after the company said its promoters are considering selling a minority stake to simplify its holding structure. Meanwhile, the scrip of NHPC fell 0.88 per cent after a major landslide in East Sikkim caused significant damage to the 510-MW hydroelectric project on the Teesta River.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.87 per cent, and the midcap index climbed 0.43 per cent.

Among the indices, Consumer Durables surged by 1.56 per cent, FMCG by 1.33 per cent, healthcare by 0.94 per cent, metal by 0.73 per cent,

Telecommunication by 0.66 per cent, Commodities by 0.58 per cent and Consumer discretionary by 0.55 per cent. Realty, Power, Bankex and Utilities were the laggards.

The Indian markets showed mixed signals as key indices traded in a narrow range on Wednesday.

'Investors are now focusing on the minutes from the Federal Reserve's most recent monetary policy meeting and Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole Economic Symposium for clues on the US interest-rate cuts this year," Avdhut Bagkar, Technical and Derivatives Analyst at StoxBox,

The European markets were trading higher on Wednesday. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were closed in the negative territory, while Seoul ended higher on Wednesday.

The US stock markets settled lower in overnight trade on

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) again turned sellers on Tuesday as they offloaded equities worth Rs 1,457.96 crore, according to exchange

Domestic Institutional (DIIs) Investors equities worth Rs 2,252.10 crore on Tuesday.

# Sebi slaps `11 lakh fine on IIFL Securities for flouting stock brokers rules

Capital market regulator Sebi on Wednesday slapped a fine of Rs 11 lakh on brokerage firm IIFL Securities for flouting stock broker rules and other regulatory norms.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) inspected IIFL Securities Ltd (IIFL) to look into various compliance requirements adhered by the brokerage

conducted for the period beginning April to July 2022. Thereafter, a show cause notice (SCN) was issued to IIFL Securities on April 15, 2024 by the regulator.

In its 35-page order, Sebi observed that the noticee Securities) admitted to the allegations stated in the SCN in respect of the monthly/ quarterly settlement of client funds and securities stating that there was some technical error.

"I find that the circulars specifically mandate brokers to settle accounts and issue retention statements on a timely basis. However, the noticee failed to do so," Sebi's Adjudicating Officer Barnali Mukherjee said in the order.

While the noticee has now taken corrective action, it noted that it failed to settle the funds and securities on a monthly/ quarterly basis.

The regulator also alleged that the noticee did not do periodic reconciliation of client securities lying in DP accounts, with back office holding and also reported incorrect quantity in weekly holding statement in one instance for 1,835 shares valued at Rs 11.69 lakh.

As per Sebi norms, stock reconciliation is a critical process for all brokers to ensure that their physical inventory count matches the recorded data in their systems to make correct

IIFL Securities admitted that it was a one-off case and a very small portion of the entire holding of shares valued at Rs 120.73 crore. Therefore, the noticee failed to reconcile 1,835 shares, and hence the allegation of violation of norms by the noticee stands established, the order said.

"I find that the noticee has given an ambiguous reply and not addressed the issue raised in the SCN regarding the passing of penalty on short reporting of upfront margin. "The noticee has not given any reason why it had passed

on a penalty to clients on account of short reporting of upfront margins amounting to Rs 24.22 lakh in the CM segment for 26 clients, Rs 56 lakh in Futures & Options segment for 13 clients and Rs 5.19 lakh in CD segment for 15 clients," Mukherjee said. Accordingly, IIFL Securities contravened the provisions of brokers' rules.

IIFL Securities was under a statutory obligation to abide by and comply with the provisions of the circulars/ directions issued by Sebi and stock exchanges, which it failed to do during the inspection period, Sebi said.

### Studying in Australia made easy for Indians

PNS n NEW DELHI

 $\Gamma$  or Indian students eager to pursue higher education in Australia, a new fintech platform has been launched by Australian fintech Ziksu in partnership with India's Elanistech. This innovative platform, introduced at a launch event at the Australian High Commission here is designed to simplify and enhance the financial journey for students studying abroad. The collaboration aims to address the financial needs of Indian students by providing a unified platform that covers the entire financing process, from pre-admission to postadmission stages. student loans averaging AUD 3.2 billion annually (INR 17,700 Crores), this platform will support students and their families by offering comprehensive financial comprehensive

Dr Monica Kennedy, Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner — South Asia at Austrade said,"Australia's Ziksu's collaboration with India's Elanistech and IDFC First Bank Limited showcases how Australian technology is bridging education and

### Al-led demand for data centres in India to drive 500 MW capacity addition in 4 yrs: Avendus

PTI n NEW DELHI

A rtificial Intelligence (AI)-led demand for data centres in India is projected to drive about 500 MW of capacity addition over next four years, according to a report released by Avendus Capital on Wednesday. India is among the fastest-

growing data centre markets globally, it has seen overall capacities doubling to about 1,011 megawatt (MW) in 2023 from about 540 MW in 2019. Poised to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 26 per cent over the next three years, the sector now has the attention of investors, from growth stage PEs to long-term pension and sovereign wealth funds, as per the report.

According to it, India's data centre (DC) market is undergoing massive disruption led by increased demand and use cases by AI

The report said that AI-led data centre capacity in India has the potential to add another 500 MW over the next

"With AI workloads set to surge and eventually outpace traditional cloud computing, the demand for DCs is also



expected to rise sharply," the

Hyperscalers in India are opting to build and own data tailored to their specifications, marking a major deviation from trends seen globally. This preference is bolstered by India's longterm growth potential and regulatory guidance for data

sovereignty. Prateek Jhawar, Managing and Infrastructure and Real Assets Investment Banking, at Avendus Capital believes that India's data centre market will ave the way for the next wave of investments in real estate and AI unlocking tremendous

"Developers can expect to generate 25 per cent plus IRR (Internal Rate of Return) with build-and-sell model,

highlighting the sector's potential for superior returns compared to other yielding real asset classes," Jhawar said. This will drive overall demand for DC capacity in India, which is expected to double to 2 gigawatt (GW) by 2026, Jhawar pointed out.

Close to 94 per cent of the current installed data centre capacity is concentrated in India's top seven cities. Over the next five years, around 40 per cent of the total additional capacity is projected to be added in Mumbai. Chennai is expected to contribute about per cent of the new capacity, while Delhi will account for around 15 per

'We anticipate heightened transaction activity from both public and private markets. Scaled investments with a vintage of over 4 years are expected to seek listing opportunities, while developers will look to raise amounts of capital to fund this growth. The industry is maturing with the entry of long-term investors with commitments of over USD 250 million per investment, offering de-risked returns,"

### Scheme to bolster medical device industry to roll out soon: Pharma Secy



Anew scheme to strengthen the domestic medical device industry will be rolled out in the next one month, Department of Pharmaceuticals Secretary Arunish Chawla said on Wednesday.

is scheme formulated after detailed consultations with the medical device industry, he stated while participating in an event here. "This (the scheme) will be launched in the next one month. It was part of the stakeholder consultation so that different parts of the scheme are firmed up and are aligned with the needs of the

He further said: "We have already received in-principle approval from the Finance Ministry for launching the

said the scheme a reduction in envisages dependence on going

The scheme is being brought in order to make the domestic industry self-reliant in the long run," Chawla said.

Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for medical devices has worked well so far with 20 big greenfield projects having already commenced

tomography (CT) scan, MRI, ultrasound and dialysis machines, among others, are iow being manufactured in the country.

# Rupee plunges 14 paise to 83.91 against US dollar

The Indian rupee nosedived 14 paise to 83.91 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday amid unabated outflow of foreign capital and volatile domestic equity mar-

Forex traders said a weak American currency and lower level of crude prices, however, cushioned the local unit at lower level.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened weak at 83.79 and touched the intra-day low of 83.94 against the greenback. The unit finally settled at 83.91 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 14 paise from its previous days' closing level of 83.77.

The rupee settled 10 paise higher at 83.77 against the currency Tuesday, a day after gaining 8

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the rupee declined on recovery in US dollar index and US treasury



FII outflows also weighed on the rupee. However, weak crude oil prices cushioned the He said the rupee is expected

to trade with a slight negative bias due to recovery in the US dollar and geopolitical tension in the Middle East. "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 83.70 to Rs 84.20," Choudhary added.

which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six higher by 0.09 per cent at

Analysts said the dollar index is at its seven-month low level upcoming PMI data from the ÚS and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's speech at Jackson Hole Symposium later this week. Brent crude, the global oil

benchmark, rose 0.40 per cent to USD 77.51 per barrel. On the domestic equity

market front, Sensex rose 102.44 points, or 0.13 per cent, to close at 80,905.30 points. The Nifty went up to 24,770.20 points.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Tuesday, offloading shares worth Rs 1,457.96 crore, according to exchange data.

# Online vendors generated 15.8 million jobs in India, says e-commerce report

PTI n NEW DELHI

Online vendors have generated 15.8 million jobs in India, including 3.5 million for women, with about 1.76 million retail enterprises participating in e-commerce activity, says a report released on Wednesday. The report 'Assessing the Net

Impact of e-Commerce on Employment and Consumer Welfare in India' was launched by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. "Plugging in data from our

survey, we estimate that online vendors generate 15.8 million jobs, including 3.5 million jobs for women," the report prepared by Pahle India Foundation (PIF), a Delhi-based policy research institute, said.

E-commerce, according to the report, has been a key driver of employment generation In India. On an average, online vendors employ 54 per cent more people and almost twice the number of female employees, compared to offline vendors.

The report noted that two of the most widely-recognised contributions of e-commerce penetration in the retail sector are growth in employment improvements in consumer

It said rather than displacing markets, commerce is expanding into new territories like tier 3



"Our data shows that a higher percentage of Tier 3 city consumers spend more than Rs 5,000 per month on online shopping as compared to consumers from bigger cities," it said, adding this is the India consumption story, which enables the co-existence of hysical and digital retail.

The study analysed the impact e-commerce has had employment and consumer welfare through a pan-India survey of 2,062 online vendors, 2,031 offline and vendors, consumers of products from e-commerce websites across 35 cities in 20 states and UTs. According to the report, each e-commerce vendor on an average employs about 9 people, of which 2 are female, while each offline vendor

employs about 6 people, of which only 1 is female. It pointed out that there was increase in employment across skill levels, including high-skilled (management,

(customer operations), and low-skilled (warehousing, logistics, delivery) functions.

The report said that the growth of e-commerce and accompanying digitalisation have fundamentally changed the skill sets and roles required in the industry.

"Vendors have experienced improved performance parameters since listing online, including higher sales and profits," it

According to the report, 60 per cent and 52 per cent of vendors, respectively, state that their sales and profits have increased since the time they have started selling

"Overall, more than two thirds of the online vendors interviewed experienced an increase in online sales value and profits in the past year," the report said, adding that 58 per cent saw an increase in



new scheme."

Participating in the second Meditech Stackathon, the

He noted that the Production

Various high-tech medical like computed

Last year in April, the Union Cabinet approved the National Medical Devices Policy to increase domestic production and reduce imports of such

# Brookfield proposes massive investment in renewable energy sector in Andhra

PTI n AMARAVATI (ANDHRA

 ${
m B}^{
m rookfield,}$  a global owner and operator of real assets, has proposed to invest massively in Andhra Pradesh in the next three to five years in renewable energy, focusing on wind and solar formats.

A delegation from company Pradesh Minister N Chandrababu Tuesday in Naidu on Amaravati and proposed to build the renewable energy projects, a state government Brookfield officials did call on

investment opportunities in Andhra Pradesh," the official confirmed to PTI. However, he said he could not comment on the quantum of investment. Meanwhile, K Ravi Kumar Reddy, chairman, Evren, a joint venture between Brookfield and Axis Energy Group, said the platform envisages to invest over Rs 50,000 crore in the next three to five years in the southern state. Evren aims to install 1,380 MW of solar power capacity and 1,640 MW of wind power

the Chief Minister and

expressed desire to examine

wind power assets in Andhra Pradesh. Further, he said that the joint venture envisages to add 828 MW of solar power capacity and 204 MW of wind power capacity in 2027. also plans to install 1,311 MW of solar power capacity

capacities in total. 'These projects will mostly

and 3,300 MW of wind power capacity beyond 2027 with the

ambition to achieve 8,873 MW of joint solar and wind

come up in the Rayalaseema region. We have to procure land for wind energy projects...We are committed," Reddy said, adding that Kurnool and

Anantapur could feature in the larger scheme of things. The Evren chairman said the company is keen to speed up these investments and observed that every MW can create one job, hinting at the employment potential. Further, Reddy pointed out

that the company has already harvested four years worth of wind data to assess the viability and intensity of wind energy to generate renewable power in the southern state.

Evren is a brand of ABC Clean Tech Company, which is 51 per cent owned by Brookfield and 49 per cent by Axis Energy

India allows export of 2 lakh tonne of

non-basmati white rice to Malaysia

### Tata Motors ties up with two firms to expand charging infra for electric CVs

capacity by 2026, Reddy said.

It already operates 210 MW of

PTI n NEW DELHI

Tata Motors on Wednesday said it has tied up with Delta Electronics India and Thunderplus Solutions to set up charging infrastructure for its range of electric commercial vehicles (CVs). As part of the MoU inked between the parties, 250 new fast-charging stations for electric commercial vehicles would be set up across the country. Strategically located in and around over 50 cities,

including Delhi, Mumbai,

Chennai, Bengaluru, Pune,

and Kochi, among others,

these new charging stations

will significantly increase the existing network of 540 commercial vehicle charging points, Tata Motors said in a

Basis its understanding of the commercial EV movement, the commercial vehicle major will recommend optimal locations and nearest dealerships for setting up the fast-charging stations, the company said.
While Delta Electronics will

supply the necessary hardware, Thunderplus Solutions will install and operate them, it added. E-commerce companies, parcel and courier service

providers, among other

industries, are increasing the

Expanding the available charging infrastructure on routes will encourage more customers to opt for electric commercial vehicles and improve vehicle uptime, resulting in higher revenues and better profitability,

adoption of commercial EVs

for last-mile deliveries.

cleaner, greener environment," Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles Vice President and Business Head SCV & PU — Vinay Pathak said.

contributing

last-mile

requirements.

"Exports of 2,00,000 MT of Currently, Tata Motors sells non-basmati white rice...To Malaysia is permitted through NCEL," the Directorate Ace EVs to cater to various delivery General of Foreign Trade

towards a

#### **PTI n** NEW DELHI

I ted exports of two lakh tonne of non-basmati white rice to Malaysia, through National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL).

Though exports of nonbasmati white rice have been banned since July 20, 2023, to boost domestic supply, exports are allowed on the basis of permission granted by the government to certain countries to meet their food security needs on request.

NCEL is a multi-state cooperative society. It is jointly promoted by some of the leading cooperative societies in the country, namely, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation popularly known as AMUL, İndian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd (IFFCO), Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd (KRIBHCO) and National Agricultural Cooperative

India has earlier also allowed The government has permitthese exports to countries like Nepal, Cameroon, Cote D' Ivore, Guinea, Malaysia, Philippines, and Seychelles.

notification.

(DGFT) has said in a

Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED).

# INDIAN PARA-ATHLETES EYE 12 MEDALS AT PARALYMPICS



PTI n NEW DELHI

yeing an unprecedented Five gold and a dozen medals in total, the first of the Indian contingent, including star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, left for the Paris Paralympics in advance to get acclimatised to the conditions.

The 16 para athletes will stay at hotels in Paris for a few days before entering the Games Village on August 25, three

U17 WORLD WRESTLING C'SHIP

India's Ronak wins

bronze in 110kg

days before the Opening

The likes of Antil, who is bidding to become the first Indian to defend his Paralympics gold, will train at facilities near the French capital to acclimatise with the

weather conditions there. Para athletics events will be held from August 30 to September 8, the closing day of the Paralympics, at Stade de France, the same venue where the able-bodied athletes

competed during the Paris

"Sumit Antil and some other para athletes will train at Nelson Mandela Sports Complex for a few days before entering the Games Village," para-athletics head coach

Satyanarayana told PTI. Nelson Mandela Sports Complex is around 5km from Stade de France. It has stateof-the-art training facilities for athletics, rugby, tennis, wheelchair tennis

Paralympics."

Some will stay at hotels near the Games Village and they can use the training facilities there during day time," he added.

Asked about Indian paraathletics team's medal prospects at the Paris Games, he said, "We are aiming for at least five gold and 12 medals in total. This will be our best performance

Satyanarayana's hopes stem

# No Jhinghan among India probables for Intercontinental Cup



from the unprecedented success at the 2024 World Para

Athletics Championships in

Kobe, Japan, in May where India had finished sixth in the medal tally with six gold, five

silver and six bronze. Antil (men's javelin F64),

Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20), Sachin Khilari

(men's shot put F46), Ekta Bhyan (women's club throw

F51), Simran Sharma (women's 200m T12) and Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump T42) won

In the Tokyo Paralympics in

2021, India had won a record 19 medals (5 gold, 8 silver and

India is sending its biggest ever team of 84 athletes across 12 sports to the Paralympics,

with 38 from the para-

athletics team.
Paralympic Committee of
India President Devendra

Jhajharia has predicted at least

stadium for the first time. The ceremony will be held

from Champs-Elysees to Place

de la Concorde in the heart of

Paris. The Opening Ceremony

of the Paris Olympics was also

held outside a stadium, on the

banks of the Seine river, a first

in the games' history.

6 bronze).

Influential centre-back Sandesh Jhingan's name was missing as Chennaiyin FC forward Kiyan Nassiri, son of East Bengal's Iranian legend Jamshid, on Wednesday inched closer to his maiden India selection after being named among new head coach Manolo Marquez's probables

Întercontinental preparatory camp. Mohun Bagan SG right-back Ashish Rai and East Bengal goalkeeper Prabhsukhan Singh

25 medals from the Paris Gill, who are yet to play for the Antil and Bhagyashree Jadhav, senior India team, also received call-ups for the camp who won a silver in Hangzhou Asian Para Games in women's in preparation for the threeshot put F34, will be the joint team annual tournament that flag bearers for India during will be held from September 3the Opening Ceremony, which will be held outside a 9 in Hyderabad. It is understood that key

defender Jhingan, who sustained a right knee injury during India's Asian Cup group match against Syria in January, is yet to recover from the injury. Jhingan, the 31-year-old central defender, also missed out on selection for the team's camp ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026 preliminary joint qualification round 2 matches against Kuwait and Qatar, in

Syria, placed 93rd in the latest FIFA rankings and Mauritius, who stand at 179, are the other two teams in the competition. India are currently ranked 124th. The preparatory camp will start in Hyderabad from August 31.

The fourth edition of the Intercontinental Cup will be the first full tournament after the retirement of the legendary Sunil Chhetri and the first assignment for Marquez who was named India head coach last month. India have won the tournament twice in the past. The 23-year-old Kiyan, who grew up in Kolkata and whose mother was born and brought up in Shillong, has been excelling upfront while playing for Indian Super League side Chennaiyin FC.

His father has been an East Bengal legend and currently lives in Kolkata, having represented the Iranian U-20 team in the 1977 FIFA World Youth Championship.

Announcing the probables,

excited about our first preparatory camp and I know it will be the same for the

"We face two different teams and the rankings are not very important. We need to work all together in the same direction to find the correct group of players and their predisposition will be very

good, something I am completely sure about. "I know all of us are in preseason with nice challenges in front of us. Is a big honour to wear the jersey of the national team and we need to show it

for all our fans."
THE LIST OF PROBABLES: Goalkeepers: Gurpreet Singh, Amrinder Singh, Prabhsukhan Singh Gill.

Defenders: Nikhil Poojary, Rahul Bheke, Chinglensana Singh Konsham, Roshan Singh Naorem, Anwar Ali, Jay Gupta, Ashish Rai, Subhasish Bose,

Mehtab Singh.

Midfielders: Suresh Singh
Wangjam, Jeakson Singh, Wangjalii, Jeaksoli Singli, Nandhakumar Sekar, Naorem Mahesh Singh, Yasir Mohammad, Lalengmawia Ralte, Anirudh Thapa, Sahal Abdul Samad, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Lalthathanga

Khawlhring. Forwards: Kiyan Nassiri Giri, Edmund Lalrindika, Manvir Singh, Liston Colaco.

**Intercontinental Cup fixtures** (all matches will kick-off at

7.30 pm): September 3: India

Mauritius September 6:

# Ronaldo aiming to help Al-Nassr end Al-Hilal's dominance in Saudi soccer league

AP n RIYADH

Cristiano Ronaldo is lining Cup for another Saudi Pro League season with the main aim of helping Al-Nassr end the dominance of Riyadh rival

Ronaldo signed for Al-Nassr in December 2022 and has yet to win a domestic trophy with the club. In a social media post this week, he wrote: New season, same goal.

Al-Hilal won the title last season with 31 wins and three draws, finishing 14 points clear of second-place Al-

in the final of the Saudi Super season on Thursday.

"I'm feeling a lot of apprehension because this season is going to be very

Cup last weekend. The 18team league kicks off its

The Associated Press. "Last year, it was a tough championship, but we managed to come out on top. This year, all the teams will be gunning to beat Al Hilal." Last summer, a string of bigname stars arrived from

difficult," Al-Hilal defender

Kalidou Koulibaly, who signed

from Chelsea last year, told

Europe's top leagues to join Ronaldo in Saudi Arabia. According to Deloitte's Sports Business Group, a total of \$957 million was spent. This summer has been comparatively quiet, although the transfer window remains

For Al-Hilal, the return of Neymar will be like a new signing. The Brazilian superstar made only five appearances for the Riyadh club before sustaining a serious left knee injury while



playing in a World Cup qualifier in October. return is highly anticipated by our players, Koulibaly said. "We know that there is still a little bit of waiting due to his injury but scored 28 league goals last people will see a great Neymar.

He still has this motivation

when we see him in training."

Neymar returned to training last month and, according to local media, coula start playing again in September. În Neymar's absence, Serbian striker Aleksandar Mitrovic

season, second only to Ronaldo's record 35. Al-Hilal Portuguese international Ruben Neves and Morocco's Bounou in goal. Al-Nassr's major new signing

so far has been Brazilian goalkeeper Bento, who Colombian international David Ospina. As well as Ronaldo, the Yellows have Senegalese star Sadio Mane, midfielder Marcelo Brozovic and defender Aymeric Laporte, who helped Spain to the European championship

Other challenges are expected to come from Jeddah clubs Al-Ahli, led by Riyad Mahrez, Ittihad, which has made the biggest signing this summer so far, paying over \$60 million to Aston Villa for French winger Moussa Diaby.

All four clubs, which were taken over in 2023 by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, are by far the country's best-supported teams.

League officials will likely be hoping a more competitive title race will help improve the average attendance, which was just over 8,000 per game last

Al-Hilal has international as well as domestic ambitions. The club will represent Asia in the expanded FIFA Club World Cup which kicks off June 15 in the United States. Al-Hilal reached the final of the 2022 tournament before losing to Real Madrid.

"What will be expected going into that competition is that it's going to be Neymar's team,' the 33-year-old Koulibaly said. "So we're going to do everything in training so that he's out there and in his best

conditions to help us win

#### Zoltan Czako of Hungary in PTI n ST LOUIS (USA)

the semi-final. The gold in this World championship challenger Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh category was won by Ukraine's Ivan Yankovskyi, who beat played out a thrilling draw with Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi to be tied second after the second round of second medal in the 51 kg the Sinquefield Cup, the final event on the Grand Chess Tour this year. After a relatively easy draw with He is first pitted against Dominic Michael Munaretto reigning world champion Ding Liren of China, Gukesh had an exciting of the United States and if he match against Nepomniachtchi out wins the bout then he will fight of a Catalan opening game on Tuesday.

the bronze medal play off with either Kazakhstan's Mussan The Indian stood marginally better Yerassyl or Iran's Abolfazl for the major part as white pieces but eventual silver medallist Mehrdad Karamiegaei. Nepomniachtchi, who has won the

# Gukesh draws with Nepomniachtchi

stayed put with some fine defense and counter-attacks to steer the game to a draw in the knight and pawns endgame. The game lasted 60 moves. Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa also stayed in the hunt after a draw with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France. It was another Italian opening game as black for the Indian who did not get any chance against a solid Vachier-Lagrave.

The pieces got traded at regular intervals and the players arrived at a rook and pawns endgame that



After a lone decisive game in the opening round wherein Alireza Firouzja of France defeated Fabiano Caruana of United States, the second round witnessed an all-draws day. Firouzja drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan and Dutchman Anish Giri signed peace with Ding Liren.

In the other game of the USD 3,50,000 prize money tournament, the all American duel between Wesley So and Caruana was also

Firouzja remained in front with 1.5 points in his bag leaving eight players behind him on one point each. With a half point in his kitty,

Caruana is currently at the bottom with seven rounds still remaining in 10-player tournament.

**RESULTS ROUND 2:** 

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 1) drew with R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 1); Anish Giri (Ned, 1) drew with Ding Liren (Chn, 1); Wesley So (Usa, 1) drew with Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 0.5); D Gukesh (Ind, 1) drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi (FID, 1); Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 1.5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1).

# It's final week to qualify for Presidents Cup and Solheim Cup

**AP n** WASHINGTON

Tuesday.

PTI n AMMAN (JORDAN)

Championship here.

**T**ndia's Ronak Dahiya bagged

Ithe bronze medal in the

110kg Greco-Roman category

at the U17 World Wrestling

In the bronze medal play-off,

Ronak, currently ranked two

in the world in his age-group

weight category, comfortably disposed the challenge of

Turkey's Emrullah Capkan 6-1

to claim India's first medal

from the championship on

Earlier, Ronak had lost to

The BMW Championship is I the last stop before the leading six players get automatic spots in the Presidents Cup next month at Royal Montreal

Turns out the first FedEx Cup playoff event had a strong effect, too.

Jordan Spieth might have been a long shot to make the U.S. Team, but last week sealed it. He finished 26 shots out of the lead, failed to advance and said he would be having surgery on his left wrist. His season is

It also was a big blow to Mackenzie Hughes of Canada, who dropped out of the top 50. International captain Mike Weir wants a strong Canadian presence, but none is in the top six and four other Canadians are ahead of Hughes.

Weir gets six captain's picks after the Tour Championship. Hughes won't be at East Lake,

either. This comes two years after Hughes, renowned for his putting, was curiously left off the International side for the matches at Quail Hollow, where he is a member.

Czako 13-4 by virtue of

India have a chance of a

repechage if Sainath Pardhi

technical superiority.

wins two bouts.

For the Americans, there figures to be significant turnover from their last team competition at the Ryder Cup. Three players already are effectively eliminated - Spieth, Rickie Fowler (didn't qualify for the postseason) and Brooks Koepka (ineligible because he plays for LIV Golf). The leading five - Scottie Scheffler, Xander Schauffele, Collin Morikawa, Wyndham Clark and Patrick Cantlay were at Marco Simone. Sahith Theegala is holding down the

sixth spot over Tony Finau. Max Homa, who went 4-0 in his Presidents Cup debut at Quail Hollow, finished last in the 70-man field last week. He has not contended since his Sunday chance at the Masters (his lone top 10 was at Wells the 2019 matches. Four others

Fargo, where he finished 13 shots behind). Homa is at No. 9 in the standings.

Right behind is Brian Harman, who has one top 10 in his last

The wild card, again, is Justin Thomas. He is at No. 16 in the standings and he could use a mile-high effort this week. Thomas faced plenty of scrutiny from being picked for the Ryder Cup team without having qualified for the postseason.

U.S. Captain Jim Furyk could have some interesting choices, such as 20-year-old Nick Dunlap or 22-year-old Akshay Bhatia, depending on what kind of performances he sees at Castle Pines and then East

The International team, which has lost nine in a row, is the side that would appear to have some stability. The leading five players were at Quail Hollow and Byeong Hun An played in from the '22 team have done enough to merit consideration. SOLHEIM CUP PUSH: The

Women's British Open at St. Andrews is the final qualifying event for the Solheim Cup, with seven players vying for for the U.S. Team.

the final two automatic spots Lauren Coughlin, who won the Women's Scottish Open, and Allisen Corpuz, who tied for 15th in Scotland, clinched their spots. Meghan Khang

and Andrea Lee are holding

down the final two spots among seven automatic qualifiers.

Rose Zhang is at No. 8, though she also is leading in the two spots awarded to players from the women's world ranking not already eligible.

Stacy Lewis gets three captain's picks, one of them likely going to Lexi Thompson, who has shown renewed form since announcing her retirement from a full schedule.

Europe takes two players from into all eight signature events its European Solheim Cup next year, allowing Bradley to

standings, the leading six players from the women's world ranking and Suzann Pettersen will get four captain's

The matches are Sept. 13-15 at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club in Gainesville, Virginia. Keegan hangs on

Keegan Bradley figured to be safe when he started the postseason at No. 39, but that was a little misleading. There were 93 points between Bradley and No. 38, and only 105 points down to Jake Knapp at No. 50. Bradley left the TPC

Southwind projected outside the top 50 and he narrowly hung on, moving inside when Tom Kim finished bogeydouble bogey-double bogey. He has said his goal was to get to the Tour Championship. But the Ryder Cup captain did well to make it to the BMW Championship. The top 50 get be around players likely to make his team for Bethpage Black.

Plus, he doesn't have to put tournament directors in a spot by asking for exemptions. WINNERS OUT: Winning a

PGA Tour event that offers full FedEx Cup points is worth a trip to the Masters and PGA Championship, a start at Kapalua for The Sentry and a two-year exemption. But it doesn't guarantee the top 50 in the FedEx Cup and the guarantee of playing the eight 20 million signature events

the following year. Nick Taylor (Phoenix Open), Jake Knapp (Mexico Open), Peter Malnati (Valspar Championship), Davis Riley (Colonial) and Jhonattan Vegas (3M Open) did not reach

Championship. Don't expect Vegas to lose sleep over it. He was No. 139 in the FedEx Cup and in danger of losing his card when he won Saunders retires

Trying to play golf at the highest level is difficult enough. Sam Saunders did this while being known his entire career as the grandson of Arnold Palmer.

Saunders strived for his own identity while embracing his heritage with remarkable

But the 37-year-old is ready to move on. Saunders missed the cut on the Korn Ferry Tour last week and posted to Instagram that it was his last professional round. He did not qualify for the Korn Ferry

Tour postseason after making only four cuts this year. "I started this career over 15 years ago, and today was my

last professional round," Saunders wrote. "I didn't want to post anything or make a big to-do of it, but I have too many people I want to thank, and acknowledge what a treat it

# **BORDER GAVASKAR TROPHY ON PAR** WITH ASHES FOR AUSTRALIA: STARC

Australia pace ace Mitchell Starc believes that with the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India becoming a five-Test affair for the first time in over three decades, it would be "right on par" with the esteemed Ashes series for

The marquee series between India and Australia, set to begin in November, was extended by a match this year for the first time since the 1991-92 season.

"Being five matches now it's probably right on par with an Ashes series," Starc told Wide World of Sports.

Since 2014-15, Australia have failed to lay their hands on the Border Gavsakar Trophy, with India winning four consecutive series including the historic triumphs Down Under in 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Starc is not only intent on reversing this trend but also harbours aspirations of a clean sweep, particularly as the series forms a crucial part of the World Test Championship. "We always want to win every

game at home and we know India are a very strong team,"

Currently, India leads the Wold Test Championships table with Australia in second place. "As we're placed at the minute we're the top two teams on the

Test ladder... So a very exciting series coming up for the fans and certainly the players.

"Hopefully when we're sitting there on the 8th of January we have that trophy back on our

The 34-year-old is just 11 matches shy of reaching a milestone 100 Tests and has no plans to quit red-ball cricket. The left-armer said he is scaling back his white-ball

"If it does come to a point commitments to prolong his where I'm lucky enough to get

Test career for as long as

..Every time I get to wear the

baggy green cap it feels very special. Hopefully it's five times

through the summer with five

wins and we can sing that song

five times, then we move on

obviously going to be pretty special as well," he said. Starc is scheduled to fly to

England next month for a white-ball series following which the left-armer intends to play domestic cricket for New South Wales ahead of the

Border Gavaskar Trophy. "The Tests will always be taking precedence for me," he

"We've got seven Tests on the bounce with five against India and then two in Sri Lanka, so they sit top of the tree with

what's coming up."
Alongside, Test and ODI skipper Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, Starc will shoulder the pace duties across three

"Pat is resting for this UK tour... We love playing all three formats but that could look different at different times over 12 months."

"There is certainly no end date on (our bowling careers). That will be an ongoing one. We'll see where (our) bodies are and the want to keep going, but at this stage it's all guns blazing for five Tests against India."

# Arya leads South Delhi Superstarz to six-wicket win over Central Delhi Kings

 $P^{riyansh}_{82}$  Arya's scintillating balls powered South Delhi Superstarz to a six-wicket win over Central Delhi Kings in the Delhi Premier League here.

Fifties from Dhruv Kaushik (56) and Yash Dhull (52) guided Central Delhi Kings to 176/7 after they were asked to bat on Tuesday.

However, South Delhi Superstarz chased down the target with five balls to spare, courtesy a solid 101-run partnership between Arya and Ayush Badoni (42). After the early loss of Sarthak Ray (0 off 1) in the first over, Badoni and Arya approached the run chase with composed batting.

By the end of the powerplay, they took the score to 45/1 and went on to consistently score more than 10 runs per over. Arya brought up his fifty in 32

balls, while Badoni contributed a vital 42 off 36 balls before being caught at mid-wicket, thus missing out on his half-

By the strategic timeout, SDS were firmly in control, thanks to the free-flowing stroke play of Arya and Tejaswi Dahiya.

Arya, who smashed seven sixes and three fours, was dismissed in the 17th over. Tejaswi followed in the next over, contributing 22 off 14.

Despite these quick wickets, the South Delhi Superstarz were still in a commanding position, needing just 17 runs from 16 balls.

Vision Panchal and Dhruv Singh then sealed the victory with two sixes and a four in the 19th over, securing the South Delhi Superstarz' consecutive win of the

Earlier in the contest, Hiten Dalal (10 off 9) fell cheaply to

However, skipper Yash Dhull led from the front, keeping the scoreboard ticking alongside Dhruv Kaushik as they stitched together a solid 91-run partnership off 65 balls. Kaushik was then dismissed in

the following over after scoring 56 off 33 balls.

**Brief Scores:** Central Delhi Kings: 176/7 in

20 overs (Dhruv Kaushik 56 off 34, Yash Dhull 52 off 44, Kuldip Yadav 2/37) South Delhi Superstarz: 177/4

in 19.1 overs (Priyansh Arya 82 off 51, Ayush Badoni 42 off 36,

# Conor joins Atletico Madrid from Chelsea Can see growth, especially in women's as Joao moves in opposite direction

AP n MADRID

ngland midfielder Conor Gallagher finally completed his move to Atletico Madrid on Wednesday, ending a weeks-long saga that required a move by Joao Felix in the opposite direction to facilitate the deal.

Gallagher joined Atletico for a reported 36 million pounds (\$47 million) on a five-year deal. Hours later, Chelsea announced the signing of Felix, the Portugal forward, for a reported 45 million pounds (\$59 million)

Chelsea wanted to sell Gallagher, an academy product and the team's vicecaptain last season, to help the club meet the Premier League's financial requirements that are being more strictly applied in recent seasons.

Chelsea and Atletico reached an agreement on his transfer but it was in jeopardy last week, reportedly because of

India hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh on

Wednesday said that his side

was unlucky to lose to

Germany in the Paris

Olympics semifinal despite

creating several chances

before calling the back-to-

back bronze winning

India repeated their 2021

Tokyo Games performance in

Paris, defeating Spain to win

consecutive bronze medals

"huge

performance

achievement".



the collapse of a deal that would have seen Atletico striker Samu Omorodion move in the opposite direction.

That meant Gallagher had to return to Chelsea and train alone but a solution was reached, with Felix instead making the switch from Atletico to Chelsea. Felix spent the second half of the 2022-

23 season on loan at Chelsea, having previously become the third most expensive player of all time when Atletico triggered the 126 million euro (around \$140 million) buyout clause in

Unlucky to lose to Germany; back-to-back

bronze a huge achievement: Harmanpreet

кеепіу-contested

semifinal earlier saw India

going down to reigning world

champions Germany 2-3 to

set up a bronze-medal match

"It (semifinal vs Germany)

was a very close match. I

think we created a lot of

chances but you can say we

were not lucky that day and

some chances were off

target," Harmanpreet told PTI Videos during a

ceremony

organised by the Odisha big thing for us," he added.

with Spain.

felicitation

But I think the bronze medal

was very important. It was

the last match of the

tournament and feeling very

happy after winning the match. Our effort was that we

should fulfil our dream (of

winning gold) but somehow

"But, still, we had the bronze

medal to play for. So, went

into the match with that

mindset that we will win.

We've won back-to-back

medals in hockey; it's a very

we were unlucky.

his contract in 2019 to sign him from

"I'm really happy to be back at Chelsea and I can't wait to get started," he said. "I can see some familiar faces from the last time I was here, which is always nice. "I loved my time here before and I told

my friends and family that I'd love to return to the Premier League one day. To do that with Chelsea is a great feeling and I'm excited to be back."

Felix was on loan at Barcelona last Gallagher played for England at the

recent European Championship and was one of Chelsea's best players last season. He has played 95 times for a club he joined as a 6-year-old, scoring 10 goals in

It continues a frenzied summer of transfer activity for Chelsea, which continues to overhaul its squad under its

speechless with the reception

given to the players, saying

the team gets the same

affection every time it comes

"And, this time, we are

getting all the more affection.

Whenever the team comes

here, be it to play in a

tournament or after winning

a medal, it always feels nice...

We get a lot of respect," added

Harmanpreet also thanked

the state government for

to Odisha.

Harmanpreet.

sponsoring hockey.

# table tennis in India: Manika on UTT

PTI n CHENNAI

Indian table tennis is headed **⊥**in the right direction thanks to the advent of the UTT tournament which attracts top players from across the world, feels Manika Batra, who is the most prominent face of the women's game in the country. Manika and Sreeja Akula recently made history by becoming the first Indian table tennis players to reach the Olympics singles prequarterfinals in Paris.

Next, the 29-year-old Manika will represent Bengaluru Smashers in the eight-team Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) competition, which gets underway here on Thursday. "Personally, it has helped me because the players come for UTT from different countries, and we play against them, we play with them," Manika told reporters here on Wednesday. "It's really fun, and we enjoy this. I can see the growth that's happening, especially in "This is the first time both women's table tennis in India, Indian teams, men and how we all are performing internationally

improved a lot from UTT." Manika lost to Miu Hirano of Japan 0-3 in the women's singles pre-quarterfinals in Paris. In the team event, India, who were represented by Manika, Sreeja and Archana Kamath, lost to Germany 1-3

in the quarterfinals. In the UTT, one of Manika's most anticipated contests will be against world No. 13, Bernadette Szocs of Romania, who will play for Ahmedabad



The two players also clashed during the pre-quarterfinals of Olympics, with India winning

Bernadette said, "I love to play here; I love all the fans who are very big supporters of table tennis. And, of course, always when I come here, everything is perfect with good organisation." Veteran Sharath Kamal, who will lead Chennai Lions in UTT, feels the performance graph of Indian players is going up gradually. "This is the first time both women, qualified for the Games in the team event. The girls went further; they went on to play in the quarterfinals in the team event,

pointed out. So, performances like this have been constantly coming up, and India has been constantly growing in the international arena, and we look forward to more growth." Nigerian legend Quadri Aruna returns to the tournament, and

and especially Manika and

Sreeja got into the last 16 in the

individual event," Sharath

his clash against Sharath is expected to be one of the highlights of the tournament. "With huge spending on the sport of table tennis in India, we have seen huge growth. Indian players are already title contenders in most of the tournaments in the world. So, I think table tennis has improved a lot in India," expressed Aruna, who will be representing U Mumba TT.

UTT 2024 SQUADS: Ahmedabad SG Pipers: Manush Shah, Bernadette Szocs (Romania), Lilian Bardet (France), Reeth Tennison, Pritha Vartikar, Jash Modi. Chennai Lions: Achanta

Sharath Kamal, Sakura Mori (Japan), Jules Rolland (France), Poymantee Baisya, Mouma Das, Abhinandh PB. Dabang Delhi TTC: Sathiyan

Orawan Paranang (Thailand), Diya Chitale, Andreas Levenko (Austria), Yashansh Malik, Lakshita

Athlead Goa Challengers: Harmeet Desai, Yangzi Liu (Australia), Ghorpade, Sudhanshu Grover, Sayali Wani, Mihai Bobocica Jaipur Patriots: Cho Seungmin (South Korea),

Sawettabut (Thailand), Snehit SFR, Ronit Bhanja, Moumita Dutta, Nithyashree Mani. PBG Bengaluru Smashers: Manika Batra, Alvaro Robles

(Spain), Lily Zhang (USA), Jeet Chandra, Taneesha Kotecha, Amalraj Anthony.

Puneri Paltan Table Tennis: Ayhika Mukherjee, Natalia

Bajor (Poland), Joao Monteiro (Portugal), Bhattacharjee, Anirban Ghosh, Yashini Sivashankar.

U Mumba TT: Thakkar, Sutirtha Mukherjee, Aruna Quadri (Nigeria), Akash Pal, Kavyasree Baskar,

#### Maria Xiao (Spain). **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited** IDFC FIRST Bank

(erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road.

Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022. Appendix iv [rule 8(1)] Possession notice

Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security nterest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 22.07.2023 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1. Tahsin Akhtai 2. Marufa Bano to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 16,61,397.62/ (Rupees Sixteen Lac Sixty One Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Seven and Sixty Two Palse Only) as on 21.07.2023 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowe

and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under subsection (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 14th day of AUG 2024. The borrowers 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 the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 16,61,397.62/- (Rupees Sixteen Lac Sixty One Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Seven and Sixty Two Palse Only) and interest thereor The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act

in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Ingale West: Plot of D.I. Khan North: Rasta of 30 Ft. South: Plot of Golchha

Description of the Immovable properties All that piece and parcel of Diverted Residential Land Admeasuring 30 X 55 = 1650 Sq Ft., Sitauted At Part of Khasra No. 1282/2, Mauja-kohka Ward No. 08, Vivekanano Nagar, Inner Portion P.H.No. 14/19, R.N.M.-Durg-1, Under Nagar Palik Nigam Bhilai Tehsil & District: Durg, Chhattisgarh-491001, And Bounded As: East: Plot of Santosh

Date: 14-08-2024 Place: CHHATTISGARH Loan Account No: 51189410

IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

Authorised Officer AU Small Finance Bank Limited

# After silver at Olympics, Chopra takes field in Lausanne in bid for Diamond League title



PTI n LAUSANNE

Two weeks after winning his historic silver medal at the Paris Olympics, star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will resume action at the Lausanne Diamond League meeting on Thursday, seeking to reclaim the DL trophy at the season-ending finale next month.

Nursing a long-standing groin injury, Chopra claimed a silver in the Paris Olympics on August 8 with a 89.45m throw, having won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition of the Games three years ago.

The 26-year-old double Olympic medallist Indian on

participation at the Diamond League meeting in Lausanne, leaving a decision on a possible surgery after the end of the

Chopra was the Diamond League champion in 2022 and finished second behind Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic in the winner-takes-all DL final in Eugene, USA, last year. This season's DL finals will be

held in Brussels on September 14. He needs to finish in the top-six of the Diamond League meetings series standings to qualify for the season finale.

There is another DL meeting — in Zurich on September 5 which has men's javelin throw event in its roster. He is currently at fourth spot

with seven points he has garnered after finishing second behind Vadlejch in the Doha Diamond League on May 10. After a busy couple of days post the Olympic final on August 8, Chopra started training in Switzerland and is determined to finish the season on a high despite being restricted by the injury.

"I came to Switzerland for training ahead of the Diamond League. Luckily, I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that.

"I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month to go until

the season ends. I will go to the doctors in my free time," he

Chopra will be up against a top-class field in Lausanne with five of the top-six finishers in Paris Olympics final competing. Only Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who stunned the athletics world by winning the gold with an Olympic record throw of 92.97m, is missing. Nadeem had finished fourth in

the Paris Diamond League on July 7 with a throw of 84.21m. That was the only DL meeting - as well as the lone event apart from the Olympics — he

had taken part this season. He is currently at sixth spot in the standings with five points. Having pushed to the fourth spot with a throw of 88.50m in Paris after winning a silver in Tokyo, Vadlejch would be looking to maintain his form in his bid to defend the DL title. Two-time world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada, who took the bronze in the Paris Olympics with 88.54m, has been on the ascendancy after a poor last season, and he is capable of pulling off big throws, having already gone past the 90m mark in his

### Lausanne on Thursday. He has been managing his

consistent javelin thrower in

the last couple of seasons,

before Nadeem pulled off the

will start as favourite in

Chopra has been the most groin injury since winning the gold in the Budapest World Championships last year. "The final treatment will be heist in Paris, and the Indian

after the season ends. I will try to take care of it as much as possible and consult the doctors later," he said.

Place : Chattisgarh

AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) Regd. Office: 19-A, Dhuleshwar Garden, Ajmer Road, Jaipur - 302001 (CIN:L36911RJ1996PLC011381)

APPENDIX IV [SEE RULE 8(I)] POSSESSION NOTICE Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) under the "Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act, 2002 (54 of 2002)] and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice on the date as mentioned below calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the

said notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice as per the details given in below table:-			
Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Mortgagor/Guarantor/Loan A/c No.	13(2) Notice Date & Amount	Description of Mortgaged Property	Date of Possession Taken
(Loan A/C No.) L9001060124912291, Dharmu Lal Chandra (Borrower), Triveni Chandra (Co-Borrower)	12-Apr-24 ₹ 2,95,266/- Rs. Two Lac Ninety-Five Thousand Two Hundred Sixty- Six Only as on 12-Apr-24	All That Part And Parcel Of Residential/Commercial Property Land / Building / Structure And Fixtures Property Situated At Kh No 2182/7, Jaijaipur Nahar,Dist-Janjgir-Champa, Chhattisgarh- 495690. Admeasuring 1722.22.Sq Ft	17-Aug-24
(Loan A/C No.) L9001060128939198, Arjun Nirala(Borrower), Bablu Nirala (Co-Borrower)	15-Apr-24 ₹8,31,462/- Rs. Eight Lac Thirty-One Thousand Four Hundred Sixty- Two Only as on 12-Apr-24	All That Part And Parcel Of Residential/Commercial Property Land / Building / Structure And Fixtures Property Situated At- Kh No. 449 6 G 3 462 6 G 3 Old Kh No. 449 462 6G, Ward No. 3, Subhash Chandra Boss, Sarangarh, Dist- Raigarh, Chattisgarh Admeasuring 215.27 Sqyds.	17-Aug-24

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, therefore notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein above mentioned table in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said [Act 2002] read with Rule 8 of the said rule on the date mentioned in the above table. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets."

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 the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) for the amount and interest thereon mentioned in the above table.

Date : 22/08/2024