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AGENDA FOR THE MODI  
GOVERNMENT 3.0

**WORLD 8**  
UK POLICE PREPARES  
FOR MORE CLASHES

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# HEARTBREAK FOR INDIA AT PARIS OLYMPICS

PTI ■ PARIS

In a shocking reversal of fortunes, Vinesh Phogat was disqualified on Wednesday from the Olympics after being found overweight ahead of her women's 50kg final here, leaving her medal-less within hours of coming close to an unparalleled gold. Vinesh had scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to reach the gold medal bout in her category on Tuesday night. Before this morning, she was assured of at least a silver medal but will now be coming back empty-handed due to the disqualification. The shattered 29-year-old had to be taken to the polyclinic inside the Games village due to severe dehydration earlier in the day. "She was found overweight by 100gm this morning. The rules do not allow this and she has been disqualified," said an Indian coach. The Indian Olympic Association requested privacy for the wrestler, who was competing in her third Olympics. "It is with regret that the Indian contingent shares news of the disqualification of Phogat from the women's Wrestling 50kg class. Despite the best efforts by the team through the night, she

## PM Modi crowns Vinesh Phogat Champion of Champions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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



weighed in a few grams over 50kg this morning," the IOA stated. "No further comments will be made by the contingent at this time. The Indian team requests you to respect Vinesh's privacy. It would like to focus on the competitions on hand," it added. International rules stipulate that any grappler found overweight at the time of weigh-in ends up at the bottom of the final standings. She had taken down defending champion Yui Susaki of Japan en route the finals on Tuesday

in a remarkable performance and was to face American Sarah Ann Hildebrandt in the summit bout this evening. Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who lost to Vinesh in the semifinals, replaced the disqualified Indian in the final. "Vinesh failed second day weigh-in. According to the article 11 of the International Wrestling Rules, Vinesh will be replaced by the wrestler who lost against her in the Semifinal. Therefore Yusneylis Guzman Lopez will compete in the Final," the Paris Games organising committee said in a statement.

## Reformed Waqf Bill on Lok Sabha table

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, proposing sweeping changes to the Act of 1995, is likely to be tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The legislation circulated to members aims to bring about far-reaching changes in the present Act, including ensuring the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims in such bodies. The proposed legislation "omits Section 40 relating to the powers of governing Waqf Board to decide if a property is waqf property". The legislation is likely to be tabled in Lok Sabha on Thursday. The Bill proposes to rename the Act as the "Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act, 1995" and seeks to ensure the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims in Waqf boards, as well as the inclusion of "Aghakhani waqf" and "Bohra waqf" in addition to the existing Sunni and Shia Waqf boards. The Bill aims to empower women by securing their rights in welfare from Waqf and includes a clause related to the "welfare, maintenance of widow, divorced woman and orphan in such manner, as may be prescribed by the Central Government." It also curtails the powers to declare a property as Waqf, stating that no person shall create a Waqf unless they are the lawful owner of the property and competent to transfer or dedicate such property. The Bill addresses the contentious provision related to the creation of "waqf-alal-aulad," clarifying that it shall not result in the denial of inheritance rights of heirs, including women heirs, of the Waqif. The term Waqf will be clearly defined by a person practising Islam for at least five years



and having ownership of such property. According to its statement of objects and reasons, "Based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee under the chairmanship of Justice (Retired) Rajinder Sachar and the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf and Central Waqf Council and after having detailed consultation with other stakeholders, comprehensive amendments were made in the Act in the year 2013. Despite the amendments, it has been observed that the Act still requires further improvement to effectively address issues related to the powers of the State Waqf Boards, registration and survey of waqf properties, removal of encroachments, including the definition of the "waqf" itself," according to a statement of objects and reasons of the Bill.

## Chopper crashes in Nepal, 5 killed

PTI ■ KATHMANDU  
Four Chinese tourists and a Nepali pilot were killed on Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains northwest region of Kathmandu. The crash took place in the border area between Kathmandu and Nuwakot districts. A Nuwakot district police official said all five persons, including the pilot, on board the helicopter belonging to private airline, Air Dynasty, were killed in the crash. The 9N-AJD helicopter crashed at the Shivapuri National Park area in Nuwakot district, some 30 km North-West of Kathmandu at around 2 pm local time, he said. According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), the helicopter was heading towards Rasuwa's Syafrubesi area from Kathmandu with four Chinese passengers. The chopper took off from Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport at 1.54 pm and lost contact with the tower just three minutes after take off, the CAAN said in a Press release. The chopper was piloted by captain Arun Malla. There were three male and one female Chinese nationals in the chopper. The dead bodies were taken to Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital at Maharajgunj in Kathmandu for postmortem, the airline's officials said. The crash comes just two weeks after a Saurya Airlines plane crashed at the Tribhuvan International Airport on July 24.

## Supreme Court notes Constitution is Supreme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI  
The Supreme Court on Wednesday expunged some "scandalous" and "unwarranted" observations made against the apex court by a single judge bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in a contempt case, saying it was "pained" by these remarks. A five-judge special bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud took suo motu note of the remarks and said these observations of Justice Rajbir Sehrawat of the high court were a "matter of grave concern". Observing that no court including the High Courts and the Supreme Court is "supreme", the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, Surya Kant and Hrishikesh Roy, said such observations were wholly unnecessary for the conduct of the proceedings before the high court and moreover, the Constitution is "supreme". It, however, did not issue a notice and initiate proceedings against the high court judge for his "scandalous" observations at this stage. "We, accordingly, expunge the observations which have been made by Justice Sehrawat in the order dated July 17, 2024 and expect a greater caution



should be exercised in future while dealing with orders of the Supreme Court and for that matter, the orders passed by a division bench of the high court," the bench said. The top court noted it has been apprised that a division bench presided over by the high court's Chief Justice has taken suo motu notice of his observations and stayed his order. It said every judge is bound by the discipline which the hierarchical nature of judicial system proposes on judicial functioning. "Judicial discipline in the context of the hierarchical nature of the judicial system is intended to preserve the dignity of all institutions whether district courts, the high courts or the level of the Supreme Court," the bench said.

## Eyeless in Dhaka, Bangladesh gropes for normalcy

PTI ■ DHAKA  
Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim government in Bangladesh will take oath on Thursday, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman said. Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, General Waker said the interim government is likely to be sworn in at 8:00pm on Thursday. He also said the advisory council may have 15 members. Yunus, the 84-year-old economist, was on Tuesday appointed as the head of interim Government by President Mohammed Shahabuddin, a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. Meanwhile, students carried out traffic management as volunteers for the second consecutive day on Wednesday in Bangladesh, as a top police official called on every member of the police force to resume their duties gradually and maintain law and order. Chaos reigned supreme in Bangladesh after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina Government on Monday, with police absent from their duty to keep law and order or manage traffic, local media reports said. Additional Inspector General of Police (AIG) AKM Shahidur Rahman, who was appointed as the focal person of the Bangladesh Police on Tuesday to handle the current crisis, called on every member of the police force to resume their duties gradually and maintain public safety and law and order. The students, including members of Bangladesh Scouts, were seen controlling the traffic movement at several places, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. "The police are friends of the people and work for the public. We cannot imagine a society without the police. Therefore, I request our police members once again to ignore rumours and return to their duties in a phased manner, ensuring that security arrangements are properly in place," said Rahman, who has now been appointed as the Director General of RAB in a fresh reshuffle on Wednesday. There were reports of attacks on police stations and facilities across the country on Tuesday, resulting in numerous police casualties, which have led to this unprecedented situation, the newspaper said. The authorities reconstituted the top positions of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) on Wednesday. "AKM Shahidur Rahman has been appointed as Director General of RAB while Md Mainul Hasan will replace Habibur Rahman as the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police," news portal Prothom Alo said.



## Away from home, they pray for peace

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA  
Initially happy at the fall of the "dictatorial" regime of Sheikh Hasina, most Bangladeshis who had come to Kolkata for medical or other reasons are now praying for peace to return. This because they are now a stranded lot as all the trains and bus services between the two countries have been stopped for indefinite period. "How can we go back home because both Maitryee and Bandhan Express have been suspended and the buses too are not plying... if we have to go we have to make break journey first by crossing the border on foot and then by taking auto-

## Kejriwal present in CM house during Maliwal assault: Delhi Police

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In its chargesheet against Bibhav Kumar, a close aide of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Delhi Police has said there could be a larger conspiracy behind the alleged assault on Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal at the CM's residence. The Delhi Police also said Kumar and Kejriwal were "together" at the CM's official residence "for a significant period of time" after alleged offence was committed. Kumar, who is in judicial custody, is accused of assaulting Maliwal on May 13 at the CM's residence. The complainant, in her subsequent/supplementary



statement recorded after the bail hearing qua the accused before the Delhi High Court on July 10, 2024, had stated that the manner in which the entire AAP leaders and workers came in support of the accused (Kumar), against one of their own MP, shows that there is a larger conspiracy behind the attack and had urged the police to probe into it," the final report said.

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

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI  
Jailed in Tihar in the alleged excise policy-linked money laundering case, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday reportedly wrote to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena informing him that Cabinet Minister Atishi will hoist the national flag at the city Government's Independence Day function on August 15. Behind bars for long, the AAP chief has neither resigned from the Chief Minister's post nor named anyone as his replacement. "Kejriwal has written to the L-G from jail saying Atishi will hoist the Tricolour on his behalf on August 15," an AAP statement said. Every year, the Government's Independence Day function is held at Chhattrasal Stadium where Kejriwal has been unfurling the national flag and addressing the gathering since taking the reigns of Delhi. However, Raj Niwas officials have claimed that no such letter has been received by Saxena. "With regard to the AAP claim regarding the flag hoisting on August 15, it is clarified that the LG Secretariat has not received any such communication whatsoever," an official said. Prominent among the senior AAP leaders who have been at the forefront of party activities since Kejriwal was jailed on March 21, Atishi holds various portfolios, including that of Water Resources. Rebuffing the AAP's statement, BJP's South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri requested Saxena not to allow Atishi to hoist the flag in Kejriwal's absence. "In the Independence Day programme organised by the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister can hoist the flag. If Kejriwal wants Atishi to hoist the flag, he should first resign from the post of Chief Minister and then nominate her in his place," he stated. "This is not a personal choice of the CM to nominate someone or any of his Ministers to hoist the national flag in his place," Bidhuri said. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the letter proves that the AAP and its leaders were anarchists yesterday and remain anarchists today. "Perhaps the framers of the Constitution and the national flag protocol never imagined that one day, there would be a stubborn Chief Minister who would not resign even after going to jail," he claimed. The Delhi BJP chief called the letter 'anarchic' and said, "It brings back the horrific memories of his declaration to disrupt the Republic Day celebrations on Rajpath in 2014 by staging a sit-in protest." He said Kejriwal tarnished the dignity of Republic Day in 2014 and has now tarnished the dignity of Independence Day in 2024. "During the Independence Day celebrations of the Delhi Government, only the Chief Minister of Delhi can hoist the flag. If he is unable to do so, then traditionally, the LG will hoist the flag. From 1991 to 1993 and in 2014, when there was no Chief Minister in Delhi, the LG hoisted the flag," said Sachdeva, adding that if he wants his Minister Atishi to hoist the flag, then he should trust her and resign, allowing her to take the oath as the Chief Minister. It is noteworthy that only Governors hoisted the national flag in States till 1973 which was changed by former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi who launched a campaign for the right to hoist national flag for the Chief Ministers. In February 1974, Karunanidhi wrote to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi demanding the right to hoist the national flag on the Independence Day.









CPM ideologue raps State Govt for Wayanad coverup

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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



State," said Shakthidharan with a plea to the journalists and intellectuals in the State not to categorize him as a Sanghi (part of the RSS Parivar). He was blunt in stating that no other Central Govts have shown the kind of attention and care the Modi Govt is showering in Kerala. "But the Vijayan-led government, enmeshed in corruption, favoritism and misdeeds of all kind wants to save its skin from charges of mismanagement and carelessness," he said. The Marxist ideologue asked what prevented the Government from having a discussion with Prof Madhav Gadgil who headed the UPA Government appointed Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel that made serious study of the status of the ecologically fragile Western Ghats of which Wayanad is a part. Prof Gadgil had warned of major natural disasters if the State

government went ahead with quarrying, mining and construction activities. Pinarayi Vijayan, while briefing the media on 30th July, the day the district was devastated by the landslide scoffed at the WGEE Panel report and described the same as trash. Though a CPI(M) follower, Shakthidharan never hesitated to speak his mind out. "Prof Gadgil had warned the State many times about the impending natural disaster. But why the CM Vijayan is reluctant to meet him and discuss with him the solution available to save Wayanad and other such regions in the State. His reluctance has its epicentre on Vijayan's ego and arrogance. More over there are dacoits who masquerade as politicians and have made it to the inner chamber of the chief minister's residence and office," said Sakthidharan.

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

PTI ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Wednesday attacked the previous Congress Government in Chhattisgarh for "maligning" the image of an institution like the state public service commission, asserting that the ruling BJP won't spare the corrupt. His remarks come amid the ongoing CBI searches at multiple locations in the state tied to alleged irregularities in the state Public Service Commission (PSC) recruitment examination during the previous Congress government. In a post in Hindi on X, Sai said, "Writing a new chapter of good governance - youth of the state will get justice. The previous Congress government in Chhattisgarh maligning an institution with a clean image like PSC by committing scams and playing with the future of the youth. Now, in the government of good governance, scams are being investigated thoroughly and no corrupt person will be spared. Youth will get justice." The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) began searching more than a dozen



locations in Dhamtari, Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur districts over the alleged recruitment scam, official sources said. Last month, the CBI took over the probe into the two cases registered in the state for alleged favouritism in the selection of deputy collectors, deputy superintendents of police and other senior government posts through the Chhattisgarh PSC during 2020-2022, the agency had said. As per the two cases, the then CGPSC chairman Taman Singh Sonwani, former

secretary Jeevan Kishore Dhruv, the then controller of examinations and many public servants and politicians misused their positions to get their children, relatives and acquaintances recruited. Notably, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other top BJP leaders, during electioneering for last year's Assembly polls, had targeted the then-ruling Congress over the alleged recruitment scam and promised to get it probed if the saffron party came to power.

Bangladesh turmoil matter of concern for NE: Himanta

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said the situation in Bangladesh is a matter of concern for the northeastern states, apprehending that the neighbouring country may again become a hub of insurgents and people from there may enter the region illegally. Sarma said he was hopeful that the Centre would continue with dialogue with the new dispensation in Bangladesh and that concerns of the northeastern states would be at the forefront. "We are concerned about the recent developments in Bangladesh and if the trouble continues, we fear that it will affect the region from two angles," the chief minister told reporters on the sidelines of an event in Dergaon. The border between the two countries has to be protected as "people from the neighbouring country may try to enter the region through the India-Bangladesh boundary", he said. "During Sheikh Hasina's regime, insurgents from the northeast region were forced to leave Bangladesh. It will be a matter of concern for us that the neighbouring country may again become a hub of insurgents," the chief minister



said. There is no doubt that with the cooperation of the previous Bangladesh government, 'we have been successful in curbing extremist activities in North East India. I have full confidence that the new government in the neighbouring country will also maintain this cooperation', he said. The death toll in the anti-government protests in Bangladesh on Tuesday climbed to 440, according to local media, even as efforts were on by the army to bring the situation under control in the violence-hit nation. Nobel laureate Mohammad Yunus was on Tuesday appointed as the head of Bangladesh's interim government by President Mohammed Shahabuddin, a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs.

Kailashnathan takes oath as Puducherry LG



PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY

Former IAS officer K. Kailashnathan was sworn in as Lt Governor of Puducherry at a ceremony in Raj Nivas here on Wednesday. Acting Chief Justice of Madras High Court Justice D Krishnakumar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Kailashnathan. Chief Secretary to Puducherry Administration Sharat Chauhan read out the warrant of appointment issued recently by President Droupadi Murmu. Kailashnathan is the 25th Lt Governor of the union

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

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

PTI ■ SHIMLA

Family members of the around 30 people who went missing following flash floods triggered by a cloudburst here on July 31 have begun losing hope as the search and rescue operations to trace the victims entered the seventh day on Wednesday amid incessant rains. Sharing details about the ongoing operation in Samej village here, Assistant Commanding Officer, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Karam Singh, said, "It is raining but the joint search and rescue operations are underway." "The water level is rising in Sutlej River and slides are also occurring at multiple places. JCBs and other machines are being used to clear the roads. Our soldiers are skilled and cross the river through ropes to search the sites where there is any possibility of finding the missing people", Singh added. Samej falls under Sarpara Panchayat in Rampur subdivision of Shimla district and borders the Kullu district. The family members of the missing persons who have



been camping at the site for the past seven days have now lost hope and are praying for the recovery of bodies to perform last rites. "The entire family including my brother, two sisters-in-law, daughter-in-law, nephews and niece are missing," said Moti Ram who along with one of his daughter-in-law and grandson survived as they were out of home when the tragedy struck. The water level in the river is increasing and the rescue teams are facing a lot of difficulty due to the continuous rains, said Kair Singh, a local. Meanwhile, the local meteorological office issued

an orange alert of heavy to very heavy rain, thunderstorm and lightning at isolated places in the state for Wednesday and Saturday. The Met also said that monsoon activity is likely to intensify in the next five to six days with fairly widespread rains. So far 16 deaths have been reported due to flash floods and cloudbursts in three districts of Himachal Pradesh on July 31 midnight and over 35 people are still missing in Kullu's Nirmand, Sainj and Malana, Mandi's Padhar and Shimla's Rampur subdivision. BJP MP Kangana Ranaut who visited Samej village on

Tuesday and other parts of Shimla and Kullu accused the state Congress government of doing "nothing" to help the victims. According to the officials, 410 rescuers from teams of the Army, NDRF, SDRF, ITBP, CISF, Himachal Pradesh Police and home guards are involved in the hunt and rescuers have intensified the search operation by deploying more machinery, sniffer dog squad, drones and other equipment. A total of 93 people were killed in rain-related incidents between June 27 and August 6 and the state suffered losses amounting to Rs 748 crore.

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

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

A six-year-old Dalit child, who was allegedly forced to clean the toilet by some teachers, was found locked in the classroom of a government primary school in the Jansath area, police said on Wednesday. The Basic Education Department has taken action against the school's principal and a teacher. The incident took place on Tuesday when a six-year-old student of class one was found locked in the school classroom, allegedly due to the laxity of Principal Sandhya Jain and class teacher Ravita Rani, police said. A police complaint in this regard has been lodged by the child's mother in which she alleged that the two teachers used to force her son to clean the toilet as they had "hated" against Dalit children. She alleged that due to the negligence of the teachers, her son remained locked in the classroom for more than an hour after the school closed. When her son did not reach home after the closure of the school, she inquired about him with other students, who

expressed ignorance, she added. She said she found the school closed when she went there, and heard the cries of her child, after which the villagers and her family members called the principal. Later, teacher Ravita Rani's husband reached the school with the keys and opened it. Rani's husband said the child might have fallen asleep in the class. Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) Sandeep Kumar told PTI that the principal has been suspended and teacher Rani has been given an adverse entry. A probe has been ordered into the matter and a two-member committee led by the block shiksha adhkari, Jansath and Shahpur, will look into it and submit its report within three days. Kumar said that all staff have been asked to check the classrooms before closing the school. Principal Jain said that "injustice" was done with her as the class teacher was responsible for this. "Even if the child was sleeping, the classroom should have been checked before locking it," she said.

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

PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY

Senior BJP leader and Madhya Pradesh minister Kailash Vijayvargiya on Wednesday called Congress leader Salman Khurshid "frustrated" over his remarks that a Bangladesh-like situation could happen in India. At a book release function on Tuesday night, Khurshid said that though "everything may look normal on the surface, what is happening in Bangladesh could happen in India." Bangladesh was rocked by waves of violent anti-government protests since mid-July, following which Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign as the prime minister and flee the country. On Khurshid's comment, Vijayvargiya said, "He should understand that this is (Prime Minister) Modi ji's country. This is Bharat. Such frustrated leaders trying to spread anarchy by giving statements should be ashamed." Responding to another question, he said that those who were acting as the face of Pakistan have now understood the situation in India, Bangladesh and

Pakistan. "Bharat is a strong country and its leader Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a very strong leader. Therefore, talking about such anarchy in India is reprehensible," said the MP minister. Khurshid's comments came at the launch of academician Mujibur Rehman's book 'Shikwa-e-Hind: The Political Future of Indian Muslims'. The Congress leader said what is happening in Bangladesh can happen in India though "everything may look normal on the surface." "Everything may look normal in Kashmir. Everything may look normal here. We may be celebrating the victory, although of course some people believe that that victory or that success of 2024 was perhaps only marginal, perhaps a lot more needs to be done," he said. "The fact remains that under the surface there is something," he said. "What's happening in Bangladesh can happen here... The spread in our country prevents things blowing up in the manner in which they've blown up in Bangladesh," he said.

One more arrested in BSP leader murder case

PTI ■ CHENNAI

A 32-year-old man has been arrested in connection with the brutal killing of BSP state president K Armstrong last month, police said on Wednesday. The arrested has been identified as N Aswathanam. A police release here said he is a resident of Vyasarpadi in the city. Prior to him, 21 people were arrested as part of the probe into the high profile murder, it said. One accused person was gunned down by the police last month when he tried to attack them and flee, while being taken to a city location to unearth some weapons allegedly hidden there by him. Armstrong (52), state chief of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was hacked to death by a group of assailants last month, sending shockwaves. Political parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, besides BSP supremo and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati, have demanded a CBI probe into the killing.

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

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Setting aside trial court orders discharging Tamil Nadu Revenue Minister KKSSR Ramachandran and Finance Minister Thangam Thenarasu from disproportionate assets cases, the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed the lower court to frame charges against them and proceed in accordance with law. Passing an order on the criminal revision petition initiated by him, Justice N Anand Venkatesh set aside the orders of the Special Court for MPs and MLAs cases, Virudhunagar, dated July 20, 2023 and December 12, 2022 respectively, discharging Ramachandran and Thenarasu from the disproportionate wealth cases. The ministers, both senior DMK leaders, have to face trial in the cases registered against them by the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC). As prima facie materials were available to frame charges, the Special Court shall proceed to frame charges and thereafter proceed in accordance with law. The judge said that one of the most striking aspects of these two cases was the meticulous



manner in which the DVAC officials have also colluded with each other to ensure that criminal trials against two sitting ministers were "quietly and indecently buried within the precincts of the Special Court." The judge directed Ramachandran to appear before the Special Court on September 9. Thenarasu has to appear before the Special Court on September 11. The judge said as the case was of the year 2011 and 2012 respectively, the proceedings of the Special Court shall be conducted on a day-to-day basis keeping in mind the directives of the Supreme Court in Vinod Kumar vs State of Punjab, and dispose of the case as expeditiously as possible. The judge made it clear "this Court has not examined or commented upon the merits

of the case, which shall be decided by the Special Court on merits, without being influenced by any of the observations made herein above". Narrating various principles, the judge said tested on the touchstone of the aforesaid principles, the conclusion was that the orders of the Special Court deserves to be set aside on the short ground that it had committed a manifest jurisdictional error in discharging the accused in the face of relevant material, the correctness of which could not be the subject matter for inquiry at the stage of discharge. Additionally, the very fact that the Special Court has not assigned a shred of independent reasoning was another reason warranting interference in exercise of revisional powers, he added.

Bridge over Kali river collapses in Karnataka, traffic disrupted

PTI ■ PANAJI/KARWAR

An old bridge across Kali river in Uttara Kannada district collapsed in the small hours of Wednesday, resulting in heavy traffic along National Highway 66, connecting Goa to Karnataka. A large portion of the bridge near here caved in around 1.30 am when a truck was crossing it, leaving the driver of the vehicle injured as he fell into the river, Karwar police said. According to officials, the bridge was used for Go-bound traffic after the construction of a new one a decade ago. The injured truck driver has been identified as Bala Murugan (37) from Tamil Nadu. The truck, en route to Karwar, fell into the water, police said, adding that the night patrol team alerted higher police officials. "Our night patrolling team noticed the collapsed bridge and alerted the control room. There was a truck in the river and the injured driver was on top of the vehicle. The local fishermen along with our team managed to rescue the driver," Superintendent of Police

(Karwar) M Narayana said. "He is admitted to Karwar Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital. The truck driver is stated to be stable and is recovering," he said. Traffic on the new bridge was stopped for some time following the incident. Later, vehicles, except heavy ones, were allowed to pass through, the Karwar police said. "Due to the bridge collapse, only light vehicles will be allowed on the new Kali bridge while suspending the movement of heavy vehicles temporarily," a statement from Karwar SP said. Traffic movement on the new bridge was restricted as the Karnataka authorities were checking its stability after the collapse of the old bridge, Goa's Canacona police station in-charge Harish Raut Desai said. An FIR has also been registered over the bridge collapse. Following the incident, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called Deputy Commissioner of Uttara Kannada Lakshmi Priya K and instructed her to ensure the safety of all bridges and roads in the district and to take precautions to prevent any loss of life.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Finance Minister yields

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

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



This adjustment marks a significant reversal from the government's firm stance on the issue after the Budget.

The ministry officials had argued that the new tax rate structure, with a lower tax rate minus the indexation benefits, would benefit people in almost all cases. However, the industry experts had different opinions. Industry bodies had sought to rethink the proposal, observing that the removal of indexation benefits amounted to a retrospective tax change for those who had bought properties earlier. They pointed out that this would particularly hurt those who

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

### PICTALK



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

# The evolution of Rahul Gandhi



KALYANI SHANKAR

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

**I**t might be too soon to judge how well Rahul Gandhi is doing as the new Leader of the Opposition. The current budget session ends in just a few days, so we'll need more time to understand his leadership fully. But he has begun well.

After winning in the Lok Sabha polls, Rahul has been confident and strong both inside and outside the house, which is appropriate for an opposition leader. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen recently discussed Rahul's evolution since their days at Cambridge University. Sen underlined that Rahul has significantly matured over the years and underscored that his true test lies in how he steers the Opposition in Parliament. Rahul stepped into the shoes of the Leader of the Opposition, a quarter of a century after his political debut in 2004. The Lok Sabha had been without a Leader of the Opposition for a decade, as no opposition party had the requisite number of members to stake the claim in the last two Lok Sabhas. During the recent budget session, the first after Rahul became the LOP, he took a vital leadership role in his party and the Opposition. Since becoming the Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi has taken on more responsibilities. He now leads and represents the Opposition's viewpoint on various subjects. This is a new role for him. He organised protests, delivered powerful speeches against the Modi government, and worked closely with allies to coordinate their efforts on the floor. He also focused on critical issues for the people and made himself more accessible. In the recent budget session, Rahul Gandhi, as the Leader of the Opposition, took on an important leadership role within his party and the Opposition. He has organised protests, delivered powerful speeches against the Modi government, and worked closely with allies. Additionally, he has focused on critical issues for the people and made himself more accessible. Rahul Gandhi's backroom office has a



team of about twelve key members.

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

This change has been compelling to witness in his political journey. Rahul finds it easier to take on a more assertive role now, with a substantial number of opposition members in the 18th Lok Sabha. Furthermore, the success of united allies in the 2024 polls has made them realise the power of unity. When Rahul spoke as the Leader of the Opposition for the first time, he said, "While the government has political power, the Opposition also represents the voice of the Indian people. This time, the Opposition represents significantly more of the Indian people's voice than it



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

did last time." Rahul Gandhi's criticisms of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have caused strong reactions from the ruling party. During Rahul's maiden speech as LOP, PM Modi spoke up for the first time in 10 years. Modi accused Rahul of saying that the entire Hindu society is 'violent'. The Prime Minister stated, "Democracy and the Constitution have taught me to take the Leader of the Opposition seriously."

Modi's responses to Gandhi's criticisms show an acknowledgement of the changed situation and the resulting tension in the Parliament. Rahul Gandhi has been speaking out against the Modi government's decision to arrest AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal and JMM chief Hemant Soren. He opposes the BJP's attempts to silence opposing viewpoints. This has caused increased tensions in Parliament for the ruling party. During his Lok Sabha campaign, Rahul Gandhi strategically showed a small red pocket edition of the Constitution at public meetings. This move effectively highlighted what he called the perceived threat to the Constitution from the BJP.

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

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

His success will depend on his political planning. He missed some opportunities in the past, like becoming a minister in Manmohan Singh's cabinet or strengthening the party as the Congress President. However, his current role shows his potential. He must use this opportunity to face future political challenges confidently. Rahul's belief in the power of the LOP to raise its voice in Parliament gives hope and optimism to the party.

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Justice delayed is justice denied



This is with reference to your editorial "Justice Delayed". The Chief Justice of India's deep concern over the excessive delay in disposing of cases, as noted in the

editorial is a concern shared by all. The staggering fact that 44 million cases are pending and could take 300 years to resolve at the current pace should prompt the ruling government to seek a tangible solution. Currently, filing a case itself feels like a punishment for both parties involved. Even after winning a case, the appeals process undertaken by the losing party makes the entire affair extremely frustrating. There is a pressing need to increase the capacity of courts at all levels to handle and dispose of cases in a timely manner. However, it is unfortunate that even the existing courts are forced to operate with severe manpower shortages. Simply changing the Acts and their names is not the change people desire; what is urgently needed is systemic and infrastructural improvement.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

this can mainly be blamed on poor quality of driving schools and doling out licences without proper application of mind.

Ganpat Bhat | Akola

### TURMOIL IN BANGLADESH

Madam — Sheikh Hasina's resignation as Prime Minister of Bangladesh is a result of socio-political upheaval of her own making. Every nation is an enterprise owned and run by its people who elect a government to run it as also simultaneously place an Opposition as the auditor. So long as the auditor is facilitated by the government to put up dissenting notes and is willing to correction, the shareholders let the checks and balances play out. When the government fails to give credence to the opposition, a plethora of public fora and institutions come in to press an alternative narrative. Should the government resort to suppressing them too, the people step in as suo- moto auditor. The likes of social media then expound dissent and if this too goes unheeded, people act as regulators leveraging electoral

platforms to tone down aberrations in governance by impinging on electoral standing of the ruling dispensation. Should a government seek to neutralise the process of such franchise itself, as has been in many nations across the globe, people take to roads to convey the message. An extremely recalcitrant government could then compel people to set up tribunals and don the robes of judge and jury. Bangladesh has apparently slipped into this unhappy final phase. It's military may yet be sagacious enough to restore law and order and enable the nation to reclaim governance and eschew going the Myanmar way. There is a lesson for every progressive democratic nation. Stifling the elected opposition and relentless and heavy handed suppression of dissent perse in hubris of power, is bound to heavily set back economic progress while the socio political fabric stands frayed beyond repair.

R Narayanan | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

### PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT

Madam — President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a six-day state visit to three nations: Fiji, New Zealand, and Timor-Leste a couple of days ago. I wonder why the President has undertaken this visit? How will engaging with these nations benefit India? Fiji and Timor Leste are almost unheard of countries in India. What is the government's agenda really? As both Fiji and New Zealand are approximately 11,000 kms and Timor Leste is about 6,500 kms away, it goes without saying that a to and fro visit to these countries would cost our nation a humongous sum. Besides, the President who would be travelling by a state aeroplane (read, like a private airliner) would leave a heavy carbon footprint. Will a RTI query in respect of the purpose and cost of the tri-nation jaunt be answered, if at all?

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

### BLINDING HEADLIGHTS CAUSE ACCIDENTS

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

It has become a fashion for several youngsters, especially in small towns and cities with none to keep a hawk's eye on them, to use ornamental illumination like flashy headlights. Flickers, Light emitting diodes (LED), and its variants, are freely used by irresponsible drivers. Section 177 of the Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) has explicitly detailed the proper and improper use of headlights. Many drivers, especially the non-professional ones, are oblivious to the correct usage of headlights and

## Renewable energy: Paving the way for a sustainable future

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



GAURAV PRABHURASHI

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



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

By May 31, 2024, India's non-fossil fuel-based power generation capacity stood at 201.7 GW, with renewable energy, including small hydro projects, contributing 146.6 GW. To meet growing demands, a significant increase in renewable energy capacity is anticipated, supported by the renewable energy procurement roadmap from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), which targets 50 GW of bids annually from FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28. Regulatory policies for the renewable energy sector are governed by both central and state governments, as electricity is part of the concurrent list. Key aspects of central government policy include promoting domestic manufacturing of solar modules and electrolyzers, safeguarding domestic manufacturing, and domestic content requirements, and implementing policies to encourage specific types of electricity genera-

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

gen production. These investments are expected to generate numerous direct and indirect jobs while ensuring energy security.

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



FIRST COLUMN

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

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



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We are forever doing material acts like eating, sleeping, 'vihar' (entertainment) and, yes, work. Some of us may be doing some spiritual practices as well. Why is there such a mismatch? Because most people do not realize how beneficial spiritual practices are for a human being. Read on and you will agree. I have chosen ten common spiritual practices for this article. They are simple to do and almost everyone can benefit by doing them. Beginning with praying, what is so difficult to do it? Someone is not well in a family, and a family member prays for his or her quick recovery. Even small children pray for their mother when she is unwell. What happens then? God hears them, as He has eyes and ears everywhere. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 13.13) What is God's response? He has to consider several factors like what does the person prayed for deserves, what effect it will have on other family members, who is praying, etc. There will be a response, which will be appropriate taking into consideration everything. Let us remember that God knows 'The Big Picture', which includes the past, present and future also. Whatever God may decide, the act of praying sincerely curbs ego, which helps one to become humble - a necessary quality to be able to deal properly with others. Praying is also a good start for taking shelter from God - the topmost spiritual activity. Chanting of God's names and mantras is quite common across all religions. Many studies have been done to see the effects of chanting on the brain. They have found that chanting stimulates positive changes in the brain. Mantras with the sound 'Ohm'



are especially useful. God's names bring similar benefits. When we take God's name, He must respond. Didn't Lord Krishna respond to calls of Draupadi - "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna"? How the Lord respond to us depends again upon what we deserve and what will be good for us. 'Darshan' - seeing God's 'murti' in Deity form or a photo of one of God's incarnations like Krishna, Rama, etc. is very useful. This is my favourite spiritual act. I have hung a large photo of Lord Krishna on the right side of my bed. All I do is to sit or lie comfortably and look at the Lord's attractive face. Lord Krishna has allowed gaining spiritual knowledge to be pleasing in doing. (9.2) What better company than of God there can be? My Lord has become my own. And He rewards me in many ways. 'Atmabala' (inner strength) flows into me. This strength - the mother of all strengths has made me stronger mentally. I am also able to tolerate the inevitable miseries of this world better. Meditation is getting quite popular worldwide. People are beginning to see the enormous benefits of this spiritual practice. Lord Krishna has recommended it strongly. In verse # 6.35, the Lord says, "Mind can be brought under control by practice." In verse # 12.8, He tells us where our mind should be fixed, i.e. in Him only. (12.8) In verse #18.65, the Lord asks us to develop His consciousness. Then, what will happen? We will be in God, i.e. become part of Him. (9.29) Could anything be better than that? Hearing about God is another great activity. Lord Krishna goes to the extent of indicating that those devoted to hearing from others will also benefit greatly. (13.25) There are many, who are conversant with spiritual truths. Satsang is a meeting of persons, who are conversant with spiritual truths. "And preachers of supreme knowledge (spiritual benefits) amongst My devotees please Me the most." (18.69) This is the highest devotion towards God. Remembering God and thanking Him whenever some good happens to us are immensely beneficial; they make us deserving of more such rewards. Why don't we do such activities? Because we are almost entirely focused on material acts. We can all do spiritual acts - the givers of great benefits both spiritual and material. (The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Negligence and tragedy: The price of complacency



RAJDEEP PATHAK

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



In reflecting on the powerful speech delivered by Mark Antony following the assassination of Julius Caesar, one cannot help but recall his stirring words: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." Antony's oration skillfully ignited the Roman populace, who were initially ambivalent towards Caesar's murder. Through his use of rhetorical questions and ironic praise for Brutus and the other conspirators, Antony incited the crowd to question the motives behind the assassination. < By revealing Caesar's will, which generously bequeathed wealth and public parks to the citizens, Antony further endeared Caesar to the people and painted the conspirators as traitors. The crowd, now convinced of Caesar's benevolence and the conspirators' treachery, erupted into chaos, leading to a violent riot. This turmoil precipitated a civil war, ultimately overthrowing the existing order and paving the way for the rise of the 'Second Triumvirate' (all sought revenge for the murder of Julius Caesar) and the end of the Roman Republic. A tragic incident in the Capital City of India echoes this (Shakespearean) historical upheaval, where the death of three students (IAS aspirants) has incited public (students') outrage. On Saturday, July 27, 2024 evening, a supposed drainage burst led to flooding in the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar used as a library where approximately 35 students were present when rainwater began to inundate the basement, creating a panic-stricken atmosphere. Despite attempts to evacuate, three students were trapped and subsequently died. This disaster has cut short the dreams of the parents of three students. Unlike Bholu Baba - who philosophically dramatized death as an inevitable part of life following the Hatras stampede tragedy - the negligence displayed by the coaching centre owners in this instance cannot be so easily dismissed. The failure to ensure proper evacuation facilities has underscored the mismanagement of the institution. Although the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has stormed into action, they

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

cannot fully absolve themselves of responsibility. More than anything else, the basement, intended for parking and storage, was illegally repurposed as a library. As the news became the talk of the town, sentiments of anger and frustration poured amidst huge grief and loss. The incident in Old Rajinder Nagar underscores a pervasive pattern of systemic negligence among various stakeholders, including coaching centre management, property owners, and municipal authorities. The illegal conversion of the basement into a library, without proper safety measures reveals a severe disregard for student safety. Compounded by chronic infrastructure deficiencies such as inadequate drainage systems, this negligence is exacerbated by municipal authorities' failures. Regulatory lapses, such as issuing No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) without thorough verification and compliance checks, further point towards significant enforcement shortcomings. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi's (MCD) delayed actions in sealing other illegally repurposed basements reflect a reactive rather than proactive enforcement strategy. Additionally, the coaching centre's lack of an effective emergency plan, including proper drills and protocols, significantly contributed to the chaos and heightened the tragedy, demonstrating a critical need for better emergency preparedness, stricter regulations and oversight to prevent such tragedies in the future. Accounts from traumatized students reveal harrowing experiences. Whether it is Aishwarya Rai, a 30-year-old UPSC aspirant from Kanpur, Nakul Tiwari, or Shreya, the very fact that they have been rescued from the terrifying moment of being drowned to death will linger

in their psyche for years to come. The question arises: why does it take such disasters for the administration to take action? The arrest, bulldozing of illegal constructions and other preventive and punitive measures often come only after tragedy strikes. Videos now emerging tell tales of utter mismanagement and illegal use of properties, breaking all norms. Why are the students only now flagging these issues? Another question is why their seniors, who have perhaps lived and studied in these conditions and are either IAS aspirants or have cleared their examinations, did not raise such issues of negligence in the past. Moreover, if a few of them have become Civil Servants from these coaching centres, why didn't they, over the years, bring this to the notice of the local administration? Another crucial issue is that the commercialization of education, driven by the high demand for competitive exam preparation, should not compromise safety standards, which in this case has resulted in unsafe and overcrowded conditions. The commercialization of education, characterized by the increasing influence of profit-driven motives, brings both benefits and drawbacks to student welfare. On the positive side, it often leads to improved infrastructure, better resources, and innovative teaching methods that enhance the learning experience. Private institutions do attempt to provide advanced facilities and extracurricular activities, fostering a more dynamic and engaging educational environment. This recent incident must become an eye-opener. It critically highlights the need for enhanced regulatory oversight and stricter enforcement of building codes and safety regulations, emphasizing regular inspections and audits to ensure compli-

ance. Investment in infrastructure, particularly drainage systems, is crucial to mitigate flooding risks, especially in flood-prone areas like Old Rajinder Nagar. Additionally, educational institutions, particularly coaching centres, should be mandated to develop and regularly practice emergency evacuation plans, as safety drills can significantly improve preparedness and reduce panic during emergencies. Increased public awareness about safety regulations and accountability mechanisms is necessary, encouraging students and residents to report violations and demand action from authorities. Moreover, the process for obtaining necessary permits and NOCs should be transparent and stringent, with severe penalties for deviations from approved plans. Public awareness and advocacy are crucial. Educating students and residents about safety standards and rights is another key factor. Further, creating platforms for community engagement and empowering residents with safety mechanisms is crucial. More than anything else, authorities should respond promptly to such reports and take corrective action. While this is a sad moment for all of us to have lost young budding talents of our country in this manner, it is time we foster a culture of accountability, in our endeavour to safeguard the dreams and lives of countless students who come to Delhi in pursuit of their aspirations. The path forward requires a collective effort from authorities, institutions, and the public to prioritize human safety over commercial interests and ensure that such a tragedy never recurs. (The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

Indian cardiologist sparks global debate on mind-based medical protocols

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

The world of medicine is all set to see an intense debate on the medical protocol to be employed in curing serious ailments thanks to an Indian doctor. An internationally reputed cardiologist Prof B M Hegde who is based in Mangalore in Karnataka has challenged the existing diagnostic system in the field of physical ailments practiced across the world and has called for a shift to mind-based cure protocol. Dr Hegde says that if one wants to live a life free of ailments like cancer and other serious medical issues, all one needs to do is to love all and hate none. "The more you hate people and abuse/criticize them, the



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

medical constitution in your body gets deteriorated," he told The Pioneer. "Although there has been a lot of thinking going on in medical circles about the role of the mind in psychological disorders, much needs to be done in the field of physical ailments. Recent data on the important role played by the human mind in the causation of major physical ill-

nesses like heart attacks and cancer have rekindled our interest in the intricacies of the working of the human mind vis a vis the human body. In the 17th century itself, William Harvey had clearly indicated that in all bodily afflictions there is a mental basis. As there is no big money involved in this kind of research unlike the gold rush in the field of epidemiology and interventions, the field did not until very recently attract good researchers," writes Prof Hegde, who is also the chief editor of the "Journal of Science of Healing Outcomes", a super peer-reviewed scientific publication. Interestingly, Prof Hegde, a former visiting

professor of cardiology at the University of London, always had strong reservations about the treatment protocol for cardio vascular diseases and cancer. In the editorial of the July 2024 issue of the JSHO, he quoted from the Journal of American Medical Association which has published a large study on the connection between life stresses and their role in the causation of coronary artery diseases. He said the JAMA study focused on the immediate and long-term effects of various emotional stressors that are a part of life in the modern rat race of the monetary economy. Prof Hegde with more than five decades of medical research and prac-



tice to his credit has found that hostility, anger, frustration and bereavement come up on top among the negative emotions. "Love, compassion, social support and job satisfaction have control over one's situation, negative emotions acutely raised the blood

pressure as also the heart rate and the breathing rate," said the octogenarian professor who has been honoured with Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan by the President of India for the scintillating works he has done over the decades. According to Prof Hegde's experience, chronic stress does take its toll leading to killer diseases. "Emotions play a major role in one getting afflicted with such ailments. Scientists, business barons, professionals and politicians should bear this in mind. When the competition becomes too intense, chances of one losing control shoot up and there can be no coming back to normalcy," he said.

Dr Hegde pointed out the debates in Parliament and election campaigns to drive home the point that one should be elegant and cool-headed during the battle for power. "Even military officers behave in a disciplined manner while they are engaged in fighting the enemies. This is what we should learn to stay cool and free of ailments," he said. For the uninitiated, Prof Hegde is the author of many books and has written the preface for medical books published by medical scientists. His seminal work "What Doctors Don't Get to Study in Medical School" is widely read in the world of medicine and many doctors rate it as the Holy Bible of

Modern Medicine. If we stay away from unhealthy competition for wealth and power, we can keep serious ailments like heart disease and cancer miles away from us. The only losers would be pharma companies that charge a fortune for a course of medicine. The JSHO has the whose-who of the world of medicine and science working as its editorial staff and board. This includes Prof Joanna Floros, and Evan Pugh Professor of Paediatrics and Obstetrics, Penn State University Hershey, USA, who is the co-editor in chief. (The writer is a special correspondent with the Pioneer; views expressed are personal)

# Professor's journey to becoming Bangladesh head

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

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

President Mohammed Shahabuddin dissolved Parliament on Tuesday and appointed the 84-year-old economist as the head of an interim government. His decision was prompted by a demand by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement to make him the non-partisan head of the caretaker government. Yunus, globally recognised as "The Father of Microfinance", is expected to return to Bangladesh from Paris on Thursday to take charge.

Yunus, who started as a Professor at national and international Universities, earned the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for women's empowerment through poverty alleviation, and received multiple national and international awards over the years. But back home, he faced harsh scrutiny by the Hasina government for more than a

decade due to obscure reasons while authorities initiated a series of investigations against him after she came to power in 2008.

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

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

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

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

On June 10 this year, a Dhaka court prosecuted Yunus and 13 others - currently out on bail - for embezzling as it rejected a plea for the dismissal of charges by the accused.

The prosecution accused Yunus and the others of embezzling Taka 250 million (about USD 2 million) from the workers



welfare fund of Grameen Telecom, which owns a 34.2 per cent stake in Bangladesh's largest mobile phone operator, Grameenphone, a subsidiary of Norway's telecom giant Telenor.

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

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

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

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

scholar to study economics at Vanderbilt University in the US and obtained PhD in economics in 1969.

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

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

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

Born in pre-Independence India in 1940 in Chittagong, Yunus first studied at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, which was then East Pakistan; went as a Fulbright

biography, 'Banker to the Poor: Microfinancing and the Battle Against World Poverty', has been translated into at least a dozen languages including French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Gujarati, Chinese and Arabic.

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

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

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

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

## Turkey to join genocide case against Israel in UN court

**AP ■ ANKARA**

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

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

Turkey, one of the fiercest critics of Israel's actions in Gaza, becomes the latest nation to seek to participate in the case. "No country in the world is above international law," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Onuc Kececi said in a post on X. "The case at the International Court of Justice is extremely important in terms of ensuring that the crimes committed by Israel do not go unpunished."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip

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

**AP ■ CHARLESTON (US)**

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

Debby was expected to restrengthen a little and turn north toward the South Carolina coastline before its centre makes a second landfall late Wednesday or early Thursday, weather officials said.

The meandering storm -- moving forward at just 4 mph (6 kph) Wednesday morning -- has already drenched coastal cities in Georgia and South Carolina with more than a foot (30 centimetres) of rain in places, stirring up tornadoes and submerging streets with waist-high floodwaters.

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

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

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

## Deeply concerned about B'desh violence: US

**PTI ■ WASHINGTON**

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

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

"We repeat our call for de-escalation on all sides and a return to calm. This is not a time for

## UK police prepares for more clashes

**PTI ■ LONDON**

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

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

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

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

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

Stephen Parkinson, England's director of public prosecutions, has warned rioters that they could face terrorism charges. "We are willing to look at terrorism offences. I'm aware of at least one instance where that is happening," he told the BBC.

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

## Act responsibly, UK gov't tells Elon Musk

**AP ■ LONDON**

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

Justice Minister Heidi Alexander made the comments Tuesday morning after Musk posted a comment saying that "Civil war is inevitable" in the UK.

Musk later doubled down, highlighting complaints that the British criminal justice system treats Muslims more leniently than far-right activists and comparing Britain's crackdown on social media users to the Soviet Union.

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

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

## Khaleda Zia gets renewed passport

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

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

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

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

The renewal process for her passport was completed on Tuesday. Subsequently, Zia's personal secretary ABM Abdus Sattar received her renewed

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

**PTI ■ ISLAMABAD**

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

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

Express Tribune reported on Wednesday.

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

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

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

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

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

The finance minister said there was no point in asking for an increase in the interest rates on these loans when the country's

foreign exchange reserves had strengthened compared to a year ago.

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

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

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

A finance ministry official said that Standard Chartered Bank had offered a less than USD 400 million loan but it was asking for a double-digit interest rate that the government could not afford to pay.

Aurangzeb said the government would wait for the IMF Board approval to get the commercial bank to cut its offered interest rates.

The finance minister said two important developments had taken place in the last few days which showed that Pakistan was well on its way to achieving macroeconomic stability.

He described the Fitch

rating agency's decision to improve Pakistan's credit rating by one notch and the central bank's decision to cut the interest rates by 1% as "very critical elements for achieving macro-economic stability".

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

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

than offered at the current CCC+ ratings.

The three international credit rating agencies have given below investment grade to Pakistani bonds due to their weak economic position and huge external financing requirements.

However, Fitch last week improved the rating by one notch - from CCC to CCC+ - which was still below the investment grade.

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

Aurangzeb said the government was also contemplating hiring another Chinese financial adviser to secure the energy debt rollover.

He said that Pakistan had requested up to a five-year extension in the energy debt but it would take time before any agreement was reached.

He said that even the conversion of the Chinese power plants from imported to local coal would take at least two to three years.

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

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













# HISTORY-MAKING BHAKER ARRIVES HOME TO ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Star pistol shooter Manu Bhaker landed back in the country on Wednesday after her historic feat of winning two medals in a single edition of the Olympic Games and was welcomed by hundreds of supporters and her family, who braved a steady drizzle to give her a memorable reception here. The Air India flight (AI 142), which brought Bhaker from Paris to Delhi, landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at around 9:20am, delayed by one hour.

Hundreds of people, who waited at the airport long before her arrival despite the morning drizzle in the city, accorded her — and her coach Jaspal Rana — an enthusiastic reception. The 22-year-old Bhaker won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event — where she had paired with Sarabjot Singh — to script Olympic history for the country. Before her, only British-Indian athlete Norman Pritchard had achieved the rare landmark for the country with his two silver medals in 200m sprint and 200m hurdles at the 1900 Olympics but this happened in the pre-Independence era. Before leaving for India, Bhaker had stated that she was looking forward to a grand welcome and she was not disappointed on Wednesday. The youngster was greeted with bouquets, garlands, and celebratory dhol and floral petals were showered on her and Rana as soon as they came out amid significant police presence to manage the crowd. Among those present were Bhaker's parents — Ram Kishan and Sumedha — and sports enthusiasts and officials from her home state Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, the state to which Rana belongs. Rana's father was also there at the airport. "It is a matter of pride for us that a daughter of India is coming back after creating history by winning two medals in an Olympics. It has never happened before. She is only 22 years old," said former Uttarakhand Sports Minister and Rana's father, Narayan Singh Rana. "She is coming along with her coach Jaspal Rana. He is my son. He brought glory playing for India in shooting. Jaspal Rana and Abhinav Bindra started it all," he added. People gathered at the airport long before her arrival and they celebrated her feat with song and dance, holding banners with photos of Bhaker and Rana. Bhaker will be meeting sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya in the afternoon. She will head back to Paris on Saturday to participate in the closing ceremony on Sunday where she will be one of India's flag-bearers.

# Refugee athlete's dream of taekwondo medal cut short

**AP ■ PARIS**  
Having overcome so many hurdles, the disappointment was immense for refugee athlete Hadi Tiranvalipour as his dream of winning an Olympic medal was cut short when he lost in a taekwondo qualification bout on Wednesday at the Paris Games. Tiranvalipour was up against Omar Ismail of Palestine in the men's under 58 kilograms competition and was handed a 2-0 loss in a lopsided match at the lavish Grand Palais venue on the first day of taekwondo events. "I'm not satisfied with my performance, I don't have an answer for this. I wanted a good result, it's not happening," he said. Before making the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, Tiranvalipour fought for eight years as a member of the Iranian national team, winning the gold medal at the 2015 Asian Junior championship back in 2015. But Tiranvalipour, who also worked as a TV presenter and studied sports science, was forced to leave his country after speaking out in favour of women's rights, losing his job. In October 2022, he travelled to Turkey, then to Italy where he lived in a forest for 10 days and then slept three months

plight of refugees worldwide. After training alone in a park, Tiranvalipour finally approached the Italian federation, which helped him apply for asylum and settle for good in the country. In the build-up to the Games, he trained at the Olympic Sports Center in Roma with the likes of Vito Dellaquila, the defending Olympic champion. After missing out on Olympic qualification during the European qualifiers in March, he was selected by the refugee Olympic team and had big expectations in Paris. "I'm not satisfied because I had too much sacrifices about my losing weight process, my training. I'm really sad," he said. "We passed so many difficult journeys. If you have a target, you have to keep going. Life is like this."

# Sprint powerhouse Jamaica has had more injuries than medals and celebrations

**AP ■ SAINT-DENIS**  
The midpoint of the Olympic track meet used to be time for Jamaican sprint stars - Usain Bolt, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and all the rest - to catch their breath, recover from their victory parties, then start gearing up for more. This year in Paris, there hasn't been much to celebrate, and there's a sense that it could be years, not days, until the good times start rolling again for the Caribbean nation known for sun, sand and sprints. After Tuesday, which marked the halfway point of the action at the Stade de France, Kishane Thompson's silver in the 100 meters was the only medal the Jamaica team had won on the track. And in a twist hardly anyone on the island could have ever imagined, Jamaica actually had more medals from field events

**HAVE DEALT WITH INJURIES:** For the women's program, the problem has simply been getting a contender to the starting line. Elaine Thompson-Herah, Shericka Jackson and Fraser-Pryce, all in their 30s, all pulled out of their Olympic sprints with injuries. They made up the entire 100-meter podium in Tokyo in 2021. The team that won 15 of the 24 Olympic medals in the women's 100 and 200 between 2008 and 2021 will go home with none this year. It will mark the first time since 1976 the country hasn't won a women's medal in either of those events. "I know the world is used to Jamaica winning, and Jamaica always celebrating," said Asafa Powell, the Jamaican legend who held or shared the 100-meter world record for nearly three years before Bolt broke it when he surged onto the scene in 2008. "But believe me, it's going to happen again." It almost happened this time. Thompson's quest to become Jamaica's next Olympic male sprint champ came a scant .005 seconds short. **THE JAMAICAN SPRINTING WOMEN**



# Top surfers converge in Kovalam for final National Surfing Championship

**PTI ■ CHENNAI**  
The Covelong Classic, the final National Surfing Championship of the year, is set to kick off at Kovalam near here on Thursday, with over 75 surfers from across the country competing for top honours. The event will happen across four categories — Men's Open, Women's Open, Junior Boys & U-16, and Junior Girls & U-16. The 2024 season started with the International Surfing Festival Kerala Varkala, followed by the Indian Open of Surfing in Mangalore, and the third stop — Mahabs Point Break Challenge — happening earlier this month in Mahabalipuram. Covelong Classic will be a three-day surfing carnival organised by the Tamil Nadu Surfing Association under the aegis of the Surfing Federation of India, to be hosted by Surf Turf. The competition has also received significant support from the Tamil Nadu Government and the Ministry of Youth Welfare and Sports Development. Among the top surfers to participate will be Ajeesh Ali, Srikanth D, Harish M and

Ramesh Budihal in the Men's Open categories. Recently, Ajeesh, Harish and Srikanth were named in the Indian squad for the Asian Surfing Championship happening next week in Maldives. Additionally, Srikanth D will be looking to defend his title. In the Women's Open category, Kamali P (ranked first) has already secured the overall championship title, making her performance at the Covelong Classic irrelevant. However, she is anticipated to face stern competition from fellow surfers Sandhya Arun (ranked second), Shrishti Selvam (ranked third), and Sugar Shanti Banarse (ranked fourth). Kamali and Sugar have also been selected for the Indian squad competing in the Asian Surfing Championship, representing the Women's Open and Junior U-18 categories, respectively. Local surfers Tavay Arun and Kishore Kumar will grab eyeballs, thanks to their recent performances and national rankings in the Junior Boys & U-16 category. Additionally, fellow local surfer Harish P, having gained recognition for his impressive surfing skills, will aim to defend his Covelong Classic championship title with determination. In the Junior Girls & U-16 category, defending champion Kamali P will look to secure a double victory, as she is a strong contender for both the Women's Open and Junior Girls & U-16 titles at the Covelong Classic. Meanwhile, Dhamayanthi Sriram (ranked second) and Saanvi Hegde (ranked third) will be putting forth their best efforts to claim the title. Surfing Federation of India's president, Arun Vasu said, "As the surfing calendar culminates with the year's final national championship, the Covelong Classic, the best surfers are set to compete in the Asian Surfing Championship. I would like to extend my best wishes to all the surfers participating in this prestigious national championship." Apart from the medals and trophies, victors in each category will receive cash rewards, with the overall competition champion being awarded a Jawa Yezdi motorbike.

# US women's volleyball team advances to semifinal with straight-set win against Poland



**AP ■ PARIS**  
The reigning Olympic champion U.S. Women's volleyball team posted a straight-set victory against Poland on Tuesday night at the Paris Olympics. The Americans led throughout while taking the first two sets, 25-22 and 25-14. They fell behind 5-0 and 7-1 in the third set before rallying to close it out, 25-20. Next up is a semifinal date on Thursday with powerhouse Brazil, which swept the Dominican Republic earlier in the day. It's a rematch of the Tokyo Games final. Turkey eliminated China with a 3-2 victory and was waiting on the result of Tuesday's late match between Italy and Serbia to learn its next opponent. US coach Karch Kiraly said he was thrilled to get his players off their feet sooner - and not have to play any extra sets, especially for setter Jordyn Poulter as she continues to regain her form in match play after coming back from a devastating left knee injury in December 2022 that required surgery. "To be able to chip away and get back and tie it up at 13-all and get out with 3-0 instead of 17-15 in the fifth, which happens so often, that's really big, especially for somebody like Jordyn Poulter who's on a really good recovery," Kiraly said. "But to have less lead here and more recovery before we play a really big Brazil team was big." Kiraly made a lineup change after the team's five-set defeat to China on July 29 to open group stage play, moving veterans Jordan Larson and Kelsey Robinson Cook to reserve roles and bringing in Avery Skinner and Kathryn Plummer. The Americans bounced back to beat Serbia two days later. The new starting six are beginning to click. "The first time we ever played with this starting lineup was against Serbia, so now we've got three matches," Kiraly said. "Most other teams have been playing for years with the same (lineup). We now have three matches, so things are coming together." Andrea Drews had 13 points, while Plummer and Skinner contributed 12 apiece. Plummer credited the Americans for improving their service pressure and four-time Olympian Larson's boost off the bench to get them back in it. "We started out the third set very slow, we tend to do that even when we have a 2-0 lead in the match," she said. "We got out of that first rotation and then I think we just

got strings of points together, had a couple of big momentum swings with some big blocks, some big serves. ... The third set was a testament to what happens when we stay together and connected.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**  
CHANGE OF NAME  
**I Barkha Kumari D/o Wakil Kumar Agrawal W/o Vikash Kumar Singh R/o Tola-Punarvas Tantara South Post-Tupkadih Jaridih Bokaro Jharkhand-827010** changed my name to Barkha Narayan Singh.  
PD(659)A

**TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED**  
Regd. Office: 11th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Gampaturo Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400013 CIN No.: U67190MH2008PLC187552  
**DEMAND NOTICE**  
Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Rules").  
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Tata Capital Housing Finance Limited (TCHFL) under the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Rules already issued detailed Demand Notice dated below under Section 13(2) of the Act, calling upon the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) (all singularly or together referred to as "Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s)" listed hereunder, to pay the amount mentioned in the respective Demand Notice, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice, as per details given below. Copies of the said Notices are served by Registered Post A.D. and are available with the undersigned, and the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.  
In connection with the above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) to pay to TCHFL, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice(s), the amount indicated herein below against their respective names, together with further interest as detailed below from the respective dates mentioned below in column (d) till the date of payment and/or realisation, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Obligor(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to TCHFL by the said Obligor(s) respectively.  

Loan Account No.	Name of Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s)	Total Outstanding Due Rs. as on below Dates	Date of Demand Notice & NPA Date
TCHIN054500	Biswajit Goswami	Rs. 2,12,196/-	25.07.2024
0100143365	(Borrower) & Pappa	Rs. 32,07,937/-	& 04.07.2024
TCHHL05450	Goswami (Co-Borrower)		
0100142306			

**Description of the Secured Assets / Immoveable Properties / Mortgaged Properties:** All That Piece And Parcel Of Residential Flat No.5 On 5th Floor Having The Super Built Up Area Of 1340 Sq. Ft. At Karan Heights Tugadana, District: Ranchi, State: Jharkhand With Undivided Share In Land Measuring 428 Sq. Ft. Along With One Car Parking Space With Right To Use And Enjoy Common Facilities And Amenities. Property Is Buited And Bonded As Follows: - North: Set Back/open To Sky South: Flat No. 6, East: Set Back/open To Sky, West: Flat No. 4  
\*with further interest, additional interest at the rate as more particularly stated in respective Demand Notices dated mentioned above, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/or realization. If the said Obligor(s) shall fail to make payment to TCHFL as aforesaid, then TCHFL shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s)/ Immoveable Property(ies) under Section 13(4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/ Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences.  
The said Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset(s)/Immoveable Property(ies), whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of TCHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.  
**DATE :- 08-08-2024, PLACE :- JHARKHAND** Sd/- **AUTHORISED OFFICER**  
For TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED