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RELIGION AND POLITICS IN MODERN INDIA

WORLD 9

STARMER BEGINS POST-BREXIT 'RESET' WITH EU

MONEY 10

CYBERSECURITY PLAYERS SEEK DIGITAL SECURITY PUSH IN BUDGET



F1 DRIVER MAGNUSSEN TO LEAVE HAAS AT END OF THIS SEASON

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11 SPORTS

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SC directs NTA to upload NEET UG results on its portal by July 20th



Students display placards in the precinct of the Supreme Court during a hearing on the NEET paper leak case Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to publish the city and centre-wise results of this year's NEET-UG exam on their website, masking the identity of the candidates, by 12 noon of July 20 (Saturday). The top court will resume hearing the arguments on July 22 on a batch of pleas seeking

the allegations of large-scale malpractices prestigious test held on May

"We direct the NTA to publish the marks obtained by students at the UG-2024 NEET examination, while, at the same time, without disclosing the identity of the students. The result should be declared city and centre wise by 12 noon on July 20, 2024 and shall be uploaded on the website of the NTA," the bench, also comprising cancellation, re-test and a Justices JB Pardiwala and court-monitored probe into Manoj Misra, said in its

order. "We want the identity of students be masked. You can have dummy roll numbers. But let us see it centre-wise what is the marks pattern," the bench said.

The call for city-and centre-wise results underlines the focus this hearing has taken a deep-dive into data about the precise number of students who sat for the exam and passed, as well as the number who have asked for a re-test or for results to be scrapped, and those opposing any intervention. The bench noted the counsel for the petitioners have submitted that it would be appropriate if the result of NEET-UG 2024 examination was published on the NTA website so as to bring about transparency with regard to centre-wise marks obtained

by candidates. It also said material collected by the Bihar Police and the report of its Economic Offences Wing (EOW), before the investigation was taken over by the CBI, shall be filed in the court by 5 pm on July 20. At the outset, the the hearing on the pleas over other cases as these have "social ramifications" and lakhs of students are waiting

for the outcome. Continued on Page 8



Local residents gather after Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derails in Uttar Pradesh

Express coach derailment in Gonda leaves two dead

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE GONDA/NEW DELHI

wo passengers were killed Two passengers were and 20 injured when eight coaches of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailed near Gonda in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday.

A railway bulletin said in the wake of the accident, three trains were being run on diverted route. The diverted trains are 15707 Katihar-Amritsar Amrapali Express, 15603 Guwahati-Jammu Tawi Amarnath Express and 15910 Lalgarh-Dibrugarh Avadh Assam Express.

Gonda District Magistrate Neha Sharma, who reached the spot, said eight coaches of the train got derailed, the injured are being rushed to hospital and relief operations are on at the site.

A 40-member medical team and 15 ambulances are at the spot and more medical teams and ambulances are being

rushed there, Commissioner Kumar said. Eyewitnesses said the loud noise of the coaches leaving the track and toppling over to the left was followed by loud cries of the passengers, especially children. The passengers started coming out of the emergency windows and doors of the tilted sleeper coaches, and some went back to pull out their belongings. In the AC coaches, passengers helped each other break the window panes and pull out those injured or stuck. Passengers had to wade through knee-deep water in the fields on either side of the track to reach the nearby approach road. Others, shocked by the accident or injured, sat on the track itself,

waiting to be rescued. When

police teams reached the spot,

officials made announcements

asking people to stay away from the damaged coaches. Continued on Page 8

Army prepares for long haul in Jammu

While gradually inducting more troops on ground zero, the Indian Army is preparing for the long haul ahead of flushing out Pakistani terrorists occupying Jammu Heights'.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also reviewed the current security situation in Jammu in the wake of number of terrorist attacks in the past weeks. He chaired a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), which includes Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Adopting offensive posturing the Indian Army has already rushed additional troops to be deployed along the higher reaches of the Kathua district bordering Himachal Pradesh to plug the gaps and block the escape routes of infiltrating terrorists.

Troop deployment is also being reviewed across the frontier districts of Rajouri and Poonch as the region has witnessed repeated ambushes on army trucks and patrol parties since October 2021.

The security forces are also contemplating setting up additional posts in the upper reaches of the Doda and Kishtwar districts to block the traditional routes of crossing into the Kashmir valley.

As per the preliminary assessment made by the different agencies, part of the multi-layered security grid in Jammu and Kashmir, the involvement of ex-Pak army



Army personnel during an encounter with terrorists in a forest village in Doda district on Thursday

regulars along with a welltrained cadre of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorist outfit cannot be ruled out behind these attacks. Most of these ambushes were

planned and executed under the same command structure and the desired objective was to inflict maximum casualties on the Indian security forces to spread the 'Arc of terror' across the peaceful Jammu region.

Before the four soldiers were martyred in the Dessa forest area of Doda, five soldiers were ambushed by Pakistani terrorists in the Badnota area of Machhedi in the Billawar tehsil of Kathua on July 8. The security grid along the International border has been kept in a state of high alert to prevent fresh infiltration attempts from across the border.

Meanwhile, two terrorists were killed as security forces foiled a fresh infiltration bid

along the Line of Control in Iammu and Kashmir's district Kupwara Thursday.

In a post on X, the Srinagar-based Chinar Corps said, "An infiltration attempt has been successfully prevented with the elimination of two terrorists today on the LoC in Keran Sector, Kupwara. Anti Infiltration Operations are continuing".

In Doda, two Army personnel were injured when a group of terrorists lobbed a grenade and opened indiscriminate firing on the Government school building where these soldiers had taken a temporary shelter during the

According to official sources, the information about the presence of soldiers in the school complex may have been shared by the local associates of the terrorists in

the Kastigarh area of Doda.

Continued on Page 8

Akhilesh's 'monsoon offer' post sets off political buzz

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW|

Seeking to fish in seemingly troubled waters, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav as given "monsoon offer" to the BIP MLA who wanted to switch over. It was apparently a repeat offer to Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya.

Taking a swipe at the BJP amid talks of infighting within the Yogi Adityanath government, Akhilesh made a cryptic post on X that sparked a buzz. Now a Lok Sabha MP from Kannauj, Akhilesh Yadav wrote on X: "Monsoon offer: bring 100, form the govern-

The short post appeared to be a replug of Yadav's past offer to Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya. In December last year, Akhilesh had called Maurya a "very weak

"He had dreamt of becoming chief minister, he should get 100 MLAs. He had once claimed that he had the support of over a 100 MLAs. He should get them, Samajwadi Party will support him (for chief minister)," he had said, adding that the former UP BJP chief was with the party despite being humiliated.

The post of the SP chief on Thursday is being seen as another veiled swipe at Maurya, who sparked a buzz in political circles after his "organisation is bigger than the government" comment during the state executive meeting

here on Sunday.
The remark was widely seen as a veiled attack on Chief Minister Adityanath, who has said that "overconfidence" cost the BJP in UP in the recently concluded general elections.

A senior Samajwadi Party leader said that Akhilesh Yadav's "monsoon offer" post on X was a message to those in BJP who wanted to switch over. 'The SP won 111 seats in the 2022 Uttar

Pradesh Assembly elections and if we get the support of 100 dissatisfied BJP MLAs, we will easily form the government," the Samajwadi Party leader explained.
The BJP's poor showing in Uttar Pradesh has

intensified friction with the organisation and set off a buzz over a tussle between Yogi Adityanath and Keshav Prasad Maurya. Supporters of the two leaders are blaming each other for the poll debacle.

The BJP's central leadership is watching too. It has asked state leaders to resolve differences and concentrate on the upcoming bypolls to 10 assembly seats. Party sources have also rejected reports of a possible change in the state leadership. "There will be no change in leadership until then. They have asked us to fix things and advised against complaints at this time," a source said.

The SP chief, meanwhile, is daily taking pot-

shots at the ruling party. In a swipe at the BJP on Wednesday, Yadav had said the people of Uttar Pradesh were fed up with the "game of thrones", drawing a sharp response from Maurya, who stressed that the BJP had strong governments and organisation at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh and that the Samajwadi Party had no chance of a comeback.

PM Modi boosts Party cadre confidence post elections



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Union Minister and BJP President JP Nadda as he arrives to meet party workers at the BJP headquarters, in New Delhi,

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

day after political activities Aday after political activities were reported from Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday reached out to the party workers to boost the sagging morale after not so good performance in the just concluded general elections in which BJP could not secure majority on its own to form the Government just like it did comfortably in 2014 and then in 2019.

Sources said Modi reached the BJP headquarters in the evening and moved around the party's huge complex on DDU Marg and chatted impromptu with many of the workers. The PM also visited a few offices of party workers and then moved on to interact with the party workers and volunteers in a conference hall.

Modi interacted with them in what is being seen as his appreciation for their work following his return to power for a third straight term. Hailing their contributions, Modi said he will continue to meet them in future. Modi was greeted by BJP president J P Nadda as he arrived at its

headquarters. "He was too glad to meet us and personally identified many of us to whom he said he has been knowing several of the dedicated workers for more than five decades now. He

reminisced some of the chit chats and also cracked jokes while recalling some of the events that happened in the closed premises of the party rters which was earlie at Ashoka Road in Lutyen's," said a worker attached to a party General Secretary while quoting the PM. He mentioned that Modi told

them to continue working with the same zeal as it is their sole contribution for making BJP the largest political party of the world, another worker said, quoting the PM.

This gesture is not unprecedented, as Modi has similarly met and thanked party workers following the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, aiming to boost morale and recognise their contributions.

The BJP, known for its robust cadre-based structure, upholds a tradition of top leadership engaging directly with ground-level workers to bolster their efforts.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the party lost its parliamentary majority, securing 240 seats, a decrease of 63 seats compared to their 2019 performance. Notably, in the crucial State of Uttar Pradesh, the party's seat count dropped from 61 in the previous term to 33 in this



Religion display on stalls on UP highways to help Kanwars eat right

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/MUZZAFARNAGAR

After drawing fire from quarters, quarters, including politicians, over display of owners' names over the eateries enroute Kanwar Yatra, Muzzaffarnagar Police on Thursday issued fresh advisory making it a "voluntary" measure to put a board of names of their owners.

The Muzaffarnagar Police said its intention was not to create any kind of religious discrimination but only to facilitate the devotees passing through Muzaffarnagar district and prevent any untoward situation. "During the holy month of Shravan, many especially people, Kanwariyas, abstain from certain food items in their diet," the Muzaffarnagar Police stated through its

social media posts.

"In the past, such instances have come to light where some shopkeepers selling all types of food items on Kanwar Marg named their shops in such a way that it created confusion among the Kanwariyas and created a law and order situation.

To prevent such a recurrence, hotels, dhabas and shopkeepers selling food items on Kanwar Marg have been requested to voluntarily display the names of their owners and employees... This system has been prevalent in the past, too," the advisory further said.

The fresh advisory came after the administration's earlier order asking eateries, including roadside carts, to display the names of the owners in front of their shops faced severe criticism. Police personnel had also started to enforce the order. **Continued on Page 8**

Khedkar leads mother into remand, father on the run

Disgraced daughter Puja

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Within days after controversial probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar was shunted back to her Mussoorie-based alma mater on disciplinary grounds, the police arrested her mother Manorama Khedkar on Thursday for allegedly threatening some farmers at gunpoint to grab their land at Mulshi taluka in Pune district.

Manorama — who had been absconding for nearly a week after

a video showing her threatening farmers at Mulshi in a bid to usurp their land went viral — was traced to a small lodge, Parvati Niwas, near Mahad

town in Raigad district where the visiting Pune rural police reached and arrested her. Manorama was later brought back to Pune where a court Judicial Magistrate First Class SG Barde remanded her in police custody till July 20. A former Sarpanch (village headwoman) of Bhalgaon in Pune district, Manorama had been staying at the lodge under a fake name of 'Indu Dnyandev Dhakane' with another person identified as 'Dadasaheb Dnyandev Dhakane'. Acting on a complaint lodged by farmer Pandharinath Pasalkar (65), the Paud police had registered a complaint against Manorama and her husband Diliprao Khedkar, both residents of National Housing Society in Baner, and one Ambadas Khedkar of Ambi village in

Haveli, and other unidentified persons.

Insult to India's dhoti kurta forces a Mall to shut shop in Bengaluru

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

In an interesting development, the Karnataka Government on Thursday ordered closure of a mall for seven days after a farmer was allegedly denied entry owing to his attire - a 'dhoti' and a white shirt — an incident which drew strong condemnation from members cutting across party lines in the Legislative Assembly. The Government also termed the alleged insult to the farmer as an infringement on "dignity and self respect", and said it cannot be tolerated.

"I checked with the BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) commissioner as to what can be done. The Government has the powers. Action will be taken against the (G T World) mall in accordance with law immediately and we will ensure that the mall is closed for seven davs," Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh told the

House. Social Welfare Minister HC Mahadevappa said the incident is condemnable. "For every individual self respect and dignity are important, this has been violated, and the Government will take action," said the Minister. The incident reportedly happened on Tuesday when septuagenarian Fakeerappa from Haveri district visited the mall, along with his wife and son to watch a movie at a multiplex. Fakeerappa was reportedly wearing white shirt and 'panche' (dhoti), and the security staffer at the mall allegedly told him and his son that he won't be allowed

him to "wear trousers and come." Earlier, Assembly Speaker U T Khader raised the issue and asked the Government to take action. "I saw in the media that a youth

inside in a 'panche', and asked studying here in Bengaluru, when he took his father wearing 'panche' which is the traditional attire of Karnataka to show him the mall, he was not let in because of the attire. This is from the rural area, who is highly condemnable and strict

"Merciless action should be taken, however big the mall owner or management is," the Speaker said. "We have nothing to do with them, we have to show that the super rich owning malls are not important for us, and it is the common man, poor and last

lesson for all malls," he said.

action should be taken by the

government, which becomes a

important," he said. Congress MLA Laxman Savadi, stating that mere condemnation won't help, urged the Government to at least cut the power supply to the mall for a

person of the society who are leading a life with self esteem are

week. Ranebennur Congress MLA Praksh Koliwad, noting that the farmer belongs to a village in his constituency, said, "The farmer

has given education to all his nine children, one of his son is studying MBA here in Bengaluru and the son wanted to take his father to show him the mall. The farmer was disrespected for his attire and the mall should be closed down."

Congress MLA and chief whip from the ruling side Ashok Pattan suggested that action should also be taken on private clubs in Bengaluru, which impose dress code.

Leader of Opposition R Ashoka said such issues have been discussed in the House earlier too, "but what's the result? " The Speaker or the Government will have to issue some orders, which should be implemented strictly secretaries the bureaucrats.

Continued on Page 8



BJP leader's daughter foils kidnapping bid

 $T^{\text{he deteriorating law and}}_{\text{order and polices loosening}}$ grip on crime reached another low when bike-borne miscreants attempted to abduct the 5year-old daughter of a BJP leader in Madiaon. However, the presence of mind of the little girl averted her kidnapping. She refused to go with the miscreants, who tried to trick her by saying her father had sent them to pick her up. Sensing danger, she shouted at them. The incident took place on

Tuesday afternoon, a complaint was filed on Wednesday, and it came to light on Thursday. As the news broke, the cops were sent into a frenzy, with all of Lucknow police working on the case to identify the kidnap-

"A case of kidnapping has been registered, and we are hunting for the kidnappers whose images are to be obtained from CCTV footage," said DCP North Abhijeet R Shankar.

Reports indicate the attempted abduction occurred in broad daylight. The miscreants, who had masked their faces, attempted to kidnap the daughter of BJP leader Vimlesh Kumar. The victim, a Class V student, faced the incident while returning home from school. After their failed attempt, the miscreants fled upon seeing a crowd converging due to the girl's cries. The 10-year-old student was walking home when the kid-nappers tried to force her to go with them, claiming her father had sent them. Although police stated they did not find any abduction attempt in the CCTV footage they had reviewed, the family insisted the miscreants' image was captured on a CCTV camera. The incident reportedly occurred around 1:40 pm. Meanwhile, an Intermediate student living in the Ashiyana

after leaving home two days ago. He was wearing his school uniform when he left and disappeared under mysterious circumstances. After extensive searching, his father filed a written complaint with the local police station. The police have registered a case and are searching for the teenager. According to Alok Kumar Rajvanshi, who lives with his family in Sector-J Rail Nagar of Ashiyana, his 17year-old son Aditya Rajvanshi left home in his school uniform on July 15 at around 5:30 am to go to Singar Nagar Metro Station. The entry time of his arrival at the station is recorded, but he did not return home. After failing to find any information about his son, the aggrieved father went to Ashiyana police station on Wednesday evening and filed a complaint.

TEENAGER SHOOTS SELF

A Class XII pass student allegedly shot himself after his father scolded him for not being career conscious, in Madehganj police station area on Thursday morning. Police said he used a revolver to take the extreme step. The 19-yearold student, Shiva Pandey, shot himself in the temple with his father's service revolver. The family informed the police at 4 am, and the police are investi-gating the reason behind the incident.

Initial reports suggest that Shiva's father Dilip Pandey argued with his son about his studies on Wednesday night. Angered by this, Shiva locked himself in his room and went to sleep. Later that night, he shot himself. Dilip, a security guard in a jewellery shop, had scolded Shiva for not pursuing further education or getting a job. Shiva had passed Class XII earlier this year.

Order for Kanwar Yatra route sparks outcry

The orders of the police in Muzaffarnagar directing hotels, dhabas, and other foodselling shops along the Kanwar Yatra route in the district to display the names of their owners and employees to prevent "confusion" among devotees have drawn sharp criticism from

opposition parties.
Reacting to these orders,
Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh
Yadav wrote on the social
media platform X, "The honourable court should take suo motu cognizance and investigate the government's intent behind such administration and take appropriate punitive action. Such orders are social crimes, which want to spoil the peaceful atmosphere of harmo-ny...and what will be known by the name of the person whose name is Guddu, Munna, Chhotu, or Fateh?"

BSP supremo Mayawati also expressed her objection. She wrote on social media that the new government order to all

the hotels, dhabas, and cart shopkeepers on the Kanwar Yatra route in western UP and Muzaffarnagar district to prominently display the full name of the owner is a wrong tradition that can spoil the harmonious atmosphere.

"In the public interest, the government should withdraw it immediately," she said. She further criticised the UP's

Sambhal district administration's inappropriate order requiring teachers and students in basic government schools to remove their shoes and slippers in the classroom, calling for the government's immediate attention to this matter as well. Congress leader Pawan Khera

criticised Muzaffarnagar police's decision, stating that "not just political parties, all right-think-ing people and the media must rise against this state-sponsored bigotry... We cannot allow the BJP to push the country back into the dark

Khera added, "The desire behind what they are propos-ing to do along the Kanwar Yatra [route] is to normalize the economic boycott of Muslims." He pointed out that many large Indian meat-exporting firms are owned by Hindus, questioning if meat changes its nature based on the religion of the seller.

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen leader and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi said the Muzaffarnagar police's direction was given so that "no kanwariya buys anything from a Muslim shop by mistake," likening it to apartheid in South Africa and discrimination against Jews in Nazi Germany.

Trinamool Congress spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale filed a complaint against Muzaffarnagar's senior superintendent of police to the National Human Rights Commission, arguing that the order exposed eatery owners and staff to discrimination and violated their fundamental

right to livelihood. Gokhale suggested that a simple notification asking vendors to state whether they serve only vegetarian food or both veg and non-veg would have sufficed.

Interestingly, the Muzaffarnagar police denied that their direction was intended to discriminate along religious lines. Their X account responded to multiple posts criticising or expressing concern around their direction to shopkeepers with their statement on the issue.

Muzaffarnagar Superintendent of Police Abhishek Singh said the Uttar Pradesh government also asked food carts and stands to comply, explaining that the decision was to ensure there was "no confusion of any kind among kanwariyas [Kanwar Yatra pilgrims]" and to prevent any situation that could escalate into a law and order issue.

Ajay Kumar Sahni, deputy inspector general of the neighboring Saharanpur district,

said on Thursday that hotels and dhabas along the Kanwar Yatra route in his district were also ordered to display the names of their owners and employees as well as their rate lists. Sahni cited past disputes with kanwariyas regarding eateries' rate lists, the serving of non-vegetarian food, or proprietors drawing the names for their hotels from religions other than their own as the reason for this directive.

Earlier this month, Muzaffarnagar's BJP MLA Kapil Dev Aggarwal stated that Muslims must not name their shops after Hindu deities during the yatra because "when devotees [kanwariyas] come to know [that the shops they eat at are run by Muslims], it causes controversy."

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has prohibited the sale and pur-chase of meat in the open along routes for the Kanwar Yatra in the state this year as a mark of 'respect' for devotees. The state government has also enacted such bans during previous yatras. In a meeting con vened for the yatra, Adityanath instructed officials to set up help desks along the pilgrimage route and arrange for the distribution of chilled water and shikanji. He also asked them to ensure 'pushp varsha'—the shower of flower petals—on kanwariyas. Hindu pilgrims undertake the Kanwar Yatra around this time of year, traveling by foot to Uttarakhand to collect water from the Ganga river, which they then offer in Shiva temples. This year's yatra will begin on Monday (July 22). The Uttar Pradesh govern-

ment has also been in the spotlight regarding another aspect of the Kanwar Yatra, reportedly sanctioning the felling of over 33,000 mature trees in forest divisions in three districts, including Muzaffarnagar, to build a new road to facilitate the pilgrimage. The National Green Tribunal

took suo motu cognisance of a news report on the topic from

Property dispute cases addressed at Janata Adalat

ases regarding property disputes were reported by the people at the 'Janata Adalat' organized by the Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) on Thursday. The event, held at the committee hall of 'Pradhikaran Bhawan', was presided over by newly appointed Vice-Chairman Prathamesh Kumar. According to the official pro-

gramme, the event was to be inaugurated by the Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow Roshan Jacob. However, she had to change her plans at the last minute due to another important official engagement. LDA Additional Secretary Gvanendra Verma stated that out of the total number of cases, 10 were resolved on the spot. These cases involved disputes related to changes in the names on titles, property registration, and freehold leases. Other disputes were referred to



their respective departments along with the necessary documents for further verification. Manish Srivastava, a resident of Ram Nagar, lodged a complaint regarding flat number S-56, which falls under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS). The flat was originally allotted to his grandmother in 1980 and transferred to his name after her death, following all formalities. He had also deposited the required fee, but the receipt was lost. He demanded a fresh receipt.

The VC directed the property staff to issue a duplicate receipt after verifying the original records by Saturday evening. Meanwhile, Virendra Pandey, a resident of Sector-F, Jankipuram, urged the VC to take action to remove debris and building materials lying in front of his house, number 446. He reported that a local resident had constructed an unauthorised wall, blocking the entire road.

The VC instructed the executive engineer of Zone-5 to inspect the area, clear the road by Sunday, and file a report by Monday.

Ambrish Kumar, a resident of Sector-G, Jankipuram, lodged a complaint requesting the VC to issue fresh duplicate documents for his house, which he purchased in 1997 but subsequently lost. The VC assured Kumar that duplicate documents would be issued after verification within a week. The VC issued a strict warning to the staff for not taking effec-

tive initiatives to resolve people's grievances within the deadline. He urged them to be sincere and efficient in their

DGP advises

FIRs against

businessmen

caution on fake

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh

Director General of Police

Thursday issued guidelines to

all police officers to address the

issue of fake FIRs registered

against entrepreneurs or inno-

cent individuals by misusing

DGP) Prashant Kumar

Prime accused held in minor girl's rape and murder case

PNS LUCKNOW

In the case of a 14-year-old girl allegedly after she was raped by a primary school teacher and his aides in the PGI area, police arrested the prime accused, Saurabh Singh, following protests and sit-in by the kin of the vic-

DCP (East) Prabal Pratap Singh said in a video statement" "The family of the girl had alleged that Saurabh and his aides killed her after rape. A case for rape and other counts has been registered against Saurabh and others. Saurabh has been arrested while other accused are being searched for. The police have also booked the accused under POSCO Act and SC/ST Act."

The minor had come to work at a government school teacher's house six months ago. She died on July 15 after her health suddenly deteri-

The bereaved family alleged that the girl was sexually assaulted and murdered by accused who wanted to hide their crime.

The minor from Unnao had studied up to Class V. Due to poverty, she had been working as a caretaker for the last

six months at the house of a government teacher living in a colony in PGI police station area. While pleading innocence, the teacher told newsmen that the girl was already unwell. "She had complaints of seizures. She was undergoing treatment at Lok Bandhu Hospital," the accused said. On July 15, she suddenly had

seizures. She was taken to Lok Bandhu Hospital where she was pronounced dead. The victim's family was informed about the matter. Her family said that when they

reached Lucknow, the police had already done the 'panchnama' of the body. The mother alleged that there were many injury marks on the body. She alleged that her daughter was killed after being raped.

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY MARINE DEPARTMENT MARINE DEPARTMENT No. MD/SHS/TECH-27/2024/786 Date: 10.07.2024

e-Tender Call Notice (e-TCN)

Name of the Work: Maintenance dredging of 5. Lakhs M³ quantity from Mahanadi River Channe for one year i.e. for the year 2024-25 including Mobilization / De-mobilization. Estimated cost Rs.9,35,00,000/-. Last date & time of submission of tender through on-line hidding till 17:00 hours on dt.29/08/2024. The technical bids shall be opened at 16:30 hours on 30/08/2024. For further details, please log on to the website

Sd/- Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority PPA/PR/22/2024-2025

https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app

MUKHYAMANTRI SAMUHIK VIVAH YOJANA

Detailed SOP to enhance transparency

PNS LUCKNOW

To enhance transparency in implementing Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's deputy director of the division overseeing these investigations. Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah and the district social welfare The investigating officer will Yojana, which aims to facilitate officer from a nearby district submit their findings using a marriages for needy girls across all classes, the Social Welfare department has developed a detailed SOP that thoroughly defines the rules and proce-

The SOP includes instructions to organise marriages of fewer than 100 couples at a single location within the districts whenever possible. For events with more than 100 couples, the presence of the district magistrates is required.

During the event, a separate registration counter will be set up to confirm the eligibility of couples. Additionally, the

AUCTION NOTICE

दिनांक 25 /07/2024 मध्याह 12:00

बजे यू पी कोऑपरेटिव बैंक लि०, मुख्यालय

2 महात्मा गांधी मार्ग, लखनऊ में

निस्प्रयोज्य घोषित वाहनों की नीलामी

"जहां हैं जैसे है" आधार पर होगी,

सिक्योरिटी रु० 5000/- नगद, फर्म के

जी०एस०टी० पंजीकरण के साथ जमा

NOTICE

I have changed my name from

NAMRATA MAHESHWARI.

In future I Shall be known as

NAMRATA MAHESHWARI

W/o Udbhav MAHESHWARI

NOTICE

147D, Rambagh, Prayagraj

NAMRATA MAHESHWARI.

NAMRATA LAHOTY

करनी होगी/आई०पी०सिंह एण्ड संस

will be on site to oversee arrangements and submit a report to the department.

The department has set a target to facilitate the marriages of 1,06,911 couples in the current financial year, all within the prescribed budget. Provisions have been made for random verification of 10 per cent of the selected couples for mass marriages, conducted by officers from the Revenue or other departments under the guidance of the district magistrates. To enhance the scrutiny process, the district-level committee has been tasked with verification format from the portal.

During these investigations, it will be ensured through local inquiries that individuals present at the venue have not been previously married, thereby preventing ineligible persons from benefiting from the scheme under any circum-

In addition to enhancing the verification process, participa-tion in mass marriages will now be limited to applications approved with digital signatures from the respective block development officer, executive offi-

cer, and district social welfare officer levels. Furthermore, the application process has been requiring Aadhaar demographic authentication to confirm that the groom is over 21 years old and the bride is over 18 years old. Applications can only be submitted through the online portal.

During the mass marriage ceremony, an assistance amount of Rs 35,000 is transferred to the girl's account to support her married life and household establish-

Additionally, Rs 10,000 is allocated for essential marriage ritual items such as clothing, toe rings, anklets, utensils, etc. In cases involving widows, aban-

doned individuals, or divorced persons, up to Rs 5,000 worth of marriage materials are provided at the time of the marriage itself. The department has set a standard expenditure of Rs 6,000 per couple to cover all marriage

Under the scheme, applicants can apply online through the website https://cmsvy.upsdc.gov.in. To avail benefits, applicants must undergo Aadhaar demographic authentication. Application forms can be filled out at Ian Suvidha Kendras, District Social Welfare Officer Office, cyber cafes, private internet centers, or the department website.

Applicants are required to submit their applications at least one week before the scheduled marriage date. Applications will be processed on a first-come,

first-served basis.

Kumar has instructed all police officers to follow the following SOPs (standard operating procedures) in any case in which there is doubt. As per the order, before filing FIRs against entrepreneurs, business establishments, builders, factory

the judicial process.

owners, hotel owners, operators of hospitals and nursing homes, and operators of schools and educational institutions, the police officers need to ensure through an investigation that the applications submitted did not involve business rivalry, business or civil dispute that had been given a criminal form, or if it was clear from the application that a crime had been committed.

Additionally, it will be made sure that the investigating offi-cer gives both the plaintiff and the defendant a chance to present their case during the investigation and that the records that each party has submitted pertaining to the case are attached to the investigation report.

The DGP said that it has often been observed that baseless FIRs are registered against entrepreneurs, doctors, hospital operators, or builders on the basis of baseless applications without any investigation. The Supreme Court has issued guidelines in this regard as well. According to the guidelines issued, investigations can be carried out prior to filing a formal complaint in situations involving marital and family conflicts, corporate crimes, cases of medical negligence, corruption, and other situations where there has been an unreasonable delay in filing the report.

Kumar added that bogus applications are frequently filed by people seeking to re-register against entrepreneurs due to personal obligations; which further compromises the freedom to do business, so the police should look into this before re-registering.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD. (Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001) Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Contact No. 9646117609 E-mail: sefet-ghtp@pspcl.in

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender Enquiry No.: 03/CE-28/FE&T/GHTP/2024 Dated: 19-07-24 Dv. Chief Engineer / FE&T Circle GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-Tende for the work to conduct Energy Audit of GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat Unit No.1 to IV having capacities of 2x210 MW + 2x250 MW for the year 2024-25 Detailed NIT and tender specification can be downloaded from website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from dated 19-07-2024 at 17:00 hrs

Note: No corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding Note: No corngertuan will be published in https://eproc.punjab.gov.in corrigendum may be seen on official website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in GHTP-59/24

76155/12/3134/2023/35810 Dated CHD :- 7/18/2024

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD. (Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001) Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 (Contact No. 96461-17606)

E-Tender Enquiry No: 200/MM-I/TGM-336(VIII)/O&M/ GHTP/2024 Dated 17-07-2024 Dy. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Maintenance Circle-I/GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites e-tender for "Cleaning of tubes of Turbine condenser of 210 MW (KWU) Unit-II

and 250 MW Unit-III of GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat with Hydro Jet and wate powered bullet cleaners". For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.ir

from 17-07-2024 at 18:00 Hrs. onwards

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online a https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

76155/12/3132/2023/35805 Dated CHD :- 7/18/2024

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Samman Capital Limited (formerly known as Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd.) [CIN:

L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 23.08.2024 from 04.00 P.M. to 05.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 24,02,804/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Two Thousand Eight Hundred Four only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLLKN00299668, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 12.07.2024 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 13.07.2024 along with

The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 26,31,000/- (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Thirty One Thousand only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 2,63,100/- (Rupees Two Lakh Sixty Three Thousand One Hundred only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF FLAT NO. 203, ADMEASURING 73.42 SQ. MTRS., 2ND FLOOR OF DIAMOND APARTMENT, ON MUNICIPAL NO 8/151 (8/048), PURANA QUILA, BABU BANARASI DASS NAGAR, WARD BABU BANARSI DAS, LUCKNOW - 226002, UTTAR PRADESH.

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.sammaancapital.com; Contact No : 0124-6910910, +91 7065451024; E-mail id : auctionhelpline@sammaancapital.com. For oidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in.

Authorized officer SAMMAAN CAPITAL LIMITED (Formerly INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.) Date: 15.07.2024 Place: LUCKNOV

Govt increasing green cover along e-ways

Lucknow (PNS): In a significant step to increase greenery in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has initiated a large-scale plantation drive along the state's expressways. As part of this effort, more than 2,00,000 saplings will be planted along four major expressways.

Additionally, 100,000 saplings will be planted in the UP Defence Industrial Corridor. The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) is spear-heading this initiative. The Yogi government is also preparing for extensive tree planting along the banks of the underconstruction

Expressway. This year, continuing the tradition of past years, more than 36 crore saplings will be planted under the 'Ped Lagao, Ped Bachao Abhiyan'.

I, No JC-14687027Y Name According to UPEIDA officials, ASHOK SINGH, Rank NK Unit a budget of over Rs 36 crore is 625 EME Bn, R/O Vill. Harbanshpur P.O. Bijahara being provided to the Uttar Pradesh Forest department for Tehsil Derapur, distt. Kanpur dehat Pin 209301, A/P 835 Fd planting trees on 500 hectares on both sides between the car-WKSP Coy EME, Declare that riageway and service road of my mother name wrongly the Ganga Expressway, and registered as Anno devi, and for their maintenance over the DOB 04.05.1953 in his service next 10 years. Additionally, as record, instead of correct Name Anar Devi and DOB 05.07.1954. part of the campaign, more than 2,37,000 saplings will be now applying for correction for the same vide affiavit no. 78AE planted on four other express-971123 dated 11.07.2024 ways managed by UPEIDA.

Cop dies during raid to arrest accused in cowslaughter case

PNS LUCKNOW A police constable lost his life during a joint raid of Aligarh police and members of the Special Operation Group (SOG) team to arrest the accused involved in cowslaughter in the district.

While loading the arms before the raid, the pistol of a subinspector got stuck. When another sub-inspector tried to unlock that pistol, the bullet stuck in it pierced through his stomach and hit the head of the SOG constable, due to which he died on the spot, while the subinspector is being treated in the

hospital. Aligarh SSP Sanjeev Suman said that a major accident happened with the police team on Wednesday night. He said that on July 9, there was an incident of cowslaughter in the Gabhana police station area of the district. Thana police and SOG were formed to arrest the accused involved in it.

On Wednesday night, information about the accused was received from an informer after which the police and SOG team were going for the raid. Before the raid, everyone was loading their weapons. In the meantime, the pistol of sub-inspector Mazhar Hasan got stuck. When

it was not unlocked, another sub-inspector Rajiv Kumar tried to unlock it. Suddenly a bullet was fired and after ripping through the stomach of Inspector Rajiv Kumar, it hit the head of SOG constable Mohammad Yakub standing nearby. Both were immediately rushed to the hospital, where the doctors declared the constable dead, while the inspector is undergoing treatment.

Sanjeev Suman claimed he has ordered an investigation into this entire matter. The SSP said that a team would be formed for this. The pistol will also be sent for forensic examination. The body of Yakub has been sent for autopsy. On the other hand, there is an uproar in the family of the deceased constable. They demanded a probe into the entire incident.

Meanwhile in another incident, a pack of stray dogs allegedly mauled a 108-year-old woman to death in Amroha district during her morning walk in the early hours of Wednesday.

According to reports, Ram Kali, who resides in Friends Colony in Amroha district, went out for a morning walk when a pack of dogs attacked her. Passerby spotted the body lying outside the colony and alerted her family, who rushed her to a nearby hospital, where the doctors declared her dead. Kali was mentally unstable and often left the house without informing anyone in the family. The dogs bit her and also scratched her body. One of her legs got separated from the body.

A man was duped of Rs 2.25 lakh in the name of recruitment in RPF and Army in the Naka police station area. The incident occurred two days ago when the accused claimed he could get the victim recruited by introducing himself as a sub-inspector in the police department.

The victim, Vikas Singh from Sachendi in Kanpur, reported that his friend Arun Singh from Hamirpur Surauli was trying to get recruited in the army. Through Arun, Vikas met Ajay from Rae Bareli's Lalganj, who introduced himself as a sub-inspector and claimed he could facilitate their recruitment. On March 15, Ajay called them to a hotel near Charbagh and asked them to transfer Rs 2.25 lakh online in three installments. The vic-

tims underwent a supposed medical test in Delhi. When no iob materialised after several

months, they filed a case.

LUCKNOW | FRIDAY | JULY 19, 2024

Agnipath, old pension issue among | Train mishap: Cries, dust fill coaches reasons for poll defeat: UP BJP chief

The 15-page report by BJP UP president Bhupendra Chaudhary has identified anger towards the 'Agnipath' scheme, paper leaks, old pension issue, dissatisfaction of party workers towards the government and the displeasure of the Rajput community among the 10 reasons for the disastrous performance of the party in 80 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh. The report submitted to the party's central leadership, also noted that the opposition's allegation that reservation would be abolished gained momentum due to the state government giving priority to people of the general category in the recruitment of contract workers for government jobs.

The report also cited the statements given by party leaders on changing the Constitution, and worker' reduced enthusiasm till the sixth and seventh phases of voting due to early ticket distribution. The report also noted that the names of BJP's core voters were removed from the electoral rolls by election officials at the lower level. In almost all seats, 30,000-40,000 names of the party's core voters were removed, the report said. The state BJP drafted the 15-page report on the basis of feedback from 40,000 party workers across the 80 seats in Uttar Pradesh. The BJP state president had met the top leaders in Delhi on Wednesday and discussed the report. The BJP won just 33 of UP's 80 Lok Sabha seats in 2024 polls, a significant decline from its 2019 and 2014 numbers. Collectively, the opposition INDIA bloc won 43 seats. Chaudhary also held a long meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president JP Nadda over the

Political observers not on same page

Political observers are not willing to buy the findings of the 15-page report submit-ted by UP BJP president Bhupendra Chaudhary to the party's central leadership listing the causes of the disastrous performance in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls. In contrast to the 15 points cited in the report, the study conducted by an academic research organisation, Centre for Study of Society and Politics (CSSP), has concluded that 'Abki Baar 400 Paar' slogan was the single biggest rea-son for the consolidation of the SC, OBCs voters against the BJP, as they were significantly influenced by the opposition campaign that with 400 seats, the BJP would amend the Constitution and scrap the reservation in government

"The BJP pushed this slogan of '400 Paar." without offering any political logic. The BJP, in brazen indifference towards the sensibilities of the voters, never cared to offer plausible explanations as to what they intend to achieve by winning over 400 Lok Sabha seats. This gap in communication strategy was exploited by the opposition INDIA block to the hilt telling the voters that the BJP

BJP's vote share decreased by at least 8 per cent in all six regions of the state - Western UP, Braj, Kanpur-Bundelkhand, Awadh, Gorakhpur and Kashi.

The party's worst performance came in the West and Kashi regions, where it got only eight out of 28 seats. In Braj, it got eight out of 13 seats. In Gorakhpur, the party got only

would amend the constitution to scrap the reservation for the SC, ST and OBCs," said director of Kanpur-based CSSP

Dr AK Verma. Verma argued: "It was the '400 Paar...' slogan that actually strengthened the PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) plank floated by Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav in June 2023. Till the commencement of the active election campaign in the last days of March, the PDA was not taken seriously by all stakeholders in the elections."

'It was for the first time in the electoral history of Uttar Pradesh that the election campaign narrative set by the opposition block changed the course of elections and decided the results," said Dr AK

"During the campaign, Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered guarantees on myriad issues but for the reason best known to him, he was silent and did not promise the guarantee that the Constitution would not be amended to scrap the reservation," Dr Verma said, adding: "The BJP campaign also failed to counter the opposition's charge relating to leak of question papers for competitive exams for recruitment to government jobs like police consta-

six out of 13 seats, while in Awadh, it got only seven out of seats. In Kanpur-Bundelkhand, the BJP failed to regain its existing seats, winning only four out of 10 seats. The internal report also flagged that the percentage of votes received by the BJP from non-Yadav ÓBCs (Kurmi, Kori, Maurya, Shakya and Lodh castes) had

ble and others." CSSP had conducted the study in two parts — January-March and April-June — during the campaign and polling for the Lok Sabha elections. "Till the end of March, the popularity rating of the PM Narendra Modi was as high as little over 60% and it dropped by 10-20 % during the elec-tions conducted in seven phas-

es from April 19 to June 1," Dr Verma said, adding: "The rat-

ing for the opposition block ranged from 20% to 30%,

which increased to 43% by the

end of polling." CSSP, in its empirical study, found wide divergence in mood and preferences of the electorate during the January-March quarter and April-June when the campaigning and

polling took place.
During the first quarter, unemployment and paper leak were not the issues dominating the minds of the voters. These issues gained currency with the shrill campaign that reservation will be scrapped. The post-poll analysis report was prepared by the state BJP after obtaining feedback from the candidates who lost, and the party organisational leaders. The BJP, soon after the elections, had despatched study teams to districts where it lost the elections.

decreased. The report also noted that a decrease in the Dalit vote share of Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was behind the Congress's improved performance. The report stated a 10 per cent decrease in the core vote share of the BSP. It further said the party got only one-third of the Dalit votes as compared to 2019.

Sandeep Kumar remembers hearing the cries of a boy and his coach getting filled with dust as the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailed

here on Thursday.
"I remember the loud cries of a boy sitting on the berth across from me. For a moment, the coach was filled with dust and it was all dark. I don't remember what happened in the next few seconds. I only remember the cries and that some passengers pulled my hand and helped me get out of the win-dow," said Sandeep Kumar, who was travelling in a sleeper coach.

At least eight coaches of the train derailed in the Motiganj area, about 150 km from Lucknow, near Gonda on Thursday, leaving two passengers dead and about 20 iniured.

The passenger train heading to Dibrugarh from Chandigarh crossed the Gonda station at 01:58 pm. The next stoppage was Basti, but it derailed shortly after it crossed the Motigani railway station. "I was sitting near the window when I heard a loud noise," recalled another passenger Manish Tiwari (35) who was travelling in the B2 coach of the train. Tiwari said he felt a jerk that hurled him to the roof of the coach. "I climbed to the upper berth to catch a nap after the train left Gonda. I just remember a strong jerk before being thrown on the other side's upper berth. I hoped it was a dream, but it wasn't," said another passenger Dileep Singh, who was travelling to Chhapra in Bihar.

Rajkumari (55), while talking to PTI on the spot, said she was travelling from Chandigarh to Siwan (Bihar) with her son in a sleeper coach when the train derailed. 'We were sitting when sud-



denly it felt like an earthquake. When the train started shaking, I realised something was wrong," she said. Another passenger of the train Sunita Sethiya (42), who was travelling from Chandigarh to Gorakhpur, said she had gone to the washroom at the time of the incident. "As soon as I came out, I felt a strong jolt. Luckily, both the gates were closed. I goth the gates were closed. I got hit with the gate. Had the gate been open, I would have fallen straight down. The people of the village and the nearby areas helped us a lot," she said.

Shaukat Ansari, admitted in the Community Health Centre (CHC), Mankapur, said that he was going to Gorakhpur when the accident happened.

He sustained injuries on his face while his father suffered

injuries on his back, he said,

adding he could not understand what happened to the train. The loud noise of the coaches leaving the track and toppling over to the left was followed by loud cries of the passengers, especially children. The passengers started coming out of the emergency windows and doors of the tilted sleeper coaches, and some went back to pull out their belongings. In the AC coaches, passengers helped each other break the window panes and pull out those injured or

Passengers had to wade through knee-deep water in the fields on either side of the track to reach the nearby approach road. Others, shocked by the accident or injured, sat on the track itself, waiting to be rescued. When police teams reached the spot, officials made announcements asking people to stay

away from the damaged coaches. The rescuers cordoned off the area and were seen entering the damaged coaches to ensure that no passenger was left behind. Dr Satya Narayan, a doctor at the CHC, said about 25 people were brought to his hospital.

One of them had already died. The injured have been treated. Three people were seriously injured, who have been referred to the Gonda District Hospital," he said. Standing at some distance, another team directed the injured passengers towards ambulances lined up at an approach road about 300 metres away. Passengers with serious injuries were carried to the ambulances in stretchers. The district administration also arranged for buses to take the passengers to their respective places.

UPEIDA to develop defence testing infra; MoU signed

Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) and Midhani Group on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the presence of Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh to establish defence testing infrastructure in the Lucknow node of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor

report. The report said that the

This defence testing infrastructure has been named Advanced Material (Defence) Testing Foundation.

The chief secretary said: "Uttar Pradesh is playing a pivotal role in bolstering the nation's defence industry infrastructure while striving to become a global hub for defence manufacturing and innovation. The Lucknow node is an important part of the Defence Corridor, and a significant memorandum of understanding has been inked between Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority and Midhani Group to establish a material testing facility

He highlighted that the con-



UP, TN have defence industrial corridors

Tndia is rapidly emerging as a significant aerospace and defence market globally, with anticipated requirements exceeding US \$250 billion by 2025. The aerospace and defence (A&D) manufacturing sectors have been identified as

struction of this defence testing infrastructure, first in the state and second in the country, would propel the not only enhance India's

focus areas under the 'Make in India' initiative.

Under this, the Ministry of Defence has established defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh (UP DIC) and Tamil Nadu (TN DIC). Úttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC) has been established by the state govern-

'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' campaign. The mechanical and material testing facility will

The primary objective of this corridor is to accelerate the 'Make in India' programme within the defence sector, fostering indigenous defence production. This initiative aims to reduce the country's dependency on imported military equipment significantly.

defence manufacturing infrastructure and promote innovation but will also position Uttar Pradesh as a key

Commissioner Navin Kumar GS

In Yogi's home district of

in Azamgarh.

defence sector hub. The foundation will not only help improve products of the industries being set up in the Defence Corridor, but also in marketing the, after certification.

Additionally, metal industries and MSMEs in Aligarh and Moradabad will also benefit from this develop-

The government's objective greenfield defence testing infrastructure (required for A&D related production) as a common facility for manufacturing, research and development and technology in the defence sector.

Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority has been appointed as the implementing authority for this initiative, tasked with ensuring the timely completion and efficient operation of the defence testing infrastructure. During the signing of the memorandum of understanding, Midhani Group CMD SK Jha and Additional CEO, UPEIDA, Haripratap Shahi along with other officials were present.

Political leaders seek urgent action, compensation

Lucknow (PNS): National spokesperson of Rashtriya Lok Dal Anil Dubey expressed condolences for the deaths and injuries in the train derailment, calling it an unfortunate incident. He demanded that the government initiate relief and rescue operations on a war footing and ensure proper treatment for all the injured Dubey also called for appropriate compensation for the families of the deceased and injured and prayed for their speedy recovery. RLD national secretary Anupam Mishra also expressed sorrow over the incident and emphasised the need for urgent government action to provide relief to the injured. He demanded compensation for the victims. The CPI (ML) expressed deep grief over the loss of lives and extended condolences to the families affected by the tragic accident involving the 15904 Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express near Gonda. The party has directed its Gonda unit to check on the well-being of the injured and provide all possible assistance. CPI (ML) state secretary Sudhakar Yadav issued a statement on Thursday, calling for rescue operations to be carried out on a war footing, immediate medical care and rehabilitation for the injured, adequate compensation for the

families of the deceased, and a thorough safety review of the frequent railway accidents. He called for an investigation and concrete measures to prevent future accidents.

The Uttar Pradesh State Secretariat of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) also expressed condolences for the derailment of the Chandigarh Dibrugarh Express train. The party demanded a high

level inquiry into the causes of the incident from the Central and Uttar Pradesh state governments, appropriate compensation for the families of the deceased, and high-quality treatment for the injured.

JP govt all set for massive plantation drive

In a monumental effort to bolster environmental conservation, the Uttar Pradesh government is gearing up to create history by planting over 36.50 crore saplings across the state on July 20.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the ambitious 'Ped Lagao, Ped Bachao Jan Abhiyan-2024' will kick off in Akbarnagar, Lucknow, marking a significant step towards a greener future. Responding to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', 54.20 crore saplings have been nurtured in nurseries and other facilities. Ministers-in-charge across the state are actively mobilising efforts to ensure the campaign's success, each overseeing strategic planting initiatives in their respective districts. In preparation for the massive plantation drive, nodal officers have been appointed in every district, tasked with overseeing logistics and ensuring smooth execution. These officers will commence their duties on Friday. conducting final inspections to ensure readiness for the monumental event.

On July 20, offices, schools, and institutions statewide will halt regular activities for half a day to participate in the tree planting endeavour.

CM Yogi will plant saplings in Akbarnagar, which was cleared of encroachments for the purpose of reviving Kukrail river. Forest Minister Arun Kumar Saxena will also plant saplings in Lucknow. Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya will plant saplings in Prayagraj and Kaushambi, and Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak in Unnao and Kanpur Dehat.

Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi will plant saplings in Ayodhya and Deoria, and Cabinet Minister Suresh Khanna in Shahjahanpur and Pilibhit. Swatantra Dev Singh will plant saplings in Banda and Chitrakoot, Cabinet Minister Baby Rani Maurya in Agra and Firozabad, Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary in Mathura and Aligarh, Dharampal Singh in Bareilly and Budaun, Anil Rajbhar in Varanasi and Mirzapur, Rakesh Sachan in Fatehpur and Hamirpur, AK Sharma in Azamgarh and Mau, and Yogendra Upadhyay in Farrukhabad and Etawah. Additionally, Ashish Patel will plant saplings in Sultanpur, Sanjay Nishad in Ambedkarnagar, Om

Prakash Rajbhar in Basti, Dara Singh Chauhan in Ghazipur, Sunil Kumar Sharma in Ghaziabad, and Anil Kumar in Muzaffarnagar. Furthermore, ministers of state (independent charges) and other ministers of state will plant saplings in various districts. Forest Minister of State KP Malik will plant saplings in Baghpat. On the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, officers at the level of principal secretary/chief secretary/secretary have been appointed as nodal officers for the Ped Lagao-Ped Bachao Ian Abhiyan-2024' (Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam) campaign. Alok Kumar will serve as the nodal officer for Lucknow in the capacity of Principal Secretary (Sports and Youth Welfare), while Anil Garg has been appointed as the nodal officer for Ayodhya for tree planting under the principal secretary (Irrigation and Water Resources). Principal Secretary (Technical Education) M. Devaraj is named the nodal officer for Prayagraj. In PM Modi's parliamentary constituency Varanasi, Managing Director of Jal Mission Gramin Dr

Rai Shekhar has been appointed

as the nodal officer. Additionally,

Principal Secretary of Social

Welfare Dr Hari Om has been des-

ignated in Mirzapur, and Relief

Gorakhpur, Sports Secretary Suhas LY has been appointed as the nodal officer. In Kanpur Nagar, Principal Secretary (Namami Gange and Rural Water Supply) Anurag Srivastava will take up the role, while Commissioner Amit Gupta will serve in Kanpur Dehat. Commissioner Balakrishna Tripathi has been designated as the nodal officer in Chitrakoot. Additionally, in Agra, Additional Chief Secretary (Housing and Urban Planning) Nitin Ramesh Gokarn will serve as the nodal officer, and Principal Secretary (Prison Administration) Rajesh Kumar Singh will fulfil this role in Aligarh. Under the campaign, saplings will be planted across all 18 divisions. The highest target has been set for Lucknow division, where over 41.73 lakh saplings will be planted. Kanpur division will see plantation of 2.96 crore saplings, followed by Chitrakoot (2.89 crore), Jhansi (2.82 crore), Mirzapur (2.62 crore), Ayodhya (2.39 crore), Devipatan (2.14 crore), Prayagraj (2.07 crore), Bareilly

(1.91 crore), Varanasi (1.76 crore), Moradabad (1.83 crore),

Agra (1.68 crore), Gorakhpur (1.65 crore), Azamgarh (1.30 crore), Aligarh (1.22 crore), Meerut (1.16 crore), Basti (1.11 crore), and Saharanpur (90.23 lakh) saplings. Geotagging of planting sites will also be conducted. The Yogi government aims to achieve this target with everyone's support. Following last year's efforts, the department has commenced preparations for successful plantation this year. Initially, the Forest department set a target of 35 crore trees, but CM Yogi increased the target to 36.46 crore in a recent meeting. After further adjustments, the Forest department is now prepared to plant 36.50 crore trees by July 20. To support this initiative, various departments have been allocated specific tree planting targets. The Forest. Environment, and Climate Change department has been allocated 14.29 crore trees, the Rural Development department 13 crore, and the Agriculture Department 2.80 crore trees. Other allocations include the Horticulture department with 1.55 crore trees, Panchayati Raj department 1.27 crore, and Revenue department 1.05 crore.

Three killed as car overturns

Three persons were killed

1 and as many injured when

PTI UNNAO

a car overturned on Agra-Lucknow expressway in Bangarmau area here on Thursday, police said. According to CO Bangarmau, the incident took place at 6 pm when a car going from Delhi to Ayodhya lost control and overturned. Vaibhav Pandey (35), Manoj Singh (45) and Arvind Singh (40) died on the spot, while three others were injured in the incident, he said. The injured have been admitted to the district hospital and their condition was stated to be stable, the officer said.

Advertisement for recruitment of project staff under Uttar Pradesh CAMPA project Walk in Interview date 24th July 2024 time: 10:00 AM Venue:

Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Environmental Sciences GGV, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

Eligibility SL. Post Emoluments No. 40000/- Month Special Project Associate (SPA) Consolidated Graduation Field Assistant 20000/- Month Graduation (FA) 20000/- Month Graduation Accountant Data Entry 18000/- Month Graduation Operator (DEO)

Note: For details of the post eligibility please visit Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya official website (http://new.ggu.ac.in) in advertisement section and bring all the originals documents, passport size photo and one set a biodata. PI -1 Dr. Brijendra Pratap Singh, PI- 2 Dr. Chandresh Kumar Singh, CO-PI-Dr. Chowlani Manpoong, Co-PI- Dr. Atul Kumar Bharadwai.

For any inquiry contact Email: p.brijendra@gmail.com Mob. 9415385888, 8871022267, 9770149409, 8132888741



Regional Office, Kanpur Metro Region: 118/330, 1st Floor, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpuri, Kanpur - 12

Possession Notice Branch : Gumti No. 5, Kanpur Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the

said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.

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

Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property & O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand Notice Date & Possession Notice Date

Chandra Singh, Both R/o: House No. 146-A, Nauraiyakheda, Udhyog Nagar, Kanpur Nagar. Demand Notice Date: 25-04-2024 • Date of Constructive Possession: 16-07-2024 Property: Premises Plot No. 46, Block-H, Scheme Vyapar Nagar / Ispat Nagar, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Shri Jitendra Singh S/o Shree Ram Chandra Singh, Area: 31.92 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: Plot No. 47, South: Plot No. 45, East: Plot No. 39, West: 6 Mtr. Wide Road.

Borrower: Smt. Jyoti Singh W/o Shri Jitendra Singh and Shri Jitendra Singh S/o Shree Ran

O/s Amount as per Demand Notice: Rs. 9,46,995.00 + Intt. + Others Charges Date: 19-07-2024 Place: Kanpur **Authorised Officer**

Arrangements, security for Maha Kumbh discussed saints were welcomed with

Arrangements and security for the Maha Kumbh to be held here next year were discussed in a meeting held with the officers and representa-

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)

(LC No. HLSA0001597F of Amethi Branch)

(LC No. HLSA00022AE5 of Lucknow - Gor

Nagar Branch) Sanjay Kumar (Borrower)

(LC No. HLSA0002E755 of Ghaziabad - Raj Nagar Branch) Abhinav Kumar Mishra

(Borrower) Seema Mishra (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. HLSA0003281A of Moradabad Branch)

Mohammad Wasim (Borrower) Sundus Roohi (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. HLSA000350D1 of Kanpur - Mati Branch)

Road Branch) Pradeep Rathour (Borrower)
Mithlesh M (Co Borrower 1)
(LC No. HLSA000528F3 of Aligarh Branch) Rahul

Ichha Agarwal (Borrower) Akhil Agarwal (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. BLSA0000B06F of Hardoi - Lucknow

Kumar (Borrower) Sanjna (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. HLSA00040924 of Varanasi Branch

Anjani Pandey (Borrower) Bibha Pandey

Anjani Pandey (Borrower) Bibha Pandey (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0062519 of Bareilly Branch) Vinay

Kumar (Borrower) Priyanka Singh (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. HLSA00055C8F of Agra Branch) Moha

Lal (Borrower) Suman (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. HLSA00055C8FTU of Agra Branch)

(LC No. HLSA0005EFEE of Lucknow - Gomti Nag Branch) Arvind Kumar (Borrower) Joyti Yadav

(Co Borrower 1) Mohit Kumar (Co Borrower 2)

(LC No. M0072865 of Moradabad Branch) Mohd

Alam (Borrower) Husna Khatoon (Co Borrower 1

(LC No. BLSA0001C014 of Meerut Branch) Iklasi Malik (Borrower) Shabanam S (Co Borrower 1) Monish Malik (Co Borrower 2)

(LC No. M0074289 of Meerut Branch) Yatendra

Yatendra (Borrower) Malti Malti (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0075469 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Jalaludeen Ahamad (Borrower) Zahid Ahmad (Co Borrower 1) NAJABUD KHATUN

(LC No. M0078063 of Moradabad Branch) Mohammad Ashraf (Borrower) Shabnam

(Co Borrower 1) SHAYARA SHAYARA

J (Borrower) Tinku Saini (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0089103 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Rabindra Rabindra (Borrower) Manju Manju (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0090420 of Lucknow - Gomti Nagar

Branch) Naveen Kaushal (Borrower) Nirmala

(LC No. M0093408 of Prayagraj Branch) Sonu

Branch) Mumtaj J (Borrower) Nasima Khatoon

(LC No. M0117330 of Lucknow - MMM Marg

Branch) Mohammad Ghani (Borrower) Nafee Bano (Co Borrower 1) MOHD SHAAN GHANI

(LC No. M0131813 of Meerut Branch) Parvez

(LC No. HLSA00006C6F of Lucknow - Gomti Naga

Pandey (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0148108 of Rae Bareilly Branch) Gaya

(LC No. M0151631 of Meerut Branch) Jitendra Tomar (Borrower) Kanchan (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0159290 of Moradabad Branch)

(I.C.No. HLSA00064D52 of Noida - Sector 2

Branch) Ashutosh Tyagi (Borrower) Rajni Tyagi (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. M0267147 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Shabir Ali (Borrower) Sahil (Co Borrower 1) MO Sajid (Co Borrower 2)

Haidar Ali (Co Borrower 3) (LC No. M0096243 of Rae Bareilly Branch) Suraj

Seema Chowdhary (Co-Borrower) (W/o and Legal

Heir of late Borrower Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Chowdhary), Ranveer Chowdhary (S/o and Legal Heir of late Borrower Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Chowdhary), Dashi Sami Chowdhary (S/o and

(LC No. 06000003025 of Lucknow Branch) Ishan

Infracity Private Limited through its Director Mr. Synendra Pal Singh 5/O Late Mr. Anmol Singh (Borrower) Roli Singh (Co-Borrower) (Wo and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh), Ishanika Singh (D/o and Legal Heir of late

Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh) , Asian Singh (S/o Mr. Arun Kumar Singh Minor though his natural guardian / real mother Mrs. Roli Singh and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun

(LC No. 06000003026 of Lucknow Branch) Ishan

(LC No. 0600003026 of Lucknow Branch) Ishan Infracity Private Limited through its Director Mr. Gynendra Pal Singh \$/O Late Mr. Anmol Singh (Borrower) Roli Singh (Co-Borrower) (WO and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh), Ishanika Singh (D/O and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh), Asian Singh (D/O and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh Minor though his natural guardian / real mother Mrs. Roll Singh and Legal Heir of late Co-Borrower Mr. Arun Kumar Singh)

(LC No. M0063247 of Lucknow - Gomti

Chetna Devi (Co Borrower 1)

Maurya (Borrower) Shivam Maurya

(LC No. 06000001112 of Lucknow Branch)

Legal Heir of late Borrower Mr. Ghulam mmad Chowdhary)

(Co Borrower 1)

Shahnawaz (Borrower) Zeenat Khan (Co Borrower 1)

rrower) Firoza N (Co Borrower 1)

Lal (Borrower) Jyoti (Co Borrower 1)

(Co Borrower 1)

Shabnam (Co Borrower 1)

(LC No. BLSA000193A2 of Hathras Branch)

Deepak Kumar (Borrower) Siya Devi

(Co Borrower 1)

Rajkumar (Borrower) Meena Devi (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0187758 of Delhi - Dwarka Branch)

(LC No. M0187758TU of Delhi - Dwarka Branch

Surjeet (Borrower) Vandana Kumari

Seema Devi (Co Borrower 1)

Piramal

Auditorium of the divisional commissioner's office on Thursday. Representatives of all the 13 akharas put forth their views. All the saints stressed on the purity of the Ganga and a

DEMAND NOTICE

Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date

25-06-2024 /Rs. 2235003 /-(Rs.Twenty Two

lakh Thirty Five Thousand Three Only)

Eighty Seven Thousand Sixty Nine and

Forty Nine Thousand Eighty Nine Only)

nty Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1273216 /-(Rs.Twelve lakh Sevi

25-06-2024 /Rs.1860079 /-(Rs.Eighteen lakh Six

25-06-2024 /Rs.691012 /-(Rs.Six lakh Ninety On

25-06-2024 /Rs.2741544 /-(Rs.Twenty Seven lak

Forty One Thousand Five Hundred Forty Four Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs 800823 /-/Rs Fight lakh Fight

25-06-2024 /Rs.1644466 /-(Rs.Sixteen lakh For

Four Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Six Only)

25-06-2024 /Rs.171970 /-(Rs.One lakh Seventy

One Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Only)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1520010 /-(Rs.Fifteen lakh Twei

25-06-2024 /Rs.1843490.42 /-(Rs.Eighteen lakh

Forty Three Thousand Four Hundred Ninety

and Forty Two Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.868906 /-(Rs.Eight lakh Sixty Eig

25-06-2024 /Rs.1469486.4 /-{Rs.Fourteen lakh Sixty Nine Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Six and Forty Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1917387 /-(Rs.Nineteen lakh

25-06-2024 /Rs.1922313 /-(Rs.Nineteen lakh

Twenty Two Thousand Three Hundred Thirteer Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.3108530 /-(Rs.Thirty One lakh

25-06-2024 /Rs.834754.82 /-(Rs.Eight lakh Th

25-06-2024 /Rs.2052787 /-(Rs.Twenty lakh Fifty

25-06-2024 /Rs.2445068 /-{Rs.Twenty Four lak

One Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Five Only)

25-06-2024 /Rs.880647.64 /-{Rs.Eight lakh Eight

nousand Six Hundred Forty Seven and Sixty

25-06-2024 /Rs.1391245.34 /-(Rs.Thirteen lak)

Ninety One Thousand Two Hundred Forty Five

25-06-2024 /Rs.388565 /-(Rs.Three lakh Eighty

Eight Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Five Only)

25-06-2024 /Rs.2579033.92 /-(Rs.Twenty Five la

25-06-2024 /Rs 1577846.62 /-(Rs Fifteen lakh

Seventy Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Six and Sixty Two Paise Only) NPA

25-06-2024 /Rs.2129097 /-(Rs.Twenty One lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Ninety Seven Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs 2295534 /-/Rs Twenty Two lakh

Ninety Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four Only) NPA (04-06-2024) 25-06-2024 /Rs.690877.31 /-(Rs.Six lakh Ninety

housand Eight Hundred Seventy Seven and nirty One Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1260764 /-(Rs.Twelve lakh Sixty

25-06-2024 /Rs.1245623.42 /-{Rs.Twelve lakh For Five Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Three and Forty Two Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1136952 /-(Rs.Eleven lakh Thirty Six Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Two Only)

25-06-2024 /Rs.1694526.94 /-(Rs.Sixteen lakh

Ninety Four Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Six and Ninety Four Paise Only) NPA

25-06-2024 /Rs.908827.32 /-(Rs.Nine lakh Eight

housand Eight Hundred Twenty Seven and

25-06-2024 /Rs.4363300 /-(Rs.Forty Three lakh

25-06-2024 /Rs.20191527 /-(Rs.Two Crore One

25-06-2024 /Rs.3903527 /-(Rs.Thirty Nine

Seven Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

ven Only) NPA (10-12-2020)

Thirty Two Paise Only) NPA (04-11-2023)

25-06-2024 /Rs.21744468 /-(Rs.Two Crore

Hundred Sixty Eight Only) NPA

NPA (04-06-2024)

(04-06-2024)

eventy Nine Thousand Thirty Three and Ninety

Four Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

and Thirty Four Paise Only) NPA

Two Paise Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

Forty Five Thousand Sixty Eight Only)

ven Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

(LC No. M0147789 of Moradabad Branch) Radha 25-06-2024 /Rs.364479 /-(Rs.Three lakh Sixty Fou

ousand Ten Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

Hundred Twenty Three Only) NPA 04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

Thousand Twelve Only) NPA (04-06-2024)

25-06-2024 /Rs.2549089 /-(Rs.Twenty Five lal

NPA (04-06-2024)

NPA (04-06-2024)

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramal Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya
Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai- 400 070.
CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639, Webside:www.piramalfinance.com
Branch Address: Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp.
Finance Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602.

Gata No.105 MI Village - Lolepur Pargana

Miranpur Lolepur Sultanpur Uttar Pradesh

Gram Devariya Pargana And Tehsil Near Laula

MalharRoad, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226010

1) Kh No 203, Lotus Park Apratment Surajpur Dadri Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh 201306 2) Flat no E 106, first floor, Towards

block E. KH no 259,260,262,263, Near Suraipp

Gata No.136, Situated at Jayantipur, City & Dist

Chowki, Gautam Budh nagar Uttar Pradesh

Flat No.F-4, Fourth Floor, House No.60/47,

Purani Dal Mandi, Kanpur Nagar, Near Banaras Hotel Nayaganj, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208001

Part Land of Gata No - 167 Pargana And Tehsil

Situated At Village Dabhaura, Bharat Petrol Pump, Shahjahanpur Uttar Pradesh - 242307 Part of Khet No. 477, Mohallla Molana Azad

Nagar, Mouja Ram Garh, Panjupur, Pargana & Tehsil Koil,District Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh- 20200

Arazi No.46, Mauja-Chaturbhujpur, Par- Mawai

Near Pani Tanki, Teh-Mughalsarai, Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh-232104.
Flat No.UG 3, Ground Floor, Rear LHS Plot No.C
107, Ghaziabad, Shalimar Garden Extn 2,

lat No.UG 3, Ground Floor, Rear LHS Plot No.0

Part of Arazi No. - 101, Mauza- Budawa, Pargana

Arail, Tehsil- Bara, District- Prayagraj/Allahabad Uttar Pradesh 212107

H no 104, On ground floor, Plot 68, Khasra no

179, 181 to 184, Agra Uttar Pradesh 282001

H no 104, On ground floor, Plot 68, Khasra no

179, 181 to 184, Agra Uttar Pradesh 282001

Piot no 107A, part of Khasra no 223 & 228 , std at vill-Madharmau kala, Paragna & Tehsil -Mohanlalganj, Distt-Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226002

Part of Khasra No 155, Mohalla Tarfara, Himanshi

Bick Sarvesh Hathras Uttar Pradesh 204101

Khasra No. 180 Moza. jayentipur Teh & Distt. Moradabad Uttar Pradesh 244001

House Bearing Municipal No3123 B Part of One Residential Plot Bearing No. 19B, Part of Land in

Khasra No 78, Iqbal Nagar Revenue Village Budh

lahidpur Part of Land in Khasra No.78 Meerut

Part of Khasra no-133, A residential plot private

oo-218 & 219, Situated at Village Datawali Gesupur, Pargana, Tehsil & District Meerut Uttar Pradesh, 250004

EWS House No.1-B/306, situated at Mohalla-Vrindavan Yojna-2, Sector-1-B, Tehsil & District-Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226014

II. HOUSE NO. 06, AZAD NAGAR AWSIYE YOJANA

NEAR DELHI HOSPITAL, 150.00 MTS (APPROX

TESHIL & DISTT, MORADABAD UTTAR PRADESH

dependent Unit in Gangadas Enclave, Villag

Khasra No.6072, Min Khasra No.6072, Min Mohalla

Piot part of Kharsa No.141, situated at Village-Ashraf Nagar, Pargana-Bijnor, Tehsil-Sarojini Nagar, District-Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh 226301

roperty situated at Part of plot no. 39, 40, 41, 42

43, over the part of Khasra no. 332 KA Minjumla

vard Haiderganj, Dist Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

House Built on Part of Gata No. 1059, Mauza

Soraon, Pargana & Tehsil Soraon, Disst Prayagraj Uttar Pradesh 212502

fouse built on Plot no 45, Part of Khasra no 226,

Vill - Tiwaripur, Pargana Lucknow Tehsil Bakshi Ka Talab, District Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226201

House Const On part of plot no 292 &293 part of

kh no 553&579 std at gram haiderganj jadeed,w balakganj & dist lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226003

louse No 1424, Mohalla Devi Wala Parikshitgarh

Plot No.35, Part Of Khasra No.1648Sa, Satrik Road.

Situated at Village-Juggaur, Pargana, Tehsil & Dist-Lucknow, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-227105 Plot on Khasra No.24 (Min) Plot on Khasra No.24

(Min), Near Shagun Marriage Lawn, Gram-Chajlapur, Pargana & Tehsil- Ratapur, Gram-Chajlapur, Raebarel Uttar Pradesh, Pincode-229001.

Khasra No.128, Hasanpur Kadim, Survey No.128, Near Police Chowki, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh,

Part Of Gata No.304, Moradabad Mohalla Miya

Property bearing No.C-112 (Single Storey) Situated at G.D.A. Residential Colony Block-C, Nandgram Nandnikunj) Ghaziabad Tehsil & District Shaziabad

House No.28, Saleh Nagar, Lucknow Cantonment, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226002

Gata No.602, Vill- Chhajlapur, Raj Restaurant,

30, B. N. Road Lalbagh Lalbagh Opp. Church

Flat No. D-3 At Third Floor NA Balaji Houses,

Plot No. 45 Pragati Vihar Road Yojna Ward

Flat no 102A on first floor built over

Shiv Vihar Colony, Jankipuram Near Shanvi

Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh-229001

Colony, M/s Public School, Moradabad,

ncode-250004.

Maharashtra-244001.

Jttar Pradesh 201003

Shekhupur, Khichra, Pargana Dasna, Tehsii

Dhaulana, District Hapur, Uttar Pradesh -

Pirgarh, Near BSA Office, Jyotiba Phule Nag. Uttar Pradesh, Pincode-244221.

107, Ghaziabad, Shalimar Garden Extn 2,

Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh-201005

Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh-201005

Moradabad, Uttarpradesh-244001

228001

polythene-free mela. A discussion on providing facilities and security to the akharas was held. At the beginning of the meeting, general secretary of the All India Akhara Parishad Hari Giri and other

lasted for about two hours, Giri said the matter to make the Maha Kumbh polythenefree has been put before the officials The most important thing for the purity of the Ganga is to stop plastic from going into the Ganga and Yamuna. This needs to be DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Imited (PCHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to PCHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively. taken with utmost seriousness.

A discussion on providing facilities to the akharas and fulfilling other necessary arrangements was held. Additional Director General of Police (ADG) Bhanu Bhaskar said that many arrangements are being made to strengthen the security system in the Maha Kumbh Mela. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is going to play a big role in this. Preparations are being made for this purpose. Guidance

has been taken from saints and

garlands.
Giving information to the

media after the meeting which

WOMAN DUPED: A woman was duped of Rs 3.5 lakh by cyber thugs in the Cantt police station area here. The thugs called and threatened her woman saying that drugs had been found in her parcel, now she will have to go to jail and the Mumbai Crime Branch team is coming to arrest her. After this, the woman was asked for bank details, passbook and one-time password (OTP) and then money was withdrawn from her account. The victim, who lives in the Cantt area, works in a private company. The swindlers also made her talk to several fake officers. The scared woman transferred the money. After the fraud, the woman lodged a complaint at the police station. The police registered a case and started investigating the matter. Richa of Muir Road works in a private company in Jaipur. She had come here to meet her father. On July 16 she received a call from an unknown number. She woman was told that the parcel she had sent has been cancelled and an FIR has been registered in Mumbai. It was said that it contained drugs. She was also told the FIR number and tt was said that the Mumbai Crime Branch will talk to her in this regard. After this, many people talked to her posing as officers. When the woman denied smuggling drugs, she was blackmailed. Cantt police station in charge, Sunil Kumar Kanaujiya said on the demand of the thugs, the woman transferred Rs 1.02.464 for the first time. Rs 2.05.321 for the second time and Rs

Remarkable medical triumph

49 990 for the third time

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

 $R^{
m egency\, Hospital\, celebrates}_{
m a\, remarkable\, medical\, tri-}$ umph with the successful treatment of a 65-year-old female patient plagued by recurrent abdominal pain, fever and chills. This extraordinary case underscores Regency's unwavering commitment to pioneering medical care and elevating patient outcomes through cutting-edge surgical interventions.

The patient's journey began with a diagnosis revealing a challenging constellation of issues: dilated common hepatic duct and bilateral intrahepatic ducts obstructed by multiple stones. Responding to the complexity of her condition, the medical team performed a

Roux-en-Hepaticojejunostomy (RYHJ) with meticulous precision. During the procedure, over 400 stones were delicately extracted from the ducts complemented by thorough CBD clearance using advanced choledochoscopy techniques. The patient's smooth recovery post-surgery stands testament to Regency's advanced capabilities and compassionate care approach. Dr Pradeep Joshi, Senior Consultant Department of GI Surgery, GI Oncology, Minimal Access and Bariatric Surgery, who led the surgical team, reflected on the case: "Managing this case was a profound challenge, given the extensive nature of the stones and ductal dilation. Our success in achieving comprehensive stone removal and duct clearance highlights our team's expertise and dedication to patient well-being. We are thrilled by the patient's recoverv and remain steadfast in our pursuit of excellence in

healthcare.

DC reviews preparations for plantation drive tomorrow

Under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner (DC) Kaushal Raj Sharma, preparations for the tree plantation campaign 'Ped Lagao-Ped Bachao Jan Abhiyan-2024' proposed on July 20 were reviewed, in which the officials of the departments concerned of all the four districts of the division were connected through virtual medium. In the meeting, the DC gave various guidelines to the officials, asking all departments to arrange 100 per cent saplings as per the target by 5 pm on Friday.

According to Sharma, the work of planting saplings as per the target should be started on July 20 at 6 am and completed by 3 pm. The information about the tree plantation being done



Divisional Commissioner KR Sharma on Thursday reviewing preparations for tree plantation drive in Varanas

on July 20 should be made available to the command centre established in the DFO office of the respective district every hour from 7 am to 3 pm, he said, adding that the sitewise information of geo-tagging of the tree plantation to be done on July 20 must be uploaded on the Haritima app after the tree plantation.

He further directed the officers/ employees of all the departments to ensure their participation in this tree plantation campaign and motivate the beneficiaries, farmers, NGOs, self-help groups (SHGs), school children etc related to their departments for tree plantation. 'The village-wise on-site inspection of the places iden-

between the roads and put good quality soil in them. He said that the responsibility of the concerned will be fixed along with imposing a fine. According to him, as per the targets given to various districts of the division, Varanasi will plant 1,50,6341 saplings while Ghazipur 3,21,4223, Jaunpur 3,91,4779 and Chandauli 26,87,876. In the meeting District Magistrate S Rajlingam, Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal, Forest Conservator Ravi Shankar, DFO Varanasi Swati Singh and officers of various departments of the division were connected through virtual medium.

tified by the SDMs and BDOs concerned must be done", the

DC directed, asking the Public

Works Department to remove

the soil of the dividers built

DM inspects redevelopment work

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam conducted a surprise inspection of the flood outposts at Primary Girls School, Nagwa and Goenka Sanskrit College, Bhadaini on Thursday in view of the redevelopment work of Judge Guest House Ghat located near Samne Ghat and the work of stone pinching on both sides of the flipper gate as well as the possible flood situation. He gave necessary instructions to the officials. During the inspection of Judge Guest House Ghat redevelopment work, the project manager informed that the work of redevelopment of 110 metres long ghat, two gazebos, one palanquin, two changing rooms, high mast lights etc has been completed while the work of block toilets, stone pitching, ramp and horticulture is in progress. The DM directed the officers to complete the pending construction work with the prescribed standards and quality. He also took information from the UPPCL project manager about the ghat under construction on the other side. After this, he also inspected the construction work of stone pinching to prevent soil erosion and to protect the gate in 10 metres on both sides of the left side of the flipper gate. He directed the Nagar Nigam officials to remove the garbage dumped on the other side of the flipper gate. During the inspecflood outpost st Primary

cleanliness. He also took information from the headmaster and local corporator about the arrangements for drinking water, toilets, kitchen etc for the people living there in case of floods and how many flood-affected families come there. The headmaster said that 30-35 families come and there is not enough space in the school. On this, the DM directed the concerned lekhpal to ensure proper arrangements on the vacant public land next to it and to provide food and other necessary things. During the inspection of Goenka Sanskrit College, the DM directed the naib tehsildar to make arrangements for hygienic kitchen, toilets, gas connection, food as per the menu, tents, availability of doctors on the spot, electrical safety, better cleanliness. On the request of the principal for making arrangements so that the education of children is not affected after the establishment of the flood outpost, the DM talked to the DIOS and assured to make suitable alternative arrangements.

Meanwhile, after several days of continuous rising water level of river Ganga, the trend has been checked in this holy city during the day. The river remained steady right from upstream right Phaphamau to downstream Ballia including Prayagraj, Mirzapur and Varanasi but it continued to rise at Ghazipur by two centimetres per hour. Since the beginning of this month, the water level of Ganga increased by over five metres from 57.66 metres on July 1 to 62.83 metres Girls School, the DM expressed at 8 am on Thursday but it was displeasure with the headmaster still far below the danger mark as he was not satisfied with the cleanliness arrangements. He of 70.262 metres as per the report of Middle Ganga asked the school to ensure better Division-III of CWC.

Ruckus on Muharrum: Seven accused arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

PAC was deployed in Amiliya Tarhar village under Lalapur police station area on Thursday following ruckus over the route of tazia procession on Muharram when some miscreants involved in it allegedly entered the house of an advocate Awadhesh, beat him up and looted him.

The villagers on Thursday attacked the house and after vandalising it set a bike parked there on fire. When the police administration came to know about the incident, the officials immediately reached the village with heavy force. At present, PAC has been deployed in the village. ACP Bara Santlal Saroj, SHO Lalapur Ajay Mishra are present on the spot.

There was ruckus in the village following a dispute between two parties while taking out tazia procession on Wednesday evening after some miscreants involved entered the house and attacked a middle-aged man along with the daughter and son of the advocate with sticks, swords, sickle etc.

An S-I was also allegedly beaten up when he tried to intervene. Awadhesh's head got fractured while his son and daughter also got injured. A report has been filed against six named and 10-12 unidentified persons.

On Wednesday the taziadars were coming out of the village village. When the procession reached near the house of Awadhesh Dwivedi some miscreants in the crowd climbed his wall. It is alleged that the miscreants tried to break the boundary wall and also broke the electricity supply wire. When Awadhesh's son protested, he was attacked. When SI Baliram and constables accompanying the procession tried to intervene, they started misbehaving and scuffled with them too. When Awadhesh came out of the house to save his son. they started beating him too. When the father and son ran away, the attackers followed them into the house and attacked them by picking up the rod of the fan. When the advocate's daughter tried to save her father and brothers she too was beaten up. Seeing the commotion, the people nearby reached the spot and tried to intervene, but they were also beaten up. When the villagers gathered the attackers fled. DCP Yamuna Nagar Shraddha

Narendra Pandey, SDM Jagjit Kaur, ACP Bara Sant Lal Saroj came with the force and questioned the victim's family, PAC has also been deployed in view of the tension.

DCP Shraddha Narendra Pandey is present in Lalapur with the force. A large number of police personnel sent there. Meanwhile the Lalapur police

claimed to have nabbed seven with the tazia from the accused in this connection on Imambara of Amiliya Tarhar Thursday night.

Awareness programmes held to prevent diarrhoea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

During the rainy season, there is a risk of diarrhoea due to infection. 'Stop Diarrhoea Campaign' is being conducted in the district from July 1 and in this direction on Thursday public awareness programmes were organised in Kaparforav

and Shahanshahpur villages of Araziline block. The programmes were supported by Jagran Pehal Reckitt India organisation. The organisation's workers Tabassum and Arpita and ASHA workers informed the villagers about the importance of campaign through posters, pamphlets etc. The school children were informed about 'Suman', the correct method of making ORS and washing hands.

During the Rural Health Sanitation Nutrition Day (VHSND), ASHA-Anganwaɗi workers will inform pregnant and lactating women to wash their hands with soap and water before touching newborns, breastfeeding, cooking and feeding, and after defecation and making them do so.

ASHA worker Seema Chaudhary said that the main reason for diarrhoea is lack of cleanliness. "To avoid this, use clean water for drinking. Boil water and let it cool. Then use it. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before cooking and eating, after defecation and cleaning the child's stool. Feed the child with a spoon in a clean vessel. Do not give milk or canned milk to the child from a bottle. Along with this, breastfeed the child only up to the age of six months," she said, adding that the main reason for malnutrition in children is diarrhoea. She said that frequent diarrhoea can make the child malnourished and if he/ she is malnourished, then a little carelessness can make him/her vulnerable to diarrhoea.

Plantation drive held



Kanpur (PNS): The Bank of Baroda's regional office, Kanpur Metro region, organised a plantation drive at Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner (Central)'s office campus on Thursday. During it Deputy Director, General Labour Welfare, New Delhi K Shekhar, Regional Labour Commissioner (C) Kanpur RK Meena, Assistant Labour Commissioner (C) Kanpur Alok Tripathi, Deputy General Manager and Regional Head, Bank of Baroda, Shaliesh Kumar Parakh; Chief Manager (RBDM) Adtiya

Chandra and other staff members were present. This unique initiative of Bank of Baroda was appreciated by the higher officials of the Labour Commissionerate. They greeted all the employees of the bank for 117th foundation day celebrations and informed that they will spread this unique initiative among the other organisations who were in touch with them and expressed their happiness. The bank distributed sweets and plants with logo of BoB Earth Green Drive to the staff members, Labour Commissioner office here.

LIC ties up with IDFC First Bank under corporate agency arrangement

ontinuing with its endeavor to increase the contribution of bancassurance and its pursuit to provide life insurance coverage to all by 2047, LIC has tied-up with one of the best technologically advanced and promising banks in the country, IDFC First Bank Ltd, under Corporate Agency Arrangement. The agreement for the tie-up was signed on July 16. This tie-up will facil-

itate more than one crore customers of IDFC First Bank who will now be able to buy LIC policies through the Bank.

The journey of digital on-boarding has already started and is in development phase and once completed cus-tomers will be able to buy LIC policies online by visiting

Bank's website. A very tech-savvy bank where more than 95 per cent transactions are happening online,

it will be a great experience for the bank customers to have end to end solution for their varied life insurance needs.

Combined strength of a vast network of more than 3,600 branches and satellite offices of LIC and over 1,000 branches of IDFC First Bank, the penetration of life insurance across the country will be made easier and this will go a long way in achieving the goal of providing life insurance protection to all by 2047. Being the premier insurer of the country, LIC has plans for all segments of the society with umbrella of variety of products consisting of annuity, ULIP, savings and term insurance.

On the occasion LIC's Managing Director R Doraiswamy informed that the coming together of these two organisations will provide the digital savvy customers of IDFC First Bank with the wide choice of attractive products of LIC.

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to PCHFL as aforesaid, PCHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise through they time to rome on the PCHFL and person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 19-07-2024 Place: Uttar Pradesh

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limite

Congress remarks often incite violence against Modi: BJP

PNS NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday accused the Congress of often using remarks, which incite violence, against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and said words like 'maut' and 'hinsa' should not be used in speeches to target political rivals.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Opposition should maintain decorum and seriousness in its political discourse as the use of such inciteful words have a psychological impact in society, promoting violence and raising unneces-

sary tensions.
"The choice of words is very important in public life. The kind of comments used by the



Opposition for PM Modi is a matter of grave concern," he

The Minister and BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu

former IPS officer to highlight that rhetoric used for shortterm political benefits at times incites violence. Trivedi referred to the killing of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the recent assassination attempt on Donald Trump to make the point. Targeting the Congress, Trivedi said its leader Rahul Gandhi used words like vio-

lence and murder in Parliament and had rationalised as throwing of some article at Modi's convoy during the poll campaign as an evidence of people's fear of the Prime Minister

Modi's security was endangered in Punjab when the Congress ruled the state, he said, contrasting this with the security provided to Rahul Gandhi in sensitive places like Kashmir and Manipur.

Mashmir and Manipur.
Someone who spoke of cutting
Modi into pieces is a Congress
MP now, and it was the
Congress leader Sonia Gandhi
who had used "maut ka saudagar" barb against him in 2007 when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat, Trivedi said. The BJP never wished death to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

even after she imposed Emergency, he said. Trivedi said Rahul Gandhi, as

the Leader of Opposition, should show maturity in his speeches, and anyone not doing so is not fit for politics. In this context, Trivedi referred to the Ishrat Jahan case, saying

central government, changed its first affidavit that called her a terrorist for political reasons as she was targeting Modi. She along with her accomplishes were killed in an encounter in 2004 by the Gujarat police. The Congress-led UPA was in power at the Centre at that time. The Congress has often supported. Congress has often supported separatists and terrorists but it is now speaking their language as well, he alleged..

India, Malaysia

to deepen

cooperation

India and Malaysia have decided to increase coop-

eration between the two

countries in the field of Oil

Palm and other sectors. This was discussed here on

Thursday during the meeting of the Union Minister

for Agriculture and Farmers

Welfare and Rural Development Shivraj Singh

Chouhan and Minister of

Commodities of Malaysia Datuk Seri Johari Abdul

The Malaysian Minister is

on a visit to India from 16-

19 July and met Chouhan at

Krishi Bhawan here to dis-

cuss opportunities to deep-

Plantations

Ghani.

in oil palm

PNS NEW DELHI

Foreign Secretary Misri's first foreign trip to Bhutan today



PNS NEW DELHI

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri will pay a two-day visit to Bhutan beginning Friday, in his first trip abroad after assum-

In Bhutanese capital Thimphu, Misri will meet Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Foreign Minister DN Dhungyel and Foreign Secretary Pema Choden among others, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said while announcing

The foreign secretary's visit underscores the "highest priority" the government of India attaches to its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, it said. Misri will also receive an audience with

Choden are expected to carry out a comprehensive review of the bilateral ties, including issues having mutual security interests, people familiar with

Misri will pay an official visit to Bhutan from July 19-20, which will be his first visit abroad after taking over as the foreign sec-

During the visit, Foreign Secretary Misri will receive an audience with His Majesty The King of Bhutan. He will call on the Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, and meet the foreign secretary and other senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan," it said.

cooperation talks.

"The visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level Bhutan, and underscores the highest priority Government of India attaches to its 'Neighbourhood First' Policy," it said in a statement.

ing charge of the top post.

the visit.

Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, according to the MEA. \In their talks, Misri and

the visit said.

"Foreign Secretary Vikram retary," the MEA said.

The MEA said the two foreign secretaries will also co-chair the India-Bhutan development

Last month, the Bhutanese

Prime Minister was among the leaders of seven countries from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region who attended the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union council of Ministers.

Misri's visit to Thimphu also comes against the backdrop of China and Bhutan looking at an expeditious resolution of their festering boundary row that could have implications for India's security interests.

Around 10 months back, Bhutan's then Foreign Minister Tandi Dorji held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in A Chinese readout on the talks

said Bhutan firmly abides by the one-China principle and stands ready to work with China for an early settlement of the boundary issue.

New Delhi has been keeping a close eye on the negotiations between Bhutan and China on their boundary row as it could have implications for New Delhi's security interests, especially in the Doklam tri-junc-

In August last year, China and Bhutan agreed to expedite and take simultaneous steps to implement a "three-step roadmap to resolve their festering boundary dispute.

In October 2021, Bhutan and China signed an agreement on the "three-step roadmap" to expedite negotiations to resolve

their boundary dispute. The signing of the pact came four years after the Indian and Chinese armies were locked in a 73-day stand-off at the Doklam tri-junction after China tried to extend a road in

the area that Bhutan claimed belonged to it. The India-China stand-off in the Doklam plateau in 201' even triggered fears of larger conflict between the two neigh

Bhutan had said the area belonged to it and India supported the Bhutanese claim.

bours.

heroism in Kargil



PNS NEW DELHI

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Thursday hailed the heroism of soldiers in the Kargil conflict and said besides recalling memories of a war, it is also important to look at its aftermath and draw the "right lessons" for the future. Speaking at an event held here to mark the 25th anniversary of the Kargil war, he also said "We must not repeat the same mistakes".

War and warfare are evolving at a very, very rapid pace. Their character and nature are changing rapidly because of transformation in technology and ongo-ing geopolitical flux, he said.

"The memories of sacrifices made by our soldiers must become a part of our national folklore, as indeed it has become with the Kargil war," General

Saga, bravery and fortitude must continue to inspire future generations of the youth as well as soldiers who join the Indian armed forces, the CDS said. Besides recalling memories of war, it is also important to look at its aftermath and draw useful lessons for the future, he said. He also said multiple initiatives are being taken by the Indian Armed Forces to maintain an edge over our adversaries, and improvements in our war fighting doctrines, strategy and concepts as per perceived threat have been enunciated.

Presenting the Kargil Honours, CDS thanked the Veterans and Veer Naris for their immense contributions and sacrifices during the Kargil War. He also lauded the Indian Defence Industry for supporting the national

General Chauhan said capability development to include infrastructure and robust opera-

tional logistics is being attempted in a progressive manner through indigenous means to build future ready Armed Forces. Multiple re-organisation and re-structuring initiatives are ongoing to enhance war fighting efficiency and effectiveness, he added.

The CDS highlighted that the nature of future military and non-military security challenges brings to fore the imperative need for the Armed Forces to be prepared for multi-domain and multi-spectrum challenges.

"There is an inescapable requirement of seamless integration across all domains - land, sea, air, space, info and cyberspace, and infusion of inter-operable systems among various branches of Armed Forces," he said.

Kargil was a conflict that underscored the need for a robust and responsive defense strategy. "The Kargil conflict highlighted the significance of maintaining vigilance and preparedness for safeguarding our borders.

It also emphasised the importance of public and international diplomacy, a strategy which was used effectively to maintain the neutrality of inimical nations and gain global support," said

Highlighting the steps taken towards integration of the Armed Forces, Chief of Defence Staff said, moving beyond jointness, the three services are now working towards promoting joint culture and integrating themselves in a number of domains.

Mentioning Kargil War as the first televised war in India where free and open media exist, CDS stressed that with constant battle of narratives attempting to shape perceptions across the world, 'Information domain' has emerged as another key bat-

CDS hails soldiers | Withdraw order for eateries on Kanwar route, says Tyagi

PNS NEW DELHI

anata Dal (United) leader KC Tyagi on Thursday said the Muzaffarnagar Police order asking eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names should be withdrawn as it may cause com-munal tension and there should not be any discrimination on the basis of religion or caste. Police in Muzaffarnagar have reportedly ordered all eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of their owners to avoid any "confu-

Asked about the order which has drawn flak from the politicians and members of the civil society, Tyagi said the 'Kanwar Yatra', a pilgrimage undertaken by the Hindus during the month of Sawan of the Hindu calendar, has been crossing different areas of western Uttar Pradesh for ages and communal tension has not been

Flagging the issue of "decline in real wages", the Congress on Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been delivered a

"400 paar" in the Lok Sabha but the Budget

offers him the chance to achieve "Asli 400 paar"

of a nationwide minimum wage of Rs 400 per

Congress general secretary in-charge commu-

nications Jairam Ramesh said multiple data

sources, including the government's own offi-

cial statistics, are unanimous in showing that

workers can buy less today than they could 10

"A combination of slow wage growth and back-

breaking inflation has caused an unprecedent-

ed decline in real wages (wages adjusted for

Citing the government data of labour bureau's

wage rate index, Ramesh said real wages for

labourers stagnated between 2014 and 2023, and

He further cited the Ministry of Agriculture's

Agricultural Statistics to claim that under

Manmohan Singh, real wages for agricultural

labourers grew at 6.8 per cent each year, while

under Modi, real wages for agricultural labour-

ers declined by minus 1.3 per cent each year.

Citing Periodic Labour Force Survey Series,

Ramesh said the average real earnings over time have stagnated between 2017 and 2022 across

all employment types - salaried workers, casu-

in fact declined between 2019 and 2024.

price rise)," he said in a statement.

The JD (U) leader said such discrimination on the basis of religion is wrong and will only widen the communal divide. "Kanwar Yatra has been crossing through the areas of west-ern Uttar Pradesh for ages and

communal tension has not been reported," Tyagi said. "Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as well welcome the pilgrims by setting up stalls. Muslim artisans are also involved in making the Kanwars... Such orders can increase communal tension," he added.

In the yatra, devotees, who are called "Kanwarias", carry pitchers of holy water on their shoulders, balanced on deco-

rated slings known as Kanwars. Tyagi said the district administration should review its decision and take it back. "Police should investigate that no antisocial elements should be running any shops, but there should not be any discrimination on the basis of religion or caste. It increases the divide in the society," he said. "Such directives can increase communal tension. It should not be implemented," he added.

Muzaffarnagar Police chief Abhishek Singh earlier on Monday said, "About 240 km of Kanwar Vatra route falls in the Kanwar Yatra route falls in the district. All the eateries, including hotels, dhabas and carts, on the route have been asked to display the names of their proprietors or those working on these shops."

'This has been done to ensure that there should be no confusion among kanwarias and no law and order situation arises. All are following this volun-

l workers, and self-employed workers

He further cited data from Centre for Labour

Research and Action to claim that real wages

of brick kiln workers have stagnated or declined

intensive labour and are a low-paying work of last resort for India's poorest," he said.

To deliver justice to 'Shramiks', and to dispel this

cycle of stagnant wages, the Congress had guar-

anteed a nationwide minimum wage of Rs 400

per day of work in its 'Nyay Patra' manifesto,

The self-anointed non-biological PM has been delivered a stinging rebuke by voters in

his efforts to reach 400 paar in the Lok Sabha.

The Union Budget offers him the chance to

achieve what the INC has called Asli 400 paar. A nationwide minimum wage of Rs 400 per day

is an idea whose time has come," Ramesh said.

between 2014 and 2022. "Brick kilns involve

en the bilateral agriculture cooperation between India and Malaysia. Statistics show workers can buy less The sides expressed the desire to collaborate on the National Mission on Edible Oil Palm, discussed the today than 10 years ago: Ramesh market access issues related to agriculture and allied products, institutionaliza-

tion of the cooperation in agriculture, and application of digital technology in the plantation sector. The meeting concluded Minister Johari Abdul Ghanifor a fruitful visit to India and expressing optimism for continued cooperation in Agriculture and

Conviction in child marriage cases still low, says report

PNS NEW DELHI

other areas.

The conviction rate under the Prevention of Child Marriage Act stands at 11 per cent while for all other crimes against children it is 34 per cent, according to a new report.

In 2022, out of the total 3,563 child marriage cases listed for trial in courts under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, a mere 181 cases were successfully concluded in terms of

trial completion. Despite the fact that there are 3,365 cases pending, with the current rate of disposal, the country may take 19 years to clear the backlogs as of 2022, according to a report by the India Child Protection (ICP) research team which was released by child rights body the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

The total number of child marriage cases registered during the last five years was less than the number of girl child marriages taking place in a single day in the country, according to a new study. On an average, only one case of child marriage per district was registered for prosecution in 2022.

The report said the official data has showed that out of 63,513 children of kidnapping and abduction who were recovered in 2022, 15,748 (25%) were kidnapped and abducted for the purpose of either 'marriage' or 'illicit intercourse'. Of this, 15,142 children recovered in 2022 were kidnapped solely for the purpose



of marriage. This report used a multi-faceted approach, combining primary data gathered at the village level through engagement with key stakeholders, including Panchayati Raj Institution functionaries and NGO activists involved in child protection initiatives.

Secondary data from the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) and the Crime in India Reports published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) from 2018 to 2022 were analysed, along with an extensive literature review to enhance understanding of the barriers to child marriage elimination efforts and their impact on children, particularly girls. The primary data was collected from a sample of 1,132 random villages across 20 districts of Assam, encompassing a total population of 21 lakhs and a child population of 8 lakhs. The report said 81 per cent reduction in the instances of

child marriage between 2021-22

In absolute numbers, the inci-

and 2023-24 in the state.

respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of stringent enforcement measures in curbing child marriage. In 12 districts, out of 20, over 90 per cent of respondents believe

627cases in 2023-24.

child marriage.

communities.

In 30 per cent of the villages sur-

veyed in Assam, child marriage

has been completely eradicated.

Additionally, 40 per cent of vil-

lages reported a significant

decline in the occurrence of

The study said 98 per cent of the

respondents believed that the

Assam government's strict law

enforcement initiatives in 2023

had a substantial and striking

influence on the reduction of

child marriages within their

The overwhelming majority of

that taking legal action such as arresting individuals and filing FIRs in cases related to child marriage can effectively address the occurrence of such cases. Overall, the same percentage for all 20 districts stands at 72 per dence of child marriages in the

SC orders release of YouTuber jailed in TN

PTI NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the release of YouTuber 'Savukku' Shankar who was detained under the Goondas Act in May by the Tamil Nadu Police. Granting the interim relief to Shankar currently lodged in the Coimbatore Central Prison, a bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said it would not decide the case on merit as Madras High Court is seized of the matter.

The bench recorded the submission of lawyers appearing for the parties that they will mention the matter before the Chief Justice of the High Court or before the appropriate bench on Monday or Tuesday seeking to expedite the hearing in the matter.

'We are definitely of the view that the petitioner has no that was filed by Shankar's hands in the delay caused in the matter. In the peculiar



till the case against detention is decided by the high court," the bench said while clarifying that its order pertains only to the preventive detention mat-

If the petitioner is in jail in any other case, this order will not affect that, the bench said.

The top court was hearing an appeal challenging the Madras High Court order adjourning the habeas corpus petition mother challenging his detention under the Goondas Act.

asked senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for Tamil Nadu government, to explain need of preventive detention against Shankar. Luthra submitted that the YouTuber has been accused of forging documents, and indulging in malafide acts.

The bench then asked, "How can he be put in detention? Is he a threat to the security of this country?

This is not an ordinary civil dispute but a preventive detention matter. Somebody's liberfacts, the petitioner be released At the outset, the apex court ty is at stake. He is in preven-

months." Senior advocate Siddhartha Dave, appearing for Shankar's mother, submitted that the YouTuber was detained only on the basis of apprehension that he would come out on bail in criminal Based on the orders of

tive detention for over two

Commissioner of Police, Greater Chennai, Sandeep Rai Rathore, the detention order under the Goondas Act was served on Shankar by a cyber crime (Chennai) police inspector on May 12. There are seven cases pending

against Shankar in Chennai

police's central crime branch/cyber crime out of which three are under investigation, charge sheets have been filed in two and the remaining are pending trial, according to a Chennai police press note. Shankar, 48, was arrested by Coimbatore police on May 4 for alleged derogatory statements about women police personnel/police officials in

an interview to a YouTube channel. Other cases Shankar faces include one for possession of

Theni police. The YouTuber had submitted in court that he was assaulted in Coimbatore prison. A detainee under the Goondas

ganja, which was registered by

Act may be imprisoned for one year, subject to scrutiny by an advisory board and the validity of such detentions is also examined by the High Court based on petitions filed by the affected persons.

Shankar, who has been accused by a number of people of making personal attacks and uncivil remarks is also a strong critic of the DMK regime and Chief Minister MK Stalin.

A former special assistant in the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption, the YouTuber was accused in 2008 of leaking sensitive conversations between officials and a court had years later acquitted him in that case.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Bill of woes

Karnataka Govt puts local job quota bill on hold after the State's IT industry reacts strongly

The Karnataka government has put on hold a bill requiring reservations for locals in the private sector following significant backlash from the industry. The Government will reconsider the bill before presenting it to the state Assembly. This decision came just hours after the state cabinet approved the bill, which proposed reserving 50 per cent of management positions and 75 per cent of non-management positions for Kannadigas in the private sector. The Karnataka State Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries, Factories, and Other Establishments Bill, 2024, was to be presented in the Assembly on Thursday. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, along with his ministers, praised the bill, emphasising their "pro-Kannada" stance and stating that their main priority is to "ensure the welfare of Kannadigas." However, the bill met with tough resistance from the IT industry that criticised the bill, arguing that it would hinder the growth of the tech sector in Bengaluru and negatively affect the IT industry in Karnataka. The

rationale behind the bill was to address the high unemployment rates among the state's residents and to ensure that local talent is given priority in job opportunities within Karnataka.

But industry leaders felt that a quota system for locals would hinder the ability of companies to hire the best talent available, potentially compromising their competitiveness and productivity. Besides, if implemented this bill would have legal and constitutional issues. The bill could violate the right to equality and freedom of movement, as enshrined in the Indian Constitution and could face significant hurdles in courts, leading to prolonged legal battles. Furthermore, the proposed

bill raised concerns about increasing regionalism and social tensions. It was feared that such a policy could create divisions between locals and non-locals, leading to a less cohesive society and potential conflicts. According to a report by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (FICCI), Karnataka's overall unemployment rate is 2.7%, which is lower than the national average of 4.2%. But these figures hide the low employability of the local populace. But to correct it with populist measures is not the best solution. Instead of mandating job reservations, the Government should focus on improving education and skill development programs for locals. Enhancing the quality of education and providing better vocational training could empower local youth to compete effectively in the job market. Now that the bill has been withdrawn it could come back later in a different form. The decision to put the bill on hold has significant political implications. The Karnataka Government has averted a standoff with the IT industry and other businesses but it may disappoint its support base which was expecting job opportunities. Nonetheless, suspending the bill will likely reassure businesses and investors. But the Government will have to focus on providing employable skills to locals, so that they could get employment in Karnataka's IT industry.



Religion and politics in modern India



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Today, as memories of Partition fade with each passing generation, the intertwining of religion and politics continues to shape the nation's discourse

known for the issues it raises and seeks to debate. The national narrative over the last 100 years or more has been severely overloaded with religious contention. India is probably the only country in the world that got its independence with conditions in which the imperial power worked assiduously to debate/impose decisions in areas that were subjected to be tackled with the investiture of independence. The open threat and use of bloodshed in many parts of the sub-continent while sorting out such issues in the days preceding independence made the matter particularly gory. It was in many ways reminiscent of a civil war instigated for various reasons. Perhaps it will take still more time to coolly reflect on what happened, where and how, and indeed if it was at all avoidable. Interpersonal relationships, intertwined with religious overtones spilt over the streets and private homes in a matter which still makes one wonder how a noble cause of independence could so inextricably get mixed up with pre-disposed religious zeal and interpretation. Experience showed that partition did not solve the problem but only split the problem into two pieces. The two independent states of India and Pakistan are still to rise beyond the echoes of what happened. The price paid at the human level cannot be comprehended through the aid of books, cinematography, or visuals. As the generation that experiences it gradually passes away, the tremors of partition remain. This cannot be done well as a method of problem-solving for contentious issues. One wonders if the realization is sufficiently around to the effect that 'enough is enough'. The hatchet needs to be buried before the agony continues to reign with many real forms of misery. The

prove to be more than a lifetime and generational effort. However, what can be done is to create certain awareness, which helps to restore a greater sense of balance and strengthen sanity all around. Election after election and contention after contention somehow veers around to undertones of communal issues. This is avoidable if a consensus can be built up not to go public with statements and actions on issues that are essentially communal. Many countries of the Third World broke away from the yoke of imperialism through the 20th century and beyond. In many cases, there was an undertone of violence that persisted. There was violence over race, there was violence over ideology, there was violence over the protagonist of the Cold War, but nowhere in the world was the post-independence issue so intertwined as an undercurrent with communalism as in the case of the sub-continent Even a casual look at much of the media and listening to much of the media's drumming up of concerns shows how much of communication time is spent on overtones of

for some permanent therapies

or solutions. That may well



A LEGITIMATE QUESTION THAT NEEDS TO BE UNDERSTOOD IS WHETHER ANYONE **GAINING BY** BRINGING RELIGION SO WIDELY INTO THE POLITICAL PROCESSES. IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE RELIGION BE A MATTER OF FAITH MATTER OF CONTROL OVER

GOVERNANCE?

avoidable because it does not help development and it does not strengthen equity. Indians are known to be bright, intelligent, and have long tradi-tions of intellectual excellence, which many parts of the world have not only recognized but gained strength from. To put it simply, a broad question can be asked: is it possible to freeze all talk from communal concerns as a public issue and let the concerns embedded in it be tackled only at the inter-community level?

This needs to be done without blowing it up as a regional or national issue which begs support from communities that may not have even understood what was being debated. Whether Faizabad election results were determined by the nature and quantum of compensation to the communities is something on which the jury is still out. This issue needs to be understood in greater depth. However, one can avoid confanning communally backed political support.

In other words, can one simply delink religion from politics so that religion remains control of the decision-mak-

ing process?

A legitimate question that needs to be understood is whether anyone gaining by bringing religion so widely into the political processes. Is it possible to have religion be a matter of faith and politics a matter of control over governance? All political talk needs to avoid reference to religion, if for nothing better than avoiding emotiveness and irrelevant dissipation of

Political discourse can deal with economics, sociology, even history, and more, anthropology can be brought in, and so can industrialization and agriculture, but avoid drawing in religious loyalties, and emotions. Attempts to draw upon eschewed fervour with selfdefeating orientation need to be stopped. An attempt to eliminate communalized political narratives and contentions may be an option worth considering. Some nations have successfully verting these concerns into achieved this, and while they may be experiencing various forms of violence, violence stemming from religious loyalties is not their failing.

(The writer is a well-known a matter of faith and politics management consultant of deals with the struggle for international repute. The views expressed are personal)

The harsh reality of child labour in rural Bihar



subject is not just one of emo-

tions, but how it has affected the

very concept of nation-building

in many ways, big and small.

This cannot be the place to hope

Despite Government efforts, the economic realities force families to make children work, often resulting in their exploitation

Baiju (name changed), an 11-year-old boy from Telia village in Kudhni block, 22 km from Muzaffarpur in Bihar, wakes up every morning like other children. However, instead of going to school, he heads off to work as a labourer, a burden he has borne for the past three years. Baiju, who belongs to the Mahadalit community, used to attend school. Life changed after his father's death, as he was forced to drop out of school and start working to support his family. He explains that his mother's meagre income is not enough to sustain the six members of their family.

Consequently, he had to give up his education and begin working. She does not have enough money to educate her children, forcing her to send Baiju to work.

Child labour is a grave issue affecting millions of children worldwide, and in our country, it has reached alarming proportions. According to a UNICEF report based on the 2011 census, there are approximately 10.1 million child labourers in India, including 5.6 million boys and 4.5 million girls. Most child labourers can be found working in domestic services, tea shops, and brick kilns. In India, child labour is more prevalent in rural areas compared to urban ones. Children from socially and economically disadvantaged communities are often compelled to work in these areas, stripping them

of their fundamental right to

education and perpetuating the cycle of poverty. This not only obstructs their education but also hampers their overall development. Children should be in school and playing, not toiling as labourers. Pinki Devi (name changed), a 45-year-old resident of Telia village, has two children who have left school to work as labourers. She explains that her husband, a daily wage labourer, is often ill. In such a situation, it became impossible to support

children to work. Social worker Phuldev Patel points out that children from the most economically vulnerable Dalit and Mahadalit tion have reduced the rate of communities are predominantly involved in child labour. The dire economic conditions of their households compel them to abandon their education and start working. He asserts that the actual number of child labourers is significantly higher than what official statistics

reveal. The government provides free books, notebooks, uniforms, and mid-day meals under the Right to Free and Compulsory Education to encourage children to attend school. However, the harsh economic realities overshadow these provisions, pushing children into labour. He further notes that human traffickers exploit this vulnerability, selling children as labourers in other states.Local journalist Amritanj observes that, like Telia village, there are numerous remote rural areas in Muzaffarpur where children work as labourers. He notes that the government

the family with his income may not have official statistics

alone, forcing her to send her on this issue because it is carried out in a highly systematic manner. Although the strict child labour laws and the vigilance of the local administrachild labourers in recent years, it has not been entirely eradicated. Even today, children can be seen working in brick kilns, tea shops, grocery stores, construction sites, and as domestic helpers. As in previous years, this year too, the World Day Against Child Labor was observed on June 12 in India and around the world. When children in a society begin working as labourers at a young age instead of attending school, it prompts deep introspection within that nation and its society. They must confront why a child is forced to abandon books for labour. When a child's right to childhood, is denied, and they are thrust into labour, they endure physical, mental, and social exploitation, transforming their childhood into one marred by labour—an ordeal known as child labour.

expressed are personal. Charkha Features)

to the valley. Janga Bahadur Sunuwar | Jalpaiguri **DO NOT IGNORE ENGLISH**

(The author is a grassroots writer from Bihar. Views

A CALL FOR ACTION

communal concern. This is

Madam — It is disheartening to note that four army personnel sacrificed their lives fighting terrorists in Doda district, Jammu. This cowardly attack must be condemned in the strongest terms. Our intelligence sources seem unable to effectively address the challenges in Jammu & Kashmir, leading to repeated attacks on our army. Despite the brave efforts of the army in counterinsurgency operations, the situation is worsening, with increasing casualties. This raises serious questions about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's abrogation of Article 370, which was intended to bring peace

There is a clear lack of coordination between the State and Central governments, and a trust deficit between local people and the army, contributing to these escalating attacks. It is high time for Prime Minister Modi to act decisively rather than relying on empty assurances, as ground realities are more precarious than they appear. This failure is not only an intelligence issue but also deeply demoralizing for our armed forces, who are currently engaged in counterinsurgency operations while also keeping vigil over Ladakh's sovereignty. The increasing attacks are eroding the morale of the troops and causing immense grief to their families. The government must prioritize tangible actions over rhetoric to ensure the safety and security of our soldiers and restore faith among the local population.

Madam — Encouraging the use of one's mother tongue and regional languages is important, but it's equally crucial to ensure that English education is not neglected from childhood. English provides citizens, regardless of age, gender, or profession, with global opportunities in education, employment, business, and services. No state

Age-defying sportspersons Athletes like Serena Williams, Novak



f technology is rapidly transforming our lives, can we overlook the role ▲ of competitive sports? Uncertainty is the only constant in world-class sporting events. Recent years have shown that age is no barrier to success.

students. Instead, offer alternatives such as arts, computers, and English literature. This approach is especially considerate for students from families frequently relocated due to transfers, sparing them the burden of learning multiple new languages. Prioritizing scientific subjects will benefit both the nation and the world in the future. Moreover, emotional ties to language should not lead to interstate conflicts or frequent changes in the names of streets, villages, towns, cities, and states, as this results in unnecessary expenditures and administrative confusion. Language should serve as a tool for communication, fostering a civilized, scientifically advanced, and happy society characterized by excellent health, peace, prosperity, progress, and success. An inclusive and optimistic outlook, embracing the principle of "live and let live," is essential for universal development. By prioritizing practical education and unity, we can ensure a brighter future for all.

should impose any regional language on PV Srinivas Sreelekha | Secunderabad

Djokovic, MS Dhoni, Tiger Woods, Rohan Bopanna, James Anderson, and recently, Lionel Messi, continue to outperform younger competitors. Their success can be attributed to advancements in medical science, financial support, rest, temperament, a balanced diet, exercise, a positive attitude, and a relentless passion for their sport. Lionel Messi, despite participating in four major tournaments including the 2016 Copa America without victory, finally triumphed in this year's final, proving his skill and defying age. He has recreated the magic that Diego Maradona brought to soccer. We hope he continues to adapt and maintain his enthusiasm and spirit.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

SC'S BENCH FOR MONEY BILLS

Madam — It's good that the Supreme Court has accepted to form a constitutional bench to look into the controversial issue of money bills in parliament. The money bills do not need to get approval of Rajya Sabha as they may be connected to urgent financial affairs of the country. Of late, it has become a practice for the Government which doesn't have majority in Rajya Sabha to introduce and get passed some bills as financial bills in parliament in order to bypass the close vetting by Rajya Sabha. The Aadhaar Act and Prevention of Money Laundering Act have been passed in that manner, attracting criticism from many. Now the highest judiciary would step in to clear the air in this regard. The executive should respect the constitutionally mandated role of the legislature in true spirit. This move is essential for maintaining the delicate balance of power.

DVG Sankara Rao | Vizianagaram

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FIRST COLUMN

FALLOUT OF TRUMP'S ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

It could have far reaching implications for the US presidential elections and the US politics



KUMARDEEP BANARJEE

A week is a long time on the volatile chessboard of global affairs, however, the recent assassination attempt of former United States of America President Donald Trump would leave a deep impact on future courses of action. While several European leaders and some in the Middle East have been subjected to violent life-threatening attempts in the recent past, the bullet grazing past former president Trump's ears has left a shrill range of questions for world leaders. It may be too early to predict whether the assassination attempt would translate into a landslide victory for Donald Trump who is facing a rematch with current President Joe Biden in the November polls

The Democrats in the US are a divided lot, with many leaders, internally questioning President Joe Biden's pitch for a second shot to the Oval Office, given his several public gaffes related to his age. Most of the public debates in the US and several other think tank zones across the world, have been debating President Biden's mental alertness and, if elected for a second time he would be able to complete his full four-year term. Any midway change due to a severe illness, which is being anticipated, would be a dampener for the US President's bid for a second run. Much like in every significant democracy, including India, the electorate in the US is a divided lot, with a deep gorge running right through the middle of the supporters of Trump and Joe Biden. The Democrat's attack on Trump and his supporters has been on the lines similar to what the opposition parties in India rallied around, during the recently concluded parliamentary elections.

The key message to their voters is to save the country from dictatorial forces (Trump /PM Modi), who will upend the constitution under their larger-than-life cult status leaders. This created a rift in the electorate, in an already ruptured society, constantly fed with an ocean of information primarily on social media, sending conflicting versions of the same events. Politics and rhetoric apart, it would be an interesting prism to watch the social messaging playing out with Trump coming back to the battlefield (election campaigns), after, he left the stage in Pennsylvania, with an iconic raised fist, and the US flag flying in the background. The pic-



ture is likely to define the resilience of the US democracy for a long time to come. Mr Trump in his few interviews, seems to have humbled down from the life-altering event, where he almost ended up being in the coffin rather than the Oval Office. It would be worthwhile to watch out if the former President sobers down on some of his key manifesto items such as immigration and freedom to choose (including the right to possess firearms for self-protection).

Immigration would be a closely watched topic from a global perspective, including India, where the largest chunk of immigrants land on US shores through legal or illegal routes. Donald Trump's Vice President choice J D Vance has a spouse who is a PIO. His wife's parents are immigrants from Andhra Pradesh and in a way, the choice defines the pluralistic nature of American Society. It would be a long shot to assume that if Trump gets a second term, his views and policies on immigration would be sobered due to his VP. Similarly, a Trump comeback could have a farreaching impact on bilateral trade relations especially with India.

One may argue that India has bipartisan support in Washington DC on several defence and technology partnerships, carefully nurtured over a India's US relationship under a new regime.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Rising political violence and struggles in the US



The attack on Donald Trump underscores the nation's turbulent political climate raising concerns about the stability of American democracy and society.

s the United States hurtling towards an internal civil war? Alex Garland's recent film 'Civil War,' which premiered earlier this year, depicts a fictional yet chillingly plausible scenario of such a conflict. This leads us to consider whether the repercussions of USinitiated wars in recent decades, aimed at maintaining supremacy, now echo ominously at home, haunted by the spectres of those who perished globally. That is the inexorable wheel of karma. The shocking assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, thrusts this issue into stark relief. In the aftermath, numerous conspiracy theories swirled around the incident, casting a spotlight on secret agencies whose heads have publicly voiced criticism against Trump. A police sniper had photographed the shooter, Thomas Matthew Crooks, just half an hour before the 20year-old opened fire on Trump during the rally, suggesting multiple missed opportunities to prevent the attempted assassination, as reported. Despite the attack, Trump's political stature has only strengthened, evidenced by his selection of Republican Senator JD Vance as his running mate for the 2024 presidential election. Once a vocal critic of Trump, Vance now stands as a staunch ally, vigorously defending him and endorsing his policies. The incident, which reshaped Trump's political narrative—where a bullet grazed his ear—left him wounded but resolute. This assault, though shocking, accentuates a longstanding history of political violence in the United States, a phenomenon entrenched since the nation's inception. Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president, was the first to be assassinated, shot by John Wilkes Booth in 1865. Lincoln's support for Black rights during the Civil War, marked by the Emancipation Proclamation, has been cited as a motive for his assassination. Subsequent presidents, including James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy, also fell victim to such violence, with Garfield being shot in 1881, McKinley in 1901, and Kennedy in 1963. Each of these assassinations profoundly

impacted the nation and its political structure. Political violence has not been confined to presidents alone. Presidential candidates like Robert F. Kennedy and George C. Wallace were also targeted, with Kennedy being killed in 1968 and Wallace being left paralyzed in 1972. Presidents like Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan survived assassination attempts, highlighting the persistent threat of violence in American politics. The United States today exemplifies how a state structure can deteriorate when policymakers focus more on external affairs, neglecting internal issues. For instance, the fentanyl crisis devastates U.S. communities, with toddlers and infants increasingly falling victim to the potent opioid, which is 50 times stronger than heroin, according to public health experts. While adults account for the majority of fentanyl-related deaths, leads in total fentanyl deaths, with 6,473 reported in 2022, while West Virginia has



the highest death rate per capita. This is a prime example to understand how the internal structure is falling apart. This cannot be stopped by exporting ammunition stocks and advanced weaponry to Ukraine and Israel through front channels while to other proxy wars in Africa and elsewhere through back channels. In societies, the root issue often isn't just institutions but the erosion of core values. Without a cohesive value system, managing politics becomes This dilemma arises: while

progress demands new values, preserving core societal values is crucial for stability and harmony. Neglecting this balance risks societal chaos and moral crisis. The inevitable decline, akin to the setting sun, cannot be halted by force alone. The political climate in the United States reflects the consequences of its global actions, suggesting a looming downfall through unpredictable events. Trump is a product of long-standing policies that have often ignored

OF RHETORIC domestic ramifications. He represents a symptom, n cause, of the systemic issues within American politics, stemming from a history of exploiting other nations at the expense of the American public.Needless to say, engaging in political violence is fundamentally misguided and counterproductive. Americans are slowly leading into what American decision-makers have executed throughout the world in recent history at the expense of unarmed civilians. Taking someone's life, regardless of their role or perceived wrongs, is morally indefensible. Whether it's a political adversary, a troublesome neighbour who's pushed you to the edge, a stranger evoking fear, or

> indication that gunshot detectors were in use at the rally, although

such detectors can rapidly triangulate and locate a shooter. The shooter, Thomas Matthew Crooks, used a gun that was legally purchased by his father, which he had access to at a gun range the previous Friday. Questions arise about whether the gun was bought specifically for him, as Pennsylvania law allows 20-yearolds to buy guns. Reports state the shooter was identified by DNA, suggesting family members provided samples. Additionally, the reports suggested that no effort was made to obscure the gun's serial number, and the shooter had recently purchased 50 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition.

Preliminary acoustic evidence suggests the potential involvement of multiple shooters in the incident aimed at Trump. Initial gunfire originated from the shooter's position, with subsequent bursts detected from unidentified sources, as reported by news sources. Despite Secret Service snipers reportedly firing a single shot to neutralise the threat, dis- critical questions about its impact crepancies with acoustic evidence on societal development and govpersist, necessitating further scrutiny of ballistic recordings for clarity. Questions arise over security failures allowing a 20-year-old to breach measures and reach a rooftop near Trump, firing multiple shots. Thomas Matthew Crooks, identified as the primary shooter, raises speculation about a potential second shooter. Described as a loner without a social media presence, Crooks' unexpected role and the presence of explosives in his vehicle suggest possible exploitation.

Criticism of rally security focuses on inadequate building coverage, allowing the shooter an unimpeded view of Trump, and exposing significant security vulnerabilileading to further crackdowns on dissent. Historically, such violence

has only resulted in cycles of disaster, undermining the causes it purported to support. What we can see is that nihilism pervades American culture, dealing a fatal blow to its cultural and spiritual development. This decline in values undermines democracy itself. Democracy, while liberating individuals from traditional constraints, necessitates self-judgement—a task hindered by the erosion of traditional Western values. Without a genuine guiding societal value system, the state structures of any nation inevitably falter in fulfilling their role in shaping individual decisions.
The collapse of collective ideas cor-

relates closely with societal institutions and behaviours. As Wang Huning, a leading Chinese political theorist, argued in his book "America Against America," "The American spirit confronts profound challenges, compounded by the younger generation's unfamiliarity with traditional Western values. This spiritual shift raises ernance." The viability of any social system hinges not solely on legal frameworks but on collective belief in fundamental values guiding behaviour. If these values falter, the sustainability of the social order is called into question. The attempt on Trump's life demands a reevaluation of rhetoric and policies that normalise political violence. The incident calls for a reevaluation of gun laws and the broader societal acceptance of violence as a means to resolve conflicts. All sides of the political divide must recognise the danger of escalating violent rhetoric and its potential to incite further violence. This incident serves as a wake-up call to address the deeper issues within American society and politics, emphasizing the need for a shift towards reasoned discourse and humane policies. Ironically, America has been compelled to a point where it can't afford to lose Trump.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views are personal)

ACCEPTANCE OF anyone else who has crossed your path, resorting to violence only more children under 5 are either dying or ties. These shortcomings empha-VIOLENCE AS A decade by PM Modi.PM Modi is perhaps the only PM, who has worked ending up in emergency rooms after testsise systemic flaws in pre-event perpetuates harm and suffering with three US Presidents in the last decade and is likely to see one of ing positive for the drug, due to acciden-MEANS TO security protocols and the need for his former friends either Trump or Biden coming back in November. It tal ingestion or exposure at home. The without resolution. rigorous reforms. Political vio-RESOLVE However, the Trump assassination number of child overdoses has surged lence, however, has rarely solved may be uncertain times, however, the past relationships and promise attempt raises numerous unanswered questions. There is no even as overall drug overdose rates in the the issues it aims to address, often CONFLICTS for securing the future of the Indo-Pacific should be a super glue to hold country have declined recently. California creating a climate of fear and

RTI implementation faces challenges as the CIC is short of staff

THE ATTEMPT ON

TRUMP'S LIFE

REEVALUATION

AND POLICIES

VIOLENCE. THE

INCIDENT CALLS

REEVALUATION

OF GUN LAWS

POLITICAL

FOR A

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BROADER

SOCIETAL

THAT NORMALISE

DEMANDS A

Despite the formation of a new government, vacancies remain unfilled, exacerbating delays and overwhelming the few remaining commissioners

n September 13 last year, the Central Information Commission (CIC) admitted a second appeal from this columnist under Section 19 (3) of the RTI Act, 2005. The appeal, apart from seeking imposition of penalty on the CPIO, for denial of information, also contained a few relevant suggestions for better implementation of the Act. However, on November 6, Ms Punhani, Information Commissioner who dealt with cases for that particular ministry retired at the end of her tenure. On the same day Uday Mahurkar, Information Commissioner retired, whereas their colleague Suresh Chandra had retired two days earlier. Several other



PRIYADARSHI **DATTA**

Information Commissioners like Ms. Vanjana N. Sarna, Neeraj Kumar Gupta and Dr. Amita Pandove had retired earlier last year at the end of their respective tenures. Y. K. Sinha, the Chief Information Commissioner, retired on October 3 whereupon Heeralal Samariya, the Information Commissioner was elevated to the position of Chief Information Commissioner. The total strength of the

Commission plummeted to a mere three by the end of 2023, from the maximum permissible ten at the beginning of the year. Even after the formation of the new government last month, little interest has been shown in filling up the vacancies that exist.

The reduction in the strength of the Commission has led to a proportionate overload of second appeals and complaints at CIC Bhawan. The second appeal of this columnist, already pending for ten months, is likely to see an indefinite waiting period. The outcome could hardly be compared with a long wait in the judiciary. Information is fragile, and prone to obsolesce faster than justice. This is where this columnist's suggestions would have helped. In his

limited experience as an RTI activist since 2010, he has found the CPIOs (Central Public Information Officers) generally share the information dutifully. However, where they do not, the Appellate Authority, who are generally their senior officers in the department/ministry is of lit-They collude with their juniors

to suppress the information, apparently in exchange for favours/obligations in office politics. Uday Mahurkar, as Information Commissioner, reportedly disposed of 5056 RTI appeals in 2021-22, the highest since the year of enactment of the RTI Act, 2005. However, it is equally a reflection of the utter non-performance of the Appellate Authority. Had those cases

the stage of the first appeal, within the department itself, there was little need for approaching CIC with a second appeal. Information could be suppressed for a variety of reasons. In rare cases, it could be that the CPIO has committed some action in his substantive capacity (as Section Officer or Under Secretary) which he wants to be probed. In the instant case, a person has been blacklisted, on trumped-up charges, despite not having any financial dealing with the min-

The blacklisting order was signed, though with approval of competent authority, by the CPIO in his substantive capacity as Under Secretary. When asked to provide the file notes, complaints if any, rules posi-

been satisfactorily disposed at tion violated he deflected the matter saying the file was under submission (there is no such ground for denying information under the RTI Act, 2005 even if the file is submitted with the PMO or Rashtrapati Bhawan). This columnist requested the

same information after the lapse of a year (thanks to the appeal pending for months in CIC) only to find that the file was still "under submission"! The conclusions are obvious. On both occasions, the First Appellate Authority, who is an IAS officer, helped the cause of suppression rather than transparency. Under Section 20 (1) of the RTI Act, 2005 there is a provision for a penalty on the CPIO not exceeding Rs,25,000 for unjustified denial of information to the applicant. There

is, however, no penalty for the First Appellate Authority recognizably failing in his duty or acting in a mala fide manner. Endowing a member of the executive with quasi-judicial power without any scope of disciplinary proceedings is bait for misuse of power.

The CIC notice for hearing of appeal is sent only to the CPIO and not the First Appellate Authority. The fear of dressing down by the Information Commissioner, in front of the CPIO, who is a junior officer, will ensure the integrity of action on the part of the First Appellate

Authority. Disciplining the First Appellate Authority is the key to reducing the load of pendency at the Information Central Commission's desk. The gov-

ernment has recently decided to commemorate June 25 as "Samvidhan Hatya Divas", a queer-sounding name, in memory declaration of Emergency in 1975. Whereas the Emergency might

have been anti-democratic, it was in itself not unconstitutional being declared under Article 352. If the government is interested in deepening democracy in the 21st century then rhetoric like "Samvidhan Hatya Divas" or even "India Mother of Democracy" will not work if the CIC's strength is curtailed. The RTI Act, of 2005 was a major tool for transparency, accountability and governance. (The writer is an author, independent researcher and RTI activist based in New Delhi. The views expressed are personal)

LUCKNOW | FRIDAY | JULY 19, 2024

TMC, BJP spar over infiltration | West Bengal Govt sets up panel

The Trinamool Congress has strongly refuted Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's contention that the steadily changing demographic patterns in Bengal, Assam and Jharkhand could lead to their "fall" and separation by

Questioning the correctness of the statistical figures provided by Sarma particularly on Assam and Bengal TMC MP Sushmita Dev said that contrary to the Assam Chief Minister's claim that in 1950 Muslims accounted for 12 percent of population of that State it was 25 per cent by the records. Sarma said that the Muslim population had now gone up to 40 per cent in many

"A false statement has come to light from Assam CM in Jharkhand. Firstly I want to tell that according to government data in 1952, 25 per cent of the Muslim population was registered," wondering about basis on which Sarma established his argument "when there has been no census conducted since 2011," Dev who also hails



from the same region said. Sarma, during a press conference in Ranchi, said, changing demography was a big issue in Assam where the Muslim population has reached 40 per cent today. "In 1951, it was 12

per cent," he added. Dev said, "I want to remind Assam CM that the Indian Government was supposed to conduct the population census but given the COVID-19 excuse, the census to date has not taken place...then how did the 40 per cent figure come from? The TMC MP also blamed the Chief Minister for not effectively sealing the Indo-Bangladesh border of his State. Party leader Kunal Ghosh too questioned Sarma's intention in raising such issues when elections will take place in Jharkhand in a few months from now. "Such statements are

not to be taken seriously because by now they have been exposed ... the BJP has lost its communal steam which is proved by the general elections their graph will now start falling ... they are making such statements because they are not confident of winning elections normally ... they tried that technique in Bengal but Mamata Banerjee gave them a good lesson," he said. The Chief Minister had in an interview to a senior journalist of a national television

channel had earlier claimed

that the way the Muslim pop-

ulation was increasing in the

States like Assam, Bengal and

Jharkhand the Hindus could

turn into minority in those

places in a few decades from

For Bengal he said that presently the population of the State it going by the projected population growth rate by 2041 it may go beyond 36 percent ... the Hindus can be minority by that time ... and by 2051 or if not so by 2061 these States will fall." His statements were promptly lapped up by the Bengal BJP leaders who said such a situation could lead

these three States to secede

from the mainland. Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari who had to take some barbs from his own party colleagues for advising the scrapping of Minority Morcha within the State BJP --- apparently because the Muslims was not as the Muslims were not voting for the party --- came out in support of Sarma saying that the Assam Chief Minister was correct in his reading of the situ-"We have nothing against the

local Muslims who have been living in India for generations .. we are concerned about the Rohingyas who are steadily entering India through the unfenced borders of which there are about 72 in Bengal," Adhikari said holding Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the present situation.

to review new criminal laws

The implementation of the three new criminal laws replacing the older ones has opened a new battle front between the Mamata Banerjee Government and Governor CV Ananda Bose.

This after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee set up a seven-member committee to review the central laws which came into force from July 1. The new laws are Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) which have replaced the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act in that order.

Reminding that Bengal could not be allowed to turn into a "banana republic," the Governor has asked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to furnish before him a report on the objectives of the sevenmember committee to review the three new central laws.



The Chief Minister has prepared a panel of experts led by a retired High Court Judge Justice Ashim Roy and includes Law Minister Malay Ghatak and Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya apart from academicians and While an official notification

reads the committee shall have the power to engage academic experts, senior advocates, research assistants and other legal experts for seeking their views on the subject matter. It shall also have the power to carry out public consultation; the Governor reminded that "Bengal cannot be a state within a state or turned into a banana republic." Incidentally before the beginning of the new parliamentary session Banerjee had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to defer the implementation of the new laws and urged the that the issue should be discussed in the House before the laws were implemented.

Constitution provides for three Lists on which the Centre and the State can make laws. These are Central List, State List and Concurrent List. It also provides that when there is any conflict between the central and the State laws the former will prevail. However the States have the authority to amend the central laws to suit respective situations.

Some BJP MLAs keen on joining NCP (SP), claims Anil Deshmukh

PTI ■ NAGPUR

Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Thursday claimed that some BJP MLAs are keen on joining the NCP (SP).

He said the "switch" to the Sharad Pawar-led outfit has started in the form of ex-corporators, referring to the resignation of Ajit Pawar-led NCP's Pimpri-Chinchwad unit chief Ajit Gavhane and two former corporators. Gavhane had said on Wednesday that they would seek the blessing of Sharad Pawar.

Speaking to reporters after a press conference here, the senior NCP (SP) leader claimed that some MLAs from the BJP are also interested in being a part of his party as they are disappointed after not getting representation in the gov-

"MLAs from the NCP (headed by Ajit Pawar) will also return. However, Sharad Pawar will decide who will be taken into NCP (SP)," he said.

Noted cardio surgeon Valiathan passes away

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Dr Marthanda Varma Sankaran Valiathan, National Research Professor of India and well known cardiovascular surgeon with a number of national and international accolades to his credit is no more. He breathed his last late Wednesday evening. The 90-year-old doctor was ailing for sometime and was the founder chancellor of Manipal

Prof Valiathan who hailed from the Royal Family of Mavelikkara, had his medical education

Thiruvananthapuram

Government Medical College from where he had his MBBS (1951-1956), Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh and Masters Degree in Surgery from University of Liverpool. He received advanced training in surgery from John Hopkins School of Medicine, George Washington and Georgetown University Hospitals in the US.



After returning to India, he worked at PGIMER, Chandigarh when the then chief minister of Kerala C Achutha Menon requested him to set up a specialty hospital at Thiruvananthapuram for the benefit of poor and downtrodden people. Prof Valiathan is the founder of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences

Thiruvananthapuram, a multidisciplinary hospital and research center where he led a team of doctors and scientists to develop heart valves for patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases. SCTIMS reached its peak during the tenure of Prof Valiathan and established itself as an internationally reputed institute for cardio vascular treatment.

After resigning from SCTIMS. he joined as Vice-Chancellor of Manipal University where he was in service till 1999. Though he retired in 1999, Prof Valiathan continued to lead and guide research teams in bioinformatics, western medicine and the Indian system of knowledge including Ayurveda.

The professor was honored with Padma Vibhushan (2005), Padma Shri (2002), Dr B C Roy National Award, the Hunterian Professorship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Chevalier of the Order of Palmes from France, and the Dr Samuel P Asper Award from John Hopkins University. He also wrote the three volume "Legacy of Caraka, Sushrutha and Vagbhata, the Holy trinity of Ayurveda. It was Dr . Valiathan as the National Research Professor of India who played a major role in elevating Ayurveda to the inter-

Indian crew member of capsized Comoros-flagged oil tanker dies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

An Indian crew member of a Comoros-flagged oil tanker that capsized off the Oman coast has died, officials said on Thursday. On Wednesday night, the

Indian Navy said eight Indians and a Sri Lankan national were rescued by Indian warship INS Teg while carrying out a rescue operation to trace the crew members of the cargo ship. The vessel had capsized about 25 nautical miles southeast of Ras Madrakah in Oman on July 15 and search and rescue efforts are underway, the offi-

cials said. Minister of state for external affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said the body of the Indian has been retrieved. The tanker MT Falcon Prestige has a 16-member crew including 13 Indians and three Sri Lankans, according to Oman's Maritime Security Centre

Spoke to our Ambassador in Oman, Amit Narang, to get an update on the capsized vessel



MV Prestige Falcon. Relieved to know that eight Indians who were rescued by INS Teg have reached ashore and are being looked after," Singh said in a social media post.

"One Indian person's body has been retrieved. We are closely monitoring the situation and the government is ensuring all possible assistance. Thank all authorities in India and Oman involved in the process," he said.

The Indian Navy said the search and rescue operation by Indian and Omani assets is being undertaken in challenging weather conditions as the area is experiencing rough seas and strong winds.

India issues advisory after shocking Bangladesh quota protests and colleges across Bangladesh for an indefinite period on late

PNS/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/DHAKA

India on Thursday issued an Ladvisory to its nationals and students in Bangladesh, urging them to restrict movement outside their living premises. The advisory comes in the wake of the ongoing quota violence across parts of the country claiming six lives. India also issued some 24-hour emergency numbers.

"In view of the ongoing situation in Bangladesh, the Indian community members and the Indian students residing in Bangladesh are advised to avoid travel and minimise their movement outside their living premises," the advisory read. "In case of any urgency or need for assistance, please reach out to the High Commission and our Assistant High Commissions," it stated. There were approximately 7,000 Indians in Bangladesh, according to the High Commission's website.

On Wednesday, student protesters demanding reforms

in the quota system in government jobs announced plans to enforce a complete nationwide shutdown on Thursday in response to the actions of the security forces. The clashes left at least six people, including four students, dead across the country.

A key coordinator of the movement, Asif Mahmud, in a Facebook post, said all establishments, barring ospitals and emergency services, will remain closed, and only ambulance services will be permitted to operate. The movement urges students from all educational institutions to participate and calls on guardians to support their cause, a newspaper reported. Meanwhile, authorities called out the paramilitary Border Bangladesh (BGB) troops in four major cities after hundreds of policemen in riot gear fanned out in public university campuses across the The violence country. prompted the government to close all public and private universities alongside schools

Tuesday asking residential students to leave dormitories. The clashes erupted on Monday as activists of ruling Awami League's student confronted the protestors who insist the existing quota system was largely debarring the enrolment of meritorious students in government Demonstrators services. accused the ruling party's student wing, Bangladesh Chhatra League of attacking their "peaceful protests" with backing from police. Student protesters have decided to enforce a complete nationwide shutdown on Thursday.

Fifty-six per cent government jobs are reserved under the current quota system with 30 being for the descendants of the 1971 Liberation War freedom fighters, 10 per cent for backward administrative districts, 10 per cent for women, five per cent for ethnic minority groups and one per cent for the handicapped people.

Religion display on stalls on UP highways to help Kanwars...

Abhishek Singh on Monday said, "About 240 km of Kanwar Yatra route falls in the district. All the eateries, including hotels, dhabas and carts, on the route, have been asked to display the names of their proprietors or those working on these shops.

Not only from the opponents, the BJP ruled Uttar Pradesh government board so that no Kanwariya also received a drubbing from its NDA allies like Janata Dal (United) which demanded immediate withdrawal of such a discriminatory order which could cause communal

Minister and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Muslims. Congress' media Yadav said the Muzaffarnagar police's order head Pawan Khera said the asking eateries on the intention behind this is to Kanwar Yatra route to find out who is a Hindu and display their owners' names who is a Muslim.

is a "social crime" and asked Muzaffarnagar police chief the courts to take suo motu cognisance of the matter. Slamming the Uttar Pradesh police, AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi likened the move to "apartheid" in South Africa "Judenboycott" Hitler's Germany.

"As per the order of the Uttar Pradesh Police, now every food shop or cart owner will have to put his name on the buys anything from a Muslim shop by mistake," Owaisi tweeted.

Congress also slammed as "an assault on India's culture". Hitting out at the BIP-RSS, the Congress also said the intention of such an Former Uttar Pradesh Chief order was to normalise economic boycott and publicity department

Insult to India's dhoti...

national arena.

At one point Minister Suresh sought directions from the chair or the House so that all malls and clubs don't restrict entry to those who wear the "cultural attire of the state." Ashoka, responding to it, said, "ultimately the order has to be issued by whom? The government.....You are in the government, you are the Urban Development Minister, you have to issue the orders....Such incidents should not happen

When some MLAs suggested that a House committee be formed and based on its report action be taken, senior BJP MLA Suresh Kumar and Ashoka said: "several committees have been formed in the past and no action has been taken on their report so far."

Army prepares for long haul...

From Page 1

According to reports the attack took place around 2.00 a.m. The soldiers were camping inside Zadan Lower Government High School, Kashtigarh, Doda when they were targeted by the terrorists. Swift retaliation by the army troops forced the ter-

rorists to flee the area. A defence spokesperson said one of the critically injured soldiers was evacuated to Udhampur-based command hospital by an advanced light helicopter (ALH) despite challenging weather conditions. "Swift action by ALH from Air

Force Station, Udhampur saved a critically injured soldier's life in Doda (J&K). Despite challenging weather, the evacuation was successful, ensuring timely medical care at Command Hospital, Udhampur. Kudos to the team for their dedication & bravery," PRO Defence Jammu posted on X.

guarding a forward post opened fire after observing suspicious movement near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Sunderbani sector of Rajouri district late Wednesday night. The officials said the area was searched on Thursday morning but nothing linked to suspicious movement was found on the ground.

In Doda, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Doda-Kishtwar, Ramban range, Shridhar Patil told reporters in Kastigarh, "All security forces

Separately, security forces on the ground are engaged in a well-coordinated operation against terrorists with whom we had contact yesterday and today as well. The operation is under progress and we will get success soon,"

However, he refused to share more details citing the continuation of the operation.

added to the challenge as the security forces continued their manhunt for the fleeing terrorists - who are believed to be the same group that killed four army personnel.

Express coach derailment in UP leaves two...

The rescuers cordoned off the area and were seen entering the damaged coaches to ensure that no passenger was left behind. The district administration also arranged for buses to take the passengers to their respective places.

Senior railway and local officials administration reached the spot, about 150 km from Lucknow, to oversee rescue operations. Pathak said

that currently their priority is to save lives of the injured and give them the best treatment. 'Train number 15904 Chandigarh-Dibrugarh

Express that left Wednesday night from Chandigarh derailed near Gonda Junction station between Motiganj and Jhilahi railway stations at around 2:37 pm on Thursday under the jurisdiction of Eastern Railway (NER)," Sabyasachi De, Chief Relations Officer,

Northeast Frontier Railway, said.

Chief Minister Adityanath took cognisance of the incident and has directed local administration to provide assistance to the affected passengers. The Chief Minister has asked the officials to ensure proper medical treatment of the passengers injured in the accident.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said no casualties from his state were

so far reported in the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailment in Uttar

Pradesh. In the wake of the derailment, Congress demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw must take responsibility of the "massive lapses" and the Kavach anticollision system should be installed expeditiously on all

Mallikarjun Kharge said the derailment of Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express in Uttar Pradesh is yet another instance of how the Modi Government has "systematically jeopardised" rail safety. Kharge pointed out that the Commissioner of Railway

Safety has stated that the

accident was "waiting to

happen". Trinamool Congress also blamed Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for the

derailment of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express in Uttar Pradesh. While the party's Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sushmita Dev said the railways, which serves as the primary mode of travel for millions, is no longer safe, TMC Krishnanagar MP Mahua Moitra commented that the railways appeared to have entered an "emergency room" phase after 10 years of Narendra

SC directs NTA to upload NEET UG results on its portal by July 20th From Page 1 Centre-wise, what was the on the NEET-UG case the warranting the cancellation the stand of the Union and "The whole hypothesis the CH and the other page 1 the NEET-UG case the warranting the cancellation the stand of the Union and the whole hypothesis

tension.

addressed the admitted leaks at Patna and Hazaribagh and determine if the breach was widespread. He also acknowledged that students knowing their results. The student identities while displaying center-wise mark patterns to transparency and maintain integrity in the examination

Students are at a handicap because they do not know investigation is going on as of the results. We want the today. The people will students' identity to be become wise," the CJI said. masked.... but let us see, Hearing a clutch of petitions examination

From Page 1 centre-wise, what was the During the hearing, the CJI mark pattern..." the court The bench commenced the

stressed the need to crucial hearing on a batch of petitions linked to the NEET-UG 2024. It rejected the submission of the petitioners are at a disadvantage by not that they were handicapped as the CBI's status report CJI suggested masking filed in the court was not made available to them. 'This is not a sealed cover ensure procedure and we are all for transparency. What the CBI has told us, if it is revealed, probably the investigation

may get scuttled. The

Supreme Court on Thursday regarding conducting the medical exam again must have a "concrete footing" that the sanctity of the entire exam had been affected.

During the day-long hearing, the bench asked the counsel for the aspirants to establish their claim about extensive irregularities in holding the examination, including leak of question paper, warranting cancellation and a re-test.
The court asked the

petitioners to prove that the paper leak in the NEET-UG exam was systematic and affected the entire process, of the medical entrance

"We will open the case today. Lakhs of young students are waiting for this, let us hear and decide," the court said as the hearing began. "Re-examination has to be on concrete footing that the sanctity of the entire test was affected," the CJI said. The bench said the CBI is probing the paper leak.

The court said it prima facie appeared that the question paper leak was limited to Patna and Hazaribagh, and nothing of this sort can be said to have happened in Godhra in Gujarat. The court raised doubts over the NTA that the paper leak happened only about 45 minutes before the start of the exam in certain centres. The Court orally remarked that the hypotheses that the question papers were leaked, solved and given to students to memorize all within 45 minutes on the morning of the exam date, appeared to be "too far-fetched."

The CJI wondered if all the 180 questions could have been solved within 45 minutes, given that the examination started at 10.15 AM. SG replied that there were seven persons in the gang who divided the questions among themselves. person involved in holding petitioners to show that the wise.

the entire paper was solved in 45 minutes and given to students is too far-fetched," CJI remarked. Appearing for the Centre,

Solicitor General Tushar

Mehta said that while the results can be published, doing so centre-wise is riddled with severe problems. "There are coaching centres, there are several problems," Mehta told the bench also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. In Patna and Hazaribagh, the question papers allegedly got leaked, while in Godhra

there were claims that a

the test took money for paper leak was "systemic" filling up the OMR sheets of certain candidates.

Questioning the claims about leak of question paper on social media platform 'Telegram', the bench said, 'You have to bear in mind that the idea of somebody doing this was not to make a national charade. People did it for money. So, it was not to bring disrepute to the exam and somebody was doing it to make money which is Mass leakage evident. requires contacts also at that level so that you connect to all such key contacts in different cities."

The

and affected the entire examination, cancellation. During the hearing, Senior

Advocate Narendra Hooda pointed out that the number of candidates in the 550-720 range of marks has increased fivefold. In response, the CII questioned if this could indicate a paper leak, to which Hooda responded that it is a red flag and asked for further investigation.

On the issue of the ongoing probe, the bench said, "The CBI probe is on. If what the CBI has told us is revealed, it will affect the investigation bench asked the and people will become

Vance promises to fight for working-class Americans

PTI ■ MILKWAUKEE

U^S Republican vice presidential nominee J D Vance praised former president Donald Trump and promised to fight for working-class Americans "cast aside and forgotten" by the Democrats, as he made his debut at the Republican National Convention.

Vance, 39, formally accepted the Republican vice-presidential nomination on the third day of the convention on Wednesday, making him among the youngest Americans to ever fill that role.

Introducing himself to millions of Americans, the Ohio Senator channelled his humble roots in the Midwest as he assailed politicians like President Joe Biden.

Trump and his running mate Vance will challenge President Biden and his Vice-President Kamala Harris from the Democratic Party in the November 5 presidential election. Vance said for the last eight years, President Trump has given everything he has to fight for the people of our

Trump didn't need politics, but the country needed him, he

he was one of the most successful businessmen in the world. He had everything anyone could ever want in life. And yet, instead of choosing the easy path, he chose to endure abuse, slander, and persecution," he

The author of the best-selling memoir Hillbilly Elegy, about his impoverished family, said "America's ruling class" had destroyed communities like his hometown with trade agreements and foreign wars.

"From Iraq to Afghanistan, from the financial crisis to the Great Recession, from open borders to stagnating wages, the people who govern this coun-try have failed and failed again,"

Trump represents America's last best hope to restore what if lost - may never be found again, he said.

'Ĭ pledge to every American, no matter your party, I will give everything I have," Vance said. To serve you and to make this country a place where every dream vou have for vourself. your family and your country will be possible once again." He accused "career politicians" like President Biden, 81, of destroying communities like his with ill-fated trade policies



"When I was in the fourth grade, a career politician by the name of Joe Biden supported the North American Free Trade Agreement, a bad trade deal that sent countless good American manufacturing jobs to Mexico. When I was a sophomore in high school, a career politician by the name of Joe Biden gave China a sweetheart trade deal that destroyed even more good middle-class iobs. And when I was a senior in high school, Joe Biden supported the disastrous invasion of Iraq," he said.

"And at each step of the way, in small towns like mine in Ohio, or next door in Pennsylvania, or in Michigan and other states across our country, jobs were sent overseas and children were sent to war. Somehow, a real

York by the name of Donald Trump was right on all of these issues while Joe Biden was wrong. Donald Trump knew, even then, that we needed lead-ers who would put America First," he said.

Vance said Trump's vision is simple: "We won't cater to Wall Street, we'll commit to the Working man. We won't import foreign labour, we'll fight for American citizens."

The United States under the leadership of Trump will pro-tect the wages of American workers and stop the Chinese Communist Party from building their middle class on the backs of hard-working American citizens.

He said Biden and the other out-of-touch politicians in Washington gave Americans a country that was flooded with

country that was flooded with cheap Chinese goods, cheap foreign labour and deadly Chinese fentanyl. "Joe Biden screwed up, and my community paid the price," Vance alleged. Vance said never in his wildest imagination would be have believed that he would he have believed that he could be standing here tonight. Vance said the country needs Trump as the president.

"Some people tell me I've lived the American Dream, and they

Far-right Israeli min visits Jerusalem holy site

AP JERUSALEM/CAIRO

Israel's far-right national secuminister visited Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site on Thursday morning, threatening to disrupt Gaza cease-fire talks. Itamar Ben-Gvir, an ultranationalist settler leader, said he had gone up to the contested Jerusalem hilltop compound of Al Aqsa Mosque to pray for the return of the hostages?but without a reckless deal."

Ben-Gvir said he was pressuring Netanyahu not to give in to international pressure and to continue with the military campaign in Gaza.

The move threatens to disrupt sensitive talks aimed at reaching a cease-fire in the 9-monthold Israel-Hamas war. Israeli negotiators landed in Cairo on Wednesday to continue talks.

Ben-Gvir's visit also came just days before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu leaves for a trip to the United States. where he will address Congress. Ben-Gvir last visited the site in May, to protest countries unilaterally recognizing Palestinian statehood.

Jews and Muslims both claim the Jerusalem hilltop com-pound, which is considered the

holiest site for Jews. Palestinians consider the mosque a national symbol and



view such visits as provocative, though Ben-Gvir has frequently visited the site, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount, during tense periods. Tensions over the compound have fueled past rounds of violence. Meanwhile, an Israeli delegation has arrived in Egypt to

press ahead with cease-fire

talks, as Israel and Hamas consider the latest proposal.

That's according to three
Egyptian airport officials, who did not provide further details. International mediators are pushing Israel and Hamas toward a phased deal that would halt the fighting and free about 120 hostages held by the

militant group in Gaza.
Talks were rattled over the weekend when Israel said it targeted the Hamas military commander in a massive strike. His status remains unclear. Hamas' Oct. 7 attack sparked

the war when militants stormed into southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducting about 250. Since then, Israeli ground offensives and bombardments have killed more than 38,600 people in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry. It does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count. Two international courts have accused Israel of war crimes and genocide - charges Israel denies. Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people are crammed into squalid tent camps in central and southern Gaza. Israeli restrictions, fighting and the breakdown of law and order have limited humanitarian aid efforts, causing widespread hunger and sparking fears of

Jerusalem — Israel's parliament extended a temporary law which allows the country to shut down foreign media outlets they consider a threat to Israel's security. In a marathon session that lasted until early Thursday morning, the parliament gave final approval to extend the emergency law until Nov. 30.

Israeli officials used the new law on May 5 to close Qatarbased Al Jazeera within Israel, confiscating its equipment, banning its broadcasts and blocking its websites.

'Biden tests positive for COVID-19'

Milwaukee (PTI): US President Joe Biden has tested positive for COVID-19, halting his campaign at a critical juncture in the presidential election when he was facing increasing pressure about his health and concerns about his viability as a candidate. "I'm sick," Biden, 81, wrote on

X. Biden tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday, disrupting a key campaign event in Las Vegas meant to shore up support with Latino "He is vaccinated and boost-

ed and he is experiencing mild symptoms, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement. Biden has returned to his

home in Delaware where he will self-isolate and will continue to carry out all of his duties fully during that time. The White House will provide regular updates on the president's status as he continues to carry out the full duties of the office while in isolation, she

The president was scheduled to speak at the Unidos event in Las Vegas on Wednesday after-

"His symptoms remain mild, his respiratory rate is normal at 16, his temperature is normal at 97.8 and his pulse oximetry is normal at 97%.

Ursula von der **Leyen re-elected** as European **Commission pres**

AP ■ STRASBOURG

Lawmakers at the European Parliament on Thursday reelected Ursula von der Leyen to a second 5-year term as president of the European Union's executive commission, giving her a comfortable majority and heading off a possible leadership vacuum. Von der Leyen raised both fists in victory as the Parliament President Roberta Metsola read out the result at the legislature. The re-election ensures leadership continuity for the 27-nation bloc as it wrestles with crises ranging from the war in Ukraine to climate change, migration and housing shortages

A majority in the 720-seat legislature voted for the German Christian Democrat after a speech in which she pledged to be a strong leader for Europe in a time of crisis and polarization.

Von der Leyen gained 401 of the 707 votes cast. There were 284 votes against her candidacy, 15 abstentions and seven void ballots. The secret ballot came hot on the heels of strong gains by the far right in last month's election for the European Parliament. "I will never let the extreme polarisation of our societies become accepted. I will never accept that demagogues and extremists destroy our European way of life.

Violence grips Dhaka as quota clashes kill 18 more; toll 25

and foreign wars.

At least 18 more people were killed and over 2,500 injured in Bangladesh on Thursday, media reports said, as violence escalated in the capital Dhaka and elsewhere over student protests demanding quota system reform for government jobs, taking the toll to 25 since the protests erupted.

Witnesses said the protesters laid a siege on the state-run Bangladesh Television Bhaban in the Rampura area in Dhaka and damaged its front side, torched several parked vehicles while some staff including journalists were trapped inside.

University students in Dhaka and other cities have been holding rallies for more than a week protesting the system of reservation in pubsector jobs, including that for the relatives of war heroes, who fought for the country's independence from Pakistan in

"At least 18 people were killed and more than 2,500 were injured in today's nationwide clashes between protesters and law enforcers and ruling party men," newspaper The Daily Star said.

Earlier, the mass-circulation Prothom Alo newspaper



had reported, "There are reports of 11 deaths. While nine of these deaths are reported from Dhaka, one is in Savar, on the outskirts of the capital, and one in south-western Madaripur district?

Private Somoy Television channel said police continued ouse rubber bullets tear gas and sound grenades to disperse the protesters. The major clashes between protesters and police erupted in the Uttara area of the capital where several private universities are located. Authorities could not immediately confirm the identity of all but reports suggest most of the dead are assumed to be students.

Earlier, six people, most of them students, were killed on

Tuesday while another death was reported overnight, taking the total death toll to 18 since the protest started more than a week ago. However, police have not yet issued a statement on the casualties. The escalated violence prompted authorities to shut the metro rail inside the capital alongside the railway

services to and from Dhaka

since Thursday afternoon. The government ordered the shutdown of mobile internet networks to quell the demonstrators. Bangladesh police website was inaccessible while that of the ruling Awami League's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League was hacked. Authorities deployed Border Guard Bangladesh personnel across the country including the capital, to maintain law and order, the official BSS news agency reported.

Government offices and banks were open as paramili-tary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), riot police and elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) patrolled streets in Dhaka and other major cities but the attendance appeared thin because of limited public transport. Also, many offices have asked their staff to work from home.

The protesters overnight vowed to enforce a "complete shutdown" nationwide after days of their demonstrations and violent clashes and ruling Awami League-backed student activists that left at least seven people dead on Tuesday.

Earlier reports suggested that Thursday's violence escaed after the ruling party's student activists allegedly confronted the protesters on the streets with bricks and bamboo sticks. Law minister Anisul Huq, meanwhile, told a media briefing on Thursday that the government decided to sit in a dialogue with protesting students and that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had entrusted him and Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury with the task of the discussion.

Public failed by UK govt, finds damning **COVID** inquiry

London (PTI): The British public was failed by the government's planning and processes when the COVID pandemic hit the country in early 2020, a damning independent public inquiry concluded on Thursday and called for "radical reform" for future civil emergencies. In the first of nine reports to be published by the 'UK COVID-10 Inquiry,' chair Baroness Heather Hallett said the government prepared for the "wrong pandemic" and called for "radical reform" of the state of the UK's structures and procedures to prepare for future civil emergencies. The UK officially recorded more than 2,35,000 deaths involving COVID-19 up to the end of 2023 and the inquiry report finds that some of that "human cost" may have been avoided had the country been better prepared for the deadly outbreak. "Never again can a disease be allowed to lead to so many deaths and so much suffering," said Hallett.

"I have no hesitation in concluding the processes, planning and policy of the civil contingency structures across the UK failed the citizens of all four nations.

Court: Closing arguments in espionage trial of WSJ reporter will be Friday

Yekaterinburg (Russia) (AP): Closing arguments in the espionage trial of US journalist Evan Gershkovich will be held Friday, a Russian court said, as the proceedings picked up speed in a case that has seen the reporter held in pre-trial custody for over a year.

Gershkovich attended a trial

session for a second day behind closed doors on Thursday, the court said. He faces charges that he, his employer and the US government vehemently deny. Unlike previous sessions in which reporters were allowed to see Gershkovich briefly before the proceedings began, there was no access to the courtroom and he was not seen, with no explanation given. Espionage cases are typically shrouded in secre-cy.Gershkovich, 32, was arrested on March 29, 2023, while he was on a reporting trip. Authorities claimed, without offering any evidence, that he was gathering secret informa-tion for the US. The Americanborn son of immigrants from the USSR, Gershkovich is the first Western journalist arrested on espionage charges in post-Soviet Russia. The US State Department has declared him "wrongfully detained,"

thereby committing the government to assertively seek his release. Gershkovich faces up to 20 years in prison if found guilty, which is almost a certainty. Russian courts convict more than 99 per cent of defendants, and prosecutors can appeal sentences that they regard as too lenient. They even can appeal acquittals.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Wednesday at the United Nations that Moscow and Washington's intelligence services are discussing an exchange involving Gershkovich, according to Russian state news agency Tass. Russia has previously signalled the possibility of a swap, but it says a verdict would have to come first.Gershkovich's trial began June 26 in the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg after he spent about 15 months in in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo Prison. At the trial's first day, the court said it was adjourning until mid-August. But Gershkovich's lawyers asked for the second hearing to be held earlier, Russian state news agency RIA Novosti and independent news site Mediazona reported Tuesday, citing court

Starmer begins post-Brexit 'reset' with EU

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer welcomed leaders from the European Union to Oxfordshire in south-east England to initiate a "reset" with the 27-member economic bloc, which the UK is no longer a member of since a referendum in favour of leaving it in 2016. At a meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) in Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Britain's war-time prime minister Winston Churchill, Starmer sought to set a new direction for his Labour Party government's post-Brexit ties with Europe to align on issues such as illegal migration and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Distancing his new government from the previous Conservative Party policies, the Labour Leader reiterated that the "unworkable"



scheme of deporting illegal migrants to Rwanda had been "scrapped" and that the UK will never withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). "The EPC will fire the starting gun on this government's new approach to Europe, one that will not just benefit us now, but for generations to come, from dismantling the people smuggling webs traf-ficking people across Europe to

standing up to [Russian President] Putin's barbaric actions in Ukraine and destabilising activity across Europe," said Starmer. "I take a practical view of how the UK can meet this moment. I'm not driven by ideology - but by what is best for my country. So we will strengthen our existing relationships and we will build new ones. This includes resetting our relation-ship with the EU... and this summit is an opportunity to set a new path on illegal migration; to transform the way that we work together on border security and law enforcement," he said. Starmer then joined the EPC's Migration Working Group, which included leaders from Italy, Albania, Germany, Malta, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovakia. Downing Street said the government is redeploying more than 100 Home Office staff from the Migration and Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) to a new rapid returns unit to take control of the country's borders.

This will mean asylum applications from designated "safe" countries, such as India, will be speedily processed and illegal migrants returned to their country of origin.

It comes after the government announced a new Border Security Bill in Parliament on Wednesday to tackle criminal smuggling gangs giving a new Border Security Command counter-terrorism-style powers to disrupt organised immigration crime and ensure smugglers can be prosecuted for preparatory offences such as supplying materials to facilitate organised immigration crime.

"Dangerous small boat crossings are undermining our border security and putting lives at risk.

Criminal smuggling gangs are making millions out of small boat crossings. We will work right across Europe to tackle this problem at (the) source, going after those profiting from this awful trade and bringing them to justice," said UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper.

The EPC is a pan-European meeting of leaders, including the heads of the EU institutions and, for the first time at this EPC, leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have also been included.

The only European governments not invited are Russia and Belarus, related to the conflict with Ukraine, with defending democracy and energy security among the other key issues on the agenda of the day-long summit. PTI AK GRS A

Pak govt targets more social media platforms

Lahore (PTI): After successfully blocking X for over six months, the Pakistan government has targeted more social media platforms - Facebook and Instagram — and restricted their access to the people, a step seen as a plan to impose a complete ban on social media. Since Wednesday, Facebook and Instagram have been restricted in Pakistan, causing users to experience difficulties accessing the social media platforms across various internet service providers (ISPs).

Some users are also experiencing issues with other Meta-owned apps, such as WhatsApp. There has been no official word

so far from the Pakistani government regarding restrictions placed on access to Facebook and Instagram. The ban comes amid an ongoing tussle between the superior judiciary, former premier Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) and the powerful military establishment which is apparently running the government. The Punjab government led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz earlier had asked the federal government to ban all social media platforms — YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc — from 6 to 11 Muharram (July 13 to 18) in Punjab, a province of over 120 m people, to "control hate material, misin-

formation to avoid sectarian vio-

lence" during the holy month. Nayatel, a telecommunication company, said on X on Thursday: Facebook and Instagram services have been disrupted with all service providers across the country for the last two days. This blockage is in addition to the already blocked Twitter/X. We are waiting for a reply from the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority for the reasons for this blockage and when this ban will be lifted."Downdetector which tracks outages by collating status reports from several sources including users showed that user reports indicated problems in accessing Facebook.

According to NetBlocks, a global internet tracking agency, "Restrictions on Facebook are in effect on multiple providers in

Pakistan." X (formerly Twitter) has been banned in Pakistan since February 17, 2024, following outrage on the "stolen mandate" of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) backed candidates in the February 8 general election.

Pakistan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir has already declared social media a "vicious media" and underscored the need to fight against this "digital terrorism." Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar who also has the portfolio of foreign minister has also called for placing a complete ban on social media.

N Korea launches balloons likely carrying trash toward South

Seoul (AP): North Korea

resumed flying balloons likely carrying trash toward South Korea on Thursday, the South's military said, days after it vowed to respond to what it called repeated South Korean civilian leafleting campaigns in the North. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that the balloons were flying north of Seoul, which is about an hour's drive from the border, on Thursday afternoon. It warned the South Korea public to be cautious of falling objects and report to authorities if they spot balloons on the ground. Beginning in late May, North Korea has floated numerous balloons carrying wastepaper, scraps of cloth, cigarette butts and even manure toward South Korea, saying they were in response to South Korean activists sending political leaflets to the North via their own balloons. No hazardous materials were found. In response, South Korea suspended a 2018 tension-reduction deal with North Korea, resuming propaganda broadcasts briefly and frontline live-fire military drills at border areas. Earlier this week, the powerful

sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to respond to what she called new South Korean civilian leafleting activ-

NASA cancels its moon rover mission

Washington (AP): NASA has said that it is cancelling its water-seeking moon rover, citing cost overruns and launch delays.

The Viper rover was supposed to launch in late 2023 aboard a lander provided by Astrobotic Technology, but extra testing and increased costs kept delaying the mission, threatening other projects, the space agency said on Wednesday. The rover had aimed to explore the moon's south pole. About \$450 million had been spent so far on its development,



The announcement comes days before the 55th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission, which landed Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the moon on July 20, 1969. NASA said it plans to study the presence of lunar ice through other projects.
Astrobotic still plans to fly its Griffin

moon lander — minus a rover — by the end of next year. The company's first moonshot ended in failure in January with a fiery plunge over the

FTA to boost India-Russia commerce

petroleum products in imports was 88 per cent.

India exports a diverse range of products to Russia

including smartphones, shrimp, medicine, meat, tiles, coffee, parts of airplanes and helicopters,

chemicals, computers, and

"India has competitive

advantage in these

products and hence the

potential to export more to

prepare a product-level

exports," Srivastava said.

India should

to promote

fruits.

Russia.

strategy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Steps such as increasing exports, making local currency trading workable and a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union will help boost trade between India and Russia, think tank GTRI said on Thursday. India should not worry over

the trade deficit, as it is getting crude petroleum oil at cheaper than market rates from Russia and it is also cutting India's overall oil import bill, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)

Since the Ukraine war began in February 2022 and the US imposed sanctions on Russia, relationship between India and Russia has shifted significantly.

There has been a sharp increase in imports from Russia, resulting in a notable trade imbalance.

Exports during the financial year 2020-21 and 2023-24 grew by 59 per cent, while imports surged by about 8,300 per cent, the report said, adding the trade deficit rose from USD 2.8 billion before the war in 2020-21 to USD 57.2 billion at present. to Russia were 4.3 billion,



strategic procurement of billion. crude oil from Russia Share of crude oil and influenced by favourable trade terms and Russia's need to find new markets amidst Western sanctions. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Russia visit on July 8-9, India and Russia have set an ambitious bilateral trade target of USD 100 billion by 2030.

With current bilateral trade at USD 65.7 billion in 2023-24, the target seems achievable, GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. In 2023-24, India's exports

It said that the import surge while imports driven by On local currency trade, is solely due to India's crude oil stood at USD 61.4 the report said that trade

due to limited international use of the Indian rupee and Russia's reluctance to accumulate it beyond a

After the Ukraine war, the US put sanctions on Russia, not allowing it to use SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank F i n a n c i a l Telecommunication) pipeline dollar for

The key question for India is finding the best way to pay Russia the amount equal to USD 60 billion in trade deficit.

transactions.

"Local currency trading would be the best solution. To facilitate this, India needs to establish a transparent and open currency exchange. This exchange would provide clear, market-determined exchange rates between local currencies like Indian rupee and other currencies such as the Russian rouble, Malaysian ringgit, Thai baht, or Chinese yuan," it

It added that this would not only give banks a reliable reference for issuing letters of credit but also help understand businesses currency volatility better. "Countries with currency surpluses, like Russia with

cannot be settled in rupee its Indian rupee surplus from oil exports to India, could exchange their surplus for other currencies more efficiently in such a multi-currency exchange platform," it said.

It also suggested making the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) functional.

The INSTC is a 7,200-kilometer multi-modal route linking India with Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe. "When functional, it would reduce transit time between India and western Russian ports from 45 to 25 days and cut freight costs by 30 per cent compared to the Suez Canal route. INSTC, despite these advantages, has limited use due to underinvestment in infrastructure," it said. The frequent loading and

unloading of cargo along the INSTC and the involvement of sanctioned Iran also pose logistical challenges. Chabahar is a key part of this corridor. India is negotiating the 'India-Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Trade Agreement" with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Belarus. Formal talks for the

agreement have not yet

Toshiba Group to invest 10 billion Japanese yen in India to expand capacity

PTI NEW DELHI

Toshiba Group on Thursday said it will invest 10 billion Japanese yen (over Rs 500 crore) to increase the capacity of producing power transmission and distribution equipment in India.

Toshiba Transmission & Distribution Systems (India) Pvt Ltd (TTDI) will increase its capacity of manufacturing power transformers and distribution transformers by about 1.5 times compared to FY2023, over a three-year period from FY2024 to FY2026, it stated.

Toshiba Group has positioned power T&D as a focus business and will invest about JPY 10 billion (over Rs 500 crore) in TTDI to expand its capacity.

Hiroshi Furuta, Chairperson and Managing Director, TTDI, said in the statement, "Furthering our commitment to make-in-India and exportthe from-India, investment will improve efficiency, operational increase speed-to-market, and support in expanding our business in India and overseas.

With this investment, TTDI will increase its assembly and test line capacity for distribution transformers and for surge arresters during the

power transformers for the transmission grids and distribution networks.

Enhanced testing capacity for power transformers will represent a significant upgrade, specifically geared towards expanding exports as well as meeting the high demand for 400kV/765kV transformers in the Indian

Distribution transformer expansion is aimed at creating a dedicated facility for CRGO (Cold Rolled Grain Oriented) steel processing centre in order to enhance the vertical integration facility, which would help the company reduce the process lead time and enhance quality and safety, the company said. Besides, TTDI will also build

a new manufacturing facility

first half of FY24 and the products will commercially available in the market by the second half of the year. TTDI offers a range of

innovative and reliable technologies for the renewable energy sector, including photovoltaic (PV) inverters, transformers, gas-insulated switchgear (GIS), and inverter duty transformers. TTDI is also focusing on enhancement of transformers, control relay & substation automation solutions system applications in energy (renewable sector), data centre for smart cities, and

for industry segments like petro chemical plants, refineries and railway.

Cybersecurity players seek digital security push in Budget for Viksit Bharat

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With India looking to artificial intelligence rapidly, cybersecurity players expect that the upcoming Union Budget will include measures to boost safety of the country's digital space through further allocation of funds and incentives.

Innefu Labs, CEO and Co-founder Tarun Wig said the global focus on AI presents a critical juncture for India.

"The AI and ML (machine learning) models can be trained to identify and would create a win-win prevent 'zero-day' attacks. But situation. It would attract and this will require support from retain talent while enabling nurturing and retaining top innovate. This, in turn, would cyber talent, and empowering foster a digital environment training AI models for cybersecurity," Wig said. He added that while other

nations are busy building their AI infrastructure, India must prioritise on optimum use of AI which could include training AI and ML models for improving our defence and intelligence posture, and to reduce cyber crimes which are on the rise, to identify money laundering networks or using AI to take governance to the far flung villages of the country.

"Adding government support for research and development



initiatives companies in the private sector and not just academia would create a win-win advancements in AI and other emerging technologies," Wig

government announced a fund worth Rs 1 lakh crore for R&D in sunrise technologies in the interim budget for financial year 2024-25.

IIT Kanpur's Artificial Intelligence and Innovation-Entrepreneurship Driven Centre of Excellence (AIIDE-CoE) incubated Future Crime Research Foundation (FCRF), Shashank Co-Founder Shekhar said investment on cybersecurity is similar to

economies He said India faces one of the highest number of cyber attacks globally every year. require support from retain talent while enabling government (in) companies, large and small, to inpose to empower every citizen of the country, it becomes companies to invest in that can support future imperative to secure them as request the government to consider building Indian champions in the cybersecurity space to meet the aspiration of Viksit Bharat by 2047," Shekhar said. Futurex, South Asia-Vice President, Ruchin Kumar said it is important to increase funding for cybersecurity training programs to address the workforce skill gap.

achieve collaborations with educational institutions to develop specialized cybersecurity courses and certifications

fostered. recommend fund allocation specifically for protecting critical infrastructure, such as power grids, transportation networks, and healthcare systems, from cyber threats, he said.

He said that the government should also mandate and fund regular security audits and vulnerability assessments for critical infrastructure sectors. Zeron, Founder, Sanket Sarkar said the government consistently has demonstrated

commitment to this critical industry through strategic investments and supportive

policies.
"Reflecting on the past years, it's clear that our digital defenses have significantly strengthened. I am optimistic that this year budget will further amplify this focus, with substantial allocations to enhance our cybersecurity infrastructure," he said.

Sarkar said continued prioritisation of cyber resilience and innovation is crucial for defending against evolving threats and driving economic growth. "This budget will not be merely a financial planning; it'll be a bold declaration of India's intent to become a global cybersecurity leader," he said.

Markets turn negative after hitting fresh record-high levels

Equity benchmark indices turned negative soon after hitting new record-high levels in a highly volatile trade on Thursday.

The 30-share BSE Sensex opened on a weak note, but bounced back later and climbed 193.9 points to hit a new record peak of 80,910.45. However, the benchmark failed to hold on to the gains and traded 151.38 points lower at 80,550.97 at 11:22

Similarly, the NSE Nifty after a weak beginning recovered the early lost ground and Global oil benchmark Brent climbed 65.9 points to hit a fresh lifetime high of 24,678.90. The Nifty also gave up all the gains and quoted 66.35 points down at 24,546.65.

Among the Sensex pack, Adani Ports, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, NTPC, Power Grid and UltraTech Cement were the biggest laggards.

On the contrary, Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Unilever, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra and Services. State Bank of India were trading in the positive territory.



In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai were trading lower, while Hong Kong quoted higher. The US markets ended mostly

lower on Wednesday. crude climbed 0.45 per cento USD 85.45 a barrel. Institutional

Foreign (FIIs) bought Investors equities worth Rs 1,271.45 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Stock markets were closed on

Wednesday on account of Muharram.

The BSE benchmark climbed 51.69 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at a new lifetime high of 80,716.55 on Tuesday. The NSE Nifty went up by 26.30 points or 0.11 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,613.

Nokia sees double-digit fall in Q2 profit, sales in weak 5G market but sees improved 2nd half

AP HELSINKI

Wireless and fixed-network equipment VV network equipment maker Nokia Thursday reported a double-digit fall in profit and sales in the second quarter due to a continuing weak market as clients are holding off investments in 5G technology. The Espoo, Finland-based

company reported a net profit of 328 million euros (USD 359 million) for the April-June period, down 20 per cent from 409 million euros (USD 447 million) a year earlier. Net income attributable to shareholders was 325 million euros (USD 355 million), down from 410 million euros a vear earlier.

has suffered in the past year from operators cutting back on investments into 5G and other telecom technology because of economic uncertainty and high financing costs.

"Our financial performance in the second quarter continued to be impacted by the ongoing market weakness with net sales declining 18 per cent year-on-year in constant currency," Nokia CEO Pekka Lundmark said in a statement. Nokia's sales were down 18 per cent at 4.5 billion euros (USD 4.9 billion)

compared with 5.4 billion euros (USD 5.9 billion) a year earlier. The Finnish company is one

of the world's main suppliers

of 5G, the latest generation of broadband technology along with Ericsson, China's Huawei and South Korea's Samsung. Lundmark said that the company's sales Similarly to its Nordic rival improve in the second half of Ericsson of Sweden, Nokia this year, particularly in its network business unit.

"Looking forward, we believe the industry is stabilizing and given the order intake seen in recent quarters we expect a significant acceleration in net sales growth in the second half," he said.

However, in Nokia's mobile network unit, the biggest business entity during the quarter by sales, "the market dynamic remains challenging as operators continue to be cautious" of spending in 5G technology and equipment, Lundmark said.

Recycling industry body demands zero duty on aluminium scrap imports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A head of the budget, recycling industry body MRAI has urged the government to remove the import duty on aluminium scrap, saying it will help promote sustainability in the industry.

According to the Material Recycling Association of India (MRAI), the recycling process of aluminium scrap emits only 0.3 million tonnes (MT) of Co2 on per tonne of production compared to 14 tonnes of carbon emissions on the production of 1 MT of aluminium through smelters route which involves maintaining of coal-based capacities for power supply.

"Among the key challenges faced by the Indian aluminium recycling industry

is 2.5 per cent import duty on aluminium scrap. It is a key raw material for aluminium recycling and the government should make it to zero until the quality material (scrap) is available in sufficient quantity in the domestic market,"AI said in a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala

Sitharaman. Finance Minister Nirmala



Parliament on July 23. Many countries have realized the importance of scrap that it is sustainable because of

recyclable in nature. The demand driver for aluminium in the next few years is going to be substantially higher due to India's projected higher growth of GDP and ambitious infrastructure development.

The production of primary aluminium metal is also with associated large consumption of volumes of natural resources, bauxite ore and coal and the generation of large quantities

of solid wastes, it noted. "Aluminium recycling has become an important part of aluminium production in India because it is much less energy intensive than the production of primary aluminium,"AI said.

Lower per capita aluminium consumption of 2.5 kg in Sitharaman will present the India is also a challenge full Union Budget for the against a world average of 11

kg, as the recycling industry has to rely more on imports for quality aluminium scrap to meet the shortfall. "India's aluminium recycling

industry plays a pivotal role in harmonising efforts to combat climate change and bolster environmental sustainability. Recycling helps to combat the climate crisis by limiting the use of raw materials, protecting natural resources like bauxite and reducing the waste going into landfills,"AI President Sanjay

'We need to take decisive steps here when it comes to its goals towards sustainability and low carbon ecosystem. World over metal scrap, especially Aluminium is considered as the greenest raw material to be used for metal production.

Mehta said.

"Having import duties on Aluminium scrap could be retrograde and would decelerate our efforts in reaching sustainability goals," said Dhawal Shah, Senior Vice President, of AI.

The association has also sought zero duty on copper scrap and brass scrap which attract 2.5 per cent duty at present, and zinc and lead which have 5 per cent import

Sales of luxury homes up 27% to 8,500 units in 7 cities in January-June: CBRE

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sales of luxury housing units, each costing Rs 4 crore and above, rose 27 per cent to around 8,500 units during the January-June period across seven major cities on high demand, according to real estate consultant CBRE. In its report 'India Market

Monitor Q2 2024' released on Thursday, CBRE said that India's luxury housing (units priced Rs 4 crore and above) segment maintained strong sales momentum, registering a 27 per cent annual increase in January-June 2024. "Total sales of luxury units

during the January-June period stood at around 8,500 compared to about 6,700 units during the same period last year," the consultant said. Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Hyderabad emerged as prominent markets, accounting for nearly 84 per cent of the total luxury housing sales across the top

seven cities. Further, Pune

recorded a noteworthy

increase in luxury sales

activity with demand growing

nearly six-fold on an annual

basis to touch around 1,100

units. Sales in Delhi-NCR rose 14 per cent annually to 3,300 units. Mumbai saw a growth of 14 per cent to 2,500 units. Housing sales in Hyderabad stood at 1,300 units, up 44 per cent annually. Pune registered sales of 1,100

units, marking a 450 per cent vear-on-year increase during this period. In Chennai and Kolkata, sales of luxury housing units, each priced at Rs 4 crore and above, remained flat at 100

units and 200 units,

respectively.

CBRE data showed that Bengaluru did not witness any sale in this price category during the January-

June 2024 period as against 200 units in the year-ago period. Anshuman Magazine,

Chairman & CEO - India, South-East Asia, the Middle East & Africa at CBRE, said, We foresee a strong momentum in the housing market for the remainder of the year. This optimism is driven by favourable home buying sentiments, festive season promotions, and

significant land acquisitions by developers." These elements are expected

to balance supply and demand dynamics and invigorate market activity, he added.

housing luxurv The segment, particularly for properties priced at INR 4 crore and above, is set to thrive as buyers seek homes that align with their affluent lifestyles. Capital value growth in this segment is projected to stabilise, with an increasing focus on core project fundamentals such as quality, location, and access to essential infrastructure," Magazine said.

Moreover, he said the ongoing mega infrastructure projects across the country, including transportation networks, highways, airports and metro systems, are poised to bolster real estate growth.

These developments are likely to unlock new markets, establish satellite cities, and stimulate growth in peripheral areas, making luxury housing an attractive investment," Magazine said.

Ceat net profit rises 7% in Q1; revenue increases

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tyre maker Ceat on Thursday said its consolidated net profit increased by 7 per cent to Rs 154 crore in the first quarter ended June 2024.

The company had reported a net profit of Rs 144 crore in the April-June period of last fiscal. Revenue increased to Rs 3,193 crore in the first quarter as against Rs 2,935 crore in the year-ago period, Ceat Ltd said in a regulatory filing.

'We are encouraged by the strong growth we've had in the replacement and export segments across all categories during the quarter," Ceat MD & CEO Arnab Banerjee said.

Despite facing margin pressure from significant increases in raw material costs and ocean freight, the company is actively mitigating these challenges through strategic price adjustments, he added.

"Our strategic focus on premiumising passenger car tyres has begun to yield positive results. Looking ahead, we anticipate continued momentum in volume throughout Q2 and beyond," Banerjee stated.

FROM EXHAUSTION TO EXUBERANCE: SWIMMER NATARAJ EYES SEMIFINALS IN PARIS OLYMPICS

Standing on the 2023 National Games podium adorned with 10 medals, eight of them gold, ace Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj was utterly exhausted.

After all, he had been competing nonstop at major events since 2017 when he was just 16, and the relentless competitive grind, coupled with the rigours of training had finally taken a toll on his body. toll on his body.

"I just needed time off to rest because my 2023 season was crazy and so hectic with so many races. I think if I didn't take any time off, my body would have broken down by now," Nataraj told PTI in an interview.

"And it could have led to an injury or I would have lost the drive to train. My body was under so much stress. I kind of just needed a few weeks off just to let my body rest," he added.

Refreshed after the much-needed break, the 23-year-old is ready for his second Olympics, where he will compete in the 100m backstroke event. Nataraj qualified for the Paris Games via the Universality Quota, which allows countries to recommend their

allows countries to recommend their two highest-ranked swimmers for the showpiece if no one makes the cut through the regulation process. Having secured direct qualification for the previous Tokyo Olympics, the entry to the Paris Games through the Universality Quota was not ideal by Nataraj's own admission. But he has opted not to dwell on the disappointment. disappointment.

"It was annoying and disappointing that I didn't get the qualifying time because I had been training really well. But I'm not really bothered about what



happened," he asserted.

"I got the quota spot. It might be a step back, but I still got the spot. And now I can spend the coming weeks either thinking 'oh, this is not the way I wanted it'. Or I can focus on what I want to do in Paris. So, I'm taking it as motivation.

Since returning from the break, Nataraj has been training better, which resulted in two silver medals at the Mare Nostrum meet in Spain and France in

This season, the training's been so much better than last season. It's so good. I think it's all because of that break," he said.

There have been times when Natarai

has come close to a podium finish but missed out by a fraction of a second. Some other times, his best performance has not come at the right time.

"I think it just hasn't clicked on race day yet," he conceded. Nataraj has not been able to improve his best time in the 100m backstroke since

2021, when he clocked 53.77s. However, he and his coach Nihar Ameen have been able to identify where exactly the Bengaluru swimmer has been lacking.

"I think it's just race execution. I am working on having a little more speed -- front end speed and a little more natural speed so that I don't have to put in as much effort on the first 50," he

explained. He has been able to improve his first 50m and claims to have gone "fastest I've ever been" in training.
"We're doing a lot more high intensity explosive short sprints. And we're just

hoping that it converts in time and I can open the first 50 a little more effortlessly.

"I've always had good capacity in good second 50m."

Nataraj, who has a season's best of 54.68s, aims to better his personal best time which would put him in semifinal contention at the Paris Games.

"I just have a goal towards trying to get a personal best. And I think if I make a personal best, it puts me in a good spot

Odisha FC pitted against Jordan and Singapore clubs



PTI NEW DELHI

Tndian club Odisha FC were Indian club Odisha FC were drawn alongside Etihad Club (Jordan) and Lion City Sailors FC (Singapore) in Group B of the preliminary stage of the 2024-25 AFC Women's 2024-25 AFC Women's Champions League, following the draw conducted in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday. Odisha FC, the champions of the 2023-24 Indian Women's League, will travel to Jordan to

play in the preliminary stage, which will be held in a centralised league format from

August 25 to 31. Thirteen sides will contest the preliminary stage, which features four groups - one group of four teams and three groups of three. The four

group winners will qualify for the 12-team group stage, joining the other eight clubs that have qualified directly. Should Odisha FC top their preliminary stage group and qualify for the next group stage, they will be placed in Group C alongside Urawa Red Diamonds Ladies (Japan), Taichung Blue Whale Women's Football Team Football Team Women's (Chinese Taipei), and hosts Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC

The group stage comprises three groups of four teams and will also be contested in a centralised league format from October 6 to 12.

(Vietnam).

Clubs were seeded and placed in pots for the draw according to their respective member

association rankings, based on the FIFA women's world ranking (as of March 15, 2024). The top two finishers of each group and the two best third-placed sides will progress to the quarterfinals, to be played on March 22 and 23, 2025.

A knockout stage draw will be conducted prior to the quarterfinals to determine the four pairings, which will be contested in a single-leg format, with the higher-ranked team of each tie to serve as the

home side. This will be followed by a centralised finals, which will see the semi-finals and final all single-leg ties - being played out from May 21 to 24, 2025, to determine the first ever champions of the tournament.

Hockey men's

championship

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

and women's sub

junior South Zone

 $T^{\text{he second edition of }}_{\text{Hockey India's sub junior }}$ men's and women's South

Zone championship involving

six teams will be held at

Kollam in Kerala from Friday.

Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh,



F1 driver Magnussen to leave Haas at end of this season

AP ■ KANNAPOLIS (US)

Formula 1 driver Kevin Magnussen will leave Haas at the end of the season when his contract expires, the team

said on Thursday.
The 31-year-old Magnussen is competing in his seventh season with the American team, starting 135 grand prix across two spells, from 2017-20 and 2022-24.

The former McLaren and Renault driver achieved a career-high ninth in the drivers' standings for Haas in 2018. He has five points this

Haas did not say who is going to replace Magnussen. "I'm proud to have raced for

such a great team of people

these last few years," he said.
"While I'm looking forward to
the next chapter of my racing
career, I remain fully focused
on giving everything I've got for the rest of 2024."

On the eve of the Hungarian Grand Prix, team principal Ayao Komatsu said he hopes they can "find a way to keep working together in some

capacity. News of Magnussen's departure came after Oliver Bearman signed a multiyear deal with Haas from 2025 onward. The 19-year old British driver will take the seat vacated by German driver Nico Hulkenberg, who is joining Sauber at the end of the year ahead of its rebranding to Audi for 2026.

Argentina tops FIFA men's rankings as Govt hits back at critics of team's racist France song

AP BUENOS AIRES (ARGENTINA)

Argentina was confirmed as the world's No. 1 team in the FIFA men's rankings on Thursday, as the national government doubled down on defending the players who celebrated winning the Copa America by singing a racist song targeting No. 2-ranked

The fallout of the chant sung late on Sunday in Miami - which mocked the African heritage of some France players continued four days later, including a rebuke to Argentina's critics by the vice president in its far-right government. Argentina's government on Wednesday fired one of its leading sports officials who urged Lionel Messi and the president of the Argentine Footbal

Association to apologize.

The sports under-secretary, Julio Garro, spoke after FIFA said it was looking into the incident and English club Chelsea started a disciplinary process



He broadcast the footage on social my character.' media from the Argentina team bus in

Fernandez later published an apology on his Instagram account, which disappeared by Thursday, saying he was "truly sorry. That video, that moment,"

against its midfielder Enzo Fernandez. those words, do not reflect my beliefs or

However, a defiant post by the vice president of Argentina, Victoria Villarruel, on social media hit back at

a field nor for speaking a truth that nobody wants to admit," Villarruel

"Enough of pretending to be offended, hypocrites. Enzo I am with you, Messi thanks for everything! Argentines always keep your heads high! Long live Argentina!

Villarruel said Argentina's history had been forged by people of all races: "We never forced our way of life on anyone, nor will we tolerate that someone tries to do the same to us."

The song refers to France players being "all from Angola," having parents from Nigeria and Cameroon, and also includes an offensive reference to Kylian Mbappé.

One of Fernandez's French teammates at Chelsea Wesley Fofana who is Black described the video as "uninhibited racism." France players Jules Koundé and Mike Maignan also posted critical comments about the Argentina

The format of the tournament will be round-robin wherein all teams will play against each other once. The top two teams will advance to the final after the end of the first round whereas the third and

"This championship is not only about winning but also statement.

On the first day, Andhra Pradesh will take on Puducherry, Karnataka will face Telangana, while Tamil Nadu will lock horns with Kerala in the men's category. In the women's section, Telangana will compete with Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu will face Puducherry, and

After no men picked for Olympics in artistic swimming, Italy's Minisini says he's ending career

With no men picked to compete in artistic swimming at the Paris Olympics, where they are eligible for the first time, a former world champion is

former world champion is ending his career this week. At the Italian national championships, four-time worlds gold medalist Giorgio Minisini said he is competing for the last time at age 28. "Obsession is a young man's game," Minisini, who was left off the Italian Olympic team in off the Italian Olympic team in April, wrote on his Instagram

Minisini and Bill May of the United States were the two most likely Olympic pioneers aiming to be picked for Paris as the first men to compete in artistic swimming. The sport debuted at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics

synchronized swimming. However, the 96 athletes picked by 18 different nations for the Olympics were all women.

"World Aquatics is very disappointed that no male artistic swimmers have been selected for Paris 2024," the



governing body said. "This should have been a landmark moment for the sport."

The rules change by World Aquatics in December 2022 allowed up to two men to be selected in an eight-athlete

squad for the Olympic open team event. The only other medal event in Paris is women's duet.

Minisini specializes in the mixed duet event which is not yet on the Olympic program, and missed selection to the team event. May was on the U.S. Team that

won silver and bronze medals in team acrobatic routine at the past two world championships. At age 45, he did not make the Olympic team last month. "All of us in the artistic

swimming community need to work even harder to progress opportunities for male athletes in the sport," said World Aquatics, which hopes to add a mixed duet event for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Puducherry and Kerala are the six teams in men's and women's categories in the competition. fourth placed sides will battle for third-place finish.

about learning and growing as players. It provides a crucial platform for young players to showcase their skills and gain valuable experience," HI president Dilip Tirkey said in a

Kerala will Karnataka.

Even with restrictive rules, swimsuit wars heat up in an Olympic year

PTI PARIS

 $T^{\text{he iconic LZR Racer, the}}_{\text{swimsuit that Michael}}$ Phelps wore while winning eight golds medals at the Beijing Olympics, is still revered around Speedo's design center.

It serves as a reminder of just how much a suit can push a swimmer to greater heights.

"In so many ways, that was the golden era," said Coora Lavezzo, the head of innovation at Speedo's Aqualab in London. "We've got those suits upstairs, and even though I wasn't there at the time, I'm fascinated by them and just how we can get back to a smidge of that former glory." Of course, the rules these days are much more of a hindrance to swimsuit designers, the result of a wild summer 15

to 43 world records being set at the championships in Rome. The international governing body, now known as World Aquatics, decided the polyurethane suits - many of

them covering nearly the entire body - were making a mockery of the sport. So the organization hastily imposed strict new rules requiring textile fabrics and limiting the amount of body coverage from the hip to just above the knees for men, while women's racing attire cannot extend past the shoulder or cover the neck.

For coaches such as Bob Bowman, who worked with Phelps over his entire career and was on hand in Rome for a speed show that bordered on a farce, the rules are just fine the way they are.

"Everybody is on a level playing field," he said. "We're years ago in which rubberized still breaking world records in attire was all the rage, leading these suits. The sport is

moving forward.' But major swimsuit designers such as Speedo, TYR and arena are pushing for the guidelines

to be liberalized. They pump millions of dollars into the sport, and would love nothing more than to be allowed to come up with revolutionary new designs that lead to vastly improved performances. But as things stand now, their hands are largely tied. Faster times come in tiny increments.

The suits remain an important element for any swimmer's performance, but the impact is nothing like it was during the rubber era.

"I think a lot of our sport is just mental," U.S. Olympian Hunter Armstrong said. "It's just about feeling good in the

The manufacturers desperate to do more. "When the pushback came



those after world championships in Rome, (World Aquatics) freaked out and they said we need rules quickly, we need to do something," said Greg Steyger, the head of innovation and design at Italian-based arena. "Unfortunately, that was in such a hurry that those rules

are not the right rules for sure.

But they've stuck to them,

they've defended them, they've done everything to keep them." Rachel Ripley, the director of merchandising at TYR, said her company is constantly lobbying for an easing of the restrictions.

"It's been pretty status quo for 15 years," she said. "There hasn't really been much push or shake-up. It's something that I think we constantly talk

about, but it requires more than just the manufacturers to make that change happen."
Even with rules as they are, the swimsuit manufacturers say

they are still able to come up with innovative creations that can make a crucial difference in a sport where races are often decided by mere hundredths of a second.

For Speedo, the new Fastskin LZR Intent and LZR Valor suits were developed through a partnership with Lamoral, a company better known for protective coatings that are used to extend the life of satellites in outer space.

Then there's TYR's Venzo suit, which is made with a frictionless yarn that evolved from military uses, most notably in socks worn by infantry soldiers who do a lot

of marching. Not to be outdone, arena has come up with the

POWERSKIN Primo that it bills as the "world's first tensoelastic suit," made of a trademarked fabric known as Hyperforce that supposedly provides the maximum amount of body compression a key element in buoyancy but far more flexibility than

but far more flexibility than previous designs.
"You're talking about maybe a 1% difference in a race," said Olympic gold medalist Ryan Murphy, America's top men's backstroke swimmer and a longtime Speedo-endorsed athlete." A ny little thing you can athlete. "Any little thing we can get to improve times, improve body position in the water, assist your technique, you're really looking for that.

Most swimmers seem content with the state of affairs, though everyone is looking for ways to go a bit faster to gain that little

extra edge.
"The innovation should be in other areas, like maybe the starting blocks," Italian swimmer Nicolò Martinenghi said.

Sarah Sjostrom of Sweden certainly had no complaints about the polyurethane suits allowed back in 2009, which she wore while winning the 100-meter butterfly in a worldrecord time a few weeks before her 16th birthday.

But she also remembers the down side.

"The biggest stress for me back then and as well as other swimmers was like getting the suit on," Sjostrom said. "It's a lot easier nowadays to put on the suit, but they still give a good compression, which is really important to have a good feeling in the water."

She said the current guidelines also keep prices more affordable for a wider range of swimmers, though a high-tech female suit can still go for

SKY to lead India in T20s against Lanka

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $B^{ig\text{-}hitting}_{Yadav\ was\ on\ Thursday\ named} \ \ \text{captain\ of\ the\ Indian\ } T20\ team\ for$ this month's three-match series against Sri Lanka, while ODI skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli made themselves available for the 50-over rubber against the same team next

Shubman Gill has been named vicecaptain for both the formats. The team will depart early next week for the tour which will mark the beginning of new head coach Gautam Gambhir's three-year

Riyan Parag, who scored seven halfcenturies in the Vijay Hazare ODI squad.

Seasoned all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who retired from T20Is along with Rohit and Kohli after India's World Cup triumph in the Caribbean last month, did not find a place in the ODI squad.

Having shouldered the team's pacebowling responsibility for a prolonged period, lead pacer Jasprit Bumrah was rested on expected

The first T20 International will be held on July 27, followed by games on July 28 and 30. All the ties will be played at the Pallekele International

Cricket Stadium. The ODIs will be held on August 2, 4

skipper for the T20 series over Hardik Pandya, the designated vice-captain during India's title run in the

Star all-rounder Pandya is three years younger to the Mumbai swashbuckler but was not the preferred choice of both chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and Gambhir. It is learnt that the two had a word with Pandya on this issue on Tuesday and conveyed to him that a long-term option in Suryakumar was being considered. Pandya is expectedly there in the T20 squad and has opted out of ODIs due to

Trophy, and Delhi speedster Harshit Rana are the two new faces in the ODI squad.

and 7 at the R. Premadasa Stadium Previously, Suryakumar led India to a 4-1 win over Australia in a T20I Suryakumar, 33, was chosen as series last November and followed it up with a 1-1 draw in South Africa. Shreyas Iyer, despite losing his national contract for missing domestic cricket, made a comeback to the ODI squad alongside KL Rahul, who performed the dual role of keeper-batter during the 50-over World Cup last year at home.

Iyer was captain of this year's IPL champions Kolkata Knight Riders, for whom Gambhir was the team

Gambhir is taking over from Rahul Dravid, whose tenure ended last month with the World Cup triumph. Dravid declined an extension despite being persuaded by Rohit. The team is looking to build towards the 2026 T20 World Cup, which India will co-host with Sri Lanka. THE SQUADS:

T20I Squad: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Shubman Gill (VC), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh, Riyan Parag, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sanju Samson (WK), Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Khaleel Ahmed, Mohd. Siraj. ODI Squad: Rohit Sharma (C), Shubman Gill (VC), Virat Kohli, KL Rahul (WK), Rishabh Pant (WK), Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Washington Sundar, Arshdeep Singh, Riyan Parag, Axar Patel, Khaleel Ahmed, Harshit Rana.

returning to the competition for the first time since 2016,

UAE are set for their second

consecutive appearance and will be high on confidence having won more than half of

The lack of game-time will be

their matches this year.

Geoffrey Boycott undergoes successful tumour surgery

PTI ■ LONDON

 $E_{\text{Sir Geoffrey Boycott has}}^{\text{ngland cricketing great}}$ undergone a successful surgery to remove a tumour from his throat, his daughter Emma said.

The former England batter had undergone extensive chemotherapy for the same in 2002. But in May, the 83vear-old learnt his cancer had returned.

"Just to let everyone know my Father, Geoffrey, has successfully come out of surgery this evening after a 3 hour operation to remove his throat cancer.

"Yet to see him but surgeon says it went well. He asked that I post an update," Boycott's daughter Emma tweeted from the cricketer's account on Wednesday. In his illustrious career spanning 1964 to 1982, Boycott scored 100 first-class hundreds while amassing over 8,000 runs in 108 Tests at an average of

nearly 48. Former Australia player and head coach Darren Lehmann reacted to the news along with ex-England players Alan Butcher and Michael Vaughan, who posted a red heart on X.

"Thanks for the update, please pass on our thoughts to the whole family and



glad the surgery went well," Lehmann wrote, while Butcher wrote, 'Great news'. While announcing his diagnosis last month Boycott had said, "In the last few weeks, I have had an MRI Scan, CT Scan, a PET Scan, and two biopsies, and it has now been confirmed I have throat cancer and will require an operation."

"From past experience, I realize that to overcome cancer a second time I will need excellent medical treatment and quite a bit of luck, and even if the operation is successful, every cancer patient knows they have to live with the possibility of it returning. So I will just get on with it and hope for the best," he

PTI DAMBULLA They beat Bangladesh in the has encouraging. The spin attack also includes Deepti Sharma, final of the last edition in International Stadium. **¬**he Women's Asia Cup is The top two teams from the also includes Deepti Sharma, Sajeevan Sajana and the sprightly Shreyanka Patil. Even though Pakistan retained Nida Dar as skipper for the Asia Cup, the squad has undergone significant overhaul since the debacle in group will play in the semifinals. While Nepal are India's record against Pakistan

India begin Women's Asia Cup defence with clash against Pak

set for a blockbuster start when defending champions India take on arch-foes Pakistan in a primetime clash here on Friday, with the eight competing teams hoping to firm up their combinations ahead of the T20 World Cup in October. Harmanpreet Kaur's India are the team to beat going into this iteration of the Asia Cup, having won the competition three out of four times in the T20 version and each of the four times in 50-overs format. Additionally, India are also the most successful team in the Women's Asia Cup T20 with 17 wins in 20 matches.

has also been stellar in the shortest format with 11 wins against three defeats in 14 matches so far and Kaur's team will lean on it in addition to the rich form shown in recent outings to clinch the Group A clash here. While India are coming off a 1-1 draw against South Africa earlier this month with the second of the three T20Is being washed out, Pakistan will be short on game-time as well as confidence since their last outing was in England in May when the hosts blanked them 3-0. Smriti Mandhana's rich form

with the bat will be India's greatest weapon at the top of the order but the biggest gain

recent all-format outings has been the way their

bowling has shaped up, with pacers and spinners putting

on a combined show. India pacer Pooja Vastrakar's eight wickets across three outings against South Africa indicate her form but additionally, Radha Yadav's successful return to the mix of

England. Three players, Iram Javed, Omaima Sohail, Syeda Aroob Shah, who have not played any matches so far this year, were included with the

uncapped Tasmia Rubab while six others were dropped.

a concern for Nepal whose last outing was in mid February when they lost to Malaysia in the Asian Cricket Council's Women's Premier Cup. UAE were last seen in

dropped.
Also placed in Group A are
Nepal and the United Arab
Emirates who will face off action in May when they lost in the T20 World Cup Qualifier semifinal to Sri here earlier in the day at the

Mandaviya to inaugurate phase 2 of talent identification programme



Quintal becomes 1st Indian rider to compete at World Superbike

to make a historic debut at the WorldSBK SSP300 competitions and become the first Indian rider to participate in a World Superbike Championship.

Thanks to the opportunity 10 finish.
provided by the Irish team, As a rider, who took his baby
Team#109 Retro Traffic steps at 13, he was the Kawasaki and its management company Gaman Racing Global Service, Quintal's entry was accepted for the SSP event in the fourth round which begins at Most, Czech Republic on Friday. SBK, founded in 1988, is an

event for heavily modified production sports motorcycles and consists of a series of rounds held on

Spaniard Daniel Mogeda, who for this opportunity," Quintal suffered an injury after said. leading the Supersport 300 The practice sessions will be

Ouintal, a world-class rider, is Dider Kavin Quintal is all currently competing in the Europea

Championship within the FIM JuniorGP and in the Asia Road Racing Championship. In the three rounds of JuniorGP, Quintal had a top-

youngest to earn points in the Índian National events. He went on to win the Talent Cup twice, in 2021 and 2023, in

Later, after the Asia Talent Cup events, he soon blossomed into a mature rider, moving to Europe. "It is a great opportunity that I

will try to learn and enjoy at the same time. I will be able to permanent racing facilities. show my maximum level The 19-year Chennai star, together with a great team Quintal, will be filling in for that surrounds this structure. the Irish team's main rider, I would like to thank the team

class, in an unfortunate crash on Friday followed by a race that paved the way for the each on Saturday and Sunday Irish team to rope in the at Most, Czech Republic.

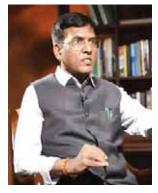
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Making use of the buzz around the upcoming Paris Olympics, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will inaugurate the second phase of the the government's ambitious Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) programme here on Friday. The first phase of KIRTI was launched by Mandaviya's predecessor in the post, Thakur,

Chandigarh on March 12. KIRTI aims to conduct 20 lakh assessments across the country throughout the year to identify promising athletes through notified Talent Assessment Centres.

A scouting and assessment programme of this scale is a first in India. KIRTI's athlete-centric

programme is conspicuous by its transparent selection methodology based on Information Technology, it



was stated in a press release. Data analytics based on Artificial Intelligence are being used to predict the sporting acumen of an aspiring athlete, the release said. In its first phase, out of 3,62,683 registrations across 70 centres, close to 51,000 assessments in 28 states and union territories have been made.

Maharashtra and Haryana, two states which have always done well in Khelo India

number of assessments - 9168 and 4820 -- respectively. Assam was third with 4703 assessments. Evaluation of aspiring athletes

has happened in 11 disciplines - archery, athletics, badminton, boxing, football, hockey, kabaddi, kho-kho, volleyball, weightlifting and wrestling. Maximum assessments have happened in athletics (13804) and football

Mandaviya will lay emphasis

on the project that aims to achieve 20 lakh assessment in the financial year 2024-25 by "onboarding all states and treating the district as a unit of assessment".

The press release said this is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "vision to take sports to every child in the country through mass participation and ultimately achieve excellence through Khelo India's structured pyramidal programmes".

We are on way to making it to next Olympics: CFI secretary general Maninder Pal Singh

PTI CHENNAI

Cycling Federation of India (CFI) secretary general Maninder Pal Singh on Thursday said the COVID-19 pandemic dashed their hopes participation at Paris Olympics but asserted they "have plans in place" for 2028 Los Angeles Games.

The country has won three medals in cycling at the Asian Games but is yet to see representation at the Olympics.

When asked about India's failure to qualify for cycling at the Paris Games, Maninder said COVID-19 affected their plans during the qualification campaign.

"Cycling is not a sport that you can equate to others when it comes to Olympic qualification. It takes two and a half years to qualify for the Games. Besides taking part in the qualifiers, one needs to



attain points from events of various classes," he told PTI in an interaction arranged by

"This year, we were hopeful of our riders qualifying. But, because of COVID, events in Asia took a hit, unlike Europe, where the riders took the required points to qualify. "Nonetheless, we are well on our way to making it to the next Olympics (in Los

Angeles). We have our plans in place and are both hopeful and confident of qualifying for the first time."

Maninder further explained the challenges faced by the sport in the country and said infrastructure has a massive role to play in preparing

cyclists.
"Cycling alone cannot thrive but it is hugely on its riders, but it is hugely dependent

infrastructure, not only the equipment but also the coaches. And, it's not easy to get since the infrastructure is very expensive.

"About 4-5 years back, there were some velodromes that were not being utilised due to some problems. While Chennai already has one, there's one coming up in Kolkata and also one in the state of Odisha. Currently, we have about 16-17 velodromes in the country." Maninder was in the city on Thursday to launch a cyclothon event, an initiative of the CFI to promote the sport in the country.

Besides the cyclothon, he affirmed that plans were in place to produce certified coaches along with some talent hunt programmes. Other than cyclothon, we have a huge programme in place for the coaches'

development.

Success-starved India held on to the 124th position in the FIFA men's rankings released on Thursday, even as reigning world champions and Copa America winners Argentina strengthened their grip at the top of the pecking order. In the FIFA rankings released in June, the Indian men's national football team dropped down three places in the list after its failure to qualify for the third round of after losses to Qatar and Afghanistan.

Since December last year, India 99, but since then it has been a

downward spiral.
In Asia, India remained on the

position, toppers Argentina consolidate position

India remain on 124th

the 2026 World Cup Qualifiers

have been sliding down. They had broken into the top 100 last year, with a best ranking of

22nd position, behind the likes of Lebanon, Palestine, and

Vietnam.

Having successfully defended their Copa América crown, Argentina (1st) tighten their grip at the top of the table. France (2nd) remained their closest challengers, after reaching the semi-finals of

EURO 2024. Newly crowned European champions Spain (3rd, up 5) have yet more reason to celebrate after themselves into the top three of the ranking, while beaten finalists England (4th, up 1) were just behind the leading

pack, having leapfrogged Brazil (5th, down 1). Belgium (6th, down 3) now find themselves outside the top five, with the Netherlands (7th) and Portugal (8th, down 2) just behind them.

Prannoy focussed on increasing speed ahead of Paris O

PTI NEW DELHI

most recent being a bout of chikungunya, but seasoned Indian badminton player H S Prannoy is unwilling to let it come in the way of a dream Olympic debut that is happening a tad late in his

He is focussed on building his stamina for the grind that awaits him in Paris later this month and helping him is his coach and former player RMV Gurusaidutt.

shuttler, a 2022 Thomas Cup title winner and a world and Games bronze-

medallist, has battled past a chronic stomach disorder, a His body has been ravaged by a spate of illnesses, the more recently a week-long bout of the mosquito-borne viral disease. "The preparations that we

started after the Australia Open, those are on point, we are on the right track," Gurusaidutt told PTI. 'The best thing about

Prannoy in this entire journey is that though he was struggling, he was showing up for training and giving his best. Of course now, since he had another rough patch, it is The 32-year-old Kerala not easy to get into the shuttler, a 2022 Thomas Cup winning momentum," he explained. But Gurusaidutt is confident



nonetheless and does not feel that the latest illness will trigger "too many changes" in Prannoy's training routine. "He has been that kind of a player who steps up on big occasions. He's done that

multiple times over the last three or four years. So, as a coach, me and Gopi sir (national coach Pullela Gopichand) have confidence in him." Following the high of his

world championship bronze in 2023, Prannoy was laid low by another stomach disorder, a condition which was similar to the chronic acid reflux problem that he had suffered in the past. Such was complexity of his illness that it was difficult for him to have a meal without wanting to throw up later.

The result was six first-round exits and a semifinal and a quarterfinal appearance this year. But he has persevered.
Gurusaidutt said the coaching team has introduced some specific drills to address the minor issues, mainly related to speed and enduring long rallies. "We wanted to introduce a few programs.

Gopi sir thought he needed to play longer matches...Based on the last 3-4 tournaments, I particularly felt people were trying to push him at the pace in terms of making him move quickly. ...There is not too much time

for him to get space between the shots. So that was something that we thought we could make it easier for him in training. Otherwise, it was about getting him confidence, and getting his fitness levels up. Those were the major aspects," he said.

Elaborating on the need to step up his pace, Gurusaidutt said, "...We wanted work on it to prepare him for somebody playing some sharp shots, and cross-courts. So, it was meant to make him feel comfortable for those things.

"So, once he picks those up, he gets into his style, that's where the game changes usually. If somebody is pushing at him constantly, once he is out of that, once he survives it then he gets into his zone again."

"Flexibility and unpre-dictability will be key" Gurusaidutt, 2014

Commonwealth Games bronze-medallist. feels Prannoy also needs to mix things up, be flexible but not predictable.

We should have a counter when someone is attacking him but also we need to make sure that he's not too defensive. He has to mix up a lot, not be predictable in one style of play."

Want to be a little pressurefree: Prannoy It will be Prannoy's maiden

Olympics and he said he wants to keep things "simple and usual" without taking unnecessary pressure. "I think everyone just wants

to talk about Paris. But I just want to be a little bit more pressure-free, kind of enjoy it a little bit more and just take it as one more tournament in my career," Prannoy had said during an earlier interview with PTI.

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