

**OPINION 6**

THE BANGLADESH CAULDRON IS BOILING

**WORLD 8**

THAI PM DISMISSED FOR BREACH OF ETHICS

**NATION 5**

BJP SWEEPS PANCHAYAT POLLS IN TRIPURA, WINS 97% OF SEATS

RANCHI, THURSDAY AUGUST 15, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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# Doda terror snuffs out Indian Army's Capt Deepak Singh



Army personnel keep vigil near the site of an encounter between security forces and terrorists, in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Fighting valiantly, a young captain of the Indian Army sacrificed his life, on the eve of the 78th Independence Day, while leading an ongoing anti-terrorist operation aimed at flushing out Pakistani terrorists hiding in the forested belt of Assar in Doda district of Jammu on Wednesday.

The security forces also neutralised a Pakistani terrorist while the hunt was going on to eliminate two to three other terrorists hiding in the area. It is suspected the terrorists may have fled the area leaving behind one M4 rifle, three bags, and a blood trail.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday morning convened a meeting in New Delhi on the rising terror-related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the 78th Independence Day, it was learnt.

Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Director General of military operations-Lieutenant General Pratik

Sharma and heads of the security-related agencies attended the meeting, sources said.

Tension prevailed in the area as residents woke up to the deafening sounds of heavy gunfire. In view of the the Independence Day events on Thursday, the security arrangements were further stepped up to prevent any other incident of terrorist violence across the region. The security forces have already been kept in a State of high alert for the past few days to maintain tight vigil along the International border and the areas closer to the line of control.

Army's White Knight Corps Wednesday posted on X stating, "One terrorist has been neutralised in the ongoing operation. One AK 47 has been recovered in addition to the M4 rifle." "Intermittent exchange of firing continues as the operations are ongoing," said the Army. Meanwhile, the army officer who laid down his life has been identified as Captain Deepak Singh.

Continued on Page 2

# Doctors seek Justice for Kolkata colleague, Now

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

On the third day of their strike on Wednesday in protest against rape and murder of their colleague in Kolkata, junior residents from over 60 Government medical colleges in cities, including Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Rishikesh, Delhi, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, Guwahati, and Bangalore among others across the country demonstrated a united front, expressing their frustration at the tragic incident through various forms of protest — from wearing black bands and holding candlelight marches to shouting slogans, and staging demonstrations.

Their anguish was palpable as they refused to relent until enactment of the Central Protection Act for healthcare workers. In Telangana, Seethakka garu, Minister of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development of the State came forward to show solidarity with doctors across the country.

Continued on Page 2

# CBI collects evidence from rape and murder scene

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Within hours of Calcutta High Court ordering a court-monitored probe by the CBI into the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case, the Central agency slued on Wednesday reached Kolkata and took charge of the case. The CBI team from Delhi comprising medical and forensic experts visited the place of the occurrence after lodging four FIRs and taking custody of the prime accused Sanjoy Das earlier arrested and grilled by the Kolkata Police. Two CBI officers had taken the case diary and other documents pertaining to the case from the Kolkata Police on Tuesday.

Continued on Page 2



Har Pal Aapke Saath

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# 61,15,703 children to receive polio drops on Aug 25 in State

**PNS : RANCHI**  
While presiding over the task force meeting organised for the eradication of pulse polio in the Development Commissioner Auditorium located at Nepal House on Wednesday, Principal Secretary of Health Department Ajay Kumar Singh said that polio has not ended yet and we need to be alert till it has been eradicated from the whole world. On August 25, as many as 61,15,703 children between the age group of 0-5 years will be administered pulse polio medicine across all the districts of the State and for this 24,463 booths have been set up. In this campaign, the team of the Health Department will also go door-to-door on August 26 and 27 to administer the medicine to the children deprived of polio dose. The Principal Secretary directed to hold convergence meetings at the district and block level to review the logistics



Principal Secretary of Health Department Ajay Kumar Singh during the task force meeting organized for the eradication of pulse polio in the Development Commissioner Auditorium at Nepal House on Wednesday. PNS

and microplan. Directives to form a team at the State level and conduct collaborative supervision of the districts and blocks were also issued. The official also directed to conduct a review of the campaign in the districts that were left out and also to review the preparations once again in districts such as Bokaro, Palamu and Latehar. Kumar also directed

villagers whereas the Information and Public Relations Department has been directed to promote this campaign as much as possible. Director-in-Chief Dr. Chandrakishore Shahi, State Cell In-charge of Routine Immunization Dr. Virendra Prasad Singh, State Nodal Officer of IEC Dr. Lal Majhi, State Coordinator of National Health Mission Akay Minj, State Representative of World Health Organization Dr. Amarendra, Dr. Pradeep Singh from IMA along with officials and representatives of Energy, Forest Environment and Climate Change, Home Prison and Disaster Management, Panchayati Raj, Women and Child Development, Transport, Mines, Urban Development and Housing, School Education, Rural Development, Police, Social Welfare, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, Rotary and other departments were present in the meeting.

# BSL holds Official Language Implementation Committee meeting

**R SHARMA : BOKARO**  
BSL (Bokaro Steel Plant) organized the first meeting of the Official Language Implementation Committee for the year 2024-25, chaired by the Director In-Charge, Birendra Kumar Tiwari. The meeting was attended by Executive Director (Projects & Additional Charge Material Management) C. R. Mahapatra, Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) Suresh Rangani, Executive Director (Human Resources & Additional Charge of Works) Rajan Prasad, along with Chief General Managers of various departments and other senior officials. The meeting began with a welcome address by the Official Language Officer, Shashank Shekhar, who also outlined the agenda of the meeting. During the session, the progress on the decisions taken in the previous meeting and the advancement of Hindi in various departments were reviewed. In his address, DIC Tiwari, emphasized the importance of promoting the use of Hindi.

# BJP Mahila Morcha hits streets over crimes against women



District president of the BJP Amit Tiwari and state Mahila Morcha general secretary Dr Seema Singh at the rally today in Daltonganj photo by PNS

**PNS : DALTONGANJ**  
Palamu Zila Mahila Morcha of the BJP today hit the streets in sizable numbers, flying the Hemant Soren

Morcha vice president Rupa Singh besides hosts of others took the lead. The district chief of the Mahila Morcha Citu Gupta and woman party workers showed spirited temper against the Hemant Soren government. BJP's lone woman MLA Pushpa Devi was there in the rally today. District president of the BJP Amit Tiwari and veteran worker Sheo Kumar Mishra facilitated the Aakros rally of the Mahila Morcha of the BJP here. It was a very humid day today but the woman wing of the BJP braved the humidity and shouted loudly against the present state government. An emerging BJP leader Jyoti Pandey was seen regulating the Mahila Morcha street walk down.

# Har Har Mahadev Seva Sangh Bhajan Sandhya on August 19

**PNS : JAMSHEDPUR**  
The much-anticipated Bhajan Sandhya organized by the Har Har Mahadev Seva Sangh is set to take place on the last Monday of the holy month of Sawan, on 19 August 2024, at the Sakchi Gurudwara Ground from 6:30 PM. This year, the event will feature a special performance by renowned Bhajan singer Kanhaiya Mittal, who will grace the stage of Har Har Mahadev Seva Sangh for the very first time, accompanied by his talented instrumental troupe. The event promises to be a grand celebration, with a spacious pandal constructed at the Sakchi Gurudwara Ground to accommodate thousands of devotees. A grand stage will be set up, along with a majestic ice Shivaling shaped like Baba Barfani at the main entrance. The evening will begin with an offering of worship, followed by a performance from local Bhajan singer Krishnamurthy, who will inaugurate the program with his melodious renditions. The event will conclude with a formal Aarti, and arrangements for Bhog Prasad and drinking water will be available for all devotees. Entry to the event is free, but it will be regulated through invitation letters-cum-

passes distributed by the Sangh. Devotees are encouraged to take their seats by 6:30 PM, and certain rows will be reserved in the audience gallery. The Sangh requests everyone's cooperation in maintaining order and enjoying the event with enthusiasm, while receiving the blessings of Bhole Baba. In addition to the pandal, Sakchi Kalimati Road will be adorned with festive lights, and arrangements for traffic management and fire safety will be in place. A team of volunteers will be on hand to assist the devotees, with full support from district and police administration to ensure precautionary measures are followed. This program is fully dedicated to Bhole Baba, and devotees are expected to participate with discipline. This year marks the 24th edition of the Har Har Mahadev Seva Sangh Bhajan Sandhya. As per tradition, the Sangh will honor four individuals with the 'Sangh Ratna Seva Award' for their outstanding service to society. This prestigious award has been presented annually for the past decade, with this year's recipients to be announced shortly. Past honorees include distinguished figures such as Dr. K S Sidhu, Padma Shri Premilata Agarwal, and Bharat Sharma Vyas, among others.

# DWA organises Swan Milan programme

**PNS : RANCHI**  
The Doctors Wives Association organised Swan Milan on 14th August 2024 at 1 M A Hall. The members clad in green bubbled with enthusiasm for participation. But before starting the program, a minute's silence was observed by everyone in memory of the lady doctor who lost her life in Kolkata recently. Chairperson Vinita Sharan and Founder cum Co-Chairperson Jhooma Sarkar extended their warm wishes to the ladies. President Shreela Choudhary delivered the welcome address. Highlighting the importance of this auspicious month, Secretary Amrita Baidya thanked everyone for their participation. The programme began with Shiv stuti by Chanda fol-



lowed by dances and songs. The biggest attraction of the event was the ramp walk by the ever enthusiastic ladies flaunting their beautiful saris, mehndi and jewelry. The organisers including Treasurer Monideepa Dasgupta, Shobha Kumar, Rekha Mishra, Manju Khaitan, Nita Sahay, Kamlesh Middha, Anju Kumari Singh, Pallavi Sharan, Neelum Shekhar along with the above mentioned office bearers won accolades for the entertaining program. Renu Tiwari, Arti Singh, Seema Maheshwari, Nirmala Raman, Bibha Singh, Supriya Thakur, Shivani Sahu Rashmi Kumar, Moona Pal, Taruna Chhabra, Sangeeta Sharan, Pallavi Sunil, Dr Neha Rani, Bindu Prasad

# Bokaro Mahila Samiti Organizes Sawan Milan Program



**PNS : BOKARO**  
Bokaro Mahila Samiti organized a Sawan Milan program at the Bokaro Club. The event was inaugurated in a traditional manner by the committee's president, Anita Tiwari, along with the vice-presidents, through the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. The event saw the participation of committee members as well as the executive members. Under the leadership of Cultural Secretary Shweta Kumar, members of the Mahila Samiti presented traditional Sawan songs and dances. Additionally, a Mehndi competition and a Sawan Queen contest were organized. The program also included various entertaining games and activities, with a special Sawan swing being decorated as part of the celebrations. New members were welcomed into the committee, traditional Sawan songs were sung, and refreshments were provided. The main objective of this event was to foster mutual harmony and love among the participants, as well as to raise awareness and encourage women to engage in social service.

# Body of youth, who fell from Trikut hills, found after 30 hours



**PNS : LOHARDAGA**

Body of a youth named Munna Sahu, son of late Samu Sahu, a resident of Tati of Kudu block, was today found by NDRF from Tikut hills in Deoghar. Sahu had gone to Babadham Shravani Mela from Tati of Kudu in Lohardaga district to worship. He was missing for 30 hours after falling from the peak of Trikut mountain. The NDRF team recovered his body at around 11 am on Wednesday morning. The missing youth had gone to Baba Dham for worship along with his twelve other companions. After offering water on Monday night, everyone went to Basukinath for worship on Tuesday morning. After returning from where everyone had gone to visit Trikut mountain. Munna along with his friend Shankar climbed

the top of the mountain without a guide. Meanwhile, Munna Sahu lost control near the railing at Hema Gudgudiya Moral Point and fell into a 200 feet deep ditch. It is being told that his remaining companions had stayed in Bhakti Prabha's ashram. After the accident, the companion present with Munna on the mountain tried to investigate by informing the guides about the incident, but could not find any trace of the young man who was the victim of the accident. After that somehow he came down.

# AFFIDAVIT

I, Abhas Kumar Ojha, Father- Shri Tirthnath Ojha, Address-Village-Dihari, Panchayat-Hajipur West, Post-Mirzachowki, Thana-Sahibganj (Mu.), District-Sahibganj, (Jharkhand). Ayush Kashyap is my son. By affidavit number 742, dated-13.08.2024, the correct and actual date of birth of my son is 03.11.2010 which is also recorded in the Aadhar card (9141 5571 6834) and birth certificate.

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**SAMJHAUTA DAY- "AZADI RIN SE"**  
On the occasion of Independence Day, Bank of India is organizing SAMJHAUTA DAY- "AZADI RIN SE" on 16th & 17th August 2024 to settle the NPA loan accounts of borrowers under One Time Settlement (OTS) at all its branches/ Zones and FGMOs across the country. The SAMJHAUTA DAY is specially designed for the NPA borrowers who could not repay their loan in time due to distress in business/ medical condition of the borrower or any other genuine reason. Our Bank is having special OTS schemes to settle small value accounts and mid-size accounts through which special and good discounts are offered to the borrowers whose accounts are NPA. We appeal all the borrowers whose accounts are NPA to come forward to avail this Golden opportunity by settling NPA loan accounts on SAMJHAUTA DAY on 16th & 17th August-2024.  
Sd/- Zonal Head

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**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
[Under Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Central Bank of India, RAMGARH Cantt. Branch under the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act no. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice Dated 01.12.2023 calling upon the Borrower Mr. Ghura Yadav, S/O Late Shri Jaglal Yadav and (Co-Applicant)/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 15,31,790.00 (Rs. Fifteen Lakh Thirty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety only) as on 18.11.2023 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice with future interest and incidental charges w.e.f. 01.12.2023.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under section 13 (4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 of the said Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 on this day of 08th Day of August of the Year 2024.

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Central Bank of India, RAMGARH Cantt. Branch for an amount of Rs. 15,31,790.00 (Rs. Fifteen Lakh Thirty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety only) as on 18.11.2023 plus interest and incidental expenses incurred by bank w.e.f. 01.12.2023.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property  
EM of Landed Property of Mr. Ghura Yadav S/O Late Shri Jaglal Yadav as per sale deed no 9295 Dated 18.06.2022, Khata No 37, Plot No. 592, Situated at Mauza Kujju, Thana No. 154, Thana Jageshar Thana Mandu, Distt. Ramgarh, Jharkhand, Total Area : 3 3/4 Dismil. Bounded by : North - 10' Feet Proposed Road, South - 5' Feet Proposed Road, East - Shri Khageshar Saw, West - Shri Moti Prasad

Authorized Officer  
Central Bank of India  
Date : 08.08.2024 | Place : Ranchi

**स्टील अथॉरिटी ऑफ इण्डिया लिमिटेड**  
बोकारो स्टील प्लांट  
बोकारो स्टील सिटी-827001, झारखण्ड, भारत

**सूचना**

मेडिकलेम नवीकरण कराने वाले सदस्यों को यह सूचित किया जाता है कि वर्तमान मेडिकलेम योजना के नवीकरण की अवधि दिनांक 18/08/2024 तक बढ़ा दी गई है।  
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# CM hails SC decision on minerals tax; says, Jharkhand will get its dues

PNS : RANCHI

Chief Minister Hemant Soren today expressed happiness over the Supreme Court's decision to retain the states' right to levy tax on mines and mineral-rich land. Soren described the decision as a big victory.

In a post on popular microblogging website X, he said, "Our continuous demand has been successful with the Supreme Court's his-

toric decision. Now Jharkhand will get Rs 1 lakh 36 thousand crore of arrears from the Center. Your government was constantly raising its voice regarding this dues and rights of every Jharkhandi. Now we will get the arrears of mineral royalty from the year 2005. This payment will be made in a phased manner in 12 years. Along with the rights of the state residents being protected, this money will be used in

public welfare, and every Jharkhand resident will get full benefit of it."

The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected the Center's petition to implement its decision of July 25 with future effect, in which the legislative right of the states to levy tax on mines and mineral-rich land was retained.

The Apex court allowed the states to collect royalty from April 1, 2005 onwards.

A nine-member Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said that the plea to implement the order of July 25 with future effect is rejected.

The bench, however, laid some conditions on the payment of past dues. It said that the Center and mining companies can pay the dues to the mineral-rich states in a phased manner over the next 12 years. However, the bench

directed the states not to impose any penalty on the payment of dues.

The Center had opposed the demand to return the royalty imposed on minerals and mineral-rich land since 1989 to the mineral-rich states, saying that it would affect the citizens and according to preliminary estimates, public sector companies (PSUs) would have to withdraw Rs 70,000 crore from their treasury.

## Over 20 Everest Summiters to gather in city for 'Everest Summit 2.0 - Beyond the Mountains' on Aug 18

PNS : RANCHI

Ranchi is all set to welcome over 20 distinguished mountaineers at the "Everest Summit 2.0 - Beyond the Mountains," organised by the Ideate Inspire Ignite Foundation in collaboration with CCL and CyberPeace Corps. This inspiring event will take place on Sunday, August 18, 2024, at the JAP 1 Auditorium (Shaurya Sabhagar), Doranda, Ranchi.

The summit is designed to inspire and energize attendees by sharing the incredible stories of adventurers who have conquered some of the world's most challenging peaks. The event symbolizes Ideate Inspire Ignite Foundation's

aim to empower people with resilience, and serves as a platform to promote such activities within the state of Jharkhand. It also aims to showcase CyberPeace's commitment to equipping individuals with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the digital landscape securely. CCL is also taking care of promotion of sports and adventure sports through various activities in our State.

A highlight of the event will be the participation of Malavath Purna, who became the youngest female to climb Mount Everest at just 13 years and 11 months old. Purna also scaled Mount Elbrus, the highest peak in Europe, on July 27, 2017.

स्वतंत्रता दिवस के अवसर पर लोहरदगा जिला प्रशासन द्वारा समस्त जिलेवासियों को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं, साथ ही जिले के समग्र विकास में प्रशासन का सहयोग करें।

डॉ बाघमारे प्रसाद कृष्ण  
उपायुक्त, लोहरदगा

## CM, Kalpana Soren congratulate U-17 Subroto Cup winning team

PNS : RANCHI

The players of the champion team of the 63rd International Subroto Cup Under-17 Girls Football Competition, Jharkhand, met Chief Minister Hemant Soren and MLA Kalpana Soren today here on Wednesday. On this occasion, the CM congratulated and wished the players of the winning team of Jharkhand Under-17 Girls for their excellent performance.

He told the players that their achievement makes all the people of Jharkhand proud. He said that all of the players have brought laurels to Jharkhand in the country and the world by performing brilliantly as a champion team.

The CM and MLA Kalpana Soren encouraged all the girl players present by giving them sweets and wished them a bright future. On the occasion, MLA Kalpana Soren praised the performance and hard work of the girl players. She told the players that all of you are excellent players, you should continue to work hard in the same way in future and keep bringing laurels to the state. The CM and his wife provided sports kit bags to the girl players.

पुलिस अधीक्षक का कार्यालय लोहरदगा, झारखण्ड

राज्य सरकार के द्वारा उग्रवादियों के प्रत्यापन पुनर्वास हेतु नवी नीति/योजना की स्वीकृत मुख्य सूचनाएं :-

- विधि व्यवस्था के क्षेत्र में सबसे बड़ी चुनौती उग्रवाद की समस्या है। जिससे लोहरदगा जिला इस समस्या से गंभीर रूप से आक्रांत है। आत्म समर्पित नक्सलियों को भुगतने पुनर्वास अनुदान निम्नरूपेण सारिका के अनुसार किया जाएगा:-

क्र.सं.	श्रेणी	पुनर्वास अनुदाय राशि
01	ए श्रेणी-जोनल कमांडर एवं उसके उपर स्तर के नक्सली	₹ 6,00,000/- (छः लाख)
02	बी श्रेणी-जोनल कमांडर एवं उसके नीचे स्तर के नक्सली	₹ 3,00,000/- (तीन लाख)

- कार्यशील एवं नियमित आग्नेयस्त्र (Regular) गोला-बारूद के प्रत्यापन के बदले अतिरिक्त भुगतान निम्नरूपेण सारिका के अनुसार किया जाएगा :-

क्र.सं.	आग्नेयस्त्र/विस्फोटकों का प्रकार	पुरस्कार से संबंधित राशि
01	सॉकेट लांचर/एलओएमओओ	₹ 1,00,000/-
02	एओके 47/56/74 रायफल/रनाईपर रायफल/इंसास/एसओएसओ	₹ 75,000/-
03	303 रायफल/पिस्टल/रियालवर/कार्बाइन	₹ 25,000/-
04	315 रायफल और अन्य रायफल	₹ 15,000/-
05	रिमोट कंट्रोल किगाईरोस	₹ 6,000/-
06	रोनेड/हैण्ड रोनेड	₹ 2,000/-
07	वायरलेस सीट	₹ 2,000/- से 10,000/- (रेज के आधार पर)
08	आईओ ईओ बीओ	₹ 6,000/-
09	विस्फोटक सामग्री (प्रति किग्रा)	₹ 2,000/-

- प्रत्यापन करने वाले उग्रवादी की योग्यता एवं अनिच्छा के अनुसार पुनर्वास समिति द्वारा कौशल विकास विभाग, झारखण्ड द्वारा जिलों में संचालित कौशल विकास केंद्रों में उपलब्ध विभिन्न संकायों में व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण की व्यवस्था की जाएगी।

अथवा पुनर्वास समिति द्वारा ₹ 6,000/- (छः हजार) प्रतिमाह की भुति पर एक वर्ष तक के लिए प्रशिक्षण की व्यवस्था की जाएगी। विशेष परिस्थिति में व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण की अवधि एक अतिरिक्त वर्ष तक के लिए विस्तारित की जा सकेगी।

- अधिकतम बार डिस्मील जमीन गृह निर्माण हेतु आवंटित की जाएगी।
- यदि प्रत्यापन करने वाले उग्रवादी के लिए पर उसके मारे जाने या गिरफ्तार होने पर कोई सरकारी इनाम घोषित हो तो समर्पण के उपरान्त घोषित इनाम की राशि उन्हें ही प्रदान कर दी जाएगी।
- मुख्यमंत्री कल्याण योजना-समर्पित महिला उग्रवादी एवं उग्रवादियों की पुत्रियों के वैवाहिक कार्यक्रम हेतु अनुदान राशि दी जाएगी।

पुलिस अधीक्षक, लोहरदगा। - मो0नं0-9431706218  
पुलिस उपधीक्षक (गु), लोहरदगा। - मो0नं0-9431361305  
अनुमण्डल पुलिस पदाधिकारी, लोहरदगा। - मो0नं0-9431129614  
अनुमण्डल पुलिस पदाधिकारी, फिस्को, लोहरदगा। - मो0नं0-7004540014

निवेदक,  
लोहरदगा पुलिस।

हारिस बिन जमाँ  
पुलिस अधीक्षक, लोहरदगा

पत्रक-270/सं0300, दिनांक-14.08.2024

## FOWA Celebrated Sawan Mahotsav



Forest Officers Wives Association (FOWA) organized Sawan Mahotsav in Palash Auditorium on 13th August. Poonam Ranjan was chosen as Sawan Queen. The program started with Shiv Vandana. FOWA members enjoyed Sawan swing. Apart from this, colourful programs of dance, music and entertaining games were also organized. FOWA members dressed in different designs of mehndi and traditional clothes looked captivating. The members celebrated this festival of love for nature with joy and harmony. FOWA President Vibha Shrivastava, Vice President Ruchi Upadhyay, Secretary Poonam Ranjan, Joint Secretary Sunandita Das, Treasurer Meenu Pandian, Ranjana Samant, Diksha Prasad, Seema Kumar, Mahvish Fatima, Ramita along with senior members Usha Sinha, Pramila Singh, Sabita Mishra, Leena Rastogi, Madhavi Chatterjee, Rajshree Singh, Kala Pandey, Preetibala and many other members were present in the program.

## SBPS students hold Tiranga Yatra



To mark the upcoming 78th Independence Day, a Tiranga Yatra was organised for the students of Sarala Birla Public School, Ranchi with great patriotic fervour. Dr. Pradip Varma, MP, General Secretary, BJP Jharkhand graced the occasion as a special invitee. The students of Rajkiya Utkramit Vidyalaya, Mahilong and Rajkiya Utkramit Vidyalaya, Ara also participated in the yatra. The week-long celebration at Sarala Birla Public School, Ranchi included a special assembly which fostered the spirit of unity and pride. Students featured and enacted as Freedom fighters who contributed to India's Independence. Principal Paramjit Kaur highlighted the significance of being independent and reminded the students to honour the sacrifices made by the freedom fighters for our nation.

एनटीपीसी NTPC

स्वतंत्रता दिवस

की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएँ

एनटीपीसी केरेडारी एवं चट्टी बरियातु कोयला खनन परियोजनाएं

समाज कल्याण योजनाओं में पूर्ण भागीदारी

समस्त देशवासियों को स्वतंत्रता दिवस की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

रामदास सोरेन  
घाटशिला, एमएलए

आजादी का उत्सव मनाएं

हर घर तिरंगा लगाएं

रमेश सिंह  
प्रदेश कार्यसमिति सदस्य, भाजपा झारखंड

भारतीय जनता पार्टी, झारखण्ड प्रदेश



# SC allows mineral-rich States to claim royalties from 2005 Modi, Shah recall Partition horrors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a major victory for mineral-rich States, the Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed them to seek dues from April 1, 2005 on royalty and tax on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land from the Centre in a staggered period of 12 years.

A nine-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the argument for prospective effect of July 25 is rejected. Pronouncing the verdict on behalf of the bench, CJI Chandrachud said by a 8:1 majority, this Court had on July 25 answered the questions referred to it and held that legislative power to tax mineral rights vests with States.

He said after the pronouncement of the July 25 verdict, the assesses sought prospective effect of the decision and the matter was listed on July 31 to decide the effect of verdict.

The Centre has opposed the demand of states for refund of royalty levied on mines and minerals since 1989, saying it will impact the citizens and the PSUs will have to empty their coffers by Rs 70,000



crore according to initial estimates.

"The submission that the Mineral Area Development Authority Act (MADA July 25 verdict) be given prospective effect is rejected," the bench said and laid down conditionalities for payment of dues by the Centre and mining companies, including Public Sector Undertakings, to the States, "While the states may levy or renew demands of tax, if any pertaining to Entries 49 and 50 of List II of seventh schedule of the Constitution, in terms of law laid down in the decision of MADA (July 25 verdict). The demand of tax shall not operate on transactions made prior to April 1, 2005," the

bench said. Entry 49 of List II deals with taxes on lands and buildings while Entry 50 deals with taxes on mineral rights subject to any limitations imposed by Parliament by law relating to mineral development. The bench also comprising Justices Hrishikesh Roy, Abhay S Oka, JB Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih, said "the time for payment of demand of tax (by States) shall be staggered in instalments over a period of 12 years commencing from April 1, 2026".

The top Court directed that the levy of interest and penalty on demands of taxes by States from the Centre and

mining companies made before the period of July 25, 2024 shall stand waived for all the assessee.

CJI Chandrachud said this verdict will be signed by eight-judges of the bench who by majority decided the July 25 judgement giving the State's power to levy taxes on mineral rights.

He said Justice Nagarathna will not sign Wednesday's verdict as she had given a dissenting view in the July 25 verdict.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for Jharkhand, said there still remains one issue that the State's Act to collect royalty on minerals and mineral-bearing land, which was set aside needs to be upheld. "Unless the Act is declared valid, we cannot collect taxes on minerals and mineral-bearing land.

Please list it expeditiously before the appropriate bench," Dwivedi, who appeared along with senior advocate Tapesh Kumar Singh for Jharkhand, said.

Dwivedi was referring to the decision of Ranchi bench of the Patna High Court that had struck down Section 89 of the Mineral Area

Development Authority Act of 1992 vide its judgment dated March 22, 1993. Section 89 of the Mineral Area Development Authority Act empowered the State Government of then undivided Bihar to levy tax on not only mineral-bearing land but also land used for commercial or industrial purposes.

CJI Chandrachud assured Dwivedi that he will issue directions on the administrative side for urgent listing of the matter. During the hearing on July 31, the Centre and mining companies have opposed the demand of States for refund of royalty collected since 1989. The July 25 verdict had overruled a 1989 judgement and subsequent decisions of the apex Court, which held that only the Centre has power to impose royalty on minerals and mineral bearing land.

Some Opposition-ruled mineral rich States then sought refund of royalty levied by the Centre and taxes from the mining companies since the 1989 verdict.

The matter of refund was heard on July 31 and order was reserved.



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday paid tributes to all those who suffered during India's partition. Modi recalled the sufferings of people impacted by it and reiterated the commitment to always protect the bonds of unity and brotherhood in the nation.

The Modi Government has been observing August 14 as the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' since 2021 in remembrance of those who lost their lives during the country's partition.

On the Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, Prime Minister Modi said on Wednesday, "We recall the countless people who were

impacted and greatly suffered due to the horrors of Partition. It is also a day to pay tributes to their courage, which illustrates the power of human resilience.

A lot of those impacted by Partition went on to rebuild their lives and attain immense success." He added, "Today, we also reiterate our commitment to always protect the bonds of unity and brotherhood in our nation."

Home Minister Shah on Wednesday paid tributes to all those who suffered during India's partition in 1947, saying a nation that remembers its history can build its future and emerge as a powerful country. Pakistan was carved out as a Muslim country after the division of India by the British colonial rule on this day in 1947.

Millions of people were displaced and many lost their lives as large scale rioting took place following the partition.

"On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day my homage to the millions who suffered inhuman pains, lost lives, turned homeless during this most hideous episode of our history," Shah said in a social media message.

The Home Minister said a nation that remembers its history can build its future and emerge powerful.

He said observing this day is a foundational exercise in the process of nation-building under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. While making the announcement about the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' in 2021, Modi had said the day would be observed in the memory of the struggles and sacrifices of people as the pain of partition can never be forgotten.

Modi had also noted that millions of people were displaced and many lost their lives due to mindless hate and violence caused by the partition. India will be celebrating its Independence Day on Thursday.

# Uproar over Kolkata doctor rape-murder case

Rahul criticises handling of case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the uproar over the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration.

The entire country is shocked by the gruesome incident of rape and murder of the junior doctor in Kolkata, said the former Congress President, adding there is an atmosphere of insecurity among the doctors' community and women with the revelations about the manner of the cruel and inhuman act against her.

"The attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration," Rahul said in a social media post.

"This incident has forced us to think that if doctors are not safe in a place like a medical college, then how can the parents send their daughters outside for studies? Why are even the strict laws made after the Nirbhaya case unsuccessful in preventing such crimes?" he said.

Every party, every section of



the society will have to hold serious discussions and take concrete steps on the continuously increasing incidents against women from Hathras to Unnao, and from Kathua to Kolkata, he said.

"I stand with the victim's family in their unbearable pain. They should get justice at all costs and the culprits should be given such a punishment that it serves as an example in society," Rahul said.

The body of the woman post-graduate trainee was found inside a seminar hall of the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on the morning of August 9. A civic volunteer was arrested on Saturday in connection with the crime. Junior doctors across West Bengal continued to cease work on Wednesday, the sixth day on

the trot, protesting against the alleged rape and murder of the woman doctor at the State-run medical college and hospital and demanding justice for her.

The ongoing protest affected the healthcare services and long queues of patients were seen at the outpatient departments (OPDs) of all Government hospitals. The agitating junior doctors have been pressing for a magisterial probe into the killing of the woman doctor and the removal of senior officials from RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday ordered the transfer of the probe into the alleged rape and murder of the trainee doctor from the Kolkata Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

# BJP seeks Mamata's resignation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of siding with the accused instead of the victim in the case of rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata, and demanded her resignation.

BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed that no woman in the State will feel safe if she continues as Chief Minister. "You (Banerjee) did not perform your moral duty. You should immediately resign," he told reporters, alleging that she tried to save the accused of the crime, which has shocked the nation.

Bhatia cited the critical comments of the Calcutta High Court about the handling of the case before it transferred the investigation to the CBI, as he addressed the CM as "nirmamta" (pitiless) Banerjee.

He expressed confidence that the CBI will ensure a thorough probe and that the guilty are hanged. He said the local police first informed the victim's parents that their daughter was sick and then claimed that she had committed suicide.

The parents were made to wait for three hours before they could see her body, he said, alleging that attempts



were made to destroy evidence and shield the accused. Before doing a thorough probe, the police rejected the possibility of a gangrape, he said.

The State Government instead of acting against the principal of the medical college, where the victim worked and the incident happened, transferred him in the same position to another college, he said.

The police did not initially lodge an FIR and termed the case as that of an unnatural death, Bhatia said, hitting out at Banerjee for allegedly shielding the accused and trying to brush the crime under the carpet.

Amid outrage, Banerjee said she will transfer the case to the CBI if it was not solved in a few days, he noted, suggesting that it was a deliberate attempt on her part to destroy evidence as first 48 hours are very important in such cases.

Law and order has collapsed in the State, he said, while also referring to the Sandeshkhali case in which a

local Trinamool Congress strongman was the main accused.

The Chief Minister tried to protect the accused in this case as well, and he was acted against only after the Court handed over the probe to the CBI, he said.

In the doctor's rape and murder case, the victim's family has expressed its lack of confidence in the local police, he said. Bhatia also slammed INDIA bloc, of which the TMC is a part, saying they are "political cultures" who have chosen to maintain silence over the case for political reasons.

He accused the Opposition parties of pandering to minorities votes, especially Muslims, by keeping selective silence over the targeting of Hindus in Bangladesh.

He said only after the BJP raised the issue, the Congress at a "belated stage" made comments on the matter as well but tried to create an "artificial equivalence" that Hindus also indulge in such acts.



# India's conservation push sees three wetlands get Ramsar designation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a boost to India's environmental conservation efforts, three new wetlands---the Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary and Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, along with the Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh have been designated as Ramsar sites, elevating the country's total to 85 such globally significant ecosystems.

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav proudly announced this development on social media platform X, stating, "As the nation gears up to celebrate its Independence Day, we are thrilled to share that we have added three Ramsar sites to our network. This takes our tally to 85 Ramsar sites, covering an area of 1,358,068 hectares in India.

The achievement reflects the emphasis Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid on establishing harmony with nature, calling our wetlands Amrit Dharohars, and working relentlessly for their conservation."

This achievement highlights India's growing commitment to preserving its rich and diverse wetland habitats, which are crucial for maintaining global biodiversity and supporting human livelihoods, added an official from the Ministry. Tamil Nadu now boasts the highest number of Ramsar sites, with a total of 18,

followed by Uttar Pradesh with 10.

This impressive increase in Ramsar sites, from 26 a decade ago to 85 till date, reflects a significant policy push from the Government. Over the past three years alone, 41 sites have been added, underscoring the country's proactive stance on environmental conservation, he said.

The Ramsar Convention, named after the Iranian city where the treaty was signed in 1971, is an international agreement focused on the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

India ratified this vital treaty on February 1, 1982, committing to the protection and wise use of its wetland ecosystems.

The latest additions to the Ramsar list span over 1.35 million hectares, showcasing a diverse array of ecological significance.

The Ramsar list aims to create and maintain an international network of wetlands that are crucial for conserving biological diversity and sustaining human life through the preservation of their ecosystem functions and benefits.

This recent expansion of Ramsar sites not only enhances India's role in global environmental stewardship but also reinforces the country's dedication to preserving its natural heritage for future generations.

# Modi to unfurl Tricolour for 11th time in a row

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unfurl the national flag for the 11th time in a row on Thursday on Independence Day, the annual event where he lays out his Government's agenda, presents its report card, makes important policy and programme announcements and speaks about burning issues.

His first Independence Day address of his third term will take him past Manmohan Singh, who unfurled the Tricolour 10 times from the

ramparts of Red Fort during 2004-2014, and place him behind Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, who did the honours 17 and 16 times respectively.

While the theme of 'Viksit Bharat' is expected to animate his address, there is a view that the crisis in Bangladesh, especially the targeting of minority Hindus, may find a mention in his speech, more so as Hindutva groups have strongly taken up the issue and hit the streets.

Modi may also speak about the mandate for his



Government for a third straight term, though with a reduced majority, and dwell at length on how reforms, development programmes and welfare measures rolled out in the last 10 years have impacted the lives of the people.

It will be eagerly seen if the Prime Minister announces any new initiative or expand the ambit of some ongoing welfare programmes at a time when a combined Opposition, at its strongest in the last 10 years, has pivoted to populist welfare promises to draw support. Jammu and

Kashmir has often figured in his August 15 speeches as the Government has worked overtime to reconfigure the security and development paradigms in the erstwhile State, now a Union territory, since scrapping Article 370 in 2019.

The Supreme Court has set September 30 as the deadline for the holding of assembly elections there. There is also anticipation that some of the key decisions taken by the Government since he assumed the office in June for a third term may be highlighted by him.

# India's first dengue vaccine enters phase 3 trials

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Panacea Biotec marked a significant milestone with the launch of the Phase 3 clinical trial for DengiAll, India's first indigenous dengue vaccine from Pandit Bhagwat Dayal Sharma Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) in Rohtak where the first participant in the trial was vaccinated on Wednesday.

The Phase 3 trial will involve over 10,335 healthy adult participants across 19 sites in

18 States and Union Territories.

This extensive study aims to evaluate the vaccine's efficacy and will follow participants for two years.

In light of the escalating dengue cases, which have become a public health crisis in India, Union Health Minister JP Nadda praised the move saying that "The initiation of this Phase 3 clinical trial for India's first indigenous dengue vaccine marks a critical advancement in our fight against dengue." Emphasising the importance

of the collaboration between ICMR and Panacea Biotec for the development of the dengue vaccine, Nadda noted that "Through this partnership, we are not only taking a step towards ensuring the health and well-being of our people but also reinforcing our vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat in the healthcare sector."

India faces a significant challenge with dengue, having no antiviral treatments or licensed vaccines available. The complexity of developing an



effective vaccine lies in the need to address all four serotypes of the dengue virus, which circulate extensively

across various regions. Dengue has over the years become a major public health concern in India, ranking among the top 30 countries with the highest incidence of the disease. The rising incidence of dengue in India has raised significant concern. Earlier this month, the Health Ministry informed Parliament that India had seen 32,091 dengue cases in the first six months of 2024, representing a 75 per cent increase compared to the 18,391 cases reported during the same period in 2023.

The tetravalent dengue vaccine strain (TV-003/TV005), initially developed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), USA, has shown promising results in preclinical and clinical trials globally.

Panacea Biotec, one of three Indian companies to receive this strain, has made the most progress in developing a complete vaccine formulation.

The trial is primarily funded by ICMR with partial support from Panacea Biotec. The company holds a process

patent for this work. Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials of the Indian vaccine formulation were completed in 2018-19, yielding promising results.

According to a WHO report approximately 75-80 per cent of infections in India are asymptomatic, yet these individuals can transmit the infection through the bite of Aedes mosquitoes.

Among the 20-25 per cent of cases where symptoms are clinically apparent, children are at a significantly higher risk of hospitalisation and mortality.



# BJP sweeps Panchayat polls in Tripura, wins 97% of seats



**PTI ■ AGARTALA**  
The ruling BJP swept the three-tier Panchayat polls in Tripura, winning 97 per cent of seats, an official said on Wednesday. The BJP secured victory uncontested in 71 per cent of the seats in Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads. The voting for the remaining 29 per cent seats was held on August 8 and the counting ended on Tuesday. The party won 584 Gram Panchayats out of 606, 34 of 35 Panchayat Samitis and eight out of eight Zilla Parishads, the official said. The saffron party had won the both Lok Sabha seats in the northeastern state in June. Out of 96 seats contested in eight Zilla Parishads, the BJP won 93 seats, while the Congress and CPI(M) emerged victorious in two and one seat respectively, State Election Commissioner Asit Kumar Das said.

In the case of Panchayat Samitis, the state's party won 173 of the total 188 seats where voting was held. The CPI(M) and the Congress bagged six and eight seats respectively. Das said that the BJP won 1,476 of the 1,819 Gram Panchayats seats contested. The CPI(M), Congress and the Tipra Motha got 148, 151, and 24 seats respectively. The BJP thanked people for reposing faith in the BJP in the Panchayat elections. The opposition parties, however, said that they could not field candidates in 71 per cent of the seats because of the alleged terror tactics of the ruling party. Chief Minister Manik Saha said, "The mandate shows the people continue to keep faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his development programmes. The BJP won 97 per cent of the seats with huge margins. There must be an effort to win 100 per cent of seats in the Panchayat polls in

future." BJP state president Rajib Bhattacharjee said the party's average winning margin stands at 97 per cent. The opposition CPI(M), however, termed the poll verdict as "an alarm call" for the ruling dispensation as the saffron party faced tough fight in those areas where the opposition parties managed to field candidates. "One CPI(M) candidate of Zilla Parishad was killed at Rajnagar in South Tripura district by the ruling party's goons. Despite winning 71 per cent seats, the ruling party terrorized workers of the opposition parties during the election and counting process," Leader of the Opposition in the Tripura Assembly Jitendra Chaudhury said. The BJP faced strong resistance and defeat in the areas where the opposition could field candidates, the CPI(M) leader claimed.

# Kerala landslides: CM announces ₹6 L compensation to kin of deceased

**PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**  
Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday announced a compensation of Rs six lakh to the next of kin of those who died in the massive landslides that hit Wayanad district recently and claimed over 200 lives. Vijayan said that of the Rs six lakh, Rs four lakh would come from the State Disaster Relief Fund and the remaining from the Chief Minister's Disaster Relief Fund (CMDRF). He also announced that Rs 75,000 would be allocated from the CMDRF to those who lost eyes and limbs or suffered disability up to 60 per cent in the landslides. The CM also said that Rs 50,000 financial assistance would be given to those who suffered disability between 40 to 60 per cent or suffered very

serious injuries in the disaster. Besides that, the survivors opting for rented accommodation or living with their relatives will get Rs 6,000 per month towards rent as part of the rehabilitation of the victims, he said. This amount, however, will not be available to those who get rent-free or fully sponsored accommodation, he added. In cases of partial sponsorship, the remaining amount will be allowed as monthly rent up to a maximum of Rs 6,000, the CM said at a press conference here. Vijayan also said that so far 231 bodies and 206 body parts have been found, following the massive landslides that hit parts of Wayanad on July 30. A total of 401 samples of bodies and body parts underwent DNA testing and of them 349 were found to be



of 248 persons — 121 males and 127 females, he further said. The CM also said that the five-member expert team led by senior scientist John Matthai of the National Centre for Geosciences,

possible dangers in different parts of the disaster-stricken area and nearby sites as well as how the disaster happened and what phenomena occurred in the landslides, he said. Vijayan further said that additionally a drone-based LIDAR survey will also be carried out to determine what is underneath the disaster-stricken areas and how the land there can be used in future. Major landslides hit the Mundakkai and Chooralamala regions of Wayanad on July 30 almost decimating both the areas. On the same day, several landslides had also hit Vilangad in Kozhikode district, the CM said, adding that a separate rehabilitation package will be worked out for that area also once the authorities complete their inspection and evaluation of the devastation there.

# Assembly adopts resolution for grant of statehood to Puducherry

**PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY**  
The Puducherry Assembly on Wednesday unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to concede the plea of the union territory for full statehood. The resolution was first tabled jointly by the DMK legislators R Siva, A M H Nazeem and R Senthilkumar and by independent member G Nehru alias Kuppusamy. The resolution was subsequently adopted as an official resolution on a request by Chief Minister N Rangasamy. Earlier moving the resolution, Siva said Puducherry had been a Union Territory since its freedom from French rule

some seventy years ago. While other Union Territories like Goa have become full-fledged states and have made stupendous progress, Puducherry had been under the rule by the Union Home Ministry since its merger with the Indian Union. "If Puducherry becomes a state the expectations of the people for fast development in all sectors would be realised in practice," Siva said. The demand for statehood for Puducherry had been made since 1972 and the Centre's attention had also been drawn to the plea, the resolution said. Despite repeated pleas, Centre had not formed any committee and had taken the stand that the present status

(of Puducherry being a Union Territory) would continue. Hence, the Centre should be urged without a break for grant of full-fledged statehood so that the rights of the people would be respected. "The Centre should concede the demand," the resolution stated. The other DMK members Nazeem and Senthilkumar and the independent member Nehru made a convincing case for grant of statehood for Puducherry. There was also a suggestion that a joint delegation of leaders of all political parties, legislators and Ministers should go to Delhi and persuade the Prime Minister, Home Minister and the Finance Minister to ensure

that Puducherry became a full-fledged state. After listening to the views of the members and also their 'emotional and spirited' demand for statehood, the Chief Minister pointed out that the private member resolution be treated as an official resolution. He welcomed the suggestion of the members who had tabled the resolution that a delegation be taken to the Centre to meet the Prime Minister, Home and Finance Ministers to push the demand for statehood. He also said that the cooperation of MPs from different states could also be sought to back the demand of Puducherry for statehood.

# Potholes on Goa roads: Show-cause notices to over 100 contractors

**PTI ■ PANAJI**  
The Goa government on Wednesday issued show-cause notices to more than 100 contractors and said government engineers would be held responsible for any accident due to pothole on roads in the coastal state. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, who holds the Public Works Department (PWD) portfolio, told reporters that roads in the state would be pothole-free by the Ganesh Chaturthi festival. Ganesh Chaturthi, one of the most prominent festivals of Goa, would be celebrated next month. Sawant held a meeting with senior PWD officials to take stock of the road conditions in the state. The CM said he has instructed senior PWD officials that if there is any accident due to pothole on a road, then the engineer concerned would be held responsible and action would be initiated against him/her. Show-cause notices have been issued to engineers and more than 100 road contractors, he said. The road contractors will have to fill the potholes on a priority basis and they are supposed to do so as per the "defect liability" clause, he said. There would be no additional financial burden on the state government to fill these potholes, he said. All the contractors will be asked to re-do the roads after October, without being paid extra money, the CM said. "The system will have to be accountable" and that is why the state government is taking several stringent steps for the safety of people, he said.

# 20 years after I-Day blast, victims' families hold on to SC as last straw for justice

**PTI ■ DHEMAJI (ASSAM)**  
Shanti Gogoi has been waiting for 20 long years, seeking justice for the killing of her daughter-in-law and her unborn child in an ULFA-orchestrated bomb blast during the Independence Day celebration in Assam's Dhemaji town. Gogoi's daughter-in-law and 12 other people, including three children, were killed in the explosion that occurred minutes before the flag hoisting ceremony at the parade ground in the northern Assam town in 2004. The explosion was a defining moment in ULFA's history, as the outfit began losing support and sympathy for targeting innocent people since then. An apprehension that justice has eluded the victims has seeped in since the Gauhati

High Court acquitted all the accused in the case, exactly a year ago. Gogoi, a retired school teacher, and others are now pinning their last hopes on the Supreme Court for justice. "The blast happened in front of hundreds of people after they gathered at the Dhemaji College field for the Independence Day celebration. But there is no witness to say who planted the explosives or who was behind it," questions Gogoi, whose daughter-in-law Namita died in the blast with the two-month foetus in her womb. She wondered whether the police expected the witnesses to testify without any apprehension in such cases. In August 2023, Gauhati High Court acquitted all six accused due to "lack of sufficient evi-



dence", overturning a conviction by a lower court. The Dhemaji district and sessions court had in 2019 sentenced four of the accused to life imprisonment and two others to four years in jail in the case. For Gogoi, her neighbour Nityananda Saikia and families of other victims, the last hope is the Supreme Court, which is hearing a case filed by the Assam government challenging

the High Court order. "The High Court order needs to be reviewed. We remain hopeful that the Supreme Court will give us justice," Saikia, who lost both his teenage sisters in the blast, told PTI. A class 12 student himself in 2004 who was present at the blast site, Saikia is now a lawyer, having taken up the profession to better understand how the culprits can be brought to book through the legal system. "We received a letter informing us that the state government will be taking up the case in the apex court," Saikia said. He showed the letter, kept by his mother in a plastic folder along with other papers related to her two daughters' death. Saikia's younger brother is a businessman and the family may appear to have moved on

over the years, but the scar runs deep. "Bomb detectors did not work. The police submitted a charge sheet with plenty of loopholes. And there was no political will to bring those responsible to justice," Saikia claimed. He also questioned the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), which had initially denied involvement but later tendered a public apology, for the reasons behind such killings. "For whom were they fighting? What were their objectives?" the distraught brother of two young sisters who perished in front of him asked. The hexagenarian Gogoi echoed similar sentiments. "Whatever be their objective, the ULFA could have surely tried to attain it without shedding so much blood of the

innocent," she said. A day after the blast, ULFA's then chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa, who signed a peace pact with the government last year, had said in a statement that security forces had used school children as shields to defy the outfit's boycott call. In 2009, the outfit's 'commander-in-chief' Paresh Barua had sought a public apology and claimed that they were misled by some cadres for which they were forced to deny the outfit's involvement. Barua is still waging an armed struggle for a 'sovereign' Assam, leading ULFA (Independent) faction. With Independence Day being celebrated with pomp over the years, the sorrow of these victims' families looms in the shadows, holding on to the last flicker of hope for justice.

# Assam hospital cancels advisory to women doctors

**PTI ■ GUWAHATI**  
The Silchar Medical College and Hospital in Assam on Wednesday cancelled its advisory to women doctors and other staffs asking them to avoid going alone to isolated places at night. SMCH's Principal cum Chief Superintendent Dr Bhaskar Gupta had issued the advisory, following the recent rape and murder of a trainee doctor at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. They are "alone," the advisory said. The authorities also urged them to 'refrain from leaving hostels or lodging rooms during night hours, unless absolutely necessary without prior information to the concerned authority.' They were also asked to "avoid going off-campus during late or odd hours, to avoid associating with unknown individuals and to ensure that they can make emergency contact in case of urgent situations". The advisory also stated that while on duty 'you should be well composed emotionally, remain alert about the surroundings and should graciously interact with the



public so that you don't attract unnecessary attention from unscrupulous people'. Any issue or grievance should be immediately communicated to the chairman/ members of the gender harassment committee and anti-ragging and disciplinary panels, the advisory stated. The students, however, protested against the advisory and demanded that the security on the campus be improved. Junior Doctors' Association (JDA) president Salman Choudhury said they were 'deeply saddened and ashamed'. "The advisory fails to address the key issues, pertaining to SMCH and is outrageous," he said. Choudhury urged the authorities to ensure proper functioning of lighting in the hospital area, enhanced security measures, dedicated washroom facilities, security in doctors' rooms and installation of CCTV cameras.

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# Vet team treks 22 km to save over 600 goats, sheep in remote Himachal



**PTI ■ SHIMLA**  
A four-member team led by a veterinarian trekked 22 km to reach Gaddi shepherds to save hundreds of goats and sheep from a respiratory disease in Himachal Pradesh's tribal Lahaul and Spiti district, officials said on Wednesday. A three-day camp was set up at Batal from August 3-6 for treating the ailing livestock in the remote Bindi Padhar grazing area near Chandratol, a statement issued here said. The sheep and goats had developed lung congestion and respiratory issues, to respond to which the shepherds crossed several streams without proper safety equipment for seeking help. Upon information about the outbreak, a specialised team led by Veterinary Officer Dr Anurag, who was accompanied by pharmacist Amar Singh and two attendants — Roshan Lal and

Kujang Thilley — was dispatched from Keylong to Batal, the release said. Dr Amitabh, Deputy Director, Animal Husbandry Department, who supervised the entire planning and execution, said after reaching the Bindi Padhar grazing area, the team inspected over 2,000 goats and treated over 600 sick goats, it added. They also monitored the health of 13 herds over the three days and physically examined them. Anurag said the team focused on treating goats that were severely ill by arranging immediate medical facilities and vaccines, which led to a noticeable improvement in the condition of the animals. The Gaddi shepherds appreciated the efforts of the veterinary team, saying their livestock could have suffered significant losses without the timely medical assistance, the release added.

# BANGLADESH TURMOIL Cong MLA urges PM not to hesitate to take action like Indira did in 1971

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**  
Expressing concern over the political turmoil and reported atrocities against Hindu minorities in Bangladesh, a Karnataka Congress legislator on Wednesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to hesitate to take decisive military action like former PM late Indira Gandhi did in 1971. Rizwan Arshad, who represents Shivajinagar Assembly constituency in Bengaluru, in a letter to Modi, also appealed to him to take "decisive action" to not only address concerns of minorities in Bangladesh but also in India, who have been under "constant attack both economically and socially by the right wing." "I write to you today as a concerned citizen of India deeply distressed by the recent reports and videos circulating on social media, highlighting the ongoing political turmoil in Bangladesh and the atrocities being reported against Hindu minorities in the region," Arshad said. If these reports are true, given the historical and cultural ties between India and Bangladesh,



it is imperative that India takes a "proactive stance" in addressing these issues, he said. Noting that the safety and well-being of the Hindu minorities in Bangladesh should be of paramount concern, the MLA urged the Prime Minister to engage with the new Bangladeshi government to ensure that immediate and effective measures are taken to protect their rights and dignity. "The right-wing social media influencers and handles in India have been circulating news which if true (many have been found fake too), I urge the Government of India to ascer-

tain the authenticity of these reports/videos. If they are proven true, the Government of India should take firm action," he said. The people of India have always stood for justice, peace, and the protection of human rights, Arshad said. "As our Prime Minister, you should not hesitate to take decisive military action like Smt. Indira Gandhi did in 1971. I request you to use your esteemed office to extend a hand of support to our Hindu brothers and sisters in Bangladesh during this critical time." "I trust that under your leadership, India will take decisive action to not only address concerns of minorities in Bangladesh but also in India, who have been under constant attack both economically and socially by the right wing," he said, and requested him to work towards ensuring the safety and security of our Hindu brethren in Bangladesh and fellow citizens, in particular minorities of India.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Happy Independence Day

As the proud nation celebrates the 78th Independence day it is time to ponder over the journey so far

As we celebrate 78th Independence Day, the air is filled with pride, nostalgia, and hope. This day is not just a commemoration of freedom from colonial rule but a reflection on the journey that has shaped the country. The path to where we stand today, has been nothing short of a roller coaster-marked by triumphs and challenges. As the nation looks back on its accomplishments, it must also cast its eyes forward, contemplating the road that lies ahead. India's post-independence journey has been a remarkable tale of resilience and growth. From the ashes of partition and the burden of colonial exploitation, the nation emerged with a spirit of unity and determination. The early years were fraught with challenges – economic instability, social unrest, and the monumental task of nation-building. Yet, India persisted. The Green Revolution transformed India from a food-deficient country to a self-sufficient one, while the White Revolution made the country the largest producer of milk. It made great strides in space exploration and reached the moon. The nation also saw the rise of a strong industrial base. However, the road was never smooth. India saw wars, political turmoil, and economic crises. The Emergency period in the mid-1970s was a dark chapter, testing the resilience of its democracy. The 1991 economic liberalisation marked a turning point, propelling India onto the global stage, but it also brought new challenges in the form of inequality and social disparities.



The turn of the millennium saw India making strides in various fields. The IT revolution positioned the country as a global technology hub, while advancements in space exploration and nuclear technology showcased

India's scientific prowess. Social progress was evident in the growing emphasis on education, healthcare, and women's empowerment. Landmark legislation such as the Right to Education Act and the decriminalisation of Section 377 reflected the country's commitment to social justice. Yet, there was no dearth of challenges. The rise of communal tensions, growing environmental concerns, and the struggle for inclusivity have reminded the nation that the journey is far from over. The COVID-19 pandemic, the most recent challenge, exposed vulnerabilities but also highlighted India's resilience, as the country emerged as a global leader in vaccine production and distribution. The nation today stands at a crossroads. The country must tackle environmental degradation, and ensure that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable. India's youth, now the largest demographic group, will play a crucial role. We must continue to uphold the democratic values and secular fabric. As the tricolor flutters in the wind this Independence Day, it is a reminder that this was achieved with many sacrifices and efforts on the part of millions of people who make it what it is. The road ahead may be challenging, but it is also filled with possibilities. No country is perfect; it's always a work in progress. But if the people of India commit to making it a shining example for the world, it will become one. Jai Hind!

### PICTALK



Young students participate in a programme on the eve of Independence Day at a school, in Moradabad, PI

## Nano technology revolutionises car care

This cutting-edge technology is changing the car detailing process by enhancing protection, durability, and aesthetic appeal of cars

The automotive industry is progressing rapidly, with nanotechnology emerging as a transformative force in redefining car care. This cutting-edge technology is revolutionising the car detailing process and offering unmatched protection, durability, and aesthetic appeal, ushering in an exciting new era for car owners and enthusiasts.



and chemical protection. Nanotechnology offers a revolutionary approach to car detailing, providing superior protection and easier maintenance than traditional methods. There are several benefits of nanotechnology in car detailing, such as:

**Enhanced protection:** Nanoparticles form a microscopic barrier that shields the car's paint and glass and protects it from UV rays and environmental problems, such as bird droppings, during weather conditions. This results in a long-lasting shine and reduced risk of fading or wear and tear.

**Deeper cleaning and glossier finishing:** Nano-formulated polishes and cleaners can penetrate deeper into the car's surface due to the particles' tiny size. It removes dirt and grime more effectively,

revealing a glossier finish to the car after detailing. **Durability & longevity:** Nanotechnology car care products typically offer extended protection compared to traditional waxes and sealants. It translates to fewer detailing sessions and keeps the car looking its best for longer.

**Easier maintenance:** The hydrophobic coatings created by nanoparticles make future washes a breeze. Dirt and grime slide off, requiring less scrubbing and reducing the risk of introducing swirl marks.

While the benefits of nanotechnology in car care are undeniable, it is important to approach its implementation with a clear eye. Not all nano-coated products are created equal, and selecting reputable brands that adhere to stringent quality standards is crucial. Moreover, proper application and maintenance are always vital to maximising the performance and longevity of these treatments.

As nanotechnology evolves in the rapidly increasing technology world, there are expected to be even more groundbreaking advances

ments in the car care industry. The future holds immense potential, from self-healing paintwork to intelligent coatings that adapt to environmental conditions. By embracing this technology, the automotive industry can be poised to deliver cars that look stunning and offer unparalleled protection and convenience. From the car owner's perspective, there will be several benefits, such as enhanced car ownership experiences characterised by less time spent on maintenance and greater pride in the cars' appearance, instilling a sense of hope for the future of car care. In conclusion, nanotechnology is ushering in a new era in the car maintenance industry by improving aesthetics, protection, and durability & longevity.

By understanding the principles and applications of this technology, car owners can make informed decisions to optimise the care of their cars and enjoy the full benefits of this exciting development, empowering them as informed consumers in the automotive industry. (The writer is an expert on car care; views are personal)



KUNAL SETHI

The former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, abruptly left her country a week ago, causing immediate concern in her country and the region. According to the BBC, Hasina's family, not security officials, convinced her to leave due to safety concerns. Her son stated, "We begged her to leave as soon as the violent mob arrived." Crowds entered her residence shortly after her escape. Political, social, and economic issues, external involvement, and unhappy political opposition caused the downfall.

India's Foreign Minister, S. Jaishankar, has informed Parliament about her visit to India and the potential impact on India's relationship with Bangladesh. The unrest that led to her departure resulted in around 560 deaths and could strain the relationship between the two countries, potentially impacting regional security and foreign relations. Initially, in her long reign of 15 years, Hasina was perceived as a democratic and secular leader of Bangladesh, overseeing an economic turnaround. However, she later became intolerant and authoritarian, cracking down on media critics and imprisoning opponents. She maintained cordial relationships with Indian leaders, which sparked anti-India protests.

Prime Minister Modi mentioned that he had met her ten times last year. The friendship has been mutual, as Begum Hasina also reciprocated by driving out the terrorists who targeted India and allowed concessions for transit facilities. She was the first state guest during the Modi government's third term. India has had a special relationship with Bangladesh since it was born in 1971. After her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh, was assassinated in 1975, Hasina spent six years in India. After that, she shifted to Dhaka to lead the Awami League. The current student protests, which started on July 5 against the 30% reservation for descendants of freedom fighters



and the 56% quota for government positions, have impacted the political situation in Bangladesh. The Hasina government's proposal to expand this quota led to widespread protests and 200 deaths. Bangladesh opposition parties organized a 'long march' to express growing discontent with the government's policies. At the international level, tensions rose between Hasina and the U.S. when her American visa was revoked after she fled the country. The U.S. State Department emphasized the importance of the interim government in establishing long-term peace and political stability in Bangladesh. The U.K. and other countries also took the same stand. The international community is working to support the interim government led by Yunus, who is responsible for restoring normalcy. New Delhi has set up a monitoring committee and increased border control to address the situation. Madam Khaleida Zia and other opposition leaders were released after Hasina's departure. During Khaleida's two terms, Bangladesh-India relations weakened. Her visit to Delhi was also a disaster. Khalida's release may enable her to lead her party, and she stressed the

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS WORKING TO SUPPORT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT LED BY YUNUS, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RESTORING NORMALCY. NEW DELHI HAS SET UP A MONITORING COMMITTEE AND INCREASED BORDER CONTROL TO ADDRESS THE SITUATION



KALYANI SHANKAR

# The Bangladesh cauldron is boiling

With New Delhi intensifying border controls, the evolving political landscape of Bangladesh is set to influence regional security and diplomacy

need for a democratic Bangladesh and emphasized peace and unity. Hasina and Khalida's sons are ready to take over their respective parties. The potential returns of these two and the other Opposition leaders could bring significant changes to the political landscape of Bangladesh. According to Hasina's son, she is ready to face any inquiry but has yet to decide on the party's leadership. Meanwhile, Hasina blames the U.S. for her ouster. Her son claims she had no time to resign and is still the Prime Minister. Bangladeshis have protested in front of the White House and the U.K. New Delhi closely monitors the situation, especially concerning border and regional security, as well as the security of Hindu minorities in Bangladesh. The Modi government is apprehensive about the safety of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Modi has called for the protection of Hindus in Bangladesh after violent incidents targeted them. The Hindu minority also protested on the streets. Bangladesh's economy, which was looking up, is declining due to Hasina's intolerance, violence, unemployment, and inflation. The country relies on India for essential commodities and

infrastructure. India needs to reconsider its Bangladesh policy after the leader's departure. The third issue concerns the porous border between India and Bangladesh, with allegations of Bangladeshi infiltrators and refugees entering India. A friendly Hasina government helped check this problem while Khalida was in denial mode. New Delhi's decision to adopt a wait-and-watch policy is a positive step. The situation depends on the elections' timing and the two Begums' potential return. If new leadership emerges, New Delhi will need to take a stand. To maintain regional peace, India's role in assisting Bangladesh in returning to normalcy is crucial and urgent. A peaceful, stable, and prosperous Bangladesh is in India's best interests. India should do everything to ensure it. The situation is still evolving, and the uncertainty of the future political landscape of Bangladesh is palpable. We will know more once the elections are announced and the plans of the two begums are revealed. The potential return of the dynastic rule adds an element of intrigue to the situation. (The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### LHAMO'S NEVER SAY DIE SPIRIT

Madam — Kinzang Lhamo of Bhutan may have crossed the finish line last in the women's marathon at the Paris Olympics, but she captured the admiration of many with her remarkable tenacity and unwavering determination. Despite battling adverse conditions, Lhamo completed the grueling 26.2-mile course in 3 hours, 52 minutes, and 59 seconds, choosing to persevere rather than quit. Lhamo, embodying the spirit of the "last woman running," sends a powerful message: regardless of the final outcome, we must maximize our capabilities and approach our tasks with a positive, persistent mindset. There is no shame in finishing last if the effort was sincere and wholehearted. Bhutan has already gifted the world with its unique concept of Gross National Happiness, which measures progress through health, education, and environmental parameters rather than traditional economic metrics. The country has also demonstrated the essence of democracy by having its Royals voluntarily relinquish power to allow for a citizen-led government through free and fair elections. Now, Kinzang Lhamo emerges as Bhutan's latest treasure. At just 26 years old, she has a promising future ahead. With more experience and exposure, Lhamo is poised to elevate Bhutan's presence on the international stage.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

### PARIS OLYMPICS COME TO A CLOSE

Madam — The 2024 Paris Olympics have concluded, with India securing a total of six medals: five bronze and one silver. Despite its status as the world's most populous nation, with a staggering 1,450,935,791 people, India's medal haul, though commendable, highlights a larger issue. The United States led the medal tally with 126 medals, including 40 gold, while China followed with 91 medals and Japan with 45. These countries, despite their smaller populations compared to India, have achieved greater success by investing uniformly in a wide range of sports. In

### Har ghar tiranga!



The 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative has sparked a nationwide movement, awakening the spirit of patriotism across the country. This campaign has united people from every corner of India, creating an atmosphere

of pride and respect for the national flag. It fosters a deep sense of unity and encourages active participation, bringing neighbors and fellow citizens together. By embracing this movement, people are enhancing their understanding of the significance and values embodied by the Indian flag.

The campaign has revolutionized the nation's ideology, symbolizing our independence, pride, and commitment to a developed India (Viksit Bharat). It underscores India's rise as a global power, moving swiftly from a nation once seen as economically challenged to one poised to become the third-largest superpower in the world. As citizens, we are reminded of our duty to uphold the guiding principles enshrined in the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Preamble, and the Constitution of India.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

India, cricket is often considered a religion, overshadowing other sports. This narrow focus, compounded by political shortsightedness, has hindered the growth and encouragement of athletic talent across other disciplines.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

### WAYANAD TRAGEDY COULD BE AVERTED

Madam — The picturesque Wayanad, a hilly district located in the Western Ghats Mountain range in Kerala, is prone to landslides during heavy rains. In Kerala's history, the landslide that occurred recently there and claimed over 400 lives was the deadliest.

According to the Geological Survey of India half of Kerala's land area is vulnerable to landslides. Wayanad region has had many tea and coffee plantations. The first landslide occurred in an uninhabited forest area with no access road. The torrent of water carrying mud and boulders swept away or buried the villages of Panchirimattam, Mundakkai and Chooralmala, and wreaked havoc in Meppadi, Attamala and Kunhome.

Mundakkai is a village located more than a kilometre down from the hill that slid first. Chooralmala caved in under the pressure of gushing water from the first landslide and heavy downpour. Irunjipuzha river split into two raging streams and wreaked havoc along its path. When it comes to discussing the early warning of rainfall, the less said, the better.

On July 24, the Agricultural Meteorological Division of the Indian Meteorological Department issued a forecast for Wayanad that predicted only 15 mm rainfall, the day when landslides occurred. Mundakkai, where the landslide hit Wayanad first, got 572 mm of rainfall within 48 hours. However, it shouldn't be overlooked that the Hume Centre for Ecology and Wildlife Biology, an NGO specializing in weather patterns of Wayanad with a network of more than 200 weather monitoring units, had warned of possible landslides two days before the landslide happened.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com





## FIRST COLUMN

## THE DIVINE PARENTAL ROLE

Unlike parents, whose guidance can be flawed, God encompasses all wisdom, power and impartiality



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

The following verse will shed light on this, which is, "You alone are my mother; You alone are my father; You alone are my relative and You alone are my friend; You alone are my knowledge and You alone are my wealth; O Lord of all Lords, You alone are my everything." In verse #7.19 of the Bhagavad-Geeta, Lord Krishna states, "After efforts of many births, a yogi in the end becomes wise, and he takes My shelter. A great soul, who considers Lord Vasudeva thus as everything is very rare." The answer, therefore, is: that God is very much more than a mother or father can ever be. These entities, i.e., a mother or a father have severe limitations. Their knowledge is very limited. They don't know the Big Picture.

Far from it, they may guide their children wrongly. On the other hand, God is omniscient. He knows past, present and future also. Lord Krishna informs us what He can do. "By being specially kind, I, situated within, destroy the darkness, born of ignorance, by the shining lamp of knowledge." (10.11) Then, a parent has limited resources that he or she can give to his or her children, whereas God has all the opulence in full. Sanjaya of the Mahabharata fame informs, "Where there is yogeshwara Shri Krishna, and where there is a soul linked to Him, there will be opulences ('soubhagya'), victory (success), wealth, and morality." (18.78) A parent can help only in a limited way. Suppose his or her child is unwell. What can he or she do besides arranging medical facilities and taking care of the best way possible?



A good parent prays additionally for the rapid cure of the child. Because Only God has the power to help us get out of the trouble we get into quickly (18.53); only God has the power to forgive. Parents can be whimsical in their decision-making. They can be partial in dealing with their children; it is natural, but God is always impartial. Lord Krishna states, "I am similarly inclined towards all beings, no one is hateful for Me, and no one is dear; that is God has no preconceived and prejudiced notion towards anyone." (9.29) Many parents are poor role models. They lie but expect their children to be truthful.

What has God instructed us to do? "Whatever a superior person does, other people follow that only. Whatever standard he establishes a common man tries to emulate that." (3.21) What does God do? He always goes by dharma. God is so strict about dharma that He incarnates to reestablish it if it becomes weak. (4.7) Additionally, God is always engaged in doing duties, Lord Krishna says, "I am always carefully engaged in action, because men follow My lead in all respects." (3.34) For parents, only their children are their own, but for God, all souls are His parts. (15.7) He has to consider all of them in all His actions. God is very compassionate towards all of them. Lord Krishna confirms, "I am a well-wisher of all living entities."

Our children are forever competing against children of other parents, but for God, all children are His parts and must be dealt with fairly. That is the reason our selfish prayers are not answered. Many parents do not consult their children about their future and try to impose their desires on them. God has forbidden this, when He stated, "Svadharm (duty) of all souls are according to what their natures are." "The four divisions of the human society, based on qualities and activities, have been created by Me." (4.21)

One can excel in whatever suits one's nature because it comes naturally. What is the message? God is a parent alright but not in a conventional way. He only takes charge of those souls, who take His shelter. Parents should also try to be self-supporting to the end by taking active shelter from God; He will take care. Is God not responsible for keeping the Creation going? Is it not our responsibility as parents to do ours? I take mine towards my descendants very seriously.

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

## Water crisis and the battle for resources



B K SINGH

As the world grapples with the escalating effects of climate change, the urgent need to rethink our approach to water management becomes ever more pressing

Whenever we face drought and heat waves we are reminded to take a relook at efficiency of water management. More than one-fourth of the global population, nearly 2.2 billion people do not have proper access to clean drinking water. United Nations (UN's) goal in this regard is to provide clean drinking water and sanitation for all by 2030. UN's coordination mechanism on water and sanitation (UN-Water) sets the theme every year. This year's theme was "Leveraging Water for Peace". Air and water are important to sustain life on Earth. The conflicts between the countries, between the states and within society arise when we have to share water for crop irrigation, household purposes, industrial uses and power generation.

The conflict gets often aggravated especially when the availability of water becomes scarce during the pinch period. Treaties between the countries have resolved the disputes. Different forums are also available for the resolution of conflicts at international and national levels. India has 25 major river basins with most rivers flowing across the states. There is the Interstate Water Dispute Act, of 1956 for resolving disputes in the use, control and distribution of river and river valleys. The disputes are continuing challenges to federal water governance in the country. To resolve the disputes, there are water dispute tribunals in India namely the Ravi and Beas Water Tribunal, Vansandhara water dispute tribunal, Mahadayi Water Dispute Tribunal, Mahanadi water dispute tribunal, Krishna water dispute tribunal and Cauvery dispute tribunal etc.

The sharing of water of the Cauvery River has been the source of serious conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In 2018, the tribunal awarded Karnataka to annually release 192 tmc of water in ten equal monthly instalments to Tamil Nadu. 2023-24 was El Nino (Spanish word meaning little boy) year and there has been a deficit in rainfall in the catchment of the river from July 2023 onwards. As a result, the reservoirs were half empty and it became difficult for Karnataka to follow the orders of the tribunal.

Two states started a blame game till early July 2024 when there were good rains in the Cauvery catchment in the latter part of July. As nature was kind, the dispute was resolved and the blame game stopped. The prolonged dispute between the states for sharing water is always traced back to destruction as well as poor maintenance of the catchment of the river and unfavourable weather conditions like El Nino. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced that El Nino, a climate pattern associated with the warming of the ocean surface in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean has impacted the monsoon causing below-normal rainfall last year, has gradually weakened.

This has been one of the five strongest El Nino on record but remained weaker than 1997-98 and 2015-16. "El Nino typically has the greatest impact on global climate in the second year of its development - in this instance 2024," WMO said. This impact has led to above normal temperature in India till June 2024. WMO further added that there is a chance of La Nina (Spanish word meaning little girl) developing later in the year. La Nina is a climate pattern associated with periodic cooling off the ocean sur-



face temperature and brings normal rains in the region. Western World, Canada and the US are experiencing heat wave conditions even in August this year. The underground water table receded during summer. There has been a public hue and cry in many places in central and peninsular India to access potable water for household needs. The Government and Civic agencies are facing the challenge. Karnataka is one such state where there was an acute drinking water problem in the summer.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directed the district administration to establish a helpline and control room to enable the public to register grievances and supply water in tankers to all affected areas. He also directed to tender the work of digging more bore wells to tap underground water for public emergencies. Bengaluru too faced a water shortage. Water supply to the city comes through the pipeline from the Cauvery River located 100 km away. The water has also to be pumped up at many intermediate locations to achieve an altitude of 1 km, where the city is. The arrangements have been made to supply water in tankers from adjoining towns.

Water supply to high-rise apartments was also reduced. Residents used disposable cutlery and wet wipes to ration their water consumption. It will generate more waste and agencies may have to step up the disposal. They have also banned vehicle washing and swimming pool activities. Deepening of the bore wells is another environmental challenge. Every time the groundwater level recedes, we go for the deepening. Is it environmentally sustainable? Recharging the ground through rain harvesting structures has to be adhered to by each Government continuously.

Rivers originating from the Himalayas are snow-fed and satisfy the water needs of the people, especially in the northern belt of the

country from west to east. Rivers in the central Indian landscape and peninsular India originate from forests.

Often big rivers originate from the same place and flow in different directions. Johila, Narvada and Son originate from Amarkantak and flow in different directions. Five rivers namely Koyana, Krishna, Venna, Savitri and Gayatri originate from Mahabaleshwar near Pune. Several important rivers like Tungbhadra and Cauvery also originate from the Western Ghats. Apart from providing drinking water to several villages and towns, there are numerous irrigation and power projects located on these rivers.

Life is fully dependent on these rivers and except the Himalayan Rivers all others originate from forests. Let us be clear that water is not produced by forests, yet the rivers originate there. Forests are the mothers of rivers and are systems to conserve rainwater in the subsoil and the roots of the trees.

The river source provides a small volume of water trickling from the roots of each of the millions of trees on undulating hills around. As it forms the stream and the flow of water proceeds under gravity, many more such streams join to increase the volume of water. Sometimes bigger streams or even rivers also join to increase the volume of flowing water in the river. The water in the streams is nothing but rainwater. During the monsoon substantial quantity of water is absorbed by the earth charging the underground aquifers and some portion of it is retained in the subsoil and roots of the trees.

The roots hold the water like a sponge and continuously release it during warm weather, making the streams perennial. While traversing in the forests we come across several perennial streams even in summer months when there is no rainfall. Every stream has a catchment and if it is a forested catchment, the

stream would be perennial in the non-rainy season, or else it would be a seasonal stream flowing on rainy days. Forests play a significant role in conserving water and making the streams perennial. Further, the streams flowing out of forested catchment would always carry cleaner water without even soil particles in it.

On the contrary, streams flowing through areas dominated by human activities would be muddy and mixed with chemicals and sewage. Further, the rainwater carries a lot of soil and the reservoirs get silted up losing their water holding capacity.

Reservoirs located closer to forested areas have a longer life. Maintenance engineers have a difficult time in de-silting reservoirs receiving water from human areas. The rainfall pattern and distribution not only depends upon weather conditions and the direction of wind but also depends upon the density and distribution of forests on land. The pledge we must take is to preserve and conserve natural forests. Forests also play a vital role in the maintenance of the water cycle. More than two years ago, on the sidelines of COP 26 at Glasgow, leaders holding 90% of forests on the planet had pledged to end deforestation by 2030.

Of course, India did not sign this pledge. Two more COP meetings have taken place since then, but the issue has not been reviewed by those who pledged. On the contrary, there are reports suggesting that natural forests are being lost at an alarming rate unprecedented warming has also taken its toll and forest fires have remained uncontrolled for months in the US, Canada, European countries, Russia, China, Brazil, and Australia. If we don't save our forests, the perennial water streams will become seasonal.

(The writer is retired principal chief conservator of forests, Karnataka; views are personal)



FORESTS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN CONSERVING WATER AND MAKING THE STREAMS PERENNIAL. FURTHER, THE STREAMS FLOWING OUT OF FORESTED CATCHMENT WOULD ALWAYS CARRY CLEANER WATER

## The perils of blind faith and the rise of India's fraudulent godmen

While India has a rich tradition of genuine spiritual leaders, the influence of these charlatans has surged, fueled by politics and societal insecurities

The Mundaka Upanishad warns of the dangers posed by those who, though ignorant, present themselves as wise. The verse (1.2.8) loosely translates to, "Living in the midst of ignorance and considering themselves wise, fools think of themselves as learned. They wander around, bewildered, like blind men led by the blind." This verse serves as a caution against self-proclaimed spiritual gurus who mislead others. India has long been a land of genuine spiritual gurus who have guided millions, providing a path for the masses to follow. However, times have changed. Today, genuine spiritual leaders are often overshadowed by flashy godmen, or "babas," who frequently



PRABHA GUPTA

deceive people for personal gain. This trend has become particularly dangerous when combined with the politics of numbers, creating a powerful politico-religious phenomenon. These so-called babas often become demigods with political leaders as their disciples, wielding immense power and wealth, even though they claim to have renounced it. A recent incident in Hathras

highlights the tragic consequences of such influence. Over 150 people, mostly women from poor Dalit families, were killed in a stampede during a satsang by Bhole Baba, also known as Narayan Sakar Hari. Baba, a former policeman who retired 28 years ago amid rape allegations, had attracted around 150,000 people to the event, despite only 80,000 being allowed. The stampede occurred when the crowd rushed to collect soil believed to have healing powers after Baba's departure. His popularity and wealth have only grown, despite such tragedies. While some of his followers were arrested, Bhole Baba himself was not named in the FIR, and his ashrams remain untouched by authorities.

And he is not alone. Many others are doing just that. A couple of years back a proclaimed baba gave unique recipe for peoples woes: keep 500 rupees in your wallet for prosperity, keep your spouse photo for better relationship and so on. Gurmeet Ram Rahim Insan ran schools for girls in which they had to eat rose petals as prasadam on which he walked.

Figures like Asaram Bapu and Gurmeet Ram Rahim Insan are serving prison sentences for serious crimes. The number and influence of such godmen have grown, partly due to the rise of religious politics. This trend is mirrored globally, though it is particularly pronounced in India. The following of these god-



men often stems from the insecurity and faith of their followers, who may feel abandoned by both God and the system. This combination distances them from rational thinking. In countries with less economic and social insecurity, the influence of religion tends to wane, but not entirely. In the United States, faith

healers or Televangelists wield significant influence over their followers, claiming to cure people in the name of Jesus Christ. While the number of those cured remains questionable, these healers amass enormous wealth, owning Caribbean islands and flying in private jets. Addressing the influence of these Babas is a significant challenge. The Indian Constitution's Article 51A emphasises the duty of citizens to develop a scientific temper and humanism, which these fake godmen often ignore. While organizations like the Andhashradha Nirmulan Samiti in Maharashtra work to expose fraudulent practices, activists like Dr. Narendra Dabholkar have paid the ultimate price,

allegedly at the hands of conservative groups like Sanatan Sanstha. Similar forces were responsible for the deaths of Govind Pansare, Gauri Lankesh, and Professor Kalburgi. Following Dr Dabholkar's murder, the Maharashtra Assembly passed a law against superstition and miracle cures. To curb the influence of fake godmen, a combination of education, awareness, and strong legal frameworks is essential. Promoting critical thinking and spiritual education can empower individuals to discern genuine spiritual guidance from deception. Educational institutions, community programs, and media can play a crucial role in spreading awareness about

the characteristics of false gurus and the dangers of blind faith. Encouraging open discussions about spirituality and ethics can help people recognise the difference between authentic spiritual leaders and charlatans. Additionally, it is crucial to strengthen laws and regulations to hold fraudulent godmen accountable. Publicising such cases can also serve as a warning to potential victims. Ultimately, by encouraging critical inquiry, supporting victims, and ensuring justice, society can reduce the influence of fake godmen and safeguard the integrity of spiritual practices.

(The writer is a freelance writer, social activist and business coach; views expressed are personal)



# Thai PM dismissed for breach of ethics

## Another case filed against Sheikh Hasina

**AP ■ BANGKOK**

A court in Thailand on Wednesday removed Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin from office over an ethical violation, further shaking up Thai politics after the court-ordered dissolution of the main opposition party a week ago.

The Constitutional Court ruled on a case involving Srettha's appointment of a Cabinet member who had been imprisoned in connection with an alleged attempt to bribe a court official.

The court voted 5:4 against Srettha and the ruling removed him from office immediately. The Cabinet will remain in place on a caretaker basis until Parliament approves a new prime minister. There is no time limit for Parliament to fill the position. The caretaker Cabinet could also dissolve Parliament and call a new election.

The acting PM is expected to be Phumtham Wechayachai of the Pheu Thai party.

Phumtham was first deputy prime minister and commerce minister under Srettha. If Parliament is given the task of choosing a new prime minister, it can select from a roster of candidates nominated for the post last year by the major political parties. The Pheu Thai Party, to which Srettha belongs, has two eligible candidates, including Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the daughter of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Another frontrunner would be Anutin Charnvirakul, head of the Bhumjaithai Party, which ran third in last year's election. He is currently a deputy prime minister and interior minister.

Anuthin, a powerbroker in the vote-rich northeast whose family owns a major construction group, has served in both a military-backed government and the civilian one that it replaced. Also in the running would be two former senior military officers: Prayuth Chan-ocha, who served as prime minister for nine years after staging a coup in 2014, and Prawit



Wongsuwan, who was one of Prayuth's deputy prime ministers.

Srettha, speaking at Government House shortly after the verdict, thanked the judges for giving him the opportunity to defend himself. He said he respected the ruling and that he always sought to act ethically during his time in office.

"I'm sorry that I'd be considered as a prime minister who's unethical, but that's not who I am," he said.

Srettha had appointed Pichit Chuenban as a minister of the Prime Minister's Office in a Cabinet reshuffle in April. Pichit was jailed for six months in 2008 on contempt of court charges after he allegedly tried to bribe a judge with 2 million

baht (USD 55,000) in cash in a grocery bag over a case involving Thaksin, the former prime minister.

Pichit resigned from the post weeks after being appointed when controversy over the incident was revived. The court said that although Pichit has already served his jail term, his behavior — as ruled by the Supreme Court — was dishonest.

Srettha as prime minister has sole responsibility for vetting the qualifications of his Cabinet nominations, the court ruled. It said he knew about Pichit's past but still nominated him, and therefore it ruled that he violated the ethics codes.

The petition against Srettha was initiated by former members of the military-installed Senate who had refused to approve Move Forward's prime ministerial candidate when the party was attempting to form a government after its election victory.

The petition against Srettha was seen as a move favouring a pro-military political party in

his coalition government.

Thailand's courts, especially the Constitutional Court, are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them and nominally independent state agencies such as the Election Commission to issue rulings to cripple or sink political opponents.

Srettha became prime minister in August last year, despite his Pheu Thai party finishing second in the general election. After Move Forward was denied power by the Senate whose term ended in May, Pheu Thai — then the biggest partner of Move Forward — excluded it from the coalition and joined hands with parties affiliated with the previous military-controlled government to gather enough support from other parties and the Senate to approve a new prime minister.

Srettha, 62, was a real estate executive before entering politics. He prioritized opening up Thailand after almost a decade of military-backed rule, frequently travelling abroad for trade negotiations. His party pushed a populist plan for a 10,000-baht (USD 286) hand-out policy to stimulate the economy, a key promise in its campaign last year, though it has been delayed by technicalities largely involving funding. His government also promoted Thai cultural products through a "soft power" agency and the critical tourism sector by loosening entry requirements and other measures.

Srettha, who tried to project an image of a strong CEO, was seen by critics as an agent for Thaksin, who returned last August to submit to a plea deal his detractors say was essential to Srettha gaining the premiership.

The Constitutional Court last week ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party over an accusation that the party violated the constitution by proposing an amendment to a law against defaming the country's royal family. The party has already regrouped as the People's Party.

PTI ■ DHAKA

A case of enforced disappearance was filed on Wednesday against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several others, including former ministers of her cabinet, on the charge of kidnapping a lawyer in 2015.

The case is the second to be filed against 76-year-old Hasina since she resigned and fled to India on August 5 following widespread protests against her Awami League-led government over a controversial job quota system. The victim of the forced disappearance, Supreme Court lawyer Sohel Rana filed the case application. The Daily Star newspaper reported.

The court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Farzana Shakila Sumu Chowdhury ordered the allegations to be accepted as a case. Other accused in the case include senior ministers of Hasina's cabinet, former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former Law Minister Anisul Haq, former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Shahidul Haque, former Director General of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) Benazir Ahmed, and 25 unidentified members of the RAB.

"On 10 February 2015, I was detained from Sector 5 in Uttara and forced into a vehicle. As soon as I was inside the car, I was nearly made unconscious by electric shocks to my ears and genitals," the report quoted Rana as saying.

"After enduring various forms of brutal torture over time, I was eventually released in August in Godagari, Rajshahi," he said.

On Tuesday, a murder case was lodged against Hasina and six others over the death of a grocery shop owner during last month's violent clashes that led to the fall of her government.

Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on August 5, taking the death toll to 560 since the anti-quota protests first started in mid-July.

# Belgorod declares emergency as Ukrainian forces press incursion

# Complaint filed against Hasina, others at International Tribunal

**AP ■ KYIV**

Russia's Belgorod border region declared an emergency Wednesday under heavy shelling by Ukrainian forces that are pressing a major cross-border incursion into the adjacent Kursk region for a second week.

Belgorod Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov described the situation there as "extremely difficult and tense" as the attacks destroyed homes and caused civilian casualties, unnerving local people.

Children in particular are being moved to safety, he said on his Telegram channel, adding that about 5,000 children are in camps in safe areas. He said the previous day that around 11,000 people had fled their homes, with about 1,000 staying in temporary accommodation

centres.

The surprise Ukrainian charge onto Russian soil that began August 6 has rattled the Kremlin. The daring Kursk operation is the largest attack on Russia since World War II and could involve as many as 10,000 Ukrainian troops backed by armour and artillery, military analysts say. An emergency was declared in Kursk last Saturday. A Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tuesday that Kyiv has no intention of occupying the Russian territory it says it is holding. The goal is to stop Russia from firing missiles into Ukraine from Kursk, he said.

It was not clear how or when — or whether — Ukraine would attempt to extricate itself from the ground it has taken. The Ukrainian military claims it controls 74 settlements, believed

to be villages or hamlets, in the Kursk region. Russian officials say more than 100,000 people have been evacuated, mostly from Kursk.

Ukraine's 1+1 TV channel published a video report Wednesday it said was from Sudzha, a Russian town about 10 kilometres from the border. The report showed burnt-out Russian military columns on roads in the area as well as Ukrainian soldiers handing humanitarian aid to local residents and taking down Russian flags from an administrative building.

Russia's predicament is whether to pull troops from the front line in Ukraine's Donetsk region, where achieving a breakthrough is currently a primary war goal for the Kremlin, to defend Kursk and stop the incursion from ballooning.

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

A complaint was filed on Wednesday with the investigation agency of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several others, accusing them of committing genocide and crimes against humanity during the mass movement of the students against her government.

"The complaint was filed by the father of one of the students who died in police gunshots during the massive street protests," an official of the agency said.

A Supreme Court lawyer filed the case on behalf of Bulbul Kabir, father of slain Arif Ahmed Siyam, a class 9 student who was shot dead by police during the protest on August 5.



Students shout slogans during a protest demanding the trial of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka on Tuesday. AP/PTI

"We have registered the complaint and thus the investigation of the case has started," Ataur Rahman, deputy director of the agency, was quoted as saying by The Daily Star newspaper. "Upon completion of the

probe, we will submit the report to the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the tribunal for the next procedures," he added.

Hasina and several others were accused of "genocide and crimes against humanity in

the complaint," state-run BSS news agency reported.

The complaint comes on a day when the interim government said that the murders conducted within the period from July 1 to August 5 will be tried by the International Crimes Tribunal. The complaint accused 76-year-old Hasina and the others of perpetrating the mass killings between July 15 and August 5, the day when Hasina resigned and fled the country, while the students and others who died during the period would come under the purview of the complaint as well, the official said.

Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk made a phone call to Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday.

# Kishida not to seek re-election, paves way for new Japanese PM

# House of Hindu family targeted in fresh arson

# Students still managing roads in Bangladesh

**AP ■ TOKYO**

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, in a surprise move Wednesday, announced he will not run in the upcoming party leadership vote in September, paving the way for Japan to have a new prime minister. Kishida was elected president of his governing Liberal Democratic Party in 2021 and his three-year term expires in September. His drop out of the race means a new leader who wins the party vote will succeed him as prime minister because the LDP controls both houses of parliament. Kishida, stung by his party's corruption scandals, has suffered dwindling support ratings that have dipped below 20%. He announced he will not run



in the September vote, allowing for a fresh leader in an effort to show that his party is changing for the better. Kishida will support a new leader, he said. Local election losses earlier in the year eroded his clout, and LDP lawmakers have voiced the need for a fresh face

ahead of the next general election.

Since the corruption scandal broke, Kishida has removed a number of Cabinet ministers and others from party executive posts, dissolved party factions that were criticized as the source of money-for-favor politics, and passed a law tightening political funds control law. But support for his government has dwindled.

The scandal centers on unreported political funds raised through tickets sold for party events. It involved more than 80 LDP lawmakers, mostly belonging to a major party faction previously led by assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Ten people — lawmakers and their aides — were indicted in January.

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

Arsonists torched a house belonging to a Hindu family with no political affiliation in northwest Bangladesh, a media report said on Wednesday, in the latest incident of targeted attacks on the minority community after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

The incident in Farabari Mandirpara village in Akcha union under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila took place on Tuesday evening, hours after Chief Advisor to the interim government Yunus Muhammad assured the distressed minority community that his government would punish the perpetrators.

The targeted arson incident also came on the same day when the Bangladesh National Hindu Grand Alliance claimed that the minority community faced attacks and threats in 278 locations across 48 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5 and termed it as an "assault on

the Hindu religion." Unidentified individuals set fire to Kaleshwar Barman's house around 7:30 pm on Tuesday in Farabari Mandirpara village in Akcha union under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, Subrata Kumar Barman, chairman of Akcha Union Parishad (UP), told newspaper The Daily Star.

Local people quickly responded and managed to control the fire, and the house's occupants were able to escape unharmed, he said.

The UP chairman said Kaleshwar Barman had no political affiliation. ABM Firoz Waheed, Officer-in-Charge of Thakurgaon Police Station, said: "Police visited the spot the same night, and an investigation is ongoing to identify the perpetrators."

The Daily Star report said that a similar incident had happened a few days earlier in Nimbari Kamarpara village of the same Union when Ananta Barman's house was burned down, leaving all valuables destroyed.

**PTI ■ DHAKA**

Several Bangladeshi students, who were behind the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, are still controlling traffic on the roads in the country despite traffic police personnel rejoining their workplaces.

A wave of violence, including revenge killings and arson, persisted after Hasina fled to India on August 5.

Most of all of the country's police officers went into hiding, afraid of reprisals for the force's role in the deaths of hundreds of young protesters demanding the scrapping of quotas in government service jobs.

In such a situation, the students came out on the streets and tried to regulate traffic. However, traffic police personnel rejoined their workplaces on Monday. Still, the students say they do not want to leave the traffic management to the designated units of the police, The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

Even on Wednesday, students were seen controlling traffic on the roads. There are also members of Ansar, Border Guard Bangladesh Red Crescent, Scouts and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC). A limited number of traffic police were also seen on the roads. Students were managing traffic, checking licenses and reminding people to use helmets.

The students say that they want to stay on the streets until full order is restored. Meanwhile, traffic police personnel said that students have played a commendable role in controlling traffic during a critical period. But now that the traffic policemen have rejoined work, the students are no longer needed there.

Enayet Ullah, a student of psychology at Dhaka College and a volunteer of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society said: "We have been working on traffic control since August 7 on behalf of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

Gen Munir's remarks came days after jailed former prime minister Imran Khan refused to apologise for the May 9 riots and said that the Army owed him an apology since he was "abducted" by the paramilitary rangers on the day of the violence.

Khan, 71, was on May 9, 2023, arrested by the Pakistan Rangers from the Islamabad High Court premises during his appearance in a corruption case. His arrest sparked countryside protests and riots by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters who damaged civilian as well as military installations across the country.

Meanwhile, at least 70 people were injured by aerial firing in different areas of Karachi during the celebrations of Independence Day on Tuesday night, Geo News reported.

Last year, two people lost their lives while more than 80 sustained injuries due to aerial firing in different areas of the city during the Independence Day celebrations.

# Shehbaz Sharif to unveil 5-year plan for Pakistan's economic stability

# 'Weakening military is weakening nation,' says Pak Army chief

**PTI ■ ISLAMABAD**

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday announced that he would soon unveil a new five-year plan to bring cash-strapped Pakistan out of the economic crisis and asked countrymen to undertake self-introspection to correct mistakes of the past.

Sharif's remarks came as the nation commemorated the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan. The Prime Minister said a "fresh journey with new zeal should be started to steer the country out of existing crises" and a five-year economic programme will soon be launched. He said that there is a need for self-introspection to correct mistakes of the past.

The nation would hear good news regarding the reduction in electricity prices in the next few days, Radio Pakistan quoted him as saying at the main ceremony held in Islamabad. Turning to issues being faced by the country, Sharif pledged to work hard till the last drop of his blood to reduce inflation and electricity prices and revamp Pakistan's battered economy.

He said the reduction in inflation and electricity bills is vital for the development of agriculture and industry, enhancing exports and providing solace to domestic power consumers.

Sharif also urged the youth to focus on their studies, training, and skills and avoid becoming prey to the forces of chaos, anarchy and



A driver decorates his ricksha with national flag colors to celebrate the country's 78th Independence Day from British rule in Peshawar on Wednesday. AP/PTI

deception.

He said the foes of Pakistan have continuously been targeting the minds of young people through digital terrorism to mislead them.

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sharif said: "We pay homage to the immense sacrifices of our forefathers and countless unsung heroes of the Pakistan Movement, who fought tirelessly for an independent country for millions in South Asia, where they could live according to their beliefs and values.

He also said Pakistan shall continue to extend moral, political and diplomatic support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir until they achieve their universal right to self-determi-

nation. President Asif Ali Zardari in his message said: "Today, we need to set aside our differences and work committedly for unity, integrity, and economic stability."

He called for upholding the rule of law and strengthening democratic institutions and also reaffirmed its support to the people of Kashmir and Palestine for their legitimate rights. India has repeatedly said it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

India has asserted that the "Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh have been, are and will always remain integral and inalienable parts of India."

President Zardari on the occasion of Independence Day approved the conferment of awards upon 104 Pakistani and foreign nationals in recognition of their services to Pakistan.

These awards will be given at a special ceremony on 23rd March next year. Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the founder of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), will be conferred upon Nishan-e-Pakistan for his marvellous contribution to the field of public service.

Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's sensational javelin thrower who won the country's first individual Olympics gold in 40 years, will get Hilal-e-Imtiaz, the second-highest civilian award.

**PTI ■ ISLAMABAD**

Pakistan's Army chief General Asim Munir has said that any attempt to undermine the nation's powerful military is equivalent to weakening the country. Addressing the Azadi Parade at the Pakistan Military Academy on the eve of the country's 78th Independence Day, he also underscored the importance of maintaining national unity amidst efforts by foreign powers using 'digital terrorism' to create a gulf between state institutions and the people of Pakistan.

"We emerge as a strong nation after trial and tribulations. To weaken Pakistan's armed forces is tantamount to weakening the country itself," Geo News quoted him as saying.

Asserting that the nation's unwavering trust in the Pakistan Army is the military's most valuable asset, he said, "Neither any negative force has ever been able to weaken this relationship of trust and love nor can it do so in future." "Historically, we as a nation have always emerged stronger after every hardship," he said, adding that mutual trust between the country and the armed forces played a key role.

He also highlighted the importance of

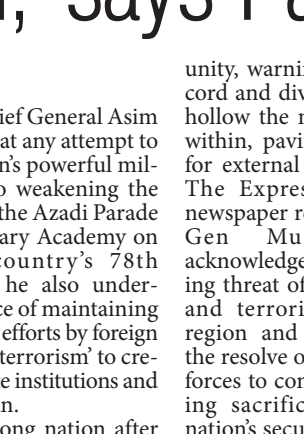
unity, warning that discord and division could hollow the nation from within, paving the way for external aggression, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Gen Munir also acknowledged the ongoing threat of extremism and terrorism in the region and reaffirmed the resolve of the armed forces to continue making sacrifices for the nation's security.

He blamed foreign powers for a wave of 'digital terrorism', which he said aimed to create a gulf between state institutions and the people of Pakistan, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Last week, addressing a conference of Islamic clerics here, Gen Munir warned against attempts to create chaos in the cash-strapped country, saying the armed forces will foil any such move and safeguard national integrity.

The powerful Pakistan Army, which has ruled coup-prone Pakistan for many years of its existence, has wielded considerable power in matters of security and foreign policy.



Gen Munir's remarks came days after jailed former prime minister Imran Khan refused to apologise for the May 9 riots and said that the Army owed him an apology since he was "abducted" by the paramilitary rangers on the day of the violence.

Khan, 71, was on May 9, 2023, arrested by the Pakistan Rangers from the Islamabad High Court premises during his appearance in a corruption case. His arrest sparked countryside protests and riots by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters who damaged civilian as well as military installations across the country.

Meanwhile, at least 70 people were injured by aerial firing in different areas of Karachi during the celebrations of Independence Day on Tuesday night, Geo News reported.

Last year, two people lost their lives while more than 80 sustained injuries due to aerial firing in different areas of the city during the Independence Day celebrations.

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Judge rejects Trump's latest demand in hush money case

Donald Trump has lost his latest bid for a new judge in his New York hush money criminal case as it heads toward a key ruling and potential sentencing next month.

last year that Merchan could continue on the case, writing that a relative's independent political activities are not "a reasonable basis to question the judge's impartiality".

The Manhattan district attorney's office, which prosecuted the case, declined to comment. Trump was convicted in May of falsifying his business records to conceal a 2016 deal to pay off porn actor Stormy Daniels to stay quiet about her alleged 2006 sexual encounter with him.

That decision reins in prosecutions of ex-presidents for official acts and restricts prosecutors in pointing to official acts as evidence that a president's unofficial actions were illegal. Trump's lawyers argue that in light of the ruling, jurors in the hush money case should not have heard such evidence as former White House staffers describing how the then-president reacted to news coverage of the Daniels deal.

NZ food bank distributes candy made from potentially lethal Methamphetamine

A charity working with homeless people in Auckland, New Zealand unknowingly distributed candies filled with a potentially lethal dose of methamphetamine in its food parcels after the sweets were donated by a member of the public.

which were solid blocks of methamphetamine enclosed in candy wrappers. New Zealand's police have opened a criminal investigation.

The amount of methamphetamine in each candy was up to 300 times the level someone would usually take and could be lethal, according to the New Zealand Drug Foundation — a drug checking and policy organisation, which first tested the candies.

reported consuming the contaminated candies since Tuesday. No one was hospitalized and Robinson said the "revolting" taste meant most had immediately spat them out.

Calmer winds, reinforcements help battle scattered fires in Athens suburbs

Firefighters in Greece battled scattered fires in hopes of containing the remains of a major wildfire that burned into the northern suburbs of Athens, triggering multiple evacuations and leaving at least one person dead.

provides mapping services for natural disasters using satellite images, said that by Monday the blaze had burned 8,500 hectares (21,000 acres, 85 square kilometres).

helping North Macedonia tackle blazes that have been burning for weeks, while Bosnian firefighters and local authorities appealed for international help to tackle fires raging in a national park in the east of the country.

suburbs and outlying settlements to flee. Authorities said some people who refused to leave their homes later became trapped and required rescuing, endangering the lives of firefighters.

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'Americans give Harris an advantage over Trump on honesty, discipline'

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Vice President Kamala Harris has a perceived advantage over former President Donald Trump on several leadership qualities such as honesty, a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds, although Americans are slightly more likely to trust Trump on the economy and immigration.

Americans are more likely to trust Trump over Harris when it comes to handling the economy or immigration, but the difference is slight — 45% say Trump is better positioned to handle the economy, while 38% say that about Harris.

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Equinox India Developments Limited (formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited). Statement of Unaudited Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter ended 30 June 2024. Rs. in million. Table with columns: Sl. No., Particulars, 3 months ended, Preceding 3 months ended, Corresponding 3 months ended, Previous year ended.

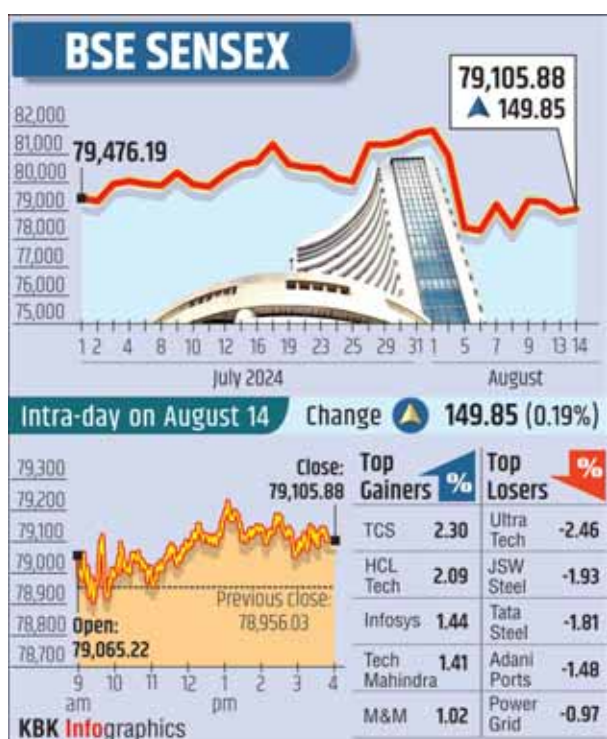
Equinox India Developments Limited (formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited). Statement of Unaudited Standalone Financial Results for the quarter ended 30 June 2024. Rs. in million. Table with columns: Sl. No., Particulars, 3 months ended, Preceding 3 months ended, Corresponding 3 months ended, Previous year ended.



# Sensex snaps 2-day losing streak

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Snapping its two-day losing streak, benchmark BSE Sensex closed higher by 150 points on Wednesday following a rally in IT stocks amid a surge in the US markets on renewed hopes of a rate cut by the Fed in September. The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 149.85 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 79,105.88 with half of its constituents ending higher. During the day, it gained 272.91 points or 0.34 per cent to hit a high of 79,228.94. The NSE Nifty closed marginally up by 4.75 points or 0.02 per cent at 24,143.75. As many 26 Nifty shares closed lower while 24 advanced. "The domestic market traded within a narrow range; even as global markets saw a positive turnaround. The IT index edged up, reflecting optimism for improved US CPI data expected later today, which could increase the scope of a loose monetary policy from the Fed," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. Among Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services rose the most by 2.3 per cent. HCL



Technologies, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors were the biggest gainers. On the other hand, UltraTech Cement, JSW Steel, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, Power Grid and Bajaj Finserv were among the

laggards. Mining shares declined after the Supreme Court rejected the Centre's plea for prospective effect of its July 25 verdict, which upheld the power of states to levy tax on mineral rights and mineral-

bearing land, and allowed them to seek a refund of royalty from April 1, 2005 onwards. NMDC tanked 6 per cent, Hind Copper by over 4 per cent, Nalco by 2.7 per cent. "The PPI (Producer Price Inflation) numbers from the US indicate softening of inflation, and a confirmation of this declining trend is likely from the CPI numbers coming today. The US market moved up yesterday in anticipation of this and a rate cut by the Fed in September," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services. In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.57 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.41 per cent. Among the indices, IT jumped 1.41 per cent, teck surged 1.33 per cent, consumer durables went up 0.13 per cent and consumer discretionary (0.09 per cent). Commodities, energy, telecommunication, utilities, metal, power, realty and services were the laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled higher while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

# Wholesale inflation falls to 3-month low of 2.04 per cent in July

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Wholesale inflation fell to a 3-month low of 2.04 per cent in July on decline in prices of food items especially vegetables, government data released on Wednesday showed. The decline in wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation in July came after it rose for four months in a row till June, when it was 3.36 per cent. It was (-) 1.23 per cent in July last year. In April wholesale inflation stood at 1.19 per cent. As per the data, food inflation in July was 3.45 per cent, down from 10.87 per cent in June, mainly due to month-on-month decline in prices of vegetables, cereals, pulses and onion. Vegetables recorded a deflation of 8.93 per cent in July, against a 38.76 per cent inflation in the previous month. "Positive rate of inflation in July, 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, manufacture of food products, mineral oils, crude petroleum & natural gas, other manufacturing etc," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in a statement.



The annual rate of inflation of the manufactured Products group increased to 1.58 per cent in July 2024, from 1.43 per cent in June 2024. Inflation in fuel and power basket rose to 1.72 per cent in July, from 1.03 per cent in the previous month. ICRA Senior Economist Rahul Agrawal said the core (non-food manufacturing) WPI continued to inch up for the fifth consecutive month, touching a 17-month high of 1.2 per cent in July 2024, even as the index contracted on a sequential basis for the second consecutive month. "The near-term outlook for WPI inflation remains benign. As per the data released by the

Department of Consumer Affairs, the prices of a majority of food items have dipped on a sequential basis in August 2024 so far, amid a pick-up in the monsoon and a healthy progression in kharif sowing. "This is likely to aid in containing the base effect-led uptick in the primary food articles inflation print in the ongoing month. Overall, ICRA expects the WPI inflation to remain unchanged at 2 per cent in August 2024," Agrawal said. The decline in July WPI was in line with the retail inflation data for the month. Retail inflation fell to a near 5-year low of 3.54 per cent in July, data released earlier this week showed.

# India's exports fall 1.2 per cent to USD 33.98 billion in July

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports in July dipped 1.2 per cent to USD 33.98 billion from USD 34.39 billion in the year-ago month, according to government data released on Wednesday. Imports increased by about 7.45 per cent to USD 57.48 billion in July against USD 53.49 billion a year ago. The trade deficit, or the gap between imports and exports, during the month under review stood at USD 23.5 billion. Briefing media on data, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that going by the current trend, the country's total exports of goods and services will cross last year's figure. India's merchandise exports rose by 2.56 per cent to USD 35.2 billion in June, even as the trade deficit widened to USD 20.98 billion. Exports during April-July this fiscal increased 4.15 per cent to USD 144.12 billion, and imports grew 7.57 per cent to USD 229.7 billion.

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Mr. Syed Rashid Zafar - Director  
Ms. Ruksaar Aisha - Principal

स्वतंत्रता दिवस 2024 के अवसर पर समस्त देशवासियों को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएँ

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15th August Independence Day

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# UIDAI exempted from income tax for 5 years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has exempted the income of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) from payment of income tax for five years till fiscal 2027-28. Accordingly, grants/subsidies received from the central government; fees/subscriptions, including RTI fee, tender fee, sale of scrap, PVC card; authentication, enrolment and updation service charges received; term/fix deposits; and interest on bank deposits earned by UIDAI would be exempt from income tax. A notification to this effect was issued by the Central

Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under the Ministry of Finance. "This notification shall be applicable for assessment year 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029," it added. UIDAI is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, to ensure compliance with Aadhaar Act, and make regulations & rules consistent with the Act. This notification would be effective subject to the conditions that UIDAI would not engage in any commercial activity; activities and the nature of the specified income shall remain unchanged throughout financial years.

# Rupee rises two paise to close at 83.95 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee traded in a narrow range to settle 2 paise higher at 83.95 (provisional) against the American currency on Wednesday, helped by a sharp decline in the US Dollar against major currencies overseas. Forex traders said a mixed-to-positive tone in the domestic market also supported the rupee. However, foreign fund outflows and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East restricted the rise in the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.90 but soon fell into the negative zone and touched an intraday low of 83.97 against the American currency. The domestic unit finally settled at 83.95 (provisional) against the American currency, 2 paise higher from its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee settled for the day on a flat note at 83.97 against the US dollar. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative

bias on elevated commodity prices and heightened geopolitical tension in the Middle East between Israel and Iran. "However, the weak Dollar and rising odds of a rate cut by the US Fed may support the rupee. Positive global markets may also support the rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Choudhary further noted that traders may take cues from US CPI data today. "USD/INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.20," it added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.13 per cent lower at 102.42. Forex traders said the US dollar has weakened against majors post the US Producer Price Index (PPI) print, which came in softer than anticipated, leaving the Dollar Index vulnerable to further correction. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.28 per cent to USD 80.92 per barrel.

# NBCC reports growth in operational income

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Board of Directors in the meeting held on Tuesday approved the financial results of the company for the quarter ended on 30.06.2024. Company reported standalone income from operations of Rs 1627.34 crore for Q1 FY 2024-25 compared to Rs 1478.07 crore for Q1 FY 2023-24. Consolidated income from operations for Q1 FY 2024-25 stood at Rs 2144.16 crore compared to Rs 1926.09 crore for Q1 FY 2023-24. Profit Before Tax (PBT) on standalone basis increased from Rs 84.67 crore to Rs

116.25 crore and on consolidated basis increased from Rs 103.78 crore to Rs 143.84 crore on YoY basis for quarter ended 30.06.2024. Profit After Tax (PAT) on standalone basis has shown growth from Rs 63.13 crore to Rs 86.63 crore and on consolidated basis from Rs 77.41 crore to Rs 107.19 crore on YoY basis for the Q1 FY 2024-25. NBCC with its robust order book and a strategic focus on redevelopment, PSU land monetisation, real estate development, overseas expansion and PMC works is well positioned to contribute towards a "Vikshit Bharat".

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Wish you a very happy 78th Independence day




**Mahesh Poddar**  
Former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha



**78<sup>th</sup> Independence Day**

On this special day, let's cherish our freedom and strive for peace. May our nation remain forever free and united.



Dr. (Fr.) E. A. Francis, SJ

**कार्यालय, जिला कृषि पदाधिकारी, लोहरदगा किसान भाईयों,**

**78वां स्वतंत्रता दिवस की बधाई एवं जोहार**

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विनोबा भावे विश्वविद्यालय पिछले तीन दशकों से शिक्षा की मशाल जलाते हुए शिक्षा जगत में नए कीर्तिमान स्थापित करने में सफल रहा है। कला, विज्ञान, वाणिज्य, भाषा विज्ञान, संस्कृति, परंपरा में बिखरे हुए ज्ञान के प्रत्येक बिन्दु को महासिंधु बनाने की ओर अग्रसर। सबका साथ, सबका विकास के कथन को चरितार्थ करते हुए 78वां स्वतंत्रता दिवस के पावन अवसर पर पूरे प्रदेशवासियों को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं एवं अभिनंदन।



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विनोबा भावे विश्वविद्यालय, हजारीबाग

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**समस्त देशवासियों को 78 वीं स्वतंत्रता दिवस की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं**




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15th August, 2024


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**HAPPY 78th INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**15th August 2024**

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समस्त प्रदेश एवं देशवासियों को

# स्वतंत्रता

## दिवस की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
पढ़ाई के छोटे-मोटे  
खर्चों से, मुझे मिला  
सावित्रीबाई फुले  
किशोरी समृद्धि  
योजना का लाभ



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
विदेश में उच्च  
शिक्षा के लिए,  
मुझे मिला  
मरड गोमके  
जयपाल सिंह  
मुंडा पारदेशीय  
छात्रवृत्ति  
योजना का  
लाभ



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
रोजमर्रा की आर्थिक  
परेशानी से, मेरा  
झारखण्ड मुख्यमंत्री  
मंडियां सम्मान  
योजना में हुआ  
निबंधन



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
पलाश ब्रांड ने  
मुझे दिया आर्थिक  
स्वावलंबन



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
उच्च/तकनीकी  
शिक्षा के लिए,  
मुझे मिला  
गुरुजी स्टूडेंट  
क्रेडिट कार्ड  
योजना का लाभ



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
कृषि ऋण की चिंता  
से, मुझे मिला  
झारखण्ड कृषि  
ऋण माफ़ी योजना  
का लाभ



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
बुढ़ापे की आर्थिक  
समस्या से, मुझे  
मिला सर्वजन  
पेंशन योजना  
का लाभ



मैं स्वतंत्र हूँ,  
बीमारी में खर्च की  
चिंता से, सरकार दे  
रही है अबुआ  
स्वास्थ्य सुरक्षा  
योजना का लाभ

आइये हमसब मिलकर  
झारखण्ड के वीर सपूतों  
और वीरांगनाओं के  
सोना झारखण्ड के  
सपनों को साकार करने  
में अपना योगदान दें।

हेमन्त सोरेन  
मुख्यमंत्री, झारखण्ड

