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रक्षाबंधन

के शुभ अवसर पर
झारखण्ड मुख्यमंत्री
मईयां सम्मान योजना (JMMSY)
का

शुभारंभ

- रक्षाबंधन के शुभ अवसर पर आज से योजना का हो रहा शुभारंभ
- केवल 2 सप्ताह में 43 लाख निबंधन एक बड़ी उपलब्धि
- अब तक 37 लाख बहनों के आवेदन की जाँच एवं प्रशासनिक स्वीकृति भी पूरी कर ली गई है
- 31 अगस्त से पहले सभी बहनों के खातों में होगी एक हजार रुपये की सम्मान राशि (पहली किस्त)
- सितंबर से हर महीने की 15 तारीख को हर बहन के खाते में बिना देर पहुँचेगी सम्मान राशि

हेमन्त सोरेन
मुख्यमंत्री, झारखण्ड



सूचना एवं जनसंपर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार

Bokaro Steel Plant commemorates Independence Day with enthusiasm and pride

DIC B.K Tiwari highlights BSL role in National Development

R SHARMA : BOKARO

Bokaro Steel Plant marked Independence Day with great enthusiasm at Mohan Kumar Mangalam Stadium. Director-in-Charge Birendra Kumar Tiwari hoisted the national flag and took the salute. Also present on stage were Deputy Commandant of CISF Digvijay Kumar Singh and other senior officials.



Plant's role in the country's progress over the past six decades. He reflected on the plant's achievements, including those of the Bokaro Steel Plant, Jharkhand Group of



Further DIC Tiwari noted ongoing improvements in township infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and maintenance, and assured that all remaining tasks would be completed. The entire road network, electrical system, and drainage are being upgraded

in phases. During the ceremony, 202 employees were honored with the Birsa Munda Excellence Award, and 27 CISF and BSL Security personnel received certificates of appreciation. Under the Steel Knowledge Scheme, Mr. Tiwari distributed special kits to children from the Birhor tribal community.

Additionally, DIC Tiwari flagged off the Steel Sanjeevani Mobile Medical Unit, which will provide free anti-TB kits to rural areas under CSR initiatives.

On Independence Day, the Women's Committee, BSL Security Department, and Bokaro Steel Officers Association also hoisted the national flag at their respective premises.

DAV Public School Sector-4 Celebrates 'Community Service Week'

PNS : BOKARO

DAV Public School Sector-4 recently observed a heartwarming 'Community Service Week,' embracing values of love, empathy, compassion, and charity. Principal Sarbendu Shekhar Kar highlighted the essence of selfless giving by recalling verses from the Gita, emphasizing that donations given with a sense of duty, without expectations of reward, at the right place and time, and to deserving individuals, are considered 'sattvic' (pure) donations. He noted that the school has always supported such acts of charity and inspired its students to serve humanity.

Throughout the week, students from classes 3 to 12 collected various items as part of the initiative. On August 17, under the guidance and supervision of Principal Kar, teachers, and LMC member Shashi Bhushan, these collected items were distributed to underprivileged and needy individuals in Bokaro. The students visited slums and marginalized communities to distribute essential supplies, gaining firsthand insight into the struggles and needs of these communities.

In closing, Principal Kar emphasized that the Vedas extol the importance of service. He urged individuals to avoid hoarding beyond necessity and to use their resources to support the weak and needy. He reiterated that giving, whether it be milk, flowers from a garden, knowledge, water from a well, or food and money, only increases when shared.



Challenges before the Finance Minister: Fiscal Priorities in the Face of Climate Change



As the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman ji, has rightly pointed out, the country is facing severe challenges due to the impact of climate change, which has necessitated higher resource mobilization and investments. While the public may be clamouring for lower taxes, the stark reality is that India's energy transition and climate adaptation efforts require substantial domestic funding, which leaves little room for broad tax cuts. The Finance Minister's remarks at the recent IISER Bhopal convocation shed light on the problematic trade-offs the government faces. India has made ambitious commitments to renewable energy and emissions reduction at various international climate forums, including the Paris Agreement, the UAE Climate Change Conference, and COP26 in Scotland. The

country needs to rely heavily on its resources to fulfil these pledges, as the promised global funding for the energy transition has yet to materialize.

India's energy sector is undergoing a critical transition, with the need to significantly increase the share of renewable energy in the overall mix. However, this transformation requires substantial investment in infrastructure, innovation, and storage solutions, which the government has undertaken despite needing more external finance.

The Finance Minister's explanation that "the challenges will have to be overcome" underscores the government's recognition of the existential threat posed by climate change and the imperative to prioritize these long-term, strategic imperatives over short-term political considerations.

While many like me in jobs may be understandably frustrated with the lack of immediate tax relief, the Finance Minister's focus on mobilizing domestic resources to address India's pressing climate and energy challenges is a prudent and responsible approach. As the country continues to navigate the complexities of sustainable development, the government's commitment to

financing the energy transition and climate adaptation efforts deserves support and understanding from the public.

But, why do I say this? No one will be happy to pay heavy taxes. However, it is equally important to understand the other side of the story. India is one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, contributing around 7% of global emissions. To address this, the government has set ambitious targets of achieving 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and net-zero emissions by 2070.

The government has invested heavily in renewable energy to meet these goals, with the installed capacity increasing from around 3 GW in 2010 to over 100 GW as of 2022. However, the total investment required for India's energy transition is estimated to be around \$450 billion by 2030, underscoring the severe financial challenge we face. India has pledged to reduce its emissions intensity by 45% by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2070 as part of its Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement. To fulfil these targets, the country needs to knowingly scale up its renewable energy capaci-

ty, invest in energy storage solutions, and implement various climate adaptation measures.

India's decarbonization pathway requires substantial domestic funding, as the promised global climate finance has yet to materialize. For example, a Council on Energy, Environment and Water study estimates that India must invest around \$10 trillion by 2070 to achieve net-zero emissions.

Lowering taxes at this critical juncture would severely constrain the government's ability to finance the energy transition and climate adaptation efforts, potentially jeopardizing India's ability to meet its international commitments.

Of course, we may discuss on the percentage of the resource allocation. However, taking care of the poor, the middle class and India's commitments against climate change at the same time is a challenging and risky task role!

KISHORE IS AN ALUMNUS OF XISS AND HOLDS A PHD IN STRATEGIC CSR FROM SANTINIKETAN. CURRENTLY, HE WORKS FOR HPPT AND IS A HP FUTURE IMPACT LEADER - ESG STUDENT AT IICA (VIEWS ARE PERSONAL).

DISHA Meeting: MP emphasises promptness and coordination in welfare schemes



PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

In a crucial meeting of the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) held at the Collectorate Auditorium, MP Bidyut Baran Mahto emphasized the need for all government departments to operate with sensitivity, promptness, and coordination to ensure that the public welfare schemes of the government effectively reach the people. The meeting, chaired by MP Mahto, was attended by prominent figures including MLA Saryu Roy, MLA Ramdas Soren, District Council President Bari Murmu, Vice President Pankaj, District Magistrate cum Deputy Commissioner Ananya Mittal, Deputy Development Commissioner Manish Kumar, Forest Division Officer Saba Alam Ansari, Project Director ITDA Dipankar Chaudhary, and other district-level departmental officers. During his address, MP Mahto underscored the crucial role of local public representatives in the successful implementation of development schemes. He urged the departments to work in harmony, ensuring that the benefits of government initiatives reach the

grassroots level. "All departments should work with sensitivity, promptness, and mutual coordination to reach the public welfare schemes of the government to the common people," Mahto stated, highlighting the importance of swift and coordinated action.

District Magistrate cum Deputy Commissioner Ananya Mittal assured that the district administration would address all public interest issues raised by the representatives in a timely and efficient manner. "The issues of public interest raised by the public representatives in the meeting of DISHA will be resolved by the district administration within the time limit and promptly," Mittal affirmed, reflecting the administration's commitment to responsiveness.

The meeting began with a review of the compliance report from the previous DISHA meeting. The proceedings focused on the directives issued earlier, with particular emphasis on the electrification of non-electrified villages. The Electricity Department was instructed to expedite the electrification process and replace dilapidated electric wires and temporary poles within the next two months. Furthermore, the MP directed

that contract linemen in the Electricity Department be insured to ensure they receive proper compensation in case of an accident. A Public Grievance Redressal System was also mandated to address the complaints and issues of electricity consumers, along with making the helpline number widely known and ensuring regular meter reading and billing.

In the review of water supply schemes, particular attention was given to addressing discrepancies in rural water supply projects. The administration was instructed to repair minor faults at the district level or utilize funds from the District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT). The MP also directed the proper implementation of basic facilities such as constructing additional classrooms in schools, boundary walls, and installing hand pumps for drinking water, all from DMFT funds.

The meeting also covered the RTE (Right to Education) campaign under the Education Department. MP Mahto instructed officials to raise awareness among school management and parents about the enrollment of 25 percent of children from economically weaker sections in private schools, ensuring their access to quality education. During the review of the Health Department, the MP inquired about the treatment provided through Ayushman Cards and the status of the 108 ambulance service. He emphasized the need for surprise inspections to ensure the regular presence of ANMs in primary health centers and the availability of essential medicines.

Loyola commemorates 78th Independence Day with patriotic fervor



PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Freedom is not what you get, it is what you make of it." This powerful message set the tone for the 78th Independence Day celebrations at Loyola School, where the spirit of patriotism was palpable throughout the campus. The event, marked by enthusiasm and reverence, was graced by the presence of Lieutenant Colonel Tejpal Singh Bajwa as the Chief Guest. Joining him were distinguished guests including Fr. Victor Misquith, former Principal, Fr. Augustine, former Rector, Fr. Gerald D'Souza, Administrator cum Treasurer, Fr. Jyoti Ranjan, Headmaster of Loyola Hindi School, Jayanthi Sheshadri, Vice-Principal of the Senior Section, Vineeta Ekka, Vice-Principal of the Junior Section, and the Plus 2 Co-ordinator. The celebration also saw participation from members of the Loyola Alumni Association, teachers, parents, and

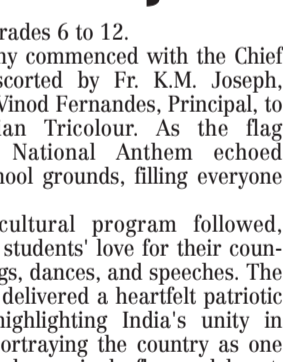
students from grades 6 to 12. The ceremony commenced with the Chief Guest being escorted by Fr. K.M. Joseph, Rector, and Fr. Vinod Fernandes, Principal, to hoist the Indian Tricolour. As the flag unfurled, the National Anthem echoed through the school grounds, filling everyone with pride.

A vibrant cultural program followed, showcasing the students' love for their country through songs, dances, and speeches. The senior students delivered a heartfelt patriotic performance, highlighting India's unity in diversity, and portraying the country as one entity united under a single flag and heart. Their soulful rendition of patriotic songs stirred deep emotions of pride and patriotism among the audience.

The younger students from standards 2 and 3 impressed with their portrayal of historical events like the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, the Dandi March, and the courageous deeds of Rani Lakshmbai. Their performances not only brought history to life but also emphasized the struggles and sacrifices that paved the way for India's independence.

Adding to the spectacle, the dancers from Loyola Hindi School performed gracefully, and Hritik, a student of class 12, delivered an inspiring speech that left the audience captivated. Their flawless performances were met with thunderous applause, reflecting the audience's appreciation.

Special arrangements for children and elderly on I-day by Bokaro admn



PNS : BOKARO

On the 78th Independence Day, Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav spearheaded a special initiative by the district administration. At the Human Service Ashram in Sector 05 of B.S. City, children received school bags and study materials.

Simultaneously, essential supplies were distributed to the elderly residents of the Chandan Kiyari Old Age Home. The event also saw participation from the Social Welfare Department, Child Protection Unit, and other staff members.

Inter-School Group Song and Dance Competition held



PNS : BOKARO

On August 14, 2024, Bokaro Steel Plant hosted an inter-school patriotic group song and dance competition at the Bokaro Club Cinema Complex. The event, organized by the Sports and Civic Facilities Department, featured Executive Director C.R. Mahapatra as the chief guest, along with other senior officials. The competition, which began with a lamp-lighting ceremony, showcased performances from both BSL-run and city public schools.

The program began with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, and the event was

conducted by Junior Manager of Bokaro Steel Plant, Ravi Kumar Sinha. Students from BSL-run schools as well as various public schools in the city captivated the audience with their impressive performances in the patriotic group song and dance categories.

DPS School Sector 04 won first place in the group song category, followed by Rainbow Public School and GGPS Sector 05. In the group dance competition, Pentecostal Assembly School secured first place, Sri Ayyappa Public School took second prize and the third prize was given to ARS Public School.

Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan Hoists Flag at Various Locations on Independence Day



PNS : BOKARO

On the occasion of India's 78th Independence Day, Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan hoisted the national flag at multiple locations across the city. The celebrations began at his residential office in Sector 1, followed by flag hoisting ceremonies at Malti Residency, the BJP office in Sector 12, Gandhi Vichar Manch, Sector 12 Mor, Dundibagh Market, Sector 3

Thana Mor, and Sector 3. During the ceremonies, MLA Narayan extended his greetings to all present and paid tribute to the nation's martyrs. He emphasized the importance of collective efforts for the country's development and prosperity. The events were attended by a large number of local citizens, party workers, and other dignitaries, who came together to celebrate the spirit of independence.

Mithila Academy Public School celebrates 78th I-day with enthusiasm



PNS : BOKARO

The Mithila Cultural Council, shared key principles for student success. Chairman Hari Mohan Jha also congratulated the students on the 78th Independence Day. Secretary PK Jha Chandan emphasized that true freedom extends beyond national independence to liberating oneself from mental constraints, advocating for freedom of thought and self-liberation.

Finally Vice-President of Mithila Sanskritik Parishad Avinash jha extended his best

wishes for Ranchi and said "As we celebrate our freedom, let us remember that true independence lies in nurturing a sense of unity, integrity, and self-respect. I encourage all students to embrace these values and strive for excellence, not just in their academic pursuits but in their roles as responsible citizens." The school premises were filled with patriotic fervor and excitement, reflecting the spirit of the Independence Day celebrations.

Mithila Academy Public School celebrates 78th I-day with enthusiasm

Mithila Academy Public School, Sector 4E, Bokaro, celebrated the 78th Independence Day with great pomp and grandeur. The event featured flag hoisting by esteemed guests including Rajendra Kumar (Permanent Invited Member), Promod Kumar Jha 'Chandan' (Secretary), Niraj Chaudhary (General Secretary), Mithila Cultural Council), Avinash Kumar, and Principal Ashok



Kumar Pathak. Following the flag hoisting, students presented a vibrant cultural program. The children performed on patriotic songs. Their perform-

ances, including skits depicting various freedom fighters, stirred a sense of patriotism and enthusiasm among the attendees. Rajendra Kumar, a Permanent Invited Member of



WORLD 5

INTERIM GOVT COMMITTED TO FREE & FAIR POLLS: YUNUS

MONEY 6

WINDFALL TAX ON CRUDE PETROLEUM REDUCED

SPORT 7

LET'S JUST LEAVE IT TO THE GODS: CHOPRA ON 90M AND BEYOND

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Patients suffer as doctors strike work over WB horror



Doctors and staff of RML Hospital stage a protest demanding justice for the woman doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered at Kolkata's R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, in New Delhi, on Saturday

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Healthcare services across the nation were paralysed as doctors and other medical workers from the Government, private, and even corporate hospitals went on a 24-hour strike starting at 6 am on Saturday, leading to the shutdown of OPDs, elective surgeries, and IPD services. The strike — called to protest rape and murder of a trainee doctor at a State-run hospital in Kolkata last week — caused significant disruption,

with hospitals across the national Capital turning away patients, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. While many sympathised with the cause, they struggled to receive necessary medical treatment. The Indian Medical Association (IMA), which represents over 4 lakh medical professionals nationwide, called for the strike after resident and junior doctors, along with medical students, ceased work for six consecutive days

and took to the street to protest the August 9 incident. As senior doctors also joined the strike, medical services were hit hard in many States, severely impacting primarily poor patients who had traveled long distances from across the country to access care at centrally run facilities like AIIMS, Safdarjung Hospital, and Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital. A 60-year-old heart patient who had come to AIIMS for an OPD visit expressed his frustration and said, "I had an appointment for a routine

checkup today, but it was cancelled due to the strike. I understand the doctors' concerns, but we haven't done anything wrong. I hope the strike ends soon." Relatives of another patient echoed similar sentiment, acknowledging the tragedy in Kolkata but emphasising that the strike had severely affected them. They had travelled from Rajasthan to Delhi seeking treatment for their uncle, as they believed the best healthcare services were available in the Capital. In display of solidarity and demanding a Central Protection Act, doctors across the Capital also marched towards Jantar Mantar, despite resistance from Delhi Police, who tried to prevent the demonstration from disrupting public life. Nurses too joined the protest, holding a sit-in to show their solidarity and outrage over the West Bengal tragedy. Dr Arpit, a protesting doctor who participated in the march to Jantar Mantar, said, "Our demands are clear. We don't want another incident like the one in West Bengal. The Government must finalise the Central Protection Act. This is not about politics; it's about justice and safety."



CBI focusing on victim's diary to crack case

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

As the murdered doctor from RG Kar Medical College and Hospital aware of any threats to her life? And if so, who were her tormentors? As they work to answer these questions, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials are focusing on the victim's personal diary and statements from her family, including her father, regarding the events leading up to the alleged rape and murder inside the hospital premises on the night of August 8 and 9. Sources indicated that CBI officials have identified around thirty individuals of interest in their investigation, including some doctors, interns, senior nurses, and other hospital staff. According to these sources, the victim's father informed investigators that his daughter had recently expressed reluctance to perform night shifts. She had also voiced suspicions about certain colleagues, fearing that they might cause her harm. The CBI is now meticulously

examining her personal diary to gather as much information as possible about her concerns and the potential threats she faced. The victim's father reportedly informed investigators, citing some of her colleagues, that she may have been murdered elsewhere and then her body was moved to the seminar hall of the Department of Chest Medicine, where she was a final-year postgraduate trainee. CBI officials, who interrogated Sandip Ghosh — the influential former principal of the college, known for his close ties with the topmost family in the State — for approximately 13 and a half hours on Friday night, resumed questioning him on Saturday. Sources suggested that Ghosh has started to crack under CBI pressure, and the interrogation was ongoing at the time of the last reports. On Saturday, a team of CBI officials visited the crime scene inside the hospital for the second time, equipped with three-dimensional cameras and other instruments to gather additional evidence.

Guv OK's K'taka CM prosecution in MUDA scam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday ruled out his resignation, following Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot granting sanction to prosecute him, in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', and said he had done no wrong to step down. He termed the Governor's decision "anti-Constitution and against law". The Chief Minister also said Governor's decision will be questioned in court and that he will battle it out legally. "It is a big conspiracy to dislodge the elected Government. They (BJP) have done this in several States including Delhi, Jharkhand. A conspiracy has been designed to destabilise the elected Government in Karnataka also. The Central Government, BJP, JD(S) and others are involved in this conspiracy," Siddaramaiah told reporters here. "High command (of Congress) is with me, the entire Cabinet and the Government is with me. All Congress MLAs, MLCs, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members are with me...I have done no wrong to resign," he asserted. Accusing the Opposition of wrong doings and behaving illegally and anti-Constitutionally, he further said, "They are using Raj Bhavan as a political pawn. The Governor is functioning like a puppet in the hands of the Central Government." The Governor has accorded sanction against the Chief Minister under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of Pradeep Kumar S P, T J Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna.



Police personnel during a rescue operation after coaches of the Sabarmati Express passenger train derailed between Kanpur and Bhimsen stations in Uttar Pradesh, on Saturday

Sabotage suspected in Kanpur train derailment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR/NEW DELHI

Twenty coaches of the Sabarmati Express passenger train derailed near Govindpuri station in Kanpur early Saturday after the engine hit an "object placed on the track", rail officials said. There is no report of any loss of life or injury in the accident. The Varanasi-Ahmedabad train derailed between Kanpur and Bhimsen railway stations around 2.35 am. Rescue and relief operations are underway, officials said. In a post on X, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, "The engine of Sabarmati Express (Varanasi to Amdavad) hit an object on the track and derailed near Kanpur at 02:35 am today." "Sharp hit marks are observed.

Evidence is protected. IB and UP police are also working on it. No injuries to passengers or staff. Train arranged for passengers for onward journey to Amdavad," Vaishnaw added. Railway Board officials said involvement of miscreants or anti-social elements is being looked into as prima facie it appears that the engine hit an object placed on track. "We found a foreign material near the 16th coach of the train. Looking at the size of the damaged portion of cattle guard of the engine, it seems that the engine hit this foreign object and derailed," an official said. "The loco pilot said some boulder hit the cattle guard (front portion) of the engine which got badly damaged and bent," another official said.

Mumbai terror attack plotter faces extradition to India

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a huge setback to Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a US court has ruled that the Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman could be extradited to India where he was wanted for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack carried out by Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists. "The (India US Extradition) Treaty permits Rana's extradition," the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit said in its ruling on Thursday. Ruling on an appeal filed by 63-year-old Rana, a panel of judges of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court in the Central District of California's denial of his habeas corpus petition challenging a magistrate judge's certification of his as extraditable to India for his alleged participation in terrorist attacks in Mumbai. Rana, currently lodged in a jail in Los Angeles, faces charges for his role in the 26/11 Mumbai attack and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the terrorist incident that hit India's financial hub in 2008.



Rana has the option of appealing against the ruling. He still has not run out of all the legal options to prevent his extradition to India. Under the limited scope of an extradition order, the panel held that Rana's alleged offence fell within the terms of the extradition treaty between the United States and India, which included a Non Bis in Idem (double jeopardy) exception to extraditability "when the person sought has been convicted or acquitted in the Requested State for the offence for which extradition is requested". Relying on the plain text of the treaty, the US State Department's technical analysis, and persuasive case law of other circuits, the panel held that the word "offence" refers to a charged crime,

rather than underlying acts, and requires an analysis of the elements of each crime. The panel of three judges concluded that a co-conspirator's plea agreement did not compel a different result. The panel held that the Non Bis in Idem exception did not apply because the Indian charges contained distinct elements from the crimes for which Rana was acquitted in the United States. In its ruling, the panel also held that India provided sufficient competent evidence to support the magistrate judge's finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes. The three panel of judges were Milan D Smith, Bridget S Bade, and Sidney A Fitzwater. Rana, a Pakistani national, was tried in a US district court on charges related to his support for a terrorist organisation that carried out large-scale terrorist attacks in Mumbai. A jury convicted Rana of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organisation and conspiring to provide material support to a foiled plot to carry out terrorist attacks in Denmark. However, the jury acquitted Rana of conspiring to provide material support to terrorism-related to the attacks in India.



Women devotees carry holy water as they take part in the 'Kalash Yatra' during 'Shravan' month, in Jaipur, on Saturday

Hoax bomb threats send cops into tizzy in NCR-Delhi, Maha

PARVESH SHARMA/STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM/NOIDA

Two malls in Gurugram and Noida were evacuated on Saturday after they received bomb threat through emails with police later saying nothing suspicious was found following anti-sabotage checks. The bomb threats to DLF Mall of India in Sector 18 of Noida and Ambience Mall in Gurugram came over three months after similar threats were emailed to multiple schools in the National Capital Region (NCR). The Saturday



threat, which had thrown police and security personnel into a tizzy, turned out to be a hoax in the wake of upcoming Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana, which

announced by the Election Commission on Friday. Besides Delhi and NCR, the Inorbit Mall in Vashi in Navi Mumbai was also evacuated by the police after the mall's management received a bomb threat email on Saturday afternoon. According to Gurugram police, the Ambience Mall management received a bomb threat email at 9.27 am. The email, which was sent from hiddenbones101@gmail.com, read, "I planted bombs in the building. Every person inside the building will be killed, none of you will escape. You deserve death.

This nation also knows how to respect a woman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Celebrated wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Saturday received a grand welcome on her return to the country with hundreds of supporters gathering outside the IGI airport, showing immense solidarity with her. Stars such as Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and panchayat leaders received Vinesh, who endured a heartbreaking exit at the Paris Olympics where she was disqualified for being overweight on the day of her 50kg final. Heavily garlanded, Vinesh stood in an open Jeep and thanked all the supporters. Congress leader Deepender Hooda accompanied Vinesh and offered her sweets.

"I thank the entire country for support," she said, her hands folded in humility. There was a thick security cover as Vinesh, who was found 100 grams overweight at the Olympics, landed in the national Capital. Vinesh's caravan left for her native village Balali in Haryana and on the way she met her supporters, positioned at different spots. Hooda presented a mace, a symbol of victory to Vinesh, who got emotional and was consoled by her husband Somvir. In a series of twitter posts, Hooda praised the 29-year-old Vinesh for her fighting spirit. "In our eyes, you have been a winner in the past and will remain so in the future too. Your courage, struggle and



Wrestler Vinesh Phogat gets emotional as she arrives after Paris Olympics heartbreak, at IGI airport, in New Delhi, on Saturday

determination have not only won the hearts of crores of countrymen but you are an inspiration to crores of youth of the country," read one of his tweets. A group of 50 supporters followed her jeep. They offered prayers at a temple in Delhi's Dwarka before continuing their journey towards Balali. Vinesh had stayed back in Paris after challenging her disqualification in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and demanding a joint silver. The application was dismissed on Wednesday. "She has come back to her country after such a long time. She is very emotional also. She will spend time with family and calm herself. What Vinesh has done for women is praiseworthy. She

might not have received a medal, but she is a champion for us," said Sakshi Malik. London Olympics bronze medal-winning shooter Gagan Narang, who was the Chef de Mission of the Indian contingent in Paris, called her a champion, posting a photo with Vinesh at the Paris airport. Both of them were on the same flight to Delhi. "She came as a champion on day 1 into the games village and she will always remain our champion. Sometimes one doesn't need an Olympic medal to inspire a billion dreams.. @vineshphogat you have inspired generations. Salute to your grit," Narang posted on X. "People are waiting to welcome her to our village. People are excited to meet Vinesh and

encourage her," her brother Harvinder Phogat said. The feisty wrestler, in her first reaction after her disqualification, on Saturday said that under "different circumstances" she could see herself competing till 2032 because she still has a lot of wrestling left in her, but is now unsure about her future as things "might never be same again". Vinesh had announced her retirement from the sport after her disqualification. In an emotional post on social media, Vinesh shared her childhood dream, the hardships she faced after losing her father and also put on record the contribution made by people in her extraordinary journey that ended in heartbreak in Paris.

CM announces job for kin of havildar Hembram killed by criminals

PNS : RANCHI
 Chief Minister Hemant Soren met the family members of late Havildar Chauhan Hembram of the Hazaribagh district force at his residential office on Kanke Road, Ranchi, today.

Chief Minister Hemant Soren announced that a member of late Havildar Chauhan Hembram's family would be given a government job. The Chief Minister assured the family that the process for appointment in either Class 3 or Class 4 positions on compassionate grounds would be completed soon, and directives have already been issued to the officials for this purpose.



Chief Minister Hemant Soren meets family members of Havildar Late Chauhan Hembram at his official residence in Ranchi on Saturday. PNS

the family members of Hembram, the Chief Minister said that the state govern-



ment is always standing with you in this hour of grief. The Chief Minister assured the family members of all possible help from the state government. MLA Kalpana Soren also expressed condolences to the family members of Havildar Late Chauhan Hembram and consoled them. Havildar Late Chauhan Hembram's

dependent will get job on compassionate grounds. Chief Minister Hemant Soren announced to give government job to a member of Havildar Late Chauhan Hembram's family. The Chief Minister told the family that soon all the procedures for appointment in class 3 or 4 on compassionate grounds will be completed, instructions have been given to the officers for this purpose. The dependent family will be given about Rs 1 crore 29 lakh by the state government. The amount payable is as follows - Rs 60 lakh compensation payment in the light of Resolution No. 4179 / dated 09.07.24 of Home, Prison and Disaster Management

Department, Rs 50 lakh benefit of police salary package made through SBI, amount of gratuity 11 lakh 25 thousand rupees, earned leave salary 5 lakh 62 thousand 500 rupees, provident fund amount 1 lakh, group insurance amount 37 thousand rupees, necessary financial assistance from charitable fund 30 thousand rupees and family pension 9 thousand rupees. It is known that Chauhan Hembram, resident of village-Pindatad, police station-Taratand of Giridih district, who was working as a Havildar in Hazaribagh District Force, was brutally murdered by a criminal on 12 August 2024 during duty.

Delhi Public School Ranchi celebrated its 35th Foundation Day

PNS : RANCHI
 Delhi Public School Ranchi, one of the premier educational institutions in the state, celebrated its 35th Foundation Day, 'ABHIVYAKTI', with great enthusiasm and grandeur on August 17, 2024, at the Vivekananda Auditorium, marking another milestone in the school's illustrious journey. The students, staff, and parents were filled with zeal to witness the extraordinary endeavours of the Ranchi Dipsites, who had rehearsed tirelessly for this occasion.



holistic development of its students and presented a report on the notable achievements of students in academics and co-curricular events. He reiterated the school's commitment to fostering a culture of excellence and providing a nurturing environment that empowers students to achieve their full potential and positively impact society.

where classical dances were suppressed. Post-independence, traditional dance forms experienced a revival, reclaiming their cultural significance. Now, as The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also emphasizes integrating dance into education, restoring its importance in Indian society and promoting it as a vital aspect of cultural heritage becomes the responsibility of the school.

The day was made even more special by the presence of Honourable Mr. Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad, Acting Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court, as the Chief Guest, and Honourable Mr. Justice Sanjay Prasad, Jharkhand High Court, as the Guest of Honour. Shri S.J. Jachuck, CGM (HR, RDCS, SAIL) and Pro-Vice Chairman, DPS Ranchi, along with Dr. Ram Singh, Principal of Delhi Public School, Mathura Road, New Delhi, presided over the event as special guests. The principals of eminent schools in Ranchi and other city dignitaries were also in attendance. The esteemed guests were honored by the school's Principal, Dr. R.K. Jha, with the presentation of saplings and mementos.

The festivities continued with a vibrant cultural extravaganza featuring a range of performances by the school's talented students. The students presented a play based on Shakespeare's tragedy, 'Macbeth' which explores the destructive power of unchecked ambition and moral corruption. The play foregrounds how Lady Macbeth is instrumental in igniting and accelerating Macbeth's vaulting ambition. How her manipulation, coupled with her dismissal of moral concerns, drives Macbeth to commit heinous acts. The drama tries to bring forward the consequences of their unbridled ambition showing how overambition strips them both of peace, leading to their ultimate downfall.

Addressing the students, Honourable Mr. Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad expressed his exhilaration at seeing the beautiful blend of various art forms. He congratulated DPS Ranchi for its achievements on state, national, and international levels. He commended the institution's efforts in instilling values and skills that prepare students for modern challenges, and applauded the relentless dedication of the educators in shaping the future generation. He motivated the students to become compassionate global citizens and to serve the community with honesty and dedication.

The program commenced with the lighting of the lamp by the luminaries, igniting the ceremonial spirit for this special day. This was followed by a melodious musical rendition by the talented vocalists and instrumentalists of DPS Ranchi. Subsequently, Principal Dr. R.K. Jha warmly welcomed the respected dignitaries, parents, and media persons, expressing his appreciation for their presence. In his address, Principal Dr. R.K. Jha expressed heartfelt gratitude to the guests for taking time out of their busy schedules to join the celebration. He briefed the audience on the school's efforts to foster the

The audience was treated to a captivating dance drama titled 'The Journey of Dance.' This performance highlighted the evolution of dance in India, from the sacred Vaidik Kaal, where dance was revered in temples, to the Mughal era, where it became a form of royal entertainment, and through the British period,

The other revered guests also motivated the students with their words of wisdom and lauded the school's endeavors in providing quality education and fostering an environment conducive to the overall development of young learners. The Foundation Day celebration at DPS Ranchi was a testament to the institution's outstanding achievements and its continuous pursuit of excellence. The program culminated with a vote of thanks.

Sadar Hospital's Doctors boycott work

PNS : RANCHI
 On the call of IMA, all the doctors of the Country have been on strike for 24 hours. In this episode, all the doctors of Ranchi Sadar Hospital are also boycotting work and sitting on dharna. In protest against the rape and murder of a female resident doctor in Kolkata, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has announced a 24-hour strike in all small and big hospitals across the country on Saturday. IMA State Secretary Dr Pradeep Kumar Singh said that health services will remain disrupted till 6 am on Sunday. He said that we demand justice for the



trainee doctor and condemn the vandalism done in the medical college and hospital by doing RG. IMA State unit chief Dr Arun Kumar Singh said that 'all government and private hospitals as well as 'diagnostic centers' are also joining the strike. "During this time all elective services, outpatient department (OPD) services and elective surgeries

will remain suspended. However, the strike will not have any impact on emergency services. Members of IMA Jharkhand, State Health Association (JHSA), RDA-CIP and other establishments will also take out a march in Ranchi," he added. IMA's demands are immediate arrest of the culprits and strictest punishment after a speedy trial, declare health care institutions as special protected areas, enact a central law to protect doctors and health workers from atrocities and empower the National Medical Council to implement rules related to the safety of medical students and doctors.

Show-cause notice to seven women supervisors



PNS : RANCHI

Action has been taken by Ranchi DC Rahul Kumar Sinha for negligence in monitoring the ambitious Jharkhand Chief Minister Maiya Samman Vojana of the State Government. Seven women supervisors, including the Child Development Project Officer of Ranchi Sadar, have been show-caused for negligence in monitoring the scheme and not achieving the target.

the scheme was not done regularly, why disciplinary action should not be recommended in view of the laxity and negligence in the implementation of this important scheme. A complaint of illegal recovery was received against Ranchi Sadar's female supervisor Anjana Das. Seeing the seriousness of the situation, the DC immediately ordered the deputation of the female supervisor to Sonahatu project. Also, as the allegations leveled against the female supervisor seemed suspicious, the Child Development Project Officer, Sadar has been ordered to provide an investigation report with a clear opinion within 12 hours of receiving the letter. Earlier, on receiving a complaint of illegal recovery, the District Social Welfare Officer had sought reasons from the female supervisor Anjana Das, which was found to be unsatisfactory. Show Cause Notice Survey to Child Development Project Officer, Ranchi Sadar. Anjana Das, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar, Ranjana Tiwari, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar, Sangeeta Kachhap, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar, Manisha Jyoti, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar, Kumari Sunita, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar, Jyoti Bala, Lady Supervisor, Ranchi Sadar.

Also, the salary of all has been suspended until a satisfactory explanation is found. Under the Jharkhand Chief Minister Maiya Samman Vojana, verification was done on the information that the hard copy of the application form was not submitted to the concerned Zonal Officer as per the number of beneficiaries in the urban area. During the verification of Ward-36 Argora and Nagdi Zone, the matter of keeping the entered applications with the sevikas, not surveying the eligible beneficiaries and not visiting the area by the women supervisors came to light, after which this action has been taken. Show-cause notice has been issued to seven women supervisors including Sadar CDPO and clarification has been sought from all as to under what circumstances the monitoring of

Doctors halt OPD services over Kolkata rape- murder case

DIVYA MODI : RANCHI

Following the rape and murder of a woman doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, healthcare services in Ranchi too were severely affected. Doctors in the State capital joined the 24-hour strike called by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) which began at 6 am on Saturday morning and is to continue till 6 am on Sunday, August 18.



The junior doctors at the State-run Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (Rims) continue to be on strike protesting the heinous act. So far more than 40 major surgeries have been postponed with the maximum number being that of the general surgery department. Operations have also postponed for other departments including bone, neuro surgery, pediatric surgery, urology and cancer surgery to name a few.

In Jharkhand, women's wing of IMA, RDA CIP, HHPI, IAP, IDA, Jharkhand Paramedical Association along with private hospitals have decided to stop OPD services starting on Saturday. The registration department is open but OPD slips are not being issued for the departments. Radiology tests are also closed as the junior doctors engaged in this are not providing any services. The protestors also lit candles in front of the trauma centre in the evening hours.

"Like CBI and ED, there should be provision of SCAW i.e. serious crime against women in our country. Under SCAW, immediate action is taken on heinous crimes against women and the harshest punishment is given. This will ensure safety of women of all classes. Medical protection act must be implemented for doctors' safety. Whatever happened with a junior doctor in Kolkata after 36 hours of duty, such an incident should not happen in our State, so the State government should immediately implement the medical protection act. Resident doctors are present everywhere in the ward, ICU, operation theatre, most of which are women, who have to face the anger of the patient's relatives. It is the need of the hour for the government to make a safety policy for women for health workers," said Women Doctors Wing IMA, Jharkhand Chairperson Dr Bharti Kashyap.

Secretary of IMA Jharkhand Dr Pradeep Kumar Singh said that this time health services will be completely stalled as more than 17 thousand doctors of the State will boycott work. Apart from this more than 25 thousand health workers including para medical staff, ANM, GNM nurses and physiotherapist association members will be on strike. The important issue in the strike will be the safety of doctors and for this the State government will also have to come forward.

Meanwhile, the Doctors Wives Association organised a silent march in the State capital on Saturday from IMA Hall, Bariatu till Karamtoli Chowk at around 4.30 pm in protest of the brutal physical assault and heinous murder of a young lady doctor at R.G Kar Medical College, Kolkata. The rally was led by the Chairperson Person Vinita Sharan, Founder cum Co-Chairperson Jhooma Sarkar, President Shreela Choudhary, Secretary Amrita Baidya and Treasurer Monideepa Dasgupta followed by a large group of members.

Three policemen killed in last 20 days in State

PNS : RANCHI



Three policemen were killed in different districts of Jharkhand in the last 20 days. Two of these policemen were shot dead. While one policeman was killed by hitting with an iron rod and strangulating him. Out of the three murders, the criminal involved in only one case was arrested by Gumla police. The criminals involved in the other two incidents are still out of police custody. If we look at the statistics of police killings in the last four years in Jharkhand, ten policemen including two inspectors were killed by criminals in different districts of the state. While four policemen were also injured by the criminals' bullets. On July 29, Abhishek Oraon, a jawan of Sahebganj district police and a resident of Tithi village of Gumla Vishunpur police station area, was shot dead in Gumla. The incident took place in Netarhat valley. A criminal gang named Rahul Singh took responsibility for this incident. Gumla police arrested Neeraj Kumar Mishra alias Rinku Pandit, a criminal involved in this case. The arrested accused has admitted in his statement that Abhishek Kumar was murdered because of not getting illegal commission in the purchase and sale of land in Netarhat. A sub-inspector posted in the Special Branch in the capital Ranchi was shot dead on August 2. The body of a sub-inspector named Anupam Kachhap was recovered from Ranchi Ring Road. 16 days have passed since this incident. But till now the criminals involved in this murder have not been identified. A case of major security lapse came to light in Hazaribagh. Here, prisoner Mohammad Shahid Ansari, admitted in Sheikh Bikhari Medical Hospital, escaped after killing policeman Chauhan Hambram posted for security on the night of August 11. Shahid Ansari was convicted in Dhanbad for murder and rape.

St. Xavier's College, Ranchi, hosted the much-anticipated launch of the book at FrCD. Brouwer Auditorium. Newsprint to Heartprint: An Ingenious Odyssey of Harivansh in Prabhat Khabar. The event, held from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM, drew the presence of notable academics, journalists, and media professionals from across the region. The program commenced with a brief introduction by the event's chair Dr. Harishwar Dayal, Dr. Nabor Lakra, S.J., Principal of St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. Following this, the book was officially launched by the authors, Dr. Abhijit K. Chattoraj, Dr. Srinath Sridharan, and Ms. Saloni Sinha, who provided insights into the book's creation and the journey of Harivansh in Prabhat Khabar. They provided insights into the making of the books how it chronicles the inspiring journey of Harivansh ji within Prabhat khabar. They emphasized the book's focus on leadership, ethical journalism and influence of religious press in religious issues. A panel dis-

Book Launch of Newsprint to Heartprint An Ingenious Odyssey of Harivansh in Prabhat Khabar

SHREYASHEE SHAHI : RANCHI



ussion followed, featuring esteemed participants such as Sri B. K. Sinha, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science; Sri Ravi Bajpai from the Department of History; Sri Manoj Prasad, Senior Journalist; and Dr. Harishwar Dayal, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics, all from St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. The discussion was rich with insights, touching on various aspects of Harivansh ji's leadership and the challenges faced by Prabhat Khabar in its journey. In a special segment, Harivansh ji shared his experiences and the journey with Prabhat Khabar, shedding light on his leadership

style and the critical issues faced by Jharkhand. He also spoke about Asha ji's contributions and cherished memories from their shared journey. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Fr. Pradeep Kujur, S.J., Vice Principal of St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. He expressed gratitude to all the guests, panellists, and attendees for their participation. The event was well-covered by journalists from print, electronic, and web portals, ensuring broad media coverage. Notable attendees included Dr. Fr. Nabor Lakra, Fr. Rector, Fr. Arun, and Fr. Pradeep Kujur, along with the event's distinguished panellists.

Ranchi Hosts Thrilling Cyclothon for Everest Summit 2.0

PNS : RANCHI

Ranchi witnessed an exhilarating Cyclothon event on August 17, 2024, in support of the 'Everest Summit 2.0 - Beyond The Mountains' initiative. Flagged off by Tenzing Jamling, the event saw enthusiastic participation from over 100 people, starting at 5:30 AM from JAP-1 (Shaurya Sabhagar), Doranda, Ranchi and covering a scenic 23 km route that led to Dhurwa Dam and back. This whole event took place under the monitoring and support of Jharkhand Police.

The Cyclothon was organized under the leadership of Rajeev Gupta, Founder Director of the Ignite Foundation, with the collaboration of CCL, CyberPeace Corps, Adani Power, Swachhata Pukare, and Pratigya. The event was further energized by the participation of Everest summiteers, including the renowned Purna Malavath, the world's youngest Everest summiteer who scaled Mt. Everest at the age of 13 years and 11 months along with other participants - Mandeep Singh, Sushant Tirkey, Vandana Khemka, Suman Lal, Saurabh Shekhar, Pinki Murmu and many more.

Among the notable summiteers who joined the Cyclothon were: Tenzing Jamling, Sharad Kulkarni, Dr. Murad E. Lala, Debraj Dutta, Satyarupa Siddhanta, S. Karthikeyan, Purna Malavath, Dr. Usha Hegde, Prakrit Varshney, Jyoti Ratre, Meenu Kaliraman, Anand Kumar, Toolika Rani. The event concluded with the finishers being awarded medals and certificates, recognizing their achievement and participation. This Cyclothon was not just a physical challenge but also a celebration of the human spirit and determination, leaving a lasting impact on the local community and beyond.

AFFIDAVIT
 I, Surendra Bhagat, father-Late Mangala Oraon, Address- Village-Areya, Tangra Toli, Post-Areya, Thana-Bagdu (Kisko), District-Lohardaga, Jharkhand. That my Army No. is 4281134Y. In my service book, my daughter name has been recorded as Smruti Khakha date of birth is 10.02.2008 which is wrong. By affidavit number 8631, dated- 17 August 2024, I am editing an affidavit to correct the mistake by registering my daughter's name as SMRITI BHAGAT (aadhar no. 9001 7753 2366) and date of birth as 15.02.2008.

AFFIDAVIT
 I, Shalini Devi wife of Lal Tripurari Nath Sahadev, resident of village Pandra P.O. Pandra, P.S. Kuru, District- Lohardaga, Jharkhand. That Shidhi Shahdeo is my daughter. That in School Register my daughter, my name (Mother's Name) is mentioned as Shalini Shahdeo which is wrong. By affidavit no. 8607, dated-16 August 2024 my actual and correct name is Shalini Devi, be recorded in her School Admission Register, and previous name be deleted, hence this affidavit.

Interim govt committed to free & fair polls: Yunus

PTI ■ DHAKA

The caretaker government in Bangladesh is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy and creating an environment in which "free, fair and participatory elections can be held," its head Mohammad Yunus assured the international community on Saturday.

Yunus, the Chief Advisor of the interim government, said while addressing the third Voice of Global South Summit which was hosted by India in a virtual format.

"You all are aware that Bangladesh witnessed a 'Second Revolution' on 5th August 2024, through a mass uprising spearheaded by our valiant students and joined by the masses," the 84-year-old Nobel laureate said, referring to the political turmoil in his country and the resignation of prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

Noting that the current interim government led by him was

sworn in on August 8, Yunus said, "Our government is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy and creating an environment in which free, fair and participatory elections can be held." Yunus assumed charge of the interim government amid ongoing violence and vandalism, including against the minorities.

"Our task is now to carry out vital reforms in our electoral system, judiciary, local government, media, economy and education," Yunus said at the summit being attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"I invite you to visit Dhaka soon. Otherwise, you may miss something important. Much of Dhaka has turned into the graffiti capital of the world. Young students and children aged as young as 12-13 have been painting the walls of this 400-year-old city with images of a New Democratic environment-friendly Bangladesh," he said.

"There is no central planning

or guidance for that. No budget support from anybody. It is just an outpouring of their emotions and commitment to the goals of the Second Revolution," the noted economist said.

Former Prime Minister Hasina, 76, fled to India on August 5 after being forced to resign from her post amidst unprecedented anti-government student-led protests.

The student-led protests demanding reforms in government job quotas evolved into a government-toppling movement in early August.

Yunus further said, "We must take the youth and students, who constitute a significant portion of the Global South's population at the heart of our strategies. Two-thirds of our population are youth. They are the most powerful segment of the society. They are different. They are committed to creating a new world. They are capable. They are technologically far ahead of the previous generation..."

He also emphasised redesign-



ing the financial system to make sure that wealth is shared by all.

"It should not be a one-way path for wealth. We must ensure financial services for all people, particularly women and youth. We can learn from each other how this can be done successfully."

He also mentioned 'The Bengali language movement' in 1952.

"In 1952 the Bangladeshi students sacrificed their lives for their mother tongue. It inspired struggles for the right to speak in the mother language all over the world. Some seven

decades later our students-led Second Revolution is inspiring youth throughout the global south to raise their voice for democracy, human rights, dignity, equality and shared prosperity." "I am honoured to be the oldest 'young person' to take part in this revolution and help them make their dreams come true. They need support from all of you," Yunus said.

"Being old should not mean that you have to retire, withdraw yourself from economic activities. Human creativity never stops on a date fixed by the state. It doesn't stop until the last breath. We may work together to see how to make societies supportive of the creativity of all people as long they live," the octogenarian economist said.

During the anti-government protest in Bangladesh, over 230 people died during violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on August 5, taking the death toll to 560 during the three weeks of violence.

10 killed in Israeli strike in southern Lebanon

AP ■ NABATIEH (LEBANON)

An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon early Saturday killed at least 10 Syrian nationals, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry.

The strike on Wadi al-Kfour in Nabatieh province is among the deadliest in Lebanon since the Hezbollah militant group and Israeli military started trading strikes on Oct. 8, a day after Hamas attacked southern Israel and sparked the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Hezbollah maintains that it will stop its attacks once a cease-fire is reached in the Gaza Strip.

Among the dead were a woman and her two children, the ministry said. Five others were wounded, two of whom in critical condition.

An Arabic-language spokesperson for the Israeli military, Avichay Adraee, said the strike in the southern province targeted a weapons depot belonging to

Hezbollah.

Mohammad Shoaib, who runs a slaughterhouse in Wadi al-Kfour, said the area struck was an "industrial and civilian area" that contained factories producing bricks, metal, and aluminum, as well as a dairy farm.

The uncle of three of the people killed in the strike said they were factory workers who were in their housing accommodation when they were hit. He denied that there were weapons at the facility. "There was nothing at all like that," Hussein Shahoud said. "There was metal for construction, for building, for all kinds of purposes."

Hezbollah has not immediately commented on the strikes.

The Lebanese government and international governments have scrambled for weeks to put an end to the monthlong clashes, with the region on a knife edge since July.

An Israeli strike last month in southern Beirut killed Hezbollah's

top commander, whom Israel accused of leading a rocket attack on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights that killed 12 youths. Hours later, an explosion widely blamed on Israel killed Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in the Iranian capital.

Both Tehran and Hezbollah vowed to retaliate, but have not yet launched strikes as diplomatic endeavors and Gaza cease-fire talks continue in Qatar.

Hezbollah and Israel fought a six-week war in the summer of 2006 that ended in a draw. Hezbollah's military capabilities have developed significantly since then.

More than 500 people have been killed in exchanges since Oct. 8, most of them fighters with Hezbollah and other armed groups but also including around 100 civilians and noncombatants. In Israel, 22 soldiers and 24 civilians have been killed. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced on both sides of tense frontier.

Nearly 650 people killed in recent violence in Bangladesh: UN report

PTI ■ DHAKA/GENEVA

Nearly 650 people have been killed in the recent unrest in Bangladesh between July 16 and August 11, the UN Human Rights Office has said in a preliminary report, suggesting a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation into reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions.

According to the 10-page report titled "Preliminary Analysis of Recent Protests and Unrest in Bangladesh", nearly 400 deaths were reported between July 16 and August 4 while around 250 people were reportedly killed following the new wave of protests between August 5 and 6, leading to the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The available public reports by media and the protest movement itself claimed that between July 16 and August 11, more than 600 people were killed due to the wave of violence following the Anti-Discriminatory

Student demonstrations. The number of reported killings in revenge attacks since that time remains to be determined, the report, released on Friday in Geneva, said.

Several deaths were reported between August 7 and 11, including those who died while undergoing medical treatment for injuries sustained in the violence, the UNHCR report suggested.

Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists and several security forces personnel, it said, adding that thousands of protesters and bystanders were injured, with hospitals overwhelmed by the influx of patients.

The report said the reported death toll was likely an underestimate as information collection faced a hindrance by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown.

Furthermore, hospitals were reportedly prevented by state authorities from providing

details of those killed and injured, the report suggested. Triggered by the reinstatement of a quota system for the allocation of jobs in civil services, the student protests in Bangladesh in mid-June turned violent, with reports of severe human rights violations by security forces.

"There are strong indications, warranting further independent investigation, that the security forces used unnecessary and disproportionate force in their response to the situation," the report said.

"Additional, alleged violations, that also warrant thorough, impartial and transparent investigations included extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, as well as severe restrictions on the exercise of freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly," the report said.

There were also reports of looting, arson and attacks on members of religious minorities, as

well as reprisals against and revenge killings of members of the former ruling party and police following the resignation of Hasina on August 5, the report said.

On August 15, mobs armed with bamboo sticks, iron rods and pipes reportedly assaulted the former prime minister's Awami League Party supporters who had gathered to pay their tributes to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on his death anniversary.

The UN report emphasised the importance of rapidly restoring law and order, as well as the need for effective measures to prevent further loss of life, violence and acts of reprisals.

"Law enforcement agencies need to receive clear instructions and training on the use of force, in line with international human rights standards. They must protect populations at risk against any retaliatory or revenge violence, including minority communities," the report said.

Missile hits Ukraine as Kyiv's troops push into Kursk region

AP ■ MOSCOW

A Russian missile strike sparked a blaze in the Ukrainian city of Sumy on Saturday, while Ukrainian forces continued to push into Russia's Kursk border region. Two people were injured in the Sumy strike, which also damaged cars and nearby buildings, said Ukraine's State Emergency Service. It said that the hit had involved an Iskander-K cruise missile and an aerial bomb.

Ukraine's air force also said it had shot down 14 Russian drones overnight, including over the Kyiv region.

Meanwhile, fighting continued in Russia's Kursk region, where Ukrainian troops have been deployed since August 6 in a bid to divert the Kremlin's military focus away from the front line in Ukraine.

Alexander Kots, military correspondent with the pro-Kremlin newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda, said that Ukrainian pressure in Kursk "is not weakening yet."

"In the main sections of the ragged front, the situation has stabilized. But there are areas where the enemy continues to try to expand its bridgehead," he wrote on his Telegram channel.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Friday that Ukraine had destroyed a bridge across the Seim River in the Glushkovsky district with US-made HIMARS rockets, marking their first use in the Kursk region.

Zakharova's statement couldn't be independently confirmed, although the Washington-based think tank the Institute for the Study of War said that geolocated footage published on August 16 showed that the bridge had collapsed following the strike.

Russian military bloggers said that the destruction of bridges would impede deliveries of supplies to Russian forces, but not cut them off completely. "No one has cancelled the pontoons," said Kots, stressing that



A damaged monument to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin stands in a central square in Sudzha, Kursk region. AP/PTI

the Kursk incursion is notable for its size, speed, the reported involvement of battle-hardened Ukrainian brigades and the length of time they have stayed inside Russia. As many as 10,000 Ukrainian troops are involved, according to Western military analysts.

The incursion, which Russian authorities say has led to the evacuation of more than 120,000 civilians, came as a shock to many, Yan Furtsev, an activist and member of local opposition party Yabloko, told the AP.

Ukrainian forces have also captured a number of Russian troops as they have moved across the region.

On Friday, the AP visited a detention centre in Ukraine, the location of which cannot be disclosed due to security restrictions. Dozens of POWs were seen, some of them walking with their hands tied behind their backs while a guard led them down a corridor. Some had rations of a thin soup with cabbage and onions.

Teenager shoots Indian-origin man dead in US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A 36-year-old Indian-origin man has been shot and killed after a teenage boy robbed a convenience store in the US state of North Carolina, authorities said.

Mainank Patel, the owner of the Tobacco House store at 2580 Airport Road, died after the shooting on Tuesday morning, the Salisbury Post reported.

A juvenile male is in custody for the crime, according to Rowan County Sheriff's Office. Because the young man is a juvenile, deputies are not able to release his name.

The juvenile was arrested Tuesday evening but no additional details have been released.

Deputies initially responded to the Tobacco House convenience store in response to a 911 hang-up call, said Captain Mark McDaniel, public information officer for the Rowan County Sheriff's Office.

While they were en route to the location, communications were received that there had been a shooting. When the deputies arrived on scene they found Patel suffering from multiple gunshot wounds, said McDaniel.

The victim was taken to Novant Health Rowan Medical Center and then transported to Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte, where he died as a result of his injuries, the report added.

A security video showed a tall, slender white male running across the store parking lot away from the building. He was wearing black shorts, a black hoodie, a black ski mask and white Nike tennis shoes with burgundy laces, and appeared to have a black handgun in his hand, said McDaniel.

McDaniel said that the sheriff's office is not certain of the motive in the shooting, but that it currently appears to have been a robbery. No one else was injured.



American businessman and Microsoft founder Bill Gates during flagging off the First India Day celebrations, in Greater Seattle area, USA. PTI

Rana can be extradited to India, rules US court

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a huge setback to Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a US court has ruled that the Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman could be extradited to India where is wanted for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack carried out by Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists.

"The (India US Extradition) Treaty permits Rana's extradition," the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit said in its ruling on Thursday.

Ruling on an appeal filed by 63-year-old Rana, a panel of judges of the US Court of

Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court in the Central District of California's denial of his habeas corpus petition challenging a magistrate judge's certification of his as extraditable to India for his alleged participation in terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

Rana, currently lodged in a jail in Los Angeles, faces charges for his role in the 26/11 Mumbai attack and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the terror incident that hit India's financial hub in

2008.

Rana has the option of appealing against the ruling. He still has not run out of all the legal options to prevent his extradition to India.

Under the limited scope of habeas review of an extradition order, the panel held that Rana's alleged offence fell within the terms of the extradition treaty between the United States and India, which included a Non Bis in Idem (double jeopardy) exception to extraditability "when the person sought has been convicted or acquitted in the Requested State for the offence for which extradition is requested".

Pak Intel agencies continue to abduct critics, reveal families

PTI ■ LAHORE

Intelligence agencies in Pakistan continue to abduct social media activists and vloggers for criticising the government and the powerful military establishment in the country, their families have alleged and approached courts in Punjab province.

Two social media activists of former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, Naeem Ahmad Yasin and Arsalan Akbar, have allegedly been arrested by intelligence agencies in the Punjab province of Pakistan.

They have been reported "missing" by their families.

The Shehbaz Sharif government and the establishment have been facing criticism on social media for "abducting" Khosa for singing a parody song on soaring electricity bills.

Days before his abduction, Khosa had sung a song "Bill Bill Pakistan", a parody of the

famous Pakistani song "Dil Dil Pakistan" and released a video on social media criticising the high prices of electricity and extra taxes added to it. Khosa also took on the worthlessness of the Pakistani passport and the cash-strapped country's loans. The comedian has a following of 137,000 on YouTube.

The families of three "missing persons" filed petitions in the Lahore High Court which on Friday directed the Punjab police chief to recover Khosa by August 20.

Binish Iqbal, the wife of Khosa, told LHC Justice Syed Shahbaz Ali Rizvi that unidentified persons barged into her house a few days ago and manhandled her husband before bundling him into a van and speeding away.

Separately, LHC Justice Shakil Ahmad directed the Punjab police to recover missing PTI activist Arsalan Akbar before August 28.

The PTI has expressed concern over recent "forced disappear-

ances" of its political workers. Professor Mazhar-ul-Hassan and Zahoor-ul-Hassan, the brothers of PTI former social media head Azhar Mashwani, and Khan's close aide Shahbaz Gill's brother Ghulam Shabbir have also been missing since June last year.

"Whereabouts of all five individuals remain unknown despite their families' efforts to locate them by approaching the police and the court. A pattern of enforced disappearance is emerging, seemingly to intimidate those living abroad, who are critical of the Pakistani government," a PTI official said on Saturday.

He urged the judiciary to ensure the safe recovery of all the missing people associated with the PTI.

Amnesty International has also demanded that the Pakistan government immediately disclose their whereabouts and "ensure an effective, independent, and impartial investigation into these disappearances".

Glacial lake outburst devastated Everest village

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Army officials, civic authorities and scientists on Saturday confirmed that the massive flash floods in a high-altitude village in the Everest region of Nepal were caused by two glacial lake outbursts leading to widespread devastation. Hurling down the steep slopes, carrying boulders, debris and muck with it, the floods devastated more than half of the homes in Thame village in the scenic Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality-5. The incident occurred at around 1.30 pm local time on Friday.

Although no deaths have been reported so far, one person is reportedly missing, news portal MyRepublica said about the damage caused due to the flooded Thame rivulet, one of the tributaries of Dudhokoshi River.

"Authorities reported that around 93 villagers who fled to higher altitudes or were rescued are now being sheltered in an army camp, while 42 others have been temporarily placed in a nearby community building," The Himalayan Times newspaper reported.

A team of experts and authorities were dispatched in a helicopter to inspect and monitor the disaster site and investigate the cause of the sudden flood and mudslide that struck the village. The helicopter went right upstream up to the glacial lakes in higher reaches.

"Following the aerial inspection, the Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality confirms that the flood was triggered by the outburst of a glacial lake, one of the many lakes situated above the valley," The Himalayan Times said.

The Kathmandu Post quoted officials to report that two of the five lakes formed above the Thame village had burst and flooded downstream areas. Glacial lake outburst floods, or GLOF, are a sudden release of water from a lake fed by glacier melt that has formed at the side, in front, within, beneath, or on the surface of a glacier. Experts have warned that global warming poses major threats to glacial lakes and subsequent GLOFs in the Hindu Kush Himalayan Region.

Corroborating that it was indeed a GLOF, the Cryosphere Society

of Nepal (CSN), a group of Nepal-based glaciologists working in the Himalayas, said in a post on X: "The lake, which is approximately 39,081.87 square

meters in size and located upstream of Thame Village in Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality, caused the devastation in Thame Village on August 16th.

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Majority blue-collar jobs pay less than ₹20,000 per month: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Majority of blue-collar jobs in India pay within the salary range of Rs 20,000 or less per month, suggesting that a substantial portion of the workforce is grappling with financial strain, struggling to meet essential needs such as housing, healthcare, and education, a report has said.

Over 57.63 per cent of blue-collar jobs fall within the salary range of Rs 20,000 or less per month, indicating that many workers earn close to the minimum wage, tech-enabled blue collar recruitment platform WorkIndia said in a report.

In addition, the report revealed that about 29.34 per cent of blue-collar jobs are in the moderate earning bracket, with salaries ranging from Rs 20,000-40,000 per month. Workers falling under this category, experience marginally improved financial security but are far from achieving a comfortable standard of living, it said.

The income in this range may



cover necessities but it leaves little room for savings or investments, which highlights the economic vulnerability of a large segment of the blue-collar workforce, it added.

"The data reveals a significant concentration of low-wage jobs and limited opportunities for higher earnings within the blue-collar sector. This disparity not only reflects the economic challenges faced by a large portion of the workforce but also has broader implications for

social stability and economic growth," WorkIndia CEO and co-founder Nilesh Dugarwal told PTI.

Addressing these issues may require targeted interventions such as skill development, wage reforms, and the creation of more high-paying job opportunities, he added.

The report further revealed that a very small segment of the workforce, constituting only 10.71 per cent, get salaries over Rs 40,000-60,000 per month. This higher earning bracket

among the blue collar reflects the presence of specialised skills or experience among these workers, yet the restricted availability of such positions suggests that upward mobility within the segment remains challenging, it said.

Only 2.31 per cent of blue-collar jobs offer salaries exceeding Rs 60,000, which is an extremely small percentage that signifies the scarcity of well-paying opportunities in this sector, it stated.

Positions in this top bracket are typically highly-specialised or involve significant responsibility, making them accessible only to a select few, the report added.

The report is based on an analysis of job data collected from the WorkIndia platform over the past two years, which includes over 24 lakh job postings across various industries. The report said, field sales positions lead the list of the highest-paying blue-collar roles, with 33.84 per cent of roles offering salaries above Rs 40,000 per month.

Identify high-value cash transactions at hotels, hospitals: CBDT to I-T Dept

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rampant cash transactions in business sectors like hotels, luxury brand sales, hospitals and IVF clinics need to be checked in a "non-intrusive" manner, the CBDT has asked the I-T department.

The apex body for direct taxes administration in the country — the Central Board of Direct Taxes — has also asked the tax department to undertake "concerted efforts" to recover arrear demands which have been witnessing a "steep rise" since the last financial year.

The CBDT recently issued an annual action plan dossier called the central action plan (CAP) 2024-25. Senior officials told PTI that transactions over Rs 2 lakh in cash were required to be reported through a statement of financial transaction (SFT) by financial institutions but that was not happening.

"While examining such reports, it is noticed that the circumvention of these provisions is widely prevalent," the Board told the I-T department.

"Further, although section 139A requires PAN (permanent account number) to be provided or obtained in specified transactions, there is



no reporting/verification mechanism for determining the compliance with this obligation," it said.

In any case, it said, "high value" consumption expenditure needs to be verified with information about the taxpayer and therefore, it is imperative to identify the sources which could be involved in possible circumvention.

The department identified some of the businesses, such as hotels, banquet halls, luxury brand retailers, IVF clinics, hospitals, designer clothing stores, and NRI quota medical college seats, where the non-adherence to these rules and large cash transactions was being found.

"Such sources will have to be identified and a verification exercise could be conducted by calling for information in a non-intrusive manner," the

CBDT directed the tax department.

A senior officer said the extent of cash in the economy can be gauged from the fact that during the 2023-24 fiscal, the tax department mounted 1,100 searches or raids across the country to check tax evasion, resulting in seizure of assets amounting to about Rs 2,500 crore out of which Rs 1,700 crore was in cash.

The CBDT also informed the I-T authorities that "new opportunities for identification of potential taxpayers have opened up due to data mining and data analytics" and effective use of such data may result in "identification of a large number of potential taxpayers."

"The case of non-filers and those whose ITRs (income tax returns) do not match with financial transactions done by them are selected based on rules through management information system and taken up for e-Verification. The outcome of e-Verification results in widening and deepening of taxpayer base," it said.

The Board said the tax department has been given a target to add in the current fiscal 10 per cent more tax return filers to what the filer base was at the end of 2023-24.

Windfall tax on crude petroleum reduced to ₹2,100/tonne



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has slashed windfall tax on domestically produced crude oil to Rs 2,100 per tonne, from Rs 4,600 per tonne with effect from Saturday.

The tax is levied in the form of Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED).

The SAED on the export of diesel, petrol and jet fuel or ATF, has been retained at 'nil'. The new rates are effective from August 17, an official notification said.

India first imposed windfall profit taxes on July 1, 2022, joining a host of nations that tax supernormal profits of energy companies.

The tax rates are reviewed every fortnight based on average oil prices in the previous two weeks.

Sebi proposes expansion of sustainable finance framework in securities market

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has proposed expansion of the sustainable finance framework in the securities market by introducing a new category of financial instruments.

This category will include Social Bonds, Sustainable Bonds, and Sustainability-linked Bonds in addition to the current green debt securities. It aims to provide issuers with flexibility in raising funds for projects that align with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) objectives.

In a consultation paper released on Friday, Sebi proposed that issuers, in addition to existing green debt securities, be allowed to raise funds through issuance of social bonds, sustainable bonds, and sustainability-linked bonds. These bonds will collectively be known as ESG Debt Securities.

This will enable issuers to raise money for more sustainable projects, assisting in closing the funding gap for the Sustainable Development Goals.



Sebi said it received representations from market participants including the Confederation of Indian Industry to expand the scope of the regulatory framework pertaining to sustainable finance to include Social Bonds, in addition to existing Green Debt Securities as a mode of raising sustainable finance, in line with global practices.

As per the consultation paper, Sebi said, it "proposed to introduce the concept of Sustainable Securitised Debt Instruments for the purpose of providing originators of the underlying credit facilities which are within such international or domestic frameworks for sustainable finance, and thereby provide

investors as well an opportunity to participate in the sustainable securitised debt instruments".

The consultation paper also addressed the initial and continuous disclosures for sustainable securitised debt instruments that would be based on international frameworks.

Initial disclosures could be made in the offer document for the securities, while continuous disclosures might be included in annual reports or other mandated formats.

The markets watchdog also suggested that issuers of ESG debt securities and sustainable securitised debt instruments appoint an independent external reviewer or certifier, to facilitate transparency and credibility.

The review could take various forms including, secondary opinions, verification, certification, or scoring/rating.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has invited comments and suggestions from the public on the consultation paper by September 6.

Open to exploring more ways to increase India's collaboration with IMF: FM



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is open to exploring more ways to increase its collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said during a meeting with IMF's First Deputy Managing Director Gita Gopinath on Saturday.

During the meeting, Gopinath congratulated the Finance Minister on policy continuity in the fiscal consolidation path being followed by the Government

of India.

"FM Smt. @nsitharaman stated that India deeply values its relationship and continuous engagement with IMF; and looking ahead, the Government of India is open to exploring more ways to increase India's collaboration with the IMF," the finance ministry said in a post on X.

Besides acknowledging the vibrancy of the Indian economy, Gopinath appreciated the strength of India's relationship with IMF - valuable to both India, IMF, and to the world at large.

CBIC asks GST officers to consult board on law interpretation while conducting audit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The CBIC has asked GST officers conducting audit to refer to the board those cases where they face issues of conflicting interpretation of provisions of the tax law.

In an instruction to field offices, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said during the process of audit, a CGST Audit Principal Commissioner may come across a scenario where a taxpayer has followed a prevalent trade practice based on particular interpretation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) law and more than one such interpretation of the law could result in litigation.

"In such cases, it is desirable that the zonal (Pr.) Chief Commissioner make a self-contained reference to the relevant policy wing of the Board i.e. The GST Policy or TRU (Tax research Unit)," the CBIC said, adding that the Commissioner would make the reference before conclusion of the audit and before issuing show cause notice to promote uniformity



and avoid litigation.

Moore Singhi Executive Director Rajat Mohan said industry has been facing significant challenges during GST audits and one of the recurring issues has been the inconsistency in interpretations of GST laws by various audit authorities. These inconsistencies have often resulted in conflicting decisions, leading to increased litigation and uncertainty for businesses.

Industries have frequently reported that during audits, differing views among audit officers regarding the applicability of certain provisions have led to undue pressure and prolonged disputes. This not only causes

operational disruptions but also increases compliance costs for businesses as they are compelled to engage in prolonged legal battles, Mohan said.

"In response to these concerns, the CBIC's instruction aims to standardize the audit process by requiring Zonal Principal Chief Commissioners to consult with the relevant policy wing of the Board (GST Policy or TRU) before concluding any investigation where multiple interpretations of the law exist.

"This step is crucial in ensuring that a uniform interpretation of the GST laws is maintained across different jurisdictions, thereby reducing the likelihood of unnecessary litigation," Mohan added.

Deloitte India Partner and Leader Indirect Tax, Mahesh Jaising said "this proactive step, applicable to ongoing audits as well, ensures policy alignment, focuses on ease of doing business and reduces unnecessary litigation by maintaining uniformity."

India exports first consignment of fig juice to Poland

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has exported the first consignment of fig juice to Poland as part of its initiative to increase shipments of unique agro products from the country, the commerce ministry said on Saturday.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the export of India's first ready-to-drink fig juice, made from GI-tagged Purandar Figs, to Poland, it said. The GI (geographical indication) tag provides legal protection to that item,



preventing unauthorized use by others, and helps in promoting exports of the product.

The shipments reflect the potential of Indian agro-products in global markets, it added.

Govt invites bids to empanel AI infra providers under ₹10,372-cr India AI mission

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has invited bids for the empanelment of entities for providing artificial intelligence services on cloud under the Rs 10,372-crore India AI mission, which was approved by the cabinet in March this year.

The empaneled agencies, like data centers and cloud service providers, will have to provide access to high-speed computing AI infrastructure like graphics processing unit (GPUs), accelerators, Tensor Processing Units (TPUs), storage etc to academia, startups, researchers, government bodies among others at the lowest rate that

will be discovered through the bidding process.

Under the IndiaAI Mission, supercomputing capacity, comprising over 10,000 GPUs, will be made available to various stakeholders for creating an AI ecosystem.

"With an objective to empanel service providers for making this possible, IndiaAI - an IBD under Digital India Corporation, MeitY has issued a RFE (request for empanelment)," MeitY, Additional Secretary Abhishek Singh said in a social media post.

The rapid development of AI across the globe has led to an increase in demand for GPU-based servers, as they can



process data at a higher speed compared to CPU-based servers.

The rate of accessing GPU-based cloud services in India is estimated to be at double the price compared to the price of countries that have installed a

large number of GPUs.

According to the bid document floated by the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) empaneled agencies will be responsible for offering high-performance computing,

network, and storage services that are essential for implementing the activities planned under the IndiaAI Mission, such as the development of indigenous LLMs (large language models like ChatGPT) and AI applications.

"IndiaAI will approve the end users who can access these cloud-based AI services, ensuring that the services are provided at prices determined through a transparent and competitive process. The empaneled AI service providers will be engaged for a period of 36 months, with the possibility of extension based on mutually agreed terms," the document said.

The document categorically mentions that the 'Invitation for Application' is not an offer to enter into a procurement agreement but rather an invitation to receive proposals from eligible and interested bidders.

"IndiaAI would make the payments for the utilised AI services of the approved projects from the end users to the extent of the approved subsidy," the document said.

The agencies eligible for bids will have to make available 1,000 AI compute units through their cloud service platform, as AI services on cloud within 6 months from the date of signing the agreement with IndiaAI.

India will need more reforms to stay on growth path, create jobs: Gita Gopinath

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India will need to undertake more reforms to be able to continue on the path of raising economic growth and to make sure that enough job creation happens in the country, IMF deputy managing director Gita Gopinath said on Saturday.

Addressing an event here, Gopinath further said that India will be required to reduce import tariffs if it wants to be an important player in the global supply chains.

"The significant improvements have been made by the government over

the years in terms structural reforms." While noting that the world is in an environment where trade integration has been questioned, Gopinath said it is important for India to remain open for global trade.

"Tariff rates in India are higher than in its other peer economies. If it wants to be an important player on the world stage and an important part of global supply chains, it is going to require reducing those tariffs," the eminent economist said.

Gopinath said it is a tremendous aspiration to get to a developed country status but it does not happen

automatically, and requires ongoing, consistent efforts, pretty broad scale, across many areas to deliver on that.

"India has grown well in terms of its overall growth rate, and at 7 per cent, it is the fastest growing major economy in the world.

"The question is, how does one keep up the momentum and raise it further so that you can increase per capita incomes in India to get to being an advanced economy," she said.

Responding to a question on taxation, she said India has parallels with other developing countries, where most of the tax revenue that is

collected is indirect taxes and not direct taxes, not in form of income taxes.

"We have been advising other developing countries too, that it is helpful to broaden the personal income tax base and so that you can have more income coming from there," she said.

Referring to the cut in corporate tax rate by the Modi government, Gopinath said although it was helpful it is less the tax rate that matters, but what matters is just making sure that there are no loopholes and there are not too many leakages that happen in terms of tax exemptions.

Demand for warehousing spaces in Delhi-NCR dips 77% in Jan-June; Chennai sees 3-fold jump: Vestian

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi-NCR witnessed a 77 per cent decline in leasing of warehousing and logistics spaces during January-June this year, while Chennai saw a 3-fold jump in demand, according to real estate consultant Vestian.

As per Vestian's latest Warehousing and Logistics Sector review for January-June 2024, the absorption of warehousing and logistics spaces in January-June across seven major cities rose 8 per cent to 16.6 million square feet during the first half of this year, from 15.4 million square feet in the year-ago period.

Among seven cities, Delhi-NCR reported the highest annual decline of 77 per cent at 1.1 million square feet during January-June, from 4.7 million square feet in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Similarly, the demand in Kolkata fell 65 per cent to 0.3 million sq ft from 0.8 million square feet. In Bengaluru, the leasing of warehousing spaces declined 19 per cent to 1.4 million square feet, from 1.7 million square feet.

However, the leasing of spaces in Chennai jumped to 1.5 million square feet, from 0.5 million square feet and in Hyderabad, the absorption of

warehousing spaces rose 48 per cent to 1.9 million square feet, from 1.3 million square feet. Mumbai and Pune together accounted for 63 per cent of the total absorption in H1 (January-June) 2024.

Leasing of warehousing and logistics spaces in Mumbai rose 80 per cent to 6.8 million square feet, from 3.8 million square feet. In Pune, the absorption of spaces grew 40 per cent to 3.6 million square feet in January-June 2024, from 2.6 million square feet in the corresponding period of the previous year.

According to Vestian, the warehousing and logistics properties received

investments worth USD 1.6 billion in H1 2024, accounting for 42 per cent of the total institutional investment received in the real estate sector.

Shrinivas Rao, CEO, Vestian said, "As participation of foreign investors increased, availability of funds eased in the sector."

"Moreover, recent government announcements to boost infrastructure developments is likely to reduce logistics costs from 8-9 per cent to 5-6 per cent of the GDP, which in turn will lead to an increase in real estate activities in the warehousing sector," Rao added.

LET'S JUST LEAVE IT TO THE GODS: CHOPRA ON 90M AND BEYOND

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Having missed out on breaching the elusive 90m mark at the Paris Games, two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra has left that widely debated matter "to the gods". After all, Chopra has been chasing that milestone for years and the wait got longer when his only legal throw of 89.45m got him a silver at the Paris Olympics earlier this month. A back-to-back medal at the Summer Games was a monumental feat for an Indian athlete but it was way short of Arshad Nadeem's sensational 92.97m that comfortably secured a historic gold for the Pakistani. Nursing a long-standing groin injury, Chopra managed to be on the podium and now he will be seen in the Lausanne Diamond League starting August 22. After a busy couple of days post the Olympic final on August 8, Chopra started training in Switzerland and is determined to finish the season on a high despite being restricted by the injury. "I need to leave it to gods now," he said when asked about his target throw in the foreseeable future.

"I just want to prepare well and see where the javelin goes. There has already been talk about 90m, now I feel just let it be. In Paris, I thought it would happen and it could have happened. "Now I will give my 100 percent in the next two or three events and see what happens," he said in a virtual interaction arranged by JSW. Following the season-ending Diamond League in Brussels from September 13-14, Chopra will consult the doctors on his groin injury with surgery being the most likely option. The 26-year-old has been managing the injury since winning the gold in the World Championships last year. With Arshad producing an Olympic record throw in the final, Chopra needed to up his game but he said he could not do that because of his physical state. "I felt I could increase the distance. My two no throws in qualification and final, they were second and third best throws and my season best as well. To increase distance I need to be injury free. "In my mind I know need to give 100 percent but because of the injury I am not able to give 100 percent. My body and mind stops me from making



that extra effort. "What is most important in training session is throwing sessions which I have not been able to do as much as I would like (due to injury). If you can't throw regularly then you are not able to work on your technique. I need to throw as much as I can. The rest is all fine," said Chopra. He needs to make a few technical tweaks in his game. "When we run with the javelin there is a lot of strain on groin, when we take cross step. But right now I am not able to tweak my technique. Also my line of the javelin was also not perfect. "Arc speed was good in Paris but the line was disturbed. If it would be straighter, I could have got two three metres out of it. However, not for once I thought that Arshad's throw could not be bettered. My mind was ready to push the limits but body was not," said the champion athlete. Chopra needs to finish in the top-six of Diamond League Meetings series to qualify for the season finale in Brussels. "I came to Switzerland for training ahead of Diamond League. Luckily I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that. I thought of continuing my season like

most other athletes. There is one month to go for season end. I will go to the doctors in free time," he said. **WE NEED TO SPOT TALENT BETTER TO BECOME SPORTING POWERHOUSE:** India finished an abysmal 71st in the Paris medals tally with five bronze and Chopra's silver. Asked what India needs to do to become a sporting power, Chopra said: "Overseas, there are more talent spotters. For example I took up javelin I don't know how, I liked it so I pursued it. But if we try multiple sports and pick the best one on recommendations of an expert that way Indian sport can move forward. We need to spot talent better. "Also, we can't just focus on one sport. We need to be good in all sports. I feel the leaders in the medals tally (China, USA, Japan). They all are powerful nations in various fields, sports play a big part as well in lifting the profile of the nation. "Hope we do well in the next Olympics, and qualify for FIFA World Cup as well. Cricket we already are doing well. There is no dearth of talent, mental, we also need to have more coaches," added Chopra, who plans to open javelin academies going forward.



Driver line-up announced for Indian Racing League

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Akhil Rabindra and Nikhil Bohra will be among the Indian racers who will be seen in action in the Indian Racing League that gets underway on August 24. Six teams comprising four drivers each will feature in the IRL. The teams will feature two Indians and two overseas racers, including female driver. Akhil Rabindra made the headlines in 2019 after being selected by Aston Martin for their racing academy as the only Asian and later clinched the inaugural IRL title in 2022. Noted Swiss driver Neel Jani, who has an impressive resume, having won the World Endurance Championship and the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2016, will be seen in action in the league, said a press release here. Returning to the competition again will be South Africa's Raul Hymn, along with his partner Sohail Shah, who won the 2023 Car Championship by earning the most points. "The Indian Racing League is a testament to the excitement and passion for motorsports in

our country. The grid here is extremely competitive, pushing each of us to our limits and showcasing the immense talent we have," said Shah. The racers would be whizzing around in their rapid World Thunder GB08s, single-seater cars that can achieve a top speed of 240 kmph. Ruhaan Alva, who was the youngest race winner last year, will be joined by Shahan Ali Mohsin and Rishon Rajeev, fresh from their success in the Formula 4 Indian Championship, along with debutant Julius Dinesen, a 17-year-old Danish prodigy with a F4 title to his name. The IRL, comprising five rounds, will begin at the Madras International Circuit at nearby Sriperumbudur on August 24-25, followed by India's first-ever night race at the Chennai Formula Racing Circuit on August 31-September 1. The six participating teams in the IRL are: Kolkata Royal Tigers, Speed Demons Delhi, Goa Aces JA Racing, Hyderabad Blackbirds, Chennai Turbo Riders and former champions Bangalore Speedsters.

Jhajharia confident of 25 medals' target despite Pramod suspension

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The shadow of Pramod Bhagat controversy won't linger on the Indian contingent, and Paralympic Committee of India president Devendra Jhajharia is hopeful of winning at least 25 medals at the upcoming Paralympics. India have an 84-member contingent across 12 disciplines for the Paralympics slated in Paris from August 28-September 8. Tokyo Paralympics gold medal-winning shuttler Pramod Bhagat was handed an 18-month suspension for breaching BWF's anti-doping whereabouts clause. "Look, there is no doubt that Pramod Bhagat is our star athlete but the target of 25 medals that we have set is from our current contingent of 84 players. Pramod Bhagat is not included in this," the two-time Paralympics gold medal-winning

javelin thrower Jhajharia told PTI Bhasha. "Pramod being a gold medal winner of the last Games not being in the Indian team is extremely sad and unfortunate, but we cannot do anything." Asked about his confidence about target of 25 medals, he said, "I have kept this target after closely monitoring our players." "You may think I am exaggerating. But I have seen the practice sessions of players. We have worked hard on their physical fitness and mental strength." Badminton's world governing body (BWF) had on Tuesday announced that Bhagat has been "suspended for a period of 18 months and will miss" the Paris Paralympics. "On 1 March 2024, the Court of Arbitration of Sport Anti-Doping Division found Bhagat in breach of the BWF anti-doping regulations for



committing three whereabouts failures within 12 months." The five-time para world champion Bhagat had appealed this decision to the CAS Appeals Division but it was rejected last month.

Jhajharia further said the number of players this time is much more than the previous games and they are competing in more sports. India were ranked 24th in the Tokyo Paralympics table with 19 medals

which included five gold. "I have set a target of 25 medals and to be in the top 20 in the medal table, but we will win more medals than this," said the 43-year-old former javelin thrower. "We had 56 players in the Tokyo Paralympics, this time 84 players will compete. For the first time, our players will participate in Blind Judo, Para Sailing and Para Cycling." Jhajharia is expecting the highest medal haul from the athletics team and is hoping new stars to emerge from these games. "Each and every player of our contingent is a medal prospect. We have 38 track and field athletes and I am expecting the most medals from them. "Our contingent has 47 new players, despite their first Paralympics games they are very confident and mentally strong about their performance," he concluded.

Aspas caps eventful game with late winner as Celta Vigo beats Deportivo Alaves 2-1 in Spain

AP ■ MADRID

Tago Aspas avoided an early red card thanks to a video review, had a goal chalked off just before halftime and then capped an eventful game by scoring Celta Vigo's winner against Deportivo Alaves in the Spanish league on Friday. The 37-year-old Aspas was the focal point for Celta for much of last season and picked up where he left off in its opening game, netting in the 84th minute to seal a 2-1 victory for the hosts. He had been shown a red card after seven minutes when his arm made contact with Antonio Blanco, but it was downgraded to a yellow after a VAR review. Blanco's cross to Kike Garcia then set up the opening goal for Alaves 10 minutes later. Aspas had a goal disallowed for offside before halftime but Celta equalized midway through the second half thanks to Williot Swedberg's superb strike with the outside of his boot. Aspas then received Swedberg's defense-splitting pass to score the winner with six minutes left. "Iago is eternal," Alaves coach Luis Garcia



said. "He gets one chance and he puts it away." **SEVILLA DRAWS AT LAS PALMAS:** In the night's other game, Las Palmas came from a goal down twice to hold Sevilla to a 2-2 draw at home. Alex Suarez's deflected a cross from the left past his own keeper to give Sevilla the lead after 24 minutes but an own goal at the other end by Tanguy Nianzo leveled the scores just before halftime. Juanlu Sanchez then converted a neat cross by Isaac Romero to put Sevilla 2-1 up on the hour mark only for Sandro Ramirez to equalize 10 minutes later, just moments after coming on as a sub. Las Palmas' two Scotland internationals, recent signings Oliver McBurnie and Scott McKenna, both appeared for the home side and it was McBurnie's pressure on Nianzo that led to Las Palmas' first goal. With three of the first four league matches ending in draws, Celta's win means it can enjoy at least one night atop the La Liga standings. Barcelona is away at Valencia on Saturday, while defending champion Real Madrid visits Mallorca on Sunday.

Frustrated Carlos smashes his racket in 3-set loss to Gael Monfils at Cincinnati Open

AP ■ CINCINNATI

Carlos Alcaraz repeatedly smashed his racket on the court in a rare show of frustration, and the four-time Grand Slam winner fell to Gael Monfils 4-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-4 at the Cincinnati Open. In a match that was suspended by rain on Thursday night with the players in a second-set tiebreaker, the 37-year-old Monfils advanced by taking the last two sets from the second-seeded Alcaraz, who called the loss his "worst match." "I felt like it was the worst match that I've ever played on my career," Alcaraz said. "I've been practicing really well. I was feeling great. But I couldn't play. I want to forget it and try to move on to New York." The U.S. Open begins there on Aug. 26. Trailing 3-1 in the tiebreaker when the match was halted, Alcaraz was hoping for a reset when play resumed Friday. But, the No. 3 player in the



ATP rankings wasn't able to control his emotions. "It never happened before, because I could control those feelings," Alcaraz said. "Today I couldn't. I was feeling that I was not playing any kind of tennis. It was really frustrating for me. At some point, I didn't want to be on the court anymore." Alcaraz was playing his first match since earning a silver medal at the Paris Olympics after losing to Novak Djokovic, who also beat him last year in the Cincinnati final. Monfils returned to the court later Friday and lost to No. 15 seed Holger Rune 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. "It was a big win for me against Carlos, unexpected to be honest," Monfils said. "To play again in a couple hours against (another) good and younger player, I knew it would be tough." In women's action, top-ranked Iga Swiatek advanced to the quarterfinals with a convincing 6-2, 6-2 win over Marta Kostyuk. Swiatek bounced back with a more

complete performance after losing a second-set tiebreaker on Wednesday before outlasting France's Varvara Gracheva. "Today, I just kept my intensity at a high level all the time," Swiatek said. "It didn't really matter to me what the score was, I just wanted to continue playing my game. I focused on myself." No. 3 Aryna Sabalenka also advanced with a 7-5, 6-2 victory over Elina Svitolina, but No. 5 Jasmine Paolini, the runner-up at the French Open and Wimbledon, lost to Mirra Andreeva 3-6, 6-3, 6-2. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova upset No. 7 and Olympic gold medalist Zheng Qinwen 7-5, 6-1. Spaniard Paula Badosa defeated Yulia Putintseva, who upset Coco Gauff on Thursday, 6-4, 6-4. Top men to advance included No. 1 Jannik Sinner, who got a walkover against Jordan Thompson on his 23rd birthday, No. 3 Alex Zverev, No. 5 Hubert Hurkacz, No.

43-member Indian contingent for U-20 Athletics World Championships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A 43-member Indian contingent including 23 in the men's category will vie for top honours across multiple events in the Under-20 World Athletics Championships scheduled in Lima from August 27-31. As per the entry list, more than 1700 athletes from 134 teams will compete in the event at Estadio Atletico de la Videna. India had won two silver and a bronze to be ranked joint 25th in the last edition. **INDIAN SQUAD** **MEN:** Himanshu, Sachin (10,000m Race Walk); Karthik Raja Arumugam, Murad Kalubhai Sirman (400m hurdles); Ankul, Rihan Chaudhary, Bapi Hansda, Abiram Pramod, Jay Kumar (4x400m relay); Bapi Hansda, Jay Kumar (400m); Siddharth Choudhary, Anurag Singh Kaler (Shot Put); Mruygam Jayaram Dondapati (100m); Hariharan Kathiravan, Nayan Pradip Sarde (110m hurdles); Sahil Khan (800m); Saruk

Khan, Ranvir Ajay Singh (3000m steeplechase); Dev Kumar Meena (Pole Vault); Prateek (Hammer Throw); Ritik (Discus Throw); Mohammed Atta Sazid (Long Jump); Dipanshu Sharma, Rohan Yadav (Javelin throw). **WOMEN:** Aarti (10,000m Race Walk); Rujula Amol Bhonsle, Neole Anna Cornelio, Sudeeksha Valduri, Abinaya Rajarajan, Siya Abhijit Sawant (4x100m relay); Neeru Pahtak, Unnathi Aiyappa Bolland (200m); Neeru Pahtak, Anushka Kumbhar (400m); Tamanna (Shot Put); Abinaya Rajarajan (100m); Unnathi Aiyappa Bolland (100m hurdles); Shreyas Rajesh (400m hurdles); Ekta Dey (3000m steeplechase); Amanat Kamboj, Nikita Kumari (Discus Throw); Pavana Nagaraj (Long Jump); Pooja (High Jump); Laxita Vinod Sandileka (800m); Laxita Vinod Sandileka (1500m); Neeru Pahtak, Kanista Tenna Maria Deva Shekar, Sandramol Sabu, Shrivani Sachin Sangle, Anushka Kumbhar (4X400m relay).

DOUBLE TRAP GREAT PETER WILSON APPLIES FOR POST OF INDIAN SHOOTING COACH



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Legendary double trap marksman Peter Wilson of Great Britain, who guided country-mate Nathan Hales to trap gold at the recently-concluded Paris Olympics, has shown interest in the Indian team coaching job and wants to train the shooters for the 2028 Los Angeles Games. Wilson, 37, was the youngest competitor in double trap at the 2012 London Olympics to win a gold medal. He holds the world record in double trap

and took up shooting after a snow-boarding accident left him unable to play cricket. After double trap was removed from the Olympic curriculum, Wilson started coaching the Great Britain team in trap, with the crowning glory coming in Paris where his ward Nathan won gold with an Olympic record to break a 12-year-long wait for the country in the event. "I have e-mailed my CV to the National Rifle Association of India and am waiting to hear from them," Wilson told PTI from UK. "I want to work with the senior

team to prepare them for the LA Games and the juniors to prepare them for the next 8-12 years," said Wilson, adding that he only aims for "success" and nothing less. Asked if it would be a challenge coming to terms with the setup in India, he categorically said "there shouldn't be any problem." He added that for him the continental championships such as the "Asian Games, World Cups, World Championships among others are a stepping stone towards the ultimate aim of winning an

Olympic medal" and he would strive for that. Wilson, who has been honoured with the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) has been coached by the great Ahmad Al Maktoum, who is a member of the ruling family of Dubai and the 2004 Athens Olympics gold medallist in double trap. India's Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore had finished second behind Al Maktoum in Athens. India is without a foreign trap coach for quite some time with most shooters, who competed

at the Paris Olympics, taking the help of personal coaches. Italy's Marcello Dradi was the last trap coach the Sports Authority of India and NRAI had hired. NRAI secretary-general Sultan Singh said, "He must have mailed the CV on the official e-mail ID. We have not yet taken a call on the date (when the new coaching setup for all shooting events will be in place). But, yes, it has to be done at the earliest." Asked if the coaches will be short-listed before the election of NRAI president on September 14, Singh said, "Normally it should be once the president takes charge and he does it but if the situation demands that we have to hold the selection committee (meeting) then may be (earlier). Basically, it's the exigency." On whether the likes of Italy's double trap stalwart Daniele Di Spigno and David Kostelecky, the personal coach of woman trap shooter Rajeshwari Kumari, were also in contention for the job, Singh said, "We would like to have the best of the lot so that the drawing board is enough for us to calculate the requirement..." When asked whether former foreign trap coach Dradi would be considered for the role, Singh said, "Till the time the selection committee does not say yes or no, I can't say anything. All of these coaches are going to apply, I can't take a call on my own. The coaches will be assessed from all angles," he added.

Durand Cup derby cancelled amid protests over doctor's rape and murder; fans to unite for a cause

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Durand Cup derby between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal, scheduled at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Sunday, has been called off because of the prevailing unrest in the city. The decision was taken following a meeting between the Kolkata Police officials and organisers of the tournament. The city has witnessed widespread protests following the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9. On Saturday, the Indian Medical Association called for a 24-hour nationwide strike to protest the heinous crime. Around one lakh people are expected to gather near the 66,000-capacity stadium, especially after both Mohun Bagan and East Bengal fan clubs called for protests. "On behalf of the Durand Cup Organising Committee, this is to regretfully inform you that the final Group A fixture between Mohun Bagan Super Giant and Emami East Bengal FC, scheduled to be played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on August 18, 2024 at 7.00pm, stands abandoned," said a statement from Durand Cup Media. "The Pre-derby press conference scheduled for 5.30pm today (August 17, 2024) also stands cancelled," it added. All online and offline tickets will be refunded following the cancellation of the match, according to their ticketing partner, Bookmyshow. "The dates and the refund process will be notified within the next two days," it added.



It is learnt that both the teams will be awarded a point each, but it has to be decided by the All India Football Federation (AIFF), the sport's apex body in the country. It is also not known whether the knockout stage matches and the summit clash, which is slated at the Salt Lake Stadium on August 31, will be shifted. The marquee clash between arch-rivals Mohun Bagan and East Bengal, which was the season's first derby, was also the concluding league match of the tournament. As per the current standings, Mohun Bagan are ahead on goal difference against East Bengal and both have six points each. The six group toppers and two best second-placed teams will make the cut for the last-eight. **FANS TO 'UNITE FOR A CAUSE':** Despite the cancellation of the derby match, Mohun Bagan and East Bengal fans clubs have vowed to come together and make "their voices heard." "Sarkar maath atakale amra raasta atkabo (If the government stops us to enter the stadium, we will block the roads)," reads a poster jointly issued by Mohun

Bagan and East Bengal fan clubs. Terming this a 'Black Day' for Kolkata Maidan, Prasenjit Sarkar, president of the Mariners' Base Camp — Ultras Mohun Bagan said fans from both the clubs will join together for "one common cause: justice for RG Kar victim." "The government has dealt a severe blow to football by calling off the derby. The government's action has shown a desire to impose an autocratic rule, and we cannot stand by it silently," Sarkar told PTI. "Tomorrow, Mohun Bagan and East Bengal fans will join for a cause, and no one can stop us from our voices being heard. There will be thousands on the street opposite the stadium. 'Politics should never be allowed in the stadium. This time we will stand up together for a bigger cause.' Together, with tifos and banners, we will demand justice. They may try to silence us, but we will not let our voices go unheard," he added. Rabi Shankar Sen of 'East Bengal the Real Power' also said they will come in huge numbers and gather in front of the stadium's VIP gate.

AP ■ LONDON

Zirkzee scores on debut for Man United in 1-0 win over Fulham on opening night of Premier League

Joshua Zirkzee marked his debut for Manchester United by coming off the bench and scoring an 87th-minute goal to give his team a 1-0 victory over Fulham on the opening night of the Premier League season on Friday. The Netherlands striker poked out his left foot to guide home a cross by fellow substitute Alejandro Garnacho at Old Trafford. Zirkzee, who joined from Bologna for a reported \$47 million last month, was one of three offseason signings to make their first appearances for United, along with defenders Noussair Mazraoui and Matthijs de Ligt. "To win here in my first home game, and to grab a goal, it couldn't be better," Zirkzee said. Zirkzee, Mazraoui and De Ligt

have arrived as part of a \$180 million spending spree by the record 20-time champions, a club under new leadership and looking to return to its former glories. Erik ten Hag was retained as manager despite guiding United to an eighth-place finish last season and this was a solid, if unspectacular, start to the campaign by his team. "It's just the first game, but it's good to strengthen the belief and confidence in the team," Ten Hag said. "I have seen the places where we need to improve. But that's normal in the first game of the season." With Zirkzee not fully match



sharp and Rasmus Hojlund injured, United started the season without an out-and-out striker on the field and it showed, with midfielders Bruno Fernandes and Mason Mount wasting the best opportunities in a game that was petering out before Zirkzee's late intervention. Fulham goalkeeper Bernd Leno came to his team's rescue, saving twice at the feet of Fernandes in one-on-one chances then getting down sharply to deny Mount from close range in the second half. Leno had no chance with Zirkzee's shot in front of the Stretford End, however, and Garnacho

squandered a great chance to make it 2-0 in stoppage time when he dragged a shot wide in front of an empty goal. "That's the only criticism I have of the team," Ten Hag said. "To kill. Kill in the box." Mazraoui played 81 minutes at right back - and was one of United's better players, along with Casemiro - before being replaced by De Ligt, three days after they both joined from Bayern Munich. Zirkzee entered in the 61st. On Saturday, there are six more games in the league's first round, including Liverpool - under a new manager in Arne Slot - at promoted Ipswich and Arsenal - the runner-up in the last two seasons - hosting Wolverhampton. Reigning champion Manchester City begins its title defense at Chelsea on Sunday.

Matsuyama, McCarthy tied for lead in opening PGA Tour playoff event



AP ■ MEMPHIS
 Hideki Matsuyama and Denny McCarthy combined to make nearly 300 feet of putts, so it was no surprise to see them sharing the lead going into the steamy weekend of the FedEx St. Jude Championship. Matsuyama recovered from a shaky start - he missed a 4-foot birdie putt on No. 2 and put his tee shot into the water on the par-3 fourth - with two long birdie putts and a 3-wood to about 12 feet on the par-5 16th for one of his easier birdies. He had a 6-under 64. McCarthy, with a reputation for a smooth putting stroke, put that to good use on the smooth greens of TPC Southwind. He holed three birdie putts from about 25 feet or longer to offset a pair of bogeys in his round of 63. They were at 11-under 129,

one shot ahead of another great putter, Sam Burns, shot 29 on the front nine before cooling slightly. He had a 63. Scottie Scheffler got on track late with three straight birdies for a 65 and was two back. The first PGA Tour postseason event is the most consequential. The points are quadrupled, and the top 50 players in the FedEx Cup advance to the BMW Championship next week and are assured of playing in all the \$20 million signature events next year. Jordan Spieth moved closer to the end of his year. He had a pair of double bogeys on the par 3s, one from the water on No. 4, another by taking two shots to get out of bunker on No. 14, and posted a 75 that left him in a tie for 65th. Spieth has talked about the possibility of wrist surgery in the offseason, and he could

have the next three months clear barring two of his best rounds of the year. Others who had better seasons could afford a spotty performance. Rory McIlroy is the No. 3 seed going into the postseason and turned in a lackluster performance on another day when the heat index was in the range of 110 degrees (40 degrees Celsius). He played the two par 5s in 3 over and shot 73, leaving him in a tie for 58th. This is a big week for McCarthy, who has never won on the PGA Tour and is at No. 45. A victory would move him into the top five in the standings and secure a spot in the Tour Championship for the top 30. Ditto for Justin Rose, who is outside the magic number at No. 55. He had another 66 and was tied for fifth with Nick Dunlap (65). Amazingly, McCarthy is doing this with what he described as a torn labrum without getting into too many details. "I don't want to divulge too much. It's bothering me, and I've been able to do enough the last few days to push through it," he said. "The heat helps it. Yeah, looking forward to a challenge on the weekend." Matsuyama doesn't divulge too much on any topic, and he summed up his round thusly: "I missed a short putt there at 2, knocked it in the water at 4, but from that point on, I really played well and putted well."

India's Riiohlang to supervise in FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup

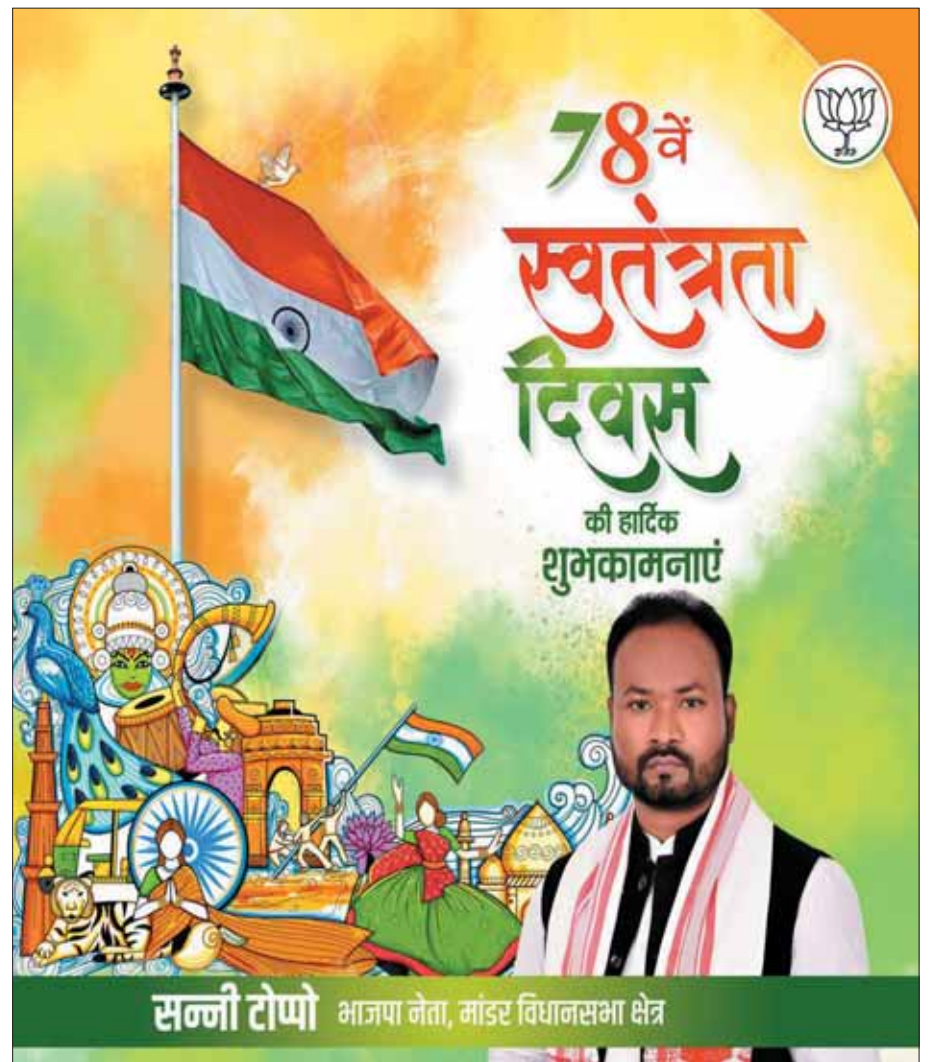


PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Riiohlang Dhar became the second Indian woman assistant referee to be selected for the upcoming FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, which will be held in the Dominican Republic. Riiohlang, a 34-year-old articulate lady from Meghalaya, has been on Friday named by FIFA among the elite list of 38 match officials, who will be on call for the October 10-November 3 event. Uvena Fernandes is the first Indian woman assistant referee to have the honour of supervising in the World Cup. She did duty in the 2016 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Jordan. "My appointment for the World Cup has come as a great honour for me," said Riiohlang, who works for the Meghalaya police department. "I have to work harder to live up to FIFA's expectations. I will also keep in mind that I will be there as a representative of India. I will do everything to

keep India's flag high," said the assistant referee. Riiohlang said refereeing has been a part of her life since 2009. "After I stopped playing football, I joined a referee course in my local town and found it interesting since it will keep me in touch with the game I love dearly. "So, I decided to take up the whistle and the flag. I have come a long way since then. I have supervised many international tournaments, but the World Cup is going to be a different experience," she said. The Chairperson of the AIFF Referees' Committee, K Sankar, said Riiohlang's fine performance in AFC and FIFA international matches remained one of the main reasons behind her appointment. "In this year's AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup in Indonesia, Riiohlang officiated in one of the semi-finals and also the third-place play-off. Her performance was excellent. Her appointment is a

great honour for the AIFF too. On behalf of the Referees' Committee, I wish her a great World Cup ahead," Sankar said. AIFF's secretary general, M Satyanarayan, said: "FIFA's announcement that Riiohlang is among the match officials for the U17 Women's World Cup is like an Independence Day gift for us. "Recently, we have started to focus on referees' development. To build the

base, we have appointed five zonal referees' development officers. Our Elite Referees' Development Programme is also doing very well for the match officials at the top of the pyramid.



"Love does not begin and end the way we seem to think it does. Love is a battle, love is a war; love is a growing up"
— Gareth Thomas



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

RAKSHA BANDHAN

CELEBRATING THE BEAUTY OF PURE BONDS

In the heart of Delhi, with monsoon clouds overhead, the streets burst into life for Raksha Bandhan. Amidst the lively chaos and bright colours, the festival unfolds as a touching celebration of sibling love. Each stall, filled with colourful rakhis, tells a story of pure bonds and heartfelt traditions, turning everyday moments into cherished memories, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

As the festive season arrives, bringing with it a time of warmth, togetherness and cherished traditions, one celebration stands out for its profound significance — the bond between brothers and sisters. Raksha Bandhan, a festival that embodies untold love and silent care, is not just a ritual but a celebration of a "PURE BOND." Amidst this atmosphere, the vibrant marketplaces come alive with the spirit of Raksha Bandhan and nowhere is this evident than in Delhi's iconic Sadar Bazar. The festival's essence is captured not just through rituals but through the bustling, colourful preparations that fill the market, making it a focal point of the celebration.

THE ENCHANTING FESTIVAL ATMOSPHERE

Sadar Bazar, one of Delhi's oldest and busiest markets, undergoes a remarkable transformation as Raksha Bandhan approaches. The market, typically known for its wide range of goods, turns into a hub of colour and excitement, with rakhis and festive decorations taking center stage. Every shop and vendor gears up for the big day, filling the air with a lively sense of excitement. The narrow lanes of Sadar Bazar, usually crowded with shoppers, become even more packed as people move from stall to stall, searching for the perfect rakhi. The market itself seems to join in the celebration, with every corner reflecting the spirit of Raksha Bandhan. Despite the unpredictable weather during the monsoon season, with sudden bursts of rain and heat, enthusiastic shoppers continue to pour into Sadar Bazar. The market remains crowded, even in the rain, as people carry umbrellas or brave the elements to get what they need. There is a shared determination among the shoppers, a sense that no amount of rain or heat can dampen the joy of preparing for Raksha Bandhan.

A MARKET FULL OF CHOICES

One of the most striking features of Sadar Bazar during Raksha Bandhan is the sheer variety of rakhis on display. The market caters to all tastes and budgets, ensuring

“ONE OF THE MOST HEARTWARMING SIGHTS IN THE MARKET IS THE SELECTION OF CHILDREN'S RAKHIS, OFTEN FEATURING POPULAR CHARACTERS. A YOUNG GIRL, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS OVERHEARD ASKING A VENDOR, "BHAIIYA, DO YOU HAVE A SPIDER-MAN RAKHI?" THIS SMALL MOMENT BEAUTIFULLY ENCAPSULATES THE SIBLING BOND, A SISTER KNOWING EXACTLY WHAT WILL MAKE HER YOUNGER BROTHER SMILE

that everyone can find something special. From simple, traditional rakhis costing as little as ₹ 10 for a dozen to more elaborate designs priced at ₹ 70 or ₹ 100 per dozen, the market offers something for everyone. Rakhis come in every imaginable style, from classic designs featuring beads and threads to more modern versions adorned with glitter and stones. Children's rakhis, often featuring popular cartoon characters and superheroes, are among the most popular items. Little girls excitedly pick out rakhis for their brothers, carefully choosing ones that they know will bring a smile to their siblings' faces. A young girl, for example, was overheard asking a vendor, "Bhaiya, do you have a Spider-Man rakhi?" This small moment beautifully encapsulates the sibling bond, a sister knowing exactly what will make her younger brother smile. A small moment that perfectly captures the thoughtfulness and love that define Raksha Bandhan. The girl knew exactly what her brother would love and she was determined to find it for him.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE FESTIVAL

The vendors and artisans are integral to the Raksha Bandhan experience. Their work begins long before the festival, with many starting preparations at least a month in advance. Crafting each rakhi requires skill, patience and a deep understanding of what the festival means to people. For these artisans, Raksha Bandhan is more than just another business opportunity; it's a chance to contribute to a tradition that has been passed down through generations. A shopkeeper in Sadar Bazar explained how much effort goes into preparing for Raksha Bandhan. "We start getting ready about a month before," he said. "There's a lot of hard work, but it's worth it when you see the market come alive like this. Even in the rain, people come. It's something we love." His words highlighted the dedication that goes into making the festival special for everyone. Despite the long hours and sometimes challenging conditions, the vendors take pride in being part of something bigger than just selling rakhis. They are part of a tradition that brings people together, year after year. The artisans also take great care in crafting each rakhi. They understand that these simple threads carry significant emotional weight. For them, it's important that every rakhi reflects the love and care that

siblings have for each other. They often work late into the night, ensuring that their creations are perfect. It's not just about making something that looks good, it's about creating something that will be cherished.

A FESTIVAL OF EMOTIONS

Raksha Bandhan is a time of joy and celebration, but it can also bring about feelings of longing, especially for those who are separated from their loved ones. Not everyone is fortunate enough to be with their siblings on this special day, and for them, the festival carries a bittersweet note. A woman in Sadar Bazar, carefully choosing rakhis to send to her brother who lives far away, shared her plans to send them by post. Despite modern courier services offering faster delivery, she preferred the traditional method, finding something special in the anticipation that comes with receiving a package by postman. Her story is just one of many that highlight the emotional depth of Raksha Bandhan. The festival is not just about the physical act of tying a rakhi, it's about the connection that siblings share, a connection that goes beyond time and distance. Even when miles apart, the bond remains strong and the act of sending a rakhi is a way of maintaining that bond. It serves as a reminder that, no matter where life takes people, the relationships that matter most are always worth celebrating.

THE ESSENCE OF TRADITION

As Raksha Bandhan draws near, the market becomes a living embodiment of tradition. With its rich history and vibrant atmosphere, it reflects the enduring values of family and togetherness. In a world that often moves too fast, these moments offer a chance to slow down and appreciate what truly matters. The festival is a time to reconnect with loved ones and honour the bonds that have shaped lives. During this time, the market becomes more than just a place to buy rakhis, it transforms into a space where memories are made. Every purchase, conversation and shared smile contributes to the festive atmosphere. The streets serve as a symbol of the festival,



where tradition is not just remembered but actively experienced, blending the past and present in a heartfelt celebration of love and family.

THE MEANING BEHIND THE RAKHI

At the heart of Raksha Bandhan is the rakhi itself - a simple thread that carries profound meaning. It's more than just a decorative piece, it's a symbol of a sister's love, gratitude and appreciation for her brother. Tying a rakhi is an act of trust, a way of saying, "Thank you for always being there." This small thread binds not just wrists but hearts, reinforcing a bond that is as old as time. For many, the rakhi is also a reminder of the shared history that siblings have, the moments of joy and support and the times when they've stood by each other. It's a token of the relationship that has shaped who they are. Though it may be simple in appearance, the rakhi holds a depth of meaning that goes beyond words. It's a symbol of a bond that is pure, unbreakable, and everlasting.

A CELEBRATION OF LOVE

Raksha Bandhan is more than just a date on the calendar, it's a celebration of the relationships that connect people, the memories that hold them together, and the love that sustains them through life's challenges. In today's fast-paced world, festivals like Raksha Bandhan remind everyone of the importance of family and the connections that define them. In Sadar Bazar, the spirit of Raksha Bandhan is alive and well. The market, with its history and vibrancy, captures the essence of the festival. It's a place where love is expressed through simple gestures and where the bonds between siblings are honored in all their beauty. As brothers and sisters across the country prepare to tie the rakhi this year, they are reminded of what the festival truly stands for. It's not just about the rituals, it's about the love, care and unbreakable bond that siblings share. In the end, that's what makes Raksha Bandhan so special - a celebration of love that goes beyond time, distance and the challenges of life.

NOE – WHERE GLOBAL FLAVOURS MEET RARE INGREDIENTS!

Nestled in the heart of Lutyens Delhi in the iconic Diplomat Hotel, the recently launched 'NOE' is set to redefine the dining culture in the city, bringing a vibrant social atmosphere and an innovative culinary experience

By SHARMILA CHAND

I wanted an elevated comfort food zone to take guests through a culinary journey blending global flavors with local influences to craft a unique experience," says Sandeep Bishnoi, the Founder who has been associated with creative brands such as Perch Wine & Coffee Bar and Hoots. Here innovative culinary experience is the key with Chef Dhruv Nijhawan, at the helm of affairs. An alumnus of Le Cordon Bleu, India, Chef Dhruv's passion for ingenious cooking techniques and for reviving rare, authentic ingredients, is well known. At NOE, he brings forth his passion as is evident in the distinctive menu that celebrates the art of 'elevating comfort food'. Evoking nostalgia and inspiring innovation, the kitchen at NOE re-invents handpicked traditional comfort dishes from world cuisines using lesser-known ingredient pairings and creative cooking techniques. From high-quality produce to regional and international cuisines, each dish encapsulates a rich tapestry of flavours and the ingredients' culinary heritage.

Speaking about the cooking methods, chef Dhruv tells me, "Every dish tells a story of a unique ingredient and a different cooking method. Reinventing modern classic dishes in a flavour forward method lies at the heart of our cooking. NOE incorporates culinary techniques from around the world using star ingredients to create an innovative dining experience." Hence, Potato & Chilli Orange sits nicely looking pretty in front of me. Swedish Hasselback potatoes in smoked brown butter with savoury cheena, bajji chili, orange zest, Korean chilli oil and pea shoot cress, is one perfect example of Dhruv's philosophy. And so is 'Tofu & Garum' - an umami flavoured silken tofu with vegan mushroom garum, soy, leek circles, porcini mushrooms & nori powder. For mutton lovers, what better than 'Kanda & Picante'? "Kaffir lime and coriander mutton kanda with broccoli picante puree finished with chermoula crumble," explains chef. He also recommends 'John Dory & Mazavaroo' - pan-seared John Dory with cauliflower crème, smoked Mazavaroo, tossed almond flakes served with cashew duqqa. The menu is extensive with a lot more stars like 'Lamb & Molé' - medium-rare cooked lamb chop with curry leaf, thyme, black molé sauce, togarashi tossed snap peas, sumac onions with seasonal cress. For crab lovers, 'Crab & Wasabi' is strongly recommended. Crab meat with avocado, wasabi, lime puree, water chestnuts, asparagus, compressed cucumbers and seasonal cress. From large plate section, Pumpkin & Pomegranate turned out to be my favourite. Braised pumpkin with pomegranate sauce reduced with all spice and tahini, served with a sumac cress salad. 'Potato & Capers' is another one I lapped up. You will love layered potato slices with lemon zest cream, asparagus and olive. The relish of smoked onion added to the flavor



brilliantly accompanied by a side salad in orange dressing. 'Onigiri & Rasam' is a brilliant take on innovative experimentation. Jasmine rice onigiri with a light rasam sauce finished with celery dust, furikake peashoot, you would have never relished rasam in this medium. The dessert section looks pretty impressive, each dish comes with a lavish dose of drama to oomph things up. For me, Biscoff & Chai was the perfect way to wind up the meal. A vanilla cardamom sponge cake with Biscoff mousse and masala chai whipped cream cheese, with a spiced ginger sable & Biscoff gelato, simply bowled me over. Complementing culinary experience is the creative highball cocktail program served at NOE's bar. Managed by Hoots - recently awarded as one of Asia's Top 50 Bars, the highball bar concept emphasises refreshing, perfectly balanced cocktails created with premium spirits and house-made mixers, showcasing creativity and craftsmanship. Inspired by its prestigious address



flows effortlessly into a trendy bar and a plush rustic outdoor deck as well as an intimate courtyard," tells Amit Chhabra, of studio LDC, the team behind the design architects of NOE. With diverse settings, NOE offers layers of sensory experiences for all moods and occasions where guests can enjoy different spaces in a single visit or each separately over multiple ones. Whether it's a casual gathering over food and drinks, a rendezvous with a friend, a special celebration, solo culinary adventures, a romantic date, or even small events, NOE promises for a memorable time. Featuring an extensive breakfast spread, an all-day dining menu, delectable Sunday brunches, and a creative drinks menu along with rotating seasonal menus and pop-up surprises, NOE welcomes you to a world of elevated comfort food, exquisite cocktails, and unforgettable dining experiences. Overall, the vibe at NOE is elegant and chic. Sharmila Chand is an author and independent journalist who writes on Travel, Food and Lifestyle



A NOSTALGIC CULINARY FARE AT INDIAN REPUBLIC CANTEEN

By SHARMILA CHAND

Ever heard of Waffle Imarti, Mac n Cheese Pakora, Waffle Bread Pakora, Samosa Cannelloni? If no, head to Indian Republic Canteen in the heart of capital's popular Connaught Place and you will get to taste innovative dishes with a flair for fun. Why the name Indian Republic, I asked the team. "The concept is inspired by the diversity of the Indian Republic, aiming to create a welcoming and accessible environment to a familiar canteen setting, where all patrons can feel comfortable and engaged," is the answer. Alok Aggarwal Co-Founder- Indian Republic Canteen further explains, "Our establishment is founded on the concept of nostalgia, aiming to evoke cherished memories of simple, beloved foods such as noodles, samosas, and bread pakoras from one's college days. We are devoted to celebrating these dishes and encouraging patrons to savor

them without reservation. The interior design of our space is a contemporary fusion of modernity and nostalgia. It reflects both cutting-edge trends and traditional influences, presenting a vision of India that is globally stylish yet deeply rooted in Indian sensibilities."

BREAKFAST SOIREES

If not in a mood to rustle up breakfast at home, then just hop in here. They have introduced a new breakfast menu, serving a delightful array of morning treats that promise to start your day on a flavorful note. Imagine the perfect morning with a spread of traditional and contemporary breakfast dishes, curated to suit every palate. From 8 AM to 11 AM, you can indulge in a hearty and wholesome breakfast experience that blends the best of regional flavors with popular morning staples. The highlight of my breakfast was the comforting taste of Nagori Halwa, a classic dish that combines the rich flavors of semolina and sugar, bringing a touch of nostalgia to your breakfast. How could I miss the delicious Bedmi Sabzi, just perfect for my taste. For a flavour of traditional regional classic, Indori Poha, garnished with fresh



coriander, sev, and a squeeze of lemon, captures the essence of Indore's street food culture so beautifully. If you prefer something nutritious and savory, the Besan Chilla with Chutney

provides a protein-packed option, featuring a gram flour pancake served with a side of tangy chutney. The Bombay Sandwich offers a taste of Mumbai with layers of fresh vegetables and

health-conscious diners need not worry as they have option of Masala Oats, Banana Muesli Bowl, a refreshing mix of

muesli, fresh bananas, and yogurt, offering a perfect balance of taste and nutrition. For the ubiquitous South Indian flavors, the menu includes crispy and golden Dosa, served with traditional sambar and chutneys, transporting you to the streets of Southern India. Complement your meal with a selection of fresh juices, made from seasonal fruits, to add a refreshing touch to your breakfast. Or go for signature drinks like The IRC Shichanji, a longstanding favorite, alongside the Imli Fritz. Each drink is crafted to be unique and memorable, aligning with the overall concept of the place.

TO CONCLUDE

Whether you are looking for a quick bite or a leisurely breakfast, Indian Republic Canteen's thoughtful and exciting menu is well curated to cater to all your hunger cravings.

CHECK IT OUT

Time: 08:00am to 11:00am
 Location — H-26, Connaught Circle, Block H, Connaught Place, New Delhi



BKP SINHA



DR ARVIND K JHA

FOREST RIGHTS ACT: A BEACON OF HOPE OR A VICTIM OF EXPLOITATION?

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 was heralded as a transformative piece of legislation designed to recognise and empower forest dwelling communities while promoting sustainable forest management. However, the implementation of FRA has faced significant hurdles, including mismanagement, exploitation, and inadequate scrutiny write **BKP SINHA** and **ARVIND KUMAR JHA**

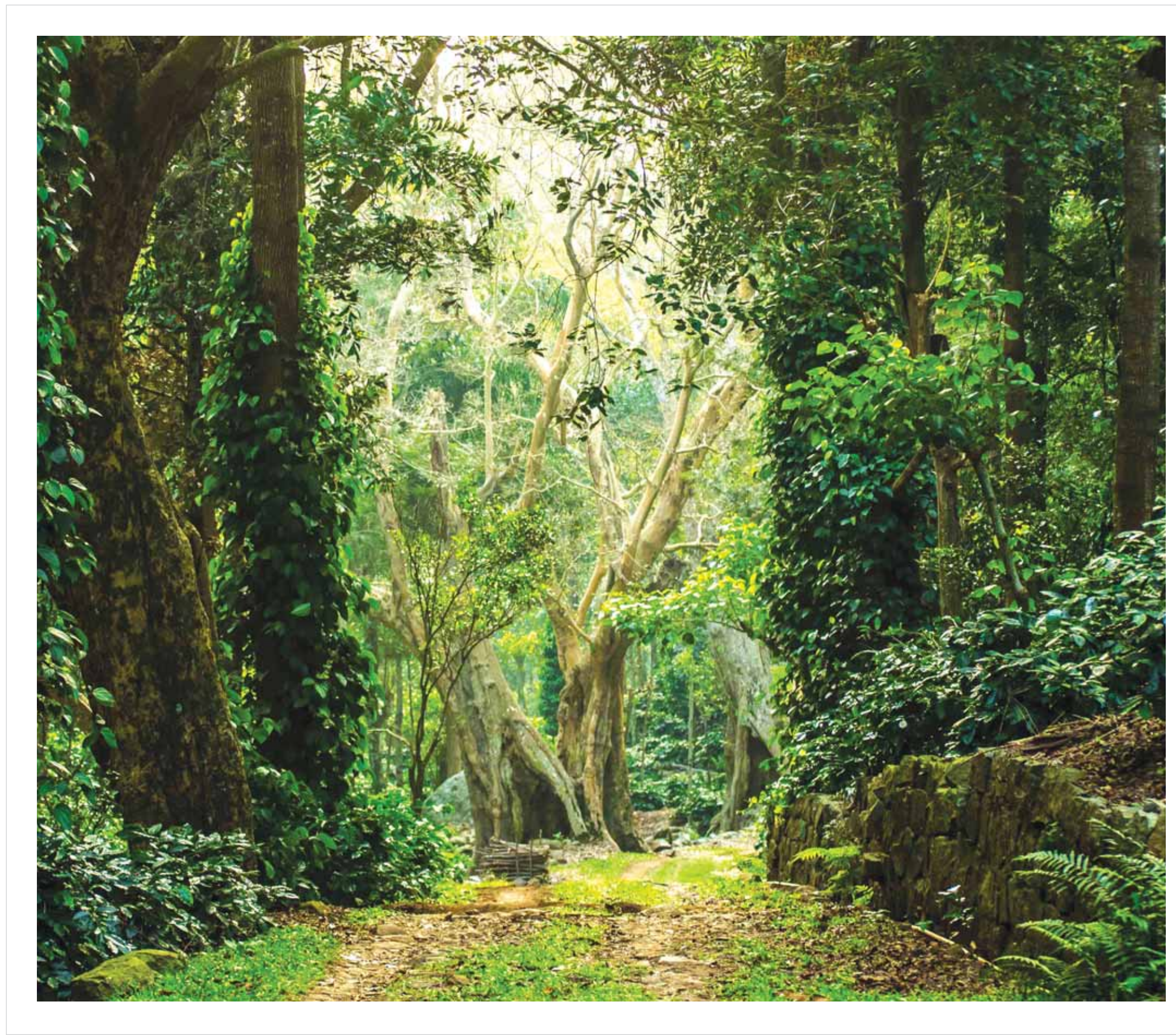
The Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006, a landmark legislation in India, was introduced to recognise forest rights (FRs) of the Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) and empower them aiming at strengthening the conservation regime of forests. It was seen as a beacon of hope ushering in an era of community-led sustainable use of forest resources, conservation of biodiversity, and maintenance of ecological balance, which are essential for the sustenance of FRs. The Act however has faced serious implementation challenges and is overly involved in debates about the fulfilment of this vision indicated in the preamble.

The FRA outlines fourteen distinct FRs for its target group but its initial implementation focused primarily on just two viz. habitation and self-cultivation. This emphasis led to large-scale encroachments by people claiming that they occupied the forest land before the mandated cutoff date of December 13, 2005. Not very surprisingly, the high volume of cases and the pressure to decide them quickly resulted in many ineligible claims getting recognized as valid. This, in turn, encouraged even more people to make similar claims, hoping that theirs would also be approved. During this time, the claims related to Community Forest Rights (CFRs) were given low priority, except for those involving traditionally collected minor forest produce.

In 2012, significant amendments to the FRA Rules were made and new guidelines issued thereafter. Although these amendments purportedly aimed to streamline implementation, they resulted in unintended consequences. Some of these amendments, allegedly extending beyond the Act's original scope, relaxed the eligibility criteria for claimants, allowing non-deserving individuals and communities to exploit the system. The amended Rule introduces a new right, known as the 'Title' to Community Forest Resources.

It enabled communities with only a few members from the FDST and OTFD to make such claims thus allowing the rural elite and powerful individuals to take advantage of the system marginalizing the genuine target group of FRA. Additionally, the evidentiary value of satellite imagery was lowered, making it more challenging to distinguish between legitimate and fabricated claims. No system was established to scrutinize the approved claims while the Tribal Ministry, GOI repeatedly issued directives to review just the rejected ones. In the existing atmosphere, it was 'practical' to approve claims rather than reject them even when the evidence was weak and essential criteria were not met. At times hundreds of cases were cleared in just one meeting which often lacked adequate representation of non-officials and women members, and objections by foresters, even when based on ground reality, were generally labelled as anti-tribal and anti-FRA.

The protection-related duties of forest right holders, gram sabhas, and village-level institutions mentioned under Section 5 of the FRA still await alignment with existing Acts and Rules given the purport of Section 13. Some state tribal departments, as nodal agencies for implementation, have excluded the forest department from village-level management plan committees constituted for community forest resources. Such exclusion precludes inputs from trained foresters and consideration of a landscape-based forest management approach, which is essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity, survival of wide-ranging wildlife, and the provision of eco-services that extend beyond village boundaries. Village-centric



management systems, influenced by electoral politics, may undermine long-term conservation efforts and harm ecological balance. Instances of clear felling and over-exploitation in bamboo coupes, in violation of sustainability principles, have already been observed in some villages. Encroachments and land-use alteration near watercourses and on slopes pose significant risks. In 1992, the Forest Department attempted to remove encroachments in Mundakai, Wayanad but faced violent resistance resulting in assaults, injuries, and the torching of six vehicles by locals. Over time, emboldened encroachers and developers constructed large resorts on slopes increasing landslide susceptibility. This risk was tragically realized with the recent landslide in Mundakai in July 2024.

Under FRA also, recognition of claims by ignoring the terrain is an extremely serious issue. In Maharashtra, a 2014 satellite-based study on FRA implementation revealed that out of randomly selected 56,029 claims for cultivation and habitation in Gadchiroli, Gondia, Nandurbar, and Dhule districts; 8,472 and 11,988 sites respectively were within 50 and 100 meters of water bodies or watercourses. Similar claims were found in different districts on slopes exceeding 20 degrees, pockmarked with a total area of

485 acres, many of which could potentially become the epicentre of additional encroachments and imminent disasters.

To date, 5.18 million acres of forest land scattered over 2.37 million sites have been recognized in the country as individual FRs of cultivation and habitation and the process is still on. The absence of a cut-off date for claim submission, however, makes misuse of the Act easier with time since the verifiability of evidence about 2005 becomes increasingly difficult. It may allow the exploitation of the Act for political purposes too.

An analysis of cases cleared just before elections, for instance, 1,33,920 titles granted to podu cultivators reportedly based on village elders' statements; ramping up of claim clearances in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh; and current invitations for new claims in Jharkhand should be revealing. A worrying trend, however, has emerged in Madhya Pradesh, with encroachers from other villages and districts targeting forest land in Burhanpur district and nearby areas, often with local politician's support. These actions have sparked violent clashes between the encroachers, local villagers, and forest officials, who are struggling to protect the forests.

An examination of randomly selected CFR cases in Maharashtra reveals that the 'nature' and 'extent' of FRs are often missing from title documents. The issue reportedly

“THE PROTECTION-RELATED DUTIES OF FOREST RIGHT HOLDERS, GRAM SABHAS, AND VILLAGE-LEVEL INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE FRA STILL AWAIT ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING ACTS AND RULES GIVEN THE PURPORT OF SECTION 13. SOME STATE TRIBAL DEPARTMENTS, AS NODAL AGENCIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION, HAVE EXCLUDED THE FOREST DEPARTMENT FROM VILLAGE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMITTEES CONSTITUTED FOR COMMUNITY FOREST RESOURCES”

exists in other states as well. Understanding the quantity of forest produce (as a forest right) is crucial for the sustainable management of community forest resources and the long-term continuance of the exercise of forest rights. Accurate quantification can prevent issues such as the dwindling supply of medicinal plants for the Ayurvedic industry, which has led to the use of substandard materials and tarnished the reputation of Ayurveda. Unregulated removals could lead to future disputes over forest produce among neighbouring villages which would simply be disastrous.

The process adopted for recognizing Rights over Community Forest Resources (RCFR) raises significant concerns. According to Section 3(1)(i), RCFR of management is admissible only for communities of FDSTs and OTFDs who have traditionally protected and conserved these resources for sustainable use. Further, section 4(3) of the Act mandates that these communities must have occupied the forest land before the cutoff date of December 13, 2005. However, in practice, management rights under Section 3(1)(i) have been liberally granted, ignoring the mandated criteria, on more than 13.5 million acres out of the country's total recorded forest area of 191.5 million acres. The trend continues unabated also

due to the absence of a deadline for claim submission. Surprisingly, RCFRs for management have been granted on thousands of acres in the core areas of Tiger Reserves and Protected Areas in Achanakmar, Udanti Sitanadi, Dhantari, Navegaon Nagzira, and Tansa without fulfilling the required criteria. Apart from the illegalities involved in RCFR cases, the overall situation indicates that the concerned District Level Committees have unauthoritarily transferred the State's responsibility mentioned in Article 51A of the Constitution.

In the past, forests were vast and tribal populations were small and cohesive with minimal influence from market forces. They existed harmoniously. Today, we face a crisis of fractured village populations and fragmented forests. The traditional arrangements that once worked may no longer be effective. Any harm to forest conservation and management has far-reaching consequences and Nature responds to it in compounded ways, leading to unpredictable weather patterns, desertification, global warming, and ecological crises.

These environmental changes exacerbate climate change, creating a vicious cycle that further threatens the sustainability and health of our forests and communities. It is crucial to set a deadline for claim

submissions, revisit the rules under the FRA, and swiftly correct its implementation to benefit genuine beneficiaries. Cancelling irregularly granted rights, removing encroachments, and relocating FR holders from high-risk areas will establish confidence in the administration among the voiceless target group of the FRA.

The Supreme Court must prioritize the hearing of writ petition 109/2008, duly because their earlier order to evict encroachers was stayed on February 28, 2019, due to the Tribal Affairs Ministry's submission that due processes were not followed in implementing the FRA. The ministry had also highlighted that the process of settling the claims and rights of the applicants left much to be desired.

At this critical juncture, the choices we make will shape the destiny of India's forests, its people including forest-dependent communities, and its ecology and economy. The question remains: Will the FRA fulfil its promise of empowering legitimate forest right holders while safeguarding India's ecological wealth, or will it succumb to exploitation and misuse? Only time, and our commitment to a sustainability-oriented implementation of the Act, will tell.

(The writer are former PCCFs, UP and Maharashtra; views expressed are personal)

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

You're currently experiencing a period marked by keen observation and active communication. This phase is ideal for engaging with new concepts and exploring different perspectives with an open and eager mind. You'll feel a surge of mental vitality, perfect for diving into research or expanding your knowledge. This heightened energy will enhance your confidence in sharing your thoughts and ideas. However, it's important to temper this enthusiasm with caution to avoid appearing too critical or making hasty decisions. Stay vigilant about the accuracy of the information you encounter, as appearances can sometimes be deceiving. Trust your intuition, but make sure to confirm your findings. Strive for a harmonious balance between exploring bold ideas and thoughtful analysis. Engage in open conversations, allowing your sharp intellect to uncover more profound insights.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Sunday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week invites you to introspect and embrace transformation. A period of deep reflection is at hand, where you may find yourself revisiting previous decisions and their impacts on your life. This process offers a chance for significant personal renewal. You might find an increased clarity and conviction in facing these realities, helping you to let go of what no longer benefits you. This is an ideal time to foster personal growth and initiate a new beginning. Use this opportunity to re-evaluate your life's path and implement changes that genuinely represent your true self. Welcoming this phase of change can lead to a more genuine and rewarding future. Allow the insights from your experiences to guide you forward.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Saturday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week heralds a period ripe for embracing new opportunities and embarking on bold ventures. The essence of adventure and spontaneity is in the air, inviting you to take steps forward in directions you've perhaps not considered before. There's an underlying force encouraging you to break free from routine and explore fresh horizons. It's an ideal time to initiate projects, explore new places, or set transformative personal objectives. Let go of any hesitations or perceived barriers that might be holding you back. This period calls for trusting the journey of exploration and being open to where it might lead. Embrace this phase with enthusiasm and a readiness to venture into the unknown, as the possibilities for growth and exhilarating experiences are particularly strong now.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Olive
Lucky day Sunday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, you may experience a sense of entrapment, driven by personal beliefs or external demands. You could perceive your options as being quite limited, feeling a heavy weight from ongoing challenges. It's crucial to recognize that these barriers are often more psychological than tangible. The key to overcoming them lies in challenging old habits or assumptions that constrain you. Take time to deeply consider what is truly restricting your progress and explore ways to adjust your outlook to uncover fresh opportunities. This period demands robust inner fortitude and adaptability. Don't hesitate to seek support when necessary, and keep in mind that true freedom begins with a shift in how you view your circumstances. Embrace the potential for change by actively addressing these mental obstacles.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Saffron
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week invites a time of deep reflection and emotional exploration. You may find yourself facing moments of uncertainty or confusion as certain aspects of your life that were previously obscured begin to surface. This period calls for a reliance on your inner guidance, urging you to look inward and trust your instincts, even when clarity seems distant. As you navigate through intricate emotions and perhaps discover underlying truths, patience becomes vital. It's important not to rush decisions based on transient emotions. Instead, focus intently on the gentle murmurs of your dreams and the nuanced signals from your subconscious, which abound with valuable insights. Embrace this journey of self-exploration, keeping an open mind and heart, and let your innate wisdom guide you through these introspective days.

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Wednesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week, you may encounter a phase of contemplation and reconsideration. It's a period where progress could appear slow, encouraging you to see things from a fresh viewpoint. Embrace this pause as a chance for introspection and reassessment of your goals and priorities. During this time, you might feel the pressures of duties or encounter hurdles that challenge your usual pace. By setting aside strict expectations and opening yourself to new perceptions, you can uncover meaningful insights. Recognize that this temporary standstill is a preparatory stage, setting the groundwork for forthcoming advancements. Seize this moment to refine your understanding and patience, as you prepare for a transformative journey ahead. Remember, every pause is an opportunity for growth and personal evolution.

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, your focus will intensify around personal connections and pivotal decisions. There's a heightened emphasis on unity, partnerships, and aligning with your fundamental values. You might notice your close relationships flourishing or becoming more profound, particularly those that align well with your deepest beliefs and desires. This period calls for choices to be made with affection and collective respect, covering both romantic ties and joint ventures. It's an opportune moment to fortify relationships or resolve any prevailing conflicts. Aim to align your actions with your loftiest ideals and be receptive to nurturing bonds that propel your personal development. Embrace chances for harmony and equilibrium, trusting that the guidance from your emotions will steer you rightly.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Teal
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week marks a period of emotional rejuvenation and beginnings in personal connections. You're entering a phase where your feelings and potential for meaningful interactions intensify, promising a bounty of affection, empathy, and contentment. It's the perfect moment to deepen bonds, explore new relational or creative avenues, and embrace projects that satisfy your soul. This phase invites you to cultivate your emotional landscape and act on your heart's desires. Whether you're starting a new romantic chapter, enriching existing relationships, or pursuing artistic expressions, the time is ripe to open your heart. Allow yourself to both give and receive love in its myriad expressions, and tap into your natural reservoir of compassion and artistic spirit. Embrace this cycle of growth and connection.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Burgundy
Lucky day Friday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week invites you to reevaluate your foundations in both material and emotional aspects. You may find yourself reflecting on how well you secure what you deeply care about, as stability becomes a theme. This period is about reassessing how you manage what you possess and confronting any underlying anxieties about potential losses or shortages. While you generally lean towards embracing change, you might notice a tendency to hold tightly to certain elements of your life or resist shifts in your usual approach. It's a good time to find equilibrium between your innovative impulses and a grounded perspective. This will help you solidify your base, ensuring that you are well-prepared and confident as you plan for future endeavors.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Fuchsia
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week emphasizes stability, family, and long-term security, reflecting a period of completion and fulfillment in your life's tangible and emotional areas. You might find yourself contemplating your accomplishments and the legacy you're shaping. It's an opportune time to invest in your future or partake in activities that strengthen your home and familial connections. Expect highlights around financial or material advancements, signaling rewards for previous endeavors. Seize the chance to honor your achievements and those of your loved ones. This period encourages you to prioritize enduring security and happiness, underlining the significance of robust foundations and valued relationships. This supportive setting promotes development and strengthens relationships essential for your personal growth.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Monday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week heralds a period of dynamic energy and passionate pursuits. You will embody confidence and charisma, reflecting a time when you can harness your inner strength and creativity. This is an ideal moment to take charge with enthusiasm and determination. Embrace your leadership qualities and let your passion propel you toward your goals. This is a powerful time for initiating projects, asserting your vision, and inspiring those around you. Your magnetic presence will attract positive attention and support. Channel your energy effectively, and don't hesitate to step into the spotlight. Use your innate creativity and confidence to make significant strides in both personal and professional areas of your life. This week is about actively shaping your future with vigor and vision.

Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour Lavender
Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week may bring potential for discord or tension in your interactions. You could find yourself in situations that are emotionally taxing or lead to disagreements. These conflicts, while challenging, offer a chance to practice discernment in choosing which issues to engage with. Aim to resolve disagreements peacefully and steer clear of power struggles. It's a time to reflect on what is truly causing friction and explore constructive solutions to these problems. Emotional resilience and clear thinking are crucial during this period. By staying composed and opting to distance yourself from minor disputes, you will be able to maintain your inner peace and handle challenges gracefully. Cultivate patience and understanding to navigate through this period with ease.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Baby Pink
Lucky day Tuesday

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ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Shakti trinity deified as Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh



Persons with the Sata element prominently displayed, become aware of the fundamentals of life. Sata finds reflection as positive virtues – purity, righteousness, a positive attitude, and meaningful karma, free from any malice, obsession, and prejudices. They also understand the unity underlying all diverse existences, whereby all and sundry are essentially set into an inter-dependant relationship. Therefore, they value all on equal terms overriding all apparent difference. They, therefore, get along well with those around with ease. They, thus, remain at peace by the self and with the rest. They carry sense of love, are humane and compassionate. They remain live to their collective obligations even while pursuing their individualistic aspirations. Sata driven use other two dimensions of shakti trinity to their advantage. Using Tamasa, they take a pause to reflect, reason out, articulate well, before getting into action. So, invariably they make better choices in life. The Rajasa element being live, they too carry desires, but are invariably directed to serve meaningful purposes.

They don't employ it purely with an utterly selfish motive. Their thought process being easy, simple, and free from clutter, could use their mind power optimally. Consequently, they see things in wider perspective to pick up the most appropriate lead. They are better focused also, and therefore have relatively higher success rating. Well, since human beings are born with a sense of 'want', a being's conduct is motivated and driven by desire. That, in turn brings in a sense of craving, possessiveness and attachment, which remains the prerogative of Rajasa. The indwelling sense of desire makes one dream, and which motivates a being blindly chase their desired destination. They ordinarily shun Tamasa, and so when faced with challenges, get unnerved. And that they are susceptible to get drawn towards varied tempting influences of the seeming world, they have a scattered brain. That makes it difficult for them to remain contented, and would therefore, never be at peace. Because of its veiling nature, the essentials of life remain clouded in Tamasa driven people. They can't

visualise things in larger perspective, as they have self-centric narrowed vision. Out of ignorance, such people are often not sure what they should look for in life and therefore, are usually found to be directionless. They are restful by nature, which induces a sense of inertia,

indolence, ignorance, and more often a negative mind-set. To such people, the indwelling Rajasa element keeps the desire element alive. But at the same time, they are not keen to take pains to pursue their desires in right earnest. So, invariably they are left behind in the

run of life. Their sense of want, however, makes it difficult for them to digest the riches available with others either. That in turn, breeds in a sense of jealousy and hatred towards the achievers. This way, particular mix of the three in a being, with one or the other prominently displayed, defines the unique character of each being. To sum up, Sata, Rajasa, and Tamasa, begin their course as three dimensions of creative intelligences, whose imprints stretch on to even the last point in the evolutionary chain. For, their psychological imperatives very much find reflection in the personality frame up of manifest beings, especially in terms of one's thought trends on ground. That makes continuum between the primal source and manifest being, evident. The spoken primal word 'Om' has in its store sound trinity designated by the three letters 'A', 'U', and 'M'. All sound syllables in active use are believed to have evolved out of these three root sounds. 'Om', thus, has in its womb the seeds of all letters with their related sounds. The three letters are

respectively marked with Rajasa, Sata, and Tamasa. The first two letters - 'A' and 'U' - apparently coalesce into 'O' in dicta-lingua. The three are also respectively identified with waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep state of a being in day-to-day life. Waking state is evidently identified with Rajasa, as it involves action. Dream state is marked with Sata, for it involves simply working on an idea either real or assumed, in the inner realm of mind, which evidently can't be seen in real terms. Tamasa is that restful state of mind devoid of any creative thoughts. Ancient India's seers, realising the relevance of the three creative intelligences - Rajasa, Sata, and Tamasa - deified them respectively through the symbolism of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh. The concept of God-trinity, thus, is nothing but Energy concept of creation deified. Concluding the discussion on Om, goodbye pioneer readers. The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com