



OPINION 6 MODI'S TUMULTUOUS NEW INNINGS

WORLD 9 GROWING CLAMOUR FOR BIDEN TO STEP DOWN

MONEY 10 INDIAN ECONOMY SET FOR STABLE HIGH GROWTH

LUCKNOW, MONDAY JULY 1, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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HARDIK BIG-STAGE PLAYER: SANJAY MANJREKAR 12 SPORTS

New Criminal Laws kick in



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ending colonial era laws from Monday, three new criminal laws— Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Act (BSA) — will come into effect across the country, replacing the British era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. The new laws will bring in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summonses through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes. The new laws in India marks a significant shift in priorities,

placing crimes against women, children, and the nation at the forefront. This is in stark contrast to colonial era laws, where concerns like treason and treasury offenses outweighed the needs of ordinary citizens. The Government has held regular meetings with States and Union Territories and they are fully geared up in terms of technology, capacity building and awareness generation to implement the new criminal laws. BNS has 358 sections (instead of 511 sections in the IPC). A total of 20 new crimes have been added and the imprisonment sentence has been increased for 33 of them. The amount of the fine has been increased in 83 crimes and mandatory minimum punishment has been introduced in 23 crimes.

The penalty of community service has been introduced for six crimes and 19 sections have been repealed or removed from the bill. BNSS has 531 sections (in place of 484 sections of CrPC). A total of 177 provisions have been changed in the bill, and nine new sections as well as 39 new sub-sections have been added to it. The new act has added 44 new provisions and clarifications. Timelines have been added to 35 sections and audio-video provision has been added at 35 places. A total of 14 sections have been repealed and removed. BSA has 170 provisions (instead of the original 167 provisions), and a total of 24 provisions have been changed. The new laws have also prioritised the investigations for offences against women and children, ensuring timely completion within two months of recording information. In the new criminal laws, it has become mandatory for forensic experts to visit crime scenes for serious offences and collect evidence. Summonses can now be served electronically, expediting legal processes, reducing paperwork, and ensuring efficient communication between all parties involved.

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PM Modi ki Mann Se Baat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi resumed his monthly radio programme "Mann ki Baat" on Sunday thanking the countrymen for their unwavering faith in the Constitution and the democratic system and participating in the Lok Sabha election 2024 in which over 65 crore of them voted. The radio programme of Modi had been paused since the last broadcast on February 25 due to the elections. Addressing the nation in his first Mann Ki Baat programme after assuming office for a third term, PM Modi expressed that he missed the conversation with the public since the February broadcast. He thanked people and congratulated the Election Commission and every

person associated with the process as he touched on a host of issues in his 30-minute radio address. The Prime Minister also cheered Indian athletes who will be competing in the Paris Olympics starting next month, and urged people to use "cheer4Bharat" hashtag to motivate them. He said the performance of Indian players in the previous Olympics in Tokyo had won the hearts of every citizen, and the participating athletes have been since wholeheartedly engaged in the preparations for the Paris Olympics. "If we take all the players together, then all of them have participated in nearly 900 international competitions. This is a very big number," he said, adding that Indians will get to witness certain things for the first time.

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Manoj Kumar Singh takes over as UP Chief Secy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Manoj Kumar Singh, an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer of the 1988 batch of Uttar Pradesh cadre, has taken over as the new chief secretary of the state. He has succeeded Durga Shanker Mishra, a 1984 batch officer of the same cadre. Singh will also continue as Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner. Durga Shanker Mishra, then posted as secretary, housing and urban development, at the Centre, was repatriated to his home state on December 29, 2021, only two days before his retirement, and was posted as the chief secretary of Uttar Pradesh. Mishra's appointment as the chief secretary on the cusp of retirement came as a big surprise to many as it was believed to be the first case of its kind in the country. Later he was given another one-year extension by the Centre in December 2022. As his tenure was about to end in December 2023, he was granted a six-month extension citing the Lok Sabha elections. However, this time, Mishra was not given a fourth extension, and the government has now entrusted the responsibility of chief secretary to Manoj Kumar Singh. Originally from Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, Manoj Kumar Singh is considered one of the most influential bureaucrats in



the state. He currently oversees several important departments. As additional chief secretary, he has held responsibilities of Panchayati Raj and Horticulture and Food Processing departments, playing a key role in implementing numerous government schemes. Manoj Kumar Singh is due to retire in July 2025. Manoj Kumar Singh currently holds two key positions as the agriculture production commissioner and the infrastructure and industrial development commissioner of the state. In addition to these roles, he is also serving in senior capacities as the additional chief secretary of Panchayati Raj and Food Processing departments, as well as the chairman of UPDA, UPSHA and PICUP, all of which are crucial for the state's development.

During the COVID-19 period, Singh was initially part of Team 11 and later Team 9, where he played a significant role in controlling the spread of COVID-19 in rural areas. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's BC Sakhi scheme, embodying the concept of 'Banking at Your Doorstep', is now being recognised as a model across the country. Manoj Kumar Singh has significantly contributed to both the planning and implementation of this initiative. The scheme is receiving national acclaim as an excellent example of women's self-reliance and financial inclusion. In addition to expanding women's self-help groups, Manoj Kumar Singh has also played a significant role in ensuring the effective implementation of child development schemes such as 'Take Home Ration'.



General Upendra Dwivedi takes over as 30th Chief of Army Staff from General Manoj Pande

General Dwivedi new Army chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

General Upendra Dwivedi on Sunday here assumed charge as the 30th Army chief. He succeeds General Manoj Pande who retired after more than 40 years of service. Incidentally, Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and the new Army chief are classmates. They studied together in class five in Sainik School, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh in the 1970s. While they were studying in Class 5A, their roll numbers were 931 and 938 respectively. Official spokesperson of the Defence Minister, A Bharat Bhushan Babu, said in a social media post, "For the first time in Indian Military history, Chiefs of Navy and Army hail from the same school. This rare honour of nurturing two prodigious students, who would go on to lead their respective Services 50 years later, goes to Sainik School, Rewa in Madhya Pradesh." Navy Chief Tripathi took charge on May 1.

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Parliament resumes on RajNEETi



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament is set to witness heated debates on a range of issues like the NEET paper leak row, the Agnipath initiative and inflation when both the Houses reconvene on Monday. Besides the paper leak matter, the Opposition parties under the INDIA Bloc are also likely to raise the issue of unemployment and the alleged misuse of probing agencies by the NDA Government when Parliament is scheduled to take the debate on the Motion of Thanks of President's Address. The Lok Sabha has allocated 16 hours for the debate on the Motion of Thanks, which will conclude with the reply by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday. In the Rajya Sabha, 21 hours have been set aside for the debate and the Prime Minister is likely to reply on Wednesday. Opposition INDIA Bloc members forced adjournment in Lok Sabha when the House was to take up the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, demanding a dedicated discussion on the NEET issue. AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh on Sunday announced that leaders of the INDIA bloc will protest in the Parliament complex on Monday morning against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's alleged misuse of the CBI and the ED to target Opposition leaders. "The BJP-led Central Government

and its prime investigating agencies are misusing power. Modi is targeting Opposition parties and filing fake cases. The CBI and the ED have filed false cases and investigations against every Opposition leader, from senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi to Mamata Banerjee to DMK leaders. They have arrested Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The ED and the CBI will go against whoever speaks against and does not join the BJP," Singh said at a press conference on Sunday. Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Sunday asserted that the Government was in touch with "all stakeholders" in the NEET

paper leak case and a decision "in the best interests of students" will be taken at an "appropriate" time. He also slammed the Opposition for stalling Parliament's proceedings over the issue, alleging that it reflected a "flawed mindset" (galat soch). Taking a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he addressed the first episode of Mann ki Baat in his third term, Congress' media and publicity head Pawan Khera questioned why he did not mention NEET, the railway accident or the "infrastructure collapses". He said the Opposition Parliamentarians will keep on protesting until the Government debates on the issue for a resolution that no young minds are affected due to such paper leaks. NEET-UG was conducted by the NTA on May 5 with around 24 lakh candidates appearing. The results were announced on June 4, but they were followed by allegations of question paper leaks in States such as Bihar, besides other irregularities. BJP member and former Union Minister Anurag Thakur is set to initiate the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address which is to be seconded by first term Lok Sabha member Bansuri Swaraj, the daughter of BJP stalwart late Sushma Swaraj. The debate has already been initiated in the Rajya Sabha by member Sudhanshu Trivedi on Friday but could not proceed due to protests by the Opposition.

Virat and Rohit Sharma ride off into the sunset

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

The confetti shimmered like a thousand dreams realized, raining down on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma as they held aloft the T20 World Cup trophy gleaming under the floodlights of Kensington Oval in Barbados. Virat and Rohit walked up to the microphone to give their victory speeches and a different kind of farewell on a night where billions of emotions were high after the triumph final. While receiving the Man of the Match award for his crucial innings of 76 of 39 balls, Virat said, "This was my last T20 World Cup, this is exactly what we (Indian Cricket Team) wanted to achieve, now it's time for the next generation to take over." After receiving the medals and awards, Rohit Sharma also announced his retirement officially. While addressing the post match conference Sharma said, "That was my last game as well. Honestly I have enjoyed it since the time I started playing this format.



Rohit Sharma embraces Virat Kohli after India's T20 World Cup 2024 win (X/@ICC)

There's no better time to say good bye to this format, winning the World Cup is what I wanted." India's star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja also hung up his boots from T20 Internationals. Kohli has always been the star performer for India from his debut 2012 World Cup. Over the years his statistics speak for himself and whenever the

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A colourful way this monsoon

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Much to the delight of tribal women of Kerala's Attappadi, their Karthumbi, the colourful handmade umbrellas, are the toast of the country liked by fashion lovers and many others. An initiative launched in 2015 in Kerala's Attappadi, an exclusive region for the tribals, Karthumbi umbrellas have now become a cynosure of all eyes. Karthumbi was launched by Thampu, a non-governmental organization functioning in Attappadi to help the tribals get over the challenges of life. In fact, Attappadi had reported more than 200 infant deaths during 2013, 2014 and 2015 as a fall out of



malnutrition and hunger. Though the Kerala Government tried to cover up the issue, the tribals numbering 32,000 stand witness to these deaths. The area had no roads, hospitals or schools to speak about. Moreover the encroachers of forest land from other parts of the State painted the region

red with their nocturnal "adventures". Rajendra Prasad, a tribal activist based in Kochi who is the founder of Thampu had an answer. Empower the tribal women by offering them an avenue with which they can supplement their income. That's how they chose umbrella manufacturing as a

source of income and that too by working from home. The Thampu initiative resulted in Karthumbi, handmade umbrellas which are without doubt a step ahead of umbrellas manufactured by major companies. "More than 700 women from the tribal community were trained in umbrella making during 2014 to 2017. Right now around 60 women are in the job of umbrella manufacturing and all of them work from their home, convenor said K A Ramu. He said the response from the customers was overwhelming and the women make Rs 30 for every umbrella crafted by them. The Karthumbi brand of umbrella has become a status symbol for the fashion

conscious women of the State and many parts of the country. "I make 10 to 20 umbrellas per day and the work is done after completing my other works like the employment guarantee programme. It has helped me to buy a scooty too," said Lakshmi Unnikrishnan, a homemaker belonging to Mudugar tribals. Prasad said at the time of launching Karthumbi umbrellas, they used to pay each woman Rs 50 per umbrella. "The Covid 19 pandemic, and the deluge literally put an end to our business. But the determination of the women workers from the tribal communities helped us to sustain the venture.

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Avalanche hits Gandhi Sarovar near Kedarnath

PNS ■ RUDRAPRAYAG

A massive avalanche hit the Gandhi Sarovar located four kilometre above the Kedarnath Dham in Uttarakhand early Sunday morning. This avalanche that occurred near the Chorabari glacier fell into the valley in the same area but there was no loss of life or property. Devotees who went to visit the Kedarnath temple this morning captured the natural phenomenon, which occurred around 5 am, on their mobile phones. A huge cloud of snow was seen sliding down with speed and stopped after falling into a deep ravine. The avalanche



occurred in the upper region of the Gandhi Sarovar in Chorabari glacier, below the snow-covered Meru-Sumeru mountain range located at the

upper end of Kedarnath valley. Rudraprayag District Disaster Management Officer Nandan Singh Rajwar said there was no loss of life or property due to the avalanche. The entire area, including the Kedarnath valley, is safe, Rajwar said. Gopal Singh Rauthan, an employee of Garhwal Mandal Development Corporation, was present in the temple when the avalanche occurred. There was a lot of curiosity among the devotees who saw this natural phenomenon for about five minutes. Another avalanche occurred in the Chorabari glacier on June 8, Rauthan said.

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Eve-teasing sparks outrage at KGMU

Accused held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A delayed response to an alleged case of eve-teasing sparked outrage among medical students at King George's Medical University (KGMU), leading hundreds to lock their hostel and shoo away canteen staff. To address the students' anger, police invoked IPC Section 354 and promptly arrested the accused.

"A case under IPC Section 354 for molestation was filed against the accused on Saturday night, resulting in his immediate incarceration," the Chowk inspector said.

The accused, a canteen employee, allegedly harassed a medical student a few days earlier. Frustrated by the university's indecisiveness, students protested on Saturday night, forcing out hostel mess staff and barricading the entrance.

Amid escalating chaos outside the Kalam Centre, the university administrators, including the proctor, intervened unsuccessfully to pacify the students. Subsequently, the administration summoned police, who assured the students of swift action. Angered students accused mess worker Sanjay Gaur of molestation, citing a lack of action by the university

ANGERED STUDENTS ACCUSED MESS WORKER SANJAY GAUD OF MOLESTATION, CITING A LACK OF ACTION BY THE UNIVERSITY DESPITE PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS

despite previous complaints. In response, the police detained the accused for questioning, while students protested at Chowk Kotwali. Throughout Saturday and Sunday nights, a predominantly female crowd of MBBS students gathered at the Kalam Centre demanding justice and banning male workers from the hostel mess.

The incident, which occurred on June 21, involved a hostel student calling Sanjay Gaur for cleaning, during which he allegedly molested her before fleeing. Despite lodging a formal complaint immediately after the incident, no action was taken by the university officials. Reports also surfaced of the hostel warden making inappropriate remarks about the female students' attire, further fuelling outrage.

In a show of solidarity, the students removed all mess employ-

ees from the first-floor premises and secured the area, though the accused worker was absent. The unrest persisted until midnight as students demanded stringent action from the university administration.

In another incident, an 11-year-old girl was killed, and her nine-year-old brother critically injured when a speeding SUV hit them in the Khargapur vegetable market on Saturday afternoon. The injured boy is said to be in a critical condition at the hospital. Police have filed a case and started an investigation.

Reports indicate that the girl, Arohi from Ram Aasrey Ka Purwa in Khargapur, was with her brother Ayush Kumar at the market to buy goods. While returning home, they were struck by a speeding SUV that sped off the scene after the incident.

Passersby helped rush both victims to the hospital and informed their parents about the incident. Shyam Verma, the victims' father, mentioned that his children were taken to RML Hospital, where Arohi was pronounced dead.

"Ayush is receiving treatment at the hospital," he added in his police complaint. Police are examining CCTV footage to trace the vehicle and identify the errant driver.

Fed up with babudom, police apathy, youth tries self-immolation

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Fed up with bureaucratic delays and police apathy, a youth attempted self-immolation inside Chinhat police station on Sunday to draw attention to his case. However, prompt action from the policemen saved the youth from being burnt. He was taken to a hospital and later questioned. Senior officials from the revenue and police departments are now reviewing his case.

According to reports, Saurabh (24) from Goyala village sprinkled some inflammable substance from a bottle and tried to set himself on fire inside Chinhat police station. The policemen present there stopped him, preventing a tragedy. Saurabh's family members stated that he was frustrated by the lack of action from the police and revenue department concerning a land dispute. They said he had been visiting the Chinhat police station and a police post for several months seeking justice, but to no avail. They alleged that Saurabh's land had been encroached upon by Rajendra Prasad, a farmer, and Jagdish Yadav, a broker.

"A complaint was also lodged with the lekhpal, a revenue official, but no help came. After that, a complaint was made to the police. Despite repeatedly visiting the police post and station, his problem was not

resolved. Frustrated, Saurabh attempted suicide at the police station," the family said.

As the news went viral on social media platforms, the police swiftly took action, anticipating inquiries from higher officials. The police stated that the matter was under investigation.

FIRE ERUPTS IN FLAT

A fire broke out at a flat in Kaiserbagh around 2:50 pm on Sunday, causing panic among the flat owner and neighbours. Upon receiving the information, two fire tenders from Chowk and one from Aminabad were dispatched to the scene as per the chief fire officer's instructions.

On arrival, the firemen discovered that the fire had broken out in the kitchen of house number 306 on the fourth floor of K-Square Apartment, filling the entire building with smoke. Following standard protocols, the building was evacuated before fire fighting operations began. The fire was fully extinguished in about 45 minutes. There were no casualties, and no one was trapped in the building. The fire started in Nayar Ali's flat (number 306), where his wife Naheed was cooking. The fire ignited from cooking oil in a pan. Naheed was alone in the house at the time. Although three fire tenders were sent to the scene, only two were needed to put out the flames.

Displaced residents assured proper amenities

Lucknow (PNS): Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob addressed displaced residents of Akbar Nagar during a two-day special camp which concluded on Sunday evening. The camp, organised by the Lucknow Development Authority (LDA), aimed to discuss and strategise the provision of basic amenities to the residents.

Addressing the gathering, the divisional commissioner assured residents that sincere efforts would be made to provide essential amenities such as water, an efficient sewer system, well-illuminated street lights, and ensure law and order. She requested their cooperation in organising the newly constructed colony. LDA Vice-Chairman Indramani Tripathi acknowledged that residents recently relocated to Sector-I flats were facing discomfort due to the lack of basic amenities. He admitted that the LDA had failed in promptly providing these amenities due to the urgency of the relocation process. Officials from the civil supply department were also present at the event. They assisted residents in transferring their ration cards to the new colony and planned to establish a new ration store there to provide subsidised ration. Mohammad Jamal, a former resident of Akbar Nagar, raised concerns about the lack of a nearby medical store, with the closest one being about two kilometres away.

12 injured as water tank collapses

Lucknow: At least 12 persons sustained serious injuries after a water tank in a residential colony in Mathura collapsed on Sunday, officials said.

The incident took place at around 6 pm in the Krishna Vihar Colony, developed by the Uttar Pradesh Awasth Vikas Parishad, officials said.

A number of nearby houses also came under the rubble of the water tank and some people, including children, got buried under the rubble of the tank and the houses.

Dr Bhudev Prasad, the in-charge of the Rapid Response Team of the Health department, said that initially four injured were pulled out from the debris, but now this number had reached a dozen. He added that more people may still be trapped under it.

Mathura District Magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh said all the injured were immediately sent to the district hospital for treatment. He said that apart from the fire service and police, teams of revenue, municipal corporation, and Health department were engaged in the rescue work.

The district magistrate said it was learned that the construction of the water tank was completed in 2021. The collapse of the tank in this way in just three years raises many questions, which will be investigated, he added. He also said the tank of 2.5 lakh litre capacity was built by the Jal Nigam at a cost of Rs

6 crore under the Gangajal Drinking Water Project (Gangajal Pejal Pariyojna). He said that teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) had also been called for the rescue work.

LIGHTNING KILLS 2

Two persons, including a priest, died in separate incidents of lightning, which also left seven others injured in Deoria district on Sunday, police said.

Kotwali police station SHO Ved Prakash Sharma said the incident happened around 1.00 pm when it was raining heavily in the area. Some people, including the temple priest, had taken shelter in the temple at the Goplapur village under Kotwali police station when lightning struck the structure.

The lightning was so strong that it burnt a hole in the roof of the temple, and those who had taken shelter were hit, Sharma said.

Temple priest Radheshyam Giri (50) died on the spot while seven other people sustained serious burn injuries. The injured are undergoing treatment at the medical college hospital. In the second incident, Rajnath Kushwaha (40) was struck by lightning when he was sowing paddy in his fields. He died on the spot.

District Magistrate Akhand Pratap Singh said the relatives of the deceased and the injured would be provided government assistance as per rules.

Shots fired at businessman, friend

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

SUV-borne unidentified men allegedly opened fire on a businessman and his realtor friend when they were returning home after attending a birthday party at a lifestyle and business hub in Vibhuti Khand police station area around 2 am on Sunday.

According to reports, the victim Misbah, along with his friend Malik Nomani from Adil Nagar in Gudamba, and several others had gone to a wedding party in Gomti Nagar. Around 2:30 am, as the group was heading home, a

speeding SUV suddenly blocked their vehicle. A youth lowered the window pane and allegedly fired shots at Misbah. "We were returning from our friend's birthday party celebration. A black SUV without a registration plate approached from the opposite direction. A youth lowered the window pane and opened fire. We managed to evade the attack by hiding under the seats. There was a girl in the attackers' vehicle who immediately fled the scene," Nomani stated in his complaint.

Nomani mentioned overhearing associates of the main

attacker referring to him as Faiz. "Faiz is our business rival. He was intoxicated when he attacked us. We immediately called the police and later filed a complaint at the police station. The entire incident is captured on CCTV installed at the club," Nomani claimed.

In a separate incident, a youth allegedly assaulted his rival when he found him alone on his way home in Chinhat police station area. The incident occurred on June 28, and a case was registered on Sunday, as the victim's family

was occupied with his hospitalisation. Reports stated that the victim, Balbeer Yadav from Laulai village in Chinhat, was returning home after work and had stopped at a flour mill when his rival Rohit attacked him. "Rohit grabbed a brick and struck Balbeer's head forcefully. The impact caused severe injuries, leaving him unconscious with blood flowing from the wound," victim's brother Sudhir explained. Balbeer is currently undergoing treatment at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, and the police have filed a case regarding the incident.



Children taking out a procession from Rajajipuram mini-stadium to celebrate Team India's T20WC victory

Pioneer

3 members of female thieves' gang held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Three members of a female thief gang, known for using iron rods and sharp-edged weapons to counter any resistance while executing the crime, were arrested in Devi Kheda, Lucknow, on Saturday. Stolen goods and cash were recovered from them. The police sent the three women to jail while continuing the search for the remaining gang members. This gang had committed a theft at the house of the joint director of Health department in Ashiyana area on June 7.

According to reports, the police were investigating the theft at the

house of Joint Director of Health department Dr Sandeep Gulati, who resides in Sharda Nagar Yojana, Rajni Khand. While Dr Gulati and his family were out of town, their house was locked. On June 7, five women broke into the house and committed theft. The incident was captured on CCTV. Upon returning, Dr Gulati found the house's lock broken and belongings strewn across the floor.

The CCTV footage revealed



images of the female thieves. Based on the footage, a case was registered with the police on June 13. On Saturday, an informer tipped off the police about three women from the gang near the Devi Kheda turning point. The police arrested the women and recovered Rs 20,000 in cash, a debit card, a bank passbook, a red purse, and an iron rod used for breaking locks. During interrogation, the three

women, identified as Santosh Tharu, Nisha Tharu, and Chandni from Azad Nagar in Krishna Nagar police station area, confessed to their crime. A police spokesman stated that the gang of women thieves had been active in Lucknow. "This gang consists of five women. They fearlessly enter houses and commit theft, carrying rods and sharp weapons. Their images were captured in the CCTV footage from Dr Sandeep Gulati's house," he said.

Dr Gulati told the police in his complaint that the incident occurred late at night on June 7. The five women entered the house and fled with gold, silver, money, and jewellery. He also provided the CCTV footage to the police.

UP leaders congratulate Team India on T20 WC win

Lucknow: Prominent leaders in Uttar Pradesh, including Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav congratulated the Indian cricket team for winning the T20 World Cup. In his congratulatory message on 'X', described the Indian cricket team as "amazing, unbelievable and invincible."

"The Indian cricket team has created history by winning against South Africa in the final match of the T20 World Cup by performing brilliantly and

excellently. Hearty congratulations and best wishes to all the players of the Indian team for their excellent performance. Thanks and congratulations for making people proud." Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said, "World victorious India! Hearty congratulations to the Indian cricket team on the historic victory in the T20 World Cup and hearty congratulations to all people of the country. Today the whole country is proud of the wonderful performance of the Indian

team." National Coordinator of Bahujan Samaj Party Akash Anand wrote on 'X', "We did it! Congratulations to Team India on a spectacular T-20 World Cup victory! Your dedication, hard work, and unwavering spirit have made the entire nation proud. This victory belongs to the nation!" India won the T20 World Cup on Saturday by defeating South Africa by seven runs in a nail-biter, ending an 11-year wait for an ICC title.

PTI

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NOTICE

I have changed my name from NIYAMAT ALI TO NIYAMAT ULLA for future purpose. Niyamat Ulla S/o Rahmat Ulla R/o 132/67, Babu Purwa, Kanpur

NOTICE

The general public is informed that earlier my name was Ajay Kumar Agarwal, now my name is Ajay Agarwal. I want to be known by the name Ajay Agarwal in future. Ajay Agarwal KBC-21 Sector B, Kanpur Road, LDA Colony Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226012

NOTICE

This is the applicant's mother Smt. Madhu Saxena W/O Shri LP. Saxena Plot No. 142 of land Kharsa No. 353 and 354 Village situated in Minjuria-Chandan, Pargana, Tehsil, District Lucknow from Gajendra Cooperative Housing Society Ltd. Dated 26-06-1991 by Secretary Shri Gajendra Kumar Sale deed order registered in Part No.1 Section No. 1013 On page no. 101 to 110 of serial no. 17072 The office of Deputy Registrar first. The Original copy of the above sale deed is actually lost on 24-02-2024 which could not find it even after searching. If anyone finds the original copy of the above sale deed, Please Contact at the following address

Name - Haritesh Kumar Saxena Address - C-2510, Indira Nagar Lucknow Mo. no.-9838434343

'Docs should be trained in soft communication skills, legal awareness'

Lucknow (PNS): On the eve of Doctors' Day, head of the respiratory medicine department at King George's Medical University (KGMU) Dr Surya Kant emphasised the critical need for doctors to be trained in soft communication skills and legal awareness when dealing with an increasingly assertive patient population. Highlighting the challenges doctors face daily, Dr Surya Kant outlined several dimensions of these issues. "During their five-year curriculum, doctors primarily focus on medical studies, but it's crucial they also learn soft communication skills," he remarked, adding: "Skills in managing societal expectations and handling chaotic situations should be integral parts of medical school curricula."

Dr Surya Kant underscored the importance of these skills, noting the absence of training on delivering difficult news to patients' families. "Society's expectations are escalating, with everyone wanting their loved ones to receive top priority. However, given the vast disparity

between doctor and patient numbers, this is often unfeasible," he added. Addressing another pressing concern, Dr Surya Kant highlighted the growing trend of legal actions against doctors by patients. "Medical colleges across the country fail to impart knowledge on the legal aspects of medical cases," he lamented, saying, "Patients and their families sometimes confuse natural surgical complications with medical negligence, leading to unwarranted lawsuits." Furthermore, Dr Surya Kant pointed out challenges that doctors encounter under the Clinical Establishment Act and during clinic registration. "Despite directives to identify and penalise quacks, authorities have focused on annual doctor registrations rather than rooting out unqualified practitioners," he explained. "This bureaucratic hurdle forces doctors to navigate multiple clearances to establish clinics, whereas a streamlined single-window clearance system would be more efficient," he added.

CITYBRIEFS

BSIP TO PROMOTE GEO-HERITAGE SITES

The Uttar Pradesh Eco-Tourism Board has signed an MoU with the Biral Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) to promote geo-heritage sites in the state. Director of Tourism Prakhar Mishra highlighted efforts to secure UNESCO World Heritage status for the 1.4 billion-year-old Salkhan fossils in Sonbhadra. The MoU involves BSIP providing technical expertise to verify the fossils' age and establish their credentials. BSIP Director Mahesh Thakkar emphasised their role in research, training, and promoting geoheritage conservation and geo-tourism in Uttar Pradesh. The MoU outlines joint efforts in conservation, research, outreach, and training to develop geotourism in geological and palaeontological sites across the state. Both parties aim to enhance knowledge exchange through meetings, field visits, and publications, and BSIP will assist in preparing dossiers for UNESCO and government agencies. They will also train tourism agencies and local guides about the scientific importance of these sites.

LU SIGNS PACT WITH INDONESIA UNIV

Lucknow University signed a memorandum of cooperation with Universitas Abdurachman Saleh Situbondo, Indonesia, aiming to collaborate on innovative educational advancements aligned with global practices in various academic fields of mutual interest. The agreement includes joint research activities, publications, seminars, conferences, academic

meetings, and programmes. LU Vice-Chancellor Professor Alok Kumar Rai emphasised their commitment to global academic collaboration, particularly with Asian countries, to share best practices and research expertise. The memorandum aims to facilitate knowledge dissemination and enhance academic excellence and research at LU.

AISPLB WRITES TO PM FOR MUHARRAM ARRANGEMENTS

The All-India Shia Personal Law Board (AISPLB) has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi regarding better arrangements for the upcoming Muharram and addressing the issues of the Shia community. The letter highlights Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS), who sacrificed his life along with 71 companions, including a 6-month-old child, in Karbala over 1400 years ago to uphold humanity and compassion. It mentions that in India, people of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, and all faiths commemorate Muharram in memory of such noble sacrifices. This year, Muharram begins on July 8 with around 7 to 8 crore Shia Muslims and followers of various religions participating in processions and rituals across India. "The board respectfully requests you to issue directives to state governments for security arrangements and better management, ensuring processions follow designated routes to prevent any disruption of law and order. There should be appropriate measures by the electricity department to ensure safety along the routes of Tazias (replicas of Imam Hussain's tomb).

UPSRTC registers record profit in April, May

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation, Lucknow region, achieved a record profit in the current financial year (2024-2025). Regional Manager, UPSRTC, RK Tripathi said that they recorded a profit of Rs 8.5 crore in May 2024 with a revenue of Rs 48 crore, and a profit of Rs 7.18 crore in April 2024 with a revenue of Rs 46.61 crore.

Tripathi said their target of achieving an annual profit of Rs 20 crore this year in the Lucknow region, considering the lean seasons as well. "While we faced losses in the financial year 2022-2023, we turned profitable in 2023-2024, but this year's profit surpasses that of the previous financial year by far," he said. He attributed this success to efforts in reducing expenditures and increasing bus occupancy. "We instructed our staff to pick up passengers from all possible points, which boosted bus occupancy. To cut costs, we are optimising the use of our regular staff, who receive fixed salaries. Regular counselling sessions motivate them to work efficiently without feeling pressurised," he added.

Tripathi also emphasised efforts to provide regular training for drivers at the Kamta training centre in Lucknow or in Kanpur, aimed at reducing accidents and improving

passenger interaction. Regarding profitability, Tripathi noted that the Kaiserbagh Bus Station generated the highest profits in May, totalling Rs 3.45 crore. He mentioned plans to enhance facilities at Kaiserbagh, including air-cooled waiting areas and a driver's rest room, using a centralised air conditioning system. He described Kaiserbagh Bus Station as having 16 platforms with a daily footfall of 20,000-25,000 passengers, serving over 800-900 buses on routes such as Hardoi, Bagraich, Meermoodabad, Neemsar, Kathgodam, Dehradun, Haridwar, Meerut, Bareilly, Farrukhabad, Ayodhya-Sonali, Gonda-Balrampur, Kothawa-Delhi, and Haldwani-Nainital. The station is equipped with passenger facilities including ten wall-mounted fans, three water coolers, one water ATM, four toilets and one mobile toilet, 250 benches, online booking facility, one bank ATM, and a Control Room for passenger grievances. Addressing traffic congestion issues, Tripathi mentioned that some buses have been relocated to Awadh Bus Station at Kamta and Alambagh Bus Station. Upon completion of Jankipuram Bus Station, more buses will be shifted to reduce the load on Kaiserbagh Bus Station.

UP govt gears up to organise Van Mahotsav from today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government is set to organise Van Mahotsav from July 1 to July 7. The event aims at preserving heritage trees and raising public awareness in order to encourage them to join the plantation campaign. As a part of the event, school-children will be made aware of the environment through many competitions including prabhat pheri and nukkad natak. Given the recent intense heat-wave, the state government is again placing renewed emphasis on environmental conservation and rainwater harvesting. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has urged the people of the state to plant and protect at least one or two fruit trees. In the first week of July in the state, public awareness programmes will be held as part of the Van Mahotsav. Under this, prabhat pheri, nukkad natak, art, essay, debate contests and seminars will be organised at the school level. At the same time, emphasis will be on campaigns on environmental protection,

'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign will inspire people, says Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign in his 'Mann Ki Baat' on Sunday. Praising it on his official social media account 'X', Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wrote, "The mention of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign by respected Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the 'Mann Ki Baat' programme will inspire countless people to

plant trees in the name of their revered mother or in her memory." Chief Minister Yogi further wrote, "Plantation is the basis of environmental conservation-enrichment and ecological balance. Come, let us all dedicate ourselves to our Mother and Mother Earth and join this campaign of making our Earth green and become a part of this sacred task of welfare of the world."

afforestation, tree plantation, rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and ending the use of plastic. During the Van Mahotsav, the focus will also be on promoting the propagation of heritage tree gardens. Along with this,

plantation in the catchment area of wetlands and on the river banks will be held for the conservation and revival of rivers, in addition to plantation in urban areas. In each district, several programmes, including public awareness, will be held

at a grand level. At the same time, as per the directives of the Central government, a tree will also be planted in the name of the mother under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign. Chief Minister Yogi has urged the public to plant at least one or two fruit trees in their yards during the upcoming rainy season as part of Van Mahotsav. He emphasised on planting as many saplings as possible across the state and ensuring their proper irrigation and care. Meanwhile, in addition to Van Mahotsav, the Yogi government aims to plant 35 crore saplings this year as well to maintain Uttar Pradesh's green cover. Departments and divisions have already set their targets, with the Forest and Environment department planning to plant 14 crore saplings and the Rural Development department aiming for 12.59 crore saplings statewide. The Lucknow division has been assigned the highest target of planting four crore saplings.

39 lakh saplings to be planted in Lucknow

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Van Mahotsav will kick off on Monday with the planting of 25 saplings to establish the 'Hari Shankari Vatika' in the Kukrail forest, in the presence of senior forest officials. DFO, Awadh, Sitanshu Pandey said on Sunday that this is the first time such a vatika is being established in Kukrail. "A Hari Shankari sapling includes peepal, pakad, and bargad saplings planted together, and this vatika is renowned for generating the maximum oxygen," he said. Pandey mentioned that the focus of the plantation in Lucknow would be on shady trees. "Additionally, plantations will be carried out on the banks of the Kukrail river in Akbar Nagar, where waterlogging species such as arjun, jamun, and kadamb will be planted," he added. The Forest

department will plant 39 lakh saplings in Lucknow in a single day. Nearly 15 lakh saplings will be planted by the Forest department and 24 lakh by other departments. The DFO said the plantations would include the creation of 'Pavitra Dhara' forest on the riverbanks, food forests, heritage tree plantations, and ayush forests. He mentioned that a Central government initiative, 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', would also be part of the plantation campaign. He further stated that a 'Heritage Vatika' would be created in the Kukrail forest area. "We have already procured saplings prepared from the 948 heritage trees across the state, and those of appropriate height will be planted in Kukrail," he said. Additionally, a food forest will be created on Hardoi Road, featuring trees like

drumstick, aonla, mango, and bael, with 1,600 saplings planted per hectare, he added. He said a 10-hectare plantation would be carried out near the Bharwara S.T.P. "There are existing plantations in this area which we will weed out, and then intersperse the new plantations. More than 16,000 saplings that help prevent waterlogging will be planted here," he said. He also said that under the Ayush Van initiative, medicinal saplings would be planted in Lucknow. "For these plantations, we are in talks with various universities in the city to plant 200-300 saplings in small batches of land," he said. The DFO mentioned that discussions are ongoing with Sushant Golf City to carry out Miyawaki plantations. "They have identified the land, and

we are working on securing funds for the plantation," he added. Commenting on the increase in the forest area of Lucknow district, he said that according to the Forest Survey of India report, the forest area now exceeds 15 per cent, up from less than 14 per cent previously. "There has been an increase of 8.83 square kilometres, equating to 8,830,000 square metres of forest cover in the Lucknow district," he said. Regarding the supply of free saplings for plantations, he said that the general public should approach the Forest department. Pandey stated that the survival rate of last year's plantation in Lucknow has been 93-95 per cent. "The audit of the plantation is conducted in three ways: interdivisional, inter-range, and an external audit," he added.

New CS known as a 'performer'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The key to realising any vision is having an exceptional team capable of translating their leader's vision into action with clear intentions and precise implementation. When Yogi Adityanath became the chief minister in 2017, he identified a group of bureaucrats who not only possessed experience and efficiency but also demonstrated integrity, tenacity and a strong work ethic. IAS officer Manoj Kumar Singh is one of these vital members of 'Team Yogi', who, after a rigorous selection process, has now assumed the role of chief secretary of Uttar Pradesh. Manoj Kumar Singh, a 1988 batch IAS officer, is recognised as a 'performer'. As one of the senior-most officers, he has earned a stellar reputation in the bureaucracy due to his extensive experience, efficiency, dedication and competence. This is why Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has consistently shown confidence in Singh throughout his tenure. It is often said that Manoj Kumar Singh has fully embraced Yogi's mantra of 'timely delivery'. Manoj Kumar Singh current-



New Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh (left) shaking hands with outgoing Chief Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra

ly holds two pivotal positions as the agriculture production commissioner and the infrastructure and industrial development commissioner of the state. In addition to these roles, he is also serving in senior capacities as the Additional Chief Secretary of Panchayati Raj and Food Processing, as well as the Chairman of UPDA, UPSHA, and PICUP, all of which are crucial for the state's development. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he played a significant role in controlling the spread of this disease in rural areas. He

also contributed to both the planning and implementation of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's successful BC Sakhi scheme. Manoj Kumar Singh played a crucial role in realising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision of making the 2019 Kumbh Mela a grand global event. As the nodal officer, he oversaw every preparation related to Kumbh-2019. Now, as chief secretary, his extensive experience will be instrumental in successfully organising Mahakumbh 2025. As the additional chief secretary of

Panchayati Raj, Manoj Kumar Singh successfully implemented Chief Minister Yogi's mission at the grassroots level. His efforts were pivotal in achieving the declaration of all 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh as open defecation-free and in constructing the highest number of toilets in the state. Singh led every phase of the Global Investors Summit, which brought investments worth over Rs 40 lakh to Uttar Pradesh. Prior to the summit, he was a key member of Team UP, which travelled to various countries to promote Chief Minister Yogi's message. Singh also played a significant role in organising the main event of the GIS. In February 2024, during the organisation of the fourth groundbreaking ceremony (GBC-4) aimed at implementing projects worth Rs 10 lakh crore, Manoj Kumar Singh, in his role as infrastructure and industrial development commissioner, orchestrated the entire event. In addition to expanding women's self-help groups, Singh has also played a significant role in ensuring the effective implementation of child development schemes.

Encroachments, delays in land measurement upset CM Yogi

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Sunday, held a Janata Darshan at his official residence, where hundreds of complainants presented their grievances. The highest number of complaints originated from Shahjahanpur, primarily concerning land encroachment and delays in land measurement, which upset the chief minister. Chief Minister Yogi reached out to the complainants one by one, giving them a patient hearing. Several complainants from Shahjahanpur district were present, with numerous complaints about land encroachment and land measurement issues. The petitioners also complained to Chief Minister Yogi about the negligence of lekhpals and kanungo. In response, the



chief minister immediately directed the district magistrate to take action and report back within three days. Similar cases were also reported from Agra and Kanpur. Chief Minister Yogi assured all petitioners that there was no need to worry and that prompt action would be taken. A woman approached Chief

Minister Yogi regarding issues in her treatment due to a lack of funds. Despite having an Ayushman card, she needed more money for her treatment. The chief minister assured her that the treatment would not be hindered due to financial constraints and immediately contacted the King George's

Medical University vice-chancellor and instructed her to take appropriate action. Similarly, an assistant teacher from Unnao explained that her child was very ill and undergoing treatment in Lucknow, while her husband was away. She requested a transfer to Lucknow, and Yogi assured her that appropriate action would be taken. CM Yogi Adityanath directed the officials concerned to redress the grievances of complainants at the district level on priority basis. He emphasised that negligence in any form will not be tolerated. Regarding land encroachment cases, Chief Minister Yogi stated that it must be ensured that the victims are heard. Law breakers will not be tolerated under any circumstances, he added.

If India becomes strong, Sanatan Dharma will also prosper: Yogi

PNS ■ KHAIRTHAL

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath participated in the Sant Samagam organised in Ladpur village located in Kotkasim tehsil of Alwar district in Rajasthan on Sunday. During this time, he also took part in the large 'Tritiya Aathan' bhandara organised at the renowned Somanath temple. Greeting all the saints who had come from all over the country, the chief minister said, "The Nath sect is an important sect of India's Sanatan Dharma. All our programmes are dedicated to the revered deities, sages, ascetics and saints. Sanatan Dharma and India complement each other. If India becomes strong, then Sanatan Dharma will also prosper." Yogi Adityanath said, "It is my privilege to participate in



the bhandara organised on the occasion of the 24 death anniversary of saint Somanath, in this village of Ladpur, which is known as the sacred place of

initiation of Maharaj Bhartiari in the Nath sect." He mentioned that the dedicated efforts and sacrifices of saints contribute to strengthen-

ing Sanatan Dharma and India. "Yogi Khetanath Maharaj and his disciple Mahant Somanath devoted their entire lives to welfare activities. Their devotion was to the Sanatan Dharma and its followers. Rajasthan is a land of devotion and power. In the Aravalli hills, many saints practiced for the welfare of society," he remarked. Yogi Adityanath also congratulated all the devotees from Tijara present at the conference for ensuring the victory of Mahant Balaknath in the assembly elections. On this occasion, he also unveiled the statues of Baba Abhyanath and Baba Kartarpuri. A large number of saints and devotees associated with the Shaddarshan sect, including Rajasthan's Minister of Environment and Forest Sanjay Sharma and Tijara MLA Baba Balaknath, were present.

CPI-ML to protest against new criminal laws today

Lucknow (PNS): The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) will observe protest day across the country, including Uttar Pradesh, on Monday against the implementation of three new criminal laws from July 1 and the demolition of the houses of the poor in Akbarnagar locality of Lucknow. Giving this information on Sunday, CPI-ML state secretary Sudhakar Yadav said that the three new laws (criminal codes) of the Narendra Modi government had been made more oppressive than the laws of the colonial era. "These laws are Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), which will replace the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 respectively. There will be a demand to stop the implementation of these laws and to reintroduce them in Parliament for proper examination and deliberations. These were passed hastily while 146 opposition MPs were under suspension," he said. The CPI-ML leader said that in order to beautify and build a riverfront in Akbarnagar, Lucknow, the administration bulldozed the homes of poor families who had been living on the banks of the river Kukrail for decades. "The houses of about 1,200 families were demolished in Akbarnagar, and now the administration is set to remove other settlements of the poor in Lucknow including Akbarnagar, Khurramnagar. Not only in Lucknow, eviction of poor farmers and small businesses is taking place in other districts, including Ayodhya," he said. He said by staging the protest, the party would ask the government to stop the eviction of the poor, stop the oppressive bulldozer rule, regularise the settlements of the poor, provide free houses and civic amenities along with adequate compensation to the displaced people of Akbarnagar.

Govt to transform Ayodhya into world's best city by 2033

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government is set to transform Ayodhya into one of the world's best cities by 2033, with an anticipated investment of Rs 85,000 crore in various development projects. This ambitious objective stems from a study commissioned by the Uttar Pradesh Tourism department and conducted by the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. According to the EDII study, under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Ayodhya's development focuses on 27 key aspects encompassing infrastructure, transportation, and beautification. Many of these projects have already been completed, while ongoing works are expected to conclude soon. The comprehensive development plan for Ayodhya encompasses an array of initiatives. These include upgrading roads and parking facilities, expanding railway lines, modernising railway and bus stations, developing

the airport, enhancing Guptar Ghat, temple museum, wax museum, Sandhya Sarovar, revitalising Ayodhya's market, and rejuvenating 37 religious sites through renovation and beautification efforts. Additionally, the plan involves organising cultural events at 25 mythological and 39 intersections, introducing water sports and sound-and-light shows with river cruises on the Saryu, installing 500 prefabricated toilets along the Saryu ghats, developing parikrama marg, and beautifying various temples. Other features encompass weather forecasting in 140 languages, operation of solar-powered boats, multi-lingual guide boards (in 28 languages), helicopter services, e-cart and wheelchair facilities, constructing railway overbridges, Laxman Path, setting up a solid waste treatment plant, providing cafeteria and open theater amenities, deploying sanitation workers, and installing street lighting infrastructure. According to the EDII study, the projects designed for the development of 'Navya Ayodhya' are of global standards. As part of

this initiative, the international airport and international bus station are being developed in Ayodhya, with the first phase of development already concluded. Simultaneously, Ayodhya Dham Junction railway station has been upgraded to modern standards to facilitate smooth connectivity with major cities throughout the country. EDII director general Dr Sunil Shukla highlighted, "The world's longest solar street light project is currently underway in Ayodhya, spanning over 10 kilometres from Guptar Ghat to Laxman Ghat, with more than 400 street lights being installed." He emphasised that initiatives like these not only position Ayodhya as a developed religious destination, but also places it prominently among the progressive cities. Dr Shukla further elaborated that the focus on establishing place-based tourism centres in Ayodhya will attract a diverse array of visitors, including tourists and architects interested in studying city management and town planning in the years ahead.

SP set to launch green birthday celebrations for Akhilesh Yadav

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party will launch a state-wide week-long plantation drive from Monday to mark the birthday celebrations of party president Akhilesh Yadav. Akhilesh Yadav's birthday falls on July 1. This green birthday celebration dubbed as the 'PDA ped' drive, will also showcase the party's commitment towards Pichhde, Dalits, Apsankhyak, the plank that has worked wonders for SP in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. Nearly all political analysts have unequivocally stressed that it was SP's PDA plank that worked for the party in terms of a strategy and will help the leadership set sail for a long political voyage if handled with caution and care. Party leaders and workers have been advised to plant saplings of Bargad (banyan),



Neem and Peepal trees. "These three species not only contribute towards environmental well-being but also signify social justice, amity and equality - the focus of the party's commitment towards PDA," said SP spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary. He added the idea behind the drive was to preserve the environment for a healthy tomorrow. "The Bharatiya Janata Party government and the party are known for going to shakhas where people learn

how to divide society. Our endeavour is to plant trees and join all sections of society. We want to do away with the pollution of dividing society through the green way," Chaudhary said. The banyan tree, which is also known as Vat Vraksh, represents life and fertility in most Hindu cultures and is seen as an abode of Lord Krishna - the deity of Yaduvanshi. It also has its significance in Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. The Neem tree, apart from its unmatched medicinal qualities, also has a special place in Hindu mythology. It is seen as an embodiment of Goddess Durga, who is revered as a symbol of divine energy and protection. The Peepal tree has a special significance for Dalits, who follow Lord Buddha. Gautam Buddha is believed to have attained enlightenment under a Peepal tree.

Woman killed

PTI ■ AZAMGARH

An elderly woman was killed and six people were injured in an attack by a mob over a land dispute in Saraimir police station area here, police said on Sunday. Following the incident on Saturday night, an FIR was registered against 13 people, including four women, on a complaint by the deceased's son Virendra Kumar Gautam, a resident of Katghar Jalal village. According to the police, Gautam said in his complaint that on Saturday night a group of people attacked his house with sticks and iron rods due to an ongoing land dispute. autam, his mother Kewalpati Devi (60), brother Parasnath, niece Vishakha, Shashi Dewal and two others were grievously injured, the complaint stated. Based on the complaint, an FIR under IPC sections 323, 504, 506 and 308 have been registered against 13 people of the Katghar Jalal village, police said.

Yogi govt to maximise reach of old age pension, family benefit schemes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government's Social Welfare department is set to form a Transformation Team to maximise the reach of its schemes. Under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's directives, all departments are consistently working to ensure that the benefits of various government public welfare schemes are easily accessible to eligible individuals. The Transformation Team will assess the current status of various schemes and propose

necessary changes. This team will comprise experts from diverse fields. Minister of State for Social Welfare Asim Arun has instructed the director of social welfare to appoint a Transformation Team and consultant within the next seven working days. This initiative aims to increase the number of eligible individuals under the National Social Assistance Programme's Old Age Pension and Family Benefit schemes by making necessary changes. In a letter to the director of the Social Welfare

department, the minister has emphasised that the department plans to revamp the selected schemes in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of reform, performance and transformation to achieve significant results. The Transformation Team will assess the current status of various schemes and propose necessary changes. This team will include subject matter experts, information technology (IT) professionals, legal experts, academic experts, and consultants.

BJP workers listen to Modi at 30,286 booths of Kashi region



MLC Hansraj Vishwakarma and other BJP workers in Varanasi listening to PM on Sunday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, which is broadcast on the last Sunday of every month, was heard by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers at all 30,286 booths of Kashi region including Varanasi district and city units of the party on Sunday. Modi, at the beginning of the first episode of his third term and the 111th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, thanked the people of the country for the successful conduct of the Lok Sabha elections. District BJP president and MLC Hansraj Vishwakarma listened to the programme of through radio at his residence located at Shakti Kendra Kanchanpur booth number 185 of Kardameshwar Mandal under Rohania assembly constituency. During this, Jaiprakash Patel, Bihari Patel,

Vijay Vishwakarma, Milan Maurya, Gaurav Patel, Prabhu Gaur, Ramesh Vishwakarma, Ramesh Sharma, Sudhir Verma, Ajay Vishwakarma and other party office-bearers and workers were prominently present. City BJP chief Vidyasagar Rai listened to PM at booth number 64 in Cantt Mandal under Cantt assembly. Similarly, regional general secretary Ashok Chaurasia listened to 'Mann Ki Baat' programme at Khojwa, regional media incharge Navratan Rathi at booth number 327 located at Gurudham Colony of Varanasi South assembly, co-media incharge Santosh Solapurkar at booth number 257 of Bindu Madhav Ward of Varanasi South assembly, Naveen Kapoor at Lajpat Nagar located at Maldahiya, Jagdish Tripathi at Pandeypur, Sanjay Sonkar at Rohniya Mandal etc.

Appeal to take part in tree plantation programme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Under the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi the first programme of 'Mann Ki Baat' (111th episode till now) was heard at all 1,216 booths of the city. Under the leadership of BJP Mahanagar president Rajendra Mishra, hundreds of workers and common people listened to PM 'Mann Ki Baat' at the house of UP Cooperative Bank director Upendra Singh. Party workers and office-bearers at booth level in all 15 mandals of all three assembly constituencies (north, west and south) of the city registered their participation in it. The workers ensured their participation under the leadership of all the mandal presidents, including Shivkuti, Vishwavidyalaya, Chowk, Khulabad and Civil Lines. The workers listened to 'Mann Ki Baat' under the leadership of Scheduled Tribe Front's city unit president Rajesh Gond, Minority Front's city unit president Nawab Khan, Backward Front's city unit president Anand Jaiswal, Mahila Morcha president Shikha Rastogi, BJYM city unit president Rohit Pandey

and presidents of various cells. BJP mahanager president Rajendra Mishra said PM Modi also mentioned the 'Ek Vriksha Maa Ke Naam' programme being run by the party in the 'Mann Ki Baat' programme and told about the importance of trees and environment in life. Therefore, an appeal is made to the workers and office-bearers of the Mahanagar to participate enthusiastically in the tree plantation programme running till July 6 and make the programme successful. PM Modi said many such inspirational things from which all the countrymen can definitely learn something. On the occasion Upendra Singh, Devesh Singh, Varun Kesarwani, Shiva Tripathi, Rajesh Kesarwani, Media Incharge Vivek Mishra, Bholu Singh, Sanjay Srivastava, Rakesh Bharti, Prashant Shukla, Anand Dubey, Avinash Dubey, Manoj Kushwaha, Sanjay Singh, Rajesh Gond, Nawab Khan, Manu Chawla, Anand Jaiswal, Rohit Jaiswal, Natwar Lal Bharti, Ajay Hela, Kritagya Tripathi, Harish Mishra, Dhirendra Ojha, Kuldeep Mishra, Deep Dwivedi, Bilal Ahmed, Avnish Tiwari etc. were present.

Moharram: Police keeping close vigil through drones

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In view of Moharram processions starting from July 7 here the police have started keeping a close vigil, especially in old areas of the city, through drones. Thousands of people will gather as soon as the procession of Alam, Mehndi, Tazia starts in memory of the martyrdom of Karbala. The taziadar of Prayagraj is famous all over the country. A crowd of several lakh people

gather to shoulder the Tazia and join the procession. The police have started preparations from now. Peace committee meetings are being held in all the police stations in the old city. Police officers are talking to people in the Muslim-dominated areas. This time, for extra vigilance, the police have made preparations for drone surveillance in many areas. Drone surveillance will be done during Moharram in many areas of

Kareli, Shahganj, Khulabad. For this purpose, police teams have already started flying drones in many areas of the old city. For the last several days, the police has been monitoring by flying drones in the localities of the old city. On Sunday morning the police flew drones in many areas of Kareli. DCP (City) Deepak Bhukar said drones are being used for security reasons. The police team will especially

monitor through this during Moharram. There crowd is so huge that drone surveillance is very important. Under the leadership of ACP Kotwali Manoj Kumar Singh drone surveillance will continue for several days to come. Inspector Amarnath Rai is monitoring drone surveillance in Kareli with three teams. Apart from this, preparations are being made to monitor other areas of the city with drones as well.

Govt playing with future of students and youth: Tiwari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Rajya Sabha MP Pramod Tiwari said that the government is playing with the future of students and youth. In a press release issued by him, Pramod Tiwari said that Rahul Gandhi and other opposition leaders are drawing the attention of the government towards the NEET scam. But the government is running away from its responsibility. He also cornered the government in the case of roof collapse in Delhi's airport Terminal 1 killing one person and injuring eight others.

KDA vice-chairman takes additional charge as municipal commissioner

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) Vice-Chairman (V-C) Madan Singh Garbhal took additional charge as municipal commissioner, Kanpur Nagar Nigam (KNN), on Saturday. Without visiting his new office, he signed on the charge file and send it to the Nagar Nigam. It may be recalled that after the transfer of Municipal Commissioner Shivsharanappa GN four days ago to Chitrakoot, the post was lying vacant here. Immediately after taking over the charge, Garbhal directed the officials of Engineering and Health departments that there should not be any problem of insanitation and water logging in the city. No laxity in this respect



KDA VC Madan Singh Garbhal took additional charge as Municipal Commissioner, Kanpur Nagar Nigam, on Saturday.

the works should be carried out according to the expectations of people. He said people should not face problem in the Nagar Nigam office in getting their works resolved for which responsibilities of all the employees will be fixed soon, he said. ARNA EXCELS: Arna Gupta won three medals in the 23rd UP State Shooting Championship held in Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range, Delhi. Besides, two EWS children - Yash Balani and Ahan Tewari - receiving training in shooting at The Sportz Hub (TSH), Kanpur, have also qualified for the State Championship. In the 23rd UP State Shooting Championship held in Delhi, as many as 3,000 shooters took part.

₹15 lakh each made available to dependents of 4 employees who died during poll duty

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

An amount of ₹15 lakh each was made available to the dependents of four employees who died during election duty in the Lok Sabha General Election-2024 online in their bank accounts. They were Polling Officer First Abdullah Ansari, Polling Officer III Triloki Nath and homeguards Veerpal and Satish Kumar. In response to the request made by District Election Officer S Rajalingam to the Election Commission for granting an ex-gratia of ₹15 lakh each on the untimely death of these employees during election duty, the Election

Commission granted approval and allocated an amount for the dependents of the deceased. Meanwhile, at a function organised at the District Magistrate Camp Office here on Sunday, the Chief Assistant Anand Shanda working in the Divisional District Information (DDI) Office was given an emotional farewell on retirement. On the occasion DM S Rajalingam praised Shanda for his contribution. In the farewell ceremony, other employees of the camp office also wished the retired employee good health and long life. In the farewell ceremony, they also presented gifts as per tradition. Earlier, at a farewell ceremony

organised at the DDI Office, Shanda was praised for his excellent contribution made during his service period. Shanda was appointed as Urdu translator in 1995 and after getting promotion, he became the chief assistant. During his service period of about 29 years, his behaviour was very good with everyone. District Information Officer (DIO) Surendra Nath Pal, accountant Anil Kumar Srivastava, regional exhibition officer Devendra Pratap Singh, additional district information officer Mansingh Yadav, junior assistant Geeta Tiwari along with Madan, Satyendra and Santosh etc from the office were also present in the programme.

Mahakumbh: 41 city roads being widened

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In view of Mahakumbh-2025, 41 roads of the city are being widened. Most of the houses falling under the purview of widening have been demolished. Work on some roads has also been completed. Now about 200 houses are still left. A notice has already been issued by Prayagraj Development Authority (PDA) to demolish these houses. Many people had asked for time to demolish their houses themselves. Zonal officer of PDA said that the work of widening the roads has been expedited. It has to be completed in the next few months. Therefore, the houses falling under the purview of widening will be demolished as soon as possible. If people do not demolish them themselves, then they will be demolished with JCB and a fine will also be collected from them. In view of Mahakumbh, the work of widening the roads is going on at a fast pace. Roads are being widened by demolishing houses all around the city. For this, notice has already been issued to the building owners. NOTICE ISSUED: Efforts to free the Allahabad University Pant Hostel from unauthorised students will be intensified. The university administration has allotted the hostel to new entrants. Preparations have been intensified to give them possession. Unauthorised students have been asked to vacate the hostel by July 5 by issuing a notice. According to Prof Ashil Kumar, these inmates were given an ultimatum to vacate the hostel by June 27 but the hostel was not vacated. In such a situation, they have been given one last chance. After this, disciplinary action will be taken against them. ARRESTED: The accused in the rape case that took place four years ago has been arrested and sent to jail. The rape victim gave birth to a child and the accused also stayed with her for a long time. Later he allegedly refused to marry her. After this the victim registered a case. Recently, a girl filed a report accusing Deepak Chauhan of Campierganj area in Chhattisgarh, of rape. In the investigation, Chhattisgarh Police found that the place of incident was Prayagraj, so the investigation was transferred to Prayagraj. The Kotwali police started investigating the case and recorded the statement of the victim. She told the police that four years ago she used to work as a labourer with the accused and he grew close to her. Kotwali in charge Rohit Tiwari said the accused has been arrested and sent to jail. He was caught when he was trying to escape from the Zero Road bus stand.

Man axed to death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A safai karmachari was axed to death by his neighbour following a dispute over draining out rainwater in Akbarpur Birbal village under Sajeti police station area late on Saturday evening. His pregnant wife who came to save her husband was also injured. She has been referred to Kanpur for treatment. The police have arrested the assailant and started a probe in the matter. An enmity between the deceased and the assailant was also going on over possession of pond land for the past two years. Arvind Nishad (30) of Akbarpur Birbal village was posted in the village as a safai karchari. He had dispute with his neighbour Mool Chand Nishad over the drainage of water for a long time. On Saturday the latter allegedly suddenly stopped the drainage of dirty water of former's house. This led to a heated arguments between them when Mool Chand Nishad attacked on Arvind Nishad with the axe and due to which he died on the spot. When his seven-month pregnant wife Mamta, came in rescue of her husband, the assailant also caused her serious injury. The police sent the injured Mamta to CHC from where she was referred for the LLR (Hallet) Hospital, Kanpur, in a critical condition. The police and forensic team

rushed to the spot and carried out investigation. Station House Officer (SHO) Brij Mohan said the assailant Mool Chand who committed the crime in a dispute of drainage of dirty water had been arrested with the axe. After the incident, the son-in-law and the kin of the accused had disappeared from their house. CONFERENCE: While delivering her keynote speech in an international conference on "The changing role of teachers and technologies post Covid-19" at Amsterdam (Netherlands) Dr Saba Yunus of Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar here said "teaching profession in India had always been considered to be a noble profession. As we do not restrict from learning new things and updating ourselves, the craze for teaching profession in India had not yet diminished". She was replying to a query of American academician who wanted to know as to whether like in America and United Kingdom, the interest of people towards teaching profession in India is decreasing. Delegates from many countries took part in the conference and presented their pithy papers. Academicians from America, London, Turkey, China, Algeria, Thailand, Russia and Malaysia also attended the conference and submitted research papers.

'CA Run for Viksit Bharat' held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Central India Regional Council (CIRC) of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) organised 'CA Run for Viksit Bharat' on Motijheel on Sunday. The term 'Viksit Bharat' imbibes of the vision of PM Narendra Modi. In a bid to reflect dedication and active participation towards PM's vision, ICAI organised nationwide 'CA Run for Viksit Bharat' through its regional councils and branches all over India on Sunday. It was also part of the 75th anniversary celebrations of the Chartered Accountants of India. CA Atul Mehrotra (Chairman, CPE Committee, CIRC) welcomed the members. Under the leadership of CA Naval Kapoor, members and students aware people about the



energy conservation, road safety rules, cleanliness and water conservation and organised Unity Run from Motijheel Gate, Swaroop Nagar to Lajpat Bhavan. CA Sudhindra Jain, Sharad Shah, Ajay Kedia, Deep Mishra, Chhavi Jain, Laxmi Saxena, Richa Agarwal, Rajni Kharbanda, Shubha Gupta, CA Abhishek Pandey, Amar Omar, Nitin Singh, Nitin Omar, Abhilash Bajpai, Gurpreet Singh Bhalla, Gaurav Vishnoi, Awadhesh Mishra, Anand Gupta, Deepak Singh Rathaur, Pankaj Pathak, Ankur Goel and Akash Gupta were present.

Saving life of patient gives immense happiness: UCHC superintendent

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Superintendent of Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) Chowkaghat Dr Falguni Gupta said for a doctor, both profession and family life are equally important but saving life of a patient gives her immense happiness and satisfaction. Highlighting the contribution of medical profession on the eve of National Doctors Day (July 1), she said that along with being a doctor, she is also fulfilling the responsibilities of a mother very well. She said that she joined Provincial Medical Service (PMS) two years after completing her MBBS, and since 2022, she has been working as CHC superintendent. She has received many certificates of appreciation from the Health department but she never neglects her family life as she is mother of

a four-year-old daughter. Dr Shalini Sharma, a medical officer posted at the primary health centre (PHC) Sevapuri, said that after being selected by the PMS, she is now serving patients at PHC Sevapuri since the year 2020. "I have worked mostly in the rural areas and I feel good that I am able to take care of the health of poor and helpless patients. "Most women have to face diseases. Due to hesitation, they are not able to share their problems with anyone else. In such a situation, I consider myself very fortunate. After completing her duty, she spends all her time with the family", she said, adding that whether it is home or hospital, she fulfils her responsibilities with full honesty and energy. Superintendent of Urban Community Health Centre Durgakund Dr Sarika Rai said that after completing MBBS she

was selected in the PMS in the year 2007. "In 2008, I was made in charge of the Durgakund Health Centre, then it was a maternity centre. After this, gradually the number of patients increased and facilities were also increased. Now this centre has become the First Referral Centre (FRU), where services of surgery along with delivery are being provided", she said, adding that till now she has done more than 500 caesarean deliveries and more than 10,000 sterilisations. For this, she has received certificates of appreciation from the Health department many times. "I do my work with complete honesty and do not discriminate against patients in any way. I treat patients from every section of society on a priority basis", said Dr Sarika, a mother of a boy studying in class X.

SP to launch plantation drive today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Inspired by the recent parliamentary poll results, Samajwadi Party (SP) is no mood to give up the same favourable political situation so the party has decided to launch a week-long PDA plantation campaign from July 1 to 7 on the instructions of party president and MP from Kannauj Akhilesh Yadav. "The party has, once again, taken an important step towards environment and social justice, taking a decision to plant trees in various districts of Uttar Pradesh under PDA", they said, adding that under this campaign, banyan, peepal and neem saplings will be planted, which are symbols of environmental protection as well as social justice. They said these trees will not only purify the environment but will also become a symbol of social equality. "In view of the increasing pollution in the present times, it is

necessary to plant such plants whose roots reach deep into the ground and which keep the environment cool and clean due to their natural properties. Through this campaign, the Samajwadi Party is not only protecting the environment but is also spreading awareness in the society", they said, adding that the drive to plant 'PDA trees' will be started from the villages of the state and efforts will be made to take it to the national level after instructions from the headquarters. According to them, through this initiative, the Samajwadi Party is once again ready to prove its commitment among the people and to make it successful, cooperation has been sought from all the workers and citizens.

System installation work progressing rapidly in Chunniganj-Nayaganj underground section

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The system installation work in the Chunniganj-Nayaganj underground section of Corridor-1 (IIT-Naubasta) of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project is progressing rapidly alongside civil construction. In the coming days, preparations are being made for a trial run of Kanpur Metro at underground stations succeeding Motijheel station. Signal installation at Chunniganj-Nayaganj underground section is nearing completion up to Nayaganj station. Testing of the signalling system in this section has also commenced, marking significant milestones in the project's timeline. The tunnel construction in the Chunniganj-Nayaganj section was finished earlier this year in March. Currently, alongside the construction and finishing of technical rooms at underground stations in this section, the installation of essential systems such as tunnel ventilation, environment control and signalling is progressing swiftly towards completion. Kanpur Metro is nearing completion of signal instal-



Signal installation at Chunniganj-Nayaganj underground section nears completion.

ation and field testing up to Nayaganj station, covering four stations: Chunniganj, Naveen Market, Bada Chauraha and Nayaganj. Seven of the planned eight signals for this approximately four kilometre section have been installed. Installation of the final signal at Nayaganj station is currently in progress. Alongside signal installation, testing of the signalling system has also commenced. Initially, the wiring connections were checked for faults using pico testing. Currently, the system is undergoing 'Partial Acceptance Testing', which involves separate testing of signalling equipment such as signals and antennas. Following this phase, a 'System Acceptance Test' will be conducted, validating the signalling system's performance with train operations. Managing Director (MD) of Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation Limited, Sushil Kumar, emphasised the dedicated efforts of Kanpur Metro's engineering team, who have been accelerating

Parliament should pass law on quota to exceed 50 per cent cap: Congress

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Sunday said Parliament should pass a law to enable reservations to exceed the 50-per cent cap, a day after NDA constituent JD (U) demanded that the quota increase in Bihar be included in the 9th schedule of the Constitution.

At a meeting of the Janata Dal-United's national executive here on Saturday, the party expressed concern over a recent Patna High Court verdict striking down the Bihar government's decision to increase the quota for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 65 per cent from 50 per cent.

In a political resolution passed at the meet, the JD(U) urged the BJP-led Centre to put the state's law under the Constitution's 9th Schedule to rule out its judicial review.

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said through-



out the Lok Sabha poll campaign, the opposition party has been saying that all state laws related to reservation for the SCs, STs and all backward classes should be included in the 9th Schedule, as was the case for a Tamil Nadu law in 1994.

"It is a good thing that JD(U) has made the same demand in

Patna yesterday. But its ally BJP, both in the state and at the Centre, is completely silent on this matter," Ramesh said. "However, bringing reservation laws beyond the 50 per cent limit into the Ninth Schedule is also not a solution, because according to a 2007 Supreme Court decision, such laws are also subject to judicial

review," the former Union minister said, adding that a Constitution amendment law is required for the purpose.

"In such a situation, the only way out is for the Parliament to pass a Constitution Amendment Bill which will enable the reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and All Backward Classes to exceed 50 per cent," he said.

Ramesh said the current limit of 50 per cent is not explicitly mandated by the Constitution, but has been decided through various Supreme Court decisions.

"This was and remains one of the main guarantees of the Indian National Congress for the Lok Sabha elections." Will the non-biological Prime Minister clear his stand? Our demand is that such a bill should be introduced in the next session of Parliament, JD (U) should not be limited to just passing resolutions," he added.

Doctors' body meets Nadda to discuss NEET-PG postponement concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Representatives of the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association have met Union Health Minister J P Nadda to discuss their concerns over medical education with a focus on the postponement of the NEET-PG exam.

At the meeting, FORDA stressed on the importance of promptly announcing the new exam dates and conducting the exams transparently and efficiently even as it focused on the confusion among the NEET PG aspirants due to the postponement of the NEET-PG exam, said a representative from the Association.

The NEET-PG, which was scheduled to be held on June 23, was postponed a night before the entrance exam, as a "precautionary measure" in the wake of recent allegations on the integrity of certain competitive exams.

The FORDA delegation included its President Dr Aviral Mathur, General Secretary Dr Sarvesh Pandey, Dr Gautam Sharma (RML), Dr Sarada (LHMC), Dr Bharani, Dr Ayush (VMMC and SJH), and Dr Meet Ghonia (NITRD).

Dr Mathur later said that the Union Health Minister has assured the delegation that his ministry and the government are committed to the welfare of students and are determined to improve the current system. The reasons behind the postponement of NEET-PG are being addressed and fresh dates for the exam will be announced soon, the Union Health Minister told the FORDA delegation.

The delegation also raised other significant issues pending resolution since before the Lok Sabha elections and Nadda assured them that further meetings would be held to address these matters.

AYUSH Ministry's CSMCARI inks medicine research pact

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences - Captain Srinivasa Murthy Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CSMCARI), under the Union Ministry of AYUSH, on Sunday inked a pact with the Commissionerate of Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy (CIM&H).

The MoU outlines a collaborative framework for testing services, imparting training, and executing a collaborative project on "research studies for the standardisation of selected higher-order medicines."

The partnership aims to carry out testing of selected raw drugs and finished products for the standardisation of medicine, said an official from the Union Ayush ministry.

It will also provide NABL accreditation training guidance to the laboratory of CIM&H. "This MoU between CCRAS



and CIM&H has set precedence for other states of India also, they can come forward and join hands with CCRAS, MoAyush for various research and development activities," said Rabinarayan Acharya Director General, CCRAS, Chennai. This MoU marks a significant step towards strengthening the collaborative efforts between these premier institutions, and is targeted to enhance the quality and safety of Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic medicines; boost collaborative research initiatives; and capacity building and knowledge exchange, the official added.

More tribals opting for Govt hospitals over traditional healers, reveals study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As India targets malaria elimination by 2030, a study from Northeastern Meghalaya indicates a positive trend: tribal communities increasingly seek treatment at government hospitals instead of traditional healers. This shift, partly due to the belief that timely and effective malaria treatment is available in the public health system, reflects significant progress in the country's malaria control efforts, according to the study published in the journal Malaria.

"By recognising these evolving attitudes, policymakers and healthcare providers can better tailor their interventions and communication strategies to more effectively address ongoing needs and concerns as India faces the 'last mile' in malaria elimination," the researchers noted. Malaria in India is predominantly concentrated in the eastern and central parts of the country, particularly in forested and hilly states with tribal populations and limited health



services. These states include Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra, as well as the northeastern states of Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram. Transmission in these areas is often challenging and persistent due to social and ecological factors, including conflict-affected regions and low community awareness about malaria prevention and control.

However, the study highlighted that patients still incur out-of-pocket expenses for travel, medications, or services unavailable at the PHC (primary health centre) level, leading some to seek private healthcare providers. The lack of awareness and knowledge about preventive measures, such as insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor resid-

ual spraying, and timely healthcare-seeking, can hinder efforts to reduce malaria transmission.

To address these issues, the study focused on West Khasi Hills (WKH), West Jaintia Hills (WJH), and South Garo Hills (SGH) in Meghalaya, which had the highest Annual Parasite Index (API) between 2016 and 2019. Data were collected from August 2019 to November 2021 from residents of 23 villages served by four PHCs across these districts. Researchers examined community preferences for treatment and the use of healthcare services, such as visiting public or private health facilities or seeking care from traditional healers.

The study found growing acceptance of public health providers, with the majority of participants preferring public healthcare institutions like PHCs for malaria treatment, citing affordability and the availability of free services. In the three districts, participants and healthcare providers noted that frontline health workers were now

equipped with basic rapid diagnostic tests (RDT) for malaria, allowing for prompt identification and timely referral for appropriate treatment. This improved outcomes and reduced the risk of complications.

In the SGH district, community members reported a significant decline in seeking traditional healers for malaria treatment due to increased awareness of diagnostic tests, treatments, and services available at PHCs or hospitals. The availability of diagnostic tools used by village ASHA and ANM workers at health sub-centres also encouraged villagers to seek help from these healthcare providers.

Recognising these shifting attitudes is crucial for policymakers and healthcare practitioners to tailor interventions and communication strategies more effectively as India approaches the final stages of malaria elimination, said the study's lead author, Carintha B. Nengmong, from the Indian Institute of Public Health, Shillong.

Family pensioners' issues set for resolution



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh will launch a special campaign for the effective redressal of family pensioners' grievances here on Monday.

Presently, around 90,000 cases are being registered on an online Centralised Pension Grievance and Redress System (CPENGRAMS) in a year, a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry said on Sunday. Of the total grievances, family pension grievance cases account for about 20-25 per cent, it said. A major segment of family pensioners' grievances is constituted by women pensioners, the statement said.

The majority of the grievances pertain to defence pensioners, railway pensioners and CAPFs pensioners under the Union home ministry, it said, adding that "Bank-related issues also constitute a sizeable number". The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DOPPW), as part of its 100 days action plan will be undertaking a month-long special campaign for effective redressal of family pensioners' grievances during the period July 1-31, 2024 in which 46 ministries/departments will be participating, the statement said. This special campaign seeks a substantial reduction in the pendency of family pension grievances. Secretaries of Departments of Pension and

Pensioners Welfare, Ex-Servicemen's Welfare, Director General, Border Security Force, Controller General of Accounts, Deputy Managing Director of State Bank of India along with nodal public grievance officers of 46 ministries/departments, representatives from all pension disbursing banks and representatives of pensioners' welfare associations will participate in this event, it said. The family pension-related grievances to be redressed in the special campaign have been shortlisted from the grievances registered on the CPENGRAMS portal. A total of 1,891 (as of June 15, 2024) family pension-related grievances pertaining to 46 ministries/departments/organisations have been identified for redressal during the campaign period, the statement said. DOPPW will monitor and provide all assistance to the concerned administrative ministry/departments/organisation for effective redressal of grievances on a mission-mode approach.

Navy Chief ends Bangladesh visit, eyes new avenues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi on Sunday commenced a five-day visit to Bangladesh with an aim to further consolidate the bilateral defence engagement and explore new avenues of cooperation in the maritime domain, navy said here. It is Tripathi's first official visit abroad after he took the reins of the Navy two months ago.

The visit comes more than a week after Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited India during which both sides vowed to expand the overall defence and strategic ties.

Giving details of the Navy chief's schedule, officials said he will hold wide-ranging talks with his Bangladeshi counterpart, Admiral M Nazmul Hassan, and other top officials of Bangladesh's military,

including the Army chief and Air Force chief. Tripathi will also review the passing-out parade at the Bangladesh Naval Academy (BNA) in Chittagong on July 4.

His engagements in the neighbouring country include an address at Bangladesh's National Defence College in Dhaka and visits to a few key defence facilities.

"The visit is aimed to consolidate bilateral defence relations between India and Bangladesh and to explore new avenues for naval cooperation," the Indian Navy said in a statement. Naval cooperation between India and Bangladesh has been traditionally strong, encompassing a wide span including operational interactions, bilateral naval exercises and capacity-building programmes.

"The visit of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy will further strengthen the strong



bonds of friendship between the navies of both countries," the statement said. Bangladesh has been an important partner under India's Neighbourhood First policy. It is clearly visible in both the defence and maritime domains. The maritime cooperation between the two countries has grown from strength to strength in recent years, with a

significant ramp up on joint efforts towards protection of maritime interests.

Both sides have recognised the value of such cooperation and are poised to enhance the efforts even further. More broadly, in all efforts under the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision, Dhaka has been a natural partner and source of support for New Delhi.

The visit of the Navy chief is an affirmation of the positive trajectory of the naval relationship as well as an indication that both sides will significantly enhance their bilateral efforts at sea.

By working together against shared and common challenges, the two navies would enhance regional security and growth in line with the SAGAR vision as well as set an example of how cooperative efforts can deliver concrete outcomes.

A military official said the cooperation between the two navies has regularly catalysed positive change in the Indian Ocean region.

A few years ago, when Bangladesh held the chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), the two countries had collaborated to organise the maiden IONS maritime exercise, he said. This exercise has continued to grow in size and scope ever since, and become a source of formalised standard operating procedures (SOPs), sharing of best practices and a means to enhance collective trust and interoperability, the official added.

In 2025, the Indian Navy would take over the chairmanship of the IONS and take the lead in establishing higher levels of maritime safety and security within the Indian Ocean, he said.

UP to promote Buddhist pilgrimage tourism

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh rich cultural tapestry includes not just the revered sites associated with Lord Ram but also key locations integral to the life and teachings of Lord Buddha. To cash in on these Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the State, the UP Government recently launched the "Bodhi Yatra 2024" program to attract pilgrims and tourists from across India and the world, drawn by their historical and spiritual importance.

At an event held here in the national capital, the UP Tourism Department announced a slew of initiatives to attract domestic and international pilgrims and tourists to the renowned Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the state. It is home to many places once visited by the Buddha and sacred Buddhist stupas, monasteries, shrines and stupas, some of which date back to the days of the Buddha himself. He spent much of his life in the region with the spots of his first and last sermons located in the state.

The State boasts of six major Buddhist sites: Sankisa, Sarnath, Shravasti, Kapilvastu, Kaushambi, and Kushinagar. Uttar Pradesh's Tourism Minister, Jaiveer Singh, explained that the objective of this journey is to showcase the memories of Lord Buddha's ordinary life journey through the heritage sites of Buddhism in the state. "Throughout the year, this journey aims to familiarize people across India with the significant messages of Buddha," said the Minister as he announced that through various artistic presentations,



the Tourism Department will highlight Uttar Pradesh's contributions to Buddhist art, culture, and the importance and connection of Lord Buddha. Furthermore, an interactive cultural session was also organized during the Bodhi Yatra program, inviting guests from various countries. The program will now be organized periodically in various cities across the country, which will enhance the reach of the pilgrimage, said the Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture Mukesh Kumar Meshram. The conclave featured Ambassadors and other diplomats from Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar, Bhutan, Japan, Indonesia, Argentina, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Union Minister of Tourism and Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat echoed similar sentiments, appreciating Uttar Pradesh for spearheading the Buddha Circuit, a visionary project to connect pilgrims with the spiritual journey of Lord Buddha, from birth to enlightenment.

Reasi terror case: NIA searches many locations in J&K



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Sunday conducted searches at multiple locations in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the Reasi terror attack case. The searches led to the seizure of various items showing linkages between the terrorists and overground workers (OGWs), a statement issued by the NIA said.

Terrorists had opened fire at a bus carrying 'yatri' from Shiv Khori to Katra on the evening of June 9 in the Pouni area of Reasi district, causing the bus to fall into a nearby gorge, killing nine people, including a child. NIA, which took over the investigation on June 15 on orders from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, searched five locations linked with hybrid terrorists and OGWs, it said. The locations were pointed out by arrested accused Hakam Khan alias Hakin Din, the NIA said. Hakam had provided safe shelter, logistics and food to the terrorists, as per the probe agency's investigations. NIA has started examining the seized material to unravel the terror conspiracy, it added.

India's rise in world of drone technology

ADITI SHARMA ■ NEW DELHI

Imagine the whir of propellers slicing through the air, a symphony of innovation taking flight. This is the sound of India's rise in the world of drone technology, and a key player in this exciting story is the Remote Pilot Training Organization (RPTO), which is a high tech boot camp for drone whizzes. Here, aspiring pilots learn the ins and outs of drones, from the core essentials of how they work to the rules of the sky. They master safety procedures, practice intricate movements and gain hands-on experience under the watchful eyes of expert instructors. Upon graduation, they receive the coveted Remote Pilot Certificate (RPC), their license

to fly drones commercially. The possibilities with drones are endless, as vast as the sky itself. From capturing stunning aerial photos to streamlining infrastructure checks, drones are revolutionizing everything from agriculture to disaster relief. But to unlock their true potential, we need a skilled workforce. That's where RPTOs come in, bridging the gap between cutting edge tech and human expertise. By providing top notch drone pilot training, they ensure a pool of qualified flyers who can navigate the complexities of drone operation and put these amazing machines to good use across various industries. Leading the charge is the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG), in collabora-



tion with EduRade, a brand owned by RC HobbyTech Solutions Pvt. Ltd. They have launched India's largest RPTO, spanning 18 acre, this state of the art facility has the capaci-

ty to operate nine medium class drones simultaneously, positioning it as a central hub for advancing drone technology and training in India.

Dr. Parameswar Krishnan Iyer, of IIT Guwahati, highlighted the importance of this initiative. Their goal is to propel drone technology in India, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making India a global drone hub by 2030. The RPTO also plays a key role in the "Namo Drone Didi" program, empowering women from Self Help Groups (SHGs) to use drones in agriculture. By equipping them with the skills and knowledge, this program not only boosts agricultural productivity but also empowers these women economically.

IIT Guwahati's RPTO has a special focus on providing high quality drone training to the youth in North East India, a region often facing educational and infrastructural hurdles. Graduates of the drone pilot training program at IIT Guwahati have a wide range of career options across various sectors, including agriculture, infrastructure, media, environmental conservation, public safety, and more. The institute also plans to offer advanced programs and certifications in drone technology, further enhancing career prospects for its students. Further, IIT Guwahati is also making strides in modernizing defense operations with tailored training programs for defense personnel.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Grit and glory

India's T20 World Cup win after a 13-year hiatus is a story of resilience, brilliance and sheer determination

Team India has done it again. It has once again etched its name in the annals of cricketing history by winning the T20 World Cup, ending a 13-year-long wait since their last title in 2011. Like any victory, it doesn't come cheap. A lot of hard work and dedication of the players along with the efforts of the coach and supporting staff must be felicitated for this triumph. The journey to this momentous victory has been a roller-coaster ride, filled with trials, tribulations, and moments of sheer brilliance. This win not only brings immense joy to millions of cricket fans in India who have been at discomfort due to scorching heat. Finally, the monsoon shower and cool breeze of victory brings them joy and something to cherish for years to come. Indeed, the path to this historic win was anything but easy. The final itself was also a heroic effort as team India was under pressure till 15th over when the data analysis showed that India had only eight per cent chance to win. India's campaign in the T20 World Cup saw a mix of thrilling victories and nail-biting finishes. Led by a dynamic captain, Rohit Sharma, (described by Shoaib Akhtar as a 'selfless captain') India showcased a blend of experienced stalwarts and young talents, creating a balanced and formidable team. The group stages witnessed India dominating their opponents with a series of comprehensive wins. A standout performance came against arch-rivals Pakistan, when India came back in the game to win the match. The bowlers, led by a fiery pace attack and wily spinners, ensured that opposition teams struggled to find momentum. Several players stood out for their exceptional performances throughout the tournament. The captain's leadership was instrumental, his tactical acumen and ability to inspire the team played a crucial role in India's success. The bowling unit, led by a veteran pacer, Jasprit Bumrah was indeed impressive. His ability to swing the ball both ways and deliver crucial wickets when Team India needed it most. His over was a turning point of the match. As the celebrations continued after India's historic triumph over South Africa for the T20 World Cup title, it marked a poignant moment as two stalwarts of Indian cricket, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, announced their retirements from T20 internationals. The victory has indeed lifted the spirits of the people who celebrated in their own style taking to the streets, bursting crackers, and waving the tricolour. The triumph is not just a cricketing success but a moment of national pride, uniting the country in joy and celebration. It is a testament to the hard work, perseverance, and never-say-die attitude of the Indian team. India's T20 World Cup win after a 13-year hiatus is a story of resilience, brilliance and sheer determination. It is a moment that will be cherished for generations and a reminder of the magic that cricket can bring to the hearts of millions. Well done team India. Keep it up!



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PICTALK



Devotees wade through a waterlogged area at Dharm Path in Ayodhya

Modi's tumultuous new innings

Like a cricket team facing tough opponents, Team Modi relies on aggressive posturing and self-confidence to maintain its stance



DEEPAK SINHA

The performance of the Modi team in its new innings can be best described using a cricketing analogy.

The new team is woefully short of bench strength and faces a serious quality issue, with some members lacking commitment and motivation to the cause. Despite this, they have come out, much like the Aussies always do in any competition, riding their luck on abrasive aggression, hype and self-belief. It is certainly a technique that has worked well for them against most oppositions, forcing them on the back foot from which they seldom recover. But as we have just witnessed in the ongoing T-20 World Championships with their unexpected departure, bluster doesn't cut much ice with teams that are determined to win and unafraid of battle. Perhaps Team Modi would do well to keep this in mind. The truth is Team Modi is on a very sticky wicket, not unlike those in the Caribbean, with uneven bounce and unpredictable turns. Not surprisingly, they are already three down with not much to show on the board. Amit Shah opened the innings but was LBW on the second ball he faced, the Kashmiri looser, followed by the Manipuri yorker that beat him all up.

On a more serious note, while issues of terror attacks in Kashmir can and will be tackled with relative ease, Manipur is at the opposite end of the spectrum. Not since the Punjab and Kashmir insurgencies initially erupted, with terrible consequences, has the Indian State been found so wanting. The tragedy is that responsibility for this state of affairs rests squarely with Modi 2.0 and its rather incongruous decision not to interfere as things went from bad to worse with the Chief Minister having been rendered hors de combat. Manipur today has fallen off the cliff and is in need of urgent surgery. If we are to save this patient, and the integrity and health of the North East hinges on that, then the Army has to be pulled out of the cold storage where it sits and



allowed to do its job, once again. The second wicket to have fallen was to a railway googly, that of the relatively experienced and administratively skilled Ashwini Vaishnav. Sadly, for him, he's got out to a very similar delivery in his last innings as well and just hasn't been able to discern the googly. One can feel sorry for him because it is a tough position that he plays, with stress levels that can only be described as gargantuan. That is also the term that one describes our railways as well, and despite whatever the opposition may say, it is in the ICU and needs urgent attention. Not unlike the Air India story, substantive change is unlikely under the umbrella of one ginormous government-controlled public entity. Before 1950, we had around 55 companies operating railways over 55000kms of track until they were all amalgamated into the Indian Railways.

At present with over double that kilometrage of track to expect one single entity to manage operations, nominally in six divisions, is a herculean task that will lead to repeated systems or human



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failure with dire consequences. Change is inevitable, the sooner the better if lives matter as all politicians insist, be it complete privatisation or a mix of synchronised public and private enterprise.

The third wicket down, that of Dharmendra Pradhan, to a vicious NEET bouncer, has been the most devastating for him and the team as well. He's taken a nasty blow on his helmet that seems to have incapacitated him and has the team teetering on the edge of disaster. Whether he can continue to find a place in the playing eleven or if the team can recover and succeed only time will tell. Whatever the result in the long term, there is no getting away from the fact that the NEET scandal has been a body blow to Team Modi and its emphasis on loyalty to the cause above all else.

The fact of the matter is that the problem of leaked question papers has been around forever and rumours are doing the rounds of how influential persons have been able to help their children succeed in such centralised exams, such as the CLAT, through means that

were perceived to be unfair. The numbers involved tended to be insignificant, but all that changed with the centralisation of admissions under the NTA, leading to cheating at an industrial scale, for want of a better word.

The damage this has caused to the body politic, especially the upcoming generations, is enormously difficult to fully comprehend. The winners and losers are not divided by ideology, ethnicity, religion or any such measure but by those who have the money and those who don't, and in this game of snakes and ladders the don'ts have no ladders to climb. The impact of what all of this means for the ruling coalition, which cannot avoid responsibility, is not difficult to gauge and we may well see some of that fallout in the forthcoming state elections, which can then only further add to Mr. Modi's troubles.

(The columnist, a military veteran and former paratrooper, is presently a Senior Visiting Fellow with the Peninsula Foundation, Chennai; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A WAKE-UP CALL

Madam — India has been witnessing a series of tragic infrastructural failures, the most recent being the collapse of the roof at Terminal 1 in Delhi, which resulted in one death and injured five others. Such incidents are unfortunately common, with the country experiencing multiple train accidents and bridge collapses. Data from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways reveals that 32 bridges have collapsed nationwide between 2020 and 2023. Despite substantial investment in construction, the problem persists. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) reported a record expenditure of ₹2,07,000 crore on national highway construction for the fiscal year 2023-24, marking a 20% increase from ₹1,73,000 crore in 2022-23 and ₹1,72,000 crore in 2021-22.

These figures point to a worrying trend of inadequate construction standards and corruption, leading to significant losses and the need for repeated investments. It is imperative that the government implements stringent measures to tackle these issues, ensuring accountability among contractors and relevant authorities to prevent corruption and guarantee the safety and durability of infrastructure.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

IMPROVE BASIC CIVIC AMENITIES

Madam — The citizens of Delhi recently endured severe heat, followed by heavy monsoon rains that resulted in significant damage and chaos. On June 28, the canopy over the forecourt at Terminal 1 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport collapsed on parked vehicles, leading to one death and six injuries. The intense weather changes left Delhiites in a difficult situation, highlighting the need for better infrastructure and planning. This issue is not isolated to Delhi; cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and others have also suffered during the rainy sea-

Bridge gender inequality



In response to the news report "25% of new hires are married women, nearly 70% of the workforce are women: Foxconn," published on

June 28, I would like to express my views. As India strives to replace China in the global supply chain, incidents like the alleged discrimination against married women at Foxconn's manufacturing plant are highly concerning. Although Foxconn has denied these allegations and stated that 70% of its workforce comprises women, a thorough and impartial investigation is necessary to dispel any doubts. There is a significant disparity in the ratio of men to women in the workforce, and companies like Foxconn can set a positive example by employing more women. This should be encouraged as we work to close this gap. Apple has consistently enforced strict policies with its manufacturing suppliers, and Foxconn should not be an exception. Ensuring gender equality in the workforce is crucial for our progress and competitiveness on the global stage.

Bal Govind | Noida

son due to poor planning and inadequate drainage systems. While substantial funds are often spent on constructing statues and other non-essential projects, basic civic amenities remain neglected. It is crucial for the authorities to prioritize improving these facilities to safeguard the well-being of citizens.

GOVT HOSPITALS IN A DISARRAY

Madam — The Indian Public Health Standard report, produced by the National Health Mission (NHM), reveals a concerning state of government hospitals in India. According to the report, 80 percent of these hospitals lack even basic facilities. This alarming assessment comes from a survey conducted by the government itself, highlighting a severe scarcity of doctors, nurses, and essential equipment in these institutions. The report sheds light on the conditions of government hospitals under the 'National Health Mission' (NHM), a critical initiative encompassing district

hospitals, community health centers, primary health centers, and Ayushman health facilities across the country. The 'Indian Public Health Standard' (IPHS) is a digital platform developed by the government to collect hospital statistics. Among the 40,451 hospitals that participated in the survey, only 8,089 met the IPHS criteria. This indicates that 42% of hospitals scored less than 50% on the IPHS scale, while 15,172 hospitals received ratings ranging from 50% to 80%. The report aims to identify and address the deficiencies in these hospitals, with the central government planning to establish 70,000 government hospitals meeting the IPHS standards within 100 days of the new administration's inception. The goal is to ensure that all government hospitals are equipped with basic infrastructure, equipment, and medical staff, thereby improving patient care.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Trespassing in the lives of others:

The uninvited interference

Human curiosity often leads us into the lives of others, crossing boundaries and delving into matters that are not our own

We have an insatiable appetite to interfere in the lives of others. The desire to take a bite of even the tiniest morsel from another's life also makes us, trespass on conversations of strangers at best, more often gossip about others, and make inappropriate remarks at the worst. We were a batch of seven railway officials from across the globe on training in Japan in 1991. Our program was coordinated by a young Japanese lady, maybe a couple of years older than me.

A few weeks together had made the eight of us share an easy relationship — easy enough for me to ask the lady one day if she was married. She had been married for almost a decade. I was already the father of two little daughters; thus, my next query if she had any children was probably not entirely baseless. I should have stopped once she had replied in the negative. My thirst to trespass into the private life of another individual kicked in as I asked her the reason. She was quiet for so long, a myriad of emotions flitting across her face, that I was afraid that this one time I had



crossed the line. As I was about to apologise for my impertinence, she responded, "Thank you for an insightful query, which set me thinking. The reason is that both I and my husband are so busy in our daily lives, that we barely spend our waking hours together. There is just no time for making a baby!" It was a lesson learnt about the price of progress on human relations in the more developed countries. We were yet to witness this back home, at least in smaller cities and towns. I also witness incidents in the lives of others in public places. I am certain even others may be looking at my daily life under the microscope. We don't need to be celebrities for

our lives to be trespassed upon. This also sometimes leads to overhearing interesting snatches of conversations. Recently, waiting at the airport for my flight, I observed a father handing over cash to his young daughter to get tea for the family, even before she had had time to put down the bags. The girl good-naturedly asked him to wait. I smiled and commented with an attempt at humour, "All fathers are like that." The family was not amused. I was in a cabin in the COVID ward of a hospital. The cabin was shared by two more patients. One morning, I overheard the lady on the adjoining bed talking to her husband on the phone rather loudly, "I am much better. You

must see the uncle on the next bed. He does not do any exercises, just lying there all the time." The shoe pinched. I was not amused at this blatant trespassing in my life. I have observed that the supposedly well-meaning interference is more prominent during a visit to a convalescing acquaintance and dispensing advice from own morbid experiences.

We cannot forget one such well-meaning advice from a neighbour who did not hesitate to tell us that his father had passed away at my age due to a similar affliction that had kept me bedridden for a rather long time. He may have only been trying to caution us to be more careful. We love to dissect the lives of our friends, and even acquaintances, particularly when they are not around. We usually try to pass off the blatant gossip as honest criticism or well-meaning advice. If only we keep in mind what Wentworth Dillon said, "Words spoken can never be recalled."

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA



FIRST COLUMN

OLDER EMPLOYEES THRIVE UNDER WORK PRESSURE

Younger employees cow down to work pressure while elders manage well



SAKSHI SETHI

As per recent research and studies, younger employees are reporting more struggles at work while older ones are doing better. Also, around 85% of the working parents in the creative, marketing and related industries feel pressure to prioritize work over parenting duties while a greater proportion also feels they must sacrifice family life to achieve their career goals. An individual at the workplace often comes across situations where they have too many tasks that need to be completed within a limited timeframe without adequate breaks or rest periods. Moreover, not receiving sufficient recognition or rewards for hard work or perceived unfair treatment or favoritism creates a stressful and demoralizing work environment making it difficult to make decisions and remember tasks which can lead to anxiety and cause stress due to a variety of psychological, physiological and situational factors. When an individual experiences work pressure, it triggers the body's stress response, known as the fight or flight response which releases stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which prepare the body to deal with perceived threats. While this response can be beneficial in short bursts, prolonged activation can have negative effects on both physical and mental health resulting in increased heart rates, headaches and fatigue. Also, constant pressure can impair cognitive functions, making it difficult to concentrate, make decisions and remember tasks, which further increases stress.

There is no denying the fact that work pressure is a natural part of most jobs and can sometimes act as a motivator (such as when prompting a student to study before an important exam), helping individuals stay focused and productive but when the pressure becomes excessive or prolonged, it leads to stress, strain, nervous tension or anxiety. Maintaining a healthy balance between pressure and stress at the workplace is crucial for both productivity as well as employee well-being. Organizations must work towards setting clear communication and expectations by ensuring that job roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated; an environment where managers are approachable and available to support their teams are well created and the distribution of the



tasks and responsibilities are even to avoid overburdening of any single employee. Introducing wellness programs such as yoga, meditation or fitness classes along with access to counseling and support services for employees dealing with stress, regularly acknowledging and rewarding employees for their hard work and contributions, and promoting teamwork and collaboration to create a supportive and cohesive work environment, creating a feedback loop where employees can voice concerns about their workload and suggest improvements, implementing strict anti-harassment policies and ensure they are enforced are a few strategies that can help organizations create a work environment where pressure serves as a motivator rather than a stressor.

Apart from organizations working towards employee well-being, it becomes crucial for the individual working at any level to maintain a balance between work pressure and family stress as it can be challenging to maintain overall well-being. Prioritizing what is most important both at work and at home, defining clear boundaries between work and family time focusing on high-priority tasks and letting go of less critical ones, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, engaging in hobbies and activities that are outside of work and staying updated on stress management techniques are a few strategies that can help an individual build resilience and manage work stress more effectively. Remember, when stressed, individuals have a more difficult time creating short-term memories and turning those short-term memories into long-term memories. By understanding the causes of work pressure and implementing effective strategies to manage it, individuals and organizations can reduce stress and create a healthier, more productive work environment.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Venkaiah Garu: Life in service of Bharat



NARENDRA MODI

From his early days in politics to his tenure as Vice-President, Venkaiah Garu's career exemplifies his ability to navigate the complexities with ease and humility



Today, India's former Vice-President and respected statesman M Venkaiah Naidu Garu turns 75. I wish him a long and healthy life and also extend my greetings to all his well-wishers and supporters. This is an occasion to celebrate a leader whose life journey showcases dedication, adaptability and an unwavering commitment to public service. From his early days in the political arena to his tenure as Vice-President, Venkaiah Garu's career exemplifies his unique ability to navigate the complexities of Indian politics with ease and humility. His eloquence, wit and steadfast focus on developmental issues have earned him respect across party lines.

Venkaiah Garu and I have been associated for decades. We have worked together and I have learnt a lot from him. If there is one thing that has remained common in his life, it is the love for people. His brush with activism and politics began in Andhra Pradesh with student politics as a student leader. Considering his talent, oratory and organisational skills, he would have been welcomed in any political party but he preferred to work with the Sangh Parivar. He was associated with the RSS, ABVP and then strengthened the Jana Sangh and the BJP. Almost 50 years ago, a young Venkaiah Garu immersed himself in the anti-Emergency movement. He was imprisoned and, that too, for inviting Loknayak JP to Andhra Pradesh. This commitment to democracy would be seen time and again in his political career. In the mid-1980s, when the great NTR's Government was unceremoniously dismissed by the Congress, he was again at the forefront of the movement to protect democratic principles.

Venkaiah Garu has always been comfortable swimming even against the most formidable tides. In 1978, Andhra Pradesh voted for the Congress but he beat the trend and was elected as a young MLA. Five years later, when the NTR

tsunami swept the State, he got elected as a BJP MLA, thus paving the way for the BJP's growth across the State.

All those who have heard Venkaiah Garu speak will vouch for his oratory skills. He is certainly a wordsmith but he is as much a worksmith. Since his days as a young MLA, he began to be respected for the rigour he put into legislative affairs and speaking for people of his constituency. No less than a stalwart like NTR noted his talent and even wanted him to join his party but Venkaiah Garu refused to deviate from his core ideology. He went on to play a big role in strengthening the BJP in Andhra Pradesh and even became the AP BJP president.

It was in the 1990s that the BJP central leadership took note of Venkaiah Garu's efforts and thus in 1993 began his stint in national politics when he was appointed the party's all-India general secretary. It was truly a remarkable moment for a man, who as a teenager would go around announcing the visits of Atal Ji and Advani Ji, to be working directly with them. As the general secretary, he was focused on how to bring our party to power and ensure that the nation get their first ever BJP Prime Minister. After the move to Delhi, there was no looking back and he rose to become the party's national president.

In 2000, when Atal Ji was keen to induct Venkaiah Garu in the Government, Venkaiah Garu instantly conveyed his preference for the Rural Development Ministry. This left everyone, including Atal Ji, puzzled. After all, here was a leader who was

being asked which portfolio he wanted and his first choice was Rural Development. But Venkaiah Garu was clear - he was a Kisan Putra. As Minister, he was closely associated with the conception and rolling out of the 'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana'. Years later, when the NDA Government of 2014 assumed office, he handled the crucial portfolios of Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. It was during his tenure that we launched the important Swachh Bharat Mission and important urban development-related schemes. Perhaps, he is one of the only leaders to have worked for both rural and urban development for such an extensive period.

When I came to Delhi in 2014, I was an outsider to the national Capital, having worked in Gujarat for the previous decade and a half. In such times, Venkaiah Garu's insights were very handy. He was an effective Parliamentary Affairs Minister - he knew the essence of bipartisanship but at the same time he drew a line when it came to parliamentary norms and rules.

In 2017, our alliance nominated him as our vice-presidential candidate. I can never forget one of the speeches he gave when he resigned as Minister and MP. He could not control his tears when he recalled his association with the party and efforts to build it. It gave a glimpse of his deep-rooted commitment and passion. Upon becoming the Vice-President, he undertook various steps that also enhanced the dignity of the office. He was an outstanding Chairperson of the

Rajya Sabha, ensuring that young MPs, women MPs and first-time MPs get the opportunity to speak.

When the decision to remove Articles 370 and 35(A) were placed before the Rajya Sabha, Venkaiah Garu was in the Chair. I am sure it was such an emotional moment for him - the young boy who was drawn to Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee's dream of a united India!

Apart from work and politics, Venkaiah Garu is a voracious reader and writer. For the people in Delhi, he is known as the person who brought the glorious Telugu culture to the city. His Ugadi and Sankranti programmes are clearly among the most cherished gatherings in town. I have always known Venkaiah Garu as someone who loves food and also hosting people. But, of late, his self-control has also been visible to everyone. His commitment to fitness is seen in how he still plays badminton and enjoys his brisk walk.

Even after the vice-presidency, Venkaiah Garu has led an active public life. On the issues that he is passionate about, he calls me and asks me about them. I met him most recently when our Government returned to office for the third term. He was delighted and conveyed his best wishes to me and our team. I wish him again on this milestone. I hope young karyakartas, elected representatives and all those who have a passion to serve, learn from his life and imbibe those values. It is people like him who make our nation better and more vibrant.

(The writer is the Prime Minister of India.)



ALL THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD VENKAIAH GARU SPEAK WILL VOUCH FOR HIS ORATORY SKILLS. HE IS CERTAINLY A WORDSMITH BUT HE IS AS MUCH A WORKSMITH

A reflective moment on India's democratic values and political integrity

From displays of loyalty to controversial gestures, this year's oath-taking ceremony reveals a transformed landscape in Indian politics

Newly elected members of the Lok Sabha taking oath to adhere to the Constitution of India is a solemn occasion. "I, X, having been elected a member of the House of the People do swear in the name of God (solemnly affirm) that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established, that I will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India and that I will faithfully discharge the duty upon which I am about to enter", is what they have to tell while taking the oath. It is not known what is the role of the presidents of the parties under whose label they enter the precincts of the House. Agreed, these members were either hand-picked by the bosses of their parties, or they themselves could have kept a



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

gun on the forehead of the proprietors of the parties demanding the latter to nominate them as candidates for the Lok Sabha election. While watching some of these newly elected members taking the oath of office, one was flabbergasted by the fall in the quality of politics and the standard of our parliamentary system. Previously we had titans as members of political and social life but now, the only titans that

we come across are the wrist-watches and clocks made by the House of Tatas. The Dravidian politicians from Tamil Nadu were the butt of jokes as they took the oath of office. After taking the customary oath specified in the Third Schedule of the Constitution, the DMK members sang paeans to their Gods in Chennai. All DMK members except T R Balu raised slogans eulogizing the DMK supremo and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, the future chief minister Udhayanidhi (son of Stalin) and late M Karunanidhi (former chief minister and one of the founders of the DMK) seeking their blessings to serve Tamil Nadu! Sycophancy and servility were at their peak while they were

swearing in as members. There has been criticism against members of the DMK and the AIADMK for their servile nature and lassitude to their leaders which make them laughing stocks. Most DMK members wore Vibhuti and holy Kumkum on their foreheads. It is not uncommon to see MPs and MLAs belonging to the DMK and the AIADMK doing Danda Namaskar, an obeisance to the presiding deity of the party. Though they do not believe in pilgrimage to temples, politicians have made it a point to fall down on the floor once they come face to face with the party head. But whether the sycophancy they exhibit in public is real or not is a major question. One of the elected MPs from Tamil Nadu



who took the oath of office last day was going around astrologers and sorcerers in Kerala to ascertain whether the Karunanidhi clan had performed black magic either on him or his family members. Since his father is a bigwig in the party hierarchy, it was the mother who accompanied the son to liberate him from the evil spirits. That is the rationalism and atheism practised by the followers of Ramasamy

Naicker. While the DMK MPs were happily extolling the K-Clan members, there were reservations in the minds of a section of people about what Thol Thirumavalavan of the VCK, whose antipathy for north Indians is infamous, would do. He is the one who frequently declares that north Indians are not welcome to stay in Tamil Nadu though he has demanded that Rohingya refugees

should be given a place of residence in the State. Thank God Thirumavalavan did not raise the slogan Jai Prabhakaran. Many DMK politicians in Chennai were heard asking why the newly elected MPs did not say Jai to Inbanidhi and Tanmaya (Udhayanidhi's son and daughter).

The most disgusting of the lot was made by AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi who shouted "Jai Palestine" while taking oath as a member of the House. This is a cardinal sin capable of throwing shadow over India-Israel ties. People like Owaisi are a blot on this nation as he had the audacity to describe the infamous criminal Mukhtar Ansari as a Shaheed. Owaisi is a living example that one could not

have civility by attending Lincoln's Inn. The day is not far when he or others of his ilk would shout "Jai Pakistan" from the temple of Indian democracy. Organizations like Hamas have no place in the comity of nations and the civilized world. What happened in October 2023 should be condemned in the strongest of words. India has given enough support to the Palestinians and what it got back was just brickbats. The general public should know the truth. Shouting slogans in support of the party president's wife and children from the Speaker's podium while taking the oath of office is not secularism or pluralism. (The writer is a special correspondent with The Pioneer; views are personal)

Amarnath Shrine Board to focus on environment after ensuring security

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

After ensuring the safety and security of the pilgrims undertaking Amarnath yatra, the biggest concern of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board authorities is protecting the environment in an ecologically fragile region. Anticipating a huge footfall of pilgrims this year, the Shrine Board authorities have permitted a large number of organisations to set up 'community kitchens' to feed pilgrims along the yatra route including base camps and at the cave shrine area of Amarnath. Rough estimates suggested during the entire yatra period more than 1 lakh meals will be served to pilgrims, security personnel deployed along the yatra route, and sanitation workers deployed at different base/transit camps to ensure round-the-clock cleanliness daily. Between Baltal and Domel, the Shrine Board authorities have permitted several langar committees to serve round-the-clock meals to pilgrims. Similarly, a large number of



langars/bhandaras have been set up on the Pahalgam axis to serve the pilgrims. In addition to dozens of refreshment points, lodgment centres have been set up between Lakhampur and two base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam to cater to the basic needs of the pilgrims. As per the advisory of the Shrine Board authorities, the pilgrims would be served healthy and nutritious food. No junk/greasy, oily food items such as snacks would be served to ensure fitness of the pilgrims. A member of the Langar committee from Punjab

which has set up at least five langars along the Yatra route said, most of the ration supplies have been stocked by them at the base camps and from there they receive regular supplies with the help of ponnywalas and porters deployed along the route. To ensure the cleanliness of the area elaborate arrangements have been made by the Rural Development department in and around base camps. Camp directors have been directed to make elaborate arrangements to protect the environment in the region. According to the duty roster,

the working hours have been divided into three shifts to ensure proper sanitation facilities and cleanliness. The Rural Development Department is chiefly responsible for sanitation services. The Rural Development Department has provided stationary and movable toilets for Amarnath yatra. More than 200 dustbins have been provided between Baltal and Domel for garbage collection and segregation. They have engaged different agencies for sanitation of toilets and baths at Neelgrath helipad and on Baltal/Pahalgam axis consisting of camps at Nunnawan, Chandanwari, Sheshnag and Langar sites at Chandanwari Pissu Top, Zojibal, Nagakoti, Wavbal and MG top have been handed over to the service providers. Keeping in mind the ecology of the region arrangements

have been made to ensure liquid and solid waste generated would be suitably treated after segregation. "The liquid waste generated would be treated in systems such as retention ponds/lagoons to remove FOG (Fat, oil, grease) to remove foul smell, suspended solid waste and other such elements responsible for increase in BOD level before it would be finally drained to the adjoining soakage pits. The sewerage system at Holy cave has been upgraded by way of construction of manholes and laying of Sewer Line at Holy Cave Camp. Sewerage System has been improved by way of construction of manholes and laying of sewer line at Panjarni Camp as well. Meanwhile in Jammu sanitation workers have been deployed by the Jammu Municipal Corporation for waste collection and sweeping, cleaning of toilets, urinal and bathrooms, secondary transportation and wastewater management.

PNs ■ NEW DELHI

India has compiled a comprehensive checklist of its entire fauna, encompassing 1,04,561 species, making it the first country in the world to achieve this milestone. This is available on the "Fauna of India Checklist Portal" which was launched on the 109th Foundation Day of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Kolkata on Sunday by Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel. On the occasion, he emphasised that this first comprehensive document on India's faunal species will position the country as a global leader in biodiversity documentation. The faunal checklist is intended to be an invaluable reference for taxonomists, researchers, academicians, conservation managers, and policymakers. It comprises 121 checklists covering all known taxa across 36 phyla. The list also includes endemic, threatened, and scheduled species, providing a detailed account of the country's biodiversity. "Since the 1750s, or the time of Carl Linnaeus (the 18th-century Swedish naturalist



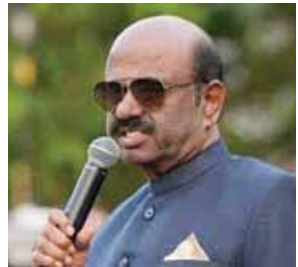
often called the Father of Taxonomy and whose system for naming, ranking and classifying organisms is still in wide use) and the present, we have had over 1 lakh different species. The portal will have details on each of them," he said. The Minister also released a list of animal and plant species discovered in India last year. More than 600 animal and more than 300 plant species were discovered in India last year, said ZSI officials. "This is a first-of-its-kind exercise in the world. Some other countries may have separate compilations of mammals, amphibians or insects. But India is the first country in the world which has prepared a complete list of fauna documented from the country," said Dhriti Banerjee, director of ZSI while talking about the

checklist. "While India accounts for only two per cent of the planet's land mass, it accounts for 7.5 per cent of the world's biodiversity. We are a remarkably bio-diverse country, especially when you take our population density into account," said Banerjee, the first woman to lead India's umbrella institute for biodiversity studies. A ZSI official said more than 100,000 species have been reported from India till now. The ZSI will also work with the Ghana Wildlife Society on a conservation project for pangolins, Banerjee said. The ZSI is collaborating with the Natural History Museum to have a common digital archive. An MoU was signed in 2021 between the two institutions to "work together to collect, study and conserve faunal specimens for science and to create and exchange associated data and images". This checklist will serve as a critical tool for ongoing and future efforts in understanding and protecting the nation's rich and diverse wildlife, said the official.

Table White Paper on State finances: Bengal Govt to Mamata

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

Amid the ongoing faceoff between Raj Bhavan and Nabanna (State secretariat) Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose has directed the State Government to place a White Paper on the State's financial situation. In a statement issued on Saturday by the Raj Bhavan said that the Governor had asked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to enlighten the people on the so-called financial crisis consequent to "public finance management issues, exposing serious lapses on the part of the state government." It was a very "disturbing, shocking, and shattering to see that West Bengal is facing a financial breakdown. Its public finance is in the doldrums," the statement said. It also said that "considering the grave nature of the economic scenario, the



Governor calls upon the CM, under the authority vested in him under Article 167 of the Constitution read with Rule 30 of the Rules of Business for West Bengal framed under Article 166 of the Constitution, to place a comprehensive report on the state's financial situation before the council of ministers and issue a white paper for the information of the people of the state." The Raj Bhavan statement a day after the Governor filed a defamation case against the Chief Minister at the Calcutta High Court after she allegedly said that some women had

complained to her, that they were afraid of visiting the Raj Bhavan because of activities reported there. The things took an ugly turn after the Governor directed two newly elected MLAs to visit Raj Bhavan for taking oath whereas the Government demanded the Governor to come down to the State Assembly and make them read their oath. The two MLAs including a woman had still not been able to take their oath as the Raj Bhavan had refused to budge from its stand. Incidentally a woman casual worker at Raj Bhavan had before the elections alleged that the Governor had not behaved with her in an appropriate manner. Referring to the incident TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh on Sunday said that the Raj Bhavan had been converted into a "BJP party office" and the Governor was conducting himself as a "BJP spokesperson."

TISS revokes termination of 115 faculty members

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major development, the prestigious Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) on Sunday revoked the termination of as many as 115 teaching and non-teaching staff members, following an assurance given by the Tata Education Trust (TET) that it would make necessary funds available for paying salaries of the affected staff members. The development has come as a huge relief to the 55 faculty members and 60 non-teaching staff members working on its four campuses in Mumbai, Mumbai, Tuljapur, Guwahati and Hyderabad. Ongoing discussions with the TET have provided an assurance that resources will be made available to the TISS to resolve the issue. TET has committed to releasing funds for the salaries of TET project/programme faculty

and non-teaching staff," the TISS Registrar said in a statement issued to the media late in the evening. The announcement came two days after 115 teaching and non-teaching faculty members were issued letters of termination. "The letter issued to all concerned TET programme faculty and non-teaching staff on June 28, 2024 stands withdrawn with immediate effect. They are requested to continue their work, and their salaries will be released as soon as the TET support grant is received by the Institute," the TISS Registrar said. Established in 1936 as Deemed University, the TISS is fully funded by the University Grants Commission (UGC). It is currently governed by the TISS society in accordance with the mandates of the UGC.

From being farmer's son to Vice Prez, Venkaiah's journey inspiring: Modi

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday released three books on the life of M Venkaiah Naidu and recalled his contributions, including the fight against imposition of Emergency and as Union Minister and Vice President. Recalling that the 50th anniversary of Emergency was observed recently, he said Naidu was even in jail for about 17 months during the fight against Emergency. The Emergency was imposed by the Congress by tarnishing the image of the country's Constitution, he said. The books, including a biography, were released on the eve of Naidu's 75th birthday. Expressing happiness over releasing the biography and two other books, Modi exuded confidence that the books would inspire people and show the right direction for national service. The journey of Naidu, from being a farmer's son to

occupying high-ranking positions as Union Minister and Vice President, is filled with many experiences, he said. Naidu chose to take up the Rural Development ministry in the cabinet of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, despite being a senior in the party, as he wanted to serve the villages, farmers and the poor, he said. During Naidu's tenure as Urban Development Minister as his senior cabinet colleague, several initiatives, including Swachh Bharat Mission and Smart Cities Mission, were started, Modi said. Praising Naidu's oratory, wit, alertness and spontaneity, he recalled the latter's comment of 'ek hath me BJP ka jhanda aur doosre hath me NDA ka agenda' (BJP's flag in one hand and NDA's agenda in another hand) during the Vajpayee regime. During Naidu's tenure as Chairman of Rajya Sabha, the bill to abolish Article 370 was passed with majesty, dignity and honour though the

government did not have majority in the upper house, he said. BJP grew as a 'vatvriksh' (banyan tree) that it is today, due to the efforts of lakhs of activists like Naidu, he said. He hoped that the country would emerge as a developed nation in 2047 when Naidu celebrates his 100th birthday. In his response, Naidu thanked the Prime Minister for releasing the books. Appreciating Modi's endeavour for the country's development, he said skill development is the need of the hour. "Development and welfare must go hand in hand. We should not be tempted by these freebies and then make the people lazy. Yes, we must give them a helping hand. You have been giving free ration to crores of people across the country. That should continue as long as it is required. But, at the same time, skill development is the need of the hour," the former Vice President said. Naidu also favoured promoting Indian languages.

Sujata Saunik first woman in Maharashtra to occupy post of Chief Secretary



TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In an indicator of the growing women power, the Eknath Shinde-led MahaYuti government on Sunday appointed senior IAS officer Sujata Saunik as the first-ever lady Chief Secretary of Maharashtra. A 1987 batch IAS officer, Sujata Saunik replaces Dr Nitin Kareer who retired from the service. Before taking over the top bureaucratic job in the state, Sujata Saunik was the Additional Chief Secretary (General Administration Department Home Affairs). Incidentally, Dr Kareer had taken over as Chief Secretary from Manoj Saunik, the husband of Sujata Saunik. The Saunik-couple are the first husband-wife duo in India, who have occupied the Chief Secretary's post. Currently, Manoj Saunik is the Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister.

Virat and Rohit Sharma ride off into the sunset

From Page 1 team needed him he performed. The 35-year-old batsman has recorded for the most number of 1292 runs in T20 World Cup in 35 matches with overall average 58.72 followed by Rohit Sharma who has second most number of runs in World Cup, 1220 in 47 matches with the average of 34.85. The former Indian Captain known for his match winning knocks in T20 World Cup campaigns, his feat came in big matches like 2014 semi final and final, 2016 Semi Final, and the clash against Pakistan in Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG 2022), to which Virat rated his biggest T20 innings of his career. Rohit whose debut for India was in the inaugural T20 World Cup in 2007 under the leadership of MS Dhoni, from being the middle order batsman to being the opening batsman his journey has been remarkable. He appeared in nine World Cup Campaigns (2007-2024). Rohit became the captain when Virat left his captaincy in 2021 T20 World Cup, from where Sharma took the charge and made it to semi final in 2022 World Cup feat and won the 2024 World Cup. The day after the world cup win and celebrations, India's star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja also hung up his boots from T20 Internationals. "With a heart full of gratitude, I bid farewell to T20 internationals. Like a steadfast horse galloping with pride, I've always given my best for my country and will continue to do so in other formats," Jadeja wrote on his Instagram handle. Jadeja has appeared in eight World Cup campaigns (2009-2024). The 35-year-old all-rounder has been known for his sharp fielding skill and contribution with the ball in the middle overs and quick hand in batting. It was a night that belonged to Virat and Rohit, the ones who rewrote the record books and captured the hearts of millions. Their retirements marked the end of an era, and also a new beginning for the future of Indian cricket. As the curtains closed on their T20 careers, one thing was certain that the two champions will always be remembered for his heroics. They would forever be etched in the annals of cricketing history, their names synonymous with power, elegance, and sheer brilliance.

New Criminal...

From Page 1 According to the new laws, judgment in criminal cases has to come within 45 days of completion of trial and charges must be framed within 60 days of first hearing. Statement of rape victims will be recorded by a female police officer in presence of her guardian or relative and medical reports have to come within seven days. Organised crimes and acts of terrorism have been defined, sedition has been replaced with treason and video recording of all search and seizure have been made mandatory. A new chapter on crimes against women and children has been added, buying and selling of any child has been made a heinous crime and there is a provision for death sentence or life imprisonment for gang rape of a minor. The offences against women and children, murder and offences against the State have been given precedence in the new law. Overlapping sections have been merged and simplified and will consist of only 358 sections against 511 in the Indian Penal Code. For example, definitions scattered from sections 6 to 52 have been brought under one section. Eighteen sections already stand repealed and four relating to weights and measures are covered under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. Instances of false promise of marriage, gang rape of minors, mob lynching, chain

snatching, etc are reported but the current Indian Penal Code did not have specific provisions for dealing with such incidents. These have been addressed in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. A new provision has been made for cases such as abandonment of women after making sexual relations on the false promise of marriage. The three laws were based on justice, transparency and fairness. Under the new laws, a person can now report incidents by electronic communication, without the need to physically visit a police station. This allows for easier and quicker reporting, facilitating prompt action by the police. With the introduction of Zero FIR, a person can file a First Information Report (FIR) at any police station, regardless of jurisdiction. This eliminates delays in initiating legal proceedings and ensures immediate reporting of the offence. An interesting addition of the law is that in the event of an arrest, the individual has the right to inform a person of his choice about his or her situation. This will ensure immediate support and assistance to the arrested individual. Besides, arrest details will now be prominently displayed within police stations and district headquarters, allowing families and friends of the arrested person easy access to important information.

General Dwivedi new...

From Page 1 General Dwivedi, who has vast operational experience along the frontiers with China and Pakistan, assumed the new responsibility at a time India is facing myriad security challenges including along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "General Dwivedi brings with him, a wealth of experience and a proven track record, of effectively planning and executing the unexpected," the Army said. He was serving as the Vice Chief of the Army since February 19. Before becoming the Vice Chief, he was serving as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Northern Command from

2022 to 2024. An alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa in Madhya Pradesh, General Dwivedi was commissioned into a regiment of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in 1984. He has a unique distinction of balanced command as well as staff exposure across Northern, Eastern and Western theatres in varied operational environments. The Army said General Dwivedi's impetus would be to augment the infusion of critical technologies by leveraging the nation's vibrant, capable and productive technology eco-system to enhance the force's overall capability.

Avalanche...

From Page 1 In 2022, three avalanches hit the area in the months of September and October. Five such incidents of avalanches were reported in the Chorabari glacier in May and June 2023. Following this, scientists from the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing and the Wadia Institute took stock of the entire situation by conducting terrestrial and aerial surveys of the area. The team of scientists had then described these incidents as "normal" in the Himalayan region, but they had emphasised on improving security in the Kedarnath Dham area.

PM Modi ki Mann Se...

From Page 1 "In shooting, the talent of our players is coming to the fore. Both men's and women's teams have qualified in table tennis. Our shooter daughters are also part of the Indian shotgun team. This time, members of our team will compete in wrestling and horse riding in those categories as well, in which they had never participated before," he said. One can make out that this time they will see a different level of excitement in sports, he said, noting that Indian contingent had shown its best performance in the World Para Athletics Championship as well. "Our players have also won glorious laurels in chess and badminton. Now the whole country is hoping that our players perform well in the Olympics as well, winning medals in these games and also the hearts of the

countrymen. In the coming days, I will also get an opportunity to meet the Indian team. I will encourage them on your behalf," he said. Invoking the emotion of attachment to one's mother, PM Modi initiated #Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam: plant a tree dedicated mother as a gesture of acknowledging the "unpayable debt to her". He encouraged citizens to share their picture of planting a tree with their mother or her picture as a mark of respect to her and Mother Earth. The Prime Minister paid rich tributes to tribal freedom fighters Veer Sidhu and Kanhu, who led the Santhal uprising against the British rule in 1855, much before the first war of independence in 1857. Tribal population observe June 30 as "Hool Divas". This day is associated with the indomitable courage of Veer Sidhu-Kanhu, who strongly opposed the

atrocities of the foreign rulers, Modi said. With the monsoon season picking pace, he spoke of the "Karthumbhi" umbrellas crafted in Attappady, Kerala, by tribal women. He said, "Karthumbi umbrellas have completed their journey from a small village in Kerala to multinational companies. What could be a better example than this of being vocal for local?" In his broadcast, Modi congratulated the All India Radio on its Sanskrit bulletin completing 50 years and said the ancient language has played a big role in the progress of Indian knowledge and science. "The demand of today's times is that we should respect Sanskrit and also connect it with our daily life," he said, noting that locals at a Bengaluru park meet every Sunday to converse in the language.

A colourful way this...

From Page 1 Now we pay Rs 30 per umbrella and are hopeful to increase the pay packet if the Government junks the GST and other taxes. This should be seen as a life saving

mission and not as a commercial venture," said Prasad. In his first Man Ki Baath programme after returning to power for the third successive term, Modi sprang a surprise

by speaking about Karthumbi. The tribal settlement at Attappady wore a festive look on Sunday as all of them sat in rapt attention to Modi's speech extolling the tribal women. Ramu and Lakshmi did not hide their glee on being mentioned by the country's Prime Minister in his speech. "We can revive this collective

which is troubled by the indifference of the State Government. If the tribals are given safe and secured houses it will be a major advantage for the community. Till 2015 we were troubled by absence of road connectivity. The Gramen Sadak Yojana has resolved this issue to a certain extent," said Lakshmi.

France's exceptionally high-stakes election begins

AP ■ PARIS

Voters across mainland France were casting ballots Sunday in the first round of exceptional parliamentary elections that could put the government in the hands of nationalist, far-right parties for the first time since the Nazi era.

The outcome of the two-round elections, which will wrap up July 7, could impact European financial markets, Western support for Ukraine and how France's nuclear arsenal and global military force are managed.

Many French voters are frustrated about inflation and economic concerns, as well as President Emmanuel Macron's leadership, which they see as arrogant and out-of-touch with their lives. Marine Le Pen's anti-immigration National Rally party has tapped that discontent, notably via online platforms like TikTok, and dominated pre-election opinion polls.

A new coalition on the left, the New Popular Front, also poses a challenge to the pro-business Macron and his centrist alliance Together for the Republic. It includes the French Socialists and Communists and the hard-left France Unbowed party and



Far left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon casts his ballot, Sunday in Paris. France is holding the first round of an early parliamentary election that could bring the country's first far-right government since Nazi occupation during World War II. The second round is on July 7, and the outcome of the vote remains highly uncertain.

vows to reverse a deeply unpopular pension reform law that raised the retirement age from 62 to 64, among other economic reforms.

There are 49.5 million registered voters who will choose 577 members of the National Assembly, France's influential lower house of parliament, during

the two-round voting. Turnout at midday at the first round stood at 25.9 per cent according to interior ministry figures, higher than the 18.43

per cent at midday during 2022 legislative elections.

Macron voted in Le Touquet, a seaside town in northern France, along with his wife, Brigitte. Le Pen cast her ballot in her party's stronghold in northern France.

The vote takes place during the traditional first week of summer vacation in France, and absentee ballot requests were at least five times higher than in the 2022 elections. The first polling projections were expected at 8 pm (1800 GMT), when the final polling stations close. Early official results were expected later Sunday night.

Voters at a Paris polling station had issues from immigration to inflation and the rising cost of living on their minds as the country has grown more divided between the far right and far left blocs, with a deeply unpopular and weakened president in the political centre. The blitz campaign was marred by rising hate speech.

"People don't like what has been happening," said Cynthia Justine, a 44-year-old voter. "People feel they've lost a lot in recent years. People are angry. I am angry." She added that with "the rising hate speech," it was necessary

for people to express their frustrations with those holding and seeking power.

"It is important for me because I am a woman and we haven't always had the right to vote," Justine said. "Because I am a Black woman, it's even more important. A lot is at stake on this day." Pierre Leclaire, a 78-year-old retiree, said he cast his ballot for the simple reason of "trying to avoid the worst," which for him is "a government that is from the far right, populist, not liberal and not very Republican."

Macron called the early elections after his party was trounced in the European Parliament election earlier in June by the National Rally, which has historic ties to racism and antisemitism and is hostile toward France's Muslim community. It also has historical ties to Russia. Macron's call was an audacious gamble that French voters who were complacent about the European election would be jolted into turning out for moderate forces in national elections to keep the far right out of power.

Instead, pre-election polls suggested that the National Rally is gaining support and has a chance at winning a parliamentary majority. In that scenario,

Macron would be expected to name 28-year-old National Rally President Jordan Bardella as prime minister in an awkward power-sharing system known as "cohabitation."

While Macron has said he won't step down before his presidential term expires in 2027, cohabitation would weaken him at home and on the world stage.

The results of the first round will give a picture of overall voter sentiment, but not necessarily of the overall makeup of the next National Assembly. Predictions are difficult because of the complicated voting system, and because parties will work between the two rounds to make alliances in some constituencies or pull out of others. In the past, such tactical maneuvers helped keep far-right candidates from power. But support for Le Pen's party has spread deep and wide.

Bardella, who has no governing experience, says he would use the powers of prime minister to stop Macron from continuing to supply long-range weapons to Ukraine for the war with Russia.

The National Rally has also questioned the right to citizenship for people born in France, and wants to curtail the rights

of French citizens with dual nationality. Critics say this undermines fundamental human rights and is a threat to France's democratic ideals.

Meanwhile, huge public spending promises by the National Rally and especially the left-wing coalition have shaken markets and ignited worries about France's heavy debt, already criticized by EU watchdogs. In the restive French Pacific territory of New Caledonia, polls closed earlier due to a curfew that authorities on the archipelago have extended until July 8. Violence there flared on May 13, leaving nine people dead after two weeks of unrest, due to attempts by Macron's government to amend the French Constitution and change voting lists in New Caledonia, which the Indigenous Kanaks feared would further marginalize them. They have long sought to break free from France.

Voters in France's other overseas territories of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, Saint-Barthélemy, Saint-Martin, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, French Polynesia and those voting in offices opened by embassies and consular posts across the Americas cast their ballots on Saturday.

Hungary's populist Orbán to take over EU presidency

AP ■ BUDAPEST

When Hungary takes over the helm of the European Union on July 1, many politicians in Brussels will have the same thing on their minds: whether populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will use the role to further his reputation as the bloc's main spoiler. Orbán in recent years has seemed to relish opportunities to block, water down or delay key EU decisions, routinely going against the grain of most other leaders on issues like the war in Ukraine, relations with Russia and China, and efforts to defend democracy and the rule of law.

His public opposition to EU policies and stances has long frustrated his partners in the bloc and pushed him to the

margins of the continent's mainstream. Hungary's motto for its presidency — Make Europe Great Again — raised eyebrows for its resemblance to the famous tagline of former U.S. President Donald Trump. The EU presidency rotates among its member countries, and while the post holds little real power, it does allow countries to put their priorities high on Europe's agenda.

Now, as Hungary resides over the 27-nation bloc for the coming six months, it will likely keep up its anti-EU rhetoric, said Dorka Takácsy, a research fellow at the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy.

But the timeline of its presidency — beginning with a lengthy summer break and a transitional period of forming a new European Parliament

and executive commission — will give Budapest few opportunities to derail the bloc's priorities significantly, she said.

"These six months are altogether not that long, which means that ... Hungary cannot do potentially much harm, even according to the critics," Takácsy said.

As Hungary's takeover approached, leaders in Brussels rushed to push through important policy decisions while Belgium was still at the helm. On Tuesday, for example, the EU launched membership talks with candidate countries Ukraine and Moldova.

Orbán has vocally opposed and threatened to block Ukraine's candidacy. His government has also held up EU efforts to supply Ukraine with badly needed funding.

Yet with Ukraine's accession process already initiated, Takácsy said, the most Hungary can do now under its presidency is delay further steps toward its EU membership, a process that in any scenario is likely to take many years. "All the meaningful steps from the European side regarding Ukraine were already done," she said. "(A Hungarian) delay, according to most European leaders, is already calculated and being taken into consideration as if it's something which is most likely going to happen." Orbán has long been accused of dismantling democratic institutions and violating the EU's standards on the rule of law, leading the bloc's legislature in May to call for the presidency to be taken out of Hungary's hands entirely.

Video shows NY officer shooting 13-year-old

AP ■ NEW YORK

Video released late Saturday shows an officer in upstate New York fatally shooting a 13-year-old boy who had been tackled to the ground after he ran from police and pointed a replica handgun at them. The teen was killed late Friday in Utica after officers in the city about 240 miles (400 kilometers) northwest of Manhattan stopped two youths a little after 10 p.m. in connection with an armed robbery investigation, police said.

The youths, both 13, matched the descriptions of the robbery suspects and were in the same area at around the same time the day after, police said. One was also walking in the road, a violation of state traffic law.

The body camera video released by police captures an officer saying he needs to pat them down to ensure they don't have any weapons in their possession. Immediately one of the two — identified by police as Nyah Mway — runs away.

Authorities froze frames of the video where a running Nyah Mway appears to point the gun at the pursuing officers. Police also edited the video to insert a red circle around the weapon to show it to viewers. The officers believed it was a handgun,

police said, but it was later determined to be a replica of a Glock 17 Gen 5 handgun with a detachable magazine.

"During a ground struggle" with the teen, one of the officers fired a single shot that struck the boy in the chest, Williams said. The teen was given "immediate" first aid by the officers and taken to Wynn Hospital, where he died, the chief said.

The replica gun carried by the teen "is in all respects a realistic appearing firearm with GLOCK markings, signatures, detachable magazine, and serial numbers," Lt. Michael Curley, a police spokesperson, said via email. "However ultimately it fires only pellets or BB's."

A bystander video posted to Facebook shows one of the officers chasing after Nyah Mway and tackling him to the ground. It also shows the officer punching the teen as two other officers arrive. A gunshot rings out as the teen is on the ground and the officers quickly stand up. The officer who fired his gun was identified as Patrick Husnay, a six-year veteran of the agency. Husnay and Officers Bryce Patterson and Andrew Citriniti were placed on administrative leave with pay. The police body camera video shows a chaotic scene.

Nyah Mway points the replica handgun at

the officers while he runs from them. The officers scream "gun!" to each other as they run.

Patterson then tackles and punches Nyah Mway, and as the two are wrestling on the ground, Husnay opens fire.

Officers initially thought Nyah Mway may have shot himself, and Patterson says, "I don't know if he shot me." It is not clear whether he is referring to Nyah Mway or his fellow officer. Patterson was not struck. Bystanders scream at the police throughout the recordings, and at one point an officer yells back: "We're trying to save him right now!"

The other youth was detained in the back of a police vehicle and was not involved in the shooting.

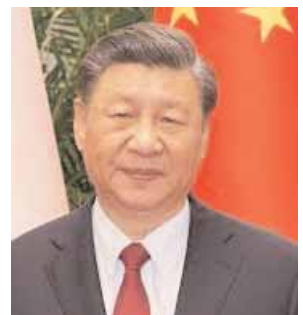
The police department released the body camera videos following a public outcry as the shooting roiled Utica, a city of more than 65,000 located some 240 miles (400 kilometers) northwest of Manhattan. It is home to more than 4,200 people from Myanmar, according to The Center, a nonprofit that helps to resettle the refugees. Nyah Mway, who local media reports said was an 8th grader at Donovan Middle School, has been identified as a refugee born in Myanmar and a member of the Karen ethnic minority.

Xi to attend SCO summit in Astana

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping will attend the 24th summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Kazakhstan's capital Astana this week, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced on Sunday. He will also pay a state visit to Tajikistan, it said. From July 2 to 6, President Xi will attend the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Astana, the ministry said.

Officials say the situation in Afghanistan, the Ukraine conflict and boosting overall security cooperation among the SCO member countries are expected to figure in the summit. The SCO, comprising India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is an influential economic and security bloc that has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations.



India will be represented by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) earlier said.

Officials say there is a likelihood of a meeting on the sidelines of the summit between Jaishankar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who is expected to accompany Xi. If it takes place, it will be the first high-level meeting between Indian and Chinese officials after the formation of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's 3.0 government following the recent general elections in India.

Generally, the Indian prime minister participates in the SCO summit, providing an opportunity for Indian and Chinese leaders on the sidelines of the heads of the state meeting of the eight-member bloc. But since Modi has decided to skip it, significance is attached to the likely meeting between Jaishankar and Wang in the light of a four-year-long frozen relations between the two countries over the standoff in Eastern Ladakh.

Relations between the two countries hit a low except for trade ever since the eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Tso (lake) area near Galwan. Since the May 2020 clashes, the two sides have so far held 21 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks to resolve the standoff.

Private call of top Democrats fuels more insider anger about Biden's debate

New York (AP) A sense of concern is growing inside the top ranks of the Democratic Party that leaders of Joe Biden's campaign and the Democratic National Committee are not taking seriously enough the impact of the president's troubling debate performance earlier in the week.

DNC Chairman Jaime Harrison held a Saturday afternoon call with dozens of committee members across the country, a group of some of the most influential members of the party. He did not acknowledge Biden's weak showing Thursday night or the avalanche of criticism that followed. Multiple committee members on the call, granted anonymity to talk about the private discussion, described feeling like they were being gaslighted — that they were being asked to ignore the dire nature of the party's predicament. The call, they said, may have worsened a widespread sense of panic

among elected officials, donors and other stakeholders.

Instead, the people said, Harrison offered what they described as a rosy assessment of Biden's path forward. The chat function was disabled and there were no questions allowed. Many donors, party strategists and rank-and-file DNC members are publicly and privately saying they want the 81-year-old Biden to step aside to allow the party to select a younger replacement at the Democratic National Convention in August. As of now, though, Biden's closest allies insist he remains well-positioned to compete against Republican Donald Trump and have given no indication they will push him to end his campaign.

Those best positioned to replace him — Vice President Kamala Harris, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer among

them — reiterated their support for Biden after the debate.

Many are anxiously awaiting the first major round of post-debate public polling to determine their next steps.

Polls from CNN and 538/Ipsos conducted soon after the debate found that most debate-watchers thought Trump outperformed Biden. But the two men's favourability ratings remained largely unchanged, just as they did in the aftermath of Trump's conviction on charges in New York that he illegally participated in a hush money scheme to influence the 2016 election. In a subsequent appearance on MSNBC, Harrison downplayed the significance of the conference call, which he said was part of a regularly scheduled communication "to talk about the state of the race" and the upcoming national convention with the DNC's many elected members across the country.

Growing clamour for Biden to step down

He says here to stay to defeat Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Following a disastrous performance at the debate stage in Atlanta, there is a growing clamour within the ruling Democratic party and the mainstream American media for President Joe Biden to step down from the presidential race. However, the 81-year-old president and his campaign have asserted that he is not giving up and is determined to successfully run for the November 5th presidential elections. "Biden is the nominee (of the Democratic party. No switching of the nominee), campaign leadership has asserted.

Biden, the 46th president of the United States, has won the Democratic presidential primary.

As of June 29, he had 3,894 delegates as against 1,975 delegates required to win the nomination of the party. These delegates would meet in Chicago from August 19 to 22 to formally nominate the winner of the primaries to run for the November 5 presidential elections.

Biden, seeking a second term in the White House, stumbled and fumbled during the televised presidential debate with his predecessor Donald Trump on Thursday night in Atlanta, setting off alarm bells among top Democrats about whether he can stay atop the gruelling months ahead of the elections on November 5.

The 78-year-old Trump, who is the presumptive Republican Party candidate for the presidential election, clashed right from the start with Biden and by the end of the 90 minutes debate, gave enough fodder for serious editorials and opinions as well as memes on social media.

Over the last 50 hours after the first presidential debate in Atlanta on Thursday night,

wherein his performance was seen far below par against his rival Trump, multiple media outlets, including The New York Times and his own party supporters and key decision makers, are calling him to step down from the race. "Dropping out is Biden's most patriotic option," The Atlantic said Saturday.

"To serve his country, President Biden should leave the race," The New York Times editorial board wrote following the debate.

The New York Times wrote, "That is no longer a sufficient rationale for why Mr. Biden should be the Democratic nominee this year." Similar messages are coming from inside the party as well.

However, his inner circle is standing by the side of Biden. A post-debate poll says that 10 per cent of the independent voters have moved towards Biden after the debate, a point that is being made by his team.

"It wasn't my best debate ever as Barack (Obama) pointed out. I understand the concern after the debate," Biden told his fundraisers in New Jersey. "I get it. I didn't have a great night, but I'm going to be fighting harder," he said.

"Research during the debate shows us converting more undecided voters than Trump did, in large part because of his conduct on January 6," Biden said. He argued Trump's lies were the biggest takeaway: "People remember the bad things during his presidency" "I didn't have a great night but neither did he," he said again of Trump.

Several prominent columnists — Paul Krugman, Tom Friedman, Nicholas Kristof, Jonathan Alter, and David Ignatius — argued that the chance of a diminished Biden losing to Trump is too high to risk.

Sunak, wife seek blessings at Neasden Temple

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and wife Akshata Murty sought divine blessings on the last weekend ahead of the July 4 general election at the iconic BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir in London, popularly known as Neasden Temple.

The couple were greeted with loud cheers as their convoy drove into the grand temple grounds on Saturday evening and went on to perform puja guided by the priests. After a tour of the grand temple complex and interaction with volunteers and senior community leaders, cricket fan Sunak began his address to the congregation with a reference to India's victory in the T20 World Cup before speaking about the inspiration he draws from his faith.

"I am Hindu and like all of you, I draw inspiration and comfort



from my faith," said Sunak. "I was proud to be sworn in as a member of parliament on the 'Bhagavad Gita'. Our faith teaches us to do our duty and not fret about the outcome as long as one does it faithfully. That is what I was brought up to believe by my wonderful and

loving parents and that is how I live my life; and that is what I want to pass on to my daughters as they grow up. It is dharma which guides me in my approach to public service," he said.

Sunak went on to reference his general practitioner (GP) father

and pharmacist mother's community service and also the "wonderful work" his philanthropist mother-in-law, Sudha Murty, does in India. "My wife is not only the greatest support that my husband could ever have but also someone committed to public service," he added.

As Britain's first Indian heritage Prime Minister, the 44-year-old went on to express his gratitude to the community for their "prayers and love" and pledged to try and continue making them proud.

"You have been with me every step of the way. On the hardest days in this job, I have felt your backing. And I know the pride that there is to have a British Asian Prime Minister and I am determined to never let you down," he said.

Alluding to the recent controversy around a far-right Reform UK activist attacking him with a racist slur during the election

campaign, the British Indian leader stressed on the country's multi-faith credentials.

"I'm proud to be the first British Asian Prime Minister, but I'm even prouder that it is not a big deal. The events of the last few days should not make us forget that the United Kingdom is the world's most successful multi-ethnic, multi-faith democracy and we should all be uplifted by that," said Sunak, amid applause.

"With your support, I will create a secure future for our country where Hindus, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, and Jains, those of all religions and none, feel equally at home, where everyone has the security they deserve," he said.

On the election pitch for his incumbent Conservative Party, he name-checked some of the Tory candidates contesting from constituencies in and around the temple in north London and reiterated some of

his core policy themes around tax cuts and education. He also drew parallels between the values of his party and the Indian diaspora: "Education, hard work, family, those are my values. Those are your values. Those are Conservative values." Sunak and Murty had last visited a BAPS temple during his visit to India for the G20 Summit in September, when they offered prayers at the Akshardham Temple in New Delhi.

During their visit to the London temple, they performed abhishek of Shri Nilkanth Varni Maharaj, the teenage form of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, and concluded their visit by mingling with the crowds.

Sunak was virtually mobbed as he reached out for high-fives with the young children and bent down to touch the feet of the elderly to seek their blessings.

Indian economy set for stable high growth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian economy is poised for potentially a stable high growth phase and it is also in a strong position in the context of significant risks that the country is facing, RBI's monetary policy committee member Shashanka Bhide said on Sunday. Bhide further said with the growth of income that would support domestic demand and additions to production or supply capacity reflected by high levels of investment spending in the last couple of years, domestic economic activity is expected to sustain its momentum. "In terms of growth momentum and inflation

trajectories Indian economy is poised for potentially a stable high growth phase. "It is also in a strong position in the context of significant risks that are also facing us," he told PTI. The current official estimate of GDP growth in 2023-24 is 8.2 per cent, accelerating from 7 per cent in the preceding year. Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India pegged the GDP growth rate for FY25 at 7.2 per cent. Bhide noted that the monsoon rainfall, which is expected to be normal this year, is a significant positive factor for growth as well as bringing down food inflation. While noting that



improvement in global demand conditions are necessary to spur external demand for goods and services, he said. Bhide said while food inflation is at a high level, averaging about 8 per cent during Jan-May 2024, the overall CPI-based inflation has moderated to below 5 per cent during March-May 2024. "The prevailing policy rate combined with the gradual decline in inflation rate does mean higher real interest rates, but continued focus on keeping the inflation aligned with the target in a sustained way is important at this point to support growth as well," he said. In its latest bi-monthly

review earlier this month, the six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) of Reserve Bank of India left the key interest rate (repo rate) unchanged for the eighth time in a row at 6.5 per cent. The RBI has projected Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based retail inflation at 4.5 per cent for FY25 with 4.9 per cent in Q1 (April-June), 3.8 per cent in Q2, 4.6 per cent in Q3, and 4.5 per cent in Q4. Retail inflation was 4.75 per cent in May. The RBI, which has been mandated to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent (with margin of 2 per cent on either side), mainly factors in CPI while arriving at its monetary policy.

FPIs invest ₹26,565 crore in Indian equities in June

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After two months of net outflow, foreign investors turned buyers in June, infusing Rs 26,565 crore in Indian equities, driven by political stability and a sharp rebound in markets. Looking ahead, attention will gradually shift towards the budget and Q1 FY25 earnings, which could determine the sustainability of FPI flows, Vipul Bhowar, Director, Listed Investments, Waterfield Advisors, said. According to the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net infusion of Rs 26,565 crore in equities this month. This came following a net outflow of Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.



Before that, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 35,098 crore in March and Rs 1,539 crore in February, while they took out Rs 25,743 crore in January. The net outflow now stood at Rs 3,200 crore in the month, data with the depositories showed. Geojit Financial Services Chief Investment Strategist V K Vijayakumar said political stability, despite the BJP not getting a majority on its own,

and the sharp rebound in markets aided by steady domestic institutional investors (DIIs) buying and aggressive retail buying, has forced the FPIs to turn buyers in India. However, the FPI buying has been focused on a few specific stocks rather than being widespread across the market or sectors. "This is because Indian equities are still considered overvalued by FPIs, Waterfield Advisors'

Bhowar said. They are favouring the financial, auto, capital goods, real estate, and select consumer sectors. "With government stability assured, impressive GDP performance and forecasts, stable consumer price index, ample forex reserves, and robust banking sector health, I anticipate a steady and substantial FPI inflow," Kishay Upadhyay, smallcase Manager & Founder Fidelity, said. Additionally, FPIs invested Rs 14,955 crore in the debt market in June. With this, FPIs' investment in the debt market reached Rs 68,624 crore in 2024 so far. India's inclusion in the JP Morgan Bond Index is positive. In the long term, this will reduce the cost of borrowing for the government and the cost of capital for corporates. This is positive for the economy and therefore, for the equity and debt market.

EPFO gross new members addition dips 4 per cent in 2023-24: MoSPI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retirement fund body EPFO's gross new subscribers addition declined by over 4 per cent to 1.09 crore in 2023-24 compared to a year ago, as per a report by Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI). According to the report 'Payroll Reporting in India: An Employment Perspective - January to April, 2024', the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) recorded 1,09,93,119 gross addition of new members in 2023-24 compared to 1,14,98,453 in 2022-23. The gross addition of new members was affected due to the pandemic and declined from 1,10,40,683 in 2019-20 to 85,48,898 in 2020-21. It bounced back to 1,08,65,063 in 2021-22. The Centre as well as states had imposed lockdown restriction in 2020 and 2021 to curb the spread of deadly coronavirus in the country, which had hit economic



activities as well as employment. The data shows that in the last five fiscal years till 2023-24, the gross new members addition by EPFO had not recovered to pre-covid level of 2018-19. The gross addition of new members was 1,39,44,349 in 2018-19. Since April 2018, the ministry has been bringing out the employment related statistics in the formal sector covering the period September 2017 onwards, using information on the number of subscribers who have subscribed under three major schemes, namely Employees' Provident Fund

(EPF), Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and National Pension Scheme (NPS). The numbers of subscribers are from various sources and there are elements of overlap. Therefore, the estimates from various sources are not additive, it stated. The report also showed that the gross addition of members of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) also dipped to 1,67,60,672 in 2023-24 from 1,67,73,023 in 2022-23. However, according to the report, the new addition of subscribers increased under NPS to 9,37,020 in 2023-24 from 8,24,735 in 2022-23.

Aviation market big enough for Akasa Air to succeed: CEO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As Akasa Air spreads its wings on domestic and international routes, the less-than-two-year-old airline's chief Vinay Dube has said he does not think about competition in encouraging or discouraging terms, as the aviation market is "big enough for us to succeed". The carrier, which took to the skies in August 2022, currently has a fleet of 24 Boeing 737 MAX planes and operates more than 900 flights weekly. While emphasising that the focus is on service excellence and cost leadership, Dube said the airline is looking for network and international expansion. "I don't think about competition and certainly don't think about it in encouraging or discouraging terms. If we focus on ourselves, the market is big enough for us to succeed," he told PTI in a recent interview.

Urja Ganga gas pipeline completion delayed to March 2025, says GAIL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The construction of the Rs 12,940-crore 'Urja Ganga' gas pipeline, India's most ambitious project taking environment-friendly fuel to eastern parts of the country, has been delayed by nine months and will now be completed by March 2025, state-owned GAIL (India) Ltd said. The 3,306-kilometre Jagdishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra pipeline was originally targeted for completion by June 2024. But due to "delay in right of use (RoU) availability", the completion schedule has been revised "from June 2024 to March 2025", GAIL said in a stock exchange filing. The bulk of the pipeline has already been constructed, and gas has started to flow in most cities along the route. Traditionally, natural gas was available for use as fuel to generate electricity, make fertiliser or turn into CNG and cooking gas only in the western and northern parts of the country, as pipelines taking the fuel from source to users were limited to these parts. In October 2016, work on laying a pipeline from Jagdishpur in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal, Bokaro in Jharkhand and Dhamra in Odisha began. The line was extended to Guwahati in Assam from Barauni in Bihar, a length of 726 km, to take the fuel to hereto-unconnected states in the eastern region. The Jagdishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra Pipeline (JHBDPL), popularly called the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga pipeline, is to supply gas to the eastern states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal. GAIL, the firm executing the pipeline, said its board of directors in a meeting on June



28 approved the revision of the completion schedule. The completion schedule for the 240-km Dhamra-Haldia pipeline has also been revised from June 2024 to March 2025, it added. The company on May 10, 2019, stated that it has completed awards of all major contracts worth Rs 10,500 crore for pipeline supply and laying of the integrated 3400-km Jagdishpur-Haldia and Bokaro-Dhamra Natural Gas Pipeline (JHBDPL) and Barauni-Guwahati Pipeline (BGPL) pipeline. The government provided 40 per cent viability gap funding amounting to Rs 5,176 crore for execution of JHBDPL. For the Barauni-Guwahati pipeline, a 60 per cent viability gap funding, amounting to Rs 5,559 crore, has been provided by the government. The Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga pipeline will connect all the geographical areas (more than 90) spread over Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and further to the northeastern region of India. When the project is fully completed, the northeastern/eastern part of India will become an integral part of the gas-based economy with the twin benefits of the cheapest gas transportation through Urja Ganga and gas pricing reforms.

Mcap of nine of top 10 most valued firms jumps ₹2.89 lakh cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nine of the top-10 most valued firms together added Rs 2,89,699.42 crore in market valuation last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest gainer, in line with a rally in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,822.83 points or 2.36 per cent. The BSE Sensex recorded the best monthly gain in June by climbing 7.14 per cent. The Sensex breached the historic

79,000 mark on Thursday. While Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever and ITC were the gainers, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) emerged as the laggard. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 1,52,264.63 crore to Rs 21,18,951.20 crore. TCS added Rs 34,733.64 crore taking its valuation to Rs



14,12,845.09 crore. The mcap of ICICI Bank soared Rs 30,286.99 crore to Rs 8,44,201.88 crore and that of Bharti Airtel surged Rs 18,267.7 crore to Rs 8,22,530.35 crore. The market valuation of Infosys climbed Rs 14,656.3 crore to Rs 6,50,602.10 crore and that of HDFC Bank zoomed Rs 13,808.74 crore to Rs 12,80,865.43 crore. State Bank of India's valuation rallied Rs 11,111.14 crore to Rs 7,57,565.68 crore.

The mcap of Hindustan Unilever went up by Rs 7,953.37 crore to Rs 5,81,570.83 crore and that of ITC climbed Rs 6,616.91 crore to Rs 5,30,475.82 crore. However, the valuation of LIC tumbled Rs 22,042.61 crore to Rs 6,25,573.90 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Infosys, LIC, Hindustan Unilever and ITC.

Domestic macroeconomic data, global trends to drive markets this week: Analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic macroeconomic data announcements, global trends and trading activity of foreign investors would guide market sentiments this week, analysts said. After a record rally, markets may face volatile trends this week amid elevated valuations and investors would also keep a track of global oil benchmark Brent crude and rupee-dollar movement for further cues. "Potential volatility in the stock market is anticipated this week. Elevated valuations remain a concern, with investors now focusing on monsoon progress and its impact on the rural economy. The upcoming Union Budget in July has become the next focal point, with high expectations for growth-oriented policies," said Pravesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst, Swastika Investmart Ltd. Market sentiment will be gauged by closely monitoring foreign and domestic institutional investors' activity (FII and DII) and crude oil prices, he said. On the global front, the US market has experienced some profit-taking from higher levels. Key economic data, such as the US job openings report, will be released on July 2, 2024, followed by the US ISM Services PMI data on July 3,



2024, he noted. "Additionally, the US Federal Reserve Chairperson Powell's speech is scheduled for July 2, 2024, and the US FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) minutes will be released on July 3, 2024. The movement of dollar index and US bond yields will also be crucial factors to watch," Gour added. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,822.83 points or 2.36 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 509.5 points or 2.16 per cent. The Sensex recorded the best monthly gain in June by climbing 7.14 per cent. The Sensex breached the historic 79,000 mark on Thursday, and the Nifty hit the 24,000 level for the first time in intra-day trade. "The outlook for the market will be guided by major domestic and global economic data such as HSBC India Manufacturing PMI, HSBC India Services PMI, S&P Global Manufacturing PMI, Fed speech, initial jobless

claims this week," Arvinder Singh Nanda, Senior Vice President, Master Capital Services Ltd, said. After hitting a fresh all-time high level in early trade on Friday, the BSE 30-share index declined 210.45 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 79,032.73. During the day, it jumped 428.4 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a record peak of 79,671.58. The Nifty went lower by 33.90 points or 0.14 per cent to 24,010.60. During the day, it climbed 129.5 points or 0.53 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 24,174. "We expect this positive momentum to continue at a steady pace with stock-specific activity. However, the release of economic data points this week would keep a little volatility in the market. Sector like auto is expected to be in the limelight with release of their monthly sales number," said Siddhartha Khemka, Senior Group VP, Head - Research, Broking & Distribution, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

Sattva Group targets 85 per cent growth in housing sales: MD Bijay

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Sattva Group is bullish on India's housing market and will launch many projects to achieve 85 per cent growth in sales of residential properties to around Rs 6,500 crore this fiscal, a top company official said. In the 2023-24, Bengaluru-based Sattva Group achieved sales bookings of Rs 3,500 crore. "We are very bullish on housing demand. We are targeting to achieve sales of Rs 6,000-6,500 crore this financial year," Sattva Group MD Bijay Agarwal said. He said the company would invest Rs 12,000-14,000 crore over the next three years to build housing, office and hotel projects. The bulk of the investments would be to develop housing projects and office complexes. Sattva Group is one of the leading real estate developers in India with a significant presence in South India. It has completed 140 projects comprising 80 million square feet area in the last 30 years. Around 23 million square feet are under construction, and 65 million square feet are in the pipeline. Agarwal noted that the demand for the residential segment has been very strong



post-COVID pandemic, while the leasing activities in the office market are also back on track. He said the company would enter the Mumbai housing market this year. Shivam Agarwal, VP (Strategic Development) of Sattva Group, said the company is looking for growth opportunities across geography and different verticals of real estate. In the residential segment, Shivam said Sattva Group will launch more than 13 million square feet of area in Bengaluru this fiscal. In Hyderabad, it will launch more than 6 million square feet of housing units this fiscal. "In Mumbai, we intend to launch a project in the latter

half of FY2024-25 of approx 1.3 million sq ft," said Shivam. Furthermore, the company is looking to acquire land parcels for another 1.5 million sq ft in Mumbai. The company's MD highlighted that the group's co-working and co-living joint ventures — Simplivork Offices and Colive — have been performing well and expanding. "We plan to list our co-working and co-living businesses on stock exchanges in the next 2-3 years by launching public issues," Agarwal said. Sattva Group has more than 50 per cent stake in Simplivork and Colive. When asked about its plan to launch Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT), Bijay said, "We are in the early stage of discussion with Blackstone". He did not give any timeline for the launch of the public issue of REIT to monetise the commercial assets developed jointly by Sattva Group and global investment firm Blackstone. Sattva Group and Blackstone have a joint portfolio of around 32 million square feet, of which 18 million square feet are already completed.



INDIA'S TELESURGERY MILESTONES

Driven by robotic technology, this cutting-edge system is all set to transform global surgery by enabling remote interventions that improve access to specialised care and boost international collaboration. Recently, the national capital witnessed the launch of a historic moment in the sector, reports **ARCHANA JYOTI**

On June 10, 2024, a historic moment unfolded at the Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC) in Delhi. Led by Dr Sudhir Rawal, a pioneering figure in robotic surgery, the team at RGCIRC performed India's first telesurgery in cancer care. The procedure, a Radical Cysto-Prostatectomy with Bilateral Lymph Nodes Removal, was conducted using the SSI Mantra Robot developed by SS Innovations, a developer of India's first indigenous surgical robotic system. The surgery was executed from the SSI Office in Gurugram, while the patient remained at RGCIRC in Delhi. Despite the distance, the surgical team completed the complex procedure in one hour and forty-five minutes, marking a significant advancement in telesurgery capabilities. The successful telesurgery at RGCIRC highlighted the potential of advanced robotic technologies to enhance precision and quality in surgical interventions. Telesurgery not only overcomes geographical constraints but also reduces the need for patients to travel long distances for specialized medical care, Dr Rawal elaborated. This approach promises to democratize access to high-quality surgical procedures, particularly benefiting patients in remote areas with limited healthcare infrastructure, said Dr Sudhir Srivastava, founder, Chairman and CEO, of SS Innovations. Pioneer in



Dr Sudhir Rawal conducting telesurgery

robotic cardiac surgery and the brain behind the SSI Mantra System, Srivastava is popularly known as the Father of Surgical Robotics in India. SS Innovations further advanced the field with the launch of SSI Mantra 3, the latest iteration of its indigenous surgical robotic system. Equipped with 5 slimmer robotic arms and an immersive 3D HD headset, it offers surgeons unparalleled precision and control during procedures. The system's cost-effectiveness aims to make advanced robotic surgery accessible to healthcare institutions across India and beyond, aligning with the 'Make in India' initiative. Alongside, it has achieved a historic feat in Indian medical science by completing the nation's maiden human trial in telesurgery, signifying a monumental leap in surgical robotics. Dr. Fredric Moll, Father of Surgical Robotics as Board Member and Vice Chairman said at an event held here to launch the innovation, "SSI Mantra 3 integrates cutting-

edge advancements in robotic surgery, offering surgeons unparalleled precision and control for improved patient outcomes. It reinforces India's position as a hub for technological innovation in healthcare." Moll has been a pivotal force in advancing robotic surgery and contributed significantly to the development of robots. Recently, SSI reached Nepal too, deploying India-made Robots to its healthcare system. Dr. Mylswamy Annaduari, Ex-Director of ISRO Satellite Centre also known as 'Moon Man of India' said: "The system represents the convergence of medical science in India and extends Indian innovation to surgeons worldwide. It is an affordable innovation, precisely what India needed. India is racing ahead in medical science, and it is also racing to assist the entire world." Dr Naresh Trehan, Chairman and Managing Director of Medanta, The Medcity, was equally vocal in appreciating the technology as he said: "I

would like to take this opportunity to commend Dr Srivastava for his dedication in achieving the rapid development of the third version of the SSI Mantra 3. This remarkable accomplishment is a testament to his commitment and vision. We are eagerly looking forward to incorporating the Mantra 3 system in our hospitals, enhancing our medical capabilities and patient care." Addressing the launch of SSI Mantra and the breakthrough in telesurgery, Prof. Dr. Somashekhar SP, Chairman-Medical Advisory Board, Aster DM Healthcare- GCC & India, echoed similar views. "SSI has created the best technology robot at an affordable rate for the global market, all made in India. It is for the benefit of all. Any technology that doesn't evolve with time will perish, and this is why we have version after version." For those who are not yet aware of this breakthrough technology, SSI Mantra 3 allows for smaller fingertip-sized incisions, leading to less pain, minimal blood loss, reduced scarring, faster recovery, and shorter hospital stays. This most advanced surgical robotic system with its cost-effectiveness will make advanced robotic surgery more accessible to hospitals, doctors, and the ultimate beneficiary, patients. The SSI Mantra 3 ensures unparalleled precision and efficiency across a wide range of multispecialty and the full spectrum of robotic cardiac surgery procedure, say experts. The minimally invasive approach aim to

BENEFITS OF TELESURGERY

- Accessibility:** Enables remote or underserved areas to access specialized surgical care.
- Expertise:** Allows surgical expertise to be delivered globally, benefiting patients without local specialists.
- Cost Efficiency:** Reduces travel costs and time for patients, making care more accessible.
- Precision and Safety:** Offers precise control and high-definition imaging, improving surgical outcomes.
- Collaborative Care:** Facilitates real-time collaboration among surgeons and healthcare professionals worldwide.
- Infection Control:** Reduces physical contact, lowering the risk of infectious disease transmission.
- Education:** Enhances surgical training and education globally.
- Global Reach:** Overcomes geographical barriers, expanding access to specialized procedures.

CHALLENGES OF TELESURGERY

- Technical Issues:** Relies heavily on internet connectivity and robotic systems, vulnerable to disruptions.
- Latency:** Delay in signal transmission can impact surgical precision.
- Security:** Raises concerns about cybersecurity and patient data protection.
- Regulatory Complexity:** Varies across countries, affecting licensing and legal frameworks.
- Cost:** Implementation and maintenance can be expensive, limiting access in some regions.
- Training:** Requires specialized training for effective use, resource-intensive.
- Patient Acceptance:** Some patients may be hesitant due to the lack of physical presence.
- Ethical Considerations:** Informed consent, patient autonomy, and maintaining patient-centered care are critical.
- Limited Applications:** Not all procedures are suitable, depending on complexity and technical feasibility.

ensure reduced trauma to patients, resulting in less pain, less blood loss, and faster recovery times. Despite these advancements, challenges such as latency in global networking, regulatory considerations, and initial costs of robotic systems continue to influence the adoption of telesurgery. However, ongoing developments in networking

technologies, including trials of 5G networks to minimize latency, hold promise for overcoming these barriers. Navigating these challenges requires ongoing technological advancement, regulatory alignment, robust cybersecurity measures, comprehensive training programs, and a commitment to patient-centered care and ethical standards

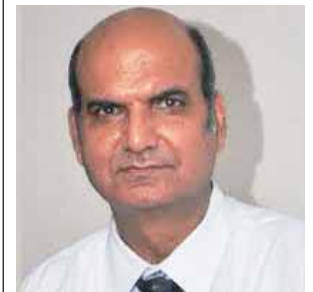
Celebrating Doctor's Day Honouring Dedication and Empathy

The First Doctor's Day was celebrated in India on July 1, 1991 which happened to be the birth and death anniversary of the most famous physician of India - Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy. It is hence a tribute to his contributions to the health domain in the country. This year's theme, "Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands," highlights the doctor's exceptional dedication, especially during challenging times like the Covid-19 pandemic. Doctor's Day serves as a poignant reminder of the invaluable contributions of doctors worldwide. It is a day to express gratitude, reflect on their profound impact, and reaffirm our commitment to supporting their noble mission of healing and caring for others.

The celebration of Doctor's Day is not merely a formality but a heartfelt expression of gratitude. It acknowledges the sacrifices doctors make—long hours, emotional strain, and personal sacrifices—to ensure the well-being of their patients. Their dedication goes beyond medical expertise; it encompasses compassion, understanding, and a deep sense of responsibility towards those under their care. As we celebrate Doctor's Day, let us pause to acknowledge the significance of their vocation. Their selflessness, expertise, and compassion touch countless lives, leaving an indelible mark on society. Whether in times of crisis or routine care, doctors exemplify the highest ideals of service and humanity. **Happy Doctor's Day!**

DOCTORSPEAK

On eve of Doctor's Day, we spoke to medical professionals whose insights underscore the significance of this occasion:



Dr. Rajinder Dhamija, Director, Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Services (IHBAS), Delhi: The Day gives me an opportunity to focus on one of my priority areas. Brain health issues in India, like stroke, epilepsy, headache disorders, Parkinson's disease, and dementia, pose significant challenges due to disparities in healthcare access and infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Limited awareness, delayed diagnosis, and social stigma worsen the burden on affected individuals and families. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced healthcare resources, improved public awareness, and measures to combat socioeconomic barriers to care.



Dr. Ashwini Anil Kumar Sirapanasetty, Obstetrics & Gynaecologist Surgeon: The medical field stands as a crucial pillar of society, much like the legislative, judiciary, and executive branches of government, and the media. Doctors shape society by playing a vital role in every phase of our lives, from childbirth onwards. An assurance from a doctors boosts the morale of a patient to live a longer life and also to heal from an grave injury



Dr. Prashant Mehta, Senior Consultant and Program Director (Lymphoid Neoplasms and Cellular Therapy) Department of Medical Oncology Amrita Institute of Medical sciences, Faridabad: My desire for our nation is improved access to healthcare for everyone, high-quality indigenous research/drug development, optimized communication, transparency, and teamwork between medical teams and patients and their families. Doctors aren't infallible gods but compassionate humans dedicated to easing human sufferings.



Dr. Jyoti Kapoor, Founder / Director, Manasthali Wellness: Doctors are healers of hope. Consulting a mental health expert is crucial when facing mental health issues as they possess the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective support and treatment.

Monsoon Mayhem? Health Hacks to Stay Safe

As we were gasping for fresh air amid intense heat waves, torrential rains descended upon us, bringing a mix of relief and new challenges including health issues due to increased humidity, stagnant water, and the proliferation of vectors and pathogens. In a conversation with health experts, **ARCHANA JYOTI** gathered essential tips to help keep health problems at bay during monsoon season

Stay Water-Wise

Waterborne wobbles like typhoid and cholera love a good monsoon bash. Avoid their party by:
● **Boiling it up:** Always boil your drinking water or stick to bottled brands.
● **Ditching the street treats:** Roadside foods like chaat may look tempting but it's best to play it safe with home-cooked meals.
● **Washing up:** Clean your fruits and veggies like they owe you money!
Stagnant Water? Not on My Watch! Mosquitoes aren't just annoying; they're like mini-monsters bringing malaria and dengue to the block

party.
● **Dry it up:** Kick those old tires and flower pots that collect water.
● **Repel the party crashers:** Mosquito repellent is your new best friend—apply it generously.
● **Sleep safe:** Mosquito nets might not be the latest fashion, but they're the best bedfellows during the monsoon.
Keep Skin Dry Fungal infections thrive on moisture.
● **Stay dry:** Change out of wet clothes as soon as possible and keep your skin dry.
● **Powder power:** Use

antifungal powders to keep the baddies at bay.
● **Bye-bye barefoot:** Flip-flops might be cool, but closed shoes keep you safe from leptospirosis lurking in those puddles.
Boost Your Immunity Fight off those sniffles and sneezes with a diet as colorful as a rainbow.
● **Eat the rainbow:** Fill up on fruits and veggies—think greens, reds, and yellows.
● **Supplement sense:** If your diet's missing something, a vitamin supplement can be your rainy-day insurance.
● **Soup it up:** Hot soups and broths are perfect for staying warm and healthy.



Long Sleeves Are In! When mosquitoes are strutting around, less skin is more.
● **Cover up:** Long sleeves

and pants aren't just for fashion—they're for fending off bites.
● **Stick to light colors:** Mosquitoes are like little

fashion critics—they prefer dark colors. So, go light and bright!
Stay in the Loop with the Latest Buzz Knowledge is power when it comes to staying healthy.
● **Weather watch:** Keep an eye on weather reports and health advisories.
● **App happy:** Download apps that track mosquito activity and rain patterns.
Ventilate to Victory! A stuffy room is a playground for mold and respiratory irritants.
● **Let the air flow:** Keep windows open when it's not pouring to let fresh air in.
● **Dehumidify your digs:**

Use a dehumidifier to keep moisture levels down.
Say No to Stagnation Don't let the rain keep you on the couch.
● **Indoor exercises:** Yoga, pilates, and home workouts are your go-to for staying fit.
● **Dance it out:** When in doubt, have a mini dance party!
The Wet Weather Wizard's Toolkit Keep these essentials at hand to navigate the monsoon madness like a pro:
● **Umbrella and raincoat:** Your best shields against the downpour.
● **First-aid kit:** Stock it with

antiseptics, bandages, and meds for common ailments.
● **Water purifier:** A compact one for those unexpected water quality issues.
Laugh in the Face of the Monsoon! Remember, a good sense of humor is the best medicine.
● **Keep it light:** Share a joke, enjoy a comedy, and keep your spirits high.
● **Stay positive:** A little rain can't stop your parade! By following these tips, you'll be able to enjoy the monsoon season without the health hiccups. So grab your raincoat, and a hot cup of tea, and let the monsoon magic begin!

FROM DHONI, TENDULKAR TO GAVASKAR ALL HAIL INDIA'S T20 WORLD CUP TRIUMPH

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The who's who of Indian cricket fraternity, including Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Sachin Tendulkar and Sunil Gavaskar, hailed the title triumph in the T20 World Cup, saying it will inspire the country's "starry-eyed children to move one step closer to their dreams".

India's first T20 world champion skipper Dhoni led the chorus of former and current cricketers, hailing Rohit Sharma's men for regaining the trophy after 17 long years after beating South Africa by seven runs in a pulsating final in Barbados on Saturday.

Former skipper Dhoni, who led India to their maiden title win in 2007 in South Africa, praised the team for maintaining their calm during the adverse situations in the game.

"WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS 2024. My heart rate was up, well done on being calm, having the self belief and doing what u guys did," (sic) Dhoni wrote on Instagram.

"From all the Indians back home and everywhere in the world a big thank you for bringing the World Cup Home. CONGRATULATIONS. Arre eek thanks for the priceless birthday gift," said Dhoni, who will turn 43 early next month.

The legendary Tendulkar took to social media to express his delight on India's achievement, saying the



country has now got a 'fourth star', following two 50-over World Cup wins in 1983 and 2011 as well as the historic triumph in the inaugural 2007 World T20.

"Every star added to the Team India jersey inspires our nation's starry-eyed children to move one step closer to their dreams. India gets the 4th star, our second in

T20WC," he wrote on 'X'. Tendulkar, who was a member of the Indian team which suffered a first-round exit in the 2007 50-over World Cup, said life has come a full circle.

"Life comes full circle for Indian cricket in the West Indies. From our lows in the 2007 ODI World Cup to becoming a cricketing

powerhouse and winning the T20WC in 2024," he said. "Very happy for my friend Rahul Dravid, who missed out on the 2011 World Cup win but his contribution to this T20 World Cup victory has been immense. I am so happy for him."

Hailing Rohit's captaincy and the contributions of the other squad members, Tendulkar

said, "What can one say about Rohit Sharma? Superb captaincy! To put the 2023 ODI World Cup loss behind and to keep all our players motivated towards the T20 World Cup is commendable."

"Jasprit Bumrah's Player of the Tournament award as well as Virat Kohli's Player of the Match award are both well-deserved. They were just

superb when it mattered," he added.

"Along with Rahul, Paras Mhambrey and Vikram Rathour also made their international debuts in 1996. It was wonderful to see Team India excel under the guidance of this class of '96."

"A total team effort. Hearty congratulations to all the players, coaches, support

staff, and BCCI," Tendulkar continued.

Gavaskar said that winning the trophy is like finally scoring a hundred.

"It is a great win after such a long time. Earlier, I kept saying that India was getting 90s but not getting centuries because they were reaching semi-finals and finals. Now, they have got a century and what a wonderful century this is," the former India captain told PTI.

From VVS Laxman to Anil Kumble, Sourav Ganguly to Gautam Gambhir, everyone praised the stupendous achievement in unison.

"Congratulations Team India on becoming the T20 World Champions. Been the best team in the tournament remaining unbeaten throughout," VVS Laxman, current head of the National Cricket Academy wrote on X.

"Great composure and character shown by the team to win this from the situation we were in with 5 overs remaining. Every player deserves credit for giving it their all and rising to the occasion and wonderfully led by Rohit," he added.

"We are champions!" rejoiced ace spinner and 2011 World Cup winner Ravichandran Ashwin.

Former India captain and head coach Anil Kumble wrote, "Congratulations team India! Wonderful victory."

"YEH MERA INDIA. WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS. SO PROUD OF YOU GUYS. (This is my India. We are the champions, so proud of you guys.)," wrote former spinner

Harbhajan Singh. An ambassador for the T20 World Cup in the Americas, Yuvraj Singh individually praised all the key members of the side.

"You did it boys! @hardikpandya7 your a hero! @Jaspritbumrah93 what an over to bring India back in the game! Extremely ecstatic for @ImRo45 great captaincy under pressure! @imVkohli #Rahul Dravid and the whole team india #ICCT20WorldCup2024," he wrote.

"Well played @akshar2026 @IamShivamDube. Koi reh to nahi gaya! Oh @surya_14kumar what a catch under pressure," Yuvraj added, wondering if he mistakenly did not leave out anyone.

Hero of two T20 World Cup finals and India's would be coach Gautam Gambhir wrote, "CHAMPIONS!"

Having earlier explained his standout moments of the game when it was under progress, legendary Sachin Tendulkar wrote, "Chak De India!!!!" Former India captain and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly also congratulated the side.

"Heartiest congratulations to Rohit sharma and his team .. What a game to win .. May be a World Cup in 11 (13) yrs but the talent the country has ,they will win many more .." (sic)

"Bumrah is absolutely magic .. Well done Virat,axar ,Hardik and every one .. Rahul Dravid and the support staff .. What a proud moment," (sic) Ganguly added.

Toni Kroos retirement delayed amid Germany's adventure at Euro 2024



AP ■ DORTMUND

Toni Kroos gets another game before he retires. Germany's Euro 2024 title challenge looks more real than ever.

One of the most decorated players in modern soccer with six Champions League titles and a World Cup, Kroos wasn't flashy as Germany beat Denmark 2-0 on Saturday, but he was a calm, assured presence holding the midfield together.

Kroos already won the Champions League with Real Madrid this season. Now he's three games away from one final trophy and could face his Madrid teammate, Spain's Dani Carvajal, in his next game.

Some fans already have their eyes on the final in the German capital and sang about heading to Berlin as Germany saw out the win.

Just like another Real Madrid great, Zinedine Zidane in 2006, Kroos is ending his storied career at a major tournament in Germany.

He came out of international retirement in February for one last tournament. Each game Germany plays in the knockout stage could be the last of his career.

Germany weathered a thunderstorm, hail and stubborn Danish resistance Saturday to ensure the 34-year-old midfielder will play again. Germany faces either Spain or Georgia in the quarterfinals July 5.

Zidane reached the 2006 World Cup final with France, only to headbutt an opponent, get a red card and lose to Italy. Kroos and Germany can still dream of a win on home soil and a first major trophy since Kroos and his teammates lifted the 2014 World Cup.

Until the Denmark game, Germany had not won a major tournament knockout game since Euro 2016. The win continues the sense that Germany is finally turning things around under coach Julian Nagelsmann after years of disappointment.

He took over last year with a mission to deliver a host-nation success story at Euro 2024, and has already signed an extension for the 2026 World Cup.

For now, it stings, just gut-wrenching: SA skipper Markram on World Cup heartbreak

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN

A devastated South African skipper Aiden Markram is hopeful that at some point he would be able to see the good in his team's T20 World Cup campaign but for now, all he feels is a "sting" which, he hopes, will ensure a "fire in the belly for next time".

South Africa needed 30 off 30 balls in a chase of 176 against India but fell short by seven runs despite Heinrich Klaasen's awe-inspiring 27-ball 52 in the see-saw summit clash here on Saturday.

India had Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya's death bowling and a blinder of a catch by Suryakumar Yadav to thank for the close win after the peerless Virat Kohli set up the match for them with a brilliant 76-run knock.

"It's not the first game of cricket that's been lost with a team needing 30 of 30 - it's more that India was allowed to bowl well, they're allowed to field well, they're allowed to go from that position to a position of strength," the 29-year-old Markram said in the post-match press conference.

"...Right now to pinpoint something is quite tough but we'll reflect over the next few days, over the next few weeks, try and find areas that we could have maybe improved in during today's game, but also to highlight the things that I went really well for us," he added.

The pain aside, Markram is proud of his teammates, who



managed to get rid of the chokers' tag to an extent by making their first World Cup final.

"I think one thing that I will definitely say is how proud we are. Not just of today, the game itself, but the competition as a whole, the build-up to get here. "So, in hindsight, the things will still feel really good about this competition. But like I mentioned, just for the time being, it stings a bit, but it's good for it to sting. It gives you that little bit of fire in the belly

for next time that you're here," he said.

Markram admitted that Klaasen will find it tough to make peace with the result after such a "special effort".

"We've seen him do it many, many times around the world and to deliver it in a stage like this is a really special effort. So, it's going to be tough for him, that's what I say when I mean we reflect back."

"There's going to be lots of things to be happy about," he said.

While the Indian players had happy tears in their eyes, the Proteas broke down in the realisation that another major title had slipped through their hands, only this time at the final hurdle.

"It's just gut wrenching, that's really what it is. Each player has been on a different individual journey to get to this first final. Ultimately you become really tight as a group and you want good things to happen to this group because you know they're great people," he said.

"...When you get really close like that, especially the nature of how the game went, obviously adds to the emotions and it's one of those things but yeah, we can channel it moving forward but I think next couple of days you let it be."

"...You let yourself feel the way you want to feel and then really start reflecting in a positive manner."

Despite the disappointment and heartbreak, Markram did not forget to applaud India's brilliance and composure in the final.

"It's tournament cricket, it's tough cricket, it's not easy to win trophies and you've got to take your hats off to a team like India for lifting the trophy. A lot of hard work goes into it."

"But yeah, we'd like to think we're one step closer and hopefully moving forward we can get that first win and it can be a snowball effect of quite a few to come," he said.

Told crowd to behave because Hardik is big-stage player: Sanjay Manjrekar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

When Sanjay Manjrekar schooled the Wankhede crowd to "behave" after they booed the newly-appointed Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya, all he wanted the public to realise that their boorish behaviour targeting a "big stage player", was unfair.

Pandya was jeered at every venue after he was handed captaincy by MI, signalling a controversial end to the successful and popular Rohit Sharma's tenure at the helm.

The whole episode had a deep-level impact on Pandya. Manjrekar, while conducting the toss at the Wankhede during a home match of MI, did interject but it only led to a meme-fest by the insensitive social media trolls.

Pandya played a major part in India's second T20 World Cup trophy with 144 runs and 11 wickets, and Manjrekar now stands vindicated.

"What a turnaround for Hardik Pandya. In IPL, there were people jeering him and booing him and I told them to behave because this is a big-stage player," Manjrekar told 'ESPNCricinfo'.

The former India player and noted pundit always knew that Pandya would hold his nerve in pressure situations as he brought his team back in the game with the wicket of the dangerous Heinrich Klaasen and then closed out



the game with a mindblowing final over. "We have seen that umpire times, wickets of Heinrich Klaasen, David Miller and right at the end, Rabada, so he was a champion and no surprise, to see him flourish on the big stage," Manjrekar said.

Manjrekar reminded Indian fans that even in their humiliating defeat against England in Adelaide, back in the 2022 edition, the colourful Baroda man was a face-saver and a calm presence under pressure.

"Even in that semifinal against England, he came in and gave India some hope with 60 off 33. So that's what he is all about."

"You felt safe when he came to bowl in the last over, he was not going to lose his nerves, he was going to bowl sensibly," he concluded.

Sindhu focussed on perfecting her skills to bag third Olympic medal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu is physically and mentally in best shape but realises she needs to be "much more smarter" in her pursuit of a third medal at the Games.

Sindhu had claimed a silver and bronze medal at the last two Olympics at Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo and will be heading into Paris with the aim of becoming the first Indian to win three Olympic medals.

"It is challenging, it's not easy but, at the same time, it's not impossible," Sindhu said during an interaction conducted by Sports Authority of India, the Indian Olympic Association

and the Badminton Association of India.

"Going into the third Olympics, I need to be smarter. I have a lot of experience on my side and I need to be much more smarter and I hope I can change the colour, and of course, get another medal for the country." Sindhu is currently training at the Hermann-Neuberger Sportschule in Saarbrücken, Germany after her proposal was cleared by the sports ministry. She will be heading to Paris directly from there when the Games begin on July 26.

"... Physically and mentally I am right there, I just have to be smarter and my coach Agus (Dwi Santoso) has been taking

care of that, my trainer has been taking care of my physical part. "I am working on all the strokes, whether it is defense, or attack or netplay, it is important to be perfect in all things."

"So I'm not focussing on just one stroke or technique, because you never know what it is going to be, there are players who are smart enough to change and move to plan B. "So you need to be prepared for it and I am focusing on practicing each and everything to make everything perfect -- each stroke, all techniques."

Asked why she picked Germany as her training base ahead of the Games, Sindhu said: "Prakash (Padukone) sir,



and we all discussed and thought, it will be a good place, it is near to Paris, it is in between nowhere, so I am much more focussed. "I have taken few sparring partners and have a team and currently training here has been very peaceful. I can focus even more before the Olympics."

Sindhu has spent most time on the court in the run-up to the Olympics but she hasn't been consistent enough or beating the top players. The Indian, though, did manage a runner-up finish at Malaysia Masters super 500.

"It took me some time to come back (from injury) and I feel that now I'm doing well. Coming to the finals is not an easy thing. And, finishing matches, not finishing matches, it depends on how we play. "Sometimes nothing might work out," she said referring to the loss in Malaysian Masters final.

"I feel that there's been a lot of improvement and I know that I

can do much better and I'm confident that I'm getting there. I need to keep believing in myself and keep working much harder.

"I feel the Olympics is something where it will be very different. I don't want to compare with others but looking at my form, I'm in great shape and it's just that you have to play very differently with every player."

"It's a different style of play. I think the strategy will be very different whether it is Chen Yu Fei or An Seyoung. It also depends on the draws, with whom I play. Looking forward to going to the Olympics. So, yeah, hoping for the best."

Sindhu, who trained under Pullela Gopichand for many years, moved from Hyderabad to Bengaluru after trying out four different coaches in 12 months.

The ace shuttler feels the level of competition now is very high. "I've played two Olympics and this will be my third and every time the game keeps changing, every Olympics there are different players."

"So it is going to be very challenging and really hard because one is we know each other's game and two is the game has completely changed and I think there are a lot of players who would be looking at your game, how you're

playing, what are they doing, what needs to be done. "So there are a lot of tactics and techniques which will go into this and also physically and mentally you need to be much more stronger, much smarter."

Talking about her mentor Padukone, Sindhu said he has been helping her out by pointing out flaws.

"Prakash sir has been seeing my matches and he's been telling me a few things if I'm making mistakes. He observes a lot. "When he sat behind me in the last All England and French Open, his inputs were quite simple. He just always told me that you know just play freely and just give your best."

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