

OPINION 6 NUANCED SHIFT IN PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT

WORLD 8 ISRAEL CONDUCTS MILITARY OPERATION IN WEST BANK

MONEY 10 NIFTY SCALES NEW LIFETIME HIGH

Published From DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol.20 Issue 183 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable



# the pioneer

BHUBANESWAR, SATURDAY JULY 6, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4

Established 1864

www.dailypioneer.com

ENGLAND FACES SWITZERLAND FOR SEMI SPOT 11 SPORTS



## Scrapping NEET-UG not rational: Centre to SC



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

### NEET-PG 2024 exam to be held on August 11

New Delhi: The NEET-PG 2024 entrance examination will be held on August 11 in two shifts, the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences announced on Friday. The examination was earlier scheduled to be held on June 23. "...It will now be held on August 11 in two shifts. The cut-off date for the purpose of eligibility to appear in the NEET-PG 2024 shall continue to be August 15, 2024," the Board said. PNS

The Union Education Ministry and the NTA filed separate affidavits opposing the pleas which have sought scrapping of the exam plagued by controversy, a retest and court-monitored probe into entire gamut of issues involved. The top court is scheduled to hear on July 8 a batch of pleas, including those alleging irregularities in the examination held on May 5 and seeking a direction that it be held afresh. The National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH and other related courses, and the

Union Education Ministry have been at the centre of media debates and protests by students and political parties over alleged large-scale malpractices ranging from question paper leak to impersonation in the test held on May 5. In its affidavit, the Ministry said invalidating the exam would "seriously jeopardise" the efforts of lakhs of honest candidates who appeared in the exam. In the absence of proof of any large-scale breach of confidentiality in the examination, it argued that it would not be rational to take the step. This is the first time that the Centre is placing its stand on holding a retest of NEET-UG for all 24 lakh candidates on record. The Ministry has only acknowledged that there were "instances of irregularities, cheating, impersonation, malpractices" during the conduct of NEET-UG. There is no mention of a paper leak. It goes on to state further that "in the absence of any proof of any large-scale breach of confidentiality in a pan-India examination it would not be rational to scrap the entire examination".

## Rishi Sunak Exits 10 Downing Street

PTI ■ LONDON

Keir Starmer on Friday promised a phase of "national renewal" as Britain's Prime Minister-elect after he led the Labour Party to a landslide victory in a landmark UK general election with a gain of over 200 seats, as outgoing leader Rishi Sunak conceded defeat with his Conservative Party suffering its worst election defeat in history. Starmer, 61, now stands poised to take charge at 10 Downing Street after his audience with King Charles III at Buckingham Palace, following Sunak's meeting with the British monarch. As Labour crossed the halfway mark of 650 constituencies in the early hours of Friday to clinch the minimum 326 required for a majority in Parliament, Starmer stepped up to make his victory speech in London: "Change begins now. And it feels good, I have to be honest. "A mandate like this comes with a great responsibility. Our task is nothing less than renewing the ideas that hold this country together. National renewal. Whoever you are, wherever you start in life, if you work hard, if you play by the rules, this country should give you a fair chance to get on. It should always respect your contribution and we have to restore that." Meanwhile, the country's first



Britain's Labour Party leader Keir Starmer reacts on stage as he is elected for the Holborn and St Pancras constituency, in London (l). Britain's outgoing Conservative Party Prime Minister Rishi Sunak speaking outside 10 Downing Street before going to see King Charles III to tender his resignation in London, on Friday

### Modi congratulates Starmer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated Labour Party leader Keir Starmer on his party's landslide win in the UK general elections and said he looked forward to their positive and constructive collaboration to further strengthen the India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership. Modi also praised outgoing British Prime Minister and

Conservative Party leader Rishi Sunak for his admirable leadership of the United Kingdom and his active contribution to deepen the ties between India and the UK during his term in office. "Best wishes to you and your family for the future," he said. Congratulating him, Modi said, "Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Keir Starmer on the remarkable victory in the UK general elections..."

British Indian Prime Minister comfortably held on to his own Richmond and Northallerton seat in northern

England with 23,059 votes but failed to turn things around for his party at a national level after 14 years in Government.



### Fresh trouble for Mahua over remarks against NCW chairperson

PNS ■ NEW DELHI The National Commission for Women (NCW) has taken suo moto cognisance of the alleged derogatory remark made by TMC MP Mahua Moitra against its chairperson Rekha Sharma and sought an FIR against her. This came a day after the TMC, commenting on a video posted on X showing the arrival at the site of a stampede that recently took place in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, wrote, "She is too busy holding up her boss's pajamas". Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh Government's Special Investigation Team probing the Hathras stampede has recorded statements of 90 people so far, SIT chief Anupam Kulshrestha said on Friday. Kulshrestha, also the Additional Director General of Police (Agra Zone), is leading the three-member SIT team.

## J&K Assembly elections likely after Amarnath Yatra



A sadhu poses while waiting to get registered for Amarnath Yatra at Ram Mandir base camp, in Jammu, on Friday

Union Ministers and BJP national leaders are expected to visit the State. The party will also launch a mass contact programme with the people in the State. The Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was dissolved in November 2018 ahead of the revocation of the State's Special Status in August 2019. The BJP-led Government scrapped Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019 and bifurcated the State into two Union Territories. There have been demands from political parties for early Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and restoration of Statehood. Moreover, during a recent visit to Kashmir, the Prime Minister stated that preparations for elections had begun and that J&K would soon have its own Government. The revision of electoral rolls will start in J&K on July 25 and culminate on August 20, according to the EC. "After the exercise is over, the EC may announce holding of assembly polls in the UT any time," a poll official said. The five LS seats in J&K — the first major electoral exercise post Article 370 abrogation — recorded voter turnout of 58.58 per cent, the highest in the last 35 years.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/JAMMU

Court after the erstwhile State's special status was scrapped in 2019. The last Assembly election in the erstwhile State was held in 2014. At the meeting, top leadership has made it clear that the party will not enter into a pre-poll alliance with any party in the State. It was also conveyed that the party would remain open to seat adjustments and "electoral understandings" with "like-minded parties. Besides, it was also conveyed that the party will not project any face for the Chief Ministerial candidate in the run-up to the Assembly polls and there will not be any changes in leadership or organisational rejig in the State BJP unit, currently headed by Ravinder Raina. In the coming days, key

The Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir are likely to be announced after the Amarnath Yatra, which will conclude on August 19. Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a late night meeting with Jammu and Kashmir unit party leaders and directed them to be ready for the upcoming Assembly elections. The two-hour long meeting was attended by BJP chief and Union Minister JP Nadda, MPs Ravinder Raina, Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma — and other top leaders. Jammu and Kashmir is likely to see its first Assembly election in September this year, according to the timeline fixed by the Supreme

## Jailed MPs Amritpal, Rashid on parole take oath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid

Jailed radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, who were granted parole to take oath as members of the Lok Sabha, were sworn in as MPs on Friday, amid heavy deployment of security personnel in and around the Parliament complex. While Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, is in Delhi's Tihar jail in a terror-funding case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Singh is lodged in a prison in Assam's Dibrugarh district for offences under the National Security Act. They were brought to the Parliament complex by

security personnel Friday morning. The MPs-elect took oath in the chamber of the Lok Sabha Speaker after completing formalities, a source said. Singh, 31, and Rashid, 56, won the recent Lok Sabha elections from Khadoor Sahib in Punjab and Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir, respectively, as Independents while being incarcerated. They could not take oath as members of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24 and 25 along with the other winning candidates. For taking oath, Rashid was granted a two-hour custody parole, excluding the travel time from Tihar to Parliament,

and Singh a four-day custody parole, beginning July 5, in view of the travel from Assam to Delhi and back. Their parole orders stated that during their period of temporary release, they can neither speak to or address the media on any issue or make any statements. Their family members also cannot make a statement to the media. While Singh, a Khalistani sympathiser who heads the 'Waris Punjab De' outfit, has been allowed to meet his family in Delhi, Rashid's family had permission only to attend his oath taking. The parole for Rashid, who has been in jail since 2019 after his arrest in 2017, was granted by a court in Delhi and that of Singh by the district magistrate of Amritsar from where he was arrested in April 2023 for barging into a police station in February and clashing with police personnel in a bid to free one of his aides from custody. Both Singh and Rashid are to be accompanied by security personnel at all times during their parole periods, the orders stated. The Delhi Police and Punjab Police were directed to coordinate with the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha for procedures inside the Parliament complex. The name of Rashid, a former MLA, cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, whom the NIA had arrested for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir valley.

## Decision on Ratna Bhandar opening today

Law Minister Prithwiraj Harichandan on Friday said, "The committee will decide the modalities on how the work will progress. It will also fix a day, when there will be no deities in the temple, for the opening of Ratna Bhandar, the repair of the inner treasure trove and the beginning of the inventory of ornaments and jewels. It will also decide how the inventory

will be done and what external agencies will be included for testing the quality of the ornaments," he told reporters. In a late evening surprise on Thursday, the new BJP government constituted the 16-member committee headed by Justice Biswanath Rath, dissolving the Justice Arijit Pasayat-led panel set up by the previous BJD government in March. The decision came a day ahead of the Justice Pasayat committee's scheduled meeting on Friday. The new committee has been constituted to supervise the Jagannath Temple Managing Committee's work in carrying out the inventorisation of valuables including jewellery stored in the Ratna Bhandar. The committee includes Dr CBK Mohanty, Sudarshan Patnaik, Swami Pragananda, Jagdish Mishra and former DGP Prakash Mishra. In March, the BJD government had formed a 12-member committee, led by Justice Pasayat, to supervise the Ratna Bhandar inventorisation and conservation work. Justice Pasayat had held two meetings.

Law Minister Prithwiraj Harichandan on Friday said, "The committee will decide the modalities on how the work will progress. It will also fix a day, when there will be no deities in the temple, for the opening of Ratna Bhandar, the repair of the inner treasure trove and the beginning of the inventory of ornaments and jewels. It will also decide how the inventory

will be done and what external agencies will be included for testing the quality of the ornaments," he told reporters. In a late evening surprise on Thursday, the new BJP government constituted the 16-member committee headed by Justice Biswanath Rath, dissolving the Justice Arijit Pasayat-led panel set up by the previous BJD government in March. The decision came a day ahead of the Justice Pasayat committee's scheduled meeting on Friday. The new committee has been constituted to supervise the Jagannath Temple Managing Committee's work in carrying out the inventorisation of valuables including jewellery stored in the Ratna Bhandar. The committee includes Dr CBK Mohanty, Sudarshan Patnaik, Swami Pragananda, Jagdish Mishra and former DGP Prakash Mishra. In March, the BJD government had formed a 12-member committee, led by Justice Pasayat, to supervise the Ratna Bhandar inventorisation and conservation work. Justice Pasayat had held two meetings.

committee includes Dr CBK Mohanty, Sudarshan Patnaik, Swami Pragananda, Jagdish Mishra and former DGP Prakash Mishra. In March, the BJD government had formed a 12-member committee, led by Justice Pasayat, to supervise the Ratna Bhandar inventorisation and conservation work. Justice Pasayat had held two meetings.

## K'jhar cop who abused CM Majhi shunted

RAJENDRA K SAHU ■ KEONJHAR



Trinath Sethy, IIC, Sadar of Keonjhar district, has been transferred to Gajapati district by the order of DGP, Odisha. This has come to light by the letter dated 05/07/2024 of IG Personnel.



Sethy had once not hesitated to abuse and insult Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi when the latter was contesting from the Sadar Assem-

Trinath Sethy, IIC, Sadar of Keonjhar district, has been transferred to Gajapati district by the order of DGP, Odisha. This has come to light by the letter dated 05/07/2024 of IG Personnel. Sethy had once not hesitated to abuse and insult Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi when the latter was contesting from the Sadar Assem-

ment constituency, Keonjhar in the elections 2024. During the poll campaign, Majhi had come to the Sadar police station in the capacity of an MLA to know about the police ha-

rasment to local villagers who had sat on the NH in demand of drinking water to their village. But instead of showing a minimum courtesy, Sethy, the then powerful police officer

under the BJD rule, had not hesitated to insult and abuse Majhi. There was much flutter over the incident; but as obvious, no action was taken by the SP/ DG as they preferred to

remain silent to please their political boss. The government machinery including police was allegedly working at the behest of local BJD leader Raja Chakra, a mining don. However, Majhi had forgiven the police officer after becoming the CM when the media reminded him of the incident. Rather, he had asked police to behave properly to the public who are coming to police stations with their grievances.

## Cyclonic circulation to trigger heavy rains

Rainfall likely in some districts on RathYatra

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A cyclonic circulation lies over the east-central Bay of Bengal, said the Regional Office of India Meteorological Department (IMD) here on Friday. As per the IMD, several parts of Odisha are likely to experience thunderstorms

and heavy rainfall activities in the next few days. On Saturday, thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur in the districts of Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khordha, Nayagarh, Ganjam and Gajapati, said the IMD issuing a Yellow warning. On Sunday, on the day of the Rath Yatra, heavy rainfall is very likely to occur in the districts of Keonjhar,

Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Malkangiri. On Monday, heavy rainfall is also very likely to occur in the districts of Gajapati, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Nabaarangpur, Khordha, Nayagarh, Cuttack, Puri, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur in the districts of Koraput, Malkangiri, Kandhamal and Ganjam, said the IMD.

# 5 crore trees to be planted across State: CM

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday announced that it is planned to plant five crore trees across the State. This is being done on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for 'Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam'.

Majhi said this while attending the 75th Van Mahotsav at the Dumuduma Government High School attending the ceremony as chief guest. Forest, Environment & Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia was present along with Additional Chief Secretary Forest, Environment & Climate Change Satyabrata Sahu, PCCF Debidda Biswal.

The CM the programme calls for planting trees at individual level and uploading their photos. And the maximum numbers of 1 lakh 48 thousand photos have been uploaded in Odisha so far in this campaign. Among all the States, Odisha is at the forefront.



"As our population is four and a half crore, we aim to plant four and a half crore trees in this campaign," he said. Majhi said that in order to

protect people from lightning-related accidents, the Forest Department has planned to plant 19 lakh palm trees in the forest blocks of the State this year. He also said cherry blossom trees are being planted in

Daringbadi in a campaign mode to put Daringbadi on the world's cherry blossom map. Minister Khuntia said, "A change in modern lifestyle and protection of land, water and forest are now the responsibility of all of us, he said.

The State-level Biju Patnaik Award for outstanding forest conservation and afforestation work was awarded to Batasar Ban Sanrakshyan Samiti, Nabarangpur, and Sagarpali Ban Sanrakshyan Samiti, Sundargarh.

# Cong leader hails Mohan govt's bid to set up NODC

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Demands corpus fund of Rs 10K cr

Congress leader Navajyoti Patnaik has welcomed Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi government's decision to form a taskforce for establishment of a North Odisha Development Council (NODC). By establishing both North Odisha Development Council and South Odisha Development Council, similar to the Western Odisha Development Council, balanced development across the State can be ensured, accelerating the progress of the backward areas, he said.



North Odisha, rich in mines and other resources, significantly contributes to the State exchequer but remains underdeveloped. The residents of Mayurbhanj, Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur and Keonjhar districts lack basic facilities such as quality healthcare, education, transportation, drinking water, and electricity services. The absence of industrialisation, agriculture and food processing industries, and tourism infrastructure has forced local youths to migrate in search of employment. The formation of the North Odisha Development Council is a crucial step towards mitigating these issues, Patnaik said.

Odisha Development Council to cover the districts of Mayurbhanj, Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur and Keonjhar. Congress leader Patnaik had earlier written several letters to former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urging the formation of the council, but no progress was made.

To ensure effective implementation and functioning of the NODC, Patnaik proposed four suggestions like establishment of the headquarters of the council in Baleswar for administrative convenience, setting up a corpus fund of Rs 10,000 crore, allocating an annual expenditure of Rs 3,000 crore for development work and passing the bill for the North Odisha Development Council in the upcoming Assembly session. Additionally, Patnaik demanded to ensure that at least 20 per cent of the total State budget expenditure is allocated for the overall development of north Odisha.

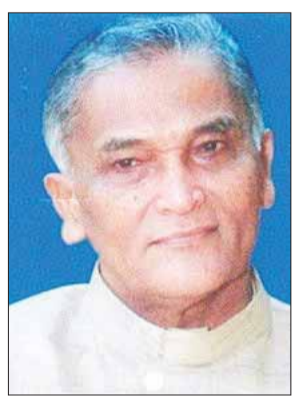
# Ex-Minister Naik passes away at 93

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Former Minister Surendranath Naik passed away at his residence here in the early hours on Friday. He was 93.

The seven-time MLA from Kakatpur was suffering from age-related ailments, sources said.

A native of Puri district, Naik was the Chairman of Astarang Panchayat Samiti from 1960 to 1967. He held different portfolios, including agriculture, revenue, and education, as a minister and was a close aide of former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik.

He had cast his vote in the recently-concluded elections. Naik was accorded a guard of honour in the Odisha Assembly premises, where Speaker Surama Padhy, Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, Deputy CMs Pravati Parida and KV Singh Deo paid their tributes to the departed soul. The CM said Naik was a popular leader and termed his



death as a great loss for the State. Former CM and BJD president Naveen Patnaik also extended condolences to the bereaved family members. "I am saddened to hear the demise of senior leader, former MLA, Minister and former Deputy Speaker Surandranath Naik. His dedication towards serving the Kakatpur people will always be remembered, he said. Naik's mortal remains were taken the Sankha Bhawan, the BJD party headquarters, and then to his native place in Astarang block for the last rites.

# Rath Yatra CRUT to ply 33 special buses to Puri

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) has announced to run 33 special buses from different places for the Rath Yatra in Puri from Sunday.

The buses would ply from Khordha, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Kakatpur to Talabania bus stand in Puri at regular intervals. The buses will operate on seven inter-city routes and

one intra-city route from July 7 to 9 and July 15 to 17, the CRUT said in release on Friday. The fare on inter-city routes will be Rs 80 for non-AC and Rs 100 for AC bus service. Devotees would be able to reach their destination in a hassle-free manner by availing the service. Buses would ply throughout the day at regular intervals for the convenience of the commuters, the CRUT said.

# Justice Pratap Misra no more

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Former Orissa High Court Judge Justice Choudhury Pratap Keshari Misra passed away at a private hospital here late on Thursday night. He was 82.

According to family sources, he was in the ICU of the hospital for four months and breathed his last at 11.59 pm. His mortal remains were taken to his Cuttack residence. The last rites were performed at his native village Bheda in Cuttack district. Born on January 5, 1942, he had enrolled as an advocate



on November 8, 1971 and practised in the Orissa High Court for more than 27 years. He also functioned as Standing Counsel of Income Tax. Justice Misra served as a Judge of Orissa High Court from June 17, 1999 to January 4, 2004.

# Cyber fraud Jodhpur man held for duping BBSR-based postal officer of Rs 11L

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The Commissionerate police have arrested a man from Rajasthan for allegedly duping a city-based postal officer of Rs 11.80 lakh by posing as an official of the Department of Telecommunication (DoT).

The accused has been identified as Kishore Rana (24) from Jodhpur. Speaking to the media, Commissioner of Police (CP) Sanjeeb Panda said the victim received a call from an unknown person, who introduced himself as an officer of the telecom department, on June 7. "He told him that Mumbai Police are probing 28 complaints against his phone number, which was also found linked to a money laundering case related to former chairman of Jet Airways Naresh Goyal, who was arrested by the ED in September 2023. The caller then connected



him through video call to a fake cop, who shared a bogus arrest warrant with the victim and tried to take advantage of his anxiety. "The scammers asked him to share his bank and property details. They demanded Rs 11.80 lakh from him as security deposit and assured to return his money in seven days once proved innocent in CBI court. Following which, the victim transferred the amount in two instalments," the CP said. The victim lodged a complaint with police when he did not get his money back and the phone on which he had received the call was found switched off. Panda said the accused, who

had withdrawn the amount from bank through a cheque, has been arrested and efforts are on to nab two other members of the gang. "Financial investigation into case has begun. We suspect their involvement in similar frauds in other states," the CP said, adding that Rs 1.16 lakh in the bank account has been frozen.

# Cong holds demo before city police HQ



**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Members of Pradesh Youth, Student and Bhubaneswar district Congress on Friday went in a procession and held a demonstration before the Commissionerate

police headquarters alleging hooliganism by BJP Youth Morcha (BJYM) activists before the Congress Bhawan here on July 2. Student Congress State president Yasir Nawaj said the BJP is fooling the people of the State in the name of religion. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's statement on Hin-

duism in Parliament is being distorted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP. Rahul Gandhi has devotion and respect for the Hindu religion. But the BJP leaders who are claiming to be flag-bearers of the Hindu religion are doing great loss for the religion, whose main motto is 'Basudheiva Kutumbakam'.

Youth Congress State president Ranjit Patra said the BJYM activists tore Rahul Gandhi's posters and pelted stones on the Congress workers. The attack was preplanned. Later, the agitators submitted a memorandum to the Commissioner of Police demanding action against the BJYM activists involved in the violence.

# UD Min now head of all dev authorities

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The Odisha Government has appointed Housing and Urban Development (H and UD) Minister Krishna Chandra Mahapatra as Chairperson of all nine development authorities in the State.

Mahapatra would now be the Chairman of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA), Cuttack Development Authority (CDA), Berhampur Development Authority, Sambalpur Development Authority, Rourkela Develop-

ment Authority (RDA), Paradip Development Authority, Puri-Konark Development Authority, Kalinga Nagar Development Authority and Talcher-Angul-Meramandali Development Authority.

A notification in this connection was issued by the department on Thursday. Though ministers earlier served as chairperson of development authorities, including the BDA, the last few years of the BJD regime saw IAS officers being appointed to these posts.

# Odisha IAS officer Private Secy to Oram



**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Odisha-cadre IAS officer Gaval Parag Harshad has been appointed as Private Secretary to Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram. The 2013-batch officer is currently serving as the Sundargarh Collector. "The Competent Authority has approved the proposal for appointment of Gaval Parag Harshad as Private Secretary to the Minister for Tribal Affairs (Jual Oram) in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs at the level of Deputy Secretary for

the period of five years with effect from the date of assumption of the charge of the post or on co-terminus basis or till he ceases to function as Private Secretary to the Minister or until further orders, whichever event occurs the earliest," a letter from the Deputy Secretary of Department of Personnel & Training said. Accordingly, the Odisha Chief Secretary has asked to immediately relieve him of his duties with instructions to take up his new assignment.

# RI held taking 20K bribe

**PNS ■ CUTTACK**  
The Vigilance police on Friday caught Bisweswar Ray Behera, Revenue Inspector (RI), Siko under Begunia tehsil in Khordha district, while accepting a bribe of Rs 20, 000 from a person. Behera had demanded the bribe from the complainant,

threatening to take action against him for felling a tree on government land. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were carried out on the residential house of Behera at Saneigadia under the Mancheswar police station in Bhubaneswar and his office room. Later, he was arrested and forwarded to court.

# OES celebrates Van Mahotsav at various sites

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The first week of July is currently being observed as Festival of Forests Week or Van Mahotsav all over India to emphasise protection of environment and improvement in its quality. In this context, the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) organised tree plantation and awareness programmes in collaboration with other institutions. A campaign was launched at a function held at the new campus of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Berhampur, for plantation of 10,000 saplings. Prof Ashok Kumar Ganguli, director of the institute, said plantation is a very pertinent approach to address the critical environmental issues.



OES president of OES Dr Sundara Narayana Patro explained the vital role of trees in maintaining ecological balance, reducing pollution, preventing temperature rise and climate change as well as meeting human needs. Students, staffs and members of IISER and OES planted two hundred saplings in a vacant area of the campus as a first phase.

Among others, OES secretary Dr Jayakrushna Panigrahi, IISER Registrar Pradeep Kumar Ray, Prof Viswas Chauhan, Dr Josh Sebastian, Er Sanjay Majhi and Assistant Director of Horticulture Subash Ch Panda participated in the programme. Another programme was held at Shreema International Higher Secondary School, Berhampur, which was chaired

by its Principal Santosh Kumar Panigrahi. Dr Patro and Dr Panigrahi explained to the students the need to protect the various aspects of the environment and maintain its quality standards. A quiz competition was conducted among the students on the trees by Er Mishra and the winning students were awarded prizes. At the end, a plantation drive was held in the school premises. Earlier, a tree planting programme was held in the campus of the new training centre of Swami Vivekananda National Institute of Rehabilitation and Research (SVNIRTAR) at Oltapur in Cuttack district. Among others, OES office-bearers and former PCCF Dr Bijay Ketan Patnaik participated in the sapling plantation.

## In Balangir Attempt to rob finance firm foiled Miscreant arrested

**PNS ■ BALANGIR**  
An attempt to loot a finance company office by an armed miscreant was foiled in Gandhipada of Balangir town when the alert security guard and some customers managed to nab the robber. Branding a sharp weapon and a toy gun, the man tried to terrorise the staffs and customers present at the spot. However, the security guard, some consumers and staffs showed courage and managed to overpower and nab the accused. Getting information, police rushed to the spot and took the man, who was identified as Manmohan Pradhan. Further investigation was underway by police. Balangir SDPO Pradip Kumar Sahu said, "The incident occurred one hour back. He had a sharp weapon and a toy gun. Due to the presence of mind of the security guard and others, he has been nabbed. He is now in our custody and further investigation is being done in this connection."



## Kujang SI held taking Rs 8K bribe

**PNS ■ JAGATSinghpur**  
The Vigilance sleuths on Thursday arrested Sub-Inspector (SI) of Police Bibekananda Sahu of Kujang police station for accepting bribe money of Rs 8,000. Accused Sahu was the Investigation Officer (IO) of a criminal case registered against the complainant owing to family disputes. The complainant obtained bail from the court for his release on May 29, but IO Sahu did not obey the judicial order and asked the complainant to give him Rs



8,000 to carry out his release order. The complainant approached the Vigilance police in this regard. A case was registered against Sahu.

## In Brahmapur Resentment high as muddy water supplied through tap

**KRISHNA CHANDRA PANDA ■ BRAHMAPUR**  
The tall claim of the previous government for supply of safe and clean drinking water through tap to the residents of silk city has proved hollow. There is serious public discontentment for supply of unhygienic and dusty water to homes from Janabilli and Rushikulya rivers reportedly without their scientific filtration and cleaning. In many wards of the BeMC, the tap water turned muddy posing risk of waterborne diseases to which the Watco authorities have paid deaf ears. After intervention of local BJP MLA Anil Kumar and the BeMC Mayor, the situation improved on Wednesday. Sources said that due to rain, soil enters at the source points of the project making the water muddy and dusty.

Due to supply of such water, the residents of first-gate area of Aska Road under BeMC were reportedly affected. The polluted water and poor sanitation coupled with non-cleaning of the drains and its adjoining areas in the city made the sufferings manifold. Sources also said that the pipelines laid from the project to the city passes through drains and have developed cracks allowing drain water to mix with it. MLA Anil Kumar said that he is constantly in touch with the Watco authorities for timely and quality supply of water to the households. According to a resident, there was no water supply to Gandhinagar 3rd lane extension area on Tuesday causing inconvenience to the residents. Some residents have also alleged that there is no fixed time for supply of water to the area.

## Slum woman sells newborn in Paradip; probe on

**PRASANTA ROUT ■ PARADIP**  
A woman residing in Sandhakud Mauza under Paradip Municipality has been accused of selling her newborn son, prompting the District Child Welfare Officer to launch an investigation. According to reports, Mamina Sardar, an abandoned woman working as a day labourer in Sandhakud, became pregnant after engaging in a relationship with a male friend. Upon learning of her pregnancy, a local ASHA took her to a government hospital for treatment. However, Mamina reportedly consulted with some neighbouring women about terminating her pregnancy. A Telugu man from the village intervened in her case promising to take care of her child after its birth regardless of its gender and provided financial assistance for prenatal expenses. Mamina later moved to the Nuabazar slum area. On July



2, she gave birth to a baby boy at the Paradip Government Hospital but allegedly sold the newborn to another Telugu man for Rs 1 lakh. The child was reportedly taken from Paradip to Vizag. District Child Welfare Officer Shakuntala Choudhury, along with Paradip Model PS police and Jatadhari Muhan Marine PS police, began an investigation into the incident. The police identified a middleman involved in the alleged child sale, who promised to bring the baby back. Meanwhile, the accused woman has fled to Cuttack. The investigation was underway and the authorities were working to ensure the child's safe return, said sources.

## In Subarnapur Fake vendor receipts issued to procure paddy illegally

**SRIKUMAR MAHANTA ■ SONEPUR**  
A shocking incident of illegal paddy procurement by collecting tonnes of paddy from people other than the legitimate farmers and giving fake vendor receipt to the farmers has come to the fore of Kamsara area in Tarbha block. It is alleged that the data entry operator (DEO) of the Kamsara Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society (PACS) has a major role in it. The farmers of the area have given a complaint to the Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies (DRCS) on Monday. Sources said farmers from various regions, including Kumbharmunda, Lembupali, Mahulpali, Badjor, Jamkani



and Kamsara had registered their names with the Kamsara PACS. DEO Manoranjan Mishra allegedly manipulated records to favour certain people. During this kharif season, paddy was procured from 349 farmers by giving of 403 vendor receipts though only 330 farmers have got their payment. However, 19 farmers have not got their payment till date. The outraged farmers appealed to DRCS, Sonepur, and Assistant Registrar Coopera-

tive Society (ARCS), Sonepur on Monday. Responding to the complaints, an inquiry was done by ARCS in which it was revealed that some farmers have got fake vendor receipts. Shakti Sahoo, a farmer of Kumbharmunda under Tarbha block, said he received the token for selling 148 quintals of paddy in Kamsara PACS. "I got two vendor receipts of 74.94 quintals and 74.90 quintals respectively from the DEO. Although the other farmers have got their payment, I did not get the payment after 4 months," he added. Like Shakti, many farmers have not got their money although all dues have been cleared. When contacted, Secretary Chhanda Charan Panda said, "I am unaware of the fake vendor receipts given to the farmers." Assistant Registrar Cooperative Society (ARCS), Sonepur Panu Charan Sahu said, "We have given a complaint in Tarbha Police Station against DEO Manoranjan Mishra and an investigation revealed that DEO Mishra had issued fake vendor receipts to 19 farmers." Meanwhile, the farmers have demanded the intervention of Collector Anya Das in the matter.

## 'Ganjam BJD leaders still not able to accept defeat'

**BJP condemns distasteful remarks against Min Jena**  
**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**  
The Ganjam BJP has demanded a Vigilance investigation into the assets of former Brahmapur MLA Bikram Panda. A Press conference was organized by BJP Brahmapur Zone Media Coordinator Sunil Kumar Sahu, covering the three Lok Sabha constituencies of Aska, Brahmapur, and Kandhamal on Thursday. Some leaders of the BJD are still unable to accept the dismal defeat of their candidates in the last elections. Instead of acknowledging their own faults, weaknesses, and anti-



people policies, these leaders, such as Bikram Panda, who lost in the Gopalpur constituency, are making misleading and distasteful remarks against BJP leader and Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, said Sahu. BJD is on a path of self-destruction, and the people will never forgive the wrongdoings of BJD. The arrogant and egoistic BJD leaders should keep in mind that

Gopalpur people believe in peace and development; they would never tolerate anti-social activities, Sahu added. Senior BJP leader Pitabas Panda said during BJD's rule, former MLA Panda was known for creating chaos in areas including Brahmapur city and Gopalpur. His accusations against BJP workers are baseless. He conveniently forgets the armed attacks on BJP workers in Hugulapata, attempts to seize booths in Minister Jena's village, and the attacks on BJP supporters in Kolathigaon involving hundreds of criminals. These leaders, who once called people to their homes and assaulted them, filed false cases, and misused power to detain innocent people, now criticize the police, administration, and Ministers, which is laughable, he said further. Senior BJP leader and State executive member Kahu Charan Pati, District vice-chairman Gangadhar Satapathy, district general secretary Prabhat Kiran Sarangi, senior leader Rajesh Kumar Sahu, and District Youth Morcha president Siba Shankar Nayak were present.

## WAO holds State Wushu Championship

**PNS ■ ROURKELA**  
The Wushu Association of Orissa (WAO) is all set to participate in the 30th edition of the State Wushu Championship 2024, scheduled to be held at Madhusudan Bhaban, Chhend Colony, Rourkela, from July 5 to 7. The championship is being hosted by the Sports Wushu Association of Sundargarh and sanctioned by the Wushu Association of Orissa. A contingent of 50 participants, comprising 36 boys and 14 girls, will represent the WAO at the championship. The participants will be accompanied by a technical team of five officials, including four men and a woman. Under the leadership of WAO vice-president Pruthwiraj Harichandan, the team is confident of putting up an impressive show at the



tournament. The participants had been training rigorously to hone their skills and are eager to showcase their talent at the State-level event. The tournament has attracted top Wushu players from across the State. With its rich history of promoting the sport in the State, the association is committed to identifying and nurturing talent and providing a platform for the Wushu enthusiasts to excel. The championship will feature a range of events including forms, sanda and taolu and will be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Wushu Association of India.

## Environmentalists to CM 'Withdraw to Pipilapanka Dam project'

**As construction of reservoir will affect Rushikulya water flow, ecology**  
**RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR**  
In an urgent appeal to the Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the local residents and environmental activists have called for the withdrawal of the proposed Pipilapanka Dam construction on the Rushikulya river in Ganjam district. In this connection, a memorandum was given to the CM through Brahmapur Sub Collector on Tuesday. The Rushikulya river, which flows through Ganjam, is a lifeline for the district's inhabitants. Due to climate change and construction of small and

large dams at the river's headwaters, water flow from tributaries to the main river has significantly decreased, affecting water availability throughout the year. The crucial water source originates from the Pipilapanka forest and flows from Sorada to Chhatrapur-Ganjam. Over the past four decades, the river's water volume has gradually reduced. From November to June, the river is primarily sustained by its main source, which supports drinking water for villagers, livestock, and agricultural irrigation. If the dam is constructed at Pipilapanka, it will block the primary water flow, threatening the river's biodiversity and turning it into a dead river. Additionally, water supply to Brahmapur will be affected, and ground water levels will drop, drying up wells and



ponds along the river. Administrative decisions to supply water via pipelines from reservoirs to various projects in the Tata Economic Area in Chhatrapur could result in insufficient water for irrigation, benefiting only a few areas while causing extensive damage to the river. The proposal to construct a water storage dam at Pipilapanka is seen as destructive to both the river and the forest ecosystem. Furthermore, the dam construction will displace thousands of people from 23 villages, mostly from Dalit and indigenous communities, depriving them of their forest rights and traditional livelihood sources such as agriculture and forest products. The environmental cost, including forest destruction and loss of biodiversity, far outweighs the limited benefits of providing water to a few areas. Saltwater intrusion from the sea into the river due to reduced freshwater flow has

already started affecting groundwater quality, making well and borewell water saline. This has damaged agriculture in Ganjam and Chhatrapur blocks. The rampant illegal sand mining further exacerbates the problem by reducing the river's water retention capacity. The proposal emphasizes alternative solutions, such as removing silt from existing reservoirs and creating deeper water bodies along the river to capture monsoon water, instead of constructing new dams that harm the river's natural flow. The present appeal follows the Chief Minister's earlier support in 1997 against a similar proposal during the Congress regime. The residents hope that the current government will once again prioritize environmental justice and protect the river that sustains

thousands of lives. "The government should invite scientists to discuss the benefits, losses, and various aspects of the project. Expert engineers from the Irrigation Department need to examine the project as well. The general public and innocent villagers need to be informed about all the reports on the damages and benefits caused by water reservoirs," environmental activist Prafulla Samantara said. During the event, notable environmentalists and officials, including Sudhir Raut, Shyam Shankar Khadanga, Rabi Rath, Bhalchandra Sadangi, Rajendra Kumar Panda, Bignaraj Sahu, Simanchal Nahak, Ashok Kumar Tarai, Sabas Chandra Mahapatra, Aditya Narayan Rath, Sabas Raut, Gagan Chandra Das, among others were present.

## Services in a shambles in MKCG, City Hosp

**Memo submitted to Health Minister**  
**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**  
The healthcare services have deteriorated alarmingly in the City Hospital and MKCG Medical College Hospital in Brahmapur, which provide services to the people of south Odisha. This has been alleged by two social organisations of city. A memorandum submitted to Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling, the Human Rights Protection Cell and Manav Adhikar Surakhya Manch (MASM) stated that due to the vacancies in posts of professors and other staffs many patients are not getting the required treat-



ment. The vacant posts must be filled up immediately. The organisations also demanded a ban on tobacco and other intoxicants in the hospital premises, renovation of the two hospitals, action against the doctors remaining absent during duty hours. The minister while receiving the memorandum in the presence of Brahmapur MLA K Anil Kumar, assured of taking necessary action on the demands. Human Rights Protection Cell convenor Abani Gaya, vice-president Gagan Chandra Mallik and other members SC Mishra, Alakanath Mishra, SS Khadanga were present.

# India's defence production hits record ₹1.27 lakh cr in 2023-24

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



India's annual defence production has hit a record high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, with the Make in India programme crossing new milestones, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday. The value of defence production in FY 2022-23 was Rs 1,08,684 crore. Welcoming the "encouraging development", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Compliments to all those who have contributed to this feat. We are fully committed to nurturing a supportive environment to further enhance our capabilities and establish India as a leading global defence manufacturing hub". He also said, "This will enhance our security apparatus and make us Aatmanirbhar!" in a social media post. Rajnath said the Government is committed to creating a more conducive regime for developing India as a leading global defence manufacturing hub. "The Ministry of Defence has achieved the highest-ever growth in indigenous defence production in value terms during financial year (FY) 2023-24, on the back of successful implementation of the policies and initiatives of the government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, focussing on achieving 'Aatmanirbharta'," the defence ministry said in a statement. The annual defence production has hit a record

high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, it said. "As per the data received from all Defence Public Sector undertakings (DPSUs), other PSUs manufacturing defence items and private companies, the value of defence production in the country has gone up to a record-high figure, i.e., Rs 1,26,887 crore, reflecting a growth of 16.7 per cent over the defence production of the previous financial year," the statement said. The defence minister congratulated the Indian industry, including defence public sector undertakings and other public sector undertakings manufacturing defence items, and the private industry for the feat. "The Make in India programme is crossing new milestones, year after year, under the leadership of PM Shri

@narendramodi," he said. "India has registered the highest ever growth in the value of defence production in 2023-24. The value of production has reached to Rs. 1,26,887 crore in 2023-24 which is 16.8 per cent higher than the value of production of previous financial year," he wrote on X. The defence ministry said that of "the total value of production (VoP) in 2023-24, about 79.2 per cent has been contributed by DPSUs/other PSUs and 20.8 per cent by the private sector". The data shows that in terms of absolute value, both DPSUs/PSUs and private sector have recorded a steady growth in defence production, the statement said. The feat has been achieved due to the policy reforms and initiatives and ease of doing business brought in by the govern-

ment in the last 10 years with focus on attaining self-reliance, the ministry said. "The indigenisation efforts have been pursued aggressively on a sustained basis, that resulted in the highest ever VoP. Moreover, the spiralling defence exports have contributed tremendously to the overall growth in the indigenous defence production," the statement said. Defence exports touched a record-high of Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 32.5 per cent over the last fiscal when the figure was Rs 15,920 crore, it added. In the last five years (since 2019-20), the value of defence production has been increasing steadily, and grown by over 60 per cent, the statement said and also shared year-wise data in this period.

## BRS member's resignation from RS accepted



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh vacancy was created in the Rajya Sabha on Friday with House chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar accepting the resignation of K Keshava Rao who had quit his membership as a BRS MP after joining the Congress. As of now, 16 seats in the Upper House are vacant. Rao was a Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) member of the Rajya Sabha from Telangana since 2020. He joined the Congress on Wednesday and resigned from his membership of the Upper House of Parliament on Thursday. On Friday, Dhankhar accepted his resignation, following which his seat in the Rajya Sabha became vacant, official sources said. With Rao's resignation, as many as 16 seats in the House are vacant. Before this, 15 seats -- four from Jammu and Kashmir, three from Maharashtra, two each from Assam and Bihar, and one each from Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tripura were vacant in the Rajya Sabha, according to the latest tally.

## Cong slams Centre for delay in printing Class VI textbooks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The Congress on Friday criticised the Centre for the delay in publishing new Class 6 textbooks, alleging the Education Ministry is "sabotaging" the education of children after doing the same with the examination process through the "incompetent" National Testing Authority. Congress general secretary Jai Ram Ramesh hit out at the government over the issue, saying that either the "rot runs deep", or the incompetence scales new heights everyday. In a social media post, he said, "After sabotaging the examination process through the incompetent National Testing Authority, the non-biological PM's Education Ministry is sabotaging the education of our children." "Even as the school year has begun, the NCERT - the National (read Nagpur) Council of Educational Research and Training - has failed to publish new textbooks for Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies for Class 6 students," Ramesh said. The textbooks themselves have not been finalised by the National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC), he said. Ramesh pointed out that printing will take another 10 to 15 days. Officials expect a delay of two months before they can make new books available to students, he claimed. "Either the rot runs deep, or the

incompetence scales new heights everyday!" Ramesh said. Later, Ramesh shared a media report which said the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is working on a proposal to recreate 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' in a virtual format via a web platform. "They cannot ensure leak-proof Parikshas, and they cannot ensure schoolchildren get their textbooks on time -- but this is what the Ministry of Education is spending its time on. The blame for these warped priorities lies entirely on the non-biological Pradhan Mantri," Ramesh said. His remarks come a day after Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan reviewed the development of school textbooks in accordance with the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) at a meeting here. The meeting came in the backdrop of a delay in the publication of Class 6 textbooks that were supposed to be taught from April and are yet to hit the market. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had earlier announced that new textbooks for Classes 3 and 6 will be introduced from the 2024-25 academic session. "For the academic year 2024-25, new and engaging textbooks will be introduced in Classes 3 and 6. The textbook development work is in the final phase and nine textbooks for Grades 3 and 6 are already available. The remaining eight will be available very soon," a senior Ministry of Education (MoE) official said. The NCERT had an initial aim of releasing the new textbooks based on the NCF 2023 only for Classes 3 and 6 this year. While the textbooks for Class 3 are available in the market, those for Class 6 have been delayed. It was only this week that the NCERT released new English and Hindi textbooks for Class 6 in the middle of the academic session.

## BJP retains most of its office bearers in States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday appointed its in-charges and co-incharges for states, retaining the incumbent office-bearers in most places. Its national general secretaries Vinod Tawde, Tarun Chugh and Radha Mohan Das Agarwal will continue to steer the party's organisational affairs in Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka respectively, while Prakash Javadekar and Satish Poonia will be the respective in-charges of Kerala and Haryana. Bihar MLA Nitin Nabin will be in-charge of Chhattisgarh, Ashish Sood of Goa, Shrikant Sharma of Himachal Pradesh, Laxmikant Bajpai of Jharkhand, Mahendra Singh of Madhya Pradesh and Vijaypal Singh Tomar of Odisha. Former Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani and party's national general secretary Dushyant Kumar Gautam will continue to be the in-charge of Punjab and Uttarakhand respectively. BJP MP Sambit Patra has also been retained as the coordinator for the north-eastern states. The party had appointed a co-incharge for most of the states.

## Foreigners must comply with organ transplant rules

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



With India emerging as a preferred destination for organ transplants among foreign nationals, the Union Health Ministry has urged the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs to educate these visitors about the country's regulatory guidelines. The move aims to ensure compliance with legal requirements governing organ transplant procedures in India, emphasising transparency and ethical standards in medical tourism practices. In a letter addressed to Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla and Union Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Chandra highlighted the necessity for sensitising foreign nationals about these regulations. The initiative aims to ensure transparency and compliance with regulations, especially in light of concerns over potential commercial dealings in organs involving foreign citizens. Chandra outlined measures including the preparation of scroll messages and creatives to be displayed at airports, on Bureau of Immigration portals, and on Ministry of External Affairs' websites and embassies abroad.

"I shall be grateful if you could kindly look into the matter personally and direct the concerned authorities to ensure that the enclosed messages may be circulated extensively through immigration for wide reach," the letter said. The scroll messages stated that when the donor or recipient is a foreign national, then prior approval of the authorisation committee shall be required before removing or transplanting human organs or tissue or both. A senior official of the embassy of the country of origin in India is required to certify the relationship between the donor and the recipient as per form 21, the message states. In case a country does not have an Embassy in India, the cer-

tificate of relationship, in the same format, shall be issued by the government of that country. Foreign patients needing organ(s) from a deceased donor for transplant, can also seek registration in India through their treating hospital after which their name will be included in the waiting list registry. However, such cases would be considered for allocation of organs only when there is no Indian patient available to take that organ. Dr. Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services (DGHS), had earlier urged States and Union Territories to monitor and report all transplant cases, emphasizing the need for strict action against any illegal activities, including suspension of hospital registrations.

## SC to review same-sex marriage verdict on July 10

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



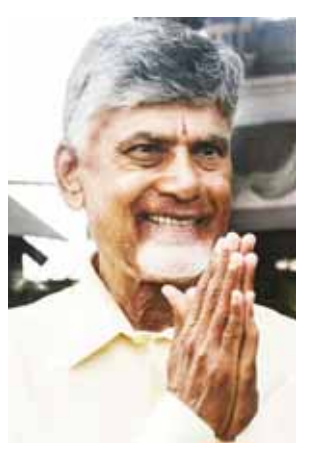
The Supreme Court is scheduled to consider on July 10 a batch of pleas seeking review of its last year's judgement which refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage. According to the cause list of July 10 uploaded on the apex court website, a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud would consider in chambers the pleas seeking review of the October 17 last year verdict. As per the practice, the review pleas are considered in chambers by judges. Besides the CJI, the other members of the bench will be Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Hima Kohli, B V Nagarathna and P S Narasimha. In a setback to gay rights activists, the apex court had on October 17 last year refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage with the exception of those that are recognised by law. The apex court, however, had made a strong pitch for the rights of queer people so they don't face discrimination in accessing goods and services that are available to others, safe hous-

es known as 'Garima Greh' in all districts to provide shelter to members of the community facing harassment and violence and dedicated hotline numbers which they could use in case of trouble. Holding that transgender people in heterosexual relationships have the freedom and entitlement to marry under the existing statutory provisions, the top court had said an entitlement to legal recognition of the right to union, akin to marriage or civil union, or conferring legal status to the relationship can be only done through "enacted law". A five-judge constitution bench headed by CJI Chandrachud had delivered four separate verdicts on a batch of 21 petitions seeking legal sanction for same-sex marriages. All the five judges were un-

animous in refusing to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act and had observed it was within Parliament's ambit to change the law for validating such union. While the CJI had written a separate 247-page verdict, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul (since retired) had penned a 17-page judgement in which he broadly agreed with Justice Chandrachud's views. Justice S Ravindra Bhat (since retired), who authored an 89-page judgement for himself and Justice Hima Kohli, had disagreed with certain conclusions arrived at by the CJI including on applicability of adoption rules for queer couples. Justice PS Narasimha had said in his 13-page verdict that he was in complete agreement with the reasoning given and conclusions arrived at by Justice Bhat. The judges were unanimous in holding that queerness is a natural phenomenon and not "urban or elite" occurrence. In his judgement, the CJI had recorded the assurance by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Centre will constitute a committee chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for the purpose of defining and elucidating the scope of entitlements of queer couples who are in union. The LGBTQIA++ rights activists, who had won a major legal battle in 2018 in the Supreme Court which decriminalised consensual gay sex, had moved the apex court seeking validation of same-sex marriage and consequential reliefs such as rights to adoption, enrolment as parents in schools, opening of bank accounts and availing succession and insurance benefits. Some of the petitioners had urged the apex court to use its plenary power, "prestige and moral authority" to push the society to acknowledge such a union which would ensure LGBTQIA++ lead a "dignified" life like heterosexuals. LGBTQIA++ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two-spirit, asexual and allied persons.

## Naidu presses for more Central funds ahead of Union Budget

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, pressing for enhanced financial support to the debt-burdened state. The meeting came ahead of union budget presentation. Sources said Naidu, during the meeting in North Block, highlighted various ongoing projects in Andhra Pradesh that require urgent central assistance. "The CM presented a detailed memorandum outlining the state's financial requirements and the rationale behind the demand for increased allocation," the sources added. TDP ministers in the Centre were present during the meeting. Naidu also met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Health Minister J P Nadda. According to the state government data, the public debt of Andhra Pradesh has

increased from 31.02 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in 2019-20 to 33.32 per cent in 2023-24 fiscal, indicating deterioration in the fiscal health of the state in the last five years. Key among Naidu's demands were funds for the Polavaram irrigation project, special assistance for backward regions, and support for the development of the new cap-

ital, Amaravati. The chief minister also sought resolution of pending issues stemming from the bifurcation of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. The meeting assumes significance as it comes just weeks before the presentation of the Union Budget 2024-25. The sources indicated that Sitharaman gave a patient hearing to Naidu's concerns and gave an assurance that she will look into Andhra Pradesh's demands within the broader fiscal constraints. Naidu has been vocal about the state's financial distress and sought increased central support to tide over the fiscal challenges, when he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union Ministers on Thursday. The Naidu-led Telugu Desam Party is a crucial partner of the NDA with its 16 Lok Sabha MPs supporting the Narendra Modi-led government.

## India-DRC Secretary-level meeting aims to boost bilateral defence ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to bilateral defence ties, the first Secretary-level meeting between the Defence Ministries of India and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was held here on Friday, Defence Ministry said. The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and included senior officers of Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs and the Armed Forces. The Congolese delegation was led by Permanent Secretary of Defence, Ministry of Defence, DRC Major General Lukwikila Metikwiza Marcel and included the senior officers from the Ministry and a representative of Embassy of DRC in India. The meeting was aimed at identifying areas for collaboration to fulfill the potential of defence cooperation between

the two countries. Detailed discussions were held to promote cooperation in training and defence industry. The Indian delegation highlighted the significant progress India has made in defence manufacturing capability. The DRC side shared the need for modernisation of their Armed Forces. They expressed confidence in the capability of the India defence industry and suggested areas of co-production and co-development. Earlier, the visiting delegation called on Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi. India enjoys cordial and friendly relations with the DRC. India was among the first countries to establish a diplomatic mission in Kinshasa in 1962. The visit is expected to open up new avenues for defence cooperation between the two countries.

## CJI calls for participation in special Lok Adalat

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Friday urged citizens, who have pending cases before the Supreme Court, to take part in the special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 to get their disputes resolved amicably and speedily. In a bid to lessen the pendency of cases in the top court, the special Lok Adalat will be organised in the 75th year of the establishment of the apex court, which came into existence on January 26, 1950 with the coming into force of the Constitution. In a video message uploaded on the apex court's website, the CJI said, "From the 29th of July to the third of August 2024, the Supreme Court is organising a special Lok Adalat. This is part of a series of activities, which the Supreme Court is observing to commemorate the 75th year since the establishment of the Supreme Court." He said most significantly, the judges, who are dedicated to the institution of justice, are

concerned about the large backlog of cases. "The Lok Adalat represents a very informal technology based solution to resolve cases involving our citizens to their satisfaction in a purely voluntary, consensual mode. "Therefore, on behalf of all my colleagues, and the staff of the Supreme Court, I would appeal to all citizens who have cases before the Supreme Court, or lawyers, advocates on record, to take the advantage and benefit of this opportunity in an attempt to resolve the cases speedily in a manner which is acceptable to every contesting party." Justice Chandrachud said. Earlier, the top court had

said Lok Adalats are an integral component of the judicial system in the country, enhancing alternative dispute resolution as a means of expediting and fostering amicable settlements. It had said organising of the Lok Adalat was pursuant to the commitment to accessible and efficient justice delivery for all sections of the society. It had said cases having elements of settlement, including those relating to matrimonial disputes, property disputes, motor accident claims, land acquisition, compensation, service and labour which are pending before the apex court, would be taken up to facilitate speedy disposal.

Budget sops not poll gimmicks, in sync with allocations: Ajit Pawar

PTI ■ MUMBAI The schemes announced in the Maharashtra budget for women, youth and farmers are not "election gimmicks", said Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Thursday, slamming the opposition for ridiculing the government over the initiatives.



farmers and other segments of society that entailed an outlay of more than Rs 80,000 crore. The opposition had called it a "torrent of assurances" but said there was no clarity on how money would be raised for the schemes announced.

Rs 1,500 per month. Pawar said women have welcomed the scheme. "I am facing criticism from the opposition for the scheme which aims to empower women," said the NCP leader, adding that the government is open to improving it.

demands. About 2.5 crore women will benefit from the Ladki Bahin scheme which would cost the state Rs 46,000 crore yearly, he said. He slammed the Congress for promising a monthly dose of Rs 8,500 to women, before the Lok Sabha polls.

Hisar firing incident: Traders decry poor law and order, observe bandh

PTI ■ HISAR

Traders observed a bandh here on Friday and the shops and petrol pumps remained closed to protest the delay in arrest of miscreants even after 12 days of firing of gunshots outside a car dealership by unidentified persons, who had also demanded a ransom of Rs 5 crore.



Pradesh Beopar Mandal and other traders organisations. During the bandh, all establishments and shops of Hisar remained closed and the markets wore a deserted look. More than 70 market associations joined the bandh.

those who demanded a ransom from two other traders of Auto Market, Hisar. The shops of Auto Market, New Grain Market and Bazaar Khajanchiyana had remained closed on Friday last week to protest against the June 24 incident of firing of gunshots outside a car dealership here recently by armed miscreants, who had also demanded Rs 5 crore from its owner.

Heavy rain lashes parts of Rajasthan



Rajasthan continues to see heavy rainfall, with Malpura in Tonk district recording 176 mm rain in the last 24 hours, the meteorological department said on Friday.

MUDA scam: Karnataka Govt transfers Deputy Commissioner of Mysuru

PTI ■ BENGALURU Amid a controversy over alleged land scam in Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), the Karnataka government on Friday transferred Mysuru Deputy Commissioner K V Rajendra.

presently the Managing Director of Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation (KUIDFC), Bengaluru. Ashoka, the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, had alleged that Rajendra had also sought details about the process adopted to allot alternative sites but MUDA did not bother to respond.



value as compared to the location of her land which had been "acquired" by the MUDA, and sought his resignation. The MUDA had allotted plots to Parvathi under the scheme in lieu of over three acres of her land, where MUDA developed a residential layout.

layouts. The BJP has alleged that irregularities to the tune of Rs 4,000 crore had taken place in distribution of sites to land losers by MUDA. "Apparently 4,500-5,000 sites were allotted by flouting norms," a BJP leader claimed.

No evidence of sale, receipt of medical exam question papers: Kerala police

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Police on Friday said presently there is no evidence that anyone has received the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination question papers and answer keys as was circulated on social media a day ago.

It also said it has intensified investigation into the announcement on social media that the question papers and answer keys were available for sale. Police said that any attempt to divert the examination process was an offence and strict legal action would be taken against those who try to do so.

It further said that all types of social media were under strict surveillance 24 hours of the day. After completing MBBS studies abroad, those who wish to practice in India are required to pass the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination (FMGE) conducted by the National Board of Examinations.

Flood situation in Assam critical, CM visits Dibrugarh

PTI ■ GUWAHATI The flood situation in Assam was critical on Friday with nearly 22 lakh people affected and all major rivers flowing above the danger mark.

Flood situation in Assam critical, CM visits Dibrugarh

increased to 62, while three persons are missing. Among the worst-hit districts are Dhubri where 6,48,806 people are affected, Darrang with 1,90,261 people hit and Cachar with 1,45,926 people affected.

The flood situation in Assam was critical on Friday with nearly 22 lakh people affected and all major rivers flowing above the danger mark. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma reviewed the situation in Dibrugarh town, which has been under water and facing severe power shortage for the last eight days.

Rahul visits UP stampede site, interacts with victims' kin

PNS ■ HATHRAS/ALIGARH

The grieving families of the 'satsang' stampede victims who met Rahul Gandhi in Hathras and Aligarh on Friday said the Congress leader has assured them he will make efforts to get their compensation enhanced.

pre-dawn journey from Delhi, accompanied by some party leaders, to console the families of those killed in the Tuesday incident. His meetings with the families in the two neighbouring districts in western Uttar Pradesh took place amid deployment of large number of security personnel by the state police.



Mrityunjay Bharti, 22, lost her maternal grandmother Asha Devi, around 55, in the tragedy. Bharti, who lives in Aligarh, has come to Hathras to be with her relatives who

live in the city's Navipur area. "He (Gandhi) spoke to us and tried to understand our issues. He said he would raise the issue in Parliament so that such incidents do not happen in future," Bharti told PTI.

mother, said she was assured of help during the interaction with the former Congress president. Another woman, who lost her sister-in-law in the stampede, told reporters, "He (Rahul Gandhi) told us that the (Congress) party will help us, and assured us help. He also inquired from us how it (the incident) took place."

looking also into the possibility that a conspiracy was behind the stampede. The government has also announced compensation of Rs 2 lakh for the kind of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured. The police are investigating the matter and have so far arrested six volunteers who were members of the organising committee of the satsang of Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba on July 2 in Fulrai village of Hathras.

Mica mines in Jharkhand free of child labour, says child rights' body

PTI ■ RANCHI

Apex child rights body ANCPNCR on Friday declared mica mines in Jharkhand 'child labour-free', confirming that all kids are now enrolled in schools.

instead, I feel overwhelmed and proud. The success of the Child Labour-Free Mica programme, supported by village panchayats, state government, and district administration, demonstrates how persistent efforts and a singular focus can ensure safety and justice for children," National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) chairperson Priyanka Kanoongo said.

children, communities, civil society organisations, and government, the 'Child Labour-Free Mica' initiative was born. Every child previously out of school was identified, withdrawn from labour, enrolled, and retained in schools, said BBA.

Two police sub-inspectors have been suspended on charges of molesting a woman pilgrim from Madhya Pradesh in Kedarnath a year ago. Sub-inspector Kuldeep Negi and Kedarnath Station House Officer Manjul Rawat were suspended on the basis of the recommendation of an inquiry committee.

Two cops suspended on charges of molesting woman pilgrim in Kedarnath

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

While she was waiting for the next sortie to be ferried back the weather turned bad and the heli service had to be suspended for the day. As there were no proper lodging arrangements at the temple, she sought Rawat's help. He asked her to stay at the police camp for the night saying a woman constable will be deployed there for her security, the SP said quoting the woman's complaint in this regard. However, no woman constable was sent to the police camp in Kedarnath as promised.

in the helicopter. While she was waiting for the next sortie to be ferried back the weather turned bad and the heli service had to be suspended for the day. As there were no proper lodging arrangements at the temple, she sought Rawat's help. He asked her to stay at the police camp for the night saying a woman constable will be deployed there for her security, the SP said quoting the woman's complaint in this regard. However, no woman constable was sent to the police camp in Kedarnath as promised.

and lodged a complaint with the Rudraprayag SP on WhatsApp. The SP instituted an inquiry committee headed by Guptkashi circle officer to look into the matter. However, the probe did not make much progress. The woman then lodged a complaint on CM helpline Uttarakhnad on October, 2023.

He submitted his report to the administration recently indicting the two cops following which an FIR was lodged against them at Sonprayag Kotwali on June 28 and both of them were suspended, the Rudraprayag SP said.



www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Momentous meeting

The meeting of PM Modi with President Putin would solidify India's role as a key player in the emerging global order

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin. It was a meeting for which preparation was underway for a long but was delayed due to the elections. Indian Russian ties are historic but have become more important in the evolving multipolar world order. This will be Modi's first visit to Russia since the onset of the Ukraine war in February 2022. Despite the West's increasing isolation of Russia due to the Ukraine conflict, India has maintained a neutral stance. India has called for dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the dispute but has refrained from condemning Russia outright. This approach aligns with India's historical policy of non-alignment and strategic autonomy. India continues to buy Russian oil despite Western sanctions. India and Russia share a long-standing relationship dating back to the Cold War era. The two countries have traditionally enjoyed strong defence and economic ties, with Russia being a major supplier of military hardware to India. This relationship has persisted through various political changes and has been marked by cooperation in multiple areas, including nuclear energy, space exploration, and trade. Indeed, the Ukraine war has had far-reaching implications for global politics, economics, and security. The conflict has disrupted global energy markets and supply chains, contributing to inflationary pressures worldwide. India nonetheless did not snap ties with Russia despite its good relations with the US and the Western pressure. While maintaining its stance of neutrality, it has continued its trade relations with Russia, including increased imports of discounted Russian oil.



In this backdrop the meeting of Modi with Putin is significant. It is expected to cover a broad range of topics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of India-Russia relations. PM Modi may seek to secure long-term energy supplies from Russia to ensure stability in its energy markets. Both leaders may discuss ongoing and future defence projects, including the delivery of military hardware and the joint development of defence technologies. India's defence modernization plans, which include acquiring advanced weaponry and upgrading its military capabilities, are likely to be a focal point of discussion. Modi and Putin are expected to discuss the evolving international order and regional security issues. India's position as a rising global power and its role in regional stability will likely be a major point of discussion. The conversation may also touch upon India's vision for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, where it seeks to counterbalance China's influence. Bilateral trade has seen growth despite sanctions on Russia, and both countries may seek to expand this further by identifying new areas of cooperation. Though it may not augur well for the US which may frown but then for every country its interests are paramount. This balancing act could position India as a crucial player in mediating global conflicts and fostering international cooperation, enhancing its role on the world stage.

### PICTALK



Locals move their belongings on a boat as they move to a safer place during floods, in Darrang district

# Nuanced shift in parliamentary conduct



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

As parliamentarians navigate new complexities, the emphasis remains on upholding the dignity, decorum, and effectiveness of legislative processes

The 18th Lok Sabha has been ushered in with customary procedural formalities on the 25th of June, 2024. Certain rituals convert the reality of Lok Sabha into the sanctified existence of a group of people meant to lead this country through such vicissitudes as it may face. This is, as it should be, an extraordinary phenomenon. The nation can be legitimately proud of this event. Yet in certain ways, it's different from some of the preceding Lok Sabhas because this time there was no consensus on the identification of a Speaker for the Lok Sabha.

It is not as if in each of the preceding Lok Sabhas, the selection of the speaker was unanimous. There were instances when the Speaker was chosen by ballot and the Lok Sabha still, functioned with a fair degree of cohesiveness. The unique situation in the 18th Lok Sabha included a demand by the opposition to promise it a Deputy Speaker's position. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, it did not seem to matter to many people. An assurance here and 'now' seemed to be the demand. The matter seems to have would have been settled. The crux of the situation seems to be putting up the Deputy Speaker's position as a factor in negotiation. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, a consensus was built around these issues, which this time around did not seem to bother many people. This is a settled and yet important proposition about the style of conduct of affairs. An illustration may help to establish the point with better clarity. In one of the preceding Lok Sabhas, at a time when Jawahar Lal Nehru dominated the scene in Indian politics, there was a bye-election schedule from Muzaffarpur Constituency in Bihar. Then socialist parties sought to put up Acharya Narendra Dev as their candidate for election from this constituency. Jawahar Lal Nehru, who was one of the tallest figures in the political scene, seized this situation to make a point. He felt that even if Acharya Narendra Dev was a candidate for the opposition, yet there was



no bitterness that Congress as a party had towards him. Ordinarily, Congress was expected to win this election of the parliamentary seat to the Lok Sabha, yet Jawahar Lal Nehru felt that the Lok Sabha should have more different types of people, and therefore Congress would not contest for the Lok Sabha seat from Muzaffarpur against Narendra Dev. Those times were different. There was a predominantly universal sentiment for merit and goodwill, and Narendra Dev sailed home well on that argument. As stated, with the main opposition and Congress working together for Narendra Dev, it was not difficult for him to get elected to the Lok Sabha. Those times were different, and those times still resonate with many people as to what good traditions in the parliamentary system are all about. It's remarkable that during the arguments for Deputy Speakership, no one in public even recalled this episode from the perspective of parliamentary history. It is indeed a case for a two-tiered split on which way the parliamentary traditions could be heading. One can only hope that over time, the good sense and goodwill of parliamentar-



PARLIAMENTARY TRADITIONS ARE IMPORTANT, AND IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE 18TH LOK SABHA WILL HAVE SOME DARING CHALLENGES TO ITS METHOD OF WORK, TO WHICH BOTH THE RULING PARTY AND THE OPPOSITION, LED BY SOME OLD VETERANS, WILL NEED TO ADAPT AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

ians will prevail and matters take their course in a more enlightened way. Be that as it may, one is not quite sure what the adamancy of a prior commitment about the Deputy Speaker's position being given to the opposition has been all about. In any case, the convention has been for the Deputy Speaker's position to be given to the opposition, so ultimately, the contention was only about the timing of the formalization of this kind of prior agreement. It is indeed a small matter, but if the loftiness of parliamentary traditions were to be seen in its due weightage in the conduct of affairs, it is important. Running a parliament cannot and should not be solely about positions, it has also to be about patterns, graces, decency, and above all, dignified conduct in electoral and consensual politics. The people show their class through their representatives, behaviours, and the way arguments are made or not made. This becomes the algorithm for the conduct of public affairs. Every parliament loses at least 20 to 40% of its members who fail to return for various reasons or who

may only serve for one term. Therefore, being a member of parliament, especially the Lok Sabha, carries a huge moral weight that goes beyond simple political votes. Parliamentary traditions are important, and it may well be that the 18th Lok Sabha will have some daring challenges to its method of work, to which both the ruling party and the opposition, led by some old veterans, will need to adapt and take responsibility. < This is a simplified version of what happens, as the method of working is nearly as critical as the methods of resolving differences. All said and done, even parliament has to operate within the bandwidth of rules, regulations, bylaws, practices, and more. It is best done through goodwill and grace. Senior members in the Lok Sabha need to conduct affairs with statesmanship and dignity. The Prime Minister has done well to emphasize that for a nation to work well, all must work together, not just the majority. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### NEW BUILDING NORMS

Madam — This letter refers to the news titled "Haryana Permits Stilt plus Four-Floor Construction" published on July 3. In Haryana, the government led by Nayab Singh Saini has given approval for the construction of Stilt plus Four floors for homeowners, builders, and property dealers. This decision has sparked a mixed response from both society and the construction industry. There is a requirement to obtain permission from neighboring plot holders before commencing Stilt plus Four construction. However, many Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) across the state have expressed opposition to the government's decision through various channels. The government's intention seems to be to increase the income of those involved in the construction sector, despite some technical and legal challenges. It is crucial, however, to strike a balance between the structural changes, such as the reconstruction of sewage systems, public facilities, and the concerns of the public. For residents of builder floors, the use of parking spaces will be significantly improved. Nevertheless, the construction of Stilt plus Four buildings will present both opportunities and challenges. Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

### MAKE QR CODE PAYMENTS UNIVERSAL

Madam — There is a recurring problem with currency change across various services, including both government and private sectors such as transportation (RTC buses, metro trains), and e-seva centers. To address this issue, it is crucial to provide the option of QR code-based online payments everywhere. Additionally, offering a choice between partial cash payment and partial online payment would be beneficial. QR code payments are a secure, contactless method that reduces the risk of account hacking compared to credit or debit card payments. It would also be

### Vigilance urged for Zika virus



Among Pregnant Women Dear Editor, The Union Health Ministry has called on states to maintain constant vigilance by screening pregnant women for Zika virus infection

and monitoring the development of fetuses in those who test positive. Each health facility and hospital has been assigned a nodal officer responsible for ensuring that the premises remain free from Aedes mosquitoes, the carriers of the Zika virus. States have also been directed to enhance their entomological surveillance and intensify vector control efforts in residential areas, workplaces, schools, construction sites, institutions, and health facilities. The spread of Zika has been reported in Pune, where two more cases have recently emerged, bringing the total to six, with both new cases involving pregnant women from Erandwane. The rising number of cases poses a significant health risk, and it is imperative that the government takes appropriate action to curb the spread of the virus across the country. Shanthi Ramanathan | Ghaziabad

advantageous to install ticket vending machines inside metro coaches for last-minute passengers. This would enhance convenience for both employees and customers, reducing arguments, stress, and conflicts, ultimately leading to a more harmonious and healthy lifestyle. In any case the digital payment is the future so why not embrace it wholeheartedly. PVS Sreelekha | Secunderabad

### PM ON MANIPUR

Madam — Prime Minister's Response to Manipur Crisis Questioned Dear Editor, Regarding the news "Modi Silences Critics on Manipur" published on July 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, facing criticism from the opposition over the handling of the ethnic conflict in Manipur, broke his silence on July 3, claiming that violence in the state has been declining. This statement is characteristic of Modi's tendency to address issues long after they have escalated, often offering little more than empty promises. Despite

both central and state governments being under BJP control, there has been minimal action to address the crisis effectively. Kuki residents have been unable to use Imphal airport since May 3, 2023, and essential supplies have to be transported through Mizoram. Modi's recent comments seem insincere and detached from the reality on the ground. The Prime Minister, who has ample time for inaugurating projects and foreign visits, has not visited Manipur, which has been plagued by violence for the past 14 months. The Supreme Court has expressed its distrust in the Manipur government, reflecting the sentiment of the people towards Modi's assurances. Even as Manipur starts to stabilize, it is imperative for the Prime Minister to prioritize visiting the state and addressing the issues directly, rather than focusing on his image and political importance. Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

## Give freebies only when essential and unavoidable

While 'freebies' schemes are intended to offer immediate relief to the targeted groups, their effectiveness and necessity remain suspect

Delhi Government on 1st July 2024 buckled down for implementing the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana, which aims to provide aid of Rs 1,000 to Delhi women above 18, barring the taxpayers, government employees and other government pension plan beneficiaries. An amount of Rs 2,000 crore has been set aside for this scheme. Several such schemes or freebies are provided by different state governments across the length and breadth of the country. Many times these freebies of diverse nature are strategically planned to precede elections and are highly poll-driven in a bid for electoral success. These freebies or Rewari culture as mentioned by PM Modi, have been defined by the Reserve Bank of India report as "a public welfare measure that is provided free of charge". They are generally aimed at benefiting the targeted population in the short term and are different from long-term welfare schemes which are categorized as public/merit goods

and are a way of promoting social justice, equity, and human development. Some examples of welfare schemes are the Public Distribution System, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act



(MGNREGA), the mid-day meal scheme, etc. While freebies are frequently used by political parties to build public trust, it is worthwhile to analyse them as a necessity or waste. < Such schemes stimulate economic growth by incentivising and increasing the productive capacity of the workforce along with providing necessities and social welfare to the poor and marginalized sections of society. For example, freebies such as uniforms, textbooks, bicycles or health insurance can improve the literacy, mobility, health, and quality of life of the needy and vulnerable groups. By increasing the disposable income of the

poor, freebies can stimulate demand for goods and services, thereby boosting economic activity. Besides, if rationally devised, they can also reduce income inequality. For example, loan waivers, or cash transfers can empower the weaker and indebted households by giving them access to assets, credit, or income support. However, freebies are like a double-edged sword, with heavy economic and social costs. Foremost, large-scale public expenditure comes with a huge and permanent fiscal burden and macroeconomic distortions. It leads to an immediate increase in demand, disrupting inflation; diverting funds from repaying governments' previous obligations causing accumulation of public debt; and diverting funds from more productive and essential sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, industry, etc. leading to resource misallocation. Besides the freebies in the form of free water, electricity, or fuel can lead to the deterioration of the environment, by encouraging their

overuse and wastage of natural resources. Freebies can also lead to negative externality by creating a dependency culture and loss of productivity, reducing the incentive for individuals to seek employment or improve their economic situation through their efforts. Additionally, cash vs. kind grants are always debatable and in general cash benefits generally lead to misuse of funds such as gambling, liquor consumption, adultery, etc. which leads to deviation from the desired benefits.

In conclusion, freebies can play a crucial role in addressing immediate social and economic challenges, they must be implemented with careful consideration of their long-term impact and sustainability. A rational policy framework is needed foremost, to define the targeted section and then design the nature and amount of benefit to minimize inappropriate utilization of resources (The author is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi; views are personal)



KAJLEEN KAUR



## FIRST COLUMN

### A TALE OF DECEIT, DESIRE AND DEVASTATION

Buddha once reflected, those captivated by lust fall into the cyclical suffering of existence



RAVI VALLURI

Those who are lust-infatuated fall back into the swirling current (of samsara) like a spider on its self-spun web," said Buddha. Aeons ago lived an old farmer whose wife was young and alluring. The prepossessing woman was not satisfied physically by her aged husband and fantasized about young men. She hardly attended to the household chores and was perpetually looking for the company of youngsters to fulfil her carnal desires. A trickster came to know about the quandary of the winsome one and seeing her alone went up to her uttering, "I am a widower. The moment I saw you I was ensnared by your voluptuous body. I beseech you to give me the pleasure of your company. However, I have very little wealth at my disposal." Delighted at the offer, the woman blurted, "O handsome one, my husband has plenty of lucre. He is old and infirm. I will embezzle the mammon and jewellery at our house and let us scoot from this place to some far away place where we can spend rest of our lives."

The strapping trickster possessing a chiselled frame became excited and asked the damsel to bring the loot and gold to a place where he would be waiting for her. "We will then leave the place as it darkens," he informed her. The farmer's wife waited till it was dark and when her husband fell asleep robbed the money and gold and left the house in the cover of darkness to meet her lover. The mountebank took the



bag full of money and gold on the pretext that he would carry it and they began their journey. After travelling some distance, they halted as there was a river to cross. The hoodwinker pondered, "What do I do with this libidinous woman? If someone were to set his eyes on her, he would perforce have to protect her. Let me scoot with the loot," he decided. His mind was cannonaded with all these thoughts, "Look, my dear, it would be arduous to cross the river. Let me first ferry the money bag to the other side of the river. I will come back and we can swim across to the other bank."

The ludicrous woman gave the bag to the young charlatan. He requested her to give up her apparel as the clothes could hinder swift swimming. The naïve lewd woman agreed to the proposal. The youthful trickster was now left with the bag and her clothes. Covering her naked body with her hands, the woman began waiting restlessly for the deluder to return. Suddenly a jackal with a piece of meat in his mouth happened to pass by. The jackal happened to see a fish that emerged from the water and in attempting to grab it dropped the piece of meat and ran towards it. However, the fish, seeing the rushing jackal, jumped back into the water.

Disappointed, the jackal went back to pick up the piece of meat. Unexpectedly a kite swooped and took it away before the jackal could reach it. The naked woman laughed at the jackal that had lost the fish and also the piece of meat. Hurt by the woman's behaviour, the jackal said, "You may be twice as intelligent as I am. But what is the use? You have lost your husband, your lover and your wealth too. The distraught woman realized her folly and entered a temple to pray for her sins as the priest draped her nudity and uttered, "Cover your nudity with the cloak of purity. Lust is ephemeral, Godliness is permanent."

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views expressed are personal)

# Paper leak: Call for fair and a political resolution



GOURAV VALLABH

Paper leaks are not merely procedural failures; they erode trust in the examination system. This matter transcends political divides and requires a systemic reform



The recent NEET paper leak has caused a stir in the nation. Paper leaks are a serious issue that must be addressed sensitively and apolitically. No government can condone such malpractices, and addressing them must prioritize fairness over political gain. This issue needs to be handled sensitively and free from political agendas. Addressing the root causes and implementing robust measures are essential to ensure the integrity of the examination process and restore trust among students and their families. Paper leaks aren't new and have happened before. It's crucial to take this issue seriously and work on solutions. Understanding why parents and students are influenced by leaked papers and addressing these root causes will help maintain exam integrity and ensure a fair process. Instances of paper leaks have undermined trust in the examination system, leading to the temptation for guaranteed selection through illicit means. It is essential to stop this practice, implement stringent security measures, enforce strict penalties for malpractices, and ensure transparent and fair examination processes to restore trust and uphold the principle of merit-based success. We must remember that the National Testing Agency (NTA) was established as a premier, specialist, autonomous, and self-sustained testing organization for higher educational institutions.

The NTA is governed by a body consisting of esteemed members such as former UPSC Chairmen, Directors of IITs, NITs, IIMs, and Vice Chancellors of JNU and IGNOU, whose integrity should not be doubted. However, the issues lie at both the policy and execution levels, and solutions are needed at both levels. Here are some proposed solutions: For examinations with over 500,000 students, a two-tier filtering system should be



THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES LIKE THE CBI IS ESSENTIAL IN ADDRESSING SUCH MALPRACTICES AND RESTORING TRUST IN THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

used, including preliminary and main exams. If the number of candidates exceeds 2,000,000, a more rigorous three-tier system should be adopted: preliminary, main stage 1, and main stage 2 exams. The final merit list should be based on the average marks obtained in main stage 1 and stage 2.

This approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation process, maintaining fairness and integrity by filtering candidates through multiple stages. Implementing this system would address the challenges of managing large numbers of candidates and reduce the malpractice risk, leading to a more reliable and credible examination process. It is important to designate certain cities or centres as sensitive or extremely sensitive, similar to how polling booths are identified by the Election Commission. These centres should be under constant CCTV surveillance to maintain the integrity of the examination process, deter malpractice, and ensure fairness and transparency.

This proactive approach will help restore confidence in the examination system and mitigate the risk of irregularities. The distinction between the Examination of Selection and the Examination of Rejection must be clearly defined and resolved. High-stakes exams like NEET and JEE are designed to be rejection-based, aiming to filter out unqualified candidates. This means the primary goal is to eliminate those not meeting the necessary standards. To achieve this, paper setters need specialized training to craft exams that effectively serve this purpose.

Each question should act as a hurdle designed to bifurcate and challenge candidates and comprehensively test their knowledge and skills. This approach ensures that only the most capable and prepared students succeed. A strong question bank, online testing, and AI-based proctoring can enhance the credibility of exams. Involving all teachers in contributing to the question bank and testing items for difficulty promotes participation.

Implementing global standard cybersecurity protocols is essential to maintain the integrity of the examination process. Implementing biometric verification for handling question papers can prevent incidents like the NEET 2024 leak. Technological measures like constant surveillance, digital encryption, and secure transmission methods are crucial for ensuring fairness and security. The recent government notification of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act on June 21 is a significant move to ensure the integrity of India's examination system. This Act introduces stringent penalties, including jail sentences of up to 10 years and fines of up to Rs 1 crore, for those involved in organized paper leaks and exam malpractices. It aims to combat examination fraud and restore public confidence in the examination process, clearly conveying that cheating and corruption will not be tolerated. This legislation deserves widespread support as it seeks to protect honest students' hard work and aspirations, ensuring a fair and transparent system for all. The grace marks system

should be eliminated as it relies on subjective measures like answering speed and accuracy, leading to inconsistency and unfair advantage. Examination bodies should avoid awarding grace marks to ensure a level playing field for all candidates, maintaining the credibility and fairness of the examination system.

The government's prompt action in conducting NEET again for 1,563 students in seven centres is commendable. Recently, the CBI was appointed to investigate NEET irregularities and has been rigorously probing the entire examination fraud, leading to the arrest of numerous brokers, teachers, principals, and others involved in the wrongdoing.

This swift response demonstrates the government's commitment to maintaining the integrity of the examination process and ensuring a fair opportunity for all students. The collaborative effort between the government and investigative agencies like the CBI is essential in addressing such malpractices and restoring trust in the examination system. Focusing on creating and enforcing fair exam policies is essential rather than engaging in political finger-pointing. Opposition parties should provide helpful solutions for issues such as exam leaks and fraud, and we need to come together to solve these problems proactively. We must prioritize students' well-being and create a secure, transparent exam environment to support their academic and career goals, positively impacting the country's future.

(The writer is a professor and a BJP leader; views are personal)

# How Assange redefined the political terrain for modern whistleblowers

Julian Assange has become a symbol of the complex battle for press freedom and the protection of whistleblowers worldwide

In recent years, the narrative surrounding whistleblowers and their impact on press freedom has garnered significant global attention. Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, remains a prominent figure in this ongoing discussion. His latest legal and personal developments provide a lens through which we can examine the broader issues of press freedom, whistleblower protection, and the intricate dynamics of state power. Julian Assange is best known for founding WikiLeaks in 2006, a platform designed to publish classified, censored, or otherwise restricted information of political, ethical, diplomatic, or historical significance. WikiLeaks gained international notoriety in 2010 when it released a cache of U.S.



SANTOSH MATHEW

military documents and diplomatic cables, revealing controversial actions and policies of the U.S. government. This move cemented Assange's reputation as a champion of transparency and press freedom but also made him a target of intense legal and political scrutiny. As of mid-2024, Assange remains detained in the United Kingdom's Belmarsh Prison, fighting extradition to the United

States, where he faces charges under the Espionage Act. His legal team argues that extraditing Assange would set a dangerous precedent for journalists worldwide, potentially criminalizing the publication of classified information in the public interest. His health has been a significant concern, with reports indicating deteriorating physical and mental well-being. Human rights organizations have repeatedly called for his release, citing the harsh conditions of his detention and the potential impact on global press freedom. In addition to his legal battles over WikiLeaks, Assange has faced rape allegations in Sweden. In 2010, Swedish authorities issued an arrest warrant for Assange on charges of sexual

misconduct, including rape. Assange denied the allegations, claiming they were part of a political smear campaign. He sought asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in 2012, where he remained for seven years until his asylum was revoked in 2019, leading to his arrest by British authorities. In 2019, Swedish prosecutors dropped the investigation, but the allegations continue to cast a shadow over Assange's public image. Julian Assange's influence on global journalism and transparency cannot be overstated. Named Time Magazine's Person of the Year in 2010, Assange's work through WikiLeaks has inspired a new era of investigative journalism. By leveraging technology to

expose hidden truths, Assange has empowered journalists and activists worldwide to challenge powerful institutions and demand accountability.

Julian Assange's plight is part of a larger narrative that includes other notable whistleblowers like Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning. Snowden, a former NSA contractor, leaked classified information in 2013, revealing extensive global surveillance programs conducted by the NSA and its allies. Currently residing in Russia, Snowden continues to be an advocate for privacy and government transparency. Chelsea Manning, a former U.S. Army intelligence analyst, leaked classified military and diplomatic documents to

WikiLeaks in 2010. Her disclosures included the infamous "Collateral Murder" video, showing U.S. helicopter gunship attacks that killed civilians in Baghdad. Manning was convicted in 2013 and sentenced to 35 years in prison, but her sentence was commuted by President Barack Obama in 2017 after seven years in custody.

India, with its complex socio-political landscape, has its own history of whistleblowing and press freedom challenges. Cases like those of Sanjiv Chaturvedi, an Indian Forest Service officer who exposed corruption in the Haryana Forest Department, highlight the risks faced by whistleblowers in India. Despite the Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014, which aims to pro-

tect individuals exposing corruption or wrongdoing, whistleblowers in India often face retaliation, including harassment, legal action, and even physical harm. The cases of Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, and Chelsea Manning illustrate the critical intersection of press freedom and whistleblower protection. While their actions have undeniably contributed to public awareness and accountability, they have also faced severe repercussions. These cases underscore the need for robust legal protections for whistleblowers and journalists to ensure that the pursuit of truth does not come at the cost of personal freedom and safety. In India and globally, the fight for press freedom and the

protection of whistleblowers is far from over.

As governments continue to navigate the balance between national security and the public's right to know, the outcomes of these high-profile cases will undoubtedly influence future policies and the broader discourse on transparency and accountability. In the context of the Emergency period's media compliance, L.K. Advani's comment, "You were asked to bend, but you began to crawl," remains relevant today as a stark reminder of the dangers of compromised press freedom and the importance of journalistic integrity in holding power to account.

(The writer is an associate professor; views expressed are personal)

# Pope to preside over interfaith meeting in Indonesian mosque

AP ■ ROME



Pope Francis will preside over an interfaith meeting in a mosque in the world's largest predominantly Muslim country during a four-nation Asian visit in September that will be the longest and most complicated foreign trip of his pontificate.

The Vatican on Friday released the itinerary for Francis' September 2-13 trip to Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. The packed schedule makes clear that the 87-year-old pontiff, who has battled health problems and is increasingly reliant on a wheelchair, has no plans to slow down.

After a day of rest upon arrival in Jakarta on September 3, Francis launches into a typically rigorous round of protocol visits to heads of state and government, speeches to diplomats and meetings with clergy and public Masses.

Francis will be the third pope to visit Indonesia, after Pope Paul VI in 1970 and Pope John Paul II in 1989. About 87 per cent of Indonesia's 277

million people are Muslim, but the country also has Southeast Asia's second-largest Christian population, after the Philippines, and the third-largest in Asia after the Philippines and China.

In Jakarta, he'll preside over an interfaith meeting at the capital's Istiqlal Mosque, expected to be attended by leaders of the six religions in Indonesia that are officially recognised and protected: Islam, Protestant, Catholic, Buddhism, Hinduism and

Confucianism.

Francis is also expected to walk through a tunnel, called the "Tunnel of Friendship," connecting the grand mosque to the neo-Gothic Our Lady of The Assumption Cathedral, which was constructed by Indonesian authorities in 2020.

As a result, the first leg of Francis' four-nation trip is likely to heavily emphasise interreligious harmony and tolerance, a theme he has hammered home on many of

his foreign visits, especially to the Gulf and other Muslim majority nations.

Sprinkled in the mix in all four countries are encounters with young people, poor and disabled people, elderly people and Francis' regular meetings with his Jesuit confreres. The trip was originally planned for 2020 but was called off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. At 11 full days, it's the longest of Francis' 11-year papacy, outpacing by a few days some of his long trips to the Americas and recalling some of the strenuous, globe-hopping trips of St. John Paul II.

It will bring the Argentine Jesuit to the world's most populous predominantly Muslim nation, Indonesia, as well as one of the world's newest countries, the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, where the Catholic Church wields enormous influence.

About 98.3 per cent of its 1.34 million population is Catholic, according to the 2022 census, and it's the Asian country with the highest proportion of Catholics after the Philippines.



Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei casts his vote for the presidential runoff election in Tehran, Iran, Friday, July 5, 2024. Iranians began voting Friday in a runoff election to replace the late President Ebrahim Raisi, killed in a helicopter crash last month, as public apathy has become pervasive in the Islamic Republic after years of economic woes, mass protests and tensions in the Middle East. AP/PTI

# Israel conducts military operation in West Bank city of Jenin, 7 Palestinians killed

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Palestinian authorities say seven people were killed Friday during an Israeli military operation in the area of the West Bank city of Jenin, where the Israeli military said it had been carrying out "counterterrorism activity" that included an airstrike.

The military said Israeli soldiers had "encircled a building where terrorists have barricaded themselves in" and the soldiers had exchanged fire with those inside, while an airstrike had "struck several armed terrorists" in the area.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said a total of seven people had been killed, but did not specify whether they died in the exchange of fire or the airstrike. The Islamic Jihad militant group named four of the dead as its members. The clashes in Jenin, a known militant stronghold where the army frequently operates, came a day after an Israeli anti-set-



tlement monitoring group said the government plans to build nearly 5,300 new homes in settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The construction plans revealed by the Peace Now group are part of the hard-line government's efforts to beef up settlements as part of a strategy of cementing Israel's control

over the West Bank to prevent a future Palestinian state. The Palestinians seek the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza — areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war — for an independent state.

Violence has spiralled in the West Bank since the start of Israel's war in Gaza, sparked by the October 7 raid into south-

ern Israel by Hamas militants who killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took more than 200 others as hostages. The Palestinian Health Ministry says over 500 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most have been killed during Israeli raids and violent protests. The dead also include bystanders and Palestinians killed in attacks by Jewish settlers.

In Gaza, the war has so far killed more than 38,000 Palestinians, Gaza's Health Ministry says. The ministry does not differentiate between combatants and civilians in its count, but it includes thousands of women and children.

Cease-fire talks appeared to be reviving after stalling for weeks. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Thursday he was sending negotiators to resume the talks, a day after Hamas handed mediators its latest response to a US-backed proposal for a deal.

# Nepal PM Prachanda to face floor test on July 12 after key ally's withdrawal of support

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's embattled Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who lost support from two major alliance partners earlier this week, is set to seek a vote of confidence from the House of Representatives on July 12, it was announced on Friday.

The prime minister sent a letter to the Parliament Secretariat asking the latter to make arrangements for the vote.

In a letter addressed to the federal parliament on Friday, Prime Minister Prachanda mentioned that after one of the members of the ruling alliance withdrew the support to the government, he will seek a vote of confidence on July 12 under Article 100 (2) of the constitution of Nepal.

Earlier, Prachanda, 69, had announced

that he would not quit after the resignation of eight Cabinet ministers belonging to the largest party and instead face a vote of confidence in Parliament.

His announcement was prompted after Nepali Congress (NC) president Sher Bahadur Deuba and Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman K P Sharma Oli, both former premiers, inked a power-sharing deal on Monday night to form a new NC-UML alliance government.

According to the understanding, UML chair Oli will lead a coalition for a year and a half. As per the understanding, NC President Deuba will be the prime minister for the remaining term of the present parliament.

The Nepali Congress, which is the largest party in the 275-member House of Representatives (HoR), has 89 seats,

while CPN-UML has 78 seats. Prachanda's party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre (CPN-MC), has 32 seats.

The CPN-Unified Socialist (CPN-US), which has 10 seats in the Lower House, has said it will vote in favour of the Prachanda-led government. Despite that support, Prachanda enjoys support from just 63 members of the HoR.

He requires 138 votes for the government to win the vote of confidence in the House. This will be the fifth time Prachanda will seek a vote of confidence within a term of one and a half years. It is required for the coalition government to seek a vote of confidence within 30 days if a coalition partner withdraws support.

Nepal has had 13 governments in the last 16 years, indicating the fragile nature of the Himalayan nation's political system.

# Brazil's Bolsonaro indicted for alleged money laundering

AP ■ SAO PAULO

The indictment dramatically raises the legal threats facing the divisive ex-leader that are applauded by his opponents but denounced as political persecution by his supporters.

Bolsonaro did not immediately comment, but he and his lawyers have previously denied any wrongdoing in both those cases, as well as other investigations into the former president. One is probing his possible involvement in inciting an uprising in capital Brasilia on January 8, 2023 that sought to oust his successor from power.

Last year, Federal Police accused Bolsonaro of attempting to sneak in diamond jewellery reportedly worth USD 3 million and selling two luxury watches.

Police said in August that Bolsonaro received cash from the nearly USD 70,000 sale of two luxury watches he received as gifts from Saudi Arabia. Brazil requires its citizens arriving by plane from abroad to declare goods worth more than USD 1,000 and, for any amount

above that exemption, pay a tax equal to 50 per cent of their value.

The jewellery would have been exempt from tax had it been a gift from Saudi Arabia to Brazil, but not Bolsonaro's to keep for himself. Rather, it would have been added to the presidential collection. The investigation showed that Mauro Cid, Bolsonaro's former aide-de-camp who allegedly falsified his COVID-19 records, in June 2022 sold a Rolex watch and a Patek Philippe watch to a store in the US for a total USD 68,000. They were gifted by Saudi Arabia's government in 2019. Cid later signed a plea bargain with authorities and confirmed it all.

Flavio Bolsonaro, the former president's eldest son and a sitting senator, said on X after Thursday's indictment that persecution against his father was "blatant and shameless". In addition to Bolsonaro, police indicted 10 others, including Cid and two of his lawyers, Frederick Wassef and Fábio

Wajngarten, according to one of the sources. Wassef said in a statement that he didn't have access to the final report of the investigation, and decried selective leaks to the press of an investigation that is supposed to be proceeding under seal.

"I am going through all of this solely for practising law in defence of Jair Bolsonaro," he wrote.

On X, Wajngarten said police have found no evidence implicating him. "The Federal Police knows I did nothing related to what they are investigating, but they still want to punish me because I provide unwavering and permanent defence for former President Bolsonaro," he said.

Bolsonaro retains staunch allegiance among his political base, as shown by an outpouring of support in February, when an estimated 185,000 people clogged Sao Paulo's main boulevard to protest what the former president calls political persecution. His critics, particularly members of his rival President

Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's political party, have cheered every advance of investigations and repeatedly called for his arrest.

The 69-year-old former army captain started his political career as a staunch advocate of Brazil's military dictatorship, and was a lawmaker for nearly three decades. When he bid for the presidency for the first time, in 2018, he was widely dismissed as an outsider and too radically conservative. But he surprised analysts with a decisive victory, in no small part due to his self-portrayal as an upstanding citizen in the years following a sprawling corruption probe that ensnared hundreds of politicians and executives. Bolsonaro insulted adversaries since his earliest days in office while garnering critics with his divisive policies, attacks on the Supreme Court and efforts to undermine health restrictions during the pandemic. He lost his reelection bid in the closest finish since Brazil's return to democracy in 1985.

# Post-communist generation hoping for new era of democracy in Mongolia

AP ■ ULAANBATAR

Tsenguun Saruulsaikhan, a young and newly minted member of Mongolia's parliament, is unhappy with below-coal electricity rates that she says show her country has yet to fully shake off its socialist past. Most of Mongolia's power plants date from the Soviet era and outages are common in some areas. Heavy smog envelops the capital Ulaanbaatar in the winter because many people still burn coal to heat their homes.

"It's stuck in how it was like 40, 50 years ago," said Tsenguun, part of a rising generation of leaders who are puzzling out their country's future after three decades of democracy. "And that's the reason why we need to change it."

Democracy in Mongolia is in a transition phase, said Tsenguun, who at 27 is the youngest member of a new parliament sworn in this week.

"We are trying to figure out what democracy actually means," she said in a recent interview.

Discontented voters deliver a ruling party setback

Mongolia became a democracy in the early 1990s after six decades of one-party communist rule. Many Mongolians welcomed the end of repression and resulting freedoms but have since soured on the parliament and established political parties.

Lawmakers are widely seen as enriching themselves and their big business supporters from the nation's mineral wealth rather than using it to develop a country where poverty is widespread.

Voters delivered an election setback to the ruling Mongolian People's Party last week, leaving it still in charge but with a slim majority of 68 out of the 126 seats in parliament. Tsenguun was one of 42 winning candidates from the main

opposition Democratic Party, which made a major comeback after being reduced to a handful of seats in the 2016 and 2020 elections.

She articulates a vision for Mongolia that dovetails with small government Republicans in the United States. In her view, too many people think the government will take care of them, and the large budget just feeds corruption.

Government should be as invisible as possible, she said, and give people the freedom and responsibility to build their own lives.

"I don't think that (the) free market has developed yet because the people are not used to this mentality," she said. "People are afraid of competition." The detention of a couple of journalists in the past several months has fuelled worries that the government may be edging backward, eroding the freedoms that democracy brought.

# Beryl makes landfall on Mexico's Caribbean coast near Tulum

AP ■ TULUM

Hurricane Beryl made landfall on Mexico's coast near the resort of Tulum as a Category 2 storm early Friday, whipping trees and knocking out power as it came ashore after leaving a trail of destruction across the eastern Caribbean.

The US National Hurricane Centre said that Beryl is expected to rapidly weaken to a tropical storm as it crosses over the Yucatan Peninsula before it re-emerges into the Gulf of Mexico and likely regains hurricane strength.

Once in the warm waters of the Gulf, Beryl is forecast to head toward northern Mexico near the Texas border, an area had already been soaked by Tropical Storm Alberto just a couple of weeks ago.

Once the earliest storm to

develop into a Category 5 hurricane in the Atlantic, Beryl spread destruction in Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Barbados in recent days. Shortly after landfall, Beryl's maximum windspeeds had decreased to 100 mph (160 kph), according to the US Hurricane Centre.

Mexican authorities had moved some tourists and residents out of low-lying areas around the Yucatan peninsula prior to landfall, but tens of thousands remained to tough out the 100 mph (160 kph) winds and expected storm surge. Much of the area around Tulum is just a few yards (metres) above sea level.

The city was plunged into darkness when the storm knocked out power as it came ashore. Screaming winds set off car alarms across the town.

Once a sleepy, laid-back village,

in recent years Tulum has boomed with unrestrained development and now has about 50,000 permanent inhabitants and at least as many tourists on an average day. The resort now has its own international airport.

Early Friday, the storm's center was about 15 miles (25 kilometers) north-northwest of Tulum and was moving west-northwest at 15 mph (about 24 kph), the hurricane center said.

On Friday, Beryl was expected to weaken as it crossed over the Yucatan peninsula and re-emerge in the Gulf of Mexico, where the surprisingly resilient storm could once again become a hurricane and make a second landfall around Mexico's border with Texas next week.

As the wind began gusting over Tulum's beaches, four-wheelers with megaphones rolled along the sand telling

people to leave. Tourists snapped photos of the growing surf, but military personnel urged them to leave.

Authorities around the Yucatan peninsula have prepared shelters, evacuated some small outlying coastal communities and even moved sea turtle eggs off beaches threatened by storm surge.

In Tulum, authorities shut things down and evacuated beachside hotels.

Tourists were also taking precautions. Lara Marsters, 54, a therapist visiting Tulum from Boise, Idaho, said "this morning we woke up and just filled all of our empty water bottles with water from the tap and put it in the freezer ... so we will have water to flush the toilet."

"We expect that the power will go out," Marsters said. "We're going to hunker down and stay safe."

# Fireworks light up skies across US as Americans celebrate July 4

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Millions of people in the US celebrated and suffered under heat warnings as they flocked to beaches and travelled in droves to toast their nation's birth with July 4 parades, cookouts and the always anticipated fiery splash of colour in the evening sky.

In Washington, neon bursts of light illuminated the night above the National Mall. The Boston Pops performed a musical fireworks spectacular at that city's Hatch Memorial Shell. And at parades all across the country, revelers dressed up in red, white and blue and waved the Stars and Stripes in commemoration of Independence Day.

Travel records were projected to fall with people jamming airports and crowding highways to reach Thursday's Independence Day celebra-

tions, which will stretch into a long weekend for many.

On the East Coast, some would-be beachgoers in Connecticut were turned away as parking at state parks along the shore filled to capacity, including a 2-mile (3 kilometer) stretch at Hammonasset Beach State Park — the state's largest shoreline beach.

Across the West, meanwhile, residents dealt with stifling heat as the National Weather Service warned of a "significant and extremely dangerous" heat wave across much of the region. A heat advisory in Philadelphia that came with temperatures tipping into the 90s didn't stop crowds from gathering at historic sites in the city where the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776. Outside the National Constitution Centre, volunteer actors dressed in Revolutionary War-era cos-

ume made of heavy wool, despite the heat. Participants said it was worth it.

"It keeps you connected to your neighbourhood and where you live," said Adrian Mercado, who was donning a 6th Pennsylvania Regiment uniform. Evening fireworks were scheduled over the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, after a concert by Ne-Yo and Kesha. Fireworks crackled in backyard displays and an anticipated 16,000 professional shows were planned to light up the horizon from sea to shining sea. Millions of people were expected to watch the Macy's 4th of July Fireworks show in New York City, where cross rings, strobing comets, waterfalls and other effects can reach up to 1,000 feet (305 metres) in the air. Excited viewers crowded along both the New York and New Jersey sides of the Hudson River as

dusk turned to dark, and they hoped rain would stay away.

"This is how we celebrate. It's the bombs bursting in air. It's the rockets' red glare. That's how people show their pride and patriotism," said Julie Heckman of the American Pyrotechnics Association.

All signs pointed to big celebrations: The Transportation Security Administration reported that a record of nearly 3 million people travelled through airports in a single day last week, a figure expected to be broken this week. AAA projected that 60.6 million people will travel by car during the holiday period. Part of the boost was attributed to easing inflation, though many Americans remain concerned about the economy. On much of the West Coast, residents were advised to take precautions to avoid overheating on the holiday.



# Hungary PM Orbán meets Putin for talks in Moscow

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin welcomed Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to Moscow on Friday for a rare meeting with a European leader to discuss peace proposals for Ukraine.

Orbán's visit comes only days after he made a similar unannounced trip to Ukraine, where he met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and proposed that Ukraine consider agreeing to an immediate cease-fire with Russia.

"The number of countries that can talk to both warring sides is diminishing," Orbán said. "Hungary is slowly becoming the only country in Europe that can speak to everyone."

In comments at the beginning of their meeting that were televised, Putin suggested that Orbán had come to Moscow as a representative of the European Council, despite several European officials having condemned the visit.

The Hungarian prime minister, widely seen as having the warmest relations with Vladimir Putin among all

European Union leaders, has routinely blocked, delayed or watered down EU efforts to assist Ukraine and impose sanctions on Moscow for its actions in Ukraine. He has long argued for a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine but without outlining what that might mean for the country's territorial integrity or future security.

That posture has frustrated Hungary's EU and NATO allies, which have broadly considered Russia's actions as a breach of international law and a threat to the security of countries in Eastern Europe.

Putin told Orbán that he wanted to hear about the position of his "European colleagues" on Ukraine and discuss Moscow's plan for peace as well as bilateral relations. Orbán noted that the meeting was the fourteenth time the leaders have held bilateral talks since 2009.

European officials and leaders have heavily criticised Orbán's visit to Moscow, something only one other European leader has done since the start of the conflict.

"This is about appeasement. It's not about peace," European



Commission spokesperson Eric Mamer said. Hungary at the beginning of the month took over the six-month rotating presidency of the EU Council, a largely formal role that can be used to shape the bloc's policy agenda.

Orbán has said he wants to use the presidency to advocate for an end to the fighting in Ukraine.

The EU's foreign policy chief,

Josep Borrell, said in a statement that Orbán's visit to Moscow "takes place, exclusively, in the framework of the bilateral relations between Hungary and Russia."

"Prime Minister Orbán has not received any mandate from the EU Council to visit Moscow," Borrell said, adding that his "position excludes official contacts between the EU and President Putin. The

Hungarian Prime Minister is thus not representing the EU in any form."

He noted that Putin has been indicted by the International Criminal Court and an arrest warrant released for his role in relation to the forced deportation of children from Ukraine to Russia.

Kaja Kallas, the outgoing Estonian prime minister nominated to become the next EU

foreign policy chief, accused Orbán of "exploiting" the presidency and said the Hungarian leader is trying "to sow confusion."

"The EU is united, clearly behind Ukraine and against Russian aggression," Kallas, a staunch supporter of Ukraine, wrote Friday on the social media platform X.

In an email on Friday, Orbán's press chief, Bertalan Havasi, said the Hungarian leader's trip comes "as part of his peace mission" — reflecting the image of a peacemaker that the populist leader has cultivated since Putin sent his troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó also joined the trip to Moscow, according to a post on his Facebook page.

Speaking to Hungarian state radio before departing Friday morning, Orbán said he was aware that his country's presidency of the EU "does not entitle us to negotiate on behalf of anyone." Without mentioning reports of his planned trip to Moscow, he said his trip earlier this week to Kyiv did not "need a mandate, because I do

not represent anything. The only thing I do is go to those places where there is a war or the threat of war that has negative consequences for Europe and Hungary as well."

Other EU officials have expressed dismay that Orbán undertook the trip unilaterally and without the approval of the bloc's member states.

European Council President Charles Michel on Thursday said on the social media platform X that "the EU rotating presidency has no mandate to engage with Russia on behalf of the EU."

"The European Council is clear: Russia is the aggressor, Ukraine is the victim. No discussions about Ukraine can take place without Ukraine," Michel wrote.

Orbán is the first European leader to visit Russia and sit down for talks with Putin since Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer visited Moscow in April 2022, just weeks after Putin ordered his troops into Ukraine. During that visit he said he raised the issue of crimes allegedly committed in Ukraine by Russian forces.

## Lanka achieved \$8 billion relief through debt restructuring; Prez

**Colombo (PTI):** President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Friday said Sri Lanka saved USD 8 billion over the past two years due to "effective economic management" and emphasised that the nation is now recovering from economic turmoil due to debt restructuring.

Sri Lanka finalised debt restructuring agreements with bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris on June 26. Earlier on June 12, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) disbursed the third tranche of USD 336 million of its USD 2.9 billion bailout package to Sri Lanka.

In April 2022, the island nation declared its first-ever sovereign default since gaining Independence from Britain in 1948. The unprecedented financial crisis led President Ranil Wickremesinghe's predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to quit office in 2022 amid civil unrest.

"Thanks to the harvest in 2022-2023, the country's production increased, and tourism thrived. As a result, we've achieved USD 8 billion relief and paved the way to debt relief," the President said on Friday.

"When the economy collapses, it affects ordinary people the most. When it recovers, its benefits reach another segment," the President's Media Division (PMD) said in a statement quoting Wickremesinghe.

The President was speaking at a ceremony held in Kurunegala, about 100 km northeast of Colombo. "Now, our country has emerged from bankruptcy. We have a four-year plan to repay our loans, offering reduced burdens and interest cuts that will yield USD 5 billion in savings. We are currently in negotiations with private contractors. As a result, approximately USD 3 billion has been withdrawn," he said.

"In total, USD 8 billion has been allocated for our use. Additionally, we have been granted USD 2 billion under relaxed terms. This does not account for funds expected from China or assistance from India. As a result, we have saved USD 8 billion over the past two years," Wickremesinghe, also the finance minister, added.

## Prachanda to face floor test on July 12 after key ally's withdrawal of support

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's embattled Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who lost support from two major alliance partners earlier this week, is set to seek a vote of confidence from the House of Representatives on July 12, it was announced on Thursday.

The prime minister sent a letter to the Parliament Secretariat asking the latter to make arrangements for the vote, local media reported.

"Dahal chose to go for the floor test by the article 100(2) of the Constitution which says 'if the political party which the prime minister represents is divided or a political party in coalition government withdraws its support, the prime minister shall table a motion in the House of Representatives for a vote of confidence within thirty days,'" The Kathmandu Post reported.

Earlier, Prachanda had announced that he would not quit after the resignation of eight Cabinet ministers

belonging to the largest party and instead face a vote of confidence in Parliament.

His announcement was prompted after Nepali Congress (NC) president Sher Bahadur Deuba and Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman K P Sharma Oli, both former premiers, inked a power-sharing deal on Monday night to form a new NC-UML alliance government.

The Nepali Congress, which is the largest party in the 275-member House of Representatives (HoR), has 89 seats, while CPN-UML has 78 seats. Prachanda's party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre (CPN-MC), has 32 seats. The CPN-Unified Socialist (CPN-US), which has 10 seats in the Lower House, has said it will vote in favour of the Prachanda-led government.

Despite that support, Prachanda enjoys support from just 63 members of the HoR.

## Vatican declares US ex-envoy Vigano guilty of schism

AP ■ ROME

The Vatican has excommunicated its former ambassador to the US, Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, after finding him guilty of schism, an inevitable end for the firebrand conservative who became one of Pope Francis' most ardent critics.

The Vatican's doctrine office imposed the penalty after a meeting of its members on Thursday and informed Vigano of its decision Friday, a press statement said.

It cited Vigano's "refusal to recognize and submit to the Supreme Pontiff, his rejection of communion with the members of the church subject to him, and of the legitimacy and magistracy authority of the Second Vatican Council."

The Vatican excommunication means that Vigano is formally outside the church, and cannot celebrate or receive its sacraments, for having committed one of the gravest crimes in canon law: schism. A schism occurs when someone withdraws submission to the pope or from the communion of

Catholics who are subject to him. It is considered particularly dangerous to the faith because it threatens the unity of the church. And in fact, Vigano had created a following of like-minded conservatives and traditionalists over the years as he delved deeper and deeper into conspiracy theories about everything from the coronavirus pandemic, to what he called the "Great Reset" and other fringe ideas.

Vigano knew the schism declaration was coming after the Vatican informed him that it was launching a penal process against him last month. He defiantly called it "an honor" and refused to appear in person or in writing to defend himself.

Vigano, who issued a lengthy public statement last month justifying his conduct, didn't directly respond to the schism declaration on X, his usual forum. About an hour before the Vatican decree was made public, he announced he would be celebrating a Mass on Friday for those who have been supporting him and asked for donations.

Vigano first burst into the pub-

lic's awareness in 2012, during the first Vatileaks scandal, when Pope Benedict XVI's butler leaked the pontiff's private papers to an Italian journalist to try to draw attention to corruption in the Holy See.

In some of the leaked letters Vigano, then the No. 2 in the Vatican City State administration, begged the pope not to be transferred after exposing corruption in the awarding of Vatican contracts that cost the Holy See millions of euros (dollars).

By the time the letters were published, Benedict had transferred Vigano to be the Vatican's ambassador to the United States, which was a prestigious post but one that took him far from Rome and out of the running to one day be a cardinal.

Vigano reappeared on the scene during Francis' 2015 visit to the United States, which as nuncio Vigano helped organize. Everything was going fine until Vigano arranged for Kim Davis, a Kentucky clerk at the center of the U.S. gay marriage debate, to be among a small group of people at the Vatican residence to greet Francis.

## Man who stabbed South Korea opp leader gets 15 years in prison

**Seoul (AP):** A man who stabbed South Korea's opposition leader in the neck earlier this year was sentenced to 15 years in prison on Friday, court officials said.

The knife-wielding man attacked Lee Jae-myung, head of the liberal Democratic Party, South Korea's biggest political party, in January after approaching him asking for his autograph at an event in the southeastern city of Busan.

After being detained by police, he told investigators that he wanted to kill Lee to prevent him from becoming South Korea's president.

The Busan District Court said the man was handed the prison term after being found guilty for an attempted murder and a violation of an election law. The court said that both the man and prosecutors have one week to appeal.

The attack happened ahead of

the country's crucial parliamentary elections in April, which ended with Lee's Democratic Party and other opposition parties winning a massive victory against President Yoon Suk Yeol's conservative governing party.

A court verdict called the attack "a grave challenge" to the country's election systems and an act that "significantly destroys social consensus and confidence on the basic liberal democratic principles," according to Yonhap news agency. It cited the verdict as saying the attacker had long loathed Lee because of differences of political opinions, practised stabbing his neck in advance and followed him on five public events.

The court's public affairs office couldn't immediately confirm details of Friday's verdict. The court didn't disclose the man's identity. Police earlier said he's about 67.

## Af wants to dust off postal service and modernise

AP ■ KABUL

In parts of Afghanistan where there are no street names or house numbers, utility companies and their customers have adopted a creative approach for connecting. They use mosques as drop points for bills and cash, a "pay and pray" system. Now the national postal service wants to phase this out by putting mailboxes on every street across the country, part of a plan to modernise a service long challenged by bureaucracy and war.

The lofty aspirations include introducing access to shopping via e-commerce sites and issuing debit cards for online purchases. It will be a leap in a country where most of the population is unbanked, air cargo is in its infancy and international courier compa-

nies don't deliver even to the capital, Kabul. The changes mean Afghans will pay higher service fees, a challenge as more than half the population already relies on humanitarian aid to survive.

The Afghan Post, like much of the country, still does everything on paper. "Nobody uses email," said its business development director, Zabihullah Omar. "Afghanistan is a member of the Universal Postal Union, but when we compare ourselves to other countries it is at a low level and in the early stages."

The postal service has 400 to 500 branches across the country and is key for completing administrative tasks like obtaining a passport or driver's licence. It distributes up to 15,000 passports daily.

Another popular service is the certification of documents for

admission to higher education or overseas institutions. The main Kabul branch has dedicated counters for it along with VIP lanes and a women-only area.

Post offices in Afghanistan are vital for women wanting to access services or products they would otherwise be denied, since they are often barred from entering ministries or other official premises. But the spectre of the Taliban's edicts targeting women and girls also looms at the Afghan Post.

At the entrance to the main Kabul branch, a sign tells women to correctly wear hijab, or the Islamic headscarf. One picture shows a woman with a red cross over her visible face. The other has a green check mark over the face because only her eyes are seen.

## Pope to preside over interfaith meeting in Indonesian mosque

**Rome (AP):** Pope Francis will preside over an interfaith meeting in a mosque in the world's largest predominantly Muslim country during a four-nation Asian visit in September that will be the longest and most complicated foreign trip of his pontificate.

The Vatican on Friday released the itinerary for Francis' September 2-13 trip to Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. The packed schedule makes clear that the 87-year-old pontiff, who has battled health problems and is increasingly reliant on a wheelchair, has no plans to slow down. After a day of rest upon arrival in Jakarta on September 3, Francis launches into a typically rigorous round of protocol visits to the four countries' heads of state and

government, speeches to diplomats and meetings with clergy and public Masses in each location. In Jakarta, he'll preside over an interfaith meeting at the capital's Istiqlal Mosque.

Sprinkled in the mix are encounters with young people, poor and disabled people, elderly people and Francis' regular meetings with his Jesuit conferees. The trip was originally planned for 2020 but was called off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Francis had to cancel his last planned foreign visit — a quick trip to Dubai last year to participate in the UN climate conference — because of a recurring case of bronchitis. He has seemed in relatively good form in recent months, including during day trips to Italian cities and visits to Roman parishes.

## Pak Punjab province to ban social media platforms for 6 days during Muharram

**Lahore (PTI):** The government in Pakistan's Punjab province is now set to ban all social media platforms — YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok — for six days between July 13 and 18, citing the need to control "hate material" during the Islamic month of Muharram.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's cabinet committee on law and order has recommended banning all social media platforms — YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, among others — during the 6th to 11th day of Muharram (July 13-18) in Punjab, a province of over 120 million people, to "control hate material, misinformation to avoid sectarian violence", according to a notification issued here late Thursday night.

The Punjab government has also requested her uncle Shehbaz Sharif's government at the Centre to notify the suspension of all social media platforms on the internet for six days (July 13-18).

The provincial government has decided to go beyond the routine measures of internet suspension and mobile jamming over Ashura, a after getting reports that 'external forces', including elements from across the border, were involved in the sharing of hate content and memes, Dawn News reported. Sources said the Punjab government had initially deliberated that social media apps be shut down on Muharram 9 and 10. Muharram — the period of recalling and mourning the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain by the community of Shia Muslims — marks the first month of the Islamic Calendar. A greater amount of importance is placed on the first ten days of the festival. On the tenth day, Shia Muslims take out processions via streets.

Cabinet Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani acknowledged that the cabinet committee had put forward a suggestion to close social media apps to avoid dissemination of hate content. Kirmani said a meeting over the issue discussed that hate content increases manifolds on social

media apps, particularly Facebook and X during Muharram, which eventually becomes a bone of contention between two sects instead of the two persons involved. "Dissemination of hate content creates bad blood and spoils the overall environment, particularly during Muharram," he said and added that shutting down social media apps was recommended before, during and a day after Muharram.

Pakistan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir has already declared social media a "vicious media" and underscored the need to fight what he called "digital terrorism".

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)  
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC0033813  
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact Number 9846117607)

**Tender Enquiry No. 105/GHTP/MM-II/CS-49(X) Dated 04-07-2024**  
Dy. Chief Engineer / MM-II/ GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-tender for the work of "AMC for Repair, Laying & Joining of Conveyor Belts and Pulley Lagging of Conveyor System of CHP Stage-I & II at GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat as per detail in tender specifications."  
For detailed NIT and tender specifications please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 05-07-2024, 11:30 AM onwards.  
Note: Corrigendum and addendum if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> only.  
**GHTP-48/24**  
76155/12/3069/2023/35373 Dated CHD - 7/5/2024

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)  
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC0033813  
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact Number 9846117607)

**Tender Enquiry No. 321/HPs/ED-I/S-426 Dated 04-07-2024**  
Dy. CE/ Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-3, Shankli Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for REPAIR OF ONE NO.15 MW PELTON TURBINE RUNNER HAVING SR. NO. 03/RE/SHANAN FOR SHANAN, HEP, PSPCL, JOGINDER NAGAR, DISTT. MANDI (H.P.)  
For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
Note: Corrigendum and Addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
**C407/24**  
76155/12/3072/2023/35378 Dated CHD - 7/5/2024

**verka**  
The Punjab State Cooperative Milk Producers Federation LTD.  
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66  
Notice Inviting e Tender  
www.verka.coop

e-tender is hereby invited for the supply of following item :-

Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
For Verka Head Office Chandigarh	
i. Ghee Ceeka Carton	Annual/ 7 Lakh
• ½ Ltr	
• 1 Ltr	28 Lakh

**NOTE:**  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](https://eproc.punjab.gov.in).  
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)  
NA/12/23917/2023/35350 Dated CHD - 7/5/2024

## Fierce fighting breaks out as militias launch new attacks

AP ■ BANGKOK

New fighting has broken out in northeastern Myanmar, bringing an end to a Chinese-brokered cease-fire and putting pressure on the military regime as it faces attacks from resistance forces on multiple fronts in the country's civil war.

The Taang National Liberation Army, one of three powerful militias that launched a surprise joint offensive last October, renewed its attacks on regime positions last week in northeastern Shan state, which borders China, Laos and Thailand, and the neighbouring Mandalay region with the support of local forces there.

Since then, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army has joined in, and by Friday, combined forces from the two allied militias had reportedly encircled the strate-

gically important city of Lashio, headquarters of the regime's northeastern military command. This is the next phase of October's "1027" offensive, said Lway Yay Oo, spokesperson for the TNLA, which last week said the military provoked retaliation with artillery and airstrikes despite the cease-fire.

"In phase two, our number one aim is the eradication of the military dictatorship, and number two is the protection and safety of local people," she said. The She, a spokesperson for the military regime, which seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021, accused the militias of putting civilians in jeopardy by restarting the fighting.

"As the TNLA are starting to violate the cease-fire, the Tatmadaw is protecting the lives and the property of the ethnic people," he said in an

email to the AP, referring to the military by its Burmese name. There was no indication that the third ethnic armed organization that makes up the Three Brotherhood Alliance, the powerful Arakan Army, has joined in the renewed fighting in Shan state, but its troops have never stopped fighting in its home Rakhine state, which was not covered by the Jan. 11 cease-fire.

The TNLA claims to have already captured more than 30 army outposts, and to now control the western part of Mogok, whose ruby mines make it a lucrative target. There is also fighting for the town of Kyaukse, which sits at a high-way crossroads, and Nawngghiko to the southwest, which leads toward the major military garrison town of Pyin Oo Lwin along the same high-way.

"That's where you need to cut

it off to prevent the military from sending reinforcements," said Morgan Michaels, a Singapore-based analyst with the International Institute of Strategic Studies who runs its Myanmar Conflict Map project. In Mandalay, the region west of Shan, a local People's Defense Force — one of many armed resistance groups that have sprung up in support of the underground National Unity Government, which views itself as Myanmar's legitimate administration — joined the TNLA's offensive.

Osmond, a spokesperson for the Mandalay People's Defense Force who would only give his nom de guerre because of safety concerns, said his and other local resistance groups have seized nearly 20 military outposts. The October offensive by the Three Brotherhood Alliance made rapid advances as the militias took large

expanses of territory in the north and northeast, including multiple important border crossings with China and several major military bases.

The alliance militias have close ties to China, and it's widely believed that the offensive had Beijing's tacit approval because of its growing dissatisfaction with the military regime's seeming indifference to the burgeoning drug trade along its border and the proliferation of centers in Myanmar at which cyberscams are run, with workers trafficked from China and elsewhere in the region.

China then helped broker the cease-fire in January, bringing the major fighting in the northeast to an end, even as other ethnic armed organizations and PDF groups launched their own attacks on regime positions elsewhere around the country.

# Sebi issues new guidelines to streamline operations of credit rating agencies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has issued new guidelines to streamline operations and enhance the ease of doing business for credit rating agencies.



CRAs (Credit Rating Agencies), it has been decided to provide specific timelines for dealing with appeals made by the issuer in respect of rating actions carried out pursuant to periodic surveillance of ratings.

three working days to request a review or appeal of the rating decision, and the dissemination of the press release on the CRA's website and intimation of the same to the stock exchange or debenture trustee must occur within 7 working days of the rating committee meeting.

# Nifty scales new lifetime high

## Sensex retreats from record to slip below 80K

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The broader NSE benchmark Nifty advanced further to settle at an all-time high for the third straight session on Friday, while the BSE gauge Sensex retreated from the record to slip below the 80k level.



India, Power Grid, ITC, JSW Steel and Sun Pharmaceuticals were the major gainers. On the other hand, HDFC Bank, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, UltraTech Cement, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies and Asian Paints were among the laggards.

all-time high," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. Asian markets were closed on a mixed note on Thursday. The US markets were closed on Thursday for Independence Day.

# Passenger vehicle retail sales dip as heatwave curtails showroom visits

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Passenger vehicle retail sales in India witnessed a 7 per cent on-year decline in June as severe heatwave conditions resulted in 15 per cent less showroom walk-ins, industry body FADA said on Friday.

customer inquiries and postponed purchase decisions, he added. Singhania also highlighted that inventory levels of passenger vehicles have reached an all-time high, ranging from 62 to 67 days.



Factors such as extreme heat resulted in 13 per cent less walk-ins by probable customers in showrooms, Singhania said. Stalled monsoon and

Commercial vehicle sales dropped 5 per cent to 72,747 units last month, from 76,364 units in June 2023. "The industry continues to face de-growth, impacted by high temperatures affecting the agricultural sector and infrastructural project slowdowns," Singhania stated.

constraints and regional market variations remain. In the passenger vehicle segment, high inventory levels and ongoing low market sentiment necessitate cautious management, the industry body said.

# Only 7 per cent of MSME credit to women: RBI ED

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank's executive director Neeraj Nigam on Friday said low labour force participation among women is a barrier to financial inclusion efforts and also to broader economic growth.

Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), he said, adding that this is very low when compared to nearly a fifth of the MSMEs being women-led.

# Startups to showcase cybersecurity innovations in mega summit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prominent founders, global cybersecurity experts and chief information security officers (CISOs) of large enterprises as well as tech unicorns will gather at the Accel Cybersecurity Summit scheduled to be held in Bengaluru on July 25.



According to a report by the Data Security Council of India, the market reached approximately USD 6 billion in 2023, clocking a CAGR (compounded annual growth rate) of over 30 per cent from 2019 to 2023.

tracks tailored to the varied interests of participants, and a pavilion where startups and data security teams can showcase their products. The 'application security' track will cover topics like setting up a high-quality AppSec programme, which involves practices and tools to protect applications from threats and vulnerabilities during development and deployment, and automating tasks across the AppSec stack.

# Veg thali gets dearer by 10 per cent in June on onion, tomato price jump: Crisil

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The average cost of a vegetarian thali became dearer by 10 per cent in June due to the jump in onion, potato, and tomato prices, a report said on Friday.



On the surge in tomato prices, it said virus infestation in the summer crop due to high temperatures in key growing regions of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh reduced tomato arrivals by 35 per cent year-on-year.

# Training for interns held



National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management, Kundli (NIFTEM-K) under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has launched its second training-cum-internship programme on food technology entrepreneurship development starting from today.

# Govt makes ISI mark must for stainless steel, aluminium utensils

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has made it mandatory for stainless steel and aluminium kitchen utensils to conform to national quality standards, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) said on Friday, in a move aimed at enhancing consumer safety and product quality.

# JSW Energy plans ₹15K crore capex in FY25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

JSW Energy Chairman & Managing Director Sajjan Jindal on Friday said the company has planned a capital expenditure of Rs 15,000 crore during the current fiscal year. In his address to shareholders at the annual general meeting, he said, the company intends to spend around Rs 1,15,000 crore to reach the goal of 20 GW generation and 40 GW storage under 'Strategy 2.0'.

# JSW Energy plans ₹15K crore capex in FY25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

production, it said. The growth capital secured through the recently completed QIP (qualified institutional placement) strategically positions the company to accelerate the execution of returns accretive growth plans, he noted.

# कार्यालय नगर निगम, देहरादून

Table with 4 columns: क्रम सं०, मार्ग का नाम, युनिपोल/होर्डिंग हेतु कुल साईट, निगम द्वारा विज्ञापन हेतु आरक्षित निविदा घनराशि. Row 1: 1, मसूरी डार्कवर्जन से डोम गांव सीमा तक 38 साईट, 112, 2,53,44,000/-

Table for Northern Railway tender: 30-Elect-33-T-2024-25-E3, Electrical work regarding repairing of Air-Conditioning System installed at Dormitories in DLI Main Railway Station.

Table for Nagarnigam Dehradun: सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना, नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत 100 बाडों में स्थित विद्युत पोल जो जैसे है जहाँ है उसी स्थिति में पोल क्योस्क के माध्यम से विज्ञापन प्रदर्शित करने हेतु अनुबन्ध की तिथि से कुल 2 वर्ष हेतु सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना प्रकाशन की तिथि से दिनांक 23.07.2024 की अपरान्त 2.00 बजे तक पोल क्योस्क विज्ञापन की ईव निविदाये आमंत्रित की जाती है-

Table for Nagarnigam Dehradun: सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना, नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत नये सम्मिलित क्षेत्रों में युनिपोल/होर्डिंग के माध्यम से विज्ञापन प्रदर्शित करने हेतु अनुबन्ध की तिथि से कुल 02 वर्ष हेतु सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना प्रकाशन की तिथि से दिनांक 26.7.24 की अपरान्त 2.00 बजे तक ईव निविदाये आमंत्रित की जाती है-

# YOUR INPUTS WILL HELP 2036 BID: PM ASKS ATHLETES TO SHARE OBSERVATIONS ON CONDUCT OF OLYMPICS

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Confident that India's bid to host the 2036 Olympics will be successful, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged athletes bound for this month's Paris Games to share their views on the arrangements in the French capital to help his government's ambitious plan to bring the quadrennial showpiece here.  
In an interaction with Paris-bound athletes, conducted both in person and online on Thursday, Modi said those travelling to the French capital would do the country a huge service by providing inputs from their experience.  
"We are hoping to host the Olympics in 2036, it will help in creating a sporting atmosphere (in the country). Work is in progress to prepare infrastructure for it," he said in the interaction, which was attended by the national men's hockey team, the shooting contingent, boxers and track-and-field stars such as Neeraj Chopra among others.  
The complete video of the PM's light-hearted conversation with the athletes was shared by his office on Friday. The meeting with the contingent was also attended by sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Indian Olympic Association (IAO)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with the athletes of the Indian contingent who are going to represent the country for the first time in the Paris Olympics, in New Delhi, Thursday, July 4, 2024

President P T Usha.  
"I won't ask you to do anything in the middle of your events but when you are free, I would urge you to observe the arrangements. Your inputs will help our bid for 2036. We will have an understanding on how to make sure that we are better-prepared," he added in his closing remarks to the athletes.  
The upcoming Games will be held from July 26 to August 11 and India would be hoping to better its best ever tally of seven medals, including Chopra's historic javelin throw gold, achieved in the Tokyo Games.  
Over 100 Indian sportspeople have qualified for the Games, including an unprecedented 21 shooters, who would be aiming to end the medal drought of last two editions.  
India has repeatedly asserted its desire to host the Games and found support from International Olympic Committee (IOC) chief Thomas Bach.  
However, it would be no walk in the park to secure the rights as several other strong contenders such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia are also expected to throw their hats in the ring. A decision on the 2036 Games host is not expected before next year's IOC elections where a new President is expected to take charge.



## Abhay leads India's charge on first day of Asian doubles squash

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Asian Games medallist Abhay Singh led India's charge on the opening day of the Asian Doubles Squash Championships by registering comfortable wins in both his events along side his respective partners in Johor, Malaysia.  
The Indian contingent registered four wins in five outings on the opening day of the event on Thursday.  
Abhay and Velavan Senthilkumar beat David Pelino and Reymark Begornia of Philippines 2-0 (11-4 11-6) in the men's doubles group stage.  
Abhay then teamed up with experienced Joshna Chinappa in the mixed doubles, with the Indian pair starting with a bang, winning both their Pool C matches on Thursday.  
Abhay and Joshna first accounted for Philippines pair of Yvonne Dalida and Reymark Begornia 11-4 11-3 and then returned to the court to beat Naisha Singh and Anders Ong Wee Jun of Singapore 11-3 11-6.  
The women's doubles pair of Rathika Suthanthira Seelan and Pooja Arthi R won one and lost one.  
**INDIA'S RESULTS:**  
**Men's doubles:** Abhay/Velavan bt David Pelino/Reymark Begornia (PHI) 11-4 11-6.  
**Women's doubles:** Rathika/Pooja bt Raifa Putri Yattaqi/Zalzabila (INA) 11-1 11-4, Rathika/Pooja lost Ho Tze Lok/Fung Ching Hei (HKG) 4-11 6-11.  
**Mixed doubles:** Abhay/Joshna bt Yvonne Dalida/Reymark Begornia (PHI) 11-4 11-3, Abhay/Joshna bt Naisha Singh/Anders Ong Wee Jun (SGP) 11-3 11-6.

## Misfiring England faces in-form Switzerland for semifinal spot



**AP ■ DUESSELDORF (GERMANY)**  
England will play Switzerland in the quarterfinals of Euro 2024 on Saturday. England faced criticism from fans who thought the team underperformed in its extra-time win over Slovakia, while Switzerland exceeded expectations by knocking out defending champion Italy.  
The winner will play either the Netherlands or Turkey in the semifinals. Here's what to know about the match:  
**Match facts:** England is playing its fourth quarterfinal game at a major tournament under manager Gareth Southgate and won two of the previous three. Southgate's cautious tactics have brought heavy criticism from England fans, some of whom threw plastic cups at him in the group stage.  
■ Jude Bellingham's last-minute overhead kick to send England's last-16 game with Slovakia to extra time was one of the most dramatic moments of Euro 2024 so far. Defender John Stones said surviving that brush with elimination gave the team new confidence.  
■ Switzerland coach Murat Yakin has won a reputation for smart tactics at Euro 2024, especially by outclassing an Italy team packed with more famous names in the round of 16.  
■ England is playing two days after a general election ended 14 years of rule by the Conservative Party. It didn't make waves in the England camp, which Stones called a "politics-free zone."  
**Team news:** Bellingham is under investigation by UEFA after seemingly making a gesture toward his crotch during England's last game. He has denied he was mocking Slovakia, saying it was an "inside joke gesture towards some close friends who were at the game."  
■ England defender Marc Guehi is suspended after picking up a second booking



## UEFA suspends Turkey player Merih Demiral for 2 games for making nationalistic gesture at Euro 2024

**AP ■ BERLIN**  
The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has suspended Turkey player Merih Demiral for two matches for making a controversial gesture at the European Championship.  
The governing body said Friday that it had banned the defender "for failing to comply with the general principles of conduct, for violating the basic rules of decent conduct, for using sports events for manifestations of a non-sporting nature and for bringing the sport of football into disrepute."  
Demiral scored both goals Tuesday in a 2-1 win over Austria to earn Turkey's place in the quarterfinals and celebrated with a hand sign associated with an ultranationalist group.  
After scoring the second goal he made a sign with each hand that is used by Turkish nationalists and associated with the Turkish ultranationalist organization Ulku Ocaklari, which is more widely known as the Gray Wolves.  
Demiral will miss Turkey's match with the Netherlands in Berlin on Saturday.

## Jude Bellingham avoids immediate ban at Euro 2024 over offensive gesture

**AP ■ DUESSELDORF (GERMANY)**  
Jude Bellingham has avoided an immediate ban after the England midfielder appeared to make an offensive gesture in his team's win over Slovakia.  
Bellingham will be available for England's game against Switzerland on Saturday for a place in the semifinals after UEFA on Friday imposed a one-game ban but said it "is not immediately enforced and is subject to a probationary period" of a year.  
The Real Madrid midfielder will have to pay a fine of 30,000 euros (\$32,500).  
UEFA said the punishment was "for violating the basic rules of decent conduct" in the Slovakia game.  
Bellingham seemed to make a gesture with his hand toward his crotch after scoring an overhead kick to level the score Sunday as England went on to win 2-1 in extra time.  
Bellingham's goal with about 80 seconds left in the game

## Verstappen's emerging F1 rivalry with Norris goes another round at British GP

**AP ■ SILVERSTONE (ENGLAND)**  
Max Verstappen's emerging rivalry with Lando Norris goes another round at the British Grand Prix this week and this time Norris has home fans behind him.  
Sunday's Formula 1 race follows their crash at last weekend's Austrian GP, the home race of Verstappen's Red Bull team. It cost both drivers a victory chance and ended Norris' hopes of a second win after the Miami GP.  
Norris retired his McLaren and felt let down by Verstappen, saying the Red Bull driver impeded him by moving under braking. Norris cleared the air with Verstappen when the friends spoke twice this week.  
"I don't think he should apologize. I thought it was good racing, at times very close to the edge, but we've spoken about it and we're both happy to go racing again," Norris said on Thursday.  
"Some of the things I said in the (TV) pen after the race were more just because I was frustrated at the time. A lot of adrenaline, a lot of emotions." Verstappen's main concern was protecting their friendship.  
"He's a great guy. Of course he loves racing, he's very passionate," Verstappen said.  
"You also have to realize he's fighting for his second win, I'm fighting for my 62nd. Naturally, your emotions are a little bit different."  
Verstappen also has 106 podium finishes compared to Norris' 19, and in pole positions leads him 40-2.  
Verstappen felt Norris may have panicked a bit.  
"I always said to Lando, when you go for moves up the inside, outside, you can trust me that I'm not there to try and crash you out," Verstappen said.  
"I felt everything that I did was nothing massively over the top."  
Another heated incident at Silverstone could change that and jog some memories.  
At the 2021 British GP, Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton collided heavily on Lap 1 at the high-speed Copse corner. Verstappen went to hospital for checks and Hamilton won.  
It sparked a bitter feud lasting until the last lap of the last race in Abu Dhabi, where Verstappen recovered from a



## Andy Murray's Wimbledon farewell tour begins with a loss in doubles with his brother

**AP ■ LONDON**  
There were tears from Andy Murray. Standing ovations from the Centre Court crowd. A video tribute replete with messages from Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Venus Williams.  
And, yes, a doubles match Murray played alongside his brother on Thursday, all part of the first stop on the two-time Wimbledon singles champion's farewell tour at a tournament that meant so much to him.  
The Murrays lost 7-6(6) 6-4 in the first round of men's doubles against Rinky Hijikata and John Peers - but the result was, truly, beside the point on this evening.  
"The match itself, it was tough, physically. It was hard for me. ... I was fortunate I was even able to get on the court to play," said Murray, who had surgery to remove a cyst from his spine less than two weeks ago, forcing him to withdraw from singles.  
"It was pretty emotional," Murray said about the postmatch tribute.  
"Watching the video was nice, but hard as well, for me. Because you know it's coming to the end of something that you absolutely loved doing for such a long time. So that was difficult."  
It was the first time a men's doubles first-round match was played in the event's main stadium in nearly 30 years, a fitting way for him to begin to say goodbye - and for his many fans to offer their thanks and well wishes, too.  
Murray, a 37-year-old from Scotland, has said he will head into retirement after playing at the All England Club, where he is also entered in mixed doubles with 2021 US Open winner Emma Raducanu, and the Paris Olympics, which begin later this month.  
"I'm ready to finish playing," Murray said, "because I can't play to the level I want to anymore."  
Murray occasionally fidgeted with his back and looked a tad uncomfortable while playing, but he also let out a celebratory scream after hitting a forehand return winner to go up a break at 2-0 in the second set, the type of shot that helped him reach No. 1 in the rankings.  
This was the first time the Murray siblings had played together at the All England Club. They bumped fists before the match began; they slapped palms between points.  
Their mother, Judy, who taught both boys tennis, was in a guest box, sitting with Andy's wife, Kim, and two of the couple's four children.  
"It was a fun experience for me to be out there and play with him," Jamie said.  
"It was sort of strange knowing what the background was." Jamie's younger brother became a superstar in these parts by winning Wimbledon in 2013, making him the first British man to triumph in singles at the All England Club in 77 years. He won the title again in 2016.  
His other Grand Slam trophy came at the US Open in 2012, the same year he won his first singles gold medal at the London Olympics at Centre Court - "One of my favourite days I've ever had, certainly as an athlete," he said on Thursday - and the next, at Rio de Janeiro in 2016, made him the only player with two in a row.  
There were some of his usual mannerisms, whether it was tugging on the brim of his white hat or leaning over to pull on the tongues of his shoes or clenching a fist while looking up at the stands. There wasn't as much of the fire and brimstone he was famous for, the cursing and muttering directed at his team or, just as frequently, himself.  
"Sometimes," Djokovic said during the four-minute video, "it looked like you against the world."  
Then it was Federer's turn to say: "But you were never alone. Because while you carried your own dreams, you also carried theirs," referring to Murray's many fans.  
After the ceremony, Murray was greeted by several current and former players, including Djokovic, Iga Swiatek, Lleyton Hewitt, Holger Rune, Cam Norrie, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe.

New look India start their journey without Virat, Rohit against Zimbabwe

PTI ■ HARARE

A new-look Indian T20 team would embark on a journey of self-discovery without their constant talismans, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, hoping to unearth their mainstays for the future in a five-match series against Zimbabwe starting here on Saturday.

shortest format, their international retirement from the format is bound to be felt more strongly. The skills and quality that the two modern greats brought to the table will be hard to replicate but as it is the order of nature, the old guard has to make way for the new one.



playing the format and there won't be too many vacancies in the playing eleven. From now till the 2026 T20 World Cup in India, the national team will play 34 games in the shortest format.

impressive Test debut against England is likely play in the first two games before Samson arrives. In the bowling department, Avesh Khan and Khaleel Ahmed, the two standbys during the T20 World Cup are certainties and Mukesh Kumar, who is a very steady death bowler could be the third seamer pipping Harshit Rana, who is a better slogger with the willow.

Inspirational, emotional: New-Gen India stars hail T20 WC triumph, eye their own glory

PTI ■ HARARE

India's emotional and epochal triumph in the just-concluded T20 World Cup found its resonance in Gen-Next stars such as Shubman Gill and Riyan Parag who termed it as an "inspiration" while vowing to bring more glory to the nation in future.



where we were almost in the jaws of defeat, and then to come back from there and win is a special moment. Obviously, a great end to the T20I career of three legends (Kohli, Rohit and Jadeja). For pacers Mukesh Kumar and Tushar Deshpande, the victory was nothing short of a "miracle". "As we say, the game is not over, till it's over. The final was the best example for it. We believe that miracles can happen," said Deshpande.

Kohli, Jadeja thank Mumbai Police for phenomenal job managing victory parade

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Floored by the grand reception and also the comprehensive police presence that ensured an orderly conduct of proceedings for most part, star India Virat Kohli on Friday thanked the Mumbai Police for doing a "phenomenal job" in crowd control during the victory parade of the T20 World Cup-winning Indian team here.

ceremony at the iconic Wankhede stadium where the players danced and took a victory lap after sharing their thoughts on the triumph that ended a trophy drought of 11 years.

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja also posted a similar note of thanks for the police force that was deployed to manage the sea of humanity that descended on Marine Drive to greet the players and be a part of the celebrations.

international retirement at the end of the World Cup, was welcomed enthusiastically by his neighbours and friends at his Mumbai house. Fans also thronged the complex to catch a glimpse of him and he duly obliged amid heavy police presence, waving and smiling at them.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS CHANGE OF NAME I, Rajesh Kumar Das S/o Dillip Kumar Das R/o Flat-No-301 Block-A Prestige-Residency Mahadev-Nagar Jharpada Bhubaneswar (M.C) Khorda Odisha-751006 changed my name to Raj Kumar Das. PD(575)A

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL NABARANGPUR COLLEGE, NABARANGPUR AT/PO: MIRGANGUDA,PS/DIST: NABARANGPUR-764059 TENDER NOTICE Sealed tenders are invited from the original manufactures or their appointed distributors/firms for supply, installation and commissioning of all laboratory and hostel requirements for the Nabarangpur College, Nabarangpur under OHEPEE, Govt. of Odisha.

ଜଙ୍ଗଲ, ପରିବେଶ ଓ ଜଳବାୟୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଓଷଡ଼ମ ବନମହୋତ୍ସବ ବାବଦ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ ତା ୦୬.୦୭.୨୦୨୪ ରିଖ, ଶନିବାର ସକାଳ ୯.୩୦ ମି. ସମୟରେ ବିଭାଗର ରାଜଗଡ଼ା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଉପସ୍ଥିତି ଆମର ଏକାନ୍ତ କାମ୍ୟ

PARADIP PORT MAJOR PORT OF INDIA First time in the 58 years history of its operation 145.38 MMT cargo throughput in FY 2023-24 Paradip Port - 754 142, Odisha, India, Telefax : (06722) 222242