

**OPINION 6**  
TACKLING NEW WAVE OF TERROR IN JAMMU

**WORLD 8**  
MY AIM IS TO DEFEAT TRUMP: KAMALA

**MONEY 10**  
SENSEX, NIFTY SETTLE LOWER AHEAD OF BUDGET

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## Economic Survey: India's GDP set to soar to seven per cent in 2024-25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's GDP is likely to grow at 6.5 to 7 per cent in the current fiscal year amid global challenges which may impact exports, said Economic Survey 2023-24 tabled in Parliament on Monday. The growth projected for 2024-25 is lower than the economic growth rate of 8.2 per cent estimated for the previous financial year. The Reserve Bank has projected the GDP growth for the fiscal year ending March 2025 at 7.2 per

cent. Global agencies like IMF and ADB see India to grow at 7 per cent. "...The Survey conservatively projects a real GDP growth of 6.5-7 per cent, with risks evenly balanced, cognizant of the fact that the market expectations are on the higher side," said the document tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament. It said the domestic growth drivers have supported economic growth in 2023-24 despite

uncertain global economic performance. Improved balance sheets will help the private sector cater to strong investment demand. The Survey also added a note of caution saying "private capital formation after good growth in the last three years may turn slightly more cautious because of fears of cheaper imports from countries that have excess capacity". While merchandise exports are likely to increase with improving growth prospects in advance



Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran addresses a Press conference after tabling of the Economic Survey 2023-24 in Parliament by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in New Delhi, on Monday

economies, services exports are also likely to witness a further uptick. A normal rainfall forecast by the India Meteorological Department and the satisfactory spread of the southwest monsoon thus far are likely to improve the agriculture sector's performance and support the revival of rural demand, it said. However, the monsoon season still has some way to go, the Survey said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the Survey highlights the prevailing

strengths of the economy and identifies areas for further growth and progress as "we move towards building a Viksit Bharat". Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on Monday said a 7 per cent GDP growth rate, the upper end of the projection made in the Survey, is doable depending on monsoon and global financial risks. The Economic Survey is an annual document presented by the Government ahead of the Union Budget to review the state of the economy.



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla being greeted by TMC MP Shatrughan Sinha after the latter took oath as a member of the House during the first day of the Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday

## Ahead of Budget, PM Modi slams Opposition attempt to drown his voice

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day before his Government to present its first Budget in the third term, Prime Minister Narendra Modi outlined the agenda for this Session with an appeal to the Opposition to be constructive and a combative message saying some parties have practised "negative politics" and "misused" Parliament to hide their political failures. "In a democracy, there should be no place for tantrums to silence the Prime Minister for 2.5 hours, stifling his voice. It is a cause for concern that there is no remorse or regret for such actions," the Prime Minister said. His remarks were an apparent reference to the incident in the last Session when Modi delivered his reply to the debate on the Motion of

Thanks on the President's Address amid vociferous protests and sloganeering by the Opposition that was demanding that both MPs from Manipur be allowed to speak. Asserting that Parliament is not for 'dal' but for 'desh', Modi said people have given their verdict in the Lok Sabha polls and now all political parties must work together for the country for the next five years. "This Parliament is not for 'dal (party)' but for 'desh (country)'" This Parliament is not limited to MPs but it is for 140 crore people of the country," the Prime Minister said. He appealed to MPs from all parties to set aside political difference and participate in discussions in a constructive way. "I want to tell all MPs, they may be of any party, that from



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the media on the first day of the Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday

January onwards we fought a pitched electoral battle, we conveyed to the people what we wanted to convey, some showed the way while others misled, but that period is over now. The people have given their verdict," he said. "Now it is the responsibility of all elected representatives and of all political parties which have fought for their respective parties for the next five years, we have to fight for the country and strive for it," Modi said. The Prime Minister said the Union Budget, which will be presented on Tuesday, will set the direction for the journey of the next five years and lay the foundation for fulfilling the dream of 'Viksit Bharat' in 2047. The Prime Minister urged political parties to rise above party lines and make use of the platform of Parliament for the

next four to four-and-a-half years. "In January, 2029, when it will be an election year, you can go into the poll field, even make use of Parliament for it. Play the games you want to for those six months but till then, work for empowering the poor, farmers, youth and women by building a movement of people's participation to fulfil the dream of 2047," Modi said. "I say with a lot of sadness that after 2014, some MPs were elected for 5 years, some for 10 years, but many MPs did not get a chance to talk about their constituency and share their views in Parliament because of the negative politics of some parties that misused Parliament to hide their political failures," he said. Modi urged all parties to give a chance to first-time MPs to speak in Parliament.

## Temperatures sizzle in LS over NEET

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The first day of the Monsoon cum Budget Session on Monday witnessed the ruling party and Opposition members face off over the NEET and NTA row with Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi demanding immediate resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan who in turn said he is on the post "at the mercy of his leader (Prime Minister Narendra Modi)" and that the Government is "collectively answerable". While Opposition called the current entrance examination system "rubbish", Centre asserted there have been no evidence of entrance exam paper leaks in last seven years. Rahul carried on with his scathing attacks. "It's obvious to the whole country that there is a very serious problem in our examination system. The Minister has blamed everybody except himself. I don't even think he

understands the fundamentals of what is going on here," the Congress leader said. The Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said this Government will create new records in paper leaks. "Students across the country are protesting. Investigation is leading to revelations, arrests are being made. I have only one request, students will not get justice if this Minister continues," he said. In response, Pradhan said the results have been made public as per the Supreme Court's directions. "I don't want to do politics, but I have a list of how many paper leaks happened when Akhilesh was in charge (as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister)," he said. Hitting back, Pradhan said he has the support of the people in his constituency and does not need a certification of intelligence from anyone in Parliament. "Lies will not become truth if you shout. The country's examination system has been

called rubbish. There cannot be a more unfortunate statement by the Leader of the Opposition. I condemn this," said Pradhan in the thick of storm ever since irregularities in the NEET followed by UGC-NET have been reported. A cornered Pradhan then took a "remote control" job — a swipe the BJP routinely use to target the Manmohan Singh Government. "In 2010, three Bills for education reforms had been introduced by their Minister Kapil Sibal. One of them was to prohibit unfair practices. What was their problem? Under whose pressure was that Bill withdrawn. Was it due to the pressure of private medical colleges? And they are asking us questions" he said. Responding to the Opposition's allegations, the Minister said the NTA has conducted more than 240 exams and over 5 crore students have appeared in them.



Students and others are seen within the precinct of the Supreme Court during a hearing on a batch of petitions related to the controversy-ridden medical entrance exam NEET-UG 2024, in New Delhi on Monday

## SC asks IIT Delhi to examine issue of NEET correct answer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Director, IIT-Delhi to set up a team of three experts that would go into a particular question of Physics asked in the NEET-UG 2024 examination and submit a report on the correct answer by Tuesday noon. The top court's order to IIT Delhi to set up a team of three domain experts to examine the issue of the correct answer to a question came at the end of the day-long hearing on a batch of petitions including those which are seeking a re-test of the controversy-ridden NEET-UG on grounds of question paper-leak and other malpractices. A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud asked the petitioners seeking re-test to show with the help of data released by the National Testing Agency (NTA), which holds the examination, that there was a "systemic failure" in its conduct, and the paper leak was "widespread" and not restricted to Patna and Hazaribagh only. "How do you establish that the paper leak was all over India?" the CJI asked. During the hearing, the bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, took note of the submissions of some aspirants that a question of Physics had two correct answers and a set of examinees, who gave one particular answer out of the two correct ones, were awarded four marks.

## Hot chase to neutralise Pak terrorists

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Close on the heels of the high-level security review meeting, chaired by Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi to chalk out a strategy to flush out Pakistani terrorists occupying Jammu Heights, a heavily armed group of terrorists launched two more frontal attacks on an Army post and the house of the Shaurya Chakra awardee in the Gunda village of Khawas tehsil in the frontier Rajouri district in the wee hours of Monday. Following these fresh attacks, the entire security grid has been alerted to conduct a fresh audit of the security arrangements given the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Drass to participate in the Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations marking 25 years of Victory in the Kargil war. The Village Defence Group member Parshotam Kumar remained unscathed in the attack while one of his close relatives received minor injuries during the firing incident. It is the first such attempt in recent months where terrorists brazenly targeted a member of the village defence guard. Official sources claimed the foreign terrorists were reportedly briefed about the presence of Shaurya Chakra awardee in the village and local over-ground



Army personnel during an encounter with terrorists in Gundha area of Rajouri district on Monday

workers must have shared the exact coordinates with the terrorists to target him. Kumar was bestowed the Shaurya Chakra, the peacetime equivalent of war's Vir Chakra by the President of India on July 5 in New Delhi. According to the citation, "Last year in August 2023, Kumar, armed with an outmoded, inferior rifle had taken on two highly trained guerrilla warfare terrorists of the PAFF-Jaish, who were equipped with sophisticated assault rifles and grenades. Unmindful of his safety, he tailed the two terrorists and (displaying) raw courage and excellent field craft, he closed in on the terrorists and engaged them from a close distance. He maintained contact with the other till (security) forces closed in. His brave act led to the neutralisation of one foreign

terrorist." Soon after thwarting the terror attack a hot chase was launched by the joint team of security forces to track down the footprints of terrorists. Special forces were also inducted in the ongoing operations spread across the thickly forested area. In a post on X, White Knight Corps said, "Terrorists attacked the house of a VDC at Gunda, Rajouri at 3.10 am. A nearby Army column reacted and a firefight ensued. In another update the White Knight Corps posted on X, "Indian Army acted on intelligence, anticipating the threat to a Village Defence Guard in a remote area in Rajouri - Reasi. Tactical teams swiftly intervened, ensuring no harm to the VDC member and his family. Operations are continuing and a firefight is in progress."

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## Parts of Haridwar witness heavy rain, more in store for State today

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Laksar and Roorkee witnessed heavy rainfall on Monday while light to moderate rain was experienced in other parts of the State. The State meteorological centre has issued an orange warning (Be Prepared) regarding the possibility of heavy to very heavy rainfall likely to occur at isolated places in Bageshwar, Pithoragarh, Nainital,

Almora and Haridwar districts today. Thunderstorms accompanied with lightning/intense to very intense spells of rain are likely to occur at isolated places in the districts of the State today. Apart from this, light to moderate rain/thunderstorms are likely to occur at many places in Uttarkashi and Chamoli districts, and at most places in

which one or two spells may be intense/heavy in some areas. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be about 31 degrees Celsius and 22 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun today.

Meanwhile, Laksar and Roorkee experienced heavy rain on Monday with 98 millimetres and 81.2 degrees Celsius respectively. Moderate rain was witnessed in other parts with 52 millimetres in Dehradun, 46 millimetres in Lalduh, 40.5 millimetres in Raiwala, 26 millimetres in Chamba and 25 millimetres in Kotdwar.

The rain experienced since the early hours and cloudy conditions resulted in a drop in temperature in Dehradun where the maximum and minimum temperatures were 27.8 degrees Celsius and 24.2 degrees Celsius respectively. The maximum and minimum temperatures in other parts of the State were 35.2 degrees Celsius and 27.2 degrees Celsius respectively in Pantnagar, 19.9 degrees Celsius and 15.2 degrees Celsius in Mukteshwar and 20.4 degrees Celsius and 18.2 degrees Celsius in New Tehri.

## Schools and Anganwadi centres closed in Dehradun today

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In view of the yellow warning regarding the possibility of heavy rainfall in Dehradun on Tuesday issued by the State meteorological centre, the Dehradun district magistrate Sonika declared a holiday for all schools and Anganwadi centres. Besides this, she also held a meeting with all sub divisional magistrates and Tehsildars, and issued instructions regarding the heavy rainfall forecast. She instructed all SDMs and officials of linear departments to remain alert.

The DM also directed them to relocate people residing near rivers and streams to safer locations and to remain active in disaster-prone areas. She also directed officials to ensure swift disbursement of relief funds to the affected families in case of a disaster. Any disaster related information should be promptly communicated to the disaster control

room and departments concerned should work in coordination, keeping their phones accessible. No negligence will be tolerated from any department regarding monsoon related issues, she added. Besides this, the police also resumed alerting people living near rivers using loudhailers on Monday morning.

The Dehradun senior superintendent of police Ajai Singh said that he has directed all police stations in-charges to keep police teams equipped with disaster relief tools ready for any emergency situation. The respective police station in-charges are regularly informing people settled near rivers to remain cautious during the rains. Police have also been regularly patrolling near rivers and streams and continuously warning residents to stay alert and avoid going near the water bodies, he said.

## CM checks impact of heavy rains in State, directs prompt response

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami made a surprise visit to the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) here on Monday. Checking the impact of rain in various parts of the State, he reiterated that the officials concerned must remain alert round the clock. He directed the Disaster Management department to maintain coordination with all the district magistrates while also keeping a consistent watch on the level of rivers.

During his visit to the SEOC, the CM talked on the phone to the district magistrates of Nainital, Bageshwar, Tehri, Rudraprayag, Pauri and Dehradun to check the status of rain, roads, waterlogging and the supply of drinking water and electricity. He told the DMs to ensure that heavy rain does not disrupt the flow of traffic on the roads. Swift

action should be taken to resume traffic in case the roads are blocked. Proper drainage should be facilitated in case of waterlogging, he said. Dhami further directed that in case the level of water in the rivers rises, those living in riverside areas and other vulnerable areas should be made aware of the situation.

heavy rain. Coordination should be established with the districts so that emergency situations are dealt with more effectively and swiftly. Special focus should be laid on the vulnerable areas of the State and the areas affected by heavy rain and disasters. The CM said that immediate action should be taken on any information about



Champawat and Udham Singh nagar districts on Tuesday. The centre has also issued a yellow warning (Watch) regarding the possibility of heavy rainfall likely to occur at isolated places in Uttarkashi, Dehradun, Tehri, Pauri, Chamoli, Rudraprayag,

the remaining districts of the State.

The provisional State capital Dehradun is forecast to witness a partly to generally cloudy sky. Few spells of light to moderate rain/thunder-showers are likely to occur, of

## DM orders MCD to increase response teams to tackle waterlogging

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In view of the weather alert regarding the possibility of heavy rainfall from Tuesday onward, the Dehradun district magistrate Sonika conducted a surprise visit to the disaster control room of the Municipal Corporation of Dehradun (MCD) on Monday evening. She took stock of arrangements of the control from the personnel deployed there. She

ing received and resolved complaints. She also asked officials to increase the number of response teams and pumping equipment to expedite water drainage in heavily waterlogged areas. Meanwhile, the corporation on Monday received about 45 complaints regarding waterlogging in various parts of the city. The quick response team of the corpo-



also interacted with complainants over the phone to understand the status of their grievances. The DM also directed the municipal commissioner Gaurav Kumar to assign an officer for monitoring the complaints received in the control room, ensuring they are promptly addressed. She also said that the complaints should be computerised for systematic compilation which will enable quick access to information regard-

ration had resolved about 30 complaints till late evening. Besides this, the district disaster control room in Dehradun also received 15 complaints from across the district regarding severe waterlogging on Monday. The district disaster management officer Rishabh Kumar said that the administration has been working on resolving the issues as soon as possible by coordinating with the departments concerned.

## 139 roads remain blocked in various parts of State

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

After a brief respite when the number of blocked roads dropped marginally, the number of such roads climbed up to 139 on Monday. According to information provided by the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) on Monday evening, a total of 1,894 roads were affected in the State so far, out of which 139 are yet to be restored. Out of these roads, 95 were affected during the past 24 hours.

main district road and 14 rural motor roads are blocked in Bageshwar district while seven rural motor roads are blocked in Dehradun district. In the Pithoragarh district, 23 rural motor roads are blocked while one State highway and three rural motor roads are blocked in Almora district.



The national highway to Kedarnath is open while four rural motor roads are blocked in Rudraprayag district. The national highway to Badrinath in Chamoli district is open for traffic though 15 rural motor roads are blocked in the district. In the Uttarkashi district, the national highway to Yamunotri is open while the national highway to Gangotri was blocked due to a landslide near Bishanpur. One State highway and eight rural motor roads are also blocked in the district. One

Seven rural motor roads are blocked in the Champawat district while 18 rural motor roads are blocked in the Pauri district. Eight rural motor roads are blocked in Tehri district while one State highway and one rural motor road are blocked in Udham Singh Nagar district. Efforts are underway to reopen the blocked roads.

## CM checks preparations for implementation of UCC

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami directed officials to ensure that for the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand, the procedures and rules under it should be finalised in a time bound manner. The CM said this while chairing a meeting to review preparations for the implementation of the UCC here on Monday. The CM directed that the works of the sub-committee formed regarding the provisions of UCC and the action to be taken by various departments should be finalised soon.

coordination for this purpose, he said.

The head of the committee formed for implantation of the UCC provisions, Shatrughna Singh informed that three sub-committees have been formed for this purpose. The sub-committee formed to prepare the outline of the rules has held 43 meetings so far. This sub-committee will present its report on August 31 this year. The sub-committee formed for simplicity and transparency in the implementation of the rules has held 20 meetings so far and will also submit its report on August 31. The sub-committee formed for capacity building and training will submit its report on September 30. Officials further stated that various departments have been accorded responsibility for the effective implementation of the UCC.

The training programmes to be held at various levels for this purpose should also be held soon. All the aspects should be studied carefully before the formal implementation of the UCC. Focus should also be laid on raising public awareness on the UCC. All the departments concerned should work in

## Kanwadias embark on sacred journey despite heavy rain

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Thousands of Kanwadias embarked on their sacred journey on the first Monday of the holy month of Sawan despite the heavy rainfall to fetch holy Ganga water in Haridwar. Despite heavy rainfall in some areas, several Kanwadias could be seen carrying elaborately decorated Kanwads on their shoulders in several routes of Haridwar. They could be seen chanting as they made their way to the ghats to collect the sacred water. The local authorities including the police and the Municipal Corporation of Haridwar (MCD) said that they had anticipated the monsoon's impact and had made extensive arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of the pilgrims. The

sanitation inspector in MCH Shrikant Chaudhary told The Pioneer that there was no prominent waterlogging in the city except in two locations including Chamgadad Tapu. The rainwater did not stay on roads for a long time as drains and roads are being regularly cleaned to prevent any blockage. He said that sanitation workers are working in three shifts to ensure proper cleanliness during the monsoon. The officials also said that temporary shelters were set up along the route, providing respite for those needing a break from the heavy rains. Besides this, medical facilities and emergency services were also on high alert, the officials said.

## Undertake Kanwad Yatra with calm and composed mindset: DGP

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Considering the assault by three purported Kanwadias on some parking lot attendants in Muni Ki Reti on Sunday, the director general of police Abhinav Kumar appealed to Kanwadias to carry out the pilgrimage with a calm and composed mindset while cooperating fully with the police personnel to ensure smooth Yatra. He issued this appeal to all Kanwadias through social media on Monday. He addressed the Kanwadias and said that like every year, Kanwadias are undertaking this holy journey with devotion and faith

in Lord Shiva. This Yatra holds not only religious and spiritual significance but also teaches one lessons of brotherhood, tolerance and hard work. He said, "I urge you all to enjoy this pilgrimage with a calm and composed mindset. Please cooperate fully with the police personnel in organising the Yatra.

If you encounter any minor difficulties during the journey, do not get angry. Instead, consider these challenges as part of your penance and address them with patience and dignity. Some anti-social elements

might try to create disturbances but do not be swayed by their provocations. Our police force is always ready to assist you in case of any problem or need." Kumar further stated that the Police department has made extensive arrangements to ensure the safety and convenience of Kanwadias. They must follow the instructions

of the authorities and report any suspicious activity to them immediately, he added.



## SDRF saves two Kanwadias from drowning in Ganga

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The rescue teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) saved two Kanwadias from drowning near two different Ghats in Haridwar on Monday. The officials informed that rescue teams of SDRF have been deployed at sensitive ghats in Haridwar for the safety of pilgrims during the Kanwar Yatra period. On the first day of the Yatra on Monday, a Kanwadia lost control at Kangra Ghat in Haridwar and was swept away by the strong current of the Ganga river while collecting holy water. The deployed SDRF personnel and expert divers

Ashiq Ali and Shivam noticed the man drowning and safely rescued him. Kanwadia was identified as Pawan Kumar (29), a resident of Rohtak, Haryana. Another incident occurred at Bairagi Camp where a person was being swept away by the river's current. However, he was safely rescued by the SDRF team members Ramesh Bhatt and Vijay Kharola who were present at the ghat. The man was identified as Girish Kumar (45). The officials said that though SDRF and authorities concerned have been deployed to help people in critical situations



near ghats, everybody must stay cautious during monsoon and avoid going too close to water bodies.

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Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Canara Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security interest Act, 2002 (Act. No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower/Surety/Owner/s as given below to repay the amount mentioned below within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice. The borrower/Surety/Owner/s having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Surety/Owner/s and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rules. <b>The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.</b> The Borrower/Surety/ Owner/s 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 <b>Canara Bank, Dehradun Clock Tower Branch</b> for the amount detailed below and interest together with expenses thereon.				
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1.	Branch: Dehradun Clock Tower Borrower: 1. Shri Deepak Kumar Gupta S/o Shri Ganga Sagar Gupta. Co-Borrower: Shri Rakesh Kumar Gupta S/o Shri Ganga Sagar Gupta.	Emt of Residential Property bearing part of khata no 1277 (Fasli year 1416-1421) khata no 740 min area 195.8 sqft or 18.12 sqmtrs which is all covered situated at Mauza Dehrahkhas Pargana Central Doon tehsil Dehradun, as per sale deed no. 6174 dtd. 14/07/2014 and all that residential property at khata no 325 (Fasli 1414 - 1419) Khasra No. 387 kha area 775 sqft. Or 72 sqmtrs, situated at Mauza Brahmanwala Pargana Central Doon, Dehradun, As per sale deed no 6173 dtd. 14/07/2014. Boundaries as per sale deed no. 6174 dtd 14.07.2014: East- Land of Sh. Mohan Lal Sharma, West- 25 ft wide road, North- Land of others, South- land of seller. Boundaries as per sale deed no. 6173 dtd 14.07.2014: East- Nala, West- 25 ft wide road, North- Land of seller, South- land of seller.	Date of Demand Notice 02.05.2024 Date of Possession notice 18.07.2024	Rs. 21,49,967.95 as on 03.05.2024 + interest w.e.f. 04.05.2024 + incidental Costs and Expenses less Recoveries after 03.05.2024 (If any)
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Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Canara Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security interest Act, 2002 (Act. No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower/Surety/Owner/s as given below to repay the amount mentioned below within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice. The borrower/Surety/Owner/s having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Surety/Owner/s and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rules. <b>The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.</b> The Borrower/Surety/ Owner/s 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 <b>Canara Bank, Patel Nagar Branch</b> for the amount detailed below and interest together with expenses thereon.				
S. No.	Branch & Name of the Borrower/Guarantor	Description of Immovable Property	Date of Demand & Possession Notice	Amount Outstanding
1.	Branch: Patel Nagar Borrower: Mr. Pappu Kumar S/o Soran Singh, Mrs Pramila W/o Pappu Kumar, & M/s Sunny Electronics Prop. Mr. Pappu Kumar S/o Soran Singh.	All The Residential Property Under Construction on the Land Bearing Khasra No. 235 (old Khasra No. 32) Measuring Area 900 sq Ft or 83.643 Sq Mts Situated At Mauza Barahmawala, pargana Central Doon, Dehradun. Boundaries: East - Land of Sh. Arjun S.M 30 Ft, West - Land of Smt Kamla Sharma S.M 30 Ft, North -20 Ft Wide Road, S.M 30 Ft, South -land of Smt Kamla Sharma S.M 30 Ft.	Date of Demand Notice 06.05.2024 Date of Possession notice 22.07.2024	Rs. 9,74,403.66 as on 15.04.2024 + interest w.e.f from 16.04.2024 + expenses -recoveries from 15.04.2024 (if any) in HL Loan ACCOUNT NO.5315619000015, Rs 13,07,122 As On 16.04.2024 + interest w.e.f 17.04.2024+ expenses - recoveries from 16.04.2024 (if any) in HL PLUS ACCOUNT NO. 164003508279, Rs 14,49,987.30 as on 30.04.2024 + interest from 01.05.2024 - recoveries from 30.04.2024 (if any) in ODC account No. 5315261000006 and Rs 4,06,360.84 as on 30.04.2024 + interest from 01.05.2024 - recoveries from 30.04.2024 (if any) in MSME TERM LOAN ACCOUNT NO. 17000992084,
Dated: 22.07.2024		Palace: Dehradun		Authorized Officer, Canara Bank

# Destination Uttarakhand

STRENGTHENING RURAL ECONOMY, PROMOTING LOCAL PRODUCE



Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are committed to the holistic development of our state, leveraging its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and immense potential. Through sustainable policies and strategic initiatives, we aim to foster economic growth, improve infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life for all our citizens. Our goal is to make Uttarakhand a model of progress, where tradition meets innovation, and every individual can thrive in a conducive environment for prosperity and well-being."

**Pushkar Singh Dhama**  
Chief Minister

## Uttarakhand's 'organic' tale of success

UOCB has played a vital part in the organic cultivation movement in India, setting up vast supply chains and developing the 'Organic Uttarakhand' brand

Formed on May 19, 2003, under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, the Uttarakhand Organic Commodity Board (UOCB) functions as the nodal agency for boosting organic farming in Uttarakhand. UOCB's mission is to help Uttarakhand develop as the organic capital of India, acquiring sustainable rural growth via organic agriculture methods.

The board's measures span farming and allied sectors, including horticulture, medicinal aromatic plants and herbs, and animal husbandry. UOCB is divided into four key wings: the Technical Cell, the Training Cell, the Certification Cell, and the Marketing Cell. The Technical Cell recognises groups inclined to embrace organic agriculture, forms farmer groups and creates cultivation techniques. The Training Cell furnishes farmers with the required aptitudes via demonstrations, training sessions, and different academic materials. The Certification Cell encourages organic certification for farms and stores, while the Marketing Cell promotes organic produce to B2B customers via exhibits and panels.

In recent years, UOCB's endeavours have demonstrated noteworthy outcomes. In 2019, farmers under UOCB's direction partook in 35 fairs and exhibits, yielding ₹28 lakh in sales and building a market worth ₹210 lakh. By 2020-21, despite the problems posed by the pandemic, farmers still partook in 11 fairs, achieving ₹8 lakh in sales and yielding a market worth ₹85 lakh.

UOCB has played a vital part in the organic cultivation movement in India, setting up vast supply chains and developing the 'Organic Uttarakhand' brand. Their offerings contain different grains and cereals like Dehradoni Basmati Rice, Pusa-1 Basmati, Red Rice, and wheat. The spice range includes bay leaf, black jeera, coriander, ginger, and turmeric. The pulses range includes black chickpeas, black gram, kidney beans, and lentils, along with millets such as barnyard millet and finger millet. Further, they offer apple juice, detergent powder, groundnut, herb oils, honey, mustard oil, soapnut, sugar, temperate fruits, and fresh vegetables.

Driven by the vision of PM Narendra Modi, the Uttarakhand government led by CM Pushkar Singh Dhama has undertaken various initiatives that promote and market the hill state's well-crafted products. A significant step in this direction is the formation of 'House of Himalayas', a flagship brand created to bring Uttarakhand's high-quality, genuine products to both domestic and global markets

## House of Himalayas Boosting rural economy of Uttarakhand



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama presenting 'House of Himalayas' brand products to PM Narendra Modi at GIS 2023, Dehradun

Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Uttarakhand is well-known for its beautiful landscapes, along with its rich treasure trove of organic and traditionally prepared products. Identifying the untouched potential of these products and the demand to strengthen rural livelihoods, the Uttarakhand government has been working actively by undertaking several schemes.

**ABOUT 'HOUSE OF HIMALAYAS'**  
On December 8, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi founded 'House of Himalayas' during the Global Investor Summit of Uttarakhand, marking it as an unparalleled initiative. This initiative sought to capsule various small-scale brands and products under one strong, cohesive identity. The purpose of House

of Himalayas is to improve the business opportunities of these unique products, which include goods made by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), crafters, individual entrepreneurs, and community-based societies.

The state boasts of a wide range of organic products that are nutritionally rich and have very little chemical impact. While a few private players exist, the majority of these products have not tapped into a broader consumer base. Therefore, House of Himalayas seeks to close this gap by offering a robust platform that ensures quality assurance, provides expert business guidance, and implements effective marketing strategies.

**KEY DIFFERENTIATORS OF HOUSE OF HIMALAYAS**  
**Superior Quality:** House of Himalayas

distinguishes itself with products that are known for their uncompromising quality and premium craftsmanship, which sets them apart from mass-generated alternatives.

**Authenticity Assured:** Focused on traditional methods and authentic experiences, the products under this initiative go through rigorous quality controls and hold certifications verifying their exceptional quality.

**Community Commitment:** Choosing House of Himalayas means supporting the local communities through meaningful social initiatives, and promoting positive change with every purchase.

**Open Sourcing:** The initiative prioritises complete transparency when it comes to sourcing materials and production processes, thus ensuring consumer trust.

**Sustainability Focus:** With sustainable sourcing and production practices, the brand caters to buyers who appreciate ethical consumption.

**Holistic Brand Experience:** A holistic experience is offered by enclosing compelling storytelling, educational insights, and immersive programmes that enhance every consumer journey.

**LAUNCH BY PM NARENDRA MODI**  
The launch of 'House of Himalayas' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated a noteworthy milestone in Uttarakhand's journey towards economic autonomy and rural advancement. At the Global Investor Summit, the Prime Minister

emphasised the brand's potential to promote Uttarakhand's products to meet international standards of quality. This initiative resonates with his vision of 'Vocal for Local, Local to Global', advocating for the global promotion of local products. By acknowledging the exceptional value of Uttarakhand's organic and traditional products, the Prime Minister highlighted the significance of empowering rural communities and building sustainable livelihoods.

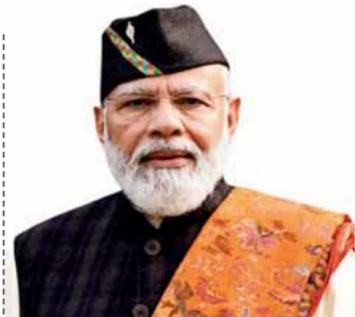
**CM PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMA'S E-COMMERCE PUSH**  
Yet another noteworthy action was taken to increase the visibility and accessibility of the state's products on July 5, 2024. The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhama, in association with Amazon India, initiated House of Himalayas into the e-commerce giant's platform. This initiative is aimed at



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama with Radhika Jha, secretary, rural development, and other officials, signing an MoU with an e-commerce platform for House of Himalayas

making the state's products available to a more expansive consumer base, both within India and the global markets.

At the launch event, held at the secretariat, CM Dhama bought local



I congratulate the Uttarakhand government on the remarkable progress achieved in the last few years. This has been made possible by sustained policy push and focus on key sectors such as tourism and renewable energy. Alongside, the state has made significant strides in infrastructure development, setting new benchmarks for sustainable growth. Uttarakhand's commitment to harnessing its natural resources and promoting tourism has not only bolstered its economy but also showcased its potential on the global stage. I applaud the state's dedication to inclusive development and look forward to its continued success in the years ahead.

**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

products, representing the state's loyalty to sustaining its own. He stressed that the primary objective of House of Himalayas is to take Uttarakhand's local products to an international level. The CM emphasised that most of the processing and production of these products is carried out by self-help groups, thereby strengthening the livelihood of women and rural communities.

Radhika Jha, secretary, rural development, highlighted the strategic categorisation of products under House of Himalayas. These comprise GI-tagged products, organic and food products, and scented products, each undergoing category-wise branding to improve their market presence.

## A step to promote local handloom & handicraft

The craftsmanship of Uttarakhand, embedded in age-old practices, has been a significant basis of livelihood for regional people for years

In the domain of conventional craftsmanship, Uttarakhand's handloom sarees maintain a unique position alongside well-known products from other states. The craftsmanship of Uttarakhand, embedded in age-old practices, has been a significant basis of livelihood for regional residents for years. Realising the prospect of this domain for further job prospects and financial evolution, the Uttarakhand government founded the Uttarakhand Handloom & Handicraft Development Council (UHHDC).

A registered society set up by the government, the UHHDC functions as the apex body for the overall growth of handlooms and handicrafts in the state. Its task is to encourage, direct, and manage the state's craftspeople, enabling sustainable work via the promotion of handicrafts. Under the reputed label 'Himadri', UHHDC has emerged as a hallmark of quality and genuineness for craft products stemming from Uttarakhand. The 'Himadri' label promises that buyers acquire authentic, handcrafted products,

while also assuring appropriate revenue for the crafters' hard work and talent. UHHDC's measures to facilitate Uttarakhand's handloom and handicraft products



spread far beyond the state. Beneath the Himadri brand, these magnificent products are showcased at prestigious occasions such as Craft Bazaars, Dilli Haat, International Trade Fairs, and the Surajkund Mela. Crafters from Uttarakhand have the chance to show their creations to a wider audience, earning praise and fondness for

their craftsmanship. Himadri showrooms are strategically situated in major places such as Dehradun, Uttarkashi, Haldwani, Haridwar, and Uttarakhand Sadan in New Delhi, assuring overall accessibility to these special products.

In addition to physical showrooms, UHHDC has developed a beneficial collaboration with the well-known e-commerce platform Amazon, extending the reach of Uttarakhand's handicrafts internationally. This alliance has resulted in the flourishing sale of handicraft products worth lakhs of rupees, garnering global praise and honour. Via this endeavour, craftspeople are furnished with a forum to showcase their skill to a global audience, assuring their art is valued and cherished on a multinational level.

As the nodal agency of the government, UHHDC diligently puts up multiple art fairs, exhibits, and promotional occasions throughout the year. These endeavours furnish crafters with a venue to exhibit their dexterities as well as play a vital part in maintaining and elevating Uttarakhand's rich cultural legacy.

PIC: DIPR, UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT



## Doon Silk: Empowering artisans, reviving tradition

Doon Silk is a label under the Uttarakhand Cooperative Silk Federation (UCRF) and is committed to maintaining and restoring the ancient silk-weaving customs of Uttarakhand

Highlighting the usage of natural fibers, Doon Silk is dedicated to protecting our surroundings and ecosystem while providing magnificent handloom products. The brand's offerings contain silk, wool, cotton, bichhua (nettle), and hemp, all selected for their minimal environmental effect.

Each Doon Silk product is a testament to the talent and artistry of Uttarakhand's farmers, reelers, weavers, craftspeople, and dyers. The label's detailed craftsmanship assures that each article maintains the highest measures of quality, gaining the confidence and respect of buyers globally. By concentrating on handloom methods, Doon Silk maintains conventional techniques as well as furnishes sustainable job prospects to more than 6,000 people in Uttarakhand.

Doon Silk's dedication to purity is depicted in its 100% natural fiber guarantee. This commitment to quality has helped the brand achieve a firm foothold in both national and global markets. With products such as silk sarees, coats, stoles, and shawls, Doon Silk caters to a myriad clientele, assuring that these timeless articles stay available at unbeatable costs. The global market has especially

adopted Doon Silk, with considerable exports to Europe and the US. The label's products have acquired overwhelming reactions, additionally fueling the need for Uttarakhand's conventional silk weaving. By selecting Doon Silk, buyers get excellent products and contribute to their minimal environmental effect.

In nature, Doon Silk is a crusade committed to maintaining legacy, encouraging sustainability, and empowering residents. By means of its uncompromising dedication to quality and custom, Doon Silk persists in making a deep mark, one beautifully prepared product at a time!

#ExploreUttarakhand



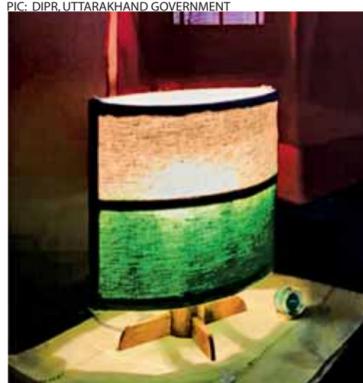
@DIPR\_UK

## Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board: Saga of Himalayan sustainability

PIC: DIPR, UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT

The Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board stands as a testament to nature's grace and sustainability, presenting a range of bamboo and nettle products that emphasise the best offerings of the Himalayan province. Among their beautiful innovations are bamboo and nettle lamps, carefully prepared by traditional crafters from Uttarakhand. These lamps, featuring tender cuts, splits, and complex weaves, are made using nettle fiber fabric obtained from the Himalayan foothills. The oval lamps emit a gentle, warm glow, effortlessly mixing natural radiance with grace, enriching any indoor area with their light.

Underscoring an eco-friendly and sustainable lifestyle, the board also offers a series of bamboo bottles. Each bottle is enveloped in a high-quality bamboo shell with a long-lasting stainless-steel interior, assuring



### Objectives and Vision

The primary objective of the ODTP scheme is to boost the traditional and craft industries of Uttarakhand. By identifying and developing local products, the scheme seeks to place these products on the national and international stage, thereby enhancing their marketability and economic value. This initiative aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of sustainable rural development, which emphasises the importance of promoting local products to spur economic growth

durable performance while reducing plastic waste. This sleek product flawlessly illustrates the synergy of fashion and sustainability.

The board's foray into eco-textiles is characterised by the introduction of Himalayan nettle, a unique natural fiber. Flourishing between heights of 1200 to 2900 meters in the temperate and sub-tropical Himalayas, this perennial plant presents manifold opportunities. Conventional apparel made from nettle fiber, which dates back thousands of years, is undergoing a revival. Nettle fiber fabrics, known for their intrinsic thermal characteristics, antimicrobial features, and resistance to wrinkling, redefine convenience and fashion.

The Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board helps the environment and sustainable living as well as empowers crafters and encourages marginal tribal communities through promoting nettle fiber products.

Text: Taresh Dutta

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

# CM presents appointment letters to 153 candidates selected through UKPSC

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami handed over appointment letters to 153 candidates selected through the Uttarakhand Public Service Commission (UKPSC) during a programme organised here on Monday. The candidates were selected by the commission for 68 posts of assistant professors in the Higher Education department, 63 posts of executive officers and 22 posts of tax and revenue inspectors under the Urban Development department. Speaking on the occasion, Dhami extended his congratulations to the candidates and emphasised that their role will involve serving as partners of the State government in serving the public. He highlighted the importance of fulfilling the responsibilities bestowed upon them with utmost dedication and honesty and expressed the need for everyone to contribute towards making Uttarakhand a model State. Dhami added that the selected individuals have reached their current positions through their hard work and the support of their parents and teachers. He further said that all individuals should discharge their duties with integrity and unwavering commitment within their respective fields. Dhami further expressed hope that those cho-



sen for roles in the Urban Development department will help expedite the city development projects with complete dedication, contributing to the State's progress. Dhami highlighted that the State administration will work to promptly fill the vacant positions in various departments in the near future.

Further, cabinet minister Dhan Singh Rawat said that under the leadership of CM Dhami, more than 15,500 youths have been appointed to government jobs over the course of three years. This year, appointments are expected to include 4,000 basic teachers, 1,600 LTs, 882 lecturers, about 622 principals and 1,500 block and cluster resource persons. A total of 11,000 individuals are slated to be appointed in the Education department. Additionally, the government is planning to appoint 1,500 nursing staff, 750 ANMs, 500 CHOs, 500 doctors, assistant professors for 378 medical colleges and candidates to 3,700 positions in Almora, Pithoragarh, Haridwar and Rudrapur medical colleges, he said.

"All the young people selected by the Uttarakhand Public Service Commission will become our qualified and competent officers shortly. Currently, there are 105 positions in the State and these young officers will play a crucial role in advancing urban development initiatives. The arrival of these candidates will expedite the department's work," said cabinet minister Prem Chand Aggarwal.

# Case registered against RTI activist for suicide threat on social media

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The police registered a case against local RTI activist Vikesh Negi in the Nehru Colony police station on Monday on charges of attempting to hinder and coerce public servants in the performance of their duties. The officials said that Negi had allegedly posted a threat to commit suicide on Facebook, alleging that the Uttarakhand police, police of Nehru Colony police station and other public servants were responsible for his plight in a land fraud case.

They informed that a case was registered against Vikesh Negi, Vinod Kumar and Rajendra Bhatt in connection with a land fraud incident in Nehru Colony police station on July 21. Following this, the accused Negi shared a post on Facebook allegedly claiming that

he was being troubled by the police and other officials of Nehru Colony police station.

The officials said that by sharing such a post, Negi aimed to obstruct and exert pressure on the Uttarakhand police and other public servants while they carry out their official duties. Considering this, the police registered another case against Negi on Monday under section 224 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at the Nehru Colony police station for attempting to hinder and coerce public servants in the performance of their duties.

The police are investigating the matter and will take further action accordingly, they added.

# Devotees throng city temples on first Somwar of Sawan

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Many devotees in Dehradun thronged the city's temples to offer prayers on the first Somwar of the auspicious month of Sawan, which commenced on Monday. Devotees believe that offering water to the Shivaling and fasting on Mondays during the month of Sawan brings merit. The famous Tapkeshwar temple in Dehradun saw a large number of devotees coming to offer prayers to Lord Shiva. A devotee Sunita Negi said that this month is considered especially auspicious by Hindus. She said that she fasts every Monday during this month and offers flowers, milk, water and Bel Patra as part of her prayers to Lord Shiva. Another devotee Vishnu Bhandari said that he visited the temple on the first Monday of Sawan barefoot. He also observed a fast for the well-being of his family. He said that he distributed Kheer Prasad on Monday at the temple to the devotees who had come to pray to Lord Shiva. A priest Suraj Dimri told this correspondent that the devotees, mostly women and unmarried girls, bring offerings including fruits, flowers and milk to Lord Shiva. He said that devotees started thronging temples early in the morning to offer their prayers to Shiva.

## CHANGE OF NAME

I, Taruna Issar W/o Late Shivaraj Naidu R/o H.No-3/3 Chander Road Van Vikas Nigam Dalanwala Dehradun Uttarakhand-248001 changed my name to Tarunna Naidu.

PD(613)A

## SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd., Plot No. 23, Shal Tower, 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Kamleshwar / Sidheshwar Singh/ Baljoti Devi/ LBROK00002382637/ LBDEH00003914443	House No-816, Ward No-7, Circular Road, South Civil Lines, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh- 251001/ July 20, 2024	March 18, 2024 RS. 8,46,050/-	Dehradun/ Muzaffarnagar/ Roorkee

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/guarantor(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: July 23, 2024  
Place: Dehradun & Roorkee

Sincerely Authorised Signatory  
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

# Sedentary lifestyle & obesity fuelling sleep apnea among individuals

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A combination of various factors including obesity, a sedentary lifestyle and lack of a proper sleep regime have led to the prevalence of sleep apnea among individuals, doctors here said. They have observed a steady rise in the number of people suffering from this condition over the years. Sleep apnea is characterised by individuals snoring loudly during sleep and experiencing excessive daytime drowsiness. Regarding this, doctors emphasised that adhering to a consistent sleep regime and seeking timely treatment can help individuals avoid experiencing the worsening effects of sleep apnea.

becoming increasingly common among people. He said that sleep apnea is a distinct condition that can lead to various negative effects on the body. Individuals with sleep apnea exhibit different behaviours during sleep, of which they are unaware but which their sleeping partners may notice. Aggarwal said that those with sleep apnea often experience excessive daytime sleepiness instead of restful sleep at night. As a result, sleep disturbances can trigger various issues like high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat and other health problems. He further said that sleep disorders, particularly apnea, are more prevalent among males than females nowadays. Factors such as obesity and irregular sleep patterns are identified as main causes of sleep apnea. To prevent this condition, Aggarwal emphasised

the importance of establishing a healthy sleep routine, which includes sleeping in one's own bed, refraining from using mobile phones at night and refrain from consuming alcohol, tea and coffee before bedtime. Senior physician at CMI hospital Dr Anshika Jain said that sleep apnea is rising among individuals. She said that she comes across sleep apnea patients on a weekly basis, noting that individuals who are obese or overweight tend to be more susceptible to the condition. Sleep apnea manifests through loud snoring and occasional breathing difficulties. Factors including a sedentary lifestyle, obesity and poor sleep hygiene contribute to the development of sleep apnea. To mitigate this, it is crucial for individuals to lose weight and seek timely medical consultation for treatment, she added.

# Sleep lab to commence functioning soon in GDMC

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In order to prevent cases of sleep apnea, a sleep lab will soon be operational at the Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) hospital. The medical superintendent, Dr Anurag Aggarwal, informed that the hospital administration had been planning to establish the sleep lab for a long

time, but due to the model code of conduct, the process took longer than expected. Recently, a sleep lab has been set up at the hospital premises. However, the sleep lab has not started functioning yet as only the necessary equipment has been set up, but there is no technician or spe-

cialised doctor to operate the machine. He further added that to address this, a proposal for hiring specialised doctors has been sent to the concerned authorities. It is expected that the appointment of a specialised doctor for the sleep lab will lead to the lab starting its operation, he added.

# Shri Venkateshwara University signs agreement with Republic of North Macedonia

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Shri Venkateshwara University has signed an agreement with the Republic of North Macedonia for a students and faculty exchange programme. According to the North Macedonian ambassador Slobodan Yojenov, there are considerable opportunities in the fields of health, nursing, architecture and tourism in North Macedonia. Following the agreement, the nation will work with the university for mutual progress.

Venkateshwara Group founder Sudhir Giri said that the university remains committed to ensuring a secure career to its students. Following this agreement, the university's students and faculty will get foreign exposure which will enhance the quality of their experience in higher education. The university has entered into

agreements with more than four dozen foreign universities and institutions by the academic session 2024-25. The university officials further informed that under this agreement, the students and senior faculty members from both the nations will work in health, nursing, architecture, tourism, research and development in the form of a joint venture.

# Bank of India to hold Samjhauta Day on July 26

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Bank of India, Dehradun zone, Shimla Bypass Road, will be organising Samjhauta Day on July 26 to settle the NPA loan accounts of borrowers under One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme at all its branches across the zone. The day is specially designed for the NPA borrowers who could not repay their loan in time due to distress in business/medical condition of the borrower or any other genuine reason. Officials said that the bank has special OTS schemes to settle small value accounts and mid-size accounts through which special and good discounts are offered to the borrowers whose accounts are NPA. The bank has appealed to all the borrowers whose accounts are NPA, to come forward to avail this opportunity by settling NPA loan accounts on Samjhauta Day.

**सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Central Bank of India** Regional Office Astley Hall, Rajpur Road, Dehradun

Appendix IV (See Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property))

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Central Bank of India, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of Powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice as mentioned against account stated here in to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notices. The borrowers/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rule on the dates mentioned against each account. 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 asset. The borrowers / Guarantors 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 Central Bank Of India, Respective Branch for the amount and interest thereon.

S. No.	Name of the Branch & Borrowers	Description of the Immovable Property	Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount
1.	<b>Branch: Roorkee</b> Borrowers: 1. Ms. Praveena W/o Praveen Kumar, Address: Vill Sherpur Kheilmou, Roorkee, Distt. Haridwar, Uttarakhand-247667, Sh. Praveen Kumar, Address: Vill Sherpur Kheilmou Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar/ Uttarakhand-247667, 3. Mr. Avanshi Sharma S/o Shri Ram Prakash Sharma (Guarantor) Address: Old Tehsil Nakli Chai Wali gali, Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar, Uttarakhand-247667	All that Part Commercial property in the name of Ms. Praveena W/o Sh. Praveen Kumar, situated at Vill- Sherpur Kheilmou, Pargana- Manglora, Teh.-Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar Uttarakhand- 247667, Area 495.74 sq.mtr. Boundaries as per Deed: North- Rasta 13 ft, South: Land of Sh. Mahendra, East: Plot of sh. Lalit Kumar, West: House of Sh. Janeshwar.	03.05.2024  Date of Possession 20.07.2024	Rs. 11,94,036.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)
2.	<b>Branch: Kotdwar</b> Borrowers: 1. Mr. Aravind Kumar S/o Budh Singh Address: 1. Grastanganj Po- Kumbhichor Koldwar Pauri Garhwal Uttarakhand Pin-246149 Address: 2. 111, Near Old Corporation Bank, Upper Tunawala Raipur Chaktonwala Grant, Dehradun- 248005, 2. Mr. Mahendra Singh S/o Lachchi Singh, (Guarantor) Address: 1. H.No.920 Grastanganj Po- Kumbhichor Koldwar Pauri Garhwal Uttarakhand- Pin- 246149	All that Part and parcel of Residential Land and Building in the name of Mr. Aravind Singh S/o Sh. Budh Singh bearing Vill- Kotdwara Gaon Patti Saneh Pargana- Khabar The Kotdwara Distt Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand -246149, Khata No. 04, Khet No. 24, Land Area 320 sq mtrs. Boundaries as per deed: North: Property of seller, South: Property Of Smt Deepa Devi, East: Vacant Land of Mr. Sadiq, West: 15' Wide Way.	06.03.2024  Date of Possession 20.07.2024	Rs. 31,74,787.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)
3.	<b>Branch: Kashipur</b> Borrowers: 1. Mr. Shubham Nayak S/o Shri Khemal Singh Nayak Himmatpur Block, Peerumdara, Tehsil Ramnagar, Distt- Nanital- 244715	Equitable Mortgage of Industrial Land Building Khata Kha -launi no 90, Khasra no. 131/1/1min, measuring area 92.93 sqmtr, Vill- Himmatpur Block, Peerumdara, Ram -nagar, Distt- Nanital- 244715, In the name of Shubham/ Nayak S/o Shri Khem Pal Singh as per sale deed no. 1510, Bagi no. 1, Jild no. 1372, pages 315-334, dated 08.06.2022 SRO Ramanagar. Boundaries of Property as per sale deed: East: Arazi Virender Singh, West: Arazi Virender Singh, North: Arazi Virender Singh, South: Rasta 15 ft.	01.05.2024  Date of Possession 17.07.2027	Rs. 15,92,959.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)
4.	<b>Branch: Kashipur</b> Borrowers: 1. Mohd Ilyas S/o Abdul Hameed Address: Near Chiddi Halwai Katoratal, Kashi -pur- 244713, 2. Mr. Vijay Kumar S/o Sh. Sampal Singh, (Guarantor) Address: Girtal Mandir Park Girtal, Kashipur U S Nagar- 244713	Equitable Mortgage of Residential Property bearing house no. 110, Katoratal Kashipur U S Nagar- 244713 in the name of Mr. Mohd Ilyas S/o Mr. Abdul Hameed as per sale deed bathi no. 1, Zild No. 1944, Pages 01-28 at sr. no. 8857, dt 18.11.2009, area measuring 69.70 sq mtr registered at SRO Kashipur. Boundaries of Property as per sale deed: East: Rasta, West: Rasta, North: Arazi Nasir Hussain South: Arazi Seller.	23.04.2024  Date of Possession 19.07.2027	Rs. 9,18,869.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)
5.	<b>Branch: Kashipur</b> Borrowers: 1. Mr. Mohd Shamsad S/o Abdul Salam, Address: 1. Ward 10, home 433, Moha -la thanasavik, Kashipur-244713, Address: 2. Khasra No.924 Min, Vill Balljuddi, Tehsil Kashi -pur U S Nagar- 244713, Co Borrower: 2. Mrs. Kamran Jahan W/o Mohd Shamsad, Address: 1. Ward 10, home 433, Mohalla thanasavik, Kashipur-244713, Address: 2. Khasra No.924 Min, Vill Balljuddi, Tehsil Kashipur U S Nagar- 244713, 3. Mr. Mohd Iqbal S/o Abdul Salam, (Guarantor) Address: Ward 10, Sissiqui Marriage Hall Thana Sabik Kashipur U S Nagar-244713	Equitable Mortgage of Residential Property bearing Arazi Khasra No. 924Min Mauza Balljuddi, Tehsil- Kashipur U S Nagar- 244713. In the name of Mr. Mod Shamsad S/o Mr. Abdul Salam & Mrs. Kamran Jahan W/o Mohd. Shams -had as per sale deed Bathi no. 1, Zild No. 3865, Pages- 251-268, at Sr. no. 4320 dt 30.04.2014 area measuring 62.732 sq mtr registered at SRO Kashipur, Boundaries of Property as per sale deed: East: 17 ft Rasta, West: Kabri -stan, North: Arazi sajid, South: Arazi Seller.	01.05.2024  Date of Possession 19.07.2027	Rs. 9,32,252.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)
6.	<b>Branch: Rudrapur</b> Borrowers: 1. Mr. Sandeep Kumar, Address: House No. 243, Malik Colony, Rudrapur, Distt Udhm Singh Nagar Uttarakhand Pin-263153, 2. Mr. Dashbandhu Kumar, Address: House No. 243, Malik Colony, Rudrapur, Distt Udhm Singh Nagar Uttarakhand Pin-263153, 3. Mrs. Savitri Devi, Address: House No. 243, Malik Colony, Rudrapur, Distt Udhm Singh Nagar Uttarakhand Pin-263153	All that Residential Land & Building in the name of Smt. Savitri Devi located at Khasra No. 25/1 Min, Village Ram -pura Malik Colony, Rudrapur, Distt Udhm Singh Nagar. Area 331.78 sq mtrs (as per title deed) Boundaries: North: House of Sukhwant Singh, South: Plot of Sharma Ji, East: 21' Wide Road, West: Land of Govind Ram.	20.04.2024  Date of Possession 19.07.2027	Rs. 22,65,029.00 + interest & expenses thereon (less if any payments made)

Date - 22.07.2024 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer, Central Bank Of India

**Canara Bank** (एन सी ई डी) Syndicate

**UNDELIVERED DEMAND NOTICE**

NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002.

The borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors mentioned below has availed credit facilities from Canara Bank, Shastrinagar Branch and secured by way of mortgage of under mentioned property. As the borrower / Co-Borrower / Guarantor failed to adhere to terms and conditions of respective loan agreements and had become irregular and classified as NPA as per RBI guidelines. The bank intends to enforce the said properties mortgaged by you and issued demand Notice under registered post / speed post which were not received. Hence this publication is issued. Hereby borrower / co-borrower / Guarantor are called upon to pay the amount mentioned below with contractual rate of interest, costs, charges etc thereon within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned will be constrained to initiate proceedings u/s 13(4) of the SARFAESI act against the mortgaged property mentioned below to realize the amount due to Canara Bank, Shastrinagar, Dehradun, Branch. Further you are prohibited U/s 13(13) of the said act from transferring the said secured asset either by way of sale / lease or otherwise. 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.

S. No.	Name of Branch/Borrower/Guarantor	Details of Mortgaged Property	Nature of Loan/s	Date of Demand Notice	Amount Due As Per Demand Notice
1.	<b>BRANCH: SHASTRINAGAR, DEHRADUN</b> Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Santosh Kumar Singh S/o Ram Dayal, Add. 1. E Block Lane No. 7 A Saraswati Vihar Dehradun, Uttarakhand-248001, Add. 2: Om City, 2nd Floor Phase-3, Near Mango Tree Mauza- Dehrakhas, Dehradun Uttarakhand.	All That Residential Property At Second Floor Constructed On Khasra No. 1443, Land Area 92.93 Sq Mts. Total Covered Area 892.60 Sq Ft. or 82.92 Sq Mts. Flat on 2nd Floor, 2bhk without Roof Rights, Om City, Phase 03, Near Mango Tree, Mauza Dehrakhas Pargana Central Doon-tehsil Dehradun, District- Dehradun, Uttarakhand, Boundaries - As Per Sale Deed: North- Property of Smt. Shivani Bansal, South- Property of Smt. Amit Pokriyal, East- 30 Ft Wide Road, West- Property of Shri Gurucharan Singh, As Per Actual Site: North- Balcony/parking Thanafer 25 Ft Wide Road (below), South- Common Corridor/staircase Thanafer, East- Flat of Mr. Dhraw Bhasin, West- House of Shri Sunil Kumar Thapliyal.	Housing Finance	17.07.2024  Date of Sending Demand Notice 16.07.2024	Rs. 33,55,614.86 as on 17.07.2024 + Interest w.e.f. 18.07.2024 + Expenses - Recoveries from 17.07.2024) In Account No. 2726619000981

Dated: 22.07.2024 Palace: Dehradun Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

# Three newly elected MLAs take oath in Himachal



PTI ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania on Monday administered oath to the three newly elected legislators, including Kamlesh Thakur, the wife of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. The oath ceremony was conducted inside the House in the presence of the chief minister, leader of the opposition, cabinet ministers and other members. The members who took oath included Congress MLAs Kamlesh Thakur from the Dehra assembly seat, Hardeep Singh Bawa from the Nalagarh seat and BJP legislator Ashish Sharma from the Hamirpur assembly constituency. With the induction of the three MLAs, the House is complete with 68 members and the strength of Congress has risen to 40 while BJP has 28 members in the legislative assembly. There is no independent MLA in the Vidhan Sabha for the first time in the history of Himachal Pradesh. Also, this is the first time a couple, CM Sukhu and his wife Kamlesh Thakur, are members of

the same House. The by-elections for the three seats — Dehra, Nalagarh and Hamirpur — were held on July 10 following the acceptance of the resignation of three independent MLAs, Hoshiyar Singh, K L Thakur and Ashish Sharma. The three independents along with six Congress rebels had voted in favour of the BJP nominee Harsh Mahajan in the Rajya Sabha polls held on February 27. On March 22, the three independent MLAs submitted their resignation and joined the BJP the next day. However, their resignation was accepted by the speaker on June 3. The three Independents were given tickets by the BJP from their respective seats but Ashish Sharma was the only MLA to retain his seats while the other two lost the by-polls to Congress rivals. Talking to the media persons here, CM Sukhu accused the BJP of hatching a conspiracy to destabilise the government by horse-trading. In his response, leader of opposition Jai Ram Thakur accused the Congress government of winning the by-polls by

misusing the official machinery. Sukhu hoped that the BJP would now shun the negative politics and cooperate with the government in pursuing the development agenda. "The people of the state have rejected the politics of toppling the elected government through money power and shown the mirror to the BJP," the chief minister said. The BJP forced the by-polls and created political turmoil and as a result, the government could not implement a developmental agenda after passing the budget due to implementation of a model code of conduct, he added. Reiterating the resolve of the state government to make the state self-sufficient, Sukhu said the Congress government was forced to raise loans to pay the interest and instalment of loans taken by the previous BJP government headed by Jai Ram Thakur. He claimed that due to prudent policies of the government, the financial condition of the state has improved by 20 per cent. Thakur said, "The BJP snatched the Rajya Sabha seat, Mandi Lok Sabha seat and three out of nine assembly seats increasing its tally in Vidhan Sabha to 28." "We accept the verdict of the people but the results would have been different if the three by-elections caused by the resignation of the Independent legislatures were held simultaneously with six bypolls and Lok Sabha polls," he said. Earlier, six assembly seats fell vacant following the disqualification of Congress rebels for defying the whip to vote in favour of the Congress during the budget. These Congress MLAs had also voted in favour of the BJP candidate in the Rajya Sabha polls.

# Dams in Karnataka filled to the brim due to torrential rain

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Most of the dams in Karnataka are filled to the brim, thanks to the torrential rains in the catchment areas of the major rivers for the past few days. The coastal and Malnad region in the Western Ghats have been receiving incessant rains for the past 15 days due to which many rivers originating from here are in spate. According to the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC), the inflow of water in the Cauvery basin was 98,577 cusecs while the outflow was 70,645 cusecs. The KSNDMC said the cumulative outflow since June 1, was 118.25 thousand million cubic (TMC) feet, while the outflow was 41.52 TMC ft. The Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam with a reservoir level of 124 ft presently has 123.2 ft water. As on Monday, the inflow was 60,016 cusecs and outflow 52,020 cusecs. Other dams in the Cauvery basin namely Harangi, Hemavathi and Kabini are also filled to the brim. The rains in the Cauvery basin have been received at a time when Karnataka was worried with the scanty rainfall and was gearing up for a legal battle with neighbouring Tamil Nadu. The Cauvery Water Regulation Committee had directed Karnataka to release



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

one TMC ft water to neighbouring Tamil Nadu till July-end. The Chief Minister convened an all-party meeting on July 14 saying that it will not be able to meet the direction and was preparing to approach the Cauvery Water Management Authority with a request that it will release 8,000 cusecs water and not 11,500 cusecs water, which is one TMC. After visiting the KRS Dam, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar who holds the Water Resources portfolio, said the CWRC had directed the state to release 20 TMC water starting from July 11 till month-end. "The rain God is merciful to us and Mother Cauvery is flowing gently. Already 30 TMC water has flown to Biligundlu in Tamil Nadu at the Karnataka border. Our dams are completely full and we are releasing water," Shivakumar said. e also said that 51,000 cusecs

water is being released to Tamil Nadu. In a normal year, we have to release 40.14 TMC ft of water. Karnataka will be able to release the requisite water to Tamil Nadu, Shivakumar said. This apart, channels will be opened to fill 1,657 tanks in the Cauvery basin. Dams in the Krishna river basin namely Bhadra, Tungbhadra, Ghataprabha, Malaprabha, Almatti and Narayanapura are almost filled up and water is being released from these dams. These six dams have a gross capacity of 422.45 TMC while on Monday there was a storage of 312.96 TMC. Last year, the storage was 129.59 TMC water on this day. Three hydel project dams Linganamakki, Supa and Varahi and Vani Vilas Sagar too are completely filled up. The major dams in Karnataka with a gross water holding capacity of 895.62 TMC have gross storage of 615.20 TMC.

# Telangana CM meets Cong top brass in Delhi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra HERE, and invited them to a public meeting in Warangal focused on the state's farm debt waiver programme. At the meeting, which comes close on the heels of the state government initiating the first phase of its loan waiver scheme on July 18, Reddy emphasised the symbolic importance of Warangal. Since the farm-loan waiver was promised by the Congress at a campaign rally in Warangal during the Assembly polls, the party's state unit plans to hold a public meeting there to highlight its implementation, sources said. They said the chief minister may also call on former Congress president Rahul Gandhi for the proposed public meeting at Warangal. The Telangana government has already credited Rs 6,098 crore to farmers' bank accounts, covering loans up to Rs 1 lakh in the initial phase. The scheme is set to unroll in three stages, with the second phase targeting loans up to Rs 1.5 lakh by July-end, and the final phase covering loans up to Rs 2 lakh in August. In a separate engagement, Reddy also met Union Jai Shakti Minister C R Patil, seeking central funds for the Musi River Beautification Project.

# Woman to get ₹5 lakh compensation 20 years after needle left in her body after surgery

PTI ■ BENGALURU

A Bengaluru based woman has been awarded a compensation of Rs five lakh by a consumer forum, nearly 20 years after a 3.2 centimetre surgical needle was left in her body following her surgery at a private hospital here. The Karnataka State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has directed the hospital and two doctors to pay Padmavathi, a resident of Jayanagar, Rs 50,000 as litigation expenses. It has also directed New India Assurance Co Ltd, which had issued a policy covering the hospital expenses, to pay her Rs five lakh for "the professional and medical negligence caused." The then 32-year-old woman underwent the surgery on September 29, 2004 at the Deepak Hospital, with the two doctors allegedly performing the



hernia operation. On completion of the surgery, her appendix was also removed, according to the Commission's order last month. Immediately, on the next day, she complained of severe pain for which she was prescribed some pain killers and assured that it is post surgery discomfort and

that it will get cured. She suffered acute stomach and back pain for several years and was also admitted in the same hospital twice later, the order noted. Padmavathi later approached another private hospital here in 2010 and during a scan, it was noticed that some foreign body existed in the abdominal

and back portion of her body and it was suggested to her to get it (surgical needle) removed. She then underwent surgery and the 3.2 cm surgical needle was removed following which she approached the consumer forum with a complaint the following year. The forum noted that the complainant was aged about 32 years, when she underwent all these surgeries and removal of the surgical needle. "Definitely she suffered severe pain and inconvenience till removal of the surgical needle," the order stated. Hence, she is entitled to get "global compensation" of Rs five lakh and the insurance company (New India Assurance Company Limited) is directed to pay the amount while the two doctors are liable to pay litigation expenses of Rs 50,000 to the complainant, it further added.

# Rain pummels Vidarbha, more than 700 houses damaged, villagers evacuated

PTI ■ NAGPUR

More than 700 houses were damaged, and several roads were inundated as rains pummelled Maharashtra's Vidarbha over the weekend, and intermittent spells continued in the region on Monday. In Chandrapur, seven gates of the Irai Dam were opened by one metre as incessant showers lashed the district in the morning. According to officials, 740 houses were damaged, particularly in villages in Chandrapur, in the last 48 hours. Water entered houses in Chichpalli village in Chandrapur after the retaining wall of a nullah developed cracks. At least 33 roads were blocked due to waterlogging in Gadchiroli district, and five were gradually opened as water started receding in the morning, officials said.



More than 100 people were evacuated from Asgaon (Paoni tehsil), Opara and Dholsar villages in Lakhandur tehsil of Bhandara district on Sunday night and shifted to temporary shelters. Heavy rains pounded Paoni and Lakhandur for more than two hours, resulting in

waterlogging, and residents were in danger, district disaster management officer Abhishek Naamdas said. A district search and rescue team evacuated villagers and sent them to temporary shelters, the official said. As a preventive measure, the SDRF is on standby, and collector Yogesh

Kumbhejkar was monitoring the situation, it was stated. The weather department has issued orange and yellow alerts for the region, warning of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning at a few places in Nagpur, Wardha, Chandrapur and Amravati for the next two to five days. According to the regional meteorological centre, Nagpur recorded 43 mm rainfall in 24 hours ending 8.30 am on Monday. The department has forecast thunderstorms with lightning and light to moderate rainfall at isolated places over Wardha, Nagpur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Gondia and Chandrapur districts. The Regional Meteorological Centre has issued an orange alert for Bhandara and Gondia for Monday and a yellow alert for Nagpur, Wardha, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Amravati, Akola, Yavatmal and Buldhana.

# Nipah: Contact list of deceased boy updated, more tests being conducted

PTI ■ KOZHIKODE

The number of people at risk for contracting Nipah in the contact list of the 14-year-old boy who lost his life to the rare infection, has been increased to 350, out of which 101 are in the high-risk category, Health Minister Veena George said on Monday. The Kerala Health Department is waiting for the test results of 13 people, whose samples were sent to the Kozhikode Medical College virology laboratory and the Advanced Virology Institute at Thiruvananthapuram for testing. "Out of the samples sent for testing, six of the persons have symptoms. Three of them are on the secondary contact list. Even though the parents of the deceased boy do not have symptoms, we have sent their samples also for testing to rule out all possibilities," she said. The health department said two of the persons on the contact list are from Palakkad, while four are from Thiruvananthapuram. The two from Palakkad are working in a private hospital, while the four from Thiruvananthapuram have



reached Perinthalmanna for treatment. The minister added that the friends of the deceased child have informed them that he had consumed a fruit from a nearby property in Pandikkad panchayat, where the presence of bats has been detected. The 14-year-old boy from Kerala's Malappuram who was under treatment here for Nipah infection died on Sunday morning. Minister George said counselling will be given to the friends of the deceased child to help them cope with his loss, and that their classes will be held online. The department has released a detailed route map of the boy's movements and has asked the people who are suspected to have come into contact with him to contact the health department and seek treatment.

# Karnataka Govt to issue guidelines to malls following denial of entry to farmer due to his attire

PTI ■ KARNATAKA

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday said the government will issue guidelines to malls and other establishments, in the wake of a farmer being denied entry because of his attire. The government on July 18 ordered closure of the G T World mall here for seven days after the incident, which drew strong condemnation from members cutting across party lines in the Legislative Assembly. It had also termed the alleged insult to the farmer as

infringement of "dignity and self respect" of an individual, and said it cannot be tolerated. "There had been discussion last week in the Assembly over a farmer from a village being denied entry into a mall owing to his attire -- wearing a 'panche' (dhoti) -- which is our cultural attire. Following the incident, orders were issued for its closure. We have also decided to issue guidelines in this regard, whether it is a mall or any other place -- small or big. 'Panche' is part of our culture," Shivakumar told the Assembly on Monday.

He said: "notice was issued to the mall for its closure; they also had some tax dues, we have taken a written explanation from them and also apology. They (mall) have also given a cheque to pay the tax dues. To ensure that such incidents don't repeat anywhere in the state, we will issue guidelines." "The mall had tax dues to the tune of Rs two crore; they had paid in between; some amount was pending to be paid for which July 31 was the last date; we have taken cheque from them and we are allowing them (to operate)," Shivakumar added.

The incident reportedly happened on July 16 when septuagenarian Fakeerappa from Haveri district visited the mall along with his wife and son to watch a movie at a multiplex. Fakeerappa was reportedly wearing white shirt and 'panche' (dhoti), and the security staffer at the mall allegedly told him and his son that he won't be allowed inside in a 'panche', and to "wear trousers and come." JD(S) floor leader C B Suresh Babu requested the Deputy Chief Minister to bring private clubs too under the guidelines.

# Mahayuti allies free to go solo in elections to local bodies: Ajit

PTI ■ PUNE

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has said the Mahayuti constituents, including the NCP led by him, are free to contest local bodies elections independently. Addressing Nationalist Congress Party workers in Pimpri Chinchwad city on Sunday, he argued that independent contests would help strengthen the cadres. "Even though we are allies in Lok Sabha and state assembly, Mahayuti members are free to contest local bodies polls independently," he said. The schedule for elections to local bodies, which include municipal councils, nagar panchayats and zilla parishads, is not yet announced.

The ruling Mahayuti alliance includes Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, BJP, and the NCP led by Ajit Pawar. Notably, Ajit Pawar's assertion on going solo in the local bodies elections came days after a Marathi weekly linked to the RSS blamed Ajit Pawar-led NCP's alliance with BJP for adverse public sentiments against the saffron party, leading to the BJP's Sabha polls in Maharashtra. The report said BJP members and other individuals expressed disapproval of the party's decision to join forces with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), which became an ally in the Shiv Sena-BJP government in the state in July 2023. Meanwhile, Ajit Pawar denied stopping his estranged uncle and Rajya Sabha

member Sharad Pawar from speaking at a Pune District Planning and Development Committee (DPDC) meeting held on Saturday. Baramati MP Supriya Sule had claimed that Ajit Pawar had objected to her father asking questions about the disbursement of development funds at the meeting. She claimed Ajit Pawar had cited a GR (Government Resolution) and said MPs and MLAs cannot ask questions about fund disbursement or vote during these meetings as they are only invitees. Sharad Pawar had attended the meeting in his capacity as a Rajya Sabha member. Clarifying his stand, Ajit Pawar said, "Supriya Sule yesterday claimed that I had insulted Pawar saheb. How can I do this to a person for whom I have high respect".

# More than 200 mm rainfall in several areas of Mumbai over 24 hours, NDRF teams deployed



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Several locations in Mumbai received over 200 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours leading up to 8 AM on Monday, with the intense rain in the morning briefly disrupting local train services during the rush hour between Kalyan and Thakurli stations, causing delays. Some areas received up to 34 mm of rainfall in just one hour between 6 AM and 7 AM. The civic body claimed its Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) located across the city recorded more than 200 mm of rainfall at multiple locations in the last 24 hours ending at 8 AM. Three teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in Mumbai to tackle any situation amid the forecast of a high tide and moderate to heavy rains in the city and its suburbs, officials said.

In its latest forecast for the next 24 hours starting at 8 AM on Monday, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted "moderate to heavy rain in the city and suburbs", according to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). A high tide of 4.59 meters is expected at 12.59 PM, the BMC stated. Malabar and Mulund Hill recorded 34 mm of rainfall between 6 am and 7 am, followed by Bhandup with 29 mm, Wadala East with 24 mm, and Versova with 20 mm. The city recorded significant rainfall in various locations, with the highest measurement of 241 mm reported at the AWS station in Trombay, Mankhurd. Other notable rainfall figures include 224 mm at Nutan Vidyamandir in Mankhurd, 223 mm at Nadkarni Park in Wadala, and 215 mm at the 'N' Ward Office in Bhandup, according to the BMC.





## FIRST COLUMN THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

It can liberate the mind from perpetual conflict and lead to inner peace



RAVI VALLURI

Recall the iconic lines, of Amitabh Bachchan in the movie Deewar — looks intently at the idol of Lord Shiva and says, “Bahut khush hoga tum!” Bachchan, in the movie, essayed the role of an atheist smuggler. However, eventually, in the final stages of his life, he surrenders to the Supreme Power and seeks forgiveness. True enlightenment is the art of living compassionately. The human mind and heart reach a point of inflexion where an act of pardon remains an inescapable reality.

A prosaic individual might not be able to separate the chaff from the grain. His mind is full of antipathetic thoughts that he cannot transcend the barrier and is unable to exonerate anyone who has inflicted pain or hardship on him. The mind, full of gloom-ridden and obstructive thoughts cannot perceive the divinity in others. It remains perpetually in a state of conflict. Such an emotionally distraught person would castigate even angelic and divine figures out of callowness. Several organised and structured religions lay prominence on the art of forgiveness. If an individual does not rise to the sublime spheres of compassion and forgiveness, then he gets trapped in the whirlpool of cause and effect. The unabated Karmic cycle continues without any resolution.

The pivot is to fortify and protect the human mind to make it robust and compassionate. It attempts to extricate the self from the cause and effect of actions and even non-actions. Action and non-actions of humans indeed leave an indelible impression on the human mind. It would be perspicacious to pose as to how non-actions are also a kind of Karmic activity and in what manner it impacts the human mind and consciousness. Non-action in a way represents not taking up the gauntlet. Sage Ashtavakra, who authored the treatise, Ashtavakra Gita, posits a theory that an individual should break the bondage of guilt and anger to invoke the grace of remission. There is a poignant Zen story that explains the exemplary tenets of compassion and forgiveness. Aeon ago a Zen Master summoned his tutees in a Temple of Knowledge and asked them if they harboured the antipathetic emotion of hatred in their minds. “Yes!” exclaimed the disciples. The Master directed his disciples to place a potato each



in their bag and always travel with it as a reminder that despite the practice of meditation and breathing exercises their prana level was not high enough to expatriate hatred and inculcate compassion. The number of potatoes was to increase depending on the quantum of anger and would be directly proportional to the antipathy in their minds. Some young monks ended up carrying a bagful of potatoes, which over a period became malodorous. In sheer exasperation, the harried disciples sought refuge in the grace of the master to dispense away with the bag. The Zen Master guffawed and chided his students to abandon the negative trait of abhorrence from their minds, lest the malodour of these traits become a burden all through their lives. To lead a warm and healthy life, individuals should embark upon the path of forgiveness and compassion.

This suffuses the mind with immense strength and courage of conviction. It would be insightful for any individual to make positive affirmations, reinforcing love for every animate and inanimate object to build a divine society. Such affirmations would train the mind to remain unruffled and spread the quintessential gospel of forgiveness. Thereby humans would truly embrace fellow beings. If we construe the human mind to be the hardware, compassionate thoughts and forgiveness are part of non-negotiable software.

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

# A blueprint for boosting rural economic growth

India's rural sector stands at a pivotal juncture, poised for transformation through small-scale and green enterprises. It has potential to become India's growth engine



MONICA B SOOD



India's rural sector must be transformed for inclusive growth and sustainable development. This change relies on small-scale and green enterprises to boost the rural economy, empower women, and employ unskilled workers. By channelling resources such as the extra Rs 1 lakh crore RBI dividends into capital projects and innovative schemes, India can foster self-sustainability in rural areas, mitigate youth distress, and rejuvenate the demand side of the economy.

This comprehensive approach not only addresses immediate employment needs but also lays the foundation for long-term capital formation and environmental preservation.

### Incorporation of small-scale and green industries as the engine of growth

Micro enterprises have always been the backbone of the Indian agriculture-based economy. These labour-intensive enterprises perfectly capture the unskilled and semi-skilled manpower from the farming communities, therefore, creating employment and improving existence standards without much training. The development of these industries generates a massive multiplier effect on the creation of other business lines that support them and the general economy. Green industries are therefore leading this change. Encompassing renewable energy, organic farming, and sustainable manufacturing, these sectors offer dual benefits: employment opportunities for production and environmental management.

The establishment of green industries in the rural region targets to solve social problems like climate change and environmental degradation and at the same time create a sustainable means of living. This was done by allowing biogas and biofuel plants, solar energy farms, Ayurvedic and Unani medicine industries, and cooperative organic farming. These measures create employment, lessen the dependency on fossil energy and foster the preservation of the environment.

**Women empowerment** Out of the total rural population of India, the female population is about 30% which is a great unexplored talent pool. It is shown the pro-



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN INDUSTRIES IN THE RURAL REGION TARGETS TO SOLVE SOCIAL PROBLEMS LIKE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND AT THE SAME TIME CREATE A SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF LIVING

motion of employment and entrepreneurship in these women brings substantial socio-economic returns. Micro and sustainable industries remain essential in empowering women since they create employment, skills development, and business opportunities for women. Self-help groups, women-based cooperatives and micro enterprises are the best way to ensure women's productive participation in the rural economy. These initiatives exist in areas where women dominate including handcrafting, production in textiles, manufacturing of alternative/Ayurvedic products, processing of raw materials, farming organically, milk production, and food processing. Credit, training, and market linkages also enable women to set up and expand their businesses besides improving on household incomes and community development.

**Public private partnerships** A Channel for Facilitating PPP for Rural Development PPP is a powerful platform for pooling resources and skills to promote rural development. Thus, PPP models can initiate the development of small and green industries in rural areas with the support of the government and private investors. The government can provide policy support and an environment for development and financial backing while the private players bring in funds, technical expertise, and managerial skills. As per this model, to encourage rural development, a part of ?1 lakh crore RBI dividends can be spent to co-finance with private entities. It can be used to fund the development of industrial clusters, renewable energy projects, and training institutions with efficient implementation and compliance with social and environmental responsibility.

### Capital formation and rural employment

These are two basic objectives of

the growth process that need to be understood and analysed. To sum up, the provision of ?1 lakh crore RBI dividends for capital investments in the form of sustainable rural development plans provides a strong base. Construction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, renewable energy facilities, and development of industrial estates can offer employment in the short run as well as in the long run spur economic development. A targeted investment can engage millions annually, thus erasing rural unemployment and distress to a large extent. In this way, employment of non-skilled and semi-skilled people from rural areas is possible, and thus future generations are protected from unemployment migration to urban areas, and rural-urban disparity. The placement of rural youth through placement in local schools, hospitals, and government offices helps in the tackling of manpower issues leading to improved service delivery and welfare of the populace.

### Funding rural transformation

Funding the strategic rural development agenda calls for out-of-the-box funding acquisition strategies to tap several sources of funds. To the Rs 1 lakh crore RBI dividends, contributions from CSR, and own finances of panchayats and municipalities, and specific cess on fuel, income tax, and GST can be added. For example, the mandatory 25% contribution from CSR funds can be used to direct corporate money into rural development causes. While a 0.5% cess on luxury items, cars, aeroplane fares and GST can fetch a huge additional amount. However, it revealed that additional resources can be mobilized from the Skill Development Schemes (SKS) and hospital's SKS funds for support of wages in essential sectors. The introduction of a small cess on share trading can also produce a fairly good revenue for such

a scheme in turn funding the rural employment programme permanently.

### Addressing rural unemployment

At the moment, unemployment has touched the figure of 8% in India. 1 per cent of the nation's unemployed populace is comprised of rural youth. If PM wants to bring the unemployment rate down to 6% and this is considered nearly equal to the employment rate observed in the developed countries, the scheme should ensure employment generation for at least 1 crore rural youth. The scheme should aim at offering low-wage employment to the increase in unemployment among the rural youthful population while at the same time ensuring that such employment offers incentives to make the youth stay in their given community without competing for skilled employment opportunities. This way the scheme means setting wages at ?10,000 per month with 80:20 work distribution will sustain rural households' income and at the same time does not hinder organised labour employers markets.

### A Roadmap to rural rejuvenation

Additional Rs1 lakh crore of RBI dividends coupled with idea capitalisms as sources of funding open the doors of a scheme that has the potential of providing a road map for rural rejuvenation. As a result, the small-scale industries, green industries, women and unskilled rural labour can make the scheme self-sustainable, reduce unemployment and bring a long-lasting impact on the environment. PPP and the focus on capital development will help the scheme to be sustainable and grow in scale, thus painting a better picture for rural India.

(The writer is Chairperson of the National Unity & Security Council; views are personal)

# Bihar again misses out on Olympic representation

Bihar's chronic issues in sports infrastructure, funding mismanagement, and administrative neglect continue to hinder its representation on the global stage

Bihar is bereft of a berth in the Olympics again.

By Gyan Bhadra The last week of this month is going to witness the glistening inaugural ceremony of the Olympic games of 17-days duration in Paris. In its wake sports pundits in India are preempting and counting on their fingers the medal tally Indian athletes will bag for the country. However, at the time of writing this piece, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs had put its imprimatur on the list of 117 athletes along with 140 supporting Staff. Now the question crops up: Is there any athlete from Bihar representing India in the Paris Olympics? The answer is a resounding “no”. As in the Tokyo Olympics; so in the



GYAN BHADRA

Paris Olympics, there is no representation of Bihar's sportsmen. The reasons behind it are threefold. One, as far as sports infrastructure in Bihar is concerned, there is a lack of an adequate number of stadiums, sports-related training centres and the ablest guidance of coaches. The reasons could be attributed to the fact that government investment in the sports sector is abysmally low. Even central financial

assistance given to the Bihar government to the tune of 50.83 crores as part of the “Kheelo India” scheme was seemingly not utilised for either the development of infrastructure or the honing of skills of athletes in the state.

The patterns of allocation of funds to the sports sector are depressingly alarming. It has been observed that money meant for the overall growth of the sports sector is diverted as per the whims and fancies of politicians.

This invariably puts a toll on the sports industry which finds itself in a quandary and struggling always. Two, it goes without saying that the association of politicians with prominent sports bodies is an age-old pastime.



Every politician worth its salt desires to be a member of sports bodies. Whether it be BCCI or sports bodies at the state level, every political leader wants to usurp icing on the cake of huge funds invested in the sports bodies then how could Bihar be left behind? Instead of being deeds heroes, espousing the

cause of sports development in Bihar, politicians, once getting a coveted position in sports bodies, exploit available resources to serve their ends.

Public memory is short. But not so painfully short that it will forget the fact that former Chief Minister Lalu Yadav, when, at the helms of Bihar Cricket Association as President, did not do enough in the realm of training budding talents of Bihar. The lack of Lalu's political will to promote cricket could be gauged by the fact that during his tenure as BCA president, no cricket player from Bihar had got a berth even in the Ranji Trophy squad; what to talk of big league matches at an international level. Now

sports pundits may arguably put a contention that during Lalu's tenure as BCA president, Bihar did not have a State Ranji Team as partition of Bihar caused losses to Bihar concerning sports facilities. Jharkhand carried takeaways of a major chunk of sports facilities with itself. However, taking refuge in this excuse by sports pundits held no water for scores of young cricket players then. This is more so because, during that period, RJD was led by Rabri Devi at the helm of state affairs; and Lalu could have done a lot about setting up a proper state Ranji Team and appointing the ablest coaches to train state's cricket players. Three, the role of the Bihar

Olympic Association (BOA) in preparing athletes for the Olympic games leaves much to be desired. Going by records, BOA officials do not take the trouble to organise events and trials for grooming athletes to the level of world-level Olympic games. So it springs no surprise that no athlete from Bihar had figured in the list of 117 athlete-member teams for the Paris Olympics. What is worse, there is a blame game between BOA and the state government over this sorry state of sports affairs. BOA puts the onus on the state government for sheer negligence about the lack of infrastructure and trained coaches. This results in BOA finding itself unable to organise

events at regular intervals. On the other hand, the state government absolves itself of essential responsibilities about BOA by saying that BOA is an independent entity and the government cannot interfere with its functioning.

In this ongoing war of attrition, budding talented athletes are the losers. Eventually, it could be summed up that the scheme “Medal Lao, Naukri Pao” may seem to be alluring to a large number of youth at first glance. However, due to the lack of necessary sports wherewithals in Bihar, the scheme would not cut much ice with scores of young talents.

(The author is a columnist, views are personal)

# World leaders thank Biden for his 'global leadership'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

World leaders on Monday thanked him for his bold steps and global leadership during challenging times. Biden on Sunday announced that he is exiting the 2024 presidential race and backed his deputy Kamala Harris to be the Democratic Party's presidential candidate in the November 5 election. In a post on X, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he respects President Biden's decision and looks forward to working together for the remainder of his term.

"I know that, as he has done throughout his remarkable career, he will have made his decision based on what he believes is best for the American people," said Starmer, who met with Biden this month in Washington. Former UK prime minister Rishi Sunak said in a post on X that he saw Biden's "love for America and dedication to service" firsthand while working with him. He also outlined some achievements between



Patricia Greene, of Washington, is photographed holding a sign thanking President Joe Biden near the White House in Washington, Sunday, July 21, 2024. Biden dropped out of the 2024 race for the White House on Sunday, ending his bid for reelection following a disastrous debate with Donald Trump that raised doubts about his fitness for office just four months before the election. AP/PTI

the US and the UK. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in a post on X thanked Biden for his "leadership and ongoing service." "The Australia-US Alliance

has never been stronger with our shared commitment to democratic values, international security, economic prosperity and climate action for this and future generations," he said.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau thanked Biden for being a "partner to Canadians - and a true friend." "I've known President Biden for years. He's a great man, and everything he does is guided by his love for his country. As President, he is a partner to Canadians — and a true friend. To President Biden and the First Lady: thank you," Trudeau posted on X along with a photograph of him with Biden.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said, "I refrain from commenting directly on this issue because it involves domestic politics in the US but I recognise that President Biden's decision is based on his desire to make the best possible political decision."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said his country is grateful to President

Biden for his "unwavering support" for its fight for freedom, which, along with strong bipartisan support in the United States, has been and continues to be critical.

"Many strong decisions have been made in recent years and they will be remembered as bold steps taken by President Biden in response to challenging times. And we respect today's tough but strong decision," he said on X.

Zelensky said Ukraine will always be thankful for Biden's leadership. "He supported our country during the most dramatic moment in history, assisted us in preventing Putin from occupying our country, and has continued to support us throughout this terrible war," he said. Taking to X, Israeli President Isaac Herzog described Biden as a "true ally of the Jewish people" and thanked him for his friendship and steadfast support for the Israeli people over his decades-long career.

"As the first US President to visit Israel in wartime, as a

recipient of the Israeli Presidential Medal of Honor, and as a true ally of the Jewish people, he is a symbol of the unbreakable bond between our two peoples. I send him, @FLOTUS Jill Biden, and all his family, my warmest wishes from Jerusalem," Herzog wrote.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant in a post on X said the US president's "steadfast backing, especially during the war, has been invaluable."

The Biden administration has been one of the biggest supporters of Israel's war in Gaza since Hamas' October 7 attacks last year. But he has increasingly clashed with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over humanitarian aid and the mounting civilian death toll of the conflict.

Netanyahu, who is expected to visit Washington this week, has not yet given any statement on Biden's decision to withdraw from the presidential race. Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris called Biden "a proud American with an Irish soul," and thanked him for his "glob-

al leadership" and "friendship". In a post on X, Ireland Foreign Minister Micheal Martin said he heard the news "with both sadness & admiration", describing Biden as an "abiding friend of Ireland". Martin said Biden provided "invaluable support for peace & prosperity on this island" and wished him the best.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said in a post on X that "Biden has dedicated his life to public service, and that is something that deserves much respect." He thanked Biden for his "commitment to New Zealand" and said he looks "forward to working with him for the remainder of his presidency."

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk wrote on X that Biden had made difficult decisions "thanks to which Poland, America and the world are safer, and democracy stronger." "I know you were driven by the same motivations when announcing your final decision. Probably the most difficult one," Tusk said.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro at a rally on Sunday said Biden made the "correct" decision and put his family and health first. He wished him "health and a long life." South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's office said it does not wish to comment on domestic political situations in other countries, but added that the South Korean government "will continue to work closely with the US to further develop the South Korea-US global comprehensive strategic alliance". Biden's decision to nominate Harris, who is of both Indian and African origin, follows weeks of intense pressure from fellow Democrats after his disastrous presidential debate performance against his Republican rival and former US president Donald Trump last month.

"Today I want to offer my full support and endorsement for Kamala to be the nominee of our party this year. Democrats - it's time to come together and beat Trump. Let's do this," Biden said in a post on X.

# Parts of Gaza humanitarian zone to be evacuated

AP ■ DEIR A-BALAH

The Israeli military ordered the evacuation Monday of part of a crowded area in the Gaza Strip it had designated a humanitarian zone, saying it is planning an operation against Hamas militants there.

Thousands of Palestinians, many carrying backpacks and accompanied by children, walked down dusty roads under the scorching sun, navigating dilapidated cars with belongings tied on top. Many Palestinians have been uprooted multiple times in search of safety during Israeli's air and ground campaign. "We do not know where we are walking," said Kholoud Al Dadas, as she clutched her children. "This is our seventh or eighth time we have been displaced. While we were sleeping in our homes, they started shooting at us, bombing from everywhere." Moments later, she collapsed in exhaustion.

The Israeli military said it is planning to begin an operation against Hamas militants who have embedded themselves in the area and used it to launch rockets toward Israel. The area



Israeli Police and ZAKA emergency service work at the scene of an attempted stabbing attack at the entrance to Netiv HaAsara, near the Gaza border in southern Israel on Monday. AP/PTI

includes the eastern part of the Muwasi humanitarian zone in the southern Gaza Strip. Earlier this month, Israel estimated at least 1.8 million Palestinians are now in the humanitarian zone it declared, covering about 14 kilometres (8.6 miles) along the Mediterranean. That's the bulk of Gaza's 2.3 million population.

Much of the area is blanketed with tent camps that lack sanitation and medical facilities and have limited access to aid, UN and humanitarian groups say. Families live amid mounds of trash and streams contaminated by sewage.

Gaza's Health Ministry said the toll from Israel's nine-

month war against Hamas in Gaza has surpassed 39,000 Palestinians killed and 89,800 wounded. The ministry's count does not distinguish between combatants and civilians. The war began with an assault by Hamas militants on southern Israel on October 7 that killed 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took about 250 hostages. About 120 remain held, about a third of them believed to be dead, according to Israeli authorities.

Delicate negotiations continued for a cease-fire and hostage release, with US and Israeli officials expressing hope that an agreement was closer than ever. A negotiating team will be sent to continue talks on Thursday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said. Egypt, Qatar and the United States are pushing Israel and Hamas toward a phased cease-fire deal that would stop the fighting and free the hostages.

Netanyahu left Monday on a much-anticipated trip to the United States to meet with President Joe Biden, who on Sunday said he would not seek another term, and address

Congress. Netanyahu said that regardless of who becomes the next US president, "our enemies must know that Israel and the United States stand together tomorrow and always." He said he will thank Biden for more than 40 years of friendship, while pushing him for more support on certain issues.

The Israeli military said it was continuing to operate in central and southern Gaza. At least 38 people were killed in the southern city of Khan Younis, according to hospital officials and a count of the bodies by an Associated Press journalist. One person was killed and three injured in a strike outside Al-Aqsa Hospital in the central town of Deir-Al-Balah, where many people have sheltered outside the facility.

The Israeli military announced the deaths of two additional Israeli hostages, saying they believe Yagev Buchshtab, 35, and Alex Dancyg, 76, kidnapped on Oct. 7, were no longer alive, based on intelligence. Both were seen alive in Gaza by other hostages who had been released. Dancyg, a Holocaust educator, gave history lectures to hostages to pass

the time, according to the Hostage and Missing Families Forum.

Netanyahu has vowed to wipe out Hamas' military and governing capabilities and secure the return of the remaining hostages. Families of hostages and thousands of other Israelis have held weekly demonstrations to urge the prime minister to reach a cease-fire deal that would bring their loved ones home.

Also Monday, Israeli police said a Canadian citizen was killed after threatening Israeli security forces with a knife near the Gaza border. The Israeli military said the man drove to the entrance of an Israeli town close to the border, left his vehicle and approached security forces with a knife. The forces opened fire and killed the man. There were no other injuries.

The attack took place at the entrance to the Israeli town of Netiv HaAsara, 300 metres (yards) north of the border. On Oct. 7, Netiv HaAsara was attacked and 20 residents were killed after gunmen passed over the concrete border wall using paragliders, according to Israeli military officials.

# Israel's Netanyahu treads carefully in Washington post-Joe Biden exit

AP ■ JERUSALEM



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu left for Washington on Monday, leaving behind a brutal war to make a politically precarious speech before the US Congress at a time of great uncertainty following Joe Biden's withdrawal from the presidential race. With efforts ongoing to bring about a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, rising concerns about the war spreading to Lebanon and Yemen, and the US in the midst of a dizzying election campaign, Netanyahu's speech has the potential to cause disarray on both sides of the ocean.

The risks only increased with Biden's decision Sunday to drop out of the race for president, especially since the choice of a replacement Democratic nominee — and the potential next American leader — are still up in the air.

Before stepping on the plane, Netanyahu said he would emphasise the theme of Israel's bipartisan support in his speech and said Israel would remain America's key ally in the Middle East "regardless of who the American people choose as their next president."

"In this time of war and uncertainty, it's important that Israel's enemies know that America and Israel stand together," he said, adding that he will meet Biden during his trip and thank him for his support for Israel.

A person familiar with Biden's schedule confirmed Sunday that the president will host Netanyahu at the White House. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly, said the exact timing of the meeting has not been established because Biden is recovering from COVID-19.

Netanyahu is scheduled to address Congress on Wednesday. He is also expected to meet with Vice President Kamala Harris, who is seeking the Democratic Party's presidential nomination.

Netanyahu will deliver his congressional address with an eye on several audiences: his ultra-nationalist governing partners, the key to his political survival; the Biden administration, which Netanyahu counts on for diplo-

matic and military support; and Donald Trump's Republican Party, which could offer Netanyahu a reset in relations if he is reelected in November. His words risk angering any one of those constituencies, which the Israeli leader cannot afford if he hopes to hold on to his tenuous grip on power.

"There are a few land mines and pitfalls on this trip," Eytan Gilboa, an expert on US-Israel relations at Israel's Bar-Ilan University, said before Biden's withdrawal. "He is thought of as a political wizard who knows how to escape from traps. I am not sure he still knows how to do that."

It is Netanyahu's fourth speech to Congress — more than any other world leader. During his address, his far-right governing partners will want to hear his resolve to continue the war and topple Hamas.

The Biden administration will look for progress toward the latest US-backed cease-fire proposal and details on a postwar vision. Republicans hope Netanyahu besmirches Biden and bolsters the GOP's hopes for perception as Israel's stalwart supporter.

The war, which was sparked by Hamas' Oct 7 attack on southern Israel, has tested Israel's ties with its top ally as never before. The Biden administration has stood staunchly beside Israel. But it has grown increasingly alarmed about the conduct of the Israeli military, the continued difficulties of getting humanitarian aid into Gaza, especially after the short-lived US military pier off Gaza coast, as well as Israel's lack of postwar plans and the harm to civilians in Gaza.

# US-Russian journalist convicted in secret trial

Washington (AP): A Russian court has convicted Alsu Kurmasheva, a Russian-American journalist for the US government-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, of spreading false information about the Russian army and sentenced her to 6½ years in prison after a secret trial, court records and officials said on Monday. The conviction in the city of Kazan came on Friday, the same day that a court in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg convicted Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich of espionage and sentenced him to 16 years in prison in a case that the US called politically motivated.

Kurmasheva, an editor for RFE/RL, was convicted of "spreading false information" about the military, according to the website of the SC of Tatarstan.

# My aim is to defeat Trump: Kamala

PTI ■ WASHINGTON



Kamala Harris has said she plans to "earn and win" the Democratic presidential nomination to defeat Donald Trump after President Joe Biden decided not to seek re-election, putting her on the path to become the first Black woman and first Asian American to lead a major political party's ticket.

Vice President Harris, 59, said she was "honoured" to receive Biden's endorsement and voiced her appreciation for his extraordinary leadership as President of the United States and his decades of service to the country.

"I am honoured to have the President's endorsement and my intention is to earn and win this nomination," she said in a statement on Sunday.

The historic endorsement came after Biden, 81, announced Sunday that he is dropping out of the race following weeks of disarray within the Democratic Party. Biden's disastrous first

presidential debate with his Republican rival and former president Donald Trump called into question his ability to win a second term and govern for another four years.

Despite Biden's backing, it remains unclear whether Harris will become the nominee, or what process the Democratic Party would take to select an alternative.

Democratic National Committee chairman Jaime Harrison said in a statement that in the coming days, the party will "undertake a trans-

parent and orderly process to move forward as a united Democratic Party with a candidate who can defeat Donald Trump in November." Though Biden's endorsement almost seals her position as the presidential nominee of her party, Harris still needs to get elected by the party's delegates during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago from August 19-22. Biden has won 3,896 delegates as against 1,976 required to win the party's presidential nomination. In a move that would give her access to the campaign funds, the Biden-Harris campaign amended filings with the Federal Election Commission to rename its principal committee and declare Harris a candidate for president.

Following Biden's decision, Harris, who has been serving as the US' first female, first Black and first South Asian vice president since 2021, immediately secured the endorsement of former president Bill Clinton, thus making it a bit easier for her to

win the delegate battle during the party convention.

"On behalf of the American people, I thank Joe Biden for his extraordinary leadership as President of the United States and for his decades of service to our country," she said.

Harris said over the past year, she has travelled across the country, talking to Americans about the clear choice in this momentous election. "And that is what I will continue to do in the days and weeks ahead. I will do everything in my power to unite the Democratic Party — and unite our nation — to defeat Donald Trump and his extreme Project 2025 agenda... We have 107 days until Election Day. Together, we will fight. And together, we will win," she said. Meanwhile, the "overwhelming majority" of state Democratic Party chairs have announced their support for Vice President Harris as their nominee for president, the Association of State Democratic Committees (ASDC) said in a statement.

# Assailant kills 6, wounds 6 at care home in Croatia

Zagreb (AP): An armed assailant entered a care home for older people in central Croatia Monday and opened fire, killing six people and wounding six others, police said. Croatia's police chief, Nikola Milina, said five people died immediately, while one more person died in a hospital.

The suspect fled the scene, but the police soon caught him in a cafe near the facility in the town of Daruvar, he said.

The victims were five residents of the care home and one employee, Milina said. Police said they were informed of the attack on Monday morning.

The suspect is "under police supervision," said a statement by the regional police office.

# Top Chinese university fires professor after complaint of sexual harassment

Hong Kong (AP): A top Chinese university fired a professor on Monday, a day after a graduate student accused him of sexual harassment on social media in a rare public allegation and posted recordings as evidence, drawing widespread support.

The woman, who identified herself as Wang Di, said she is studying in a doctoral program at Renmin University of China's School of Liberal Arts. She posted a 59-minute video on Sunday on the Weibo social media platform in which she said her supervisor, an ex-vice dean and former Communist Party representative at the school in Beijing, physically and verbally abused her. She also said that for more than two years after she rejected him, he assigned her many tasks, scold-

ed her and threatened that she would not graduate. She also posted audio clips which she said were evidence of the harassment. In one, a man could be heard trying to kiss a woman, who kept saying, "No, no, teacher." "At this moment, I can no longer endure it and have nowhere to retreat, so I am speaking out," she wrote. She demanded that the professor be punished and a new supervisor be appointed for her. She wore a mask in the video, but held up an identification card. Her post drew 2.2 million likes as of Monday evening, with many users leaving comments in support of the student. Renmin University said Monday it concluded that the complaints against the professor were true following an investigation. In addition to

sacking him, it also revoked his party membership and reported the incident to authorities in accordance with the law, it said in a statement on Weibo. It said the academic had "seriously betrayed the original mission of teaching and educating" and that his acts violated party discipline and school rules. The professor did not immediately respond to a request for comment. After the university announced its decision, the woman's post on Weibo disappeared.

The Associated Press does not generally name people who say they are victims of sexual harassment unless they publicly identify themselves.

In China, public accusations of sexual harassment have become rare in recent years following an uptick during a brief

#MeToo movement that was swiftly snuffed out by the government. The ruling Communist Party views powerful social movements as a potential threat to stability and its hold on power.

In June, a Chinese journalist who promoted women's rights as part of the #MeToo movement was sentenced to five years in prison on charges of incitement to subvert state authority, according to her supporters.

In one of the most high-profile cases, former Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai disappeared from public view after accusing former high-level official Zhang Gaoli of sexual assault in 2021. Her accusation was quickly scrubbed from the internet and discussion of it remains heavily censored.

# UK to fast-track returns of illegal migrants to safe countries like India

PTI ■ LONDON

The asylum applications of migrants entering the UK illegally from countries on its designated safe states list, including India, will be fast-tracked to deport them back speedily under new Labour government proposals.

UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper has said she has begun the work to move staff from the previous Conservative-led government's now-abolished Rwanda scheme to a new Returns and Enforcement programme. In place of the policy of trying to fly out illegal migrants to the African country, the Home Office plans to increase the returns to the countries of origin, starting with an increase in raids on businesses employing illegal workers. "We are drawing up new plans for fast-track decisions and returns for safe countries," Cooper wrote in 'The Sun on Sunday'. "Most people in this country want to see a properly controlled and managed asylum

system, where Britain does its bit to help those fleeing conflict and persecution, but where those who have no right to be in the country are swiftly removed," she said. India was added to the UK's "Safe States" list last November, which would speed up the process of returning Indians who travel from the country illegally, as Home Office figures show asylum seekers from India have a very low acceptance rate.

The number of Indians crossing the English Channel illegally via small boats into the UK surged briefly between September 2022 and March 2023 before falling to a "negligible proportion", according to the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford. Vietnam and Albania are among the other countries on the safe list which will be targeted for speedier returns.

"I was shocked to discover the Conservatives had 1,000 civil servants working on the Rwanda Partnership. Not any more. We've moved staff instead into

a new Returns and Enforcement programme to increase returns of those with no right to be here and to make sure rules are respected and enforced, starting with an increase in illegal working raids," said Cooper. "We've directed Immigration Enforcement to intensify their operations over the summer, with a focus on employers who are fuelling the trade of criminal gangs by exploiting and facilitating illegal working here in the UK — including in car washes and in the beauty sector," she said. It comes as the newly appointed minister announced the creation of a new Border Security Command in the days after Labour won a landslide victory in the July 4 general election.

Under the plans, a core team in the Home Office is establishing the remit, governance and strategic direction of the new command. Early legislation is being prepared to introduce new counter-terror style powers and stronger measures to tackle organised immigration crime.

Under the plans, a core team in the Home Office is establishing the remit, governance and strategic direction of the new command. Early legislation is being prepared to introduce new counter-terror style powers and stronger measures to tackle organised immigration crime.

# Internet down in B'desh despite calm

AP ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh remained without internet for a fifth day and the government declared a public holiday Monday, as authorities maintained tight control despite apparent calm following a court order that scaled back a controversial system for allocating government jobs that sparked violent protests.

This comes after a curfew with a shoot-on-sight order was installed days earlier and military personnel could be seen patrolling the capital and other areas. The South Asian country witnessed clashes between the police and mainly student protesters demanding an end to a quota that reserved 30% of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971. The violence has killed more than a hundred people, according to at least four local newspapers. Authorities have not so far shared official figures for deaths.

There was no immediate violence reported on Monday morning after the Supreme Court ordered, the day before, the veterans' quota to be cut to 5%. Thus, 93% of civil service jobs will be merit-based while the remaining 2% reserved for members of ethnic minorities as well as transgender and disabled people.

On Sunday night, some student protesters urged the govern-



Bangladeshi military forces soldiers put up barbed wires on a main street in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Monday, July 22 AP/PTI

ment to restore internet services. Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, told the Associated Press that they were withdrawing their calls for a complete shutdown, which they attempted to impose last week. "But we are issuing an ultimatum for 48 hours to stop the digital crackdown and restore internet connectivity," he said, adding that security officials deployed at various universities should be withdrawn, student dormitories reopened and steps taken so stu-

dents can return to their campuses safely. Abdullah also said they wanted the government to end the curfew and ensure the country was back to normal within two days. Students have also demanded some university officials to step down after failing to protect campuses. Sarjis Alam, another coordinator of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, said that they would continue with their protests if all their demands weren't met. "We cannot step back from

our movement like a coward," he added. Another key organiser of the student protests, Nahid Islam, told reporters that the internet shutdown had disrupted their ability to communicate and alleged that authorities were trying to create divisions among protesters. "I am mentally traumatised ...our unity is being destroyed," he said. The US Embassy in the capital Dhaka described Sunday the situation as "extremely volatile" and "unpredictable," adding

that guns, tear gas and other weapons have been used in the vicinity of the embassy. They said the Bangladeshi army had been deployed and urged Americans to be vigilant, avoid large crowds and reconsider travel plans. The protests have posed the most serious challenge to Bangladesh's government since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina won a fourth consecutive term in January elections that the main opposition groups boycotted. Universities have been closed, the internet has been shut off and the government has ordered people to stay at home. Protesters had argued the quota system was discriminatory and benefited supporters of Hasina, whose Awami League party led the independence movement, and wanted it replaced by a merit-based system. Hasina has defended the quota system, saying that veterans deserve the highest respect regardless of political affiliation. The main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party has backed the protests, vowing to organize its own demonstrations as many of its supporters joined the student-led protests. The Awami League and the BNP have often accused each other of fueling political chaos and violence, most recently ahead of the country's national election, which was marred by a crackdown on several opposition figures.

# Pak Army says political mafia spreading canard about counter-terror operation

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Army on Monday said that an "organised political mafia" was spreading misinformation about a planned new counter-terrorism operation, 'Azam-e-Istehkam', aimed to flush out militants and foster economic growth and stability. Army spokesperson Lt Gen Ahmad Sharif addressing a press conference in Rawalpindi talked about various pressing issues, including the launch of the operation. "A massive illegal, political mafia rose to sabotage the operation and the first move of that mafia was to make the operations controversial through false and fake arguments," he said. Referring to Pakistan's earlier major military operations, Operation Zarb-e-Azb and Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad, which resulted in large-scale displacements, a reporter inquired if similar displacements would occur during the current operation, Azm-e-Istehkam. "This is not a military operation but a comprehensive counter-terrorism initiative aimed at fostering economic growth and stability," he said. He referred to the previous military operations and said, "Our issue is that we make every important issue ... a joke because of our politics." The army spokesperson said the problem is that "we are sacrificing even very important issues on the altar of politics and Azm-i-Istehkam is one

such example of this". He also clarified that it was only for the purpose of "reinvigorating the already in-place National Action Plan (NAP)", which was launched in 2014 to eliminate militancy. He said efforts already underway would be "augmented" by law enforcement agencies empowered by effective legislation, as per the original announcement of the operation. The spokesperson said a "very strong lobby" did not want the objectives of the NAP to be fulfilled "because the stakes in (sabotaging) operation are very high and it's not based on any ideology but involves a lot of money". Pointing to the National Action Plan's 14 points, he said kinetic operations were "underway in a splendid manner" with "four to five operations underway every hour". Sharif said the NAP decided in 2014 to set up Counter-Terrorism Departments at the provincial levels and they would be responsible for leading operations against terrorism. He said it was also decided to register all the religious seminars but only 16,000 out of about 32,000 seminars have been registered so far. Sharif said that so far, 22,409 intelligence-based operations have been conducted against terrorists and their facilitators this year. He said 137 officers and soldiers died in these operations, while 398 terrorists were also killed, including 31 high-value targets. The spokesperson said that

"digital terrorism" is active against the army and its leadership on social media, adding that militants involved in attacks on law enforcement agencies and "digital terrorists" have one thing in common and that is both targeting the army and its leadership. "Digital terrorists are using fake news to undermine the relationship between the army, the leadership of the army, the army and the people." He said that "just as a terrorist tries to get his point across by holding a weapon, in the same way, a digital terrorist tries to get his point across by spreading anxiety through mobile phones, computers, lies, fake news and propaganda". The spokesperson said that only law and punishment can stop digital terrorists, clarifying that if digital terrorists are not stopped, they will get more space. "Those illegal elements who want to make this country a soft state, we cannot allow it," he added. Sharif said over 112 operations were being conducted daily by the military and law enforcement agencies against terrorism. To a question about the Bannu protest case, he said that the protesters became violent, raised anti-state slogans and looted an army supply depot. He accused the provincial government of failure to stop the protesters. The spokesperson also talked about fake news and propaganda which was targeting the armed forces and other institutions of the state.

# SL Tamil parties sans ITAK to field common candidate for prez election

Colombo (PTI): A group of Tamil parties sans the main party, ITAK, on Monday signed an agreement to field a common candidate for the presidential election to be held later this year. Last week, the election commission said that the date for the much-awaited presidential election in the island nation will be announced by the end of this month. Earlier this month, the election commission has indicated that the election is likely to take place on a date between September 17 and October 16. The leaders of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA), Tamil National People's Front (TNPf), and Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) along with leaders of a civil group, Tamil People's Congress Association (TPCA) signed the agreement in Jaffna, sources said.

However, the main Tamil party Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK), which heads the umbrella group Tamil National Alliance (TNA), was not a party to the agreement, they said. The Tamils from the north and east regions have aligned historically with the opposition candidate in presidential elections since 1982. Among the group which signed the pact for a common Tamil candidate is the former northern chief minister CV Wigneswaran's TPA. Wigneswaran, a former Supreme Court judge, was publicly endorsing incumbent President Ranil Wickremesinghe until Monday's signing of the agreement to field a common candidate. Wickremesinghe as the then-opposition challenger at both the 1999 and 2005 presidential elections had received TNA backing. In 2005, a Tamil vote boycott led by the LTTE saw Wickremesinghe narrowly lose to the then-candidate Mahinda Rajapaksa.

# UAE sentences Bangladeshi nationals to prison over home govt protests

AP ■ DUBAI

A court in the United Arab Emirates sentenced dozens of Bangladeshi nationals to prison, including three for life imprisonment, over protests against their home government in the Gulf country, state media reported Monday. The Abu Dhabi Federal Court of Appeal on Sunday handed 10-year prison sentences to 53 Bangladeshi nationals and an 11-year term to another Bangladeshi national, in addition to the three life imprisonments, according to the state-owned Emirates News Agency, WAM. The court ordered the deportation of the Bangladeshis from the UAE following their prison terms. "The court heard a witness who confirmed that the defendants gathered and organised large-

scale marches in several streets of the UAE in protest against decisions made by the Bangladesh government," WAM reported. On Saturday, authorities in the United Arab Emirates ordered an investigation and an expedited trial of the arrested Bangladeshi nationals. The protests in the UAE followed weeks of demonstrations in Bangladesh by people upset about a quota system that reserved up to 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971. The country's top court on Sunday scaled back the controversial system, in a partial victory for the mostly student protesters. The UAE's attorney general's office on Saturday indicted the Bangladeshis on several

charges, including "gathering in a public place and protesting against their home government with the intent to incite unrest," obstructing law enforcement, causing harm to others and damaging property, according to WAM. Bangladeshi nationals make up the UAE's third-largest expatriate community. Many of them are low-paid labourers seeking to send money back home to their families. The Emirates' overall population of more than 9.2 million is only 10 per cent Emirati. Political parties and labour unions are banned in the UAE, a federation of seven sheikhdoms. Broad laws severely restrict freedom of speech and almost all major local media are either state-owned or state-affiliated outlets.

# School blown up in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Peshawar (PTI): Unidentified militants blew up a government girl's school in a tribal district in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Monday, officials said. There was, however, no loss of life in the explosion. The militants blew up the Govt Girls Middle School in North Waziristan tribal district, bordering Afghanistan, on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Minister Faisal Khan Tarakai said. Seven rooms of the school were razed to the ground in the blast. A total of 255 girls were enrolled in the school. Tarakai said the school would be made functional soon. "Such cowardly acts cannot deter our resolve of education promotion in tribal areas. Provision of education is the top priority of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government," he said.

# Police arrest PTI information secretary during raid

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan police on Monday arrested jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's information secretary Rauf Hasan in a raid at the party's central secretariat here, stepping up the crackdown on the Opposition party. Initially, it was reported that PTI chairman Gohar Ali Khan was also arrested but Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson Zulfi Bokhari rejected the report about Khan's arrest while confirming that Hasan had been arrested. It was not clear what are the charges against Hasan who was also attacked by unknown

persons a few weeks ago that left bruises on his face. The party also condemned the move through its official X account and lambasted the Islamabad police. "It's absolutely shameful how Islamabad Police continues to completely mock and disregard every law in this country," the party said. "Law of the jungle is reigning over Pakistan!" PTI leader Khurram Sher Zaman claimed that police personnel were confiscating documents and equipment from the party's office. "We've been informed that they've locked staff in a room & waiting for [the] prison van to arrive & have taken comput-

ers & important documents," he wrote on X. Earlier, SSP Hassan Jahangir Watoo led the raid as the police encircled the PTI headquarters in the federal capital. The raid comes just days after PTI's international media coordinator Ahmad Waqas Janjua was arrested on Friday. According to Bokhari, he was presented before the Anti-Terrorism Court in Islamabad, which handed him over to police on a seven-day remand. According to the charges, explosives were recovered from Janjua during his arrest and his links with banned organisations are to be investigated, police said in the court.

# Rescue op underway after flooding, bridge collapse kill 25

AP ■ BEIJING

Rescuers on Monday were searching for dozens missing after heavy rains caused flash flooding and a bridge collapse in different parts of China, killing at least 25 people. Flash flooding tore through a village in southwestern Sichuan province in the middle of the night Saturday, and rescuers said 10 people died and they were searching for another 29 missing. Days of heavy rain swelled the river that runs through the village of Xinhua in Hanyuan county. The water swept away 40 houses on the riverbank, according to local media, while also breaking bridges and cutting off roads. In northwestern Shaanxi province, vehicles fell into a rushing river when part of a highway bridge collapsed late Friday, and state broadcaster CCTV reported at least 15

# Philippine prez orders shutdown of Chinese-run online gambling outfits

AP ■ LA MANILA

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday ordered an immediate ban on widespread and mostly Chinese-run online gaming operations in the Philippines accusing them of venturing into crimes, including financial scams, human trafficking, torture, kidnappings and murders. Marcos also said in his state-of-the-nation address that the Philippines would press efforts to strengthen its defensive capability by forging security alliances with friendly countries to counter threats to its territorial interests in the South China Sea, adding that his country would only settle disputes through diplomacy. He made the remarks on the territorial conflicts before legislators, top officials and diplomats at the House of Representatives after the worst confrontation between Chinese and Filipino forces in the disputed waters last month. Marcos' decision to ban the

Chinese-run online gambling outfits — estimated to number more than 400 across the Philippines and employing tens of thousands of Chinese and Southeast Asian nationals — came amid an ongoing government crackdown backed by Beijing. That led to the shutdown of several sprawling complexes with dozens of buildings, where authorities suspect thousands of Chinese, Vietnamese and other nationals mostly from Southeast Asia have been illegally recruited and forced to work in dismal conditions. Relatedly, Philippine senators have ordered the arrest of a town mayor in Tarlac province north of Manila who has failed to appear in public hearings where allegations against her were being investigated, including her alleged links to a large online gambling outfit near her townhall and suspicions that she hid her Chinese nationality fraudulently to be

able to run for a public office reserved only for Filipinos. The mayor, Alice Guo, has denied any wrongdoing but has been suspended from her post with her financial assets ordered frozen. Philippine senators say the massive online gambling industry has flourished largely due to corruption in regulatory agencies and payoffs to local officials. "Disguising as legitimate entities, their operations have ventured into illicit areas furthest from gaming such as financial scamming, money laundering, prostitution, human trafficking, kidnapping, brutal torture, even murder," Marcos said. "The grave abuse and disrespect to our system of laws must stop." Marcos ordered the government's gaming agency to wind down the operations of the so-called Philippine offshore gaming operators, or POGOs, by yearend, drawing loud applause from legislators and top officials.

# Hundreds of migrants leave southern Mexico on foot for US border

AP ■ CIUDAD HIDALGO

Hundreds of migrants from around a dozen countries left from Mexico's southern border on foot Sunday, as they attempt to make it to the US border. Some of the members of the group said they hoped to make it to the US border before elections are held in November, because they fear that if Donald Trump wins, he will follow through on a promise to close the border to asylum-seekers. "We are running the risk that permits (to cross the border) might be blocked," said Miguel Salazar, a migrant from El Salvador. He feared that a new Trump administration might stop granting appointments to migrants through CBP One, an app used by asylum-seekers to enter the US legally — by getting appointments at US border posts, where they make their cases to officials. The app only works once migrants reach Mexico City, or states in northern Mexico. "Everyone wants to use that route" said Salazar, 37. The group left Sunday from the southern Mexican town of Ciudad Hidalgo, which is next to a river that marks Mexico's border with Guatemala. Some said they had been waiting in Ciudad Hidalgo for weeks for permits to travel to

towns further to the north. Migrants trying to pass through Mexico in recent years have organised large groups to try to reduce the risk of being attacked by gangs or stopped by Mexican immigration officials as they travel. But the caravans tend to break up in southern Mexico, as people get tired of walking for hundreds of miles (kilometres). Recently, Mexico has also made it more difficult for migrants to reach the US border on buses and trains. Travel permits are rarely awarded to migrants who enter the country without visas and thousands of migrants have been detained by immigration officers at checkpoints in the centre and north of Mexico and bused back to towns deep in the south of the country. Oswaldo Reyna, a 55-year-old Cuban migrant, crossed from Guatemala into Mexico 45 days ago and waited in Ciudad Hidalgo to join the new caravan announced on social media. He criticised Trump's recent comments about migrants and how they are trying to "invade" the United States. "We are not delinquents," he said. "We are hard-working people who have left our country to get ahead in life, because in our homeland we are suffering from many needs."

Some said they had been waiting in Ciudad Hidalgo for weeks for permits to travel to

# In Kyiv, music fans rub shoulders with generals, artists

AP ■ KYIV

This year, Ukraine's largest music festival struck a different chord. Gone were the international headliners, the massive performance halls and the hundreds of thousands of visitors. Instead, the country's most beloved local artists graced the stage this past weekend at the Atlas Festival. The stage was erected on a shopping mall parking lot, the only option that contained a shelter large enough to contain the 25,000 people that that organisers expected in the event of an air raid. Carefree youth rubbed shoulders with hardened military

commanders and famous singers who crooned songs imbued with national pride. Music was the main draw, yes, but so was shattering the illusion that the capital is invulnerable to the bloody battles playing out hundreds of miles away. "Such kind of festivals can't be separated from the life of the stage country. The country is at war. The core issues here should relate to the war," said Vsevolod Rozhemyako, a businessman and one of the founders of the 13th "Khartia" Brigade, now a part of Ukraine's National Guard and defending the frontline in Kharkiv. "People who are still young and who don't join (the fight)

should understand that they cannot live in a bubble," he said. And yet, a bubble is precisely how it feels to be in Kyiv, as the war approaches its third year. While Ukrainian soldiers are killed and wounded everyday along the snaking 1,000-kilometre (620-mile) frontline in the east, the capital is a contrast with its bars and clubs filled with patrons. Every so often, Kyiv comes face to face with the war. Last week, a barrage of Russian missiles destroyed a children's hospital and a private clinic, in one of the deadliest attacks since the full-scale invasion. Residents have grappled with power cuts caused by Moscow's targeted destruction of Ukrainian ener-

gy generation at the height of a summer heat wave. At every corner of the music festival — the first time it was held since Russia's full-scale invasion of the country in February 2022 — visitors were confronted with the inescapable reality that theirs is a country trapped in a bloody war of attrition. Festival organisers hoped to raise USD 2.2 million (2 million euros) to help soldiers purchase supplies on the front line. In the mall's basement parking lot, various military units, from Khartia to the 3rd Assault, offered interactive games to lure donations, and possible recruits. First-person shooter game offered visitors a chance

to improve target practice by gunning down shadowy virtual infantrymen. At another corner, medics brandished severed plastic limbs and offered emergency medical training. The festival concluded Sunday with a much-anticipated performance from Serhii Zhadan and his band Zhadan and Dogs. Zhadan, a celebrated artist dubbed the poet of the Donbas, himself recently joined Khartia. "It's just a small break, an opportunity to take a breath," said Zhadan, minutes before the crowd roared before he took to the stage. "The most important things, they are happening over there, at the frontline."

On stage, Zhadan starts with one of his most beloved songs "Malvi" or "Mallow". The crowd sings along with him, word for word. "But what can you do with my hot blood," they chant as one mass chorus. "Who will come at us." 18-year old Viktoriia Khalis was excited to see his performance, she said. She had been to the Atlas music festival once before in 2021. The difference is stark, she said. "The main thing that has changed, unfortunately, now the festival is connected with donations," she said. But she also feels more connected to her homeland, somehow. "I feel this entire crowd is related to me. I feel unity."

**Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**  
Tender Notice Reference No. GNDU/Gen/54/2024  
The Department of G.N.D.U. Amritsar invites online bids for the following:

Sr. No.	Item	Quantity
1	Supply of Toner / Drum for various printer and photo copier machine	92 Items

Closing date & time: 01/08/2024 at 5:00 PM  
For details log onto: [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in)  
Note: Any corrigendum(s) to the Tender Notice shall be published on the above website only.

Assistant Registrar (General),  
Guru Nanak Dev University,  
Amritsar

NA/12/24283/2023/35881 Dated CHD - 7/22/2024

# Economic Survey slams energy guzzling developed world

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

On the one hand, developing nations are being forcefully nudged to sign up for climate commitments that they are not ready for, on the other hand, the developed world is in a mad 'Scramble for Africa' kind of rush to usher in the latest and the most expansive energy guzzlers like Artificial Intelligence ecosystem, the Government's 'Economic Survey 2023-24 has said.

"Even as the data centres are ramping up energy demand, cloud storage facilities, crypto mining, and AI are all expected to increase this exponentially." The report also took exception to the developed world's fancy to such energy demand driven technologies while planning to impose carbon taxes on carbon-intensive imports by the developing countries like India.

This technological advancement, aimed at enhancing efficiency and



productivity, paradoxically contributes to higher emissions. "Despite ambitious pledges by leading technology firms to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2030, their pursuit of AI dominance has resulted in a 30 per cent rise in emissions by 2023," the report further cautioned.

This means that India not only has to deal with climate change and undertake energy transition but also confront the protectionism of developed countries, said the report. The European Union is on

course to implement its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and both the United Kingdom and the United States are in different stages of imposing their versions of it in due course. The EU argues that this mechanism creates a level playing field for domestically manufactured goods, which must adhere to stricter environmental standards, and help reduce emissions from imports.

However, other nations, particularly developing countries, worry that this would harm their economies and make it too expensive to trade with the bloc.

According to a report by the independent think tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), CBAM will impose an additional 25 per cent tax on carbon-intensive goods, such as iron, steel, cement, fertilisers, and aluminium, exported from India to the EU.

Based on data from the past three years, this tax burden would represent 0.05 per cent

of India's GDP. "It would be a comedy if it were not real and tragic. Even as developed nations prepare to impose a carbon tax at the border on imports coming into their countries laden with carbon, they are ramping up energy demand like never before, thanks to their obsession with letting AI guide, take over and dominate natural intelligence," the report said.

For instance, the report cited a broad estimate by the International Energy Agency which said that a single ChatGPT search consumes 10 times more energy than a similar query on Google.

According to a research report published in April, Goldman Sachs analysts wrote that the demand for power in the United States would experience growth not seen in a generation, thanks to AI, and that "transmission, one of the major bottlenecks for clean energy transition, and the addition of data centres and AI could exacerbate this".

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Monday, dragged down by heavy selling pressure in Reliance Industries and Kotak Mahindra Bank ahead of the Budget.

Besides, a weak trend in global equity markets also hit investors sentiment, traders said.

Falling for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 102.57 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,502.08. During the session, it tanked 504 points or 0.62 per cent to 80,100.65.

The NSE Nifty dipped 21.65 points or 0.09 per cent to 24,509.25. During the day, it dropped 168.6 points or 0.68 per cent to 24,362.30.

Among the Sensex pack, Reliance Industries declined over 3 per cent after the company reported a 5 per cent drop in its June quarter net profit.

Kotak Mahindra Bank also fell more than 3 per cent after its June quarter earnings failed to cheer investors.



ITC, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies and IndusInd Bank were the other big laggards.

NTPC, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers.

HDFC Bank climbed over 2 per cent after the company's consolidated net profit grew 33.17 per cent to Rs 16,474.85 crore in the June 2024 quarter.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled lower, while Hong Kong

ended in the positive territory.

European markets were trading higher in the mid-session deals. US markets ended lower in overnight trade on Friday.

According to the Economic Survey, 2023-24 tabled in Parliament on Monday, capital markets are becoming more prominent in India's growth story, with an expanding share in capital formation and investment landscape on the back of technology,

innovation and digitisation. Further, Indian markets are resilient to global geopolitical and economic shocks, it added.

"Despite heightened geopolitical risks, rising interest rates and volatile commodity prices, Indian capital markets have been one of the best performing among emerging markets in FY24," the Economic Survey said.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.08 per cent to USD 82.53 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,506.12 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark hit its new all-time high of 81,587.76 in the initial trade on Friday but failed to carry forward the winning momentum and tanked 738.81 points or 0.91 per cent to settle below the 81,000 mark at 80,604.65.

Nifty tumbled 269.95 points or 1.09 per cent and ended at 24,530.90 after hitting its fresh record peak of 24,854.80 during the opening bell on Friday.

# Rupee rises three paise to close at 83.67 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range to settle 3 paise higher at 83.67 (provisional) against the American currency on Monday, as crude oil prices and the US dollar retreated from their elevated levels.

Forex traders said the Indian rupee recovered from all-time low levels and traded in a narrow range as mixed-to-weak domestic markets put downside pressure on the rupee. However, weak tone in the US dollar and a decline in crude oil prices cushioned the downside.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.66, and touched an intraday high of 83.65 and a low of 83.68 against the dollar during the trading session.

It finally settled at 83.67 (provisional) against the American currency, registering a gain of 3 paise from its previous close.



On Friday, the rupee depreciated 7 paise to settle at its all-time low of 83.70 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on the weak tone in the global markets and overall strength in the US dollar. Weak Asian currencies and a weak yuan may also support the dollar. However, weakness in crude oil prices and FII inflows may support the rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at

Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Any intervention by the RBI may also support the rupee. Investors may take cues from India's Union Budget. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.20 to Rs 84.20, Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.17 per cent at 104.22.

Brent crude futures, the

global oil benchmark, were trading marginally lower by 0.29 per cent at USD 82.39 per barrel.

On the macroeconomic front, India's forex reserves jumped by USD 9.699 billion to an all-time high of USD 666.854 billion for the week ended July 12, the RBI said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the kitty had increased by USD 5.158 billion to USD 657.155 billion, surpassing the previous high of USD 655.817 billion for the week ended June 7.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 102.57 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,502.08 points and Nifty dropped 21.65 points or 0.09 per cent to 24,509.25 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Friday as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,506.12 crore, according to exchange data.

# CRR cut to help banks facing low deposit growth: SBI MD

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Lowering the cash deposit ratio or the proportion of deposits which banks are mandatorily required to park with the RBI will help the lenders facing low deposit growth, SBI Managing Director Ashwini Kumar Tewari said on Monday.

Conversations for such a cut are on, he told reporters here, clarifying that the country's largest lender does not need such a reduction as it is well placed on the liquidity front.

There has not been any formal request for a CRR cut made either, he added.

Speaking at an event organised by domestic rating agency Careedge, Tewari said, "We have to look at various avenues for helping tide over the challenge posed by lower deposit growth", and specifically mentioned a request to get bank deposits at par with capital market investments while referring

to CRR and SLR.

To a question on whether the bank has sought a CRR cut, he said, "We have not sought any formal dispensation, but it is a conversation we continue to have. I don't think there is any move to do this at the moment".

When asked if a CRR cut will help banks tide over the continuing wedge between the credit and deposit growth, he said, "Of course, it will help".

The economy will need resources to help fund the growth, he said, adding that 90 per cent of all economic activity is funded by the banks.

SBI's statutory liquidity ratio or investments in government bonds are 2-3 per cent higher and hence, it may not benefit as much. But there are banks running credit deposit ratios of up to 90 per cent for whom the CRR cut, which expands the lendable resources for a bank, will be of help.

# Gold rises ₹100 on jewellers' buying



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose by Rs 100 to Rs 75,650 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday due to increased buying by jewellers and a firm trend in the overseas markets.

However, silver prices plunged by Rs 600 to Rs 91,000 per kg. In the previous session, it had settled at Rs 91,600 per kg, as per the All India Sarafa Association.

Saturday, the precious metal rates had closed at Rs 75,550 per 10 grams.

Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also rose by Rs 100 to Rs 75,300 per 10 grams. It had ended at Rs 75,200 per 10 grams in the previous session.

Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to fresh demand by local jewellers and a firm trend in the international markets.

The white metal has declined Rs 3,400 per kg in the past four sessions since July 18 when it had fallen by Rs 400 to end at Rs 94,000 per kg.

Globally, Comex gold is trading higher at USD 2,451.70 per ounce, up by USD 4.90 per ounce from the previous close.

"After a sharp pullback from all-time highs last week, Comex gold edged higher on Monday as US election uncertainty weighed on US dollar and treasury yields," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP of Commodity Research at Kotak Securities, said.

President Joe Biden's decision to end his re-election campaign and endorse Vice President Kamala Harris prompted speculation on whether it would benefit or hinder chances of former President Donald Trump returning to the White House.

As a result, the bulls of the US dollar remained cautious and the commodity prices gained some traction.

Traders are now eagerly anticipating the release of several key economic indicators ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) policy decision next week, Chainwala added.

However, silver was marginally down at USD 29.25 per ounce in New York.

According to commodity market experts, traders also worried about slowing Chinese economic growth, geopolitical risks from the Russia-Ukraine war and the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East will benefit the safe-haven asset.

Further, traders are awaiting the upcoming release of the US Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) price index data on Friday for more cues about the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy path, which will provide directions for the bullion prices in the near future, they said.

# Sebi returns draft IPO documents of recruitment solution provider Crizac

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi has returned the draft documents of student recruitment solution provider Crizac Ltd, which was looking to float Rs 1,000 crore Initial Public Offering (IPO), an update with the markets regulator showed on Monday.

The move might delay the Kolkata-based company's initial share-sale.

The proposed IPO was entirely an Offer For Sale (OFS) by promoters, Pinky Agarwal and Manish Agarwal, with no fresh issue component.

The OFS consists of the sale of equity shares worth Rs 841 crore by Pinky Agarwal and up to Rs 159 crore by Manish Agarwal, according to the offer document.

The company filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in April.

According to an update on Sebi's website on Monday, the markets regulator returned the company's offer document on July 15 without providing reasons for the same.

Crizac offers international student recruitment



solutions to global institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.

It has established partnerships with leading universities in the UK and is a major player in student recruitment from India to the UK, holding a significant market share of about 13 per cent based on the number of Indian students pursuing higher education in the UK in 2023, the draft papers quoted a F&S report.

Over the last three years, Crizac facilitated enrolment applications from over 72 countries through its registered agents on its technology platform. It processed more

than 3.82 lakh student applications and collaborated with over 140 global universities.

Crizac's pro forma consolidated revenue from operations during the fiscal year 2023 jumped 79.5 per cent to Rs 472.97 crore from Rs 263.53 crore in the previous year. Besides, profit after tax grew 65.50 per cent to Rs 112.14 crore for the financial year 2023 from Rs 67.76 crore in the preceding fiscal.

Equirus Capital and Anand Rathi Advisors are the book-running lead managers to the issue.

# Cut import duty on smartphone components in Budget, Govt told

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Economic think tank GTRI on Monday urged the Government to cut import duty on smartphone components in the Budget as it could lead to an increase in superficial assembly plants that rely heavily on imported parts.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget for 2024-25 tomorrow.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said the current schemes and tariff structure resulted in great success, and the current framework is also ensuring duty-free imports of components for exports.

"Do not cut import duty on smartphone components in this Budget. Removing tariffs could lead to an increase in superficial assembly plants that rely heavily on imported parts, contributing little to the local economy.

"Imported components and subassemblies account for up to 90 per cent of the bill of material value for an India-made phone," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. Currently, import tariffs on the product is 20 per cent while duty on components range between 0 and 20 per cent. The Budget should maintain these tariffs for several compelling reasons, he said.

"Smartphone is the most celebrated success story pushed by PLI (production linked incentive) incentives and a clever tariff arbitrage between these phones and its components," he added.

India's production of this item has crossed USD 49 billion in FY24, and its exports grew from USD 10.96 billion in FY23 to USD 15.57 billion in FY24, a growth of 42 per cent.

Additionally, over 98 per cent of smartphones sold in India are made locally,



demonstrating the success of policies like the PLI scheme, which offers a 4-6 per cent cash incentive on annual incremental production. No need to change a policy giving great results, it said.

The GTRI added that Indian manufacturers can import necessary inputs or capital goods duty-free for manufacturing and exporting electronic items, facilitated through schemes

like Advance Authorisation, Export Promotion Capital Goods, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and 100 per cent Export Oriented Units. Firms can also use the customs bond scheme for

duty-free imports without localisation requirements.

"Apple, for example, through its contract manufacturers Foxconn and Wistron, benefits from SEZs to manufacture and export

smartphones. In 2023, Apple's iPhone production in India exceeded Rs 1 lakh crore (about USD 13.5 billion), with Rs 65,000 crore worth of exports," the think-tank said.

Schemes like SEZs thus allow import of all inputs at zero duty, thus making Indian smartphone globally competitive, it added.

In FY24, electronics imports crossed USD 83.92 billion, with components growing from USD 25.13 billion in FY23 to USD 34.36 billion in FY24, a 36.8 per cent increase.

It added that the high reliance on imported parts in local manufacturing suggests that cutting import duties would eliminate incentives to establish deeper manufacturing operations in India, leading firms to assemble mobile phones from nearly complete imported kits and exit once incentives disappear.

"Maintaining current import tariffs is crucial for sustaining the growth and depth of India's smartphone manufacturing sector. Reducing these tariffs could encourage short-term assembly operations over long-term, valuable manufacturing, undermining the industry's success and future potential," it said.

Srivastava said these tariffs are not just protective measures but catalysts for fostering a robust, self-reliant smartphone manufacturing ecosystem in India.

This ecosystem can compete globally while driving local employment and technological advancement, he added.

"Preserving these tariffs is essential for continuing the remarkable growth trajectory and nurturing the deep manufacturing capabilities of India's smartphone sector," he said.

# ATHLETES OF INDIAN HERITAGE LOOK TO SHINE AT PARIS GAMES

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India would not be limited to the Indian contingent in the upcoming Paris Olympics.

PTI takes a look at some Indian-origin athletes who will be representing their adopted countries at the Paris Games:

**RAJEEV RAM (Tennis, USA):** Perhaps the most well known athlete on the list. The 40-year-old was born in Denver, USA to parents who migrated from Bangalore.

Stepped in academics, Ram's father Raghav, who passed away in April 2019, due to pancreatic cancer, was a botanist while his mother Sushma worked as a scientific technician. But Ram chose to break tradition and pursue tennis.

"I am very proud to be of Indian heritage and represent the community in any way I can. In tennis, there are not many of us from the community. Any success that we can achieve as a closed group can inspire the next generation to excel," Rajeev had once said.

Playing for the USA, Rajeev has achieved considerable success. The tennis doubles specialist won five Grand Slams titles including four men's doubles and one mixed doubles.



(Left to right): Rajeev Ram (Tennis, USA); Prithika Pavade (Table Tennis, France); Kanak Jha (Table Tennis, USA); Shanti Pereira (Singapore, Athletics) and Amar Dhesi (Wrestling, Canada)

He teamed up with Venus Williams to clinch the mixed doubles 2016 Rio Olympics. He will compete in the men's doubles event.

**PRITHIKA PAVADE (Table Tennis, France):** Prithika's father was born and raised in Pudukcherry. In 2003, he migrated to Paris after getting married. A year later, Prithika was born in the French capital.

A TT player himself, Prithika's father introduced

her to table tennis when she was six. At only 16 years old, she participated in her first Olympic Games in Tokyo. The 19-year-old is studying chemistry and environmental science and will compete in women's singles, where she has been seeded 12th, the women's doubles and mixed doubles events.

**KANAK JHA (Table Tennis, USA):** Another Indian origin athlete competing at the Paris

Games will be USA table tennis player Kanak Jha. Jha's mother Karuna is from Mumbai while father Arun was raised in Kolkata and Prayagraj. Both are IT professionals.

Jha's fascination with table tennis started at the India Community Centre in Milpitas, California. He and his elder sister Prachi, also a TT player, immediately wanted to try out the sport. In no time he started beating

players twice his size. To keep him close to his roots, Jha's mom enrolled him in a Jainshala and Hindishala, centres where he could learn Hindi and about Jainism.

The 24-year-old is a four-time U.S. National Champion (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) and two-time Olympian (2016, 2020).

He was USA's youngest athlete at the 2016 Rio Olympics and also the first American to win a medal at the Youth

Olympics in Argentina in 2018. He will be competing in the men's singles event at Paris.

**SHANTI PEREIRA (Singapore, Athletics):** Known as Singapore's Sprint Queen, Veronica Shanti Pereira has her roots in Kerala. Her grandparents hailed from Vettukad near Thiruvananthapuram. But after Shanti's grandfather got a job in Singapore, the couple migrated from India.

Last year, Pereira ended Singapore's 49-year-long wait for a track and field medal at the Asian Games, after she clinched a silver in women's 100m.

Awarded the 'Sportswoman of the Year' at the Singapore Sports Awards, Pereira will be one of the Lion City's two flag-bearers at the Paris Olympics opening ceremony. She also has a children's book -- 'Go Shanti Go!' -- based on her life, written by her two

elder sisters. She will compete in the women's 100m race in Paris.

**AMAR DHESI (Wrestling, Canada):** Amarveer was born in Surrey, British Columbia, a small province on the western coast of Canada to Balbir Dhesi.

A former Greco Roman national champion, Amar's father belongs to village Sanghwal in district Jalandhar in Punjab. Balbir had trained at the NIS Patiala and even got a job with the Punjab Police but moved to Canada in search of greener pastures in 1979. Once there, he worked in a sawmill factory and started the Khalsa Wrestling Club for youth in Surrey in 1985. Amar would attend practice with his dad and older brother Paramveer since he was five and entered his first competition as an eight-year-old.

Amar, who loves to watch London Games bronze-medallist Yogeshwar Dutt's wrestling videos, made his Olympic debut at Tokyo 2020 where he finished 13th in the men's 125kg freestyle event. He won his first senior gold medal a year later at the Pan American Championships and then captured 125kg gold at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. The 28-year-old will compete in the men's 125kg freestyle event.

## The Kerala Story in athletics: Growth hits flat-line as powerhouse on wane

PTI ■ BENGALURU

It's not a dire situation yet, but the dwindling number of athletes from Kerala in India's Olympic contingents shows that the growth of athletics in the state, which was once a track-and-field powerhouse, has certainly hit a disheartening flat-line.

These numbers will summarise the situation before the deep dive: India's athletics squad for Paris Olympics has 29 members (18 men and 11 women). Kerala will be represented by four members -- Muhammed Anas, Muhammed Ajmal, Mijo Chacko Kurian (all men's 4x400m relay), and Abdulla Aboobacker (men's triple jump).

In the Tokyo Olympics, Kerala made its presence through Yahiya, Noah Nirmal Tom, Alex Antony, KT Irfan, MP Jabir and M Sreeshankar in the track and field events.

The state had better representation at the Rio Games in 2016 through Anas, Jinson Johnson, T Gopi, Jisna Mathew, Tintu Luka, OP Jaisha and M Renjith.

Along with the diminishing overall numbers, a close look will reveal another anomaly -- a female athlete from the state is not a part of the Indian squad for the second successive Olympics.

It's a downfall for the powerhouse that produced some iconic names such as

PT Usha, Shiny Wilson, Anju Bobby George, Rosa Kutty, Mercy Kuttan and Bobby Aloysius among others. "It's a matter of concern that the current Indian (Olympics-bound) contingent does not have too many names from Kerala, especially women. It reflects the way athletics, and sports in general, is being treated in the state by the officials," a veteran administrator told PTI.

"Whenever an athlete from the state does well in an international competition, our politicians and other officials will make grand announcements. But there are hardly any follow-ups," said the administrator.

A decorated veteran athlete echoed that sentiment.

"Yeah! It is true. Action never really follows those promises. We have the example of (VK) Vismaya in front of us. She is running pillar to post to get the promised government job."

Vismaya held off the then world champion Salwa Nasser to win the 4x400m gold at the Jakarta Asian Games in 2018. She was pledged a job by the state government then, but it's yet to materialise.

Vismaya could not be contacted for the latest update about her job status. However, Hima Das, MR Poovamma and Saritaben Gayakwad, the other 4x400 relay team members, received jobs and other cash awards as per the



promise made by the respective state governments.

"If a gold winner in the Asian Games has to wait over five years to get a promised job, then you can guess the fate of other lesser-known sportspersons."

"I won't blame them if they look to play for a different state. After all, a job and financial security matter to an athlete whose career is unpredictable," the athlete said.

However, Kerala State Sports Council (KSSC) president U Sharaf Ali said the delay was not deliberate.

"There have been a few delays, I admit. But we will keep our word at the earliest to honour the athletes who have brought laurels to the country

and the state," said Ali.

He said injuries to front-line state athletes like Ancy Sojan, a long jump silver medal winner in the Hangzhou Asian Games, was also a reason behind the marginal representation of state athletes in the Indian Olympic squad.

"Some of the top names like Ancy are coming back after an (ankle) injury and T Gopi also has a long-standing knee injury issue, and could not qualify for Paris."

"Sreeshankar (long-jump) underwent a surgery recently and he will also not be competing in the Olympics. It's unfortunate," said Ali.

On her return, Ancy clinched top spot in the Indian Grand Prix '3 in

Bengaluru with a leap of 6.52m but that was not enough for her to book a ticket to Paris.

But these are issues at the top, while the rot has percolated to the grassroots level too.

The stories of mismanagement and apathy are galore in a state that often prides itself for the abundance of talent at junior level.

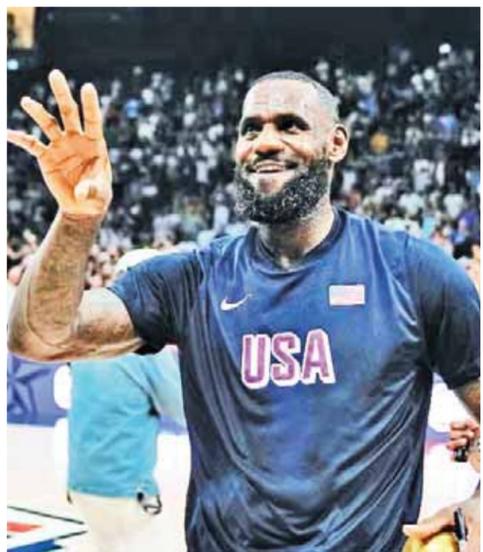
"Talent is there. But talent alone will not bring success, as the athletes' needs must be met as they require proper financial back-up to buy equipment."

"Many of them are coming from poor families and we don't get as many sponsors in athletics as in cricket or football. We are largely dependent on government funds," said a well-established state-level coach.

Few months back, the state athletes had to spend money from their pocket to travel to Coimbatore for the junior national championship.

"Money is one thing. Even some of the traditional track and field stadiums like the Maharajas are in a dilapidated state. The authorities are just starting the renovation work on many of them."

"What they don't realise is that it deprives budding athletes valuable practice time. It's affecting the overall quality of our athletes and they will be forced to leave the state in search of better facilities," rued the coach.



## LeBron James selected as Team USA male flagbearer for Paris Olympics opening ceremony

AP ■ NEW YORK

LeBron James wasn't totally sure what the opening ceremony was all about when he was picked for his first Olympics in 2004.

This time, he'll be one of the stars of the show.

James has been picked by his fellow U.S. Olympians to serve as the male flagbearer for the Americans in Friday night's opening ceremony for the Paris Games. He becomes the third basketball player - and the first men's player - to carry the U.S. flag at the start of an Olympics, joining Dawn Staley for the Athens Games in 2004 and Sue Bird of the Tokyo Games that happened in 2021.

The 39-year-old James got word of the honor Monday in London, a few hours before the U.S. Men's team was scheduled to play its final pre-Olympics exhibition game against World Cup champion Germany.

"There's obviously the utmost respect for who he is as a person and a player and how good he is," fellow U.S. Star and first-time Olympian Stephen Curry said earlier this month of James, someone he's faced off against four times in the NBA Finals and is now teaming up with for the first official time.

The female U.S. flagbearer will be revealed in the coming days. The International Olympic Committee decided in 2020 that national delegations would have two flagbearers - one male, one female - at the opening ceremony at an Olympics, a move to promote gender parity. The U.S. is expected to have nearly 600 athletes in the Paris Games, about 53% of them female.

James - a global icon, a four-time NBA champion and the league's all-time leading scorer set to go into his record-tying 22nd NBA season - is set to play in the Olympics for the fourth time, after he was part of U.S. Teams that won bronze in 2004, gold at Beijing in 2008 and gold again in London in 2012. He walked in the opening ceremony at each of his three previous Olympics. This time, he'll float. This will be an opening ceremony like none other in Olympic history: Thousands of athletes will be part of a flotilla sailing along the River Seine at sunset toward the Eiffel Tower. It's a 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) route, with about 320,000 guests set to watch from the river bank and about 1 billion more, Olympic officials estimate, watching on televisions around the world. Not all Olympic athletes take part in the opening ceremony; many skip it for logistical reasons, such as having to compete the following day. James and the four-time defending gold medalist U.S. Men don't open Olympic play until Sunday, when they face Serbia at Lille, France. James and the U.S. Olympians will be waiting longer than almost any other nation for their trip on the Seine. By IOC custom, Greece - which will have NBA star Giannis Antetokounmpo as one of its two flagbearers - will lead the procession, followed by the Refugee Olympic Team and then about 200 more national delegations. The U.S. is scheduled to go next-to-last in the procession, because Los Angeles will play host to the next Summer Games in 2028. France, as the host, will be the final nation in the opening ceremony procession. Its men's basketball team, featuring reigning NBA rookie of the year Victor Wembanyama, opens Olympic play on Saturday and isn't expected to be present for the opening ceremony.



## I am not going to make mistakes of Tokyo in Paris: Manika Batra

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Wiser after her maiden Olympics appearance in Tokyo, Indian table tennis star Manika Batra on Monday said she is focused on taking one match at a time in the upcoming Paris Games and a medal will not be in her mind in the initial rounds.

Preparing for the Paris Olympics along with her teammates, Batra said she has learned from her Tokyo Games experience.

"I have learned many things from the last Olympics, and I am not going to make those mistakes again. My mindset has changed since then, I am calmer and have more confidence in myself," said Batra during an interview with Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT).

"I have been working on my stamina and my agility, and my ultimate aim is to challenge for a medal. "But I will go slowly. I will try to be in that zone and give my best. I will go round by round

and not think of a medal too early. I will give my best for my country," Batra, who represents PBG Bengaluru Smashers in UTT, added.

Batra played an instrumental role in the women's team qualifying for the Paris Olympics, a first for Indian table tennis. She also reached the quarter-finals of the WTT Saudi Smash in May beating World No. 2 and former world champion Wang Manyu of China and World No. 14 Nina Mittelham of Germany.

"India qualified for the first time (for the Olympics), this is a huge achievement. I am really happy with how we are working together (at the camp). I think we have a shot at the medal and we should give our best," Batra said.

"The growth of women's table tennis in India is really inspiring. I see many of my fellow players playing really well. Everyone in the team is motivated and training very hard. Women's table tennis in India will only grow further," she said.

## Veteran Indian goalkeeper Sreejesh to retire after Paris Olympics

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Celebrated India hockey goalkeeper P R Sreejesh on Monday announced that he will bid adieu to the game after the Paris Olympics, ending a career that spanned 18 years during which he was a pivotal figure in some historic moments for the side.

The 36-year-old, a veteran of 328 International caps, including three Olympic Games, and multiple Commonwealth Games and World Cups, will be playing in his fourth Olympics in Paris beginning July 26.

"As I prepare for my last dance in Paris, I look back with immense pride and forward with hope," Sreejesh said in a Hockey India press release.

"This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I am forever grateful for the love and support from my family, teammates, coaches, fans and Hockey India. Thank you for believing in me."

"My teammates have stood beside through the tough and the ardent times. We all want to give our absolute best here in Paris and certainly, the desire is to change the colour of our medal," he added, referring to perhaps the biggest moment of his career -- a bronze in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

After making his debut at the 2006 South Asian Games, Sreejesh was a part of various memorable wins for India, including a gold in the 2014 Asian Games and a bronze medal in the 2018 Asiad in Jakarta-Palembang.



He was also there in the Asian Champions Trophy-winning side in 2018, and the 2019 FIH Men's Series Finals champion team in Bhubaneswar.

The affable keeper had a crucial role in the silver medal-winning team of the 2022 Commonwealth Games as well.

Sreejesh was one of the main architects of India's historic bronze medal win at the Tokyo Olympics and captain Harmanpreet Singh said the team will look to secure another medal at the Paris Games this time to make Sreejesh's last tournament a memorable one.

"Paris 2024 will indeed be a special tournament. We have decided to dedicate our campaign to the legend PR Sreejesh," said Harmanpreet.

"He has been an inspiration for all of us and I still remember his mentorship in 2016 Junior World Cup when we lifted the title. It was the beginning of

many of our careers in International hockey and he has shaped each one of our careers in his own way.

"We want to 'Win it for Sreejesh' and we are all the more encouraged to stand on the podium once again."

The man from Kerala, who had also played a vital role in India's third-place finish at the Hockey Pro League 2021/22, was awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award in 2021.

He is only the second sportsman from India to win the award of World Games Athlete of the Year in 2021. Besides, he won consecutive FIH Goalkeeper of the Year awards in 2021 and 2022.

Last year, Sreejesh stood tall in India's gold medal-winning campaign at the Asian Games that sealed the team's berth for Paris Olympics. Congratulating Sreejesh on his stellar career, HI President Dilip Tirkey said: "Sreejesh was

# Good for TRP but my relationship with Kohli is personal, declares Gambhir

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
India's newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir on Monday declared that his much talked about relationship with batting mainstay Virat Kohli "is between the two of us and not for TRPs", asserting that they are going to be "on same page" in the coming times. Gambhir and Kohli had not been the best of friends, something which was evident from the multiple confrontations between the two in the IPL. However, the duo will now be working together starting with the white-ball tour of Sri Lanka from July 27. "Good for the TRP, but my relationship is not public. What kind of a relationship I share with Virat Kohli... I

think it's between two mature individuals," Gambhir said. Gambhir was addressing a press conference along with chief selector Ajit Agarkar ahead of India's tour of Sri Lanka where they will play three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs. In the context of Kohli, Gambhir added, "On the field, everyone has got the right to fight for their own jersey and come back to a winning dressing room." "But at the moment, we're representing India, representing 140 crore Indians and I'm sure we're going to be on the same page and try and make India proud." Kohli, who recently announced retirement from the T20 International format, is part of India's ODI squad



against the island nation and ahead of that, the former India skipper has apparently communicated to the BCCI that he's ready to begin this new phase with a clean slate. Gambhir said the two share a very good relationship (with him) off the field. "...And will continue to do that. But yes, to make it more public, what kind of a relationship... I think it's between two individuals. I've had a lot of chats with him (Kohli)... We've shared messages." "Sometimes, just because we want headlines, it's not important. Right now, the most important thing is we both are going to be working extremely hard to make India proud. And that's our job." **THE SUPPORT STAFF QUESTION:** Former India all-rounder Abhishek Nayar and Netherlands batter Ryan ten Doeschate, who worked with Gambhir in the IPL 2024 during his stint as mentor of the Kolkata Knight Riders, are joining the Indian team coaching staff for the Sri Lanka tour. Gambhir said the full details of his support staff will be known only after the Sri Lanka tour. "Really happy with BCCI. They've agreed with most things I've asked for. The crux of the support staff will remain as they are." "The rest of the staff will be finalised after the Sri Lanka tour. (For now) Abhishek and Ryan as assistant coach. T Dilip will continue as fielding coach. Sairaj Bahutule as interim bowling coach for the Sri Lanka tour."

## We wanted someone who was likely to be available more often: Agarkar on Suryakumar as T20 captain

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Fitness, feedback from the dressing room and consistent availability swung the pendulum in Suryakumar Yadav's favour when it was decided to appoint him captain of the Indian T20 team ahead of Hardik Pandya, chief selector Ajit Agarkar said here on Monday. Agarkar was addressing a media conference along with newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir ahead of India's tour of Sri Lanka where the team will play three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs against the hosts starting July 27. "Why Surya was made captain? Because he is one of the deserving candidates. The one we know has been around the dressing room over the last one year, you get feedback from the dressing room a lot. He has got a good cricketing brain and he is still one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar said during the joint press conference. "You (would) want a captain that's going to be more likely to play all the games. We think he's a deserving candidate and hopefully we'll see over time how he develops into the role." The chairman of selectors said they wanted a captain with a proven fitness record and not someone who was prone to injuries as Pandya is believed to be. "But in regards to Hardik (Pandya), he's still a very important player for us and that's what we want him to be because those sorts of skill sets are very difficult to find what he has," Agarkar said. "Fitness, obviously, has been a challenge for him over the last few years and then it becomes a little bit more difficult for him and even as selectors," he said. "We're trying to now, we've got a bit more time till the next T20 World Cup when we can look at a few things. It's not rushed at the moment." "We want him to be, you know, as I said, he's an important player for us and hopefully his performances are more important - that was the thought behind it. The fitness is a clear challenge and we want someone who's likely to be available more often than not," Agarkar said. As regards to former vice-captain KL Rahul being



to try and see... I mean, this time (in) T20 (against Afghanistan), frankly, when Hardik did get injured was a little bit of a challenge. "At that point, Rohit wasn't playing but was still around (and) made our life a lot easier that he could come and play. We don't want that situation going forward again," he continued. **CHANCE FOR GILL TO LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE:** Agarkar said the selectors wanted vice-captain Shubman Gill to learn from the experience as well as from the senior players. "Shubman is a guy that we feel is a three-format player and seems to have shown a lot of quality over the last year or so that we hear from the dressing room," he said. "You try and have somebody who can also learn from a couple of the senior guys that are there." "Surya in this instance or Rohit who's still around so we don't face the same challenges (that) suddenly (you are) trying to look for a captain in case there are injuries or loss of form somewhere," he explained. "He's shown some decent leadership qualities. We want to try and get him the experience that he can put forward. There are no guarantees in life but at this point, that's the thought," he said. **PACE BOWLING COMBINATION IN FUTURE:** Agarkar admitted that while playing Tests in India the team may not need three seamers but going forward they will be discussing the fast bowling lineup too. "Some of the guys, some of the fast bowlers are at the NCA. We hope that for the next month or so, they'll be back up playing," he said. "I think he has (Mohammed Shami) started to bowl which is a good sign for us. (The) 19th September is the first Test. That was always the goal," he added. "We don't quite know whether that's the timeline at the moment. That I have to speak to the guys at the NCA but that's the aim." "There are so many Tests coming in India; maybe you don't play three seamers in the eleven. But, going forward, there's a lot of cricket or Test cricket that's coming. We need some conversation around it," he said.

overlooked, he retorted, "I wasn't there when KL was superseded; I wasn't the selector firstly." "We've got a little bit more time now till the... Since I've come, there's been a 50-overs World Cup, almost followed by the T20 World Cup. Fitness is a concern, not just that, we also feel that Surya has the necessary qualities to be a good captain." "Two years is a long time, so at least it gives us a bit more of a chance to try and look at some things differently. The main thing is we want guys who are available all the time. In this way, we also feel we can manage Hardik a little bit better," he said. **JADEJA WAS NOT DROPPED:** Agarkar admitted the selection committee should have clarified that senior all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who also retired from T20Is after the World Cup, was not "dropped." "It would have been really pointless to take both him and Akshar for this short series. We know what Jaddu has done. He's had a terrific World Cup (T20). So, no, not at all dropped," he said. "All options are open. But there

was (a chance that) either of them would have played all three games if we'd taken both. There's a big test season coming up where he's (Jadeja) likely to feature in a lot of the Tests. I don't think three games would have mattered. "We probably should have clarified that after the selection that he's not getting dropped. He's still within the scheme of things and very important as a player," said the former India pacer. **LEADERSHIP DOOR OPEN FOR RAHUL, RISHABH, PANDYA:** Agarkar said the door is not shut for the former deputies like KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant and even Pandya as far as leadership role is concerned. "We need to get him (Pant) back playing, that's the first thing. He's going to be a key to us as a player; hasn't had a lot of cricket. We'll see what he can do," he said. "We don't want to burden somebody again who's just coming back after over a year out of the game. KL has not been part of T20 now for a little while," he said. "We've got a chance to reset the button a little bit. We've got a bit more time to plan. We want

## Gambhir-Agarkar in sync: Players won't be allowed to pick and choose series for workload management

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Gautam Gambhir's plain-spoken and Ajit Agarkar's lucidity is set to make for a heady combo as the new head coach and the chairman of selectors looked completely in sync while spelling out, in no uncertain terms, that days of cherry-picking series by citing workload management could be over. They explained certain tough calls while in a few things, they were subtle yet said enough to allow people to read between the lines. Physically, neither Gambhir nor Agarkar have an imposing presence but ask anyone in the periphery of Indian cricket and people will swear by the fact that these are two individuals with sharp and informed takes, which don't change readily. As they put up a united front in their first joint media interaction, it was clear that they were ready to put their money where their mouths were. Technically, it might seem that Agarkar enters his second year of chairmanship but perhaps like Gambhir, this is also a fresh start in which the duo can create a road-map for the 2027 ODI World Cup. So what was the biggest takeaway from the Gambhir-Agarkar joint press briefing ahead of the tour of Sri Lanka? Workload management seems to be the biggest one. The prickly word in Indian cricket will again dominate air space but this time, it is crystal clear that rules will be different for batters and bowlers. "I've said it before, workload management for someone like (Jasprit) Bumrah is important.



If you are a batter who is in good form, might as well play all the games," Gambhir was as straight as ramrod in his reply when asked about his take on the issue. "It was widely believed that both ODI and Test captain Rohit Sharma and team's premier batter Virat Kohli will skip the three games in Sri Lanka but their presence ultimately is an indicator that both the seniors will probably play as many series as possible. "Now that Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli will play only two formats, I expect them to be available for most games," Gambhir addressed the issue with a lot of clarity just like chairman Agarkar was up and ready to explain what went against Hardik Pandya, who was considered to be a natural successor to Rohit, at least in the T20 format. "You (would) want a captain that's going to be more likely to play all the games," one couldn't get a more crystal clear answer to a pointed question. What was more refreshing was that unlike selection committee chairmen of the past, Agarkar just didn't go by

his gut feeling about the leadership qualities but also took the view of the change room. "Why Surya was made captain? Because he is one of the deserving candidates. The one we know has been around the dressing room over the last one year, you get feedback from the dressing room a lot. "He has got a good cricketing brain and he is still one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar elaborated. In the 27-minute media conference, one thing was reiterated time and again. Stars can no longer pick and choose. While acknowledging that a player of Pandya's skill-set is a rarity, Agarkar made it clear that the selection committee cannot be taken for granted. "Fitness, obviously, has been a challenge for him over the last few years and then it becomes a little bit more difficult for him and even as selectors," he said. Agarkar handled the tricky query on KL Rahul being ignored for captaincy with similar eloquence. "I wasn't there when KL was superseded; I wasn't the selector firstly."

Then there was the issue of Duleep Trophy and Agarkar was clear that if not all, most of the Indian Test team contenders will be playing at least one match of the tournament before India's rare season of 10 Tests commences on September 19. In case of Ravindra Jadeja, Agarkar was clear that the senior all-rounder wasn't dropped from the ODI team but his explanation did indicate that one might not see two players with pretty identical skill-sets in ODI set-up. "It would have been really pointless to take both him and Akshar for this short series... So, no, not at all dropped," he said on Jadeja. And then Gambhir had to address the elephant in the room - the conjectures about his relationship with Kohli, something the straight-shooter rejected as "good for TRP". Gambhir might be perceived as a 'My Way or High Way' man but his messaging was that he wants to be the agent that keeps the dressing room happy. And what qualifies as a happy dressing room?

## Mumbai City FC sign Supratim Das for three years

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Mumbai City FC on Monday announced the signing 19-year-old midfielder Supratim Das on a three-year contract which will keep him at the club till Indian Super League (ISL) 2027. Das is known for his technical abilities, game awareness and "excels at holding the ball under pressure and delivering incisive passes as a midfielder", the club said in a statement. Das, who is from the Reliance Foundation Young Champs, played a crucial role in winning the sub-junior I-League title in the 2018-2019 season and in their runner-up finish in the MFA



Super Division League during the 2022-23 season. He also participated in the Reliance

Foundation Development League 2022-23 and 2023-24 and earned qualification for the Premier League Next Gen Cup in 2023. Das has been a part of the RFYC's exposure trips to Spain in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and to Japan earlier this year. "The club is known for developing young talents and it is a fantastic opportunity for me to develop my skills and polish my talent at the top level," Das said. MCFC's head coach Petr Kratky said, "We had our eyes on him for some time and are happy he has decided to join us. His vision, technical ability, and understanding of the game will benefit our team."

# Dominant India Women face Nepal, eye semifinal berth in Asia Cup

**PTI ■ DAMBULLA**  
Buoyant India will look to extend their winning run and seal a semifinal berth when they face Nepal in their final Group A Women's T20 Asia Cup match here on Tuesday. India registered convincing wins in their first two matches of the continental tournament, beating traditional rivals Pakistan and United Arab Emirates by seven wickets and 78 runs respectively to put one foot in the semifinals. Minnows Nepal hardly have any time to recover from the thrashing they received at the hands of Pakistan in their previous outing on Sunday, the same day when the tournament's overwhelming favourites and defending champions India bulldozed the hapless Emirates side. While India are primed to enter the last-four, Pakistan improved their net run rate with the comfortable win over Nepal lifting them to the second



spot in Group A. India will, however, not be bothered by how the other teams are doing and will look to sustain the momentum they have gained with two convincing victories heading into the semifinals. India have flexed their muscles in both batting and bowling so far in the tournament, and are likely to continue in the same vein come Tuesday. If the swashbuckling opening duo of Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma

fired with the bat in the victory over Pakistan, after the bowlers' excellent display, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Richa Ghosh led the show in the middle-order in the hammering of the UAE. The big-hitting Ghosh, especially, was in destructive mood as she carted 64 in just 29 balls while Kaur compiled 66 in 47 deliveries. While Kaur played the anchor's role to perfection, it was Ghosh's blazing knock which helped India score their first-ever 200-plus total in T20Is. As far as the Indian bowling is concerned, the likes of Renuka Singh, Pooja Vastrakar and Deepti Sharma have been doing a wonderful job of both containing runs and taking wickets. Even Tanuja Kanwar, who was roped in as a replacement for injured off-spinner Shreyanka Patil, performed her duty with aplomb, giving away only 14 runs while taking a wicket in her full quota of four overs. The Indu Barma-led Nepal, which started the tournament with a

historic six-wicket victory over the UAE, is well aware of the task. They will certainly take win in the event but more than that to even come close to challenging a dominant India.

**पंजाब नैशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank**  
Recovery Center, PNB House, BHEL, Sector-IV Haridwar- 249403. Email: cs8238@pnb.co.in

**POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)**  
Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 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/s on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors to repay the amount as mentioned against each account within 60 days from the date of notice(s) date of receipt of the said notice(s). The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the dates mentioned against each account. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Punjab National Bank for the amounts and interest thereon. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors 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.

S. No.	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor	Details of Security/Property	Date of Demand Notice	Date of possession notice affixed	Amount Outstanding
1.	Branch: Ramnagar, Roorkee Borrower: Mr. Vinod Kumar S/o Shri Paltu Singh Mohalla Ganeshpur bahar Hadood, Nagar Nigam Roorkee Haridwar- 247663 and Also at VPO- Baseda Khaddar Mukhyali Tehsil Laksar Haridwar- 247663.	Residential house west facing having area measuring In East- 23 feet, in West- 23 feet, in North: 34 feet 3 inch and In South: 36 feet having total area measuring 807 sq. feet or 75 sq. mtr belonging to part of Khasra No. 193 M situated at Mohalla Ganeshpur Bahar Hadood, Nagar Nigam Roorkee, Registrar vide sale deed at Bahi No. 1, jild No. 4939 of pages 171&192, Serial No. 10922 on date 17.10.2019 in sub-registrar Office Roorkee which is bounded as: East: Open plot, West: Way 16 ft wide, North: House of Pooja W/o Kirat, South: House of Smt. Amrita Dubey.	26.04.2024	18.07.2024	Rs. 21,48,298.53 + further interest & other Charges /Expenses.

Date: 22.07.2024 Place : Haridwar Authorised Officer