



**OPINION 6**  
BRS FACES EXISTENTIAL  
CRISIS AS KCR FALTERS

**WORLD 8**  
CHINA ACCUSES QUAD OF  
'INCITING' CONFRONTATION

**MONEY 10**  
INDIA'S POWER GENERATION  
CAPACITY RISES

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## Dilli door ast... aspirants

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The tragedy in infamous by-lane of Old Rajinder Nagar in the national Capital, which claimed the lives of three IAS aspirants last week, rocked Parliament on Monday. Leaders cutting across party lines demanded a high-level probe and called for a mechanism to curb mushrooming of coaching centres nationwide, particularly in Delhi. Lok Sabha members demanded an enquiry into the tragic incident, while Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said the culture of coaching centres has spawned "gas chambers" and stressed on the need to examine the huge expenditure on newspaper advertisements by them. Given the sensitivity and urgency of the matter the Upper House agreed for a short duration discussion on the deaths of three UPSC aspirants by drowning in a coaching centre in Delhi due to waterlogging. While BJP's New Delhi Lok Sabha MP Bansuri Swaraj blamed the AAP-led Delhi Government for "utter apathy", AAP leader Sanjay Singh urged the Rajya Sabha Chairperson to hold discussions in the House also on NEET, Manipur violence and "infiltration" by China. DMK MP Tiruchi Siva sought to know had this incident happened in a NEET centre, what would have the Treasury Benches done. He said the Delhi Lieutenant Governor has all the powers in the national Capital and only he should be held responsible (for this incident). "The Chief Minister of Delhi is just for namesake," he said.



File photo: PTI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan informed Parliament that there are clear guidelines for running coaching centres and it is the duty of the State Governments to supervise their functioning. "We must fix responsibility so that such incidents do not recur. There should be no politics... Negligence has happened and someone has to take responsibility so that a solution can be found," Pradhan said. The Government has sent advisories related to coaching centres to the States and Union

Territories in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2024, he informed. BJP MP Sudhanshu Trivedi who initiated the discussion in Rajya Sabha, pointed towards the "laxities" of the Delhi Government's various departments. "There were many complaints (against the institute). A student complained on June 26 and then a reminder on July 22 while the fire department gave NOC (no-objection certificate) for the use of the basement as storage," Trivedi said. In his remarks Dhankhar said, "I find that youth demographic

dividend of the country has to be nurtured, I further find that coaching has become virtually commerce." He also pointed out the high sums earned by the coaching centres leading to commercialisation of education. "Coachings have become a flourishing industry with high returns.... Every time we read a newspaper front one or two pages are by way of advertisements.... Every penny spent on advertisement is coming from the students, every new building is coming from the students," he said.

Comparing the coaching culture to no less than "gas chambers", the Chairman stated, "In a country where opportunities are growing this silo is turning out to be a problem... They are becoming no less than a gas chamber." He urged the members to tell the youths about the various other employment and skill opportunities available in the country. Congress MP Randeep Singh Surjewala demanded a law to regulate fee structure and ensure safety of students. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav wrote to Speaker Om Birla urging him to direct the Government to pay ₹one crore compensation to the next of kin of the students who died. In the Lok Sabha the issue of suicides in the coaching hub of Kota in Rajasthan was also raised and Minister of State for Education Sukanta Majumdar said several initiatives have been taken by the Centre to curb incidents of suicide among students. "According to NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) and Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India, only 1.2 per cent of total suicide cases are related to failure in examinations," Majumdar told the House. On the other hand a civil services aspirant wrote to Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud seeking action against officials responsible for the deaths of three fellow students. In his letter, Avinash Dubey said students residing in these areas are "living a life of hell" due to annual flooding caused by "apathy" of the authorities.

## Media muffled



Pioneer photo

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

After a day-long protest by the mediapersons over the security norms to curb the movement of journalists in the Parliament premises on Monday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla met a group of journalists and assured them that all their grievances would be redressed and better facilities would be provided to them to discharge their duties. Print and TV journalists routinely record comments from MPs near the entry and exit points of the Parliament building but on Monday they were restricted to a porta-cabin enclosure made for them. Reporters were removed from Parliament's Makar Dwar where they usually interact with MPs. Makar Dwar is one of the entrances to the new Parliament building. Leader of the Opposition

Rahul Gandhi raised the issue in the Lok Sabha and requested the Speaker to remove the restrictions imposed on the media within Parliament premises. "Sir, I would request you to allow the media, who have been restricted to a cage, to move out," Rahul said in the Lok Sabha. Birla reminded Rahul about the rules of procedures of Parliament and said such issues should be discussed with him in person and not be raised on the floor of the House. Rahul and other Opposition leaders such as Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien, Congress MP Karti Chidambaram, and Shiv Sena-UBT MP Priyanka Chaturvedi met mediapersons in the media enclosure. "This is censorship. This is completely unacceptable. We are with you in this fight," O'Brien said.

## Jammu terrorised Hunted to extinction

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A late-night fire incident, in which at least four houses belonging to Kashmiri Pandits were gutted under mysterious circumstances in the Mattan area of Anantnag district on Sunday, has once again sparked a debate and raised serious security concerns among the Kashmiri Pandit community living in exile since 1990. The houses stood tall and witnessed over three-decade-long struggle before they were gutted under mysterious circumstances late last night. "We received this news early in the morning. The fire incident took place around 2.30 am. We demand a high-level probe into the fire," a close relative of the family living in Jammu told reporters. The multi-floor building was considered heritage site in the area. Most visitors reaching Mattan to fulfil their religious obligations used to pay a visit to the area and soak themselves in the glorious history of their forefathers who had constructed these architecturally rich structures. A prominent Kashmiri Pandit activist Ravinder Padita, associated with the Save Sharda in a post on X commented, "Is it sabotage or natural causes? One needs to know".



At least four houses belonging to Kashmiri Pandits were gutted under mysterious circumstances in the Mattan area of Anantnag district. Pioneer Photo

Another Kashmiri Pandit sharing his angst posted a message on X, "A Kashmiri Pandit house gutted in Mattan, Anantnag, Kashmir last night. The genocide continues for 34 years". Chetan Wanchoo, a political worker

associated with the BJP said, "I strongly resent the fire incident at Mattan, Anantnag, where more than 4 houses of Kashmiri Pandits were gutted. This incident raises serious concerns. Urgently request L-G Manoj Sinha to form a high-level enquiry to uncover why these houses were targeted. The main concern is clear: Why are Kashmiri Pandit homes and Hindu shrines repeatedly targeted? Time has come to take decisive action against the miscreants." Meanwhile, Chief Spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Tanvir Sadiq in a post on X commented, "Very sorry to hear that. These are such aesthetic constructions, and architecture which are disappearing slowly. It's a significant loss. I request the police to investigate the case and find out reasons behind this fire incident". Umesh Talashi, also associated with the National Conference said, Heartbroken as four KP houses, including mine, were gutted in a fire in Mattan. Urging Deputy Commissioner Anantnag and Jammu Kashmir Police to take swift action and ensure justice. At the time of the fire incident, no one was staying in the house. Family members claimed in the absence of any power connection the question of fire caused by a short circuit does not arise.

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

On World Tiger Day, July 29, India faces troubling news about its iconic wildlife. In the first seven months of this year alone, 81 tigers have died across the country due to habitat destruction, poaching, territorial disputes, disease, and human-wildlife conflicts, in the past five years 528 elephants have lost their lives to unnatural causes including electrocution, train accidents, poaching, and poisoning. According to the data available from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Madhya Pradesh-home to the country's largest tiger population-has reported the highest number of mortalities at 27 followed by Maharashtra (14) and Karnataka (11). Madhya Pradesh has seven tiger reserves. The other States which also reported tiger deaths are Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Rajasthan and Assam. Of the total deaths, 45 were adults and eight were cubs, with the sex of the remaining tigers still to be identified. Most fatalities occurred within tiger reserves,



suggesting territorial disputes among the predators and increased human-animal conflicts as many tigers ventured into fringe areas. Presently, there are 54 tiger reserves in India, managed under Project Tiger and overseen by the NTCA. Last calendar year 2023, the country reported a disturbing surge in tiger deaths, reaching a record 204, as reported by the Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI), a non-profit organization engaged in the conservation of these majestic creatures. In contrast, the NTCA data put the figures at 182. The number of tigers in India has increased from 2,967 in 2018 to 3,682 in 2022, an annual rise of 6 per cent,

according to the government data released on the International Tiger Day last year. Meanwhile, distressing figures on elephant deaths were tabled by the Government in the Lok Sabha on Monday underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive conservation strategies amidst growing human-wildlife conflicts and environmental pressures. As per the data on the jumbo deaths, electrocution has been the leading cause, with Odisha topping the list at 71 followed by Assam (55), Karnataka (52), Tamil Nadu (49), Chhattisgarh (32), Jharkhand (30), and Kerala (29) which have been the most affected. Train accidents contributed to deaths

in Assam (22) and Odisha (16). Poaching was reported primarily in Odisha (17), Meghalaya (14), and Tamil Nadu (10), while poisoning cases occurred in Assam (10), Chhattisgarh (2), and West Bengal (1). The question on jumbo deaths was raised by BJP MPs Jayanta Kumar Roy and Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo. In response, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh told the Lok Sabha that 392 elephants died from electrocution and 73 were killed in train accidents during this period. According to the last elephant census conducted in 2017, India has 29,964 elephants, which is around 60 per cent of their global population. Data presented in Parliament last week revealed that human-elephant conflict resulted in 2,853 human deaths in India over the last five years, with the number of fatalities reaching a five-year high of 628 in 2023. The data revealed that Odisha recorded 624 such deaths during this period, Jharkhand 474, West Bengal 436, Assam 383, Chhattisgarh 303, Tamil Nadu 256, Karnataka 160, and Kerala 124.

## Kejriwal booked

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday filed a chargesheet against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in connection with its corruption probe into the now scrapped 2021-22 Delhi excise policy, calling him one of the conspirators of the criminal conspiracy. In a related development, the Delhi High Court on Monday reserved its order on the bail plea by Kejriwal in the corruption case. The verdict was reserved by Justice Neena Bansal Krishna after hearing the counsel appearing for the AAP leader as well as the CBI. In the trial court, the CBI filed a chargesheet against Kejriwal alleging the AAP received kickbacks worth ₹100 crore. The CBI, which first questioned Kejriwal in April



2023, has so far filed five chargesheets in the case against 18 accused including Kejriwal's former deputy, Manish Sisodia, and Bharat Rashtra Samithi leader K Kavitha. The CBI said the one filed today, will be its final charge sheet in the case. The development came days after Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court extended Kejriwal's judicial custody in the case

till August 8. The court also extended the judicial custody of Sisodia and Kavitha in connection with a money-laundering case linked to the liquor policy case. The CBI has named Kejriwal, AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak, non-executive director of Aurobindo Pharma P. Sarath Chandra Reddy, director of Buddy Retail Pvt Ltd Amit Arora, alleged hawala

operator Vinod Chauhan, and businessman Ashish Mathur as accused. According to the agency, it has been revealed that Vijay Nair [former media in charge of AAP], a close associate of Kejriwal, was contacting various liquor manufacturers and traders and demanding undue gratification since March 2021, for incorporation of provisions favourable to them in the upcoming Delhi excise policy 2021-22. The CBI also alleged that kickbacks of around ₹90-100 crore were paid in advance to some politicians of the ruling AAP in Delhi and other public servants by some persons in the liquor business from South India through co-accused Vijay Nair, Abhishek Boinpally and Dinesh Arora to tweak the Excise Policy for 2021-22.



Shimla: Clouds hover over the hill town of Shimla on Monday

PTI

## Punjab CM slams dynasty politics; Pledges development for border regions

**PNS ■ DINANAGAR (GURDASPUR)/CHANDIGARH**

In a scathing critique of the political dynasties that have dominated Punjab's border regions, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday highlighted how these "self-serving leaders" have hindered the area's progress. Mann, speaking at the inauguration of a new railway over-bridge (ROB) in Gurdaspur, accused the opposition leaders of prioritizing personal power over public welfare.

"Leaders who have represented this region for decades have failed to drive any significant development. Their sole aim has been to maintain power, often at the expense of the people's welfare," Mann said. He specifically targeted the senior Congress leader and the Leader of Opposition in Vidhan Sabha Partap Singh Bajwa, accusing him and his family of perpetuating a cycle of political opportunism that has stalled the region's growth.

Mann pointed out the paradox of households in the region displaying flags of multiple political parties, symbolizing the leaders' desperate attempts to cling to power. "These leaders have new wardrobes ready, hoping to be elected again, but the people have decisively rejected them," Mann added.

One of the major points of contention Mann raised was the prevalence of toll plazas in the region, many of which he said were established under the previous regime. Of the 17 toll plazas closed by Mann's administration, 14 were instituted by a former Public Works Department Minister from the area, presumably referring to Bajwa without naming him directly.

Mann criticized these leaders for their lip service to public service, contrasting it with

the tangible benefits delivered by his government.

Under Mann's leadership, significant strides have been made towards infrastructure development, including the construction of the Malwa Canal, a project long ignored by previous administrations. Spanning approximately 150 kilometers, this canal is expected to bring a new era of prosperity to the Malwa region, with an investment of around Rs 2,300 crore. The canal will cater to the irrigation needs of nearly two lakh acres of farmland, boosting agricultural productivity and local economies.

The Chief Minister emphasized the transparency and service-oriented approach of his administration. "Our government is dedicated to the well-being of the people. We have ensured free electricity for 90 percent of households, provided over 43,000 government jobs to the youth, and significantly improved health and education facilities," Mann stated. He reiterated the government's commitment to fighting corruption, asserting that while it hasn't been completely eradicated, significant progress has been made.

Highlighting the sacrifices of the region's soldiers, Mann announced that the State Government provides Rs one crore in financial assistance to the families of martyrs. "This region, which produces the maximum number of soldiers, deserves our utmost respect and support. It is our duty to support the families of those who have laid down their lives for the nation," Mann said.

On the issue of drug abuse, Mann declared a zero-tolerance policy, emphasizing that his administration has dismantled significant parts of the drug supply network and imprisoned major traffickers. He also highlighted initiatives to channel the energy of the youth towards sports and positive

activities, aiming to build a healthier and more vibrant community.

Concluding his address with a call to action, Mann urged the people to support the government's environmental efforts by planting more trees. Citing a verse from Gurbani, he underscored the importance of air, water, and land, urging citizens to imbibe these values for the state's ecological and spiritual rejuvenation.

### Rs 51.74-cr ROB in Dinanagar to Ease Traffic Woes

To streamline the movement of traffic in the historic city of Dinanagar, Chief Minister Mann on Monday dedicated a newly-constructed ROB on Amritsar-Pathankot Railway station near Dinanagar railway station in Gurdaspur district. Built at a cost of Rs 51.74 crore, the ROB is a significant boon for Dinanagar residents. This 730-meter-long, 10.5-meter-wide bridge replaces level crossing C-60 and includes work on the railway portion and approach roads, fully funded by the State Government. The project commenced in December 2019 and was completed on schedule.

The bridge features 0.75-meter-wide footpaths on both sides, along with service roads and highway lights. Ample parking space with paver tiles has been provided under the bridge. The ROB is crucial for residents, alleviating traffic congestion and providing seamless connectivity.

The construction eliminates the level crossing on Amritsar-Pathankot line, ensuring uninterrupted traffic flow from border villages to Dinanagar and further to NH-54. The ROB also serves as a strategic route for defense movements, thereby acting as a catalyst for safeguarding the unity, integrity, and sovereignty of the country.

## Cong gets 1500 applications for tickets to contest 2024 Hry Assembly Elections

**MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH**

About 1500 candidates of the Opposition Congress in Haryana have submitted applications seeking ticket to contest the 2024 Haryana Legislative Assembly elections scheduled to be held in October this year. Aspirants from all the 90 Constituencies have submitted applications seeking tickets. The last date of submission of applications is July 31. Talking to 'The Pioneer', Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee Media head Kewal Dhingra said that about 1500 forms have been received from ticket aspirants so far. About 500 more applications are likely to receive from the ticket aspirants within the next two days, he added.

Dhingra said that the Congress party had won five of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana recently. "From 28 per cent in 2019 to beyond 44 per cent, we have had a significant increase in vote share. There is a wind of change in the Congress party's favour. The people of Haryana want a Congress government in the State. Overwhelming response also indicates that the party is on a good wicket and this is also because the workers sense the party has a good chance of retaining power. It is indeed a positive and encouraging sign."

Party insiders said that this is much higher compared to the response the party generated in 2019. Large number of women party workers has also applied for poll tickets. There was also good response for the SC reserved seats. The number of applications from constituencies where the party has sitting MLAs were about four or five on an average. Out of the current 29 Congress MLAs, 17 have already submitted their applications to get tickets again. Former Chief

Minister Bhupendra Singh Hooda has not yet submitted his application. Maximum applications are received from those assembly seats where Congress does not have sitting MLAs. There are many contenders who had applied for tickets in the Lok Sabha elections, but could not get the ticket, they have also staked claim for the ticket in the Assembly elections.

Out of 90 Assembly seats in the State, 17 are reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates. The number of ticket applicants for Assembly seats reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates in the State is very high. 30 to 40 ticket applicants have submitted their application for each reserved seat. For Nilokheri SC reserved seat, about 40 applications have been received so far. The party has also roped in a private agency to verify credentials of new applicants, sources added.

In early preparation for Assembly polls, the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee has called for applications as it planned to finalise the list of candidates few weeks ahead of the announcement of Vidhan Sabha election date by the Election Commission of India. Sanjeev Takshak, who submitted a form seeking ticket from Charkhi Dabri, said that he has raising public related issues for the last many years. Since 2017, he was exposing scams worth millions, but the government remains unresponsive. He appealed to the current government to stop illegal earnings from overloading.

Of all the political parties, the Congress is the only one that charges a fee for filing an application for the Assembly ticket in Haryana. The application fee is Rs 20,000 for general category seats. Women aspirants and those from the Scheduled Caste and backward communities need to shell out Rs 5,000 each.

However, there is no fee for the ticket seekers in the BJP, AAP, INLD and the JJP.

On this, a senior Congress leader said that the party has decided to introduce a fee to ensure that only serious candidates submit the applications for the ticket. It will make it easier to scrutinise the applications," he said, adding that obviously it would also be helpful in generating funds for the party. While the BJP has a two-way system of nomination, which involves recommendation from the district unit and also from the party state unit, the INLD invites applications from aspirants for the ticket. A BJP leader said that the party has a vibrant and inclusive system to select the nominees for the ticket. "We have a system of forming a panel on the basis of the recommendations of the district units which went up to the state and national leadership for a final decision," he added. The regional outfits- the INLD and JJP are yet to start their process of the identification of the candidates in the Assembly elections. The INLD leader said they didn't have any fee for the ticket though the party has a membership fee of Rs 25 whereas the JJP leader said the party had disbanded its district units and was now restructuring the units across the state. The party though has a membership fee of Rs 10. Talking to journalists, former Chief Minister Bhupendra Singh Hooda recently said that the Congress party will give tickets to loyal, dedicated and winning candidates. Only one person will get a ticket on one Assembly seat and remaining aspirants will work to make the Party's candidate win. There is huge enthusiasm among the party workers and people at large and this time, Congress is going to form a Government with full majority in the state, he added.

## Cong alleges fund discrimination against Punjab, Haryana by Centre for Paris Olympics' athletes

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

In a fresh controversy, Congress leaders have accused the BJP-led Central Government of discriminatory fund allocation under the Khelo India Scheme. Leading the charge, the Leader of Opposition in Punjab Vidhan Sabha Partap Singh Bajwa took to social media platform 'X' to highlight the disparity.

"The Modi Government's skewed allocation of funds under the Khelo India Scheme is a glaring example of injustice. Punjab & Haryana, the heartlands of Indian sports, were given a meagre Rs 78 crore and Rs 66 crore, respectively, despite sending 43 athletes to the Paris Olympics. Meanwhile, UP & Gujarat received a whopping Rs 438 crore and Rs 426 crore, contributing only 9 athletes.

This step-motherly treatment undermines our sporting potential and regional talent," he said, in his post.

Echoing Bajwa's concerns, Congress MLA from Jalandhar

Cantonment and former Captain of the Indian Hockey Team, Pargat Singh, also alleged discrimination in fund distribution.

An Olympian, Pargat Singh shared state-wise details of funds released for sports infrastructure under the Khelo India Scheme.

"Despite sending 48 athletes to the Paris #Olympics, Punjab & Haryana received Rs 78 crore and Rs 66 crore, respectively, while UP & Gujarat, sending only 9 athletes, got Rs 438 crore & Rs 426 crore. Is this not a biased distribution?"

How long will BJP continue this discrimination against states?" he wrote on X.

The Congress leaders' posts have sparked a debate about the equitable distribution of resources and the support for athletes from different states.

The accusations of bias have added to the ongoing political discourse surrounding sports funding and regional representation in national schemes.

## Punjab to introduce automated challan machines for municipal building violations

**MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH**

In a transformative step towards improved efficiency and transparency, Punjab's Local Bodies Department is phasing out manual challans for building violations and unauthorized constructions. The Department will equip all municipal corporations with state-of-the-art challan machines, revolutionizing the process and enhancing record-keeping capabilities.

The initiative is set to replace outdated manual challan systems with automated machines. A dedicated software, currently under development, will support this transition by maintaining detailed records of violations and fines. This modernization is expected to streamline the process, mitigate revenue loss from poor data management, and ensure a more transparent approach to handling building infractions. A preliminary meeting has already taken place to outline the implementation

strategy, and a proposal is being prepared for submission to higher authorities for final approval. Upon authorization, the new system will be deployed across all municipal bodies in Punjab.

Currently, data management in municipal corporations is inadequate, leading to significant revenue losses due to poor tracking of fines. Many individuals fined for illegal constructions fail to pay, and municipalities struggle to monitor these defaulters. The introduction of automated challan machines and supporting software is designed to address these challenges by providing a secure and accessible database.

To develop the necessary software, the Local Bodies Department has engaged in discussions with a bank. This partnership aimed at creating a robust system that ensures meticulous record-keeping and easy retrieval of data. The project proposal is in its final stages and will soon be presented for approval.

A two-year-old survey

revealed that approximately 5,000 illegal colonies housing around five million people in Punjab. Additionally, there are numerous unauthorized colonies outside municipal boundaries that were not included in the initial survey.

Junior Engineers (JEs) in municipal building branches are currently responsible for identifying and reporting unauthorized constructions. Upon receiving a complaint, a JE investigates on-site to verify if the construction adheres to approved plans or is being carried out without proper permits.

Based on their findings, a challan is issued, and orders are given to halt any illegal activities. The new automated system will streamline this process, enhancing efficiency and reducing potential errors.

The proposed automated system offers a range of significant benefits. By ensuring precise recording and tracking of violations and fines, it is expected to enhance transparency within the municipal manage-

ment process. The system also improves efficiency by expediting both the issuance of challans and the maintenance of records, thereby reducing the administrative burden on municipal staff. With advanced data management capabilities, the system is designed to secure penalty collections and prevent revenue loss, ensuring financial stability. Additionally, the implementation of a secure database will facilitate more effective monitoring and enforcement of building regulations, promoting greater accountability across municipal operations.

The adoption of challan machines and accompanying software is expected to mark a significant leap in modernizing Punjab's municipal administration. By embracing technological advancements, the Local Bodies Department aimed at fostering a culture of compliance and accountability, ensuring stricter enforcement of building regulations and more efficient municipal operations.

## Set target of planting 1.50 crore saplings in Hry: CM

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday said that a target of planting 1.50 crore saplings has been set under the 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' campaign to make the environment clean and beautiful. Every citizen should plant at least one sapling as this is a significant step towards environmental protection, he urged.

Speaking at a felicitation ceremony in Kurukshetra, Saini said that under the 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' campaign, 20,000 saplings were planted in Karnal and 5,000 in Kurukshetra. Every citizen should plant one sapling each. He said that over the past 10 years, the central and state governments have worked on basic amenities for people. Moreover, the central and state governments are continuously working to make people's lives easier. Earlier, the Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone of the Agrasen

Bhawan to be built in Sector 8 by Vaishya Aggarwal Panchayat. MP Naveen Jindal and Minister of State for Urban Local Bodies Subhash Sudha were present on the occasion.

### 'Vande Bharat Train is a testament to India's rapid development'

Talking to the journalists before leaving for Delhi from Chandigarh Railway Station by 'Amritsar-Ajmer Vande Bharat' train on Monday, Saini said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has experienced rapid development over the past decade, and the 'Vande Bharat' train is a prime example of this progress.

The Chief Minister said that the Congress has always weakened the country through falsehoods, while under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the nation has grown stronger. Responding to the "Haryana Mange Hisab" question, the Chief Minister said that Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda should give



account for his 10-year tenure first.

He stated that during previous government reign, FIRs were not even registered for the poor, job opportunities were lacking, proper compensation for crop damage was not provided, and MSP for crops was not ensured. Now, MSP is provided for 14 crops in Haryana, and even the last person in the society is benefiting from government welfare schemes dur-

### an amendment in policy of State Award for teachers

The Chief Minister has approved an amendment in the policy of State Award for teachers working in State Universities, Government Colleges, and Government-aided Private Colleges. According to the amendment, the service evaluation period for teachers has been reduced from 15 years to 10 years. This change will allow new teachers to also be eligible for awards. An official spokesperson said that the state government runs a State Teacher Award Scheme for Excellence and Commendable Services for the contribution of teachers working in various State Universities.

Government Colleges and Government-aided Private colleges for their academic, curricular and extracurricular assignments. The aim of these awards is to honour faculty members for their outstanding performance in the field of

teaching. The spokesperson said that faculty members in higher education who demonstrate outstanding exceptional academic efficiency, quality of teaching, professional competence, good conduct, team spirit, community engagement, and use innovative teaching methods will be recommended for the awards. The spokesperson further said that under the policy, a total of 14 state awards will be given each year, for their outstanding services. Eligibility criteria include that teachers must be working in State Universities/Government Colleges/Government-aided colleges situated in the jurisdiction of the Haryana State. All regular working faculty members who have taught for at least 10 years and have an outstanding record in teaching, research, and contributions to students/society are eligible for the award. However, once a teacher has received the award, they are not eligible for it again.

## BRIEFS

### Himachal CM lauds forest corporation for over 25 pc profit rise in 2023-24

**Shimla:** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Monday commended the forest corporation for earning profits of over Rs 10 crore in the financial year 2023-24, over 25 per cent rise from last year's gains. He also directed the officials to expedite the disposal of timber wood stock accumulated in depots to prevent them from rotting. Sukhu's direction to officials came while he was presiding over the 214th meeting of the Board of Directors of Himachal Pradesh State Forest Development Corporation (HPFSDC). Sukhu said that for the first time, the HPFSDC would engage in mining activities from the Beas River, for which it would obtain clearance under the Forest Conservation Act (FCA). He asked the corporation to blacklist defaulting contractors and initiate recovery proceedings against them besides barring them from participating in future tenders.

### Bains directs to ensure potable and clean water in schools

**Chandigarh:** Punjab School Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains on Monday directed that clean drinking water be provided to students in all government schools across the State. With the rainy season underway, there is a risk of waterborne diseases spreading. To ensure students' health and safety, it is crucial to provide clean drinking water and prevent rainwater accumulation in school premises. To this end, the Punjab School Education Department has issued instructions to school heads and school management committees to conduct routine water sampling, keep drinking water tanks covered, regularly clean and chlorinate tanks.

### Punjab Govt committed to provide urban facilities in rural areas: Minister

**Chandigarh:** "Punjab Government is dedicated to delivering urban-level facilities to rural areas. The State Government's initiatives have not only made life easier for the common people but have also saved valuable time for the populace," said the state's Social Justice, Empowerment, and Minorities Minister Dr Baljit Kaur, while speaking at the 15th CSC Day event on Monday. Highlighting the significance of Common Service Centers (CSCs), she said that these centers play a crucial role in aiding citizens in rural and remote regions, offering a wide range of services that promote digital inclusion, access to government and private sector services, financial accountability, e-governance, entrepreneurship, skill development, healthcare and education.

### TEDx event inspires students with diverse speakers

**Chandigarh:** Nine diverse and accomplished speakers inspired students at an independently organized TEDx event at Punjab Kala Bhawan, Chandigarh, on Monday. Dikshant Schools chairman Mitul Dikshit expressed enthusiasm, stating, "Hosting this prestigious TEDx event is an honour. We are committed to providing youngsters with knowledge and perspectives to inspire societal contributions. Such interactions boost students' morale." Speakers included actor, storyteller, and writer Lovleen Misra; filmmaker Mridul Toolisdass; IIT-Delhi engineer and entrepreneur Sachin Jha; photographer Amit Ashar; Quiddich Innovation Labs co-founder Rahat Khusreshtha; Associate Professor at Christ University Dr Sai Varghese; Founder of TakeMe2Space Ronak Samantray; and Senior Director at TERI Dr Dipankar Saharia delivering engaging speeches.

### Rs 1.33 lakh crore invested in last decade for robust drinking water and sewerage infrastructure: Hry Minister

**Chandigarh:** Haryana Public Health Engineering and Public Works (Building and Roads) Minister Banwari Lal on Monday said that during the last about 10 years of the present government, an amount of Rs 1,33,343.36 crore has been spent on creating effective and enduring infrastructure for various drinking water and sewerage schemes in both urban and rural areas of the state.

### Hry Govt working with the interest of all sections of society in mind: Kanwar Pal Gujjar

**Chandigarh:** Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Kanwar Pal Gujjar on Monday said that the State Government is working in mind the interests of every section. By setting new dimensions in developmental work, the government has positioned the state among the leading states in the country. The government's Antyodaya Yojana has brought prosperity to poor families. Gujjar was hearing public grievances in Jagadhri town of Yamunanagar district.

### Haryana Right to Service Commission orders fine of Rs 5,000 on Meter reader

**Chandigarh:** The Haryana Right to Service Commission has taken serious note of the Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) office in Jakhla (Fatehabad) and ordered a fine of Rs. 5,000 to be recovered from the meter reader. This penalty has been imposed due to the failure to provide the notified service within the stipulated time frame and the delay in completing the work.

### A dozen leaders join Congress after leaving INLD and JJP

**Rohtak:** About a dozen leaders, who had left INLD and JJP on Monday joined Congress party in a programme in Rohtak in the presence of former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. The congress leader said that former president of Kilo constituency INLD and Kisan Cell, Balwan Majra alias Ballu Nandal, former youth secretary of JJP and former district president of INSO Amit Majra, BJP's Shri Ram Yatra Cell Rohtak president Advocate Randeep Majra, Puneet Nandal, Rajesh Nandal and Joginder Narwal joined Congress along with their colleagues. In his address, Hooda said that the 'Padak Lao, Pad Pao' scheme will be implemented again for sports persons when the Congress government is formed in the state. He further said that the sports persons will also be given a three percent quota in jobs again, and stadiums will be built in villages.

### Punjab Agri Dept tightens noose around spurious pesticide dealers

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Tightening the noose around spurious fertilizer and pesticide dealers in the state, Punjab Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Department on Monday seized a large stock of unauthorized pesticides at Jhanduke village in Mansa district. Punjab Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Gurmeet Singh Khudian informed that under the Quality Control drive, a team, led by Mansa Chief Agriculture Officer raided M/s Dandiwal Beej Bhandar, Jhanduke, and seized a total of 8.82 quintals of powder form pesticides and 29

litres of liquid pesticides worth over Rs six lakh. The seized stock of unauthorized pesticides belonged to M/s Woodland Crop Science, Marsh Fertichem Limited (Marketing) and Modern Crop Science. Canesha Crop Chemical Private Limited, and Cropwell Agro Industries Private Limited (manufacturing companies). The Minister said that a total of six samples of different pesticides have also been drawn as per the Insecticides Act 1968 and Rules 1971; and the Department has also initiated the process to lodge an FIR in this matter.



Govt. of Haryana



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# Classifieds

## BEDAKHLI NOTICE

**I, Raj Bala** W/o Late Sh. Pawan Kumar R/o House No.4556, Mauli Jagran Complex, Chandigarh declare that my son Rubal, his wife Simran and their son Lovish all are out of my control. I disown them from all my and my family's moveable / immoveable properties. Anybody dealing with them will do so at his/her own risk and responsibility.

**I, Joginder Singh** S/o Ram Kishan R/o Ward No 2, Mahaveer Colony, Tehsil Ladwa District Kurukshetra declare that my son Sandeep Kumar & his wife Pooja Devi both are out of my control, so I disown them from our movable and immovable property. If anybody deals with them, they will be responsible themselves.

**I, Joginder Singh** S/o Ram Kishan R/o Ward No 2, Mahaveer Colony, Tehsil Ladwa District Kurukshetra declare that my married daughter Rajni Rani is out of my control, so I disown her from our movable and immovable property. If anybody deals with her, they will be responsible themselves.

**I, Ram Rati** W/o Lehari R/o Village Kutani, Tehsil & District Panipat, that my son Vikas Kumar and his wife Nisha Parveen are out of my control. So, I debar them from my moveable and immoveable property. In future anybody deals with them responsible for that deal himself.

**We Gurcharan Sharma** S/o Gainda Ram and Sapna Sharma, W/o Gurcharan Sharma R/o # 185, Old Darshani Bagh, Manimajra Chandigarh our daughter Sunaina Sharma is out of our control. We disown her from our all moveable immovable properties. Anybody dealing with her at their own risk.

**We Bitu Saini** W/o Sh. Sadhu Ram & Kiran Devi W/o Bitu Saini R/O H.No. 869, Hissar Road Nasirpur Ambala City inform that our Daughter Renu Saini is out of our control . So we disown her from our movable and immovable properties. if anybody deals with her will do so at his/her own risk.

**I, Parmanand** S/o Shri Hari Ram R/o H.No- 6-7 Shivalik Colony Village Singhawala Ambala City inform that my Son Jagdisg & Narender & Rajinder and Gurmeet Kaur, Seema & Rajwinder Kaur are my daughter in law are out of my control. So I disown all of them from my moveable and immovable property. I and my family will not be responsible for any kind of transaction or legal or illegal work done by them.

**I, Harpal Singh,** S/o Baldev Singh, R/o Kurdi, Tehsil & District SAS Nagar, Mohali, Punjab declare that my sons Ravinder Singh, Gurjant Singh and my wife Surinder Kaur are out at my control. So, I disown my sons and wife from all my movable/ immovable property. Anybody dealing with them will do so at their own risk.

**I, Rajiv S/O** Iqbal Singh, R/O Ward No. 21, Gali No.2, Patel Nagar, Sonipat, my son Abhay Is Out Of My Control. I,Disown Them From All My Moveable And Immoveable Properties. If Anybody Deals With Him At Their Own Risk.

**ਮੈਂ ਪਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ** ਪੁੱਤਰ ਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਲੀ 1667, ਮੋਨ ਬਜ਼ਾਰ, ਅੰਦਰੂਨ ਚੌਕੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਬਜ਼ਾਰ, ਰਾਮ ਨਗਰ, ਵੇਰਵਾ, ਐਮੀਡਸਰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਗਰਨਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਵਿੱਛ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਮੈਂ ਅਪਣੀ ਸੁਝ ਬੂਝ ਤੋਂ ਸਮਝ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਲੜਕੇ ਗਰਨਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੌਲ੍ਹੇ ਤੋਂ ਅਚੱਲੇ ਜ਼ਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਖ਼ਤਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਖੁੱਚ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

**ਮੈਂ ਕਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ** ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਅਜੀਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦ ਵਾਲੀ ਬਜ਼ਾਰ ਕੰਪਨੀ, ਸੋਨੀ ਮੂਹੜਾ ਪਠਾਨਕੋਟ, ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਪਠਾਨਕੋਟ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹਾਂ। ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਸਤੀਸ਼ ਗਰਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਇੰਦੂ ਬਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਵਿਕਰਮ ਸੋਨੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਵੱਖ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਮੈਂ ਅੱਜ ਤੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਾਮਾ ਚੌਲ੍ਹੇ-ਅਚੱਲੇ ਜ਼ਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਖ਼ਤਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਅੱਜ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਉਹ ਖੁੱਚ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਸਬੰਧਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**I Peetar Gill** S/o Billu Gill R/O Berian mohalla Dinanagar, tehsil Dinanagar, distt Gurdaspur declare that my minor daughter Khushbu school record written bymistake her name as Khushbu. But correct name is Khushbu. Concerned note.

**I, NO 4296215W RANK SEP** Name Anand Ram Of Village Karra Road Nawatoli, Post+ PS- Khuntli, Distt-Khanti, State- Jharkhand Pin-835210 I am army soldier my army service record my son name Aayu is wrongly entered but my son's correct name is Aayu Kanav as per civil documents. My son's Aadhar card No. is 7460-4033-0753 so adds my son's correct name in my army service record vide affidavit No PB-40590015710562W date 29 July 2024

**I, Kiran Singh** is legally mother of Sushil Singh, Residence of Village-Khemrajpur, Post Office Shankrupur Tehsil-Harraya, District-Basti, State-Uttar Pradesh Pin code- 272129 have changed my name from Kiran Singh to Kiran Devi and have changed my DOB 05-05-1967 to 01-01-1973 vide affidavit No. IN-PB40354816285002W Dated 29 July 2024 Before District Court, Gurdaspur (Punjab)

**I, Jagtbal Singh** is legally father of Sushil Singh, Residence of Village-Khemrajpur, Post Office Shankrupur Tehsil-Harraya, District-Basti, State-Uttar Pradesh Pin code- 272129 have changed my name from Jagtbal Singh to Jagat Pal and have changed my DOB 01-01-1967 to 01-01-1975 vide affidavit No. IN-PB40353809532412W Dated 29 July 2024 Before District Court, Gurdaspur (Punjab)

**I, Rupali** W/o Pawan Kumar R/O Village Ranipur Chhota Post office Ranipur Distt Pathankot declare that in school record of my son Dushyant Bhuri. My name wrongly written as Rupali Bhuri. My correct name is Rupali. Concerned note.

**I, Joginder Kaur** W/o Harbans Singh R/o VPO Ghot Pokhar District Gurdaspur (Punjab) declare that in my passport No. M4710006, my date of birth is wrongly written as 01.01.1951 .As per my Aadhar card my correct DOB is 15.02.1946.

**I, Inderjeet Singh,** son of Avtar Singh, resident of village Raipur Khurd Tehsil & District Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar declare that in the educational certificates of my daughter Harpreet Kaur my name is wrongly recorded as Inderjeet and my wife's name as Kiranjeet . My real name is Inderjeet Singh and my wife's real name is Kiranjeet Kaur. It should be corrected.

**I, Sharvan kumar** s/o Sai Dass R/O Mohalla Jandrian, Tehsil and District Pathankot declare that in my Passport my name written as Sharwan Kumar but my actual and correct name is Sharvan kumar.

**I, Mukesh Kumar** S/O Sham Lal R/O village Ranipur Chhota Teh/Distt Pathankot (Pb) declare that in my son Anmol Bhuri school my name is entered as Mukesh Bhuri but in my documents my name written as Mukesh Kumar.so Mukesh Kumar and Mukesh Bhuri are the name of one and same person.

It is for general information that I, Arun Kumar S/o Dharam Vir Dutt R/O Village Dhirowal, PO. Mansoorpur, Dhirowal, Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144211 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Dharm Dutt in my Pan Card No. ABXPK9522H. The actual name of my father is Dharam Vir Dutt, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I Sushil Bansal** S/O Sparakash Bansal R/O H. No. 764, Sector-17, Huda, Jagadhri, Yamuna Nagar Have Changed My Name From Sushil Kumar Bansal To Sushil Bansal.

**I, Ravinder Kaur** Saini, w/o Jagpal Singh, resident of village Malkipur, district Rupnagar, have changed my name to Ravinder Kaur, please note.

**I, Raj Kumar** S/o Shiv Dhan Mal R/o 100, Krishna Colony, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Raj Kumar to Raj Kumar Goel.

**I, Amarjit Singh** Sandhu S/o Kanwal Singh Sandhu R/O H.No. 302, RCS Society, Sector 48-A, Chandigarh have changed my minor daughter's name from Gurnivaaz Kaur to Gurnivaaz Kaur Sandhu.

**I Sushma Choudhary** W/o Rajeev Kumar Bhardwaj R/o H.No.576 A (G.F.), Omaxe Silver Birch, Chandigarh Extension Mullanpur, SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab declares that in school records of my son Vidhant Bhardwaj my name is mentioned as Sushma, whereas my correct name is Sushma Choudhary.

**I, Pushpak Verma** S/o Sumit Verma R/O#120, Badheri Chandigarh have changed my name from Pushpak Verma to Pushkar Verma.

**I, Sumit Verma** S/o Amarjit Verma R/O #129, Badheri Chandigarh have changed the name of my minor daughter from Akshra Verma to Akshara Verma.

**I, Narender Kumar** S/O Nakhmi Chand r/o # 5487/1, MHC (Sector-13), Manimajra, U.T., Chandigarh have changed my name to Narender Gulati.

**I, Kulwinderpal Singh** Sandhu Son of Sukhdev Singh R/O Kothe Bahadurgarh, Bari Hari urf Harike Kalan Distt. Sri Muktsar Sahib have changed my name Kulwinderpal Singh to Kulwinderpal Singh Sandhu.

**I, Lithika Garg,** D/o of Sh.Vaneet garg and Smt. Shweta garg, Residing H.No. 144, Sector 28A, Chandigarh160002, have changed my name from Lithika to Lithika Garg for all future purposes.

**I, Navin Kumar** S/o Dei Ram R/O Village Bhogipur, Rajlu Tehsil Ganaur, Distt. Sonipat declares that I have changed my minor son's name from Chhavi Raj to Shekhar Jangra, for all future purposes.

**I, Ashima Bakshi** D/o Mitter Chand Bakshi R/o 977-B, Vishnu Nagar, Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my minor son's name from Manas Verma to Manas.

**I, Ashima Verma** D/o Mitter Chand Bakshi R/o 977-B, Vishnu Nagar, Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Ashima Verma to Ashima Bakshi.

**I, Gulshan** Alias Gulshan Kumar Alias Gulshan Kalra S/O Dharamvir R/O #545, Sector-40A, Chandigarh have changed my name to Gulshan Kumar Kalra.

**I, Suresh Bansal** S/o Sh. Ram Kumar Bansal R/O H.No. 318, Gali Dhana Katli Wali, Noharia Bazar, Sirsa (Haryana). That I have changed my name from Suresh Bansal, Suresh Kumar to Suresh Kumar Bansal, in future my name is to be called as Suresh Kumar Bansal.

**I, Ajay** S/o Chander Singh R/o 1169/21, Prem Nagar, Haffed Road, Rohtak declare that in my daughter's birth certificate the name of mine, my wife and my daughter wrongly written as Ajay Chander Rathi, Amayra Ajay Rathi and Arti Ajay Rathi. The actual name of mine, my wife and my daughter are Ajay, Arati Preet Singh and Amayra and same name will be considered for further communication in future.

**I, Aeshani** D/O. Diwaker Ahluwalia R/O. Flat No. 4, Tower No. 5, Omaxe Greens Jharnari, Sas Nagar, Mohali-Punjab. I Have Changed My Name From Aeshani To Aeshani Ahluwalia.

**I, Santra** W/o Rajpal Hudda R/o #1093/972, Hanuman Mandir Gali, Dabuaia, Faridabad (Haryana) have change my name from name from Santra to Sumitra Devi.

**I, Reena Rani** W/o Arvind kumar R/O H.No.1904-1905 Sec-11 HUDA Panipat have changed my name from Reena Rani to Reena Singhal for all future purposes.

**I, Harpreet Kaur** W/o Kulbir Singh R/o VPO Chetanpura, Amritsar, Punjab- 143606 have changed my minor daughter's name from Shubneet Kaur to Kaur is her surname and Shubneet is her given name.

**I, Sanjeev Kaushik** S/o Sh. Shiv Parshad, R/O H.No- 596/97 Ram Bagh Road Ambala Cantt have changed my name from Sanjeev Kumar to Sanjeev Kaushik.

**I, Shakti Kaushik** W/o Sh. Sanjeev Kaushik, R/O H.No- 596/97 Ram Bagh Road Ambala Cantt have changed my name from Shakti to Shakti Kaushik.

**I, Jaswinder** W/o Deepak Lakhwai R/O H.No 21 New Kanch Ghar Ambala city have changed my name from Jaswinder to Jaswinder Pal Kaur.

**I, Dinesh Kumar** Gupta S/O Anil Parkash Gupta R/O H.No-39140 Kanch Ghar Ambala City have changed my name from Dinesh Kumar Gupta to Dinesh Kumar.

**I, Rekha Rani** Uppal W/o Rajiv Kumar Uppal R/O H.No- 15-A, Navneet Nagar Police Line Ambala City have changed my name from Rekha Rani Uppal to Rekha Rani.

**I, Kapil Gulati** S/O Vipul Gulati R/O 363, Sita Ra, Gali, Goal Bagh, Durgiana Mandir, Amritsar, Punjab, India have changed my name from Kunal Gulati to Kapil Gulati.

**I, Rekha Devi** W/O Rajinder Kumar, # 446, Sector 33-A, Chandigarh have changed my name to Rekha.

**I, Rajiv Kumar** S/o Shri Kapoor Singh R/O HNo. 1318P, Sector 23, Sonapat, Haryana 131001, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rajiv Tomar.

**I, Suresh Kumar** S/o Ram Chand R/o VPO Jalbhe Distt. Jalandhar have changed the name of my daughter from Suvita to Suvita Kumar.

**I, Suresh Kumar** S/o Ram Chand R/o VPO Jalbhe Distt. Jalandhar have changed the name of my daughter from Nevedita to Nevedita Kumar.

**I, Barinder Singh** S/O Darshan Singh R/O VPO Sikri, Tehsil Tanda, Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name from Barinder Singh to Varinder Singh. Concerned note.

**I, Shabnam** D/o Sahaban R/O #5/1, Maloya, Chandigarh declare that have converted my religion from Muslim to Hindu and my name from Shabnam to Sakshi.

**I, Rajwinder** D/o Kulwant Singh R/O Malawe Di Kothi, Batala, Gurdaspur, Punjab- 143505 have changed my name to Rajwinder Kaur.

**I, Sanoj Kumar** S/o Sh. Ram Pal R/O Near Rajesh Pilot Chowk, KDB Road, Vishwash Nagar, Kurukshetra, Distt. Kurukshetra have changed the name of my Minor daughter from Anshika to Anshika Tamak.

**I, Sanoj Kumar** S/o Sh. Ram Pal R/O Near Rajesh Pilot Chowk, KDB Road, Vishwash Nagar, Kurukshetra, Distt. Kurukshetra have changed the name of my Minor Son from Anshu to Anshu Tamak.

**I, Naresh Kumar** S/o Sh. Ram Pal R/O Near Rajesh Pilot Chowk, KDB Road, Vishwash Nagar, Kurukshetra, Distt. Kurukshetra have changed the name of my Minor Son from Anish to Anish Tamak.

**I, hitherto Known** as Archana Kaur Kanwal Wife of Jaspreet Singh Anand residing at H.No.12, Golden Avenue, Head Water Works Road, District Amritsar-143001 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Archana Kaur

**I, hitherto Known** as Seema Rani Wife of Mangat Singh residing at Village Khemkaran Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran-143419 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Seema Rani Bhardwaj

**I, hitherto Known** as Rakesh Kumar Son of Diwan Chand Wasson residing at G.T Road Near Police Station, Kiran Medicare Hospital PO Dinanagar Tehsil Dinanagar District Gurdaspur-143531 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Rakesh Kumar Wasson

**I, Ritesh Mahajan** Son of Ravi Bushan residing at H.No.458, Ward No.2, Chati Khui Tehsil and District Gurdaspur have changed my minor Son's name from Yadu Nandan to Yadu Nandan Mahajan.

**I, Kawaljit Kumar** W/o Pritam Singh R/O H.No.31, Lane No.1, Sant Avenue, Opp Mall of Amritsar, Amritsar have changed my name from Kawaljit Kaur to Kalwaljeet Kaur

**I, Sarabjit Singh** S/O Balwinder Pal Singh R/O H.No.S-15/381, I/s Chatwintd Gate Amritsar have chaged my name from Sarabjit Singh to Sarabjeet Singh

**I, Amarjeet Kaur** Gill W/o Kulwant Singh R/O Ward No.2, Abadi Idgah, VPO/Majitha District Amritsar have chaged my name from Amarjeet Kaur Gill to Amarjeet Kaur

**I, Kulwinder Kaur** w/o Paramjit Singh R/O VPO Saidoke Distt Amritsar have Changed my name Kulwinder Kaur to Kalwinder Kaur

**I, No.15581754F** Hav Sandesh Kumar Unit 270 Engr. Regt. C/o 56 APO have changed my mother's name from Santosh Kaur to Santosh

**I, No. 15581754F** Hav Sandesh Kumar Unit 270 Engr. Regt. C/o 56 APO have changed my mother Santosh Date of Birth from 11.04.1960 to 01.04.1962

**I, Komalpreet Kaur** Dhillon W/o Tajinderbir Singh R/O Chetanpura, PO Chetanpura, Chetanpura, Amritsar have changed my name from Komalpreet Kaur Dhillon to Komalpreet Kaur

**I, Naresh Mehra** S/o Manohar Lal Mehra Resident of 119-A, Gali No.7, Sunder Nagar, Amritsar. I have changed my name from Naresh Mehra to Naresh Kumar.

**I, Baljeet Kaur** Spouse of No.1080280A Ex Ld Gurmej Singh R/O VPO Sur Singh Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran have changed my name from Baljeet Kaur to Baljit Kaur and Date of Birth from 06.01.1970 to 01.03.1962 Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB10430722419984W Dated 29.04.2024 Before Executive Magistrate Tarn Taran

**I, Laxmi** Mother of No.14952758M Sep Pradeep Shindedesai R/O Examba Belagaur Karnataka-591244 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 APO have changed my name to Laxmi Balasaheb Desai Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB40358043779445W Dt.29.07.2024 Before Notary Public Amritsar

**I, Kavita Kanwar** spouse of No 15217165L NK Veer Singh R/O 105/2 Kundalon Ki Dhani Village Balai Tehsil Shiv Dist Barmer Rajasthan 344701 have changed my Date of Birth from 24-12-1991 to 01-01-1992 vide affidavit no BT 509612 dated 27-05-2024 before Notary Public Barmer

**I, Anil Narang** S/o Sh. Om Parkash Narang R/O H. No. 425, Sector 13P, Hisar, Haryana declare that I am the citizen of India. I have changed my name from Suparna Narang to Suparna. In future I shall be known as Suparna for all purpose. I will be fully responsible for any dispute in future.

**I, Anil Narang** S/o Sh. Om Parkash Narang R/O H. No. 425, Sector 13P, Hisar, Haryana declare that I am the citizen of India. I have changed my name from Anil Kumar to Anil Kumar. In future I shall be known as Anil Kumar for all purpose. I will be fully responsible for any dispute in future.

**I, Ritesh Mahajan** Son of Ravi Bushan residing at H.No.458, Ward No.2, Chati Khui Tehsil and District Gurdaspur have changed my minor Son's name from Yash Mahajan to Yadu Nandan Mahajan. Concerned note.

**In my son JC-542750H** Sub Munim Singh 21 Kumaon services documents my name wrongly written as Santi Devi, which needs to be corrected as Shanti Devi. Shanti Devi resident of Gadanpur, Udesar, Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh

**In my son No. 4198856M** Hav Baldev Singh, 21 Kumaon services documents my name wrongly written as Hayat Singh, which needs to be corrected as Hayat Singh Lamakoti. Hayat Singh Lamakoti resident of Kwerala, Kala Agar, Nainital, Uttarakhand-263157

**In my son No. 4198856M** Hav Baldev Singh, 21 Kumaon services documents my name wrongly written as Laxmi Devi, which needs to be corrected as Lachhema Devi. Lachhema Devi resident of Kwerala, Kala Agar, Nainital, Uttarakhand-263157

**I, Sangita Kumari** is legally wedded wife of No. 14935420L Hav Pramod Bhagat resident of Vpo Aura, Tehsil & District Sheohar, Bihar-843128 now at 15 Mech Inf C/O 56 APO, Have Changed My Name From Sangita Kumari To Sangita Devi vide affidavit no. IN-PB40754185145829W dated 29-07-2024, before Notary Public, Amritsar

**I, Firoza Begum** W/o Mohd Sattar # 1101, Small flat housing board complex Dhanas Chandigarh declare that in aadhar card my name wrongly mentioned karzina Begum but correct name is Firoza Begum concern Note.

**I Ramesh** S/O Haripal Singh R/O # 379 Village Maloya Chandigarh have changed my name to Harmesh Kumar.

**I, NR 21352L, Lt Col** Sreena Pushpangadhan R/O # 210/4, Pab Colony, Joshi Enclave, Sector A, Chandimandir Cantt, Panchkula- 134107 declare that my Daughter's School record her name is wrongly mentioned as Lena where as her correct name is Lena Linu Lakshmanan, as per her birth certificate.

**I, Gurmeet Singh** S/O Gurmali Singh R/O #75, Village-Jaswantgarh, Distt.Panchkula have changed my son name from Harsh Preet to Harsh Choudhary.

**I, Monika Yadav** D/o Mahabir Yadav, R/O 63, Model Town, Tehsil Hansi ,Distt. Hisar declares that Mahabir Yadav, Mahabir Singh and Mahabir Singh Yadav are the names of my Father and the same person.

**I, Rakesh Yadav** S/O Sarjit Singh R/O Ward No. 02, Yadav Mohalla, Kalayat, Tehsil Kalayat, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that I have changed my name from Rakesh to Rakesh Yadav. In future, I will be known by the name of Rakesh Yadav. All concerned please note.

**I, Durvasa Devi** Mother of No.-15687269X Rank HAV Name Manish Kumar Upadhyay R/O Vill. Gurela, PO Gurela, Teh. Sakaldihia, Distt. Chandauli, UP-232109 have changed my name in army record from Durvasa Devi to Durvasa Upadhyay vide affidavit dated 29-07-2024 before Session Court Hisar.

**I, Jawahar Lal** Upadhyay Father of No.-15687269X Rank HAV Name Manish Kumar Upadhyay R/O Vill. Gurela, Teh. Sakaldihia, Distt. Chandauli, UP-232109 have changed my name in army record from Jawahar S Upadhyay to Jawahar Lal Upadhyay vide affidavit dated 29-07-2024 before Session Court Hisar.

**I, Dhaniklal Roy** Father of No.-15705177W Rank CHM Name Brij Bhushan Roy R/O Vill. Mohania, PO Mohania, Teh. Mohania, Distt. Kaimur, Bihar-821109 have changed my name in army record from Dhaniklal Roy to Dhanik Lal Ray vide affidavit dated 29-07-2024 before Session Court Hisar.

**I, No.-1484654W** Rank R/O Vill. & PO Dubber Potha, Teh. Nowshera, Distt. Rajouri, J & K-185151 have changed the name of my daughter in army record from Madvi to Madhvi Devi vide affidavit dated 29-07-2024 before Session Court Hisar.

**I, Mukesh Kumar** Bindal S/O Mahesh Kumar R/O H. No. 595, Sector 14, Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Mukesh Kumar Bindal to Mukesh Kumar for future purpose.

**I Suparna Narang** W/o Sh. Anil Kumar R/O H. No. 425, Sector 13P, Hisar, Haryana declare that I am the citizen of India. I have changed my name from Suparna Narang to Suparna. In future I shall be known as Suparna for all purpose. I will be fully responsible for any dispute in future.

**I, Meenu** D/o Satbir Singh w/o Sh. Lalit Kumar R/O Vill.Machhraula ,Sonipat have changed my name from Monu Devi to Meenu w/o Lalit Kumar for all future purposes.

**I, No. 4472407Y** Rank: Ex-HAV (MACP NB SUB) Name: Gurjeet Singh S/O Gurdas Singh R/O Village Kakrala, Tehsil Samana, Distt. Patiala, Punjab 147102 declare that in my service record my mother's name is mentioned as Balwant Kaur but her correct name is Ranjeet Kaur.

**I, Kaveri Badiger** is legally Mother of Service No. 16120501Y Rank: NK Name: Shankarnag M Bagier residing at Village Balaganoor Post Gadag, Taluk Gadag, Distt. Gadag (State) Karnataka Pin- 582102, have changed my name from Kaveri to Kaveri Badiger.

**I, Manappa Badiger** is legally Father of Service No. 16120501Y Rank: NK Name: Shankarnag M Bagier residing at Village Balaganoor Post Gadag, Taluk Gadag, Distt. Gadag (State) Karnataka Pin- 582102, have changed my name from Manappa to Manappa Badiger.

**I, Raman Narang** S/o Sh. Ramesh Kumar Narang, R/O H.No. 506/3, Hem Nagar, Sonipat, declare that Sanyam Narang is my son, whose date of birth is 02.01.2010. Son's name is registered as Sanyam in school records and Municipal Corporation. In future my son should be known as Sanyam Narang.

**I, Vandana** W/o Vivek Sheel, #- 46 Purana Gurudwara, Nangal, Tehsil Nangal (Rupnagar), have changed my name to Vandana Vasudev.

**I, Rajinder Rana** S/o Sagli Ram R/O Vill Behlu Tehsil Anandpur Sahib (Ropar) declare that Rehaan and Rehaan Rana both are the name of my son (class 10th, Mount Carmel School Jindwari-Admission No.2914)

I am Sukhbir Kaur, wife of Jasbir Singh, resident of village Khedi Dabdaln, Tehsil Ladwa, District Kurukshetra. My name before marriage was Ajmer Kaur. After marriage I changed my name to Sukhbir Kaur.

**I, Baldev Kumar** S/o Chet Ram R/O Village Gumti Postoffice Madanpur, Tehsil Shahabad Markanda, District Kurukshetra, have changed my name from Baldev Kumar to Baldev Dhiman.

**I, Dinesh Kumar** S/O Shishupal Jindal R/O of 1558A/12 Aare Wali Gali, Gali No. 4, Didar Nagar, Thanesar Distt Kurukshetra, have changed my name from Dinesh Kumar to Dinesh Kumar Jindal.

**I, Mohit Aggarwal** S/O Kanwarpal Aggarwal R/O 1393-a, huda sector 1 near d.a.v. centenary school, Shahabad Shahabad (m) Shahabad Kurukshetra, Haryana 136135, have changed the name of my minor daughter Muskan aged 5 years and she shall hereafter be known as Mishqa Aggarwal.

I, hitherto known as Vaishali As Vanshika Arora D/O Parmod Kumar, R/O 254, ward no. 5, mohanj nagar near geeta school, kurukshetra, thanesar, Kurukshetra, Haryana, 136118, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Vanshika Arora.

I, hitherto known as Sahib alias Sahab Singh S/o Jagir Singh, R/O Daulatpur Niwan, Moga, Punjab -142048, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sahib Singh.

**I, Krishan Garg** S/o Sh.Jainarain R/O Flat no.1002, Tower-2 B,Suncity Parikarma society Sector -20 Panchkula Haryana have changed my name from Krishan Garg to Krishan Kumar.

**I, Megha** alias Megha Garg, W/o Sh.Krishan Kumar, R/O Flat no.1002, Tower-2 B, Suncity Parikarma society, Sector -20 Panchkula Haryana, have changed my name from Megha alias Megha Garg to Megha Rani





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PAPER WITH PASSION



KALYANI SHANKAR

## Talk tough, act tougher

Despite PM Modi's stern warning to Pakistan, crossborder terrorism is showing no signs of waning

Despite warnings, increased presence of troops and diplomatic manoeuvres cross-border terrorism remains a grim reality. In what must be a grave concern for all, the Indian Army has reported the loss of its 12th soldier this month, further straining the already tense relations between India and Pakistan. Rifleman Mohit Rathour was killed, and a Major along with three other soldiers were wounded in an unprovoked attack by Pakistanis Border Action Team (BAT) on an Indian forward post during an operation against terrorists attempting to cross the LoC at Kamkari in Machhal sector, north Kashmir. BAT, comprising Pakistani military personnel and terrorists, often provides cover fire for intruders crossing the LoC. In this latest assault, Pakistani personnel exploited poor weather and low visibility to attack the Army post with grenades and gunfire, resulting in a prolonged gunfight that critically wounded two soldiers, one of whom later died. In response to the surge in terror attacks, security in J&K



has been tightened, with the Government deploying two BSF battalions, totalling over 2,000 personnel, to the Union territory. The recent attack comes a day after the India Prime Minister warned Pakistan of dire consequences.

On Kargil Vijay Diwas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued a stern warning to Pakistan, asserting that the evil designs of the masters of terror will never succeed and that India will overcome every terror challenge. This strong message came amidst a rise in terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, including a deadly attack on a bus carrying pilgrims. But the PM's warning had little effect on the perpetrators.

The ongoing skirmishes along the Line of Control (LoC) and heightened insurgency activities in Jammu and Kashmir have contributed significantly to these casualties. While Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups continues to stir trouble, India must chalk out a comprehensive strategy to end such activities and ensure the safety of citizens and secure borders. Indeed, it is a tough task, given the difficult terrain but we must show resolve to take on terrorism and give fitting reply when such an incident takes place. Isolating Pakistan on international forums, especially at the UN, can work provided we present our case discreetly with proof. So far, despite the provocations, India has been steadfast in its efforts to normalise the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. The Government's approach includes developmental initiatives, infrastructural investments, and engagement with local communities to foster peace and stability. But clearly, it is not enough and terrorists must be dealt with more vigorous force using high-tech solutions. The martyrdom of the soldiers should not go waste and we should strengthen India's resolve to pursue peace and stability in the region. Cross-border terrorism must stop now and we should have zero tolerance towards infiltrators to protect our borders and the people.

### PICTALK



'Kanwariyas' gather at Har Ki Pauri ghat to collect 'Ganga jal', in Haridwar

## BRS faces existential crisis as KCR falters

Despite substantial party funds, the BRS now faces an existential crisis, compounded by internal defections and declining support

The Bharatiya Rashtra Samithi, formerly the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, sets itself apart from other declining political parties. Led by the ambitious K. Chandra Shankara Rao, or KCR, the party's national expansion has been marked by setbacks, including its failure to retain power in Telangana. This fate is shared by many political parties and their leaders, as most eventually fade away after holding power at a state or national level. The downside continued as BRS suffered a significant and sudden setback with no Lok Sabha seat in 2024. Despite having around Rs 1,000 crore in party funds, KCR's hopes of national expansion were dashed. Rao renamed his party BRS in 2022, dropping the word Telangana, and KCR opened branches in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Those units are defunct now.

This is a stark example of how the political landscape can change instantly. Having lost power in the 2023 Assembly elections to Congress in the wilderness for the past ten years, the BRS is now facing a significant struggle for survival. The BRS has no representation in the Lok Sabha for the first time after the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The party, which dominated Telangana politics for about two decades and ruled the state for almost a decade, has now been voted out of the Lok Sabha in 2024. Just last week, BRS received a further setback. BRS MLA A. Gandhi defected to the ruling Congress, which reflects the party's decline.

The Congress now boasts 75 M.L.A.s, including 65 from Congress, one from C.P.I., and nine former BRS Members. In 2001, KCR made a historic decision to resign from the Telugu Desam Party (T.D.P.). He believed that creating a separate state was the only way to end the discrimination in the Telangana region, sparking a demand for separation. TRS was formed to achieve separate Telangana, a seemingly impossible regional objective. He was 47 at the time. T.D.P. was the second-largest party in the National Democratic Alliance. In



2004, the TRS. Joined forces with the Congress and secured five Lok Sabha seats. Following this, KCR was appointed the Union Minister for Labour and Employment in the United Progressive Alliance (U.P.A.) government, headed by U.P.A. Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. He continued his struggle inside and outside Parliament. In 2009, he initiated a hunger strike to demand the introduction of the Telangana Bill in Parliament. After a few days, the Centre conceded to his demands. Shortly before the 2014 election, the U.P.A. government announced the formation of Telangana state. The TRS performed well in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, winning 11 seats, its highest tally. However, it lost power to the Congress in the 2023 Assembly polls. On December 9, 2022, TRS, was officially renamed BRS., indicating KCR's intention to pursue national ambitions.

Now that the BRS, has failed to win even a single Lok Sabha seat in the state and its vote share has dropped to only 16.69%, the party faces a genuine existential crisis. The BRS, lost power last year, with just 35 seats in the Assembly.



UNLIKE CHANDRABABU, WHO HAD THE BACKING OF THE KAMMA COMMUNITY, KCR LACKS SUPPORT FROM ANY CASTE GROUP EXCEPT VELAMAS, A SMALL GROUP

The BRS chief struggled to keep the party together during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. It could not implement plans to field candidates in other states. KCR's attempt to establish a dynastic rule by appointing his son, nephew, and daughter to significant positions has been a point of contention. It was seen as a deviation from the party's founding principles and a sign of increasing autocracy. Secondly, like many dictatorial leaders, Rao failed to develop a second tier of leadership, which is an asset for any political leader except promoting his family. Thirdly, KCR, who rose to power through agitation and protests, steadily withdrew from public spaces. His inaccessibility and his aversion to media have significantly contributed to the disconnect between him and his leaders and workers. Rao surrounded himself with people who lacked substance and only praised him.

As a result, he could not see the reality and fell into the trap of his sycophants, who presented false facts. Unlike Chandrababu, who had the backing of the Kamma community, KCR lacks support from any caste group except Velamas, a small group.

This political isolation is a significant factor in his decline. Fifthly, there were allegations of corruption. His daughter Kavitha is now in jail for alleged corruption in the Delhi liquor case. Sixthly, instead of concentrating on the state, KCR began dabbling in national politics and went around the Opposition-ruled states with a naked ambition of becoming Prime Minister. But he failed.

This wavering resulted in BRS. Unable to form the government in the 2024 polls. Seventhly, he thought he and his party were unbeatable and would continue to rule Telangana indefinitely like many other tinpot dictators. Eighthly, BRS. Faced defections.

However, he also induced defections when he was the chief minister. KCR has now joined a group of once-influential leaders such as Sharad Pawar, Lalu Prasad Yadav, Edapadi Palaniswamy, Deve Gowda, Mayawati, Uddhav Thackeray, and others who have previously held power but are now struggling. In politics, it's like playing a game of snakes and ladders.

(The author is a popular columnist; views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### DO NOT SUBVERT NITI AAYOG

Madam — Boycotting NITI Aayog Meetings Undermines Democratic Processes Boycotting NITI Aayog meetings by some political parties contradicts the principles of cooperative federalism. With parties from the INDIA bloc attending, it was expected that others, including the Congress party with its significant representation in Lok Sabha, would also participate.

The central government's allocation of more funds to Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, seen as politically motivated, should be addressed through dialogue rather than boycotts. Cooperation between the government and opposition is essential for national interest. Opposition parties staying away from NITI Aayog meetings miss the opportunity to voice their concerns and influence critical decisions.

Boycotts serve as ineffective protests, harming democratic processes and national unity. Continuous stalling of official processes by the opposition, since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure began, undermines the democratic framework. For citizens, the concern is about the smooth functioning of democracy. The opposition's confrontational approach hinders cooperative federalism, affecting national interest.

Addressing grievances through participation, not boycotts, ensures a healthier democratic process. Same Old Story Educated middle-class citizens often await the budget with anticipation, only to feel disappointed afterward. The recent budget, though promising in terms of infrastructure, employment, and other areas, fell short of transformational changes, particularly in taxation. The Finance Minister missed an opportunity to significantly alter the taxation structure, leading to disillusionment among the middle class. This cycle of expectation and disappointment continues, echoing Indiana Jones' sentiment: "Same old, same old."

Dorai Ramani Suresh | Ghaziabad

#### Ensure safety norms at coaching centres



The coaching institutions at Old Rajinder Nagar in Delhi are endangering the lives of UPSC aspirants, who face numerous hardships to pursue their dreams of becoming IAS officers. The recent tragic incident where three aspirants drowned in a basement flooded with rainwater underscores the dire state of India's coaching centers. Previously, such stories were common from Kota, but now Old Rajinder Nagar has also gained

notoriety for exploiting students for profit. This area, known as the UPSC hub, is filled with overpriced, poorly maintained apartments rented out to students from low and middle-income families who struggle to afford them. The Delhi government must take immediate action against negligent property owners and coaching institutions, enforcing strict standards to ensure the safety of the aspirants. These standards should include regulations on the number of students per batch, proper ventilation, parking facilities, and reasonable rent for student accommodations.

Additionally, a toll-free number should be established for students to report grievances related to their living and studying conditions directly to the police, ensuring their safety and empowering them against exploitation. These measures are crucial to protect the lives and aspirations of future officers and uphold societal responsibility.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

#### CELEBRATING PARENTS DAY

Madam — Parenting responsibilities are a testament to the unconditional love, support, and sacrifices parents make throughout their lives. This day emphasizes the importance of family values, fostering stronger relationships, and promoting gratitude and respect towards parents. Parents guide us with unwavering love and support, enduring countless silent and selfless sacrifices to ensure our happiness.

Despite the challenges of raising children, including teenage tantrums and door slams, their disciplined approach aims to provide us with a better life. As we transition into adulthood, parents continue to support us, often silently, checking on us and ensuring our well-being. Their selfless gestures speak volumes, even if they are not always expressive. It is time to show our appreciation and thankfulness for the support and love parents provide. The young generation must understand that one day they would be parents too!

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

#### NAIL THE MYTH

Madam — Scientific facts have broken several myths and misconceptions. Will it put a break to political rhetoric in India which advocates population control based on false assumptions that the minority population is growing at a faster pace than its majority counterparts. Now that the pandemic period is over, the focus must be to release the 2021 census based on latest survey conducted so as to ascertain a clear picture of the socio economic scenario rather than targeting any particular community or area. It is absurd to predict about the future only on narrow rhetoric and political compulsions rather than using the demographic dividend for the progress of the country. So, no single community or religion be held responsible for rising population since it can falsify facts. If the Minority phobia is real or a mechanism to gain political dividends is a million dollar question.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Monsoon mayhem: The pothole predicament

Despite millions being spent annually by road authorities to ensure safe travel, the recurrence of potholes raises serious questions about where the money is going

The arrival of the monsoon season brings relief from the scorching heat, but it also brings along a familiar foe: "Potholes". This issue constantly frustrates commuters and raises doubts about the effectiveness of road maintenance. Every year, the Road Authorities spend millions of rupees to ensure a smooth and secure journey for travellers. However, these hazardous holes continue to deface the roads. All that money—where is it going? The other day I had to take a chance and walk the distance between the Amar Business Zone and the Hinjewadi Bus Stop. The rain was so intense that vehicles and cabs were unavailable, so I had to face it on my own. I prayed while I walked, hoping that I wouldn't hurt myself. The flooded streets and obscured footpaths turned the walk into a risky journey, where every step held the risk of either finding solid ground or plunging into an unseen pothole.



they are on foot or in their vehicles. The unpredictable nature of the road, obscured by the coverings of water, is risky. Potholes, which are frequently hidden beneath murky pools, become silent causes of numerous accidents, damaged vehicles, and occasionally fatal injuries. This issue demands urgent attention and a lasting resolution.

The persistence of potholes is a glaring testament to a systemic failure. Despite the annual financial outlay, the roads remain in a perpetual state of disrepair. One can't help but wonder about the quality of materials used, the thoroughness of the repair work, and the accountability

of the authorities involved. Are these millions being funneled into quick fixes rather than sustainable solutions? Moreover, the economic implications of this issue cannot be ignored. In an inflated world, where every rupee counts, the costs incurred from vehicle repairs, medical bills, and lost productivity due to traffic caused by bad roads are substantial. It's an added burden on the average citizen, who is already grappling with the rising cost of living.

So, what can be done to address this perennial problem? First and foremost, there needs to be a shift from reactive to proactive maintenance. Regular inspections, especially before the monsoon

season, can help identify potential trouble spots and address them preemptively. Employing advanced materials and technologies in road construction can also play a pivotal role in enhancing durability. Clear records must be kept of how the funds are spent and allocated. Citizens have the right to know where their money is going and, more importantly, to hold the authorities accountable for standard work. It may be worth considering a public-private partnership to enhance the expertise and efficiency in road maintenance.

(The author is a freelance writer and a motivator; views are personal)



RACHNA LAKHPATRI



## FIRST COLUMN

### THE HIDDEN ENEMY WITHIN

By keeping their ego in check, we can create a positive and productive work environment that will foster innovation and sustained success



SAKSHI SETHI

Today, many of us insist the main impediment to a full, successful life is the outside world. The most common enemy that lies within an individual is the three-letter word 'Ego'. At the beginning of the career, it impedes learning and the cultivation of talent. With the progress, it blinds to their faults and sows future problems and in failure, it magnifies each blow and makes the recovery more difficult. The ego, which is often defined as a person's sense of self-esteem or self-importance, is often viewed as a necessary trait for leaders. However, when ego inflates to unhealthy levels, it becomes a significant obstacle to effective leadership thereby stifling personal growth, distorting decision-making, eroding trust and ultimately jeopardizing the success of an organization. Collaboration is a cornerstone of effective leadership. Great leaders understand the importance of harnessing the collective intelligence and diverse perspectives of their team.

Apart from collaboration, Constructive feedback is also essential for personal and professional growth. Leaders who embrace feedback can adapt, learn and improve continuously. While a healthy level of self-confidence is essential for leadership, an inflated ego can have detrimental effects. Leaders with big egos often believe their ideas are superior, which can prevent them from valuing the input of their team. This attitude can stifle creativity and innovation, as team members may feel undervalued and less motivated to share their ideas.

Moreover, such leaders may resist feedback, seeing it as a threat to their authority or self-image. This resistance can prevent them from growing and improving, leading to repeated mistakes and missed development opportunities. Above all, ego can erode trust within a team. If team members feel that their leader is self-serving, they may become disengaged and less loyal to the organization. For a high-functioning team, it is the trust, and clear accountability mechanisms, that can allow leaders to build strong relationships with their team members thereby fostering a positive work environment where individuals feel safe, valued and motivated to contribute their best efforts.



The absence of the said factors can lead to a toxic work environment as leaders with large egos may struggle to admit when they are wrong which will ultimately prevent learning from mistakes and perpetuate problems. For an organisation to flourish, it becomes vital to acknowledge the mistakes continuously for continuous improvement and to build a culture of honesty and transparency. There is no denying the fact that leaders with inflated egos may prioritize short-term gains and personal accolades over long-term success and sustainability. This can lead to decisions that provide immediate benefits but can harm the organization in the long run. The only way to mitigate this is by encouraging leaders to engage in self-reflection and seek feedback; creating an environment where open communication is valued and establishing clear accountability mechanisms that can help them become more aware of their ego and its impact.

By addressing and learning from their failures, leaders can drive continuous improvement and inspire their teams to do the same. Moreover, leaders who practice humility and openness, encourage a culture of collaboration, thereby fostering an environment where ideas can flourish and the best solutions can emerge. Remember, ego in the workplace leadership can be a double-edged sword. By promoting self-awareness, fostering a culture of humility, encouraging open communication, setting clear accountability, and leading by example, organizations can mitigate the negative impacts of ego and cultivate more effective and empathetic leaders. In an era that glorifies social media and other forms of shameless self-promotion, the battle against ego must be fought on many fronts. Great leaders recognize the importance of humility, empathy and a commitment to the collective goals of their team and organization.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

# Equitable revenue sharing is must for fiscal federalism



A S MITTAL

Punjab's declining GDP reflect the broader issue of uneven development. Addressing these disparities is essential for promoting holistic growth and preventing social distress across states



The current state of India's fiscal federalism is significantly detrimental to the states. The system needs to be reoriented to spur a competitive environment across the country, not just within some individual states. The recent union budget was expected to set a comprehensive five-year economic agenda for the country's wholesome growth.

In Budget 2024-25, unique packages were granted to Bihar of Rs 26,000 crore and Rs 15,000 crore to Andhra Pradesh in exchange for political support, resulting in an even wider fiscal imbalance. It's essential to ask why a similar approach has yet to be taken to address the economic growth of other financially distressed states. For example, Punjab, as a landlocked border state facing locational disadvantages, requires a fair platform to compete on an equal footing.

Once a prosperous and progressive state, Punjab grapples with a significant problem of unchecked unemployment stemming from distressed farming and an imbalanced industrial base dominated by 99.7% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Punjab accounts for only 5% of industrial units in the country, with a 3.6% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in the industrial sector over the last five fiscal years, ranking 12th. In contrast, the neighbouring state of Haryana has demonstrated higher growth rates at 5.9%. Punjab ranked first in GDP in 1981 and fourth in 2004. In the fiscal year 2023-24, with a GDP of Rs 6.98 lakh crore, the state was ranked 16th.

In comparison, the neighbouring state of Haryana's GDP stands at Rs 11.20 lakh crore, ranked 12th. Interestingly, Bihar, once part of the economically challenged states known as 'BIMARU' (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh), is now a fast-growing economy with a growth rate of 10.6% and a GDP of Rs 8.59 crore in FY 2023-24. Allowing lopsided economic development in a sensitive state like Punjab will have serious repercussions. Failing to ensure



ONCE A PROSPEROUS AND PROGRESSIVE STATE, PUNJAB GRAPPLES WITH A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM OF UNCHECKED UNEMPLOYMENT STEMMING FROM DISTRESSED FARMING AND AN IMBALANCED INDUSTRIAL BASE DOMINATED BY 99.7% OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISE

holistic development will ultimately lead to accusations of inefficiency in managing human resources. Unemployment exacerbates various issues in distressed areas, including mental health, crime, and drug abuse. Substantial evidence links drug abuse and law and order problems directly to unemployment. These issues must be addressed assertively to ensure the overall progress and well-being of Punjab.

Economic distress in Punjab has led to unemployment and a significant migration of its human resources to Canada, which has created a breeding ground for radicals and anti-Indian Khalistani extremist activities on Canadian soil; it is a globalised challenge that must be addressed promptly. Secondly, the Pakistan border has been adversely affecting Punjab's economy.

This, along with illegal arms supply and drug-related terrorism, has severely impacted Punjab's social fabric and law and order. The central government has not adequately compensated Punjab for its unique challenges compared to other states. The revenue-sharing disparity is a pressing issue causing significant, alarming socio-economic distress in Punjab. The state receives only 51 paise for every rupee it contributes to the Centre's tax pool, compared to states like Bihar, which receive Rs 1.20. This highlights the urgent need for equitable revenue sharing to ensure Punjab's socio-economic well-being.

Currently, Punjab's contribution to the country's tax kitty stands at approximately 3%, and it only receives 1.8% of the divisible pool of taxes allocated by the Fifteenth Finance Commission. It

is concerning that Punjab only received 1.8% of the Rs 8,16,649 crore distributed by the Centre to the states during 2022-23. However, the large areas and population figures of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar provide them with additional leverage from the central tax pool. Uttar Pradesh received the highest share at 18% (Rs 1,46,525 crore), and Bihar received the second-highest share of 10%.

This highlights why Punjab and other states argue they must receive a fair share of funds despite contributing more to the exchequer. During the fiscal year 2022-23, Punjab contributed Rs 32,800 crore to the central taxes fund, which included CGST, income tax, corporation tax, wealth tax, union excise duty, customs, and service tax. However, in return, the state only received Rs 14,756 crore. Punjab has raised the issue with the Sixteenth Finance Commission, which believes it deserves a fair share of central tax. The Finance Commission recommends the distribution of tax revenues between the Centre and States.

Despite recommendations to allocate 42% and 41% of net tax revenue to States, their share of gross tax revenue fell to 35% in 2015-16 and 30% by 2023-24. For 2024-25, the Gross Tax Revenue (GTR) is projected to grow at 11.7%, raising concerns about adequacy in meeting state fiscal needs. The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act has had significant and varying consequences on fiscal federalism.

It has given the Centre more extensive taxation powers, altering the budget landscape and transforming budgetary federal-

ism in the country. While GST has led to revenue growth, it also restricts the financial autonomy of the states. In a recent memorandum submitted to the 16th finance commission chairman, Punjab highlighted the loss on account of GST introduction, indicating that the state would have earned more than Rs 45,000 crore with VAT versus the budgeted GST of Rs 25,750 crore in FY 2024-25.

This gap is expected to increase to Rs 95,000 crore with VAT and GST at Rs 47,000 crore by 2030-31.

The Way Forward: In the current fiscal federalism, it is crucial to adopt a comprehensive and inclusive approach to budgetary prudence, local employment generation, and social harmony, regardless of demographic and political differences. Devolve more fiscal powers to states, enhancing their flexibility in revenue generation, expenditure planning, and borrowing limits. Reforms are necessary to address imbalances in the revenue transfer system.

A Finance Act amendment is still pending to establish fairness and accountability in managing the resource imbalances between the Centre and the States, which has led to growing regional tensions. Ultimately, fair, competitive, and effective fiscal federalism is essential to ensure that resources result in improved services and infrastructure for citizens.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)

## India's population: A liability or an untapped asset with immense potential

As the world population nears 8 billion, it becomes imperative to reassess the impact of population dynamics on sustainability and progress.

Much is being written and spoken about India's teeming human population. Huge concerns are being raised on the spectre of the burgeoning population becoming a severe liability for national survival. India's population was 1.44 billion in January 2024 and could be a shade above this at present. This population has been growing at the rate of nearly 1 per cent per year during the last decade. People say that the country cannot progress economically and become a developed nation unless population growth is checked. Or, in other words, a big population is a most severe dampener to national growth and development. How far is this true and is there historical precedence to cor-



ATUL SEHGAL

roborate this concern? The subject of the population needs to be analysed from a larger, global perspective. The population of the world is close to 8 billion today and has trebled over the last 100 years. The core issue regarding population being considered an asset or liability pertains to the current paradigms of tapping and using global material resources and the huge disparity in ownership of those resources. Humans do not and cannot

produce babies at will like goods are produced in a factory. Humans can only cohabit and copulate, like lower animals. This is borne out by the fact of decreasing fertility in many parts of the world despite the professed advancements of modern medical science.

Scientists and medical professionals can help with the process of fertilisation of reproductive cells but cannot achieve conception at will. It stands to reason that babies are produced in the factory of nature by the subtle action of a supernatural, omnipotent entity. You can call him Creator or God who is also the controller and regulator of the world and the larger universe. This is a prime scientific fact if science is correctly under-

stood as the systematic and logical treatment of any subject. Hence population growth or decline is a subject more of God than of man. If population growth is high and humans fear that it will make human life unsustainable, their Creator knows better. He makes humans learn and realise their mistakes through natural disasters like climate change, wildfires, cyclones, tornados, earthquakes, floods and epidemics. These serve to balance out the excessive population from time to time. It has to be admitted that modern science has done a lot to conquer life-threatening illnesses and increase the longevity of humans. Average life expectancy globally today is almost double compared to what it was 200



years ago. But this increase has come at the cost of the environment. We have used chemical fertilizers for crops abundantly which have undermined the quality and fertility of soil. We have used chemical, reductionist formulation-based drugs and vaccines aplenty whose serious, sneaky side effects are slowly coming into evidence. But we cannot go on doing it ad infinitum without seriously prejudicing sustainability. Today, humans

are ravaging and pillaging global material resources like never before. They are enhancing human comforts at the cost of the environment. Life expectancy is rising at the cost of life quality. Infectious diseases are being combated through strong chemical formulation drugs, while insidiously inviting chronic diseases and newer ailments unheard of before. Humans are unwittingly proceeding towards a situation of unsustainable existence. Let us go back to the prime metaphysical truths of existence. God regulates all life. He is the source of all knowledge which is enshrined in the divinely revealed scriptures called Vedas. These scriptures are the repository of all knowledge including science and technology.

Vedic hymns declare that each human couple should produce 10 children. The same Vedas exhort humans to live up to at least 100 years, healthy and fit. In the above backdrop, the human population is an asset, not a liability. We should know how to utilise the manpower productively and fruitfully. If we follow the modes of agriculture and food production as per Vedic sciences, using technologies based on such sciences, we will never have to compromise the quality or fertility of the soil and can produce bumper crops season after season. We can achieve this through strictly organic farming and protect our environment and ecosphere. Following assiduously the principles of Ayurveda, we can ensure

sound health and high longevity without recourse to synthetic chemical drugs. All we have to do is change our systems and paradigms of living to reduce the stark wealth disparity witnessed today where 20 per cent of the global population holds 80 per cent of global resources. Our instinct of self-aggrandisement, driven by capitalism based on the banal baser element of greed has led to the present situation. Population needs to be considered an asset and it will be regarded as an asset if we change our living paradigms to align with nature and embrace environment-friendly technologies expounded in our ancient Vedic scriptures. (The author is a management consultant based in New Delhi; views are personal)

# Quad calls for respecting sovereignty of nations

PTI ■ TOKYO

In a loud and clear message to China, the Quad on Monday reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific and resolved to work towards a region where no country dominates others and each state is free from "coercion" in all its forms.

The grouping comprising India, the US, Japan and Australia, after a meeting of their foreign ministers, announced a plan to expand its ambitious Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) programme to the Indian Ocean region that would facilitate monitoring the strategic waters.

The Quad also said that it was working for early operationalisation of its South Asia programme through India's Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region.

The Quad foreign ministerial meeting also called for upholding the free and open rules-based global order and respecting the principle of freedom, human rights, democratic values, sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations.

Without directly naming China, the ministers expressed serious concern over the situation in the East and South China Seas and reiterated the Quad's strong opposition to any "unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion."

## China accuses Quad of 'inciting' confrontation

**Beijing (PTI):** China on Monday accused the Quad nations, including the US and India, of "artificially creating tension" and "inciting confrontation" to "contain" the development of other countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Beijing's statement came hours after the foreign ministers of the Quad countries, comprising the US, Japan, India and Australia, in a meeting in Tokyo, reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, vowing to work towards a region where no country dominates others and each state is free from coercion in all its forms.

The Quad was "artificially creating tension, inciting confrontation and containing the

development of other countries", Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said at a press briefing here when asked for his reaction to the joint statement of the foreign ministers of the Quad countries released after the end of their meeting.

This is against the global trend of peace and development and stability in the Asia Pacific, Lin said.

In a loud and clear message to China, the Quad foreign ministers in Tokyo called for upholding the free and open rules-based international order and respecting the principle of freedom, human rights, democratic values, sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations.

The meeting was attended by

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Australia's Penny Wong.

Without directly naming China, the four foreign ministers expressed serious concern over the situation in the East and South China Seas and reiterated the Quad's strong opposition to any "unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion".

Lin said China believes cooperation among countries and regional initiatives to be conducive to regional development, stability and prosperity rather than forming small circles harming mutual trust and cooperation.



Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, left, Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, second left, and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, second right, arrive for the Quad Ministerial Meeting, at the Foreign Ministry's Iikura guesthouse in Tokyo, Monday.

Foreign ministers also expressed "deepest concern over the war raging in Ukraine including its terrible and tragic humanitarian consequences."

"We reiterate the need for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in line with international law, consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, including respect for

sovereignty and territorial integrity," they said.

The Quad foreign ministers also referred to increasing Chinese manoeuvres in the South China Sea, especially the "dangerous use" of coast guard and maritime militia vessels. "We continue to express our serious concern about the militarisation of disputed features, and coercive and

intimidating manoeuvres in the South China Sea," the joint statement said. "We also express our serious concern about the dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels, the increasing use of various kinds of dangerous manoeuvres, and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities," it said.

# Maduro wins Venezuela's presidential election

AP ■ CARACAS

Nicolas Maduro was declared the winner in Venezuela's presidential election Sunday, even as his opponents were preparing to dispute the results, setting up a high-stakes showdown that will determine whether the South American nation transitions away from one party rule.

Shortly after midnight, the National Electoral Council said Maduro secured 51% of the vote, overcoming the main opposition candidate, Edmundo González, who garnered 44%.



to a few hundred supporters at the presidential palace. He provided no evidence to back the claim but promised "justice" for those who try to stir violence in Venezuela.

Opposition representatives said tallies they collected from campaign representatives at the polling stations showed González trouncing Maduro.

Meanwhile, the head of the electoral council said it would release the official voting acts in the coming hours.

"The Maduro regime should understand that the results it published are difficult to believe," said Gabriel Boric, the leftist leader of Chile. "We won't recognize any result that is not verifiable."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. has "serious concerns that the result announced does not reflect the will or the votes of the Venezuelan people," speaking in Tokyo.

The delay in announcing results — six hours after polls were supposed to close — indicated a deep debate inside the government about how to proceed after Maduro's opponents came out early in the evening all but claiming victory.

When Maduro finally came out to celebrate the results, he accused unidentified foreign enemies for trying to hack the voting system.

"This is not the first time that they have tried to violate the peace of the republic," he said

impromptu rendition of the national anthem.

"This is the path toward a new Venezuela," added Fernández, holding back tears. "We are all tired of this yoke."

Voters started lining up at some voting centers across the country before dawn Sunday, sharing water, coffee and snacks for several hours.

The election will have ripple effects throughout the Americas, with government opponents and supporters alike signaling their interest in joining the exodus of 7.7 million Venezuelans who have already left their homes for opportunities abroad should Maduro win another six year term.

Authorities set Sunday's election to coincide with what would have been the 70th birthday of former President Hugo Chávez, the revered leftist firebrand who died of cancer in 2013, leaving his Bolivarian revolution in the hands of Maduro. But Maduro and his United Socialist Party of Venezuela are more unpopular than ever among many voters who blame his policies for crushing wages, spurring hunger, crippling the oil industry and separating families due to migration. The opposition managed to line up behind a single candidate after years of intraparty divisions and election boycotts that torpedoed their ambitions to topple the ruling party.

# Vandalism hits communication lines in France

Paris (AP)

The French government says multiple telecommunications lines have been hit by acts of vandalism, affecting fiber lines and fixed and mobile phone lines as cities around France are hosting events for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The scale of the impact is unclear, as is whether it has affected any Olympic activities. The vandalism came after a series of attacks hit train networks around France on Friday, hours before the Olympics opening ceremony.

Marina Ferrari, secretary of state in charge of digital affairs, posted on X that damage in several regions overnight Sunday to Monday affected telecommunications operators. She said that led to localized impact on access to fiber lines and fixed and mobile telephone lines.

# Israeli military detains 9 soldiers for alleged detainee abuse

Tel Aviv (AP)

The Israeli military said Monday it was holding nine soldiers for questioning following allegations of "substantial abuse" of a detainee at a shadowy facility where Israel has held Palestinian prisoners throughout the war in Gaza. The military did not disclose additional details surrounding the alleged abuse, saying only that its top legal official had launched a probe.

An investigation by The Associated Press and reports by rights groups have exposed abysmal conditions at the Sde Teiman facility, the country's largest detention centre.

A report by the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, earlier this year said that detainees alleged they were subjected to ill-treatment and abuse while in Israeli custody, without specifying the facility.



A heated argument erupts between soldiers at the Sde Teiman detention facility in southern Israel after Military Police investigators arrived to detain suspects for questioning.

The military has generally denied ill-treatment of detainees. Following the accusations of harsh treatment, Israel has said it is transferring the bulk of Palestinian

detainees out of Sde Teiman and upgrading it. Israeli media reported that military police officers who arrived at Sde Teiman in southern Israel to detain the soldiers

were met with protests and scuffles. The detentions of soldiers prompted an outcry among members of Israel's far-right government, who condemned the investigation into their conduct, saying it was an affront to their service.

Israel has detained thousands of Palestinians since the Oct 7 Hamas attack that sparked the war in Gaza, according to official figures, though hundreds were released after the military determined they were not affiliated with Hamas.

Israeli human rights groups say the majority of detainees have at some point passed through Sde Teiman.

International mediators are trying to bring Hamas and Israel to agree to a cease-fire deal that would wind down the war in Gaza and free the remaining 110 hostages held there.

# Social media hinders teens' self-discovery

AP ■ SUNSHINE COAST

Over recent months, a number of politicians have supported calls to ban social media for children under 16 in Australia. Currently, kids under 13 are not allowed to use social media.

There's some research that suggests social media can be helpful for certain young people by, for example, connecting them with like-minded peers.

That said, there are a raft of reasons for this proposed change. The most compelling is evidence showing inappropriate screen time and social media use are linked to poor mental health in children and young people, including depression and anxiety.

Overuse or misuse of social

media can damage many areas of psychological wellbeing. But, as an expert in adolescent development, I've been exploring one that's not often considered: identity development.

Identity development has long been regarded as the core psychological business of adolescence. You decide who you are, what you want to become, what underlying values you stand for and what you want out of life as you move toward adulthood. But might social media risk thwarting this process?

Between the ages of about 11 and 15, the human brain becomes increasingly sensitive to attention and feedback from peers. The parts of the brain responsible for developing perspective, judgment, critical thinking and self-control will

not fully mature until a person's early to mid 20s.

Teenagers have always compared themselves to others. They seek validation from peers as they explore their values, develop their personalities and seek to express themselves. But social media has provided a platform for adolescents — particularly those high in FOMO, or fear of missing out — to obsess over how they compare to many more people, including aptly named "influencers."

It can be difficult for a young person to develop a clear sense of self when they're constantly comparing themselves to and following others.

Similarly, young people are developing many of their opinions based on what they see on social media. An individual's

tendency to conform to other people's opinions is sometimes called the "bandwagon effect." While plenty of social media content can be harmless enough, social media — like the real world — are becoming increasingly political and polarised, with little tolerance for opposing ideas. Some teens may find themselves latching onto ideologies fed to them via marketing algorithms. And we know young people can become radicalised through social media. How do you see yourself? Are you the same person in public, in private, with friends, family or at work? Would you honestly admit some of your deepest feelings to your work colleague, friend, or even your partner? How about to yourself?

# Amitabh Bachchan statue in US listed as tourist attraction on Google Maps

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A life-size statue of Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan installed by an Indian-American businessman outside his New Jersey residence in the US has now been listed by Google as a tourist attraction.

Gopi Seth installed Bachchan's life-size statue in August 2022 outside his residence in Edison city, about 35 kilometres south of Manhattan in New York.

"Our home has become one of the most popular tourist attractions, thanks to the Amitabh Bachchan statue. Recognised by Google Search, this site attracts a growing number of visitors each day," Seth told PTI



on Sunday. In two years since then, fans of the Indian superstar have been coming to this place, taking pictures and selfies, with many of them posting on social media platforms like Instagram and X.

"Fans of Mr Bachchan from all around the world travel to see the statue, with 20 to 25 cars of families arriving daily. Visitors often leave greeting cards and letters, expressing their admiration for the legendary actor," Seth said, sharing some of the videos of the fans visiting the statue.

Seth said the popularity of his home extends far beyond in-person visits. "Enthusiastic fans post videos, photos, and tweets about their experiences, flooding social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. These posts have garnered significant attention, further boosted the site's fame and made it a trending destination on the internet," he said.

# Firefighters make progress amid wildfires spreading smoke across US West

Forest Ranch (US) (AP):

Firefighters made progress and were aided by improving weather over the weekend in the battle against wildfires covering massive areas and leaving a trail of damage in the western United States, but further evacuations and resources have been necessary as thousands of personnel tackle the flames.

The so-called Park Fire, the largest wildfire in California this year, was one of more than 100 blazes burning in the US on Sunday, according to the National Interagency Fire Centre. Some were sparked by the weather, with climate change increasing the frequency of lightning strikes as the western US endures blistering heat and bone-dry conditions.

The Park Fire had scorched an area greater than the city of Los Angeles as of Monday, darkening the sky with smoke and engaging thousands of firefighters. The blaze spanned more than 562 square miles (1,455 sq km) of inland Northern California.

Winds and temperatures were expected to increase slightly amid a drop in humidity, officials said in an update early Monday. Air quality alerts were issued for Monday in the northwestern US and western Canada.

The Park Fire started Wednesday, when authorities say a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then fled. A man accused of setting the fire was arrested Thursday and is due in court Monday. Firefighters increased containment to 12% on Saturday, aided by cooler temperatures and more humidity, officials said.



# 150 killed in unrest, B'desh announces mourning

PTI ■ DHAKA

For the first time, the Bangladesh government on Monday officially acknowledged that 150 people were killed across the country during the students' unrest over the quota system.

Violence gripped Bangladesh recently and the government called in the army to quell protests against job quotas. The protests, which started in universities and colleges earlier this month, quickly turned into a more widespread agitation against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her government. The unrest has left several thousand people, including policemen, wounded and major government installations damaged.

"The government has decided that a nationwide mourning will be observed tomorrow... People have been urged to wear black badges to mourn the deaths (during the violence)." Cabinet Secretary Mahub Hossain told a media briefing after a meeting chaired by Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

He said mosques, temples, pagodas and churches across the country were also urged to offer prayers for the departed souls and the wounded people. The top bureaucrat said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal presented a report at the meeting about the overall situation and confirmed 150



deaths in clashes across the country.

The announcement came on a day when the military and paramilitary troops patrolled the streets of the capital Dhaka while police in riot gear enforced a strict vigil as a faction of the protesting students overnight called a new round of protests.

The group called the new protest after six of their coordinators announced the withdrawal of the demonstrations, which the protesters said was obtained under duress in police custody.

The six student leaders in an appearance before the media overnight announced the withdrawal of the street demonstra-

tions as their demand for reforms in the quota system was met by the government following a Supreme Court order. "We have mobilised forces to prevent fresh violence," a police official said.

Witnesses and live TV footage showed the security forces guarding major points in the capital with military and police armoured personnel carriers patrolling the streets alongside the paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh.

The protesters subsided after the apex Appellate Division of unitary Bangladesh's Supreme Court on July 21 ordered a massive quota reform, keeping only seven per cent of reserve posts instead of the existing 56

per cent. The government subsequently issued a Gazette notification in line with the order saying 93 per cent of jobs would be open to candidates on merit.

"Our main demand for logical reforms to the government job quota system has been met," student coordinator Nahid Islam on Sunday said in a video message, calling for educational institutions to re-open. However, other students, calling for a new protest, claimed their leaders were forced to announce while in police custody. Meanwhile, the government ignored an ultimatum to release their leaders and apologise for those killed in deadly unrest.

Groups of youths held scattered street protests but were quickly chased away by police in parts of the capital and elsewhere.

Their demand included a public apology from the prime minister for the casualties, the dismissal of several of her ministers, and the reopening of schools and universities around the country which were closed for an indefinite period as the unrest reached its peak.

A nationwide curfew gripped Bangladesh mid-July, and the government called in the army in aid to the police and paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to quell protests against job quotas that, according to media reports, killed more than 200 persons across the country.

The mass circulation 'Prothom Alo' newspaper cited 210 deaths, 113 of them being children. Most others were juveniles and youths. The newspaper said at least 9,000 people were arrested nationwide since the beginning of the unrest.

According to observers and political commentators, the students protests were largely peaceful until the ruling Awami League student activists were asked to quell the protesters and police attacks on demonstrators, who were later presumed to be backed by the opposition political quarters. The government leaders said the peaceful and issue-specific students' movement was not

involved in violence and attributed the anarchy to the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) party and their student activists backed by the main Opposition outside parliament Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of ex-premier Khaleda Zia. The BNP had boycotted the January 7 elections. The government has accused JI of hijacking the protests to cause a nationwide anarchy.

The unrest significantly impacted Bangladesh's economy with the Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) estimating the economic impact to be around USD 10 billion and rising. President of the country's apex business chambers, Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI), Mahbul Alam, said the major export-earning garment industries alone incurred losses of Bangladeshi Taka 6,400,000 (USD 5,45,167). Bangladeshi authorities said they restored internet services in the country after a 10-day disconnection of both mobile internet and the key social media platform as the situation returned to normal following the disbandment of the protests.

However, the resumption of mobile internet on Sunday failed to relieve tens of thousands of F-commerce sellers, who rely on Facebook to sell their goods and services, were yet to resume.

# Braverman lashes out on colleagues over Tory leadership race

PTI ■ LONDON



Britain's former home secretary, Suella Braverman, on Monday lashed out at her Conservative Party colleagues for branding her "mad, bad and dangerous" as she decided not to contest the Tory leadership contest to succeed Rishi Sunak as Opposition Leader.

The 44-year-old Indian-origin member of Parliament from Fareham and Waterlooville in south-east England was widely expected to not join the race by Monday's nomination deadline to go up against fellow Indian-origin former home secretary Priti Patel and other former ministers - Kemi Badenoch, James Cleverly, Tom Tugendhat, Robert Jenrick and Mel Stride. However, contrary to some media reports that she had failed to find the requisite 10 MPs to propose her candidacy, Braverman said she had chosen to step aside because her party was unwilling to accept her diagnosis of what led to its worst electoral defeat in history earlier this month.

"I've been branded mad, bad and dangerous enough to see that the Tory Party does not want to hear the truths I've set out," writes Braverman in "The Daily Telegraph". "Although I'm grateful to the 10 MPs who wanted to nominate me for the leadership, getting onto the ballot is not enough. There is, for good or for ill, no point in someone like me running to lead the Tory Party when most of the MPs disagree with my diagnosis and prescription. The traumatised party does not want to hear these things said out loud. Instead, platitudes about 'unity' are fashionable. That's all fine but it's not honest," she writes.

According to the former minister who was sacked by Sunak as home secretary, the party's disastrous election result was down to the party's failures on "migration, taxes and trans ideology". She also lamented the lack of a proper rebellion against the former British Indian leader as she criticised his leadership over the party's controversial Rwanda scheme to deport illegal migrants to the African nation.

She writes: "The reality is that we were a united party under Rishi Sunak. We MPs united to

install him as PM with a coronation...Precisely everything on Rishi's agenda was nodded through: smoking bans, pedicabs, tax rises, Windsor framework and even the misguided early general election.

"In fact, if only our Rwanda rebellion had succeeded, we would have got flights off. But not enough colleagues joined us, instead putting 'unity' above a fatally flawed law that failed to stop the boats - as we predicted." A barrister by profession, the Goan heritage politician had led calls for the UK to leave the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to make the Rwanda scheme work, something the incoming Labour government has categorically ruled out as it shelved the deportation programme.

However, while admitting that the Tories got things "monumentally wrong" and declared that the general election defeat was "predicted, preventable, deserved and, as yet, unaddressed", she pledged to support whoever takes charge as a backbench MP.

"I wish all the candidates the best. The survival of our party depends on the outcome of this contest. And it is not just about unity. Pretending that we are united on the surface when we are unreconciled on policy won't work," she added.

The final list of candidates in the race to replace Sunak will be unveiled this week after which they will kick off their campaigns to sway enough MPs to vote for them in the first round of votes ahead of the Conservative Party conference at the end of September. After a whittling down process to the final two candidates who will fight it out for the wider Tory membership vote through October, the new leader will take their place as the UK's Opposition Leader on November 2.

# Pak seeks reprofiling of over \$27-bn debt with friendly nations

Islamabad (PTI): Cash-strapped Pakistan has sought the re-profiling of more than USD 27 billion in debt and liabilities with China and two other friendly nations to secure a bailout package from the IMF, according to a media report on Monday.

The Washington-based International Monetary Fund last month announced that it signed a staff-level agreement with Pakistan to provide a USD 7 billion loan which would be disbursed for 37 months.

However, it attached stringent conditions with it, requiring Pakistan prior action before the fund's board accords final approval for the loan. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb after returning from Beijing told the media on Sunday that talks have been going on with China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE for a re-profiling of USD 27 billion.

Aurangzeb said Pakistan had already asked the friendly bilateral trio of lenders to roll over its more than USD 12 billion annual debt portfolio by three to five years to secure the IMF board's approval, which is expected next month.

This is on top of Islamabad's request to Beijing to convert imported coal-based projects to local coal and re-profile more than USD 15 billion in energy sector liabilities to create fiscal space amid difficulties in timely repayments.

Pakistan has a peculiar financial arrangement with these three countries in the shape of commercial loans and SAFE deposits that are rolled over every year and form a major part of the IMF programme in terms of external financing needs.

Pakistan has now requested the maturity period of these loans - USD 5 billion from China, USD 4 billion from Saudi Arabia, and USD 3 billion from the UAE - to be extend-

ed to at least three years, offering greater predictability under the IMF programme.

Aurangzeb said the Chinese side acknowledged Pakistan's foreign exchange difficulties and wanted to help in new business ventures and the re-profiling of energy sector payments besides playing its role in supporting Pakistan's case at the IMF board as one of the major stakeholders.

He said the process of debt and equity rescheduling had been started and would now go to the working groups with relevant financial institutions and sponsors of Chinese projects for which Pakistan hired local Chinese consultants.

"Between now and the IMF board meeting (on the 37-month bailout package), we have to ensure confirmation of external financing" from friendly bilateral partners, the minister said.

However, he explained that the Chinese energy sector debt reprofiling had nothing to do with the IMF programme as other prior actions had been completed and structural benchmarks were under implementation.

Aurangzeb said he was in contact with the Chinese, Saudi and UAE finance ministers for an extension in debt rollover for three years and they had assured their support that would place Pakistan in a very comfortable position in terms of external financing gap. "I can assure you we are at a very good place on external financing for the next three years, including year one, year two and year three," he said.

He said the IMF had worked out a financing needs assessment for three years that also included its own USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility. After rollovers from friendly countries, the remaining external financing gap would become very manageable, he said.

# Pakistan court extends remand of PTI's info secretary by two days

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani court has extended the physical remand of a close aide of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party for two more days and sent a female social media activist, allegedly linked to the political organisation, to judicial remand. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) presented Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Central Information Secretary Raouf Hasan before District and Sessions Judge Murid Abbas on Sunday after the expiry of his three-day remand granted last week, the Dawn newspaper reported on Monday. The FIA prosecutor informed the judge that the case record, including transcripts of videos, has been submitted to court. The forensic analysis of the videos has to be carried out, the pro-

secutor said and sought eight days' physical remand of Hasan. Following the arguments, the judge extended Hasan's physical remand for two more days, the report said.

During the last hearing on Thursday, the FIA presented a report to the court claiming that Hasan received "instructions through messages, audio notes, graphics and videos" from abroad daily. It alleged that the PTI member oversees the party's social media teams that run trends on social media platforms "to incite violence, create law and order situation and fan cyberterrorism".

The FIA also presented Syeda Arooba Kanwal, a social media activist who was allegedly linked with the PTI in court. The FIA prosecutor claimed that Kanwal was operating the party's account on social media



platform X, which she refused to surrender to the investigators, and sought her physical remand for investigation.

The defendant's lawyer, Ali Bukhari, said Kanwal was an employee and handled PTI's social media account. He claimed the entire case has been based on data retrieved from a

cell phone, which is already in FIA's custody. The advocate requested the court to discharge all the accused.

However, the judge sent Kanwal to jail on judicial remand. The Pakistan government last week formed a joint investigation committee to identify those involved in creating disorder in the country through "malicious social media campaigns". No party or person has been named against whom the possible investigation would be directed. However, analysts say, the step may be targeted at the PTI party. Hasan was arrested on Monday last week along with 11 other PTI supporters and was booked by the FIA's cybercrime wing under Sections 9 (glorification of an offence), 10 (cyber terrorism) and 11 (electronic forgery) of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA).

# 3 killed after protesters clash with security forces in Gwadar

PTI ■ KARACHI

At least three people have been killed and many others were injured when protesters clashed with security personnel in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province following a sit-in for the rights of Baloch people in Gwadar city, media reports said on Monday.

The sit-in organised by the Balochistan Yakjehti Committee (BYC) began on Sunday even as scores of people, including 14 persons in Mastung, were injured in clashes with security personnel.

The BYC is holding a demonstration for the rights of the people of Balochistan province and the safeguarding of its natural resources. Although the authorities set up roadblocks at several places

leading to Gwadar, a large number of people still managed to gather at Marine Drive for the rally named the 'Baloch Rajee Muchi' (Baloch National Gathering), the Dawn newspaper reported.

Clashes were reported with security personnel at some checkpoints and near Gwadar as protesters started arriving at the Marine Drive.

There were also reports of protesters attacking checkpoints in some areas, forcing security personnel to use tear gas shells and rubber bullets. Till Monday, at least three people died in the clashes while around 28 have been injured, hospital sources confirmed.

Three dead bodies at the government hospital in Gwadar besides eight others injured, they said.

On Saturday evening, security forces opened fire during clashes, injuring 14 persons in Mastung. Four others were injured in Turbat on Sunday. Balochistan Home Minister Ziaullah Langove and provincial spokesperson Shahid Rind were unavailable for comments due to a communications blackout in many parts of Balochistan.

Later, addressing the gathering in Gwadar, BYC leader Dr Mahrang Baloch and others vowed not to abandon their struggle for the rights of the Baloch people and the protection of the province's resources. Authorities said life has been derailed in many parts of the province since Sunday with roads and highways leading to Gwadar and Quetta blocked by protesters or security personnel.

# Top radical leader booked in Pak for issuing death threats to CJ

Islamabad (PTI): An FIR was filed against a top leader of the radical Islamist group Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan and its 1,500 workers for issuing death threats to Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa.

The FIR was registered against Pir Zaheerul Hasan Shah, the Deputy Amir of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). The charges against Shah include sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), inciting religious hatred, causing public disorder, intimidating the judiciary, threatening the judiciary, interfering in official duties, and obstructing legal functions.

According to the FIR, during a protest outside the Press Club, Shah incited hatred against the judiciary and announced a reward of PKR 10 million for anyone who brings the head of Justice Faez Isa. The FIR also includes charges against 1,500 Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan workers. The FIR was registered after Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said that strict action would be taken against those issuing death threats to the Chief Justice, emphasising that the state will not tolerate such fatwas.

During the press conference, Asif condemned the inflammatory remarks made against Chief Justice Isa and highlighted attempts on social media to incite the public to commit murder. He warned that permitting such rhetoric could lead to the disintegration of the state's structure.

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif pointed out that there are efforts to incite violence in the name of religion, with Chief Justice Isa being targeted through various pretexts.

# 'Sexual violence rampant in Sudan civil war'

AP ■ CAIRO

An international rights group on Monday accused a paramilitary group in war-torn Sudan of sexual violence against women, including rape, gang rape, and forced and child marriage. A smaller number of incidents were also attributed to the military, it said.

Human Rights Watch called for the United Nations and the African Union to establish a joint mission to protect civilians in Sudan as more than 15 months of fighting between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces has shown no signs of abating.

"The Rapid Support Forces have raped, gang raped, and forced into marriage countless women and girls in residential areas in Sudan's capital," said

Laetitia Bader, deputy Africa director at Human Rights Watch. The group also accused both warring parties of blocking survivors' access to critical emergency care, and said the military has "willfully restricted" shipments of humanitarian supplies to RSF-controlled areas, including medical supplies and aid workers since October last year.

The RSF, meanwhile, has pillaged medical supplies and occupied medical facilities, it said. RSF fighters also committed sexual violence against service providers, the group said, citing local responders. Sudan plunged into chaos in April last year when simmering tensions between the military and the RSF exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere in the country. The fighting has

killed more than 14,000 people and wounded 33,000 others, according to the UN, but rights activists say the true toll could be much higher.

The conflict has created the world's largest displacement crisis, with over 11 million people forced to flee their homes. The formerly military-aligned RSF grew out of the Janjaweed militias formed during the conflict in Darfur in the 2000s by former President Omar al-Bashir, who ruled the country for three decades until he was overthrown during a popular uprising in 2019. He is wanted by the International Criminal Court for charges of genocide and other crimes committed during the conflict.

In a report released on Sunday, Human Rights Watch said it documented widespread sexual violence, as well as forced

and child marriage during the conflict in Khartoum and the nearby cities of Omdurman and Bahri, or Khartoum North. The three cities are known as Greater Khartoum. These acts constitute "war crimes and crimes against humanity", it said.

The group said most of the cases were attributed to the Rapid Support Forces, but some were also blamed on the military, especially as the military retained control of Omdurman earlier this year. It said men and boys have also been raped, including in detention. Both the RSF and the military didn't immediately answer requests for comment.

Human Rights Watch said neither party has taken meaningful steps to prevent its forces from committing rape or attacking health care, nor to

independently and transparently investigate crimes committed by their forces.

It said an RSF spokesman denied occupying hospitals or medical centres in Khartoum and its sister cities, but didn't provide evidence that the group has carried out effective investigations into allegations of sexual violence by its forces. It called on the African Union and the United Nations to jointly deploy a new mission to protect civilians in Sudan, including preventing sexual and gender-based violence.

"The United Nations and African Union need to mobilise this protection and states should hold to account those responsible for ongoing sexual violence, attacks on local responders, health facilities and the blocking of aid," Bader said.

**NOTICE FOR CANCELLATION OF TENDER**  
No. E-499218/302 Date: 27.07.2024  
Due to insufficient participation of bidders in the e-tender invited vide NIT No. E-499218/3 dated 11 June 2024, are cancelled and re-tender is invited. The detailed notice inviting re-tender is available in the website www.assamtenders.gov.in.  
Sd/-Mission Director,  
Samagra Shiksha Axom  
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**  
No. E-499218/301 Date: 27.07.2024  
The Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha, Assam, invites bids from registered appropriate class of contractor for 8 group of building works in different schools as per the detailed notice inviting tender which can be downloaded from the website <https://www.assamtenders.gov.in>.  
The last date of submission of tender is 19-08-2024 upto 2:00 PM.  
Sd/-Mission Director,  
Samagra Shiksha Axom  
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

**verka**  
**APPOINTMENTS**  
The Punjab state Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (Milked Punjab) invites applications/resumes for appointment of 01 post of Animal Nutrition Officer (ANO), 02 posts of Animal Nutrition Supervisor and 05 posts of Calf Rearing Programme Supervisor on contract basis till March 2026 under JICA Project (which could be extended further as per requirement of the project)  
**Qualification:**  
1. For the post of Animal Nutrition Officer:- Veterinary post graduate/graduate or agriculture post graduate/graduate with relevant field experience.  
2. For the post of Animal Nutrition Supervisor:- Graduation in veterinary science/agriculture. However, if such graduates cannot be found, then candidates with diploma in veterinary science/agriculture will be considered. If even such candidates are not available then bachelor's degree in any discipline, having field experience will be considered.  
3. For the post of calf Rearing Programme Supervisor:- Any graduate. In case person with graduation is not available, then suitable candidate with Higher Secondary School Certificate(Class 12) will be considered.  
All the requisite details of the posts and process of submitting applications are available under "Career Section" of our website <http://www.verka.coop/career/>. The last date of receipt of the resumes/applications is 15.08.2024.  
General Manager (QA&E)/ Incharge (HR)  
NA/12/24407/2023/36097 Dated CHD :- 7/29/2024

# Govt's debt set to rise to ₹185 lakh cr in FY25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government estimates its debt, including external borrowing, valued at current exchange rate and public account and other liabilities will increase to Rs 185 lakh crore, or 56.8 per cent of the GDP, during the current fiscal year.

The total debt stood at Rs 171.78 lakh crore, or 58.2 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), at the end of March 2024, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha on Monday.

As per the International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook, April 2024, India's Gross Domestic Product at current prices has already reached USD 3.57 trillion in 2023-24, he said.

Repeating to another question, Chaudhary said the growth rate of the private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) at constant prices in



2022-23 and 2023-24 is 6.8 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, he said, quoting provisional GDP estimates for 2023-24 released by the National Statistical Office. The growth rate of PFCE at current prices in 2022-23 and 2023-24 is 14.2 per cent and 8.5 per cent, respectively, he said, adding that the ratio of PFCE to the GDP at current prices in 2023-24 is 60.3 per cent.

In response to another question, Chaudhary said the normal net borrowing ceiling (NBC) of the states for 2021-

22 was fixed at 4 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP) as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission. Of the normal NBC of 4 per cent of projected GSDP for 2021-22, the borrowing ceiling of 0.50 per cent of the projected GSDP was earmarked for the incremental capital expenditure incurred by states during 2021-22, for which, a target for capital expenditure was fixed for each state, he said.

In another reply, he said the

Union government under the head 'Special Assistance' under Demands for Grants 'Transfers to States' provide grants-in-aid to states for spill-over committed liabilities for which Budget provision is not made and for other need-based assistance to states.

Further, NITI Aayog, in its report titled 'Report on Developmental Support to the Successor State of Andhra Pradesh under Andhra Pradesh Re-organization Act (APRA), 2014' dated December 1, 2015, has recommended "...A total assistance of Rs 2,100 crore for the seven backward districts of Andhra Pradesh at the rate of Rs 300 crore per district.

Based on recommendations of NITI Aayog, he said the Department of Expenditure has released an amount of Rs 1,750 crore so far under the APRA, 2014 for development of seven backward districts of Andhra Pradesh.

# Digitalisation in finance paving way for next-generation banking: RBI Gov

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Digitalisation in finance is paving the way for next-generation banking and improving access to financial services at affordable cost, said Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday. In the foreword of the Report on Currency and Finance (RCF) for 2023-24, the Governor also said the flagship Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has revolutionised the retail payment experience for end-users, making transactions faster and more convenient. In the digital currency arena, the Reserve Bank is at the forefront with pilot runs of the e-rupee, the central bank digital currency (CBDC).

The digital lending ecosystem is becoming vibrant with initiatives such as Open Credit Enablement Network, Open Network for Digital Commerce and the Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit.

He said fintechs are collaborating with banks and non-banking financial



companies (NBFCs) as lending service providers. They are also operating platforms to facilitate digital credit. BigTechs are backing payment apps and lending products as third-party service providers.

"Digitalisation in finance is paving the way for next-generation banking; improving access to financial services at affordable costs; and enhancing the impact of direct benefit transfers by effective targeting of beneficiaries in a cost-efficient manner," Das said. He noted that loans in the

retail segment are being enabled by online payments and innovative credit assessment models with instant disbursements. Also, e-commerce is being boosted through embedded finance. "All these innovations are making financial markets more efficient and integrated," the Governor said.

At the same time, Das said digitalisation also presents challenges related to cybersecurity, data privacy, data bias, vendor and third-party risks, and customer protection.

"Increased interconnectedness may lead to systemic risks. Additionally, emerging technologies can introduce complex products and business models with risks that users may not fully understand, including the proliferation of fraudulent apps and mis-selling through dark patterns," he said.

Das further said digitalisation may induce human resource challenges in the financial sector, necessitating strategic investments in upskilling and reskilling.

Taking stock of India's digital journey so far, the report explores emerging opportunities and challenges, supported by surveys of key stakeholders and data analytics.

It finds empirical support for a positive role of the regulatory framework in increasing the confidence of consumers in digital financial products, boosting operating and technical efficiencies of financial institutions and engendering more liquid and integrated financial markets.

# India's power generation capacity rises to 4.46 GW in 10 years: MoS Power

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's total installed power generation capacity has grown around 80 per cent over the last 10 years to 4,46,190 MW (4.46 GW) in June 2024, Parliament was informed on Monday.

The installed capacity, which was 2,48,554 MW in March 2014, reached 4,46,190 MW in June, the Union Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik said.

In a reply to the Rajya Sabha, he said the installed capacity of coal-based power has increased from 1,39,663 MW in March 2014 to 2,10,969 MW in June 2024.

While the installed capacity of renewable sector has increased from 75,519 MW in March 2014 to 1,95,013 MW in June 2024, the minister added.

The Government of India proposes to set up an additional minimum 80 GW coal-based capacity by 2031-32, Naik said.

He further said 1,95,181 circuit kilometre (ckm) of transmission lines, 7,30,794



MVA of transformation capacity and 82,790 MW of inter-regional capacity have been added, connecting the whole country into one grid running on one frequency with the capability of transferring 1,18,740 MW from one corner of the country to another.

"India's grid has emerged as one of the largest unified grids in the world. Connecting the whole country into one grid has transformed the country into one unified power market," he added.

Now, the distribution companies (discoms) can buy power at cheapest available

rates from any generator in any corner of the country, thereby enabling cheaper electricity tariffs for consumers.

Besides, 2,927 new substations have been added, upgrade of 3,965 existing sub stations has been carried out and 8.5 lakh ckm of high tension and low tension lines have been added/upgraded, the MoS said.

As a result of these measures, the availability of power in rural areas has increased from 12.5 hours in 2015 to 21.9 hours in 2024, Naik said, adding that the availability of power in urban areas is 23.4 hours.

# Rupee settles flat at 83.73 against US dollar in restricted trade

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee moved in a narrow range before settling flat at 83.73 (provisional) against US dollar on Monday as a firm American currency in overseas markets offset the gains from weak crude oil prices.

Forex traders said a recovery in the US dollar and dollar demand from importers and oil marketing companies. A recovery in the US Dollar ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting this week may also weigh on the rupee," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Choudhary further noted that "a positive tone in the domestic markets and fresh foreign fund inflows may support the rupee at lower levels. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the FOMC, Bank of England (BoE) and Bank of Japan (BoJ) meeting this week.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on



month-end dollar demand from importers and oil marketing companies. A recovery in the US Dollar ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting this week may also weigh on the rupee," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Choudhary further noted that "a positive tone in the domestic markets and fresh foreign fund inflows may support the rupee at lower levels. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the FOMC, Bank of England (BoE) and Bank of Japan (BoJ) meeting this week.

# Sensex, Nifty settle flat after hitting fresh all-time high levels

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty hit intra-day record high levels before closing almost flat on Monday due to profit-taking in FMCG and IT shares by cautious investors ahead of the key US Fed interest rate decision later this week.

The 30-share BSE Sensex closed higher by 23.12 points or 0.03 per cent at 81,355.84 - its all time closing high -- with 16 of its components advancing and 14 ending lower. The index opened higher and jumped 575.71 points or 0.70 per cent to hit a new intra-day record peak of 81,908.43 in late morning deals following a decline in US bond yields.

However, investors preferred to book profits at record high levels amid high volatility dragging the index down.

The NSE Nifty ended marginally up 1.25 points or 0.01 per cent at an all-time closing high of 24,836.10. During the day, it surged 164.9 points or 0.66 per cent



to hit a fresh lifetime peak of 24,999.75.

From the Sensex pack, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, State Bank of India, IndusInd Bank, Reliance Industries and Sun Pharma were among the biggest gainers.

Bharti Airtel, Titan, ITC, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tech Mahindra and HDFC Bank were among the laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. The US markets rallied on Friday. "An ease in the US personal consumption expenditure to 2.5% and the subsequent drop in the US 10-year yield have fuelled optimism that the Fed might cut rates in September, leading to a global rally. However, profit-taking was triggered in the domestic market given trading in the overbought territory and closed flat," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 2,546.38 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.31 per cent to USD 80.88 a barrel. The BSE benchmark jumped 1,292.92 points or 1.62 per cent to settle at 81,332.72 on Friday.

The NSE Nifty surged 428.75 points or 1.76 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,834.85.

## IN BRIEF

### NTPC DECLARES Q1 FY25 UNAUDITED RESULTS

**New Delhi:** The country's largest integrated power utility - NTPC Ltd., with a group installed capacity of more than 76GW, declared unaudited financial results for Q1 FY25 on July 27, 2024. NTPC Group generated ₹114 Billion Units in Q1 FY25 as compared to ₹104 billion units in Q1 FY24. NTPC's standalone gross generation in Q1 FY25 is ₹98 billion units as compared to ₹88 billion units in the corresponding previous period.



### INTEGRATION OF AI INTO DENTAL EDUCATION

**New Delhi:** A high-level stakeholders meeting was held at GGSIPU to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into dental education. As per the WHO Global Oral Health Status report, oral diseases affect 3.5 billion individuals globally. To tackle this case load, the academic experts feel AI can play a vital role. The technology enhances diagnostic accuracy, treatment planning, and patient care in dentistry.



### JUNCKERS' OAK NATURE LAUNCHED

**New Delhi:** Freddy Svane, the Ambassador at the Royal Danish Embassy in New Delhi launched "Oak Nature" by Junckers, Europe's leading manufacturer of premium solid wood flooring for sports, residential, and commercial uses. The launching was celebrated the Junckers' 25 successful years in India, marking significant growth in the industry. The launch event, titled "Discover Junckers: A Night of Art and Design," was held at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) in Saket highlighting Danish craftsmanship in an Indian setting.

### LOHIA LAUNCHES ELECTRIC 3-WHEELER MODELS

**New Delhi:** Lohia, one of India's largest electric automobile manufacturers, has announced the launch of new electric three-wheeler (E3W) models, signalling a renewed focus on this segment. This strategic move aims to revolutionise the EV market with innovative, sustainable solutions, offering a wide range of electric rickshaws and three-wheelers to meet diverse customer needs.

### REC DECLARES 1ST INTERIM DIVIDEND OF 3.50 PER SHARE

**New Delhi:** The Board of Directors of REC Limited, today approved the limited reviewed standalone and consolidated financial results for the quarter ended 30th June 2024.



### INTER-SCHOOL AQUATIC MEET HELD

**New Delhi:** LPS Global School hosted the Inter-school Aquatic Meet, Nautica, on July 26, 2024, welcoming 233 participants from 22 prestigious schools across the region. The event, held at LPS Global School, showcased spirited competition and camaraderie among young athletes passionate about aquatic sports.



# Report flags employer-employee expectations mismatch

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Around 34 per cent of organisations in the country struggle to find the right talent and one in three grapples with retaining existing employees as the gap between employer expectations and employee realities regarding hiring and retention continues to grow, according to a report.

Even as employers and job seekers agree that flexibility, higher salaries and career progression are top priorities, employees value company culture and ethics more than the organisations realise while organisations overvalue the importance of brand and incentives, said Michael Page 'Talent Trends 2024 - India Expectation Gap' report. Coming out of the pandemic, a convergence of factors resulted in a subtle but



transformative change in workplace dynamics, with people thinking more holistically about the value their job gives to their lives, said Nicolas Dumoulin, Michael Page Senior Managing Director for India, Thailand, Philippines, and Vietnam. Michael Page 'Talent Trends 2024 - India Expectation Gap' report is based on interviews among 3,087 respondents across India.

The report further revealed that, on one hand, companies struggle to meet salary expectations, while on the other hand, they face a scarcity of applicants with the required skills who also align with the organisation's culture.

Meanwhile, the report found that most employees are open to new careers and job roles in 2024 compared to last year and 94 per cent of respondents were open to exploring different roles this year, according to the report. Though openness to new roles has varied slightly across demographics, this shift has endured since 2022, during the great resignation, and it added.

The report also revealed that 41 per cent of respondents in India would refuse a promotion to maintain well-being.

When it came to workplace discrimination, the report found that in India 47 per cent of employees report workplace discrimination, which is higher than the Asia Pacific average of 31 per cent. However, 45 per cent of the Indian employees who experienced discrimination still face barriers in formally reporting such incidents, it added.

"Discrimination remains a pervasive issue in India's workplaces, as highlighted in our 'Talent Trends 2024 - India Expectation Gap' report. This has created an urgent need for comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives to address systematic bias and foster a more inclusive environment..." Michael Page India Managing Director Anshul Lodha told.

# Vedanta Nico signs pact for supplying nickel to US-based AEsir Technologies



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"Vedanta Nico, India's primary nickel producer, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AEsir Technologies, Inc, a US-based innovator in advanced battery technologies," Vedanta Nico said in a statement.

Vedanta Nico, a subsidiary of Vedanta Ltd, on Monday said it has entered into a pact with US-based AEsir Technologies for the supply of nickel, a critical component for next-generation batteries. Nickel plays an important role in EV battery technology, particularly in the cathode, where it enhances energy density, power output, and battery lifespan. Nickel-rich batteries, such as nickel-zinc variants, offer fast charging, reduce reliance on cobalt, and improve the overall electric vehicle (EV) value proposition.

The global demand for nickel in batteries is projected to reach 500,000 tonnes by 2025 from 150,000 tonnes in 2020 due to the expanding EV market adoption. The International Energy Agency (IEA) forecasts that the number of electric cars will rise from over 10 million in 2020 to 145 million by 2030, spurred by larger battery capacities, faster charging, and advancements in reducing cobalt use. "We are thrilled to partner with AEsir Technologies to create a game-changing battery solution for the critical infrastructure, 5G telecom, and EV market. Our expertise in nickel production, coupled with AEsir's innovative zinc battery technology, positions us to deliver a product that meets the evolving needs of the industry. This collaboration aligns with our vision of contributing to a sustainable future through responsible mining and value-added products," Vedanta Nico COO Prashuk Jain said.

# Indian economy likely to record over 7% growth: NCAER

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian economy could grow higher than 7 per cent and possibly closer to 7.5 per cent in the current fiscal on the back of normal monsoon and receded electoral uncertainty, economic think tank NCAER has said. In its July 2024 issue of Monthly Economic Review (MER), NCAER said real GDP grew by 8.2 per cent in FY2023-24, driven by stable consumption demand and steadily improving investment demand.

"Based on the momentum in the high-frequency indicators, normalised monsoon, a relatively benign global outlook and receded electoral uncertainty, both in India and in the rest of the world, growth will likely turn out to be higher than 7 per cent, and possibly closer to 7.5 per cent," NCAER director general Poonam

Gupta said. Gupta said the Union Budget 2024-25 lived up to the expectations of unwavering commitment to fiscal consolidation, prudence, and quality. The Budget has kept the fiscal deficit target at 4.9 per cent of GDP and capital expenditure at 2.4 per cent of GDP during 2024-25.

According to the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), the short to medium-term growth strategy is based on six key areas — private sector capital formation, green transition financing, MSME development, agricultural transformation, Education and skill development, and enhanced state capacity.

The NCAER-NSE business confidence index (BCI) increased to 149.8 in the first quarter (Q1) of FY25, up from 138.2 in the fourth quarter (Q4) of

FY24, indicating an improvement in business sentiments.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) revised its growth projection for India upward to 7 per cent, while the Asian Development Bank (ADB) maintained its projection at 7 per cent as of July 2024 for FY2024-25. The range of projections for India for the current fiscal year is between 6.6 to 7.2 per cent.

As per the Economic Survey 2023-24, India's real GDP grew by 8.2 per cent in FY2023-24 due to stable consumption and improving investment demand, and it is projected to grow between 6.5-7 per cent in FY2024-25.

The Union Budget for FY2024-25 emphasised fiscal prudence and capex. Nominal GDP is projected to grow at 10.5 per cent in FY2024-25; while the fiscal deficit is budgeted at 4.9 per cent of GDP.





## Players will fight tooth and nail to be there: Dravid on cricket's Olympic debut at LA 2028

PTI ■ PARIS

An ardent supporter of cricket's inclusion in the Olympics, former India head coach and batting legend Rahul Dravid says the "serious dressing room conversations" that he has heard indicate that players are going to "fight tooth and nail" to be there at the world's biggest sporting event. Dravid was in the French capital on Sunday to attend a panel discussion on 'Cricket at the Olympics: Dawn of a New Era', celebrating the sport's inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Games, at the recently inaugurated India House. "I've already heard a few conversations in the dressing room. People are talking about the 2026 T20 World Cup, there is an ODI World Cup in 2027, and you hear people saying there is the Olympics in 2028," Dravid, who also caught up on some tennis action at the Games before coming for the event, said during the discussion. "People are going to want to win that gold medal, stand on the podium, and be a part of the Games Village, a great sporting event, and interact with so many athletes. "As you get closer, I have no doubt that teams will be preparing and checking out facilities. They will take this seriously, and players will fight



tooth and nail to be out there," he added. The Test great had ICC CEO Geoff Allardice for company during the discussion at India House here. "You grow up watching the Olympics, seeing Carl Lewis winning the gold medal, watching the great athletes perform. You always want to be part of great events like this. The environment, the energy -- it's a dream come true." Dravid hoped that India would win both the men's and women's gold medals at the LA Games. "The dream for me to have a fantastic cricket tournament, hopefully Indian men and women winning the gold which would be nice.

"Unfortunately, I won't be able to play, but I will make every effort to be in LA in some capacity or another. If not anything else, I will try to get a media job," joked Dravid, who ended his tenure as India head coach after the recent T20 World Cup triumph in the West Indies. The men's and women's cricket competitions will run concurrently at the LA Olympics. As far as Allardice is concerned, he said cricket will be one of the "star attractions" in LA four years from now. "It's quite surreal to be here in Paris, seeing the energy around sport and how it's getting together. Cricket is starting to dawn on the global sporting

community. "I think cricket will be one of the star attractions in Los Angeles...When you see global stars of big sports around the world competing in one city at a time -- watching Rafael Nadal at tennis this afternoon -- and then if you are in LA, you can watch the best tennis players, best golfers, and the best cricketers. "We are going to be very, very strong come 2028," he said. **WOMEN'S CRICKET IS GOING FORWARD:** Dravid also shared his thoughts on the growth of women's cricket, saying it is progressing well and increasing participation by young players is making the sport more inclusive and attractive. "Women's cricket is already going forward. I don't think it needs anything else. It's fantastic to have it going on concurrently. Even when you talk to people at the grassroots level, to coaches, one of the things they constantly tell you is the level of participation from young girls. "Every year in every academy, the percentage is growing exponentially, sometimes even more than the boys. Cricket is becoming a lot more inclusive and attractive. This could potentially be a career. You would not have said that five or six years ago. That's what we want to see."

## Rohit, Kohli among India players to train ahead of ODIs against Sri Lanka

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India skipper Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and a few other players will start their training from Monday ahead of the three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka starting August 2. While the Indian T20I team under Suryakumar Yadav will

play the third and final match on Tuesday in Pallekele, Rohit, Kohli and a few others like rookie Harshit Rana will train in Colombo after reaching the island nation's capital on Sunday. Rohit, Kohli and Kulddeep Yadav will hit the ground running nearly a month after they helped India win the T20 World Cup in the

Americas for the second time. The ODIs against Sri Lanka will also mark the return of Shreyas Iyer into the national side. It was in late 2023 that Iyer last played a limited-overs match for India, against South Africa in December. The squad also features Delhi all-rounder Rana, who was a member of the IPL-winning

Kolkata Knight Riders' team earlier this year. These players will train under India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar in Colombo. Each of the three ODIs will be played at the R Premadasa Stadium here. While the first match is on August 2, the second and third ODIs are on August 4 and 7 respectively.

## Clinical India eye series whitewash against wobbly Lanka in third T20I

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

There will be no let-up in intensity as a ruthless India, under the leadership of new coach Gautam Gambhir and captain Suryakumar Yadav, seek to exploit Sri Lanka's weaknesses and push for a series whitewash in the inconsequential third and final T20I here on Tuesday.

The fate of the series was decided after India swept aside Sri Lanka in the first two games, leaving the possibility of an embarrassing whitewash hanging over the hosts' heads. India secured a seven-wicket victory on Sunday in a rain-shortened match in the second T20I, thwarting Sri Lanka's charge once again.

Despite the hosts' flying start, their fight fizzled out for the second consecutive game due to subpar batting. On the same day, the Sri Lankan women's team beat tournament-favourites India in the final for their maiden Women's T20 Asia Cup title in Dambulla but it seemed to have no impact on the men's side which continued to grapple with existing issues.

Sri Lanka's embarrassing batting collapses in the middle overs is the prime reason of their undoing in this series so far, while India have gone about their business like a true world champion side.

India has proven to be the superior side by a significant margin, demonstrating greater confidence in their plans, skills, and execution, and never faltering under pressure. There have been moments when Sri



Lanka have appeared to be running away with the contest but each time India has found their way back, particularly with their incisive bowling, to keep their upper hand. The 'bowlers' captain' Suryakumar has not only marshalled his troops with precision to make effective bowling changes, but he has looked to lead from front with the bat having scored 58 and 26 in the two outings so far.

India have remained aggressive right from the word go to reap rich benefits, putting a 200 plus score in the opener. In the second game, a slight change in the batting line-up delivered a seven-wicket win which helped them seal the series.

It remains to be seen if vice-captain and opener Shubman Gill is fit in time for

this contest after he missed the second game due to a stiff neck.

His replacement, Sanju Samson had to wait for over an hour to face his first ball due to a rain break and when his chance arrived, the right-hander missed one from Maheesh Theekshana for a golden duck.

Samson and India will be seeking improved performances from the batter, who has been a fixture around the T20I squad for some time, including serving as a non-playing member of the World Cup-winning team.

But at the other end, Yashasvi Jaiswal has looked to go all-out with his attacking game to rake up 70 runs in two outings and he remains one of the biggest threats for the Lankans.

For the hosts, Pathum Nissanka (111 runs) and Kusal Perera (73) have provided the fireworks at the top but Sri Lanka's middle-overs struggles have led to their downfall.

India spinner Ravi Bishnoi, who helped script a win in the second game with 3/26, highlighted Sri Lankan batters' inability to navigate spin bowling in the series.

"They play spin really well but I do not know what (has) happened, they are collapsing in the middle overs," Bishnoi said after the second T20I.

"They are known as a good spin-batting team but I think something has gone wrong," said Bishnoi, possibly hinting at the lack of skills and aptitude among Sri Lankan players generally which has led to their struggles across formats.

With the ball, Matheesha Pathirana returned an expensive 4/40 in the opening game but Sri Lanka will want a lot more from their bowlers.

### TEAMS (FROM):

**India:** Suryakumar Yadav (c), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh, Riyan Parag, Rishabh Pant (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Khaleel Ahmed, Mohammed Siraj.

**Sri Lanka:** Dinesh Chandimal, Avishka Fernando, Kusal Mendis (wk), Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Perera, Charith Asalanka (c), Wanindu Hasaranga, Kamindu Mendis, Dasun Shanaka, Chamindu Wickramasinghe, Binura Fernando, Asitha Fernando, Dilshan Madushanka, Matheesha Pathirana, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Welalage.

## Covering 22,000 kms in 2 years, Kerala cyclist reaches Paris to cheer for Neeraj

PTI ■ PARIS

India's star athlete Neeraj Chopra will have a special supporter at the Paris Olympics: a Kerala cyclist who has travelled all the way from Calicut, riding more than 22,000 kilometers over two years.

Fayis Asraf Ali's arrival in the French capital was the culmination of a long journey on his Surly bicycle that took him across 30 countries, beginning on August 15, 2022.

Ali set off with a mission to cycle from "India to London to spread peace and unity".

Having cycled across 17 countries, he stopped in Budapest one August afternoon last year, when he came to know that the Tokyo Olympics gold medalist was staying across the street.

The ace javelin thrower was with the athletics contingent for the World Championships in which claimed another historic win.

A few hurried calls to a "known Kerala coach" led to a "dream meeting" with his sporting idol.

"I got a few minutes to talk to the Indian athletes and Neeraj told me since you are going to London why don't you come to Paris for the Olympics," Ali told PTI

during an interaction after ending his journey at India House here on Sunday.

"I thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to see him again in Paris so I altered my plan a bit and procured the required visa and cycled to the UK before ending my journey here.

"I am so excited to meet him again. I've requested PT Usha ma'am (IOA chief). I'm here to see him create history again. We will cheer for him (on August 8)," he added.

He carries four pairs of clothes, a tent, a sleeping bag and a mat that takes the total weight of the cycle to 50kgs.

"I never stay in a hotel and get some sponsors on the way and that's it. In between twice, I flew to Kerala to arrange visas. "Visa is all you need to cross the border, a cyclist does not need any other documentation," he added.

Is he not tired or facing any health issues?

"No, never. The love of the people and the warm reception I get everywhere keeps me going. I'm here and so excited," added Ali, who was greeted by star cricketers Chris Gayle, Harbhajan Singh and Suresh Raina while he was in the UK.

An engineer by profession, Ali was into his fourth year in Saudi Arabia when his father

was diagnosed with a heart ailment in 2015. His father died in 2018.

Being the only son, he had to return to India to look after his father. He had quit his job and was back home in Calicut. His wife is a medical professional and he has two sons.

He also has a thyroid issue that makes him put on weight.

"Those three years made me realise that health is the most important thing in life, not money. One fine morning I saw a couple of cyclists touring and thought of starting riding," he recalled.

He first bought a Rs 1.3K bicycle to get used to riding and then chalked out plans for his maiden solo ride: Calicut to Singapore. Then he upgraded it to a Rs 1 lakh cycle, especially designed for long trips. For the trip to Paris, he had to buy a more advanced bicycle, costing Rs 2.5 lakh.

He set out on his first trip on August 7, 2019 and reached Singapore on November 21, clocking 8000kms across seven countries.

"Rotary arranged my trip and I got a few sponsors. But my biggest supporter was my wife who took care of both my kids and the family. So I just had to embark on my journey," he said.

## India's tennis campaign at Olympics ends in single day

PTI ■ PARIS

India's tennis campaign at the Paris Olympics lasted just one day as Sumit Nagal and the men's doubles pair of Rohan Bopanna and N Sriram Balaji bowed out after losing their respective opening matches to French challengers, here Sunday.

Nagal was first to take court, but his strong baseline game didn't seem to be enough against mercurial Corentin Moutet, who earned a stylish three-set win.

In his second appearance at the Olympic Games, Nagal bounced back after losing the first set but fell 2-6 6-4 5-7 in two hours and 28 minutes at the Roland Garros.

In the Tokyo Games, Nagal had lost in the second round to Russian Daniil Medvedev but could not make the most of a manageable opener today.

He was up 2-0 in the decider with an early break but allowed Moutet to claw his way back and win.

Later in the day, Bopanna and Balaji went down fighting 5-7 2-6 against Edouard Roger-Vasselin and Gael Monfils, who replaced injured Fabien Reboul in the home team at the last minute.

India have won only one Olympic medal in tennis,

when Leander Paes bagged a bronze in the 1996 Atlanta Games. Monfils' big-hitting helped the home team that was egged on by the partisan crowd.

It was probably the last time Bopanna represented India in a multi-sport event. The 44-year-old has already announced his retirement from Davis Cup.

The doubles match featured several fiery baseline exchanges between Bopanna and both the French players.

The French ploy of engaging Bopanna in long rallies from the back took Balaji out of the picture on many points, and it largely denied the debutant opportunity of a quick finish at the net.

The Indians dropped serve first when Bopanna went down 0-40 in game six following a long rally that ended with Indian team's unforced error.

Bopanna and Balaji though got the break back in the next game on Roger-Vasselin's serve. Down by a breakpoint, Monfils could not put away a volley.

The match was back on serve. Eventually, Balaji came out to serve at 5-6 to stay in the set. Feeling the nerves, he struggled to put first serves in and committed a double fault to get to 15-30. A long rally

ensued, which ended in home team's favour. At second set point, Bopanna netted a backhand volley.

Balaji could not hold serve in the second set, as Bopanna too struggled to cope with the powerful strokes of the French players.

The match ended with Indian team's unforced error.

It has always been a battle of attrition between Nagal and Moutet with three of their last four outings being three-set affairs and it was no different today.

Nagal had got the better of Moutet in their last meeting in Grand Prix of Hassan in the Moroccan city of Marakkech in April this year. Nagal didn't seem to have a plan B but Moutet had a few tricks in his bag to unsettle his rival. He served underarm a number of times and used the drop shots, the forehand slice and the backhand slice very effectively.

The chants of Coco-Coco, Aalee-Aalee and Moutet-Moutet certainly gave the home player the energy required in such a slugfest.

Nagal had a nervy start with a boisterous crowd behind Moutet. A drop volley error at 30-all put him down by a break point. Another unforced error cost him the opening game.



The French player began with an underarm serve, much to the amusement of the home fans. He, however, ended up serving a double fault. It was an easy hold for the southpaw even as Nagal also bounced back with a hold at love.

Nagal said he was expecting underarm serves from him but obviously didn't appreciate that.

Moutet struggled a bit with his first serve but fed Nagal a lot of high balls and attacked his backhand more to build on the break.

Nagal had his chances to get the break back in game four but squandered four breakpoints.

He was down by another breakpoint in game five but saved and held when Moutet just missed the line with his return. The crowd favourite again amused the gathered supporters at court seven as he crossed over the court to check the spot if the ball landed inside the line.

It was crucial for Nagal to hold serve after falling behind 2-4 but he erred on overhead volley at breakpoint.

Moutet pocketed the opening set when Nagal's forehand return soared over the baseline.

The second set was not a one-way traffic with Nagal finding his rhythm. The free points

were not given. The set remained in serve till game five. After playing two deuce points, Moutet again served underarm, and this time he got the point as Nagal netted the return. Nagal was furious but the crowd loved the moment.

Nagal finally had his first break of the match when Moutet's dropped shot crashed into the net.

Before that on the second breakpoint, when he netted the return, Nagal had banged his racquet on the court, letting go of the frustration.

However, he gathered himself with the crucial break. The crowd stood and began

singing the national anthem to egg on their favourite.

Nagal though, consolidated the lead with a hold and levelled the match by breaking his rival in game eight when Moutet netted a volley return.

The French player yet again resorted to giving high balls and drop shots to Nagal to break the momentum, and almost succeeded, but Nagal too stuck to his guns, avoiding an early break.

He then broke Moutet when he double faulted while facing his fourth breakpoint.

**AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED**  
(A SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANK)  
Regd. Office: 19-A, Dhuleswar Garden, Ajmer Road, Jaipur-302001. (CIN : L3691R1996PLC011381)

**APPENDIX IV (SEE RULE 8(I) POSSESSION NOTICE)**

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) under the "Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Act, 2002 (54 of 2002)) and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with (rule 3) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice dated 14-Dec-23 Calling upon the Borrower Rk Tallor (Borrower), Lali (Co-Borrower), Rakesh Kumar (Co-Borrower), Smt. Lalita Devi (Co-Borrower) (Loan Account No. L9001060125209331) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being for Rs. 547496/- Rs. Five Lac Forty-Seven Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-Six Only within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/ mortgagee having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/ mortgagee and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this the 25 Day of July of the Year 2024.

The borrower/ co-borrower/ mortgagee in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) for an amount of for for Rs. 547496/- Rs. Five Lac Forty-Seven Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-Six Only as on 11-Dec-23 and interest and expenses thereon until full payment.

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

**DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At- Freehold - Within Municipal Limit-Khwat No 89 Khatoni No 143 Kh On 107/1/1, Niyampur Road Nangal Choudhary, Narnaul, Dist-Mahendragarh-Haryana-123023 Admeasuring 15.9 Square Yard owned by Smt. Lalita Devi

Date : 25-July-24  
Place : HARYANA

-Sd-  
Authorized Officer  
Au Small Finance Bank Limited