

OPINION 6

A NEW DAWN IN  
TIBETAN DIPLOMACY

WORLD 8

NORTH KOREA TEST-LAUNCHES  
TWO BALLISTIC MISSILES

MONEY 10

SENSEX, NIFTY HIT  
FRESH RECORD

RAIPUR, TUESDAY JULY 2, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR  
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADALate City Vol.13 Issue 179  
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11 SPORTS

# OPPOSITION FINDS VOICE IN PARLIAMENT

## Rahul debuts as LoP

## Government returns fire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties, led by Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha and Mallikarjun Kharge in the Rajya Sabha, fired a salvo at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in his third tenure, by "provoking" and then "prompting" the top Cabinet Ministers from the BJP, including Modi, Amit Shah, and Rajnath Singh, to respond and retort to the statements made by Congress leaders in Parliament.

Amid several rounds of interruptions, references to the Rule Books, Parliamentary conventions etc, a brief 'clash' between Speaker Om Birla and Rahul and a few Opposition leaders was also observed apparently catapulting a tough Opposition to resonate in Parliament after a hiatus of one decade.

In his maiden speech as LoP in Lok Sabha, Rahul triggered a row when he said those who call themselves Hindus are engaged in "violence and hate" round the clock.

Rahul said leaders of the ruling party are not Hindus as they engage in "violence and hate" round the clock, drawing massive protests from the Treasury Benches. He, however, hit back at



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday

saying he was speaking about the BJP and neither the ruling party nor the RSS nor Modi represents the entire Hindu society.

"It is not just one religion that talks about courage. In fact, all our religions talk about courage," Rahul said in his debut speech as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha that was watched by his mother Sonia Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from the visitors' gallery.

Holding up pictures of Lord Shiva, Guru Nanak and Jesus Christ, he referred to Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism,

Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism to underline the importance of fearlessness. As Rahul held up a picture of Lord Shiva, Speaker Om Birla reminded him that rules do not allow displaying placards in the House.

"Shivji says daro mat, daro mat, shows the abhaya mudra (the right hand held upright with the palm facing outwards), talks about ahimsa, but those who call themselves Hindus indulge in hatred, violence and untruths round the clock," Rahul said, pointing towards the BJP MPs. In his one hour 40 minutes

speech Rahul accused the BJP of launching "systematic attacks" on the Constitution and the fundamental idea of India, noting that millions of people have resisted the ideas proposed by the ruling party. Rahul also claimed that the Armed forces know that the Agniveer was Modi's brainchild, prompting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to accuse the Leader of Opposition of misleading the House. He also hit out at the Centre over the situation in Manipur, alleging that it has pushed the northeastern State into a civil war.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi termed "serious" the remarks made by Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, by calling the entire Hindu society violent and he, along with Home Minister Amit Shah and other Ministers, demanded an apology from the Congress leader. Intervening during Rahul's speech, Modi said, "This issue is very serious. Calling the entire Hindu community violent is a serious issue." Besides Modi, who intervened twice, at least five Cabinet Ministers also interjected during Rahul's speech with Shah demanding his apology for painting the Hindu community as violent.

The second intervention by Modi came when Rahul alleged that Ministers do not greet him due to the fear of Modi, the Prime Minister said democracy and the Constitution have taught him to take the Leader of Opposition seriously. Shah said the ruckus created by the Opposition cannot drown the fact that the words — "those who call themselves Hindus indulge in violence" — were used in the House.

Shah spoke of the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday

Emergency and 1984 anti-Sikhs riots to hit back at Rahul, saying he has no right to talk about non-violence when the Congress had spread "ideological terror" in the country.

Shah said Rahul insulted "crores of Hindus" by saying that Hindus commit violence, lie and spread hatred. "He should apologise for this," the Home Minister demanded.

Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw and Kiren Rijiju accused Rahul of denigrating the responsible position of the Leader of Opposition with his

"extremely irresponsible" speech in the Lok Sabha. They also accused the Congress leader of inflicting "grave insult" on the Hindus by allegedly linking them with violence and spreading untruth. Rijiju said the ruling BJP has challenged many of the claims made by Rahul in his speech in the Lok Sabha and has sought action from the Speaker.

He will have to substantiate or tender an apology, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister said slamming his allegations on Agnipath scheme and compensation

for the residents of Ayodhya during development projects there. BJP Rajya Sabha member Sudhanshu Trivedi said the Congress has a history of insulting Hindus, as he cited former home ministers P Chidambaram and Sushil Kumar Shinde's alleged terrorism barbs for the religion.

Union Health Minister and BJP president JP Nadda also lambasted Rahul, accusing him of combining lies and hatred in his speech.

"It was a worst show by Rahul on his first day. Third time fail LoP has a knack for agitated, flawed logic. His speech today has shown that neither has he understood the mandate of 2024 (his third successive loss) nor does he have any humility," Nadda said.

Slamming Rahul for his remarks, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said democracy will remain intact and there will also be peace "so long as Hindus are in majority" in the country. Union Minister Krishan Pal Gurjar flayed Rahul for his remarks and said the Leader of Opposition only made "baseless remarks" in his speech and did not give any "positive suggestion" in the House.



Hurricane Beryl, now a Category 3 storm, is threatening several Caribbean nations

## World Cup team stranded in Barbados

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Indian cricket fans might have to wait a little longer to see their T20 World Cup-winning heroes back in the country as the Rohit Sharma-led side's travel plans have been impacted by a hurricane here.

Reports said that hurricane Beryl, originating in the Atlantic, had intensified with maximum sustained winds of 210 kmph. The Category 4 hurricane was about 570km east-southeast of Barbados and there are reports that the airport in Bridgetown will shut in the evening. The Indian team was supposed to take an Emirates flight from New York via Dubai. A source told PTI that the plan now is to fly the team back to India on a charter flight. "The team was supposed to leave from here (Bridgetown) to New York and then reach India via Dubai. But now the plan is to get a charter flight straight from here to Delhi."

A meeting with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also being considered," a source said. The Indian contingent, including support staff, families, and officials, consists of about 70 members.

India had ended their 11-year wait for an ICC trophy on Saturday, overcoming South Africa by seven runs in a thrilling contest to win the T20 World Cup for the second time.

## Home Minister Amit Shah allays fears

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As the new criminal laws came into force on Monday amid apprehensions, Home Minister Amit Shah allayed fears regarding them asserting that the new laws have ended the era of British laws in India, converting the criminal justice system into 'completely Swadeshi'.

The new law prioritises the provisions of justice in contrast to the colonial-era law that focused primarily on penal action, the Home Minister claimed.

"Instead of 'dand', it is now 'nyay'; instead of delay, there will be speedy trial and speedy justice. Earlier, only the rights of the police were protected but now, rights of victims and complainants will be protected too," Shah said. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) came into effect on Monday. The new laws have replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively.

Addressing a Press conference in the Parliament premises, Shah said, "First of all, I would like to congratulate the people of the country that about 77 years after Independence, our criminal justice system is becoming completely 'Swadeshi'.

"This will function on Indian

ethos. After 75 years, these laws were contemplated upon and as these laws have gone into effect from today, colonial laws stand scrapped, and laws made in the Indian Parliament are being brought into practice," he said.

The Home Minister said justice would be delivered up to the level of the Supreme Court in all cases within three years of the registration of an FIR under the new criminal laws.

"The new laws brought in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summons served through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes," he said.

He said the new statutes were made more sensitive by adding a chapter on crimes against children and women and the inquiry report in such cases were to be filed within seven days. Shah said, according to the new laws, judgment in criminal cases had to be delivered within 45 days of completion of trial and charges must be framed within 60 days of first hearing.

The Home Minister said the laws would be applicable to cases occurring on or after July 1, 2024. Shah said the first case under the new laws was about a motorcycle theft registered in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior at 10



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament session, in New Delhi, on Monday

minutes past midnight.

He also said the police dismissed the case filed against a street vendor for selling water and tobacco products from a cart that allegedly obstructed a public way in central Delhi's Kamala Market after an investigation. Setting aside apprehensions regarding the new criminal laws, Shah said that new laws do not give more powers to police and remand period will remain only 15 days.

"In the first-60 day period, police can take custody for 15 days any time," he said, adding that in the next 3/4 years, the entire system would get an uplift. Shah also said the issue of bringing sexual crimes against men will be discussed since a Supreme Court verdict has mentioned this. On terrorism, Shah said it has been defined separately in the BNS "as we have a zero-terror policy".

"There are some instances," he recalled, "where conspiracies are hatched outside the country as was a bomb blast which occurred when he was Gujarat Home Minister. All conspirators walked free as terror was not defined."

Shah also rejected amid protests Opposition's criticism that the new criminal laws were a "cut, copy, paste" job and were rushed through without adequate discussion or debate.

He said misinformation was being spread in this regard. "We have been consulting on the new laws for four years. I have attended 118 consultative meetings. And in Parliament, there was a 9.29-hour debate in the Lok Sabha, 6.7-hour in Rajya Sabha on the new laws...34 members in Lok Sabha and 26 in Rajya Sabha participated [in the debate]," Shah said.

The Home Minister said organised crime, acts of terrorism and mob lynching had been defined, sedition was replaced with treason and video recording of all search and seizures made mandatory. "A new provision has been added for the cases where physical relations have been established after giving false promise of marriage and statement of rape victims will be recorded by a woman police officer in presence of her guardian," he said.

## NEET toppers tally down

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency announced the revised rank list for the medical entrance exam NEET-UG on Monday.

The revised list was announced after a retest was conducted for candidates who were earlier awarded grace marks to compensate for loss of time as the exam on May 5 started late at six centres.

For the retest conducted at seven centres on June 23 following a Supreme Court order, 48 per cent of the 1,563 candidates did not appear. NTA officials reported that 813 of the 1,563 candidates appeared for the retest while the others opted for the marks without the grace.

Centre-wise, Chandigarh — which had just two candidates — registered zero attendance. The under-scanner Jhajjar centre registered 58 per cent attendance, with 287 of the 494 candidates taking the retest.

Allegations arose that the grace marks inflated scores, leading to six candidates from a single Haryana centre achieving a perfect 720, along with 61 others. Consequently, the top court ordered the cancellation of the grace marks and provided an option for a retest.

"At least 52 per cent — 813 out of 1,563 candidates — appeared for the retest. No candidates appeared in Chandigarh while the numbers were 291 from Chhattisgarh, one from Gujarat, 287 from Haryana, and 234 from Meghalaya," a senior NTA official earlier said.

The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) was held on May 5 across 4,750 centres, with approximately 24 lakh candidates appearing for it. Initially expected on June 14, the results were announced on June 4 due to early completion of answer sheet evaluations.

## Delhi IGI canopy fall impacts 22,000 fliers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Days after the canopy collapse at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), the Ministry of Civil Aviation shared data saying the incident impacted more than 22,000 passengers of IndiGo and SpiceJet.

Around 21,690 passengers of IndiGo and around 925 passengers of SpiceJet were affected.

The Ministry said IndiGo airline provided alternate flights to 12,194 passengers while refunded airfare to 9,431 passengers. SpiceJet

provided alternate arrangements to 250 passengers. Terminal 1 was used for domestic flight operations by IndiGo and SpiceJet.

Sources said 72 flights of IndiGo have been shifted from T1 to T2 and T3, and 17 flights to T3, adding that all the flights are operational. The expanded T1, which had its capacity increased to handle 40 million passengers from the earlier 17 million, is yet to become fully operational.

According to the sources, it might be a few months before operations resume at T1. Union Minister of Civil

Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu on Monday visited the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) and held a meeting with senior officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, BCAS, DIAL, and airline operators where he took stock of the operations. The meeting focused on reviewing current operations and passenger handling following the transition of flights from Terminal 1 to Terminals 2 and 3.

According to the Ministry, a comprehensive assessment was conducted, involving



Restoration and relief work underway at the Terminal-1 of the IGI Airport where a canopy collapsed amid heavy rain in New Delhi

detailed discussions on ensuring smooth functioning and deploying additional manpower to manage

increased passenger flow. Minister Naidu advised all stakeholders to maintain rigorous standards to ensure

seamless operations and prioritise passenger safety. All flights from T1 have been shifted to Terminal 2 (T2) and Terminal 3 (T3), and all of them were being operated. As per an update provided by the ministry on Monday, the war rooms to help passengers have been activated and close coordination between DIAL and airlines is being facilitated. "All SpiceJet flights to/from Delhi from 1st July till 7th July, 24 will operate from Terminal 3, Delhi Airport. Necessary information has been communicated to all the passengers on their registered contact details (SMS/Email),"

the airline said in a post on X on Sunday. According to officials, structural engineers from IIT Delhi, engaged by the Civil Aviation Ministry, are expected to complete an independent assessment of the roof collapse at Delhi airport's T1 in a month's time. After a thorough assessment of the findings and taking into consideration other aspects, decision will be taken on restarting operations at the terminal. On June 28, a canopy at the old departure forecourt of T1 partially collapsed amid heavy rains resulting in the

death of a person and injuries to at least six people. Following the incident, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said structural engineers from IIT Delhi have been asked to immediately assess the partial collapse of the canopy. The official said the ministry was engaging structural engineers from IIT Delhi to do an independent assessment of roof collapse incident at T1 and they were expected to complete the assessment in one month. After the findings come in, a decision will be taken about recommencing operations at T1, the official added.



# New criminal law: Street vendor booked in first FIR

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the three criminal laws came into force on Monday, Delhi Police registered its first FIR under provisions of the new criminal code Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against a street vendor for allegedly obstructing a public way in central Delhi's Kamala Market.

Addressing a press conference, Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated the Delhi's case was not the first FIR registered in the country. He said the first case under the new laws was about a motorcycle theft registered in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior at 10 minutes past midnight. He also said the Delhi Police "dismissed" the case filed against a street vendor after an investigation. "By using the provisions of review, police have dismissed this case," he told the media.

The BNS, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively.



Ranjan Dimri

Delhi Police sources said that they will initiate the process of cancelling the FIR registered against the street vendor and will have to inform the court for formally cancelling the FIR. The FIR was registered under Section 285 of the BNS which states, "Whoever, by doing any act, or by omitting to take order with any property in his possession or under his charge, causes danger, obstruction or injury to any person in any public way or public line of navigation, shall be punished with fine which may extend to Rs 5,000."

Police said 23-year-old Pankaj Kumar, a native of Patna, was found selling water, bidi and

cigarettes from a cart under a foot overbridge near the New Delhi railway station around 12:15 am. While the patrol officer asked Kumar to move his makeshift cart away from the path as it was hindering people's movement, he ignored the officer's instructions following which a case was registered at 1:30 am. The officer also asked four-five passersby to become witnesses but they refused, the FIR stated. The patrol officer used the e-Pramaan app to record the seizures made. The app, handled by the Delhi Police's Crime Branch, will directly feed the content to police records for further investiga-

tion. In north east Delhi, the first FIR was registered at the Seelampur police station, under clause 109 (1), over a gun firing incident that led to the injury of a 30 year old e-rickshaw driver. According to the clause 109 (1), "Whoever does any act with such intention or knowledge, and under such circumstances that, if he by that act caused death, he would be guilty of murder, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine; and if hurt is caused to any person by such act, the offender shall be liable either to imprisonment for life, or to such punishment as is hereinbefore mentioned." In east Delhi district, the first case was registered under section 303 (2) of BNS in Shahdara over theft of a mobile phone by an auto driver who forcibly stole it from his passenger and fled away. According to officials, two cases under the BNS were also registered in Delhi's Outer district including one regarding an accident in Nihal Vihar and an encroachment case in Mangol Puri.

The Delhi Police has imparted training to its 30,000 personnel, from the ranks of assistant sub-inspectors and inspectors to assistant commissioners and deputy commissioners, who are responsible for registering FIRs and conducting investigations. The force was among the first in the country to start training personnel on the new criminal laws, the officials said. Meanwhile, Delhi Police chief Sanjay Arora said the force has started registering FIRs under the three new laws. He told reporters during the Delhi Police's Commissionerate Day celebrations at Kingsway Camp that the force was fortunate the new laws came into force on this day. "We are fortunate as today is our Commissionerate Day and, on the same day, these laws are being implemented," Arora said.

The Noida Police on Monday registered its first FIR under provisions of the new criminal code BNS for cheating and forgery, and arrested five people in connection with the case. The case was lodged at Surajpur police station under the Central Noida police zone, a police spokesperson said.

# IMD predicts overcast skies, heavy rainfall in coming days

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted overcast skies and heavy rainfall in the coming days. An 'orange' alert has been issued, signaling significant rainfall that could lead to localized flooding and disruptions.

"Moderate to heavy rainfall is likely till Wednesday. From Thursday until Saturday, we will again see a reduction in rain intensity," the IMD said. Rainfall is expected to drop the maximum temperature by around 7-8°C during this period. Safdarjung, representative of Delhi's weather, recorded zero rainfall in the last 24 hours till 8:30 am on Monday. Though forecasts of moderate to heavy rain were in place for Sunday, weather experts said the monsoon trough did not move towards Delhi, instead keeping humidity high. As per the IMD, the temperature was 35 degree C but the feel like index was recorded at 46.1 degree C while humidity stood at 62 per cent. The IMD has clarified that the recent heavy rainfall in Delhi,



which caused significant disruptions, was not due to a cloudburst but was close to one. The IMD's Chief, Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, provided insights into the weather patterns that led to the intense rainfall on June 28. This activity was supported by thermodynamic instability in the atmosphere, which is favourable for thunderstorms. The Safdarjung Observatory recorded 228.1 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Friday, more than three times the June rainfall average of 74.1 mm and the highest for the month in 88 years - since 1936. A cloudburst typically involves rainfall of over 100 mm in an hour within a localized area. The IMD classifies rainfall as 'light' when it is between 2.5mm and 15.5mm; as 'moderate' when it is between 15.6mm and 64.4mm; as 'heavy' when it is between 64.5mm and 115.5mm and as 'very heavy' when over 115.5mm in a 24-hour window. Regarding other States, the IMD forecast isolated heavy rainfall very likely over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana-Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, East Rajasthan, West Madhya Pradesh during Monday to Friday.

# Atishi directs officials to tackle overflow of Central Delhi's drain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi PWD Minister Atishi on Monday directed officials to find solutions for addressing the overflow of a drain, which runs through central Delhi, during heavy rainfall days after the rain on Friday wreaked havoc and created flood like situation in the national capital.

The drain overflowed following a record-breaking rainfall of 228 mm on June 28, causing waterlogging in nearby areas. Atishi inspected the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) drain number 12 at ITO along with Mayor Shelly Oberoi, Chief Secretary and other senior officials including, and senior officials from MCD, PWD, Urban Development, and Flood and Irrigation Control Departments.

"The water of central Delhi goes to Yamuna from drain No 12



Ranjan Dimri

near ITO. When Delhi received 228 mm of rainfall on June 28, the drain overflowed and caused waterlogging in the surrounding areas," the senior AAP leader said in a post in Hindi on X (formerly Twitter). "Today, I along with Mayor @OberoiShelly and senior officials, inspected this drain and gave instructions for finding short- and long-term solutions to stop the overflow," she

added. During the inspection, Atishi instructed the officials to find short-term solutions to prevent MCD drain number 12 from overflowing in the upcoming rainy season. She directed them to find a permanent solution to prevent the drain from overflowing so that the waterlogging problem does not arise in future and people do not have to face problems.

# AAP Government responsible for flooding in city, says BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Monday held the Arvind Kejriwal led AAP government responsible for creating flood like situation in the national Capital, calling it 'incompetent'.

Hitting at the Delhi government over the water logging situation in the city, he said, "Delhi has 287 identified dangerous waterlogging spots, and on Friday, more than 250 of these locations had non-functional pumps." He added that on the day Delhi received a record-breaking rainfall of 228 mm, over 400 out of the total 696 permanent water drainage pumps installed by the Public Works Department (PWD) in the city were. "According to our information, more than 100 pumps were non-functional because they did not have



diesel," Sachdeva said. Additionally, he said, "465 pumps are installed in Delhi by the Delhi Jal Board, the Flood Department, and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and most of these are still not working. Proof of this is that two days after the flooding, Minister Atishi herself visited the pumping station at Minto Road Bridge, and even then, three out of

eight pumps were not operational." "At the Bharti Nagar Pumping Station, the pumps of the Public Works Department of the Delhi government were found to be non-functional on Friday, and the situation has not improved satisfactorily," the Delhi BJP Chief claimed while mentioning that every year during the monsoon, around 1300 additional tem-

porary water drainage pumps are rented and installed, but this year not a single one has been installed. He claimed that the Kejriwal government's argument, that the necessary tender could not be issued due to the election code of conduct, is false. "However, the truth is that the government, engrossed in securing the Chief Minister's bail and fighting elections, did not pay attention to this essential task," he said. "Renting additional water drainage pumps for the monsoon is an annual public interest task, and if the Arvind Kejriwal government, intoxicated by power, had written a letter to the Election Commission seeking special permission, it would have certainly been granted, but they did not consider it necessary," he alleged.

The Delhi BJP President said that the excuse of not being able to install additional water

drainage pumps due to the election code of conduct is weak, as the code ended on June 5. "The Public Works Minister Atishi could have tendered on June 6 or 7 and installed additional pumps by June 20," he said. Sachdeva challenged Atishi to disclose how many permanent and temporary water drainage pumps are needed during the monsoon and how many are currently operational. He said, "The drowning of 11 people in the capital city is shameful. The BJP demands that the Delhi government provide one crore rupees in compensation to the bereaved families of these helpless individuals." Sachdeva demanded compensation from the Delhi government and the MCD "for the damage caused to traders of wholesale markets in Old Delhi, as well as to ground floor and basement homes and offices throughout the city."

# 1,100 trees felled in Ridge: Probe committee already formed, says official

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after a three-member fact-finding committee of Delhi Ministers was constituted over the felling of 1,100 trees in the Ridge area, Principal Secretary of Delhi government's Environment and Forest department AK Singh claimed that the committee consists of only political executives and an independent committee consisting of Officers of the Forest Survey of India and other impartial experts has already been formed.

"In this regard, it is informed that vide Order dated May 15, Supreme Court of India has already constituted an independent fact-finding committee consisting of Officers of the Forest Survey of India and other impartial experts. The said Committee has also been given the liberty to inspect and collect all required information pertaining to the case being



examined by the Apex Court," Singh said. He added that the committee has furnished preliminary report before the court and said, "Therefore, constituting another committee (in the name of fact finding) when the Apex Court is already in

seize of the matter, is not only improper but may also invite contempt of the court for interfering in the judicial process of fact finding." Singh said that the Minister In-charge of the Forest and Environment Department Gopal Rai is primarily responsible for disposal of business of that department.

"If a committee is required to be constituted to inquire on the initiative of the Department, the same requires approval of the Council of Ministers," he said. "Further, the constitution of the fact finding committee is a departure from the general practice and procedure of the CiNCT. The undersigned / Principal Secretary (Environment & Forest) is being asked to report to the Minister of Urban Development, whereas there are no orders by the Chief Minister to that effect," he said while adding that Gopal Rai is not even a member of the committee. He also alleged that the committee is nothing but a "Group of Ministers" which has not been constituted by the Council of Ministers to conduct the exercise as desired in the minutes of the meeting on Saturday and meeting notice on Sunday. "The said fact-finding com-

mittee has been constituted under the signatures of Saurabh Bharadwaj without any due authority or sanction from the Council of Ministers," he said. Further, he claimed, "Gopal Rai is the Minister In-charge (Environment & Forest), however he is neither disposing such business of fact finding in terms of Rule 4(2) of the ToBR 1993 nor any approval of the Council has been obtained for the purpose of constitution of the Committee of Ministers in light of provisions of Rule of ToBR 1993 read with clause 13 of Schedule to the Transaction of Business Rules (ToBR) 1993." Hence, the constitution of the fact-finding committee to inquire into the cutting of trees in Southern Ridge by the DDA, without obtaining approval of the Council of Ministers, is a violation of the provisions of the business rules, he added.

# NIA consent for Rashid Engineer to take oath as LS member on July 25

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) gave consent for jailed Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, known as Engineer Rashid, to take oath as a Lok Sabha member on July 25, ahead of the Delhi court's order on Tuesday. Additional sessions judge Chander Jit Singh will pass an order on the plea on Tuesday. Rashid could not take oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24 despite his name being called as he has been lodged in jail since 2019 after being charged by the NIA in a terror-funding case. The NIA's counsel said Rashid's oath taking should be subject to some conditions like not speaking to the media. He also said Rashid, who is in Tihar Jail, must complete the process within a day. Everything within a day. Rashid, an Independent MP



from Baramulla who has been arrested in a 2017 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case, had moved the court seeking interim bail, or custody parole in the alternative, to take oath and perform his parliamentary functions. On June 22, a special court here had adjourned the matter and asked the NIA to file its response. The agency has been consulting with Parliament and jail authorities on the matter. While Rashid's counsel had cited AAP leader Sanjay Singh

being granted custody parole to take oath as a Rajya Sabha MP, the court noted that Rashid's charges were different. This session of Parliament is scheduled to end on July 3. Procedures allow MPs to take oath in the speaker's chamber even when Parliament is not in session. Rashid has been in custody since August 2019 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for his alleged involvement in the terror funding case. His name surfaced during the probe of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was arrested for allegedly financing terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir Valley. The NIA had earlier filed a chargesheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed, and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin in connection with the case.

# Rajiv Dhankher appointed DMRC's new director of projects and planning

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has appointed Rajiv Dhankher, an Indian Railways Service of Engineers (IRSE) officer, as its new director of projects and planning, officials said on Monday.

Dhankher, an IRSE officer of the 1992 batch, has three decades of experience in projects, planning and execution at numerous key positions, they said. He earned his bachelor's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Kharagpur and master's degree from IIT Delhi. Dhankher also holds a post-graduate diploma in management from Gurugram and an LLB from Delhi University, the officials said.



Before taking up this role in the DMRC, he was the DRM in the Ajmer division of Indian Railways. During his tenure, the Udaipur-Himmat Nagar railway section was commissioned. He has also worked as a chief project

manager in the NCRTC for the Sahibabad-Ghaziabad-Duhai priority section, they said. Dhankher was also involved in the commissioning of the Jammu-Udhampur Rail Link Project, the officials added.

# Implementation of three new criminal laws revolutionary step of Govt: GGSIPU VC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With three new criminal laws implemented from Monday, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University Vice Chancellor of the University Mahesh Verma here called it a revolutionary step of the government. He also said these three laws have evolved the judicial system from colonial era to match the requirements of adhunika Bharat. He added that these will help in building a meaningful, empathetic and just society. The Vice Chancellor made these assertions in a panel discussion organized by Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University's School of Law and Legal Studies on the three new laws. He also said there is a need to make the people aware about these laws and also train those who will implement them. He enumerated the various activities being



planned by the University to play a key role in this area. The Vice Chancellor added that in these new laws, the word 'Nyay' has been used in place of 'Dand' and community work has also been included as a punishment for minor crimes. He concluded by saying that this

is an unprecedented change in the Indian judicial system, which will benefit every section of the society. Former District & Sessions Judge H.S. Sharma said the most important thing about the changes made in these laws is that maximum attention has been given to those

who seek justice. Full provision has been made to ensure that their plea is heard carefully at every level. Special Secretary of National Security Council Secretariat Praveen Sinha said the changes made in these laws are quite progressive and are focused on the interests of the citizens. Their benefits will be reflected in the near future. He said many old provisions have been removed and new provisions have been added in view of the requirements of our contemporary society. He also said among these changes, special care has been taken to ensure that the dignity of women and the rights of children are upheld. Former Judge of Delhi High Court, Justice Talwant Singh said a lot of emphasis has been laid on digital evidence in the new laws. This will increase digital intervention in the judicial process and the demand for forensic science professionals

will increase. He also said by setting a time limit for the judicial process, legal benefits will reach a greater number of people. Former judge of Delhi High Court, Justice M.L. Mehta said it is inappropriate to oppose these new laws without reading and understanding them properly. The changes brought in these laws have been made keeping in mind the interests of the people. He said that the new changes will speed up the judicial process and increase access of justice to the common man. Dean of University School of Law and Legal Studies Professor Queeny Pradhan said about 800 students and staff participated in this discussion. Nodal officer of the program Dr. Upma Gautam said many such programs will be organized by the University in the future to increase awareness about the new laws.



# Enactment of new criminal laws to end colonial statutes: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Unveiling a booklet detailing the enactment of three new criminal laws, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Monday said they aimed at replacing colonial-era statutes with modern legal frameworks. Citing the new laws, the Chief Minister said: "This change reflects the strong will of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah." Sai praised the officials of the Home Department, stating: "You all have made excellent efforts in terms of awareness and training. These laws have been replaced by old laws to provide justice to all



citizens. Officials should ensure their effective implementation in the state." He said the new laws enacted have prioritized justice over punishment. "These laws will prove to be a significant step towards fulfilling the Indian government's guarantee of justice and security," he said. From July 1, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), passed in Parliament in December, replaced the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860, the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 respectively.

# Bastar's Kosa silk is gaining fame abroad: Ramvichar Netam



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Minister Ramvichar Netam said on Monday that Bastar's Kosa silk was gaining fame abroad due to its unique features. He said this while inaugurating a Kosa Kendra

Retail Showroom in Nava Raipur. "The unique biogeographical diversity of Bastar has a special contribution to Kosa's continuously rising demand." He praised the efforts of farmers, NGOs and government agencies engaged in manufacturing silk clothes.

**"The unique biogeographical diversity of Bastar has a special contribution to Kosa's continuously rising demand"**

Tribal Development Secretary Narendra Dugga said the goal of promoting the silk centre was to train tribal youths in skills related to Kosa production. "Bastar's art will also be promoted through this initiative," he said.

# IADVL hosts programmes to mark mid-year conference

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHILAI

The mid-year conference of the Chhattisgarh unit of the Indian Association of Dermatology Venereology and Leprology (IADVL) in Bhilai hosted various programmes to mark the occasion. The conference, MIDCUTICON CG 2024, was held at Hotel Grand Dhillon in Bhilai on Sunday. Faculties from across the country presented and shared their insights about innovative techniques and medications



used to enhance practice. A quiz was conducted for all post graduate residents of Chhattisgarh. The winning team was AIIMS, Raipur, and the runner up was Pt Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Raipur.

# Minister for pre-audit of expenses in urban bodies

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao has called for pre-audit of the income and expenditure of all 184 urban bodies. To ensure compliance with rules, files will be scanned by a CA firm. Along with the pre-audit of the current financial year, there will also be a similar scrutiny of the last four years. Along with urban bodies, the Mechanical Cell of the

Urban Administration and Development Department and the State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) will also be audited. Sao said that all the files after the discontinuation of audit work by the previous government will be post-audited after the appointment of a new CA firm. The internal audit conducted earlier helped a lot in implementing strict financial discipline, resulting in direct and indirect savings of more than Rs 100 crore.



# Edu basic mantra for progress: CM

CM reviews works of school education department



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Monday stressed the need to impart quality education in schools and said education was the basic mantra for progress. He told officials to formulate a policy for training the faculties for school education for ensuring the quality studies. The Chief Minister, while reviewing the work of the school education department, also underlined the need to constantly

monitor schools by officials including the District Collector. Calling for completing the pending renovation works in school buildings, Sai also ordered a probe into renovation works done in the past. With the onset of monsoon, he called for planting saplings by school children under the drive "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam". The plantation should essentially be done in the schools which are encircled with boundary walls and it must be ensured that the school students themselves protect the plant sown by them, he said.

# Centre supports promoting maize, soybean in C'garh

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR/NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday pledged his full support for Chhattisgarh's promotion of the maize and soybean crops. In a meeting in New Delhi with Chhattisgarh Agriculture Minister Ramvichar Netam, he said that there were ample opportunities to promote them. The central and state governments will continue to collaborate to avoid complications for farmers, he said. Chouhan approved the proposal to expand maize and horticulture areas in the state.



Promoting pulses, oilseeds and horticulture crops was prioritised. Netam briefed him about the availability, storage and distribution of fertilisers and seeds along with various state welfare schemes being operated to benefit farmers. Officials were told to overcome the shortage of DAP fertiliser.

# No rule of law in C'garh: Congress



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Congress chief Deepak Bajj said on Monday that there was no rule of law and order under the BJP, which claims to be a party giving out good governance. Speaking to the media here, he criticised the government for launching an investigation into the Arang mob lynching as culpable homicide instead of murder. The citizens are living in a state of fear, and crime against women has increased uncontrollably, he said. The tribal community is unsafe although the chief minister is a tribal, he said, referring to the murder of a tribal youth in Raipur.

# Use of AI for self-prescription poses risk to human life, warn doctors

AGENCIES ■

Use of Artificial Intelligence (IA) for self-diagnosis and prescription poses significant risk to human life, warn healthcare professionals. On Doctors' Day, they voiced concern over the growing trend of patients depending on Internet search results even for serious ailments. They believe that while there are many advantages of using the Internet, there are no less problems impacting everyday lives because of it. Ease in life and potential risks, both multiplied over the last couple of years, if not more, with the entry of AI and Machine Learning (ML), which are fast overtaking our lives, say doctors. According to them, the Internet has emerged as a primary source of health information, fuelling a rise in unsupervised self-medication practices. AI has introduced a new facet to this trend, which poses significant risks to human life. Engaging in such unchecked behaviour presents grave threats and may result in fatal consequences if incorrect medications are consumed due to misjudgement. Potential dangers of self-medication include inaccurate self-diagnosis and the misuse of medications, leading to potentially hazardous drug interactions or incorrect dosages, they said. AI works based on data input, and in healthcare data has to be accurate to the last

decimal to ensure perfect diagnosis of the ailment to provide best medication or treatment. Hundred per cent accuracy is certainly not possible when it comes to providing data by non-healthcare practitioners. "The Internet, especially AI, is developed and dominated by the western world, especially the US. Basic information available on AI platforms could be those associated with the geography and demography of the West. "Such information may or may not be suitable to people in India, because the information available will only be to the closest and not the most accurate," Dr. Gayatri Kamineni, COO, Kamineni Hospitals told IANS. "Dosages matter to ensure best treatment for any ailment, and if that input is wrongly provided, the result could be disastrous, even leading to fatalities in certain cases. "The Internet in general and AI in particular must be seen as a support function and not as a judgment to trust blindly," she said. Dr B Kishore Reddy, Chief Ortho Oncologist and Managing Director, Amor Hospital believes that when someone takes medication without consulting a doctor or medical professional, he might be choosing the wrong drug. "Additionally, self-medication increases your risk of taking an incorrect dose or using drugs for longer than necessary. And if you take a substance

for a prolonged period, your body may become dependent and need this substance to continue functioning correctly. "Sometimes patients may feel some short-term relief and may think taking medication to alleviate symptoms is beneficial. But there is a likely possibility that such medication could mask symptoms of an underlying medical condition, and if proper medical guidance is not sought, that underlying condition could worsen and become dangerous over time. "Misusing or overusing medication can also increase the risk of severe medical complications, causing harmful symptoms, including nausea, convulsions and even death. "Internet, especially Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning have eased the lives of healthcare practitioners. We have access to the most advanced treatment protocols, and due to the ease in communication, the risk of making mistakes has reduced a great deal in a hospital setting. "However, this advancement is controlled and monitored by experts who have decades of experience in providing best care. It is the combination of experience, expertise, and Internet, which delivers the best outcome for patients. "Depending on the Internet alone, without the experience and the expertise is not advisable at all," observed Dr. C. Mallikarjuna, Chief Urologist and Managing Director, Asian Institute of Nephrology & Urology (AINU).

**SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**  
**PROFORMA - 10-01**  
 Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated in RSD UP CHORD Line, New Shunting neck including 2 nos. Cross Overs for energization of 25,000 Volts, 50 HZ, A.C. OHE of Raipur division of S.E.C. Railway after the date specified against all times and no un-authorized person shall approach works in the proximity of the Over Head line.

Section	Division	Date
Energization of 25,000 Volts, 50 HZ, A.C. OHE at RSD UP CHORD Line, new shunting neck including 2 nos. Cross Overs of Raipur division of S.E.C. Railway	Raipur Division	02.07.2024

**PROFORMA - 10-02**  
**INTRODUCTION OF AC 25KV A.C. TRACTION (WARNING TO ROAD USERS)**  
 It is notified for information of the Public that in connection with introduction of 25 KV A.C. Electric Traction over the 'Energization of OHE work of 25,000 KV, 50 HZ, A.C. OHE at RSD UP CHORD Line, new shunting neck including 2 nos. Cross Overs at RVH Yard between location RSD UC1/21-RSD UC1/23 of RVH Yard of Raipur Division of S.E.C. Railway, height gauges have been erected at all the road crossings with clear height of 4.78 Meter above road level with a view of preventing loads of excessive height gauges under any circumstances.

The following of a load of excessive height of as follows:  
 • Danger to the height gauges and consequent obstruction to the road as well as the Railway line.  
 • Danger to the materials or equipment carried on the vehicle itself.  
 • Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the conductors.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)  
 South East Central Railway, Raipur

PRR/TRD/FL/64  
 South East Central Railway @secrail

**NAME CHANGE**

It is informed to general public that I, Akshay Jain S/o Shrimandar das jain resident of B-123, S.R.C.P. Township, village Bharuwadih, Distt: Baloda Bazar, PIN 493332 have changed my old name AKSHAY JAIN S/o Shrimandar das jain. So in future I should be recognized by my new name that is AKSHYA JAIN S/o Shrimandar das Jain in all government and other documents.

**AKSHYA JAIN**  
 HOUSE NO: B 123,  
 S.R.C.P. TOWNSHIP  
 VILLAGE:  
 BAHRUWADIH  
 DISTT: BALODA  
 BAZAR  
 PIN: 493332 (C.G.)

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, जल संसाधन संभाग कोटा जिला-बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)

स. क्र.	निविदा सूचना क्र.	सिस्टम नंबर	निविदा प्रारंभ होने का दिनांक	निविदा खुलने का दिनांक	कार्य का नाम	राशि (लाख में)
1	01/SAC/2024-25 DATE 28.06.2024	155505	05.07.2024 17.31	16.07.2024 11.30	अरपा बैराड़ा बैराड़ा परियोजना के शीर्ष कार्य सील में आर.डी. 0.00 मी से आर.डी. 2500.00 मी. तक पहुंच मार्ग का निर्माण कार्य। (तृतीय आमंत्रण)	203.73
2	02/SAC/2024-25 DATE 26.06.2024	155506	05.07.2024 17.31	16.07.2024 11.30	दवनपुर जलाशय योजना का जीर्णोद्धार एवं नहर मरम्मत कार्य। (तृतीय आमंत्रण)	217.17

अन्य विवरण एवं विस्तृत निविदा छत्तीसगढ़ शासन की ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट वेब साइट <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर निविदा प्रारंभ होने के दिनांक पर समय 17.31 बजे से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं।

कार्यपालन अभियंता  
 जल संसाधन संभाग कोटा  
 जिला- बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)

G-242500720/4

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# BJP, INDIA Bloc spar over new laws

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As the new criminal laws came into force from Monday, the BJP said they are a symbol of India's progress and resilience. The Congress, however, accused the government of getting them "forcibly" passed in Parliament after suspending 146 MPs and asserted that going forward, the INDIA bloc will not allow such "bulldozer justice" to prevail in the country's parliamentary system.

Defending the new laws, BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said here they are a symbol of India's progress and resilience, positioning the country for a more just and secure future.

Responding to a question in a press conference, he said the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Indian Evidence Act, originating from 1860 and 1872, respectively, were outdated and ill-equipped to address contemporary issues.

"Today is a historic day in the annals of our free country, India. An evolving society needs laws that cater to its needs and demands, protecting its rights," he said.

Highlighting the comprehensive nature of the new legislation, he underscored several key changes. "In the earlier laws, terrorism had no definition, making it difficult for the prosecution and the police to file charges or prove a case. The new laws have defined terrorism," Bhatia said. This clarity, he said will strengthen India's resolve to eradicate terrorism.



Bhatia also emphasised the inclusion of mob lynching as a specific offence with the potential for death penalty. He also pointed out the special focus on the rights of women and children.

"There is a separate chapter for crimes against women and children, ensuring specificity and deterring criminals from committing these crimes," the BJP spokesperson said.

The new laws also aim to expedite the delivery of justice, he added. "A judgment, if reserved in criminal cases, has to be delivered within 45 days," Bhatia said. He pointed out that this provision addresses delays caused by judicial retirements and reconstitution of benches, ensuring timely justice for all. Addressing broader societal implications, Bhatia said the

new laws are symbolic of the fact that a new, resilient India is ready to embrace laws duly enacted by our legislators. He positioned this legal transformation as part of a larger narrative of national progress and modernisation.

Hitting out at the opposition, Bhatia said, "I am sure they have not even read the three laws, just like they hold the Constitution in their hand but don't care to read it." He asserted that the entire nation has come forward to embrace and welcome the new criminal laws.

Criticising the laws, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge said in a social media post "After the political and moral shock in the elections, Modi ji and the BJP are pretending to respect the Constitution, but

the truth is that the three laws of the criminal justice system which are being implemented from today, were passed forcibly after suspension of 146 MPs."

"INDIA will no longer allow this 'bulldozer justice' to prevail in the parliamentary system," he asserted. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also took a swipe at the government after the first FIR was lodged under the new laws.

"The first FIR has already been filed under Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita 2023. It is by Delhi Police against a street vendor for obstruction, after he was earning his daily livelihood under a foot-over bridge of New Delhi Railway Station," Ramesh said. Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram also slammed

the government as the new criminal laws came into effect and said it was another case of "bulldozing" existing laws and replacing them with three new bills without adequate discussion and debate.

In a social media post, Chidambaram said, "90-99 per cent of the so-called new laws are a cut, copy and paste job. A task that could have been completed with a few amendments to the existing three laws has been turned into a wasteful exercise."

"Yes, there are a few improvements in the new laws and we have welcomed them. They could have been introduced as amendments. On the other hand, there are several retrograde provisions. Some changes are prima facie unconstitutional," he said.

MPs, who were members of the standing committee, pored over the provisions and wrote detailed dissent notes to the three bills, the senior leader said.

Chidambaram added the government did not rebut or answer any of the criticisms in the dissent notes and there was no worthwhile debate in Parliament. "Law scholars, bar associations, judges and lawyers have in numerous articles and seminars pointed out the grave deficiencies in the three new laws. No one in government has cared to answer the questions," he said.

"It is another case of bulldozing three existing laws and replace them with three new Bills without adequate discussion and debate," Chidambaram said.

The initial impact will be to throw the administration of criminal justice into disarray, he said. "In the medium term, numerous challenges to the laws will be instituted in various courts. In the long term, further changes must be made to the three laws to bring them in conformity with the Constitution and the modern principles of criminal jurisprudence," Chidambaram said.

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said the Congress' concern was that the bills were passed without discussion. "Something as important and as far reaching as this. Many of us had called for an overhaul of the IPC but we wanted a discussion and the discussion never took place and that is something very regrettable in a democracy like ours," he told reporters outside Parliament.

Congress MP Manish Tewari hit out at the government over the issue, saying these three new criminal laws are pernicious in nature and draconian in their implementation.

"They will throw a spanner in the works of the Indian criminal justice system. From today, two parallel systems will be in play. All those cases registered before June 30, 2024, midnight will be prosecuted under the old system and those cases registered after June 30, 2024, midnight will be prosecuted under the new system," he said.

"There are 3.4 crore pending cases and a bulk of them are criminal cases. So, there is going to be utter confusion," he said.

# Opp MPs protest in Lok Sabha, allege misuse of agencies by Centre



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Several INDIA Bloc MPs staged a protest in Parliament premises on Monday against the alleged misuse of probe agencies by the government to "target" Opposition leaders.

Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and several leaders of the INDIA Bloc, including those from the TMC and AAP, participated in the protest on the steps leading to the Makar Dwar in Parliament.

The Opposition leaders carried placards which read "stop misusing agencies to silence Opposition" and "BJP mein jao bhrashtachar ka licence pao (Join the BJP and get a licence for corruption)". AAP MP Raghav Chadha held a poster that showed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal standing behind bars.

Opposition MPs raised slogans demanding release of three arrested ministers in West Bengal, and stopping

"misuse" of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, and against former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren. "The whole INDIA bloc is united against the misuse of central agencies against opposition leaders," Congress leader Rajeev Shukla said.

The Opposition protest comes days after a court here sent Kejriwal to judicial custody till July 12 in a corruption case related to the alleged excise scam.

He was formally arrested by the CBI last week. Previously, he was arrested by the ED in a money-laundering case linked to the policy. He was recently granted bail by a trial court that was stayed by Delhi High Court.

Hemant Soren was released on Friday after the state High Court granted him bail in a money laundering case, observing that he was not guilty, and there was no likelihood of the petitioner committing an offence on bail.

# Modi praises healthcare heroes on Doctor's Day



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of Doctor's Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said his government is fully committed to improving the health infrastructure in India and ensuring doctors get the widespread respect they deserve.

July 1 is observed as the National Doctor's Day to commemorate Bidhan Chandra Roy, a renowned doctor who served as West Bengal Chief Minister too, and whose birth and death anniversary falls on this day.

In a social media post, Modi said, "Greetings on #Doctors Day. This is a day to honour the incredible dedication and compassion of our healthcare heroes.

They can navigate the most challenging complexities with remarkable skill."

"Our Government is fully committed to improving the health infrastructure in India and ensuring doctors get the widespread respect they deserve," he said.

In social media post, the prime minister hailed chartered accountants for their "vital role" in shaping the country's economic landscape.

"Happy Chartered Accountants Day! CAs play a vital role in shaping our economic landscape. Their expertise and strategic insights are beneficial for businesses and individuals alike," Modi said.

"They also contribute significantly to economic growth and stability. They are equally integral to our financial well-being," he said.

# Kharge seeks scrapping of Agniveer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Constitution and people of India are supreme and the Modi government has failed to implement various policies on ground and instead indulge in speeches, Leader of Opposition and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge said on Monday. He also demanded scrapping of Agniveer scheme. In its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections 2024, the Congress has promised to scrap this new recruitment scheme and return to the older one where soldiers were recruited for 16 years of service.

Kharge also said the recent Lok Sabha elections was the first one to make the Constitution an issue. "Elections can only be conducted when there's a Constitution. Some people object to anyone even talking about the Constitution, but are okay with making it a poll issue," he said.

"And today, when we talk about democracy, there are provisions in the constitution like Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Chairman, Deputy Chairman, but leaving that post vacant for five years, is this a democratic way?" Kharge asked in the Rajya Sabha.

"The Opposition was sidelined, while the post of the deputy speaker has been lying vacant (for the past five years)." Participating in the discussion



in the Upper House on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address, he also said the third term of the NDA has seen examination paper leaks, terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, train accident, airport canopy collapse, bridge cave-ins and toll tax hike.

Taking potshots at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that last 10 years of his rule was just a trailer and 'picture abhi baaki hai', (last ten years was just a trailer, the real picture is yet to come) and said "How the PM's picture would be, we have been able to imagine in the last one month," Kharge quipped.

Listing out many recent incidents, Kharge pointed out that there have been examination paper leaks, cancellation of many examinations, train accident, three terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, leakages

in Ram temple, collapse of canopy at three airports, increase in toll taxes and depreciation of rupee.

Kharge said the future of 30 lakh students has been affected due to recent paper leaks. "If this keeps happening, students will stop their study," he said. In the last seven years, there have been paper leaks 70 times, Kharge claimed adding that this has affected future of 2 crore students.

Leader of opposition further said the government was not doing anything on this matter and blames opposition parties for raising the issue in Parliament.

He asked the government to improve the examination system in the country. Expressing dismay at President's address to the joint sitting of Parliament last week, he said the speech did not make

any mention of the Manipur situation.

Kharge said the Prime Minister did not visit Manipur, which has been burning since the last one year. He also said the Prime Minister visited nearly 14 countries and gave several speeches during the poll campaign but did not visit Manipur. Congress President said there was no vision or direction in the President's address to Parliament and attacked the ruling party for only giving slogans and not doing development works.

Kharge said the President's speech has also "ignored" the challenges faced by the country and tried to hide the government's failure.

He said there was no mention about the poor, dalits and minorities in the President's address. Targeting Prime Minister Modi, he said opposition parties talk about the plight of common man, while Modi was only doing 'Mann Ki Baat'.

Kharge said Modi is an expert in only giving slogans. Charging the Prime Minister with trying to divide the society through his speeches during polls, he said no prime minister has done this before. Kharge also attacked the ruling benches for not taking along opposition parties.

He charged that many elected governments of opposition parties, including in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, were dislodged while chief ministers have been jailed and said this is against "democracy and the Constitution".

"This year, the President's first address was in January and the second in June. The first address was for elections and the second was a copy of it. There was nothing for Dalits, minority sections and the backward classes in her address.

There was neither vision nor direction in the President's address. Like the last time, it was just about full of words of appreciation for the government," Kharge said.

He also appealed to Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar to put back statues of Mahatma Gandhi, BR Ambedkar and that of other leaders at their original places in Parliament complex.

# Lt Gen Raja Subramani takes over as Vice Army Chief



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani on Monday here assumed the appointment of the Vice Chief of Army Staff. The General Officer was tentatively the appointment of General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Command based at Lucknow.

He was commissioned into the Garhwal Rifles in December 1985. He has graduated from the prestigious National Defence Academy (NDA) and Indian Military Academy (IMA). He is an alumnus of Joint Services Command Staff College, Bracknell (UK), and National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi.

He holds a Master of Arts Degree from King's College London and an M Phil in Defence Studies from Madras University.

He has in his illustrious career spanning over 37 years served across a wide spectrum of conflict and terrain profiles and has tenanted a host of Command, Staff and Instructional appointments. The General Officer has insightful knowledge and a deep understanding of operational dynamics on both the Western and Northern Borders.

Lt Gen Subramani has the distinction of commanding a battalion during 'Operation Rhino' in Assam, an infantry brigade along the international boundary with Pakistan and a 'Black Cat' division in North East India.

He also commanded Uttar Bharat Area in 2020 and the premier Kharga Corps at Ambala. Lt Gen Subramani also held a number of key positions including that of a brigade major of a mountain brigade, assistant military secretary in the Military Secretary Branch, Colonel General Staff at headquarters Eastern Command, deputy director general of Military Intelligence in the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence and Brigadier General Staff in Eastern Command.

# MEA: 2,639 Indian fishermen repatriated from Pakistan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Pakistan on Monday exchanged the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said and added that 2,639 Indian fishermen and 71 civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014 as a result of New Delhi's sustained efforts.

Under the provisions of the bilateral Agreement on Consular Access 2008, such lists are exchanged every year on January 1 and July 1, the MEA said in a statement.

"India and Pakistan today exchanged, through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody," it said.

India has shared the names of 366 civilian prisoners and 86 fishermen in its custody who are Pakistani or are believed-to-be-Pakistani. Similarly,



Pakistan has shared the names of 43 civilian prisoners and 211 fishermen in its custody who are Indian or are believed-to-be-Indian, the MEA added. The government of India has called for "early release and repatriation" of civilian prisoners and fishermen along with their boats and missing Indian defence personnel from Pakistan's custody, the ministry said.

"Pakistan has been asked to expedite the release and repatriation of 185 Indian fishermen and civilian prisoners, who have completed their sentence.

In addition, Pakistan has been asked to provide immediate consular access to the 47 civilian prisoners and fishermen in Pakistan's custody, who are believed-to-be-Indian and have not been provided consular access so far," the statement said. Pakistan has been requested to ensure the safety, security and

welfare of all Indian and believed-to-be-Indian civilian prisoners and fishermen, pending their release and repatriation to India, it said.

The MEA said India remains committed to addressing on priority all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners and fishermen in each other's country.

"In this context, India has urged Pakistan to expedite the nationality verification process of 75 believed-to-be-Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen in India's custody, whose repatriation is pending for want of nationality confirmation from Pakistan," the statement said.

"As a result of sustained efforts by the government, 2,639 Indian fishermen and 71 Indian civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014. This includes 478 Indian fishermen and 13 Indian civilian prisoners who have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2023 till date," it added.

# Doctors turn junkyard into fun spot for kids with chronic diseases

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an initiative that goes beyond medical treatment, a team of doctors has turned a once desolate junkyard in their hospital into a vibrant space filled with fun and frolics for young patients battling paediatric cancer and chronic illness like neurological, lung, liver and heart diseases.

Located within Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here, this transformation is more than just a physical renovation. Led by the visionary minds of Senior Paediatrician Dr Anil Sachdeva and Chairman Board of Management of the Hospital, Dr Ajay Swaroop, the Pediatrics department developed the corner where swings and slides offer more than mere recreation to the little patients.

Here, amidst the laughter and play, children find temporary respite from their medical challenges, fostering a conducive environment for faster recovery. Brainchild of the initiative, Dr Sachdeva and Dr



Swaroop talked about the need for such spaces which "are in supporting the emotional resilience of young patients." Beyond swings and slides, the park offers a therapeutic space designed to promote physical activity and nurture mental well-being.

Here, amidst laughter and play, children find respite from medical challenges, fostering a path to faster recovery, they said.

"This endeavour not only provides a playground for physical activity but also fosters a healing environment that supports the mental well-being of these courageous children", elaborated Chairman Board

of Management Dr Swaroop. Children are able to relax and forget their medical issues leading to faster healing and recuperation, added Dr Sachdeva. The idea was to provide corners where such children on the healing path can momentarily escape their medical concerns, thus aiding in their recuperation and ensuring their overall well-being.

The park also provides a space for families to connect, feel a sense of community, and derive strength from their common experiences while navigating the emotional roller coaster that is caring for a sick child.



# New criminal laws well designed to render justice: Pody CM

**PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY**

Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy said that the three new criminal laws which came into force across the country on Monday are well-designed to curb crimes, particularly heinous crimes.

The three new criminal laws are Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam 2023.

Addressing a special meeting of the Departments of Law and Police at the Indira Gandhi Government Medical College and Hospital here marking the launch of the three new criminal laws, Rangasamy said, "The territorial government is keen that there should be no room for crimes and more

particularly heinous crimes".

Thanking the Central government for implementation of the new laws, the chief minister said that they are aimed at imposing deterrent and stringent punishment on the culprits and also ensuring justice to the victims of crimes.

"People should feel safe and secure so that a peaceful society can be ensured," he said.

Stating that Puducherry was becoming a tourist destination, the chief minister said that there was every need to protect law and order. The government was going ahead with ensuring a peaceful environment.

He also said that seven fast track courts would come up soon in Puducherry.

"Judicial officers and also



subordinate staff would be posted to man these courts," he said.

The chief minister also released a handbook on the new laws and wanted its Tamil translation for the benefit of all.

Home Minister A Namassivayam said that the

new laws were absolutely necessary and they were made by Indians for Indians, unlike the previous laws which were designed by the British during colonial rule.

Law Minister K Lakshminarayanan said that the government was mulling appointment of a Director of Prosecution.

Chief Secretary to the government Sharat Chauhan and senior police officials participated.

An official source said that training has already been given to police personnel and others concerned on the three new laws in the union territory.

The three new laws have replaced the old Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act.

# 3 killed, 1 injured as speeding SUV rams into car in Ahmedabad

**PTI ■ AHMEDABAD**

Three persons were killed and one was critically injured when a speeding Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) rams into another car in Gujarat's Ahmedabad city on Monday morning, police said.

The accident took place at a 'T' junction on the Sardar Patel Ring Road at around 5 am, they said.

Visuals showed beer cans in the SUV and some lying scattered near the car wreckage.

The number plate of the SUV belonged to another car, sources said.

The State Monitoring Cell (SMC), which keeps a watch on illegal liquor sale in Gujarat, denied reports that its team



was chasing the SUV.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic (West), Neeta Desai said the SUV driver was in their "custody" and a probe was ordered to find out if he was speeding because of their involvement in any illegal activity.

She said the SUV coming from the Vaishnodevi Circle hit the other car when the latter was taking a turn towards Rajpath Club Road.

The deceased have been identified as SUV occupant Om Prakash (37), the other car's driver Ajit Kathi (32) and its occupant Manish Bhatt (52), both residents of Viramgam town in Ahmedabad, she said.

Om Prakash and the SUV's driver Rajendra Sahu, who was seriously injured, were residents of Rajasthan, she said.

"The SUV going towards Bopal rams into another car, which was coming from Bopal side and taking a right turn towards the Rajpath Club Road. Two occupants of the car and one person in the SUV died on the spot. The SUV's driver was undergoing treatment at a hospital," said Desai.

# Manipur CM denies report on resignation, asks media not to spread rumours

**PTI ■ IMPHAL**

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Monday described a report on his resignation as unfounded and asked the media not to spread rumours.

Singh also claimed that it is an attempt by political rivals who want to take advantage of the prevailing situation in the state which has been in the grip of violence since May last year.

His statement came three days after a media outlet reported that Singh is likely to resign soon.

"Manipur is passing through a troubled time. In such a crucial time, the leaders of Manipur can't afford to be weak. We are fully confident of our abilities," the chief minister said.

Addressing the Manipur issue is more important, Singh told reporters after attending a programme in Imphal on the implementation of three new criminal laws across the country.

"The rumours (on resignation) are possibly spread by those who want to be CM and ministers, as well as the opposition," he said.

The chief minister said that his government communicates regularly with the PMO and



the Union Home Ministry on the Manipur situation.

"If we leave, who will lead the people? More chaos will be created. We have to guide the people," said Singh who heads a BJP government in the northeastern state.

Singh also called on media outlets not to publish unfounded reports.

"Panic situation might be created if speculative reports are published without verification. Publications of such unfounded reports may give pleasure to some people. However, chances are 90 per cent of the people in the state would start panicking," he said.

He asked media outlets to come to Manipur and take stock of the actual situation to help bring peace to the state.

Ethnic conflict between Imphal valley-based Meiteis and hill-based Kukis has led to

# Leadership change: Will abide by Congress high command's decision, says Siddaramaiah

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said he would abide by the decision of the Congress high command on the issue of leadership change, amid a political tussle within the ruling Congress.

A Vokkaliga seer last week publicly requested Siddaramaiah to step down and to make way for his deputy D K Shivakumar.

"It is not a matter to be discussed in public. Whatever decision the High Command takes, we will go by it," Siddaramaiah told



reporters when asked about the Vishwa Vokkaligara Mahasamsthana Mutt seer Chandrashekhara Swami's appeal.

"I don't want to comment on what Swamiji says. Ours is a

national party. There is a high command," the Chief Minister added.

Meanwhile, Shivakumar warned leaders not to issue public statements on the matter of leadership change and creation of multiple posts of Deputy Chief Minister.

"If anyone crosses the limit, the party will take a decision," Shivakumar said.

There have also been demands by some Ministers perceived to be close to Siddaramaiah to create more posts of Deputy Chief Minister and given to leaders from Lingayat, SC, ST, and

minority communities. The move is seen in some quarters as an attempt to clip the political wings of Shivakumar, who is also the State party chief.

Shivakumar, a member of the Vokkaliga community, is currently the only Deputy Chief Minister in the Siddaramaiah government.

There was stiff competition between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar for the Chief Minister's post after the declaration of Assembly election results in May last year, and the Congress had managed to convince the latter and made him

the Deputy Chief Minister.

There were some reports at the time that a compromise had been reached based on a "rotational chief minister formula," according to which Shivakumar will become CM after two-and-a-half years but they have not been officially confirmed by the party.

Shivakumar has made no secret of his ambition to become chief minister, while Siddaramaiah had sought public support during the Lok Sabha polls so that the Congress wins maximum number of seats in the state, which would strengthen his position.

# MP Cabinet nod for bills on seizing vehicles used in cow transportation

**PTI ■ BHOPAL**

The Madhya Pradesh cabinet on Monday approved a bill providing for seizing vehicles involved in transportation of cows for slaughter, and also gave its nod to another proposed legislation under which state ministers will henceforth have to pay their own income tax.

The cabinet approved another bill that seeks to impose penalty on owners for not filling or plugging open borewells, a move that comes in the backdrop of several incidents of children falling in open borewells and dying in the state.

A cabinet meeting, presided over by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, was held in the assembly campus in Bhopal where several important decisions were taken.

It approved a bill for amending the Madhya Pradesh Cow Slaughter Prohibition Act, 2004, and giving right to district collectors to confiscate vehicles involved in transporting cows for slaughter, an official said. Under the Act, illegal transportation of beef and cows is banned in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Yadav, in a statement, said on several occasions vehicles caught while illegally transporting cows get released on court orders.

"We have decided that vehicles involved in cow slaughter will be confiscated and will not get released," the CM said.

According to the official, the cabinet also a nod to a bill to prevent incidents of children falling in open borewells.

# Assam flood: Over 43 per cent of forest camps in Kaziranga submerged

**PTI ■ GOLAGHAT/JORHAT (ASSAM)**

With worsening flood condition in Assam, rising water levels have impacted more than 43 per cent of the 233 forest camps at Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, an official report said on Monday.

As a significant portion of wildlife habitat is now submerged, scores of animals have started crossing the National Highway 715 in search of higher ground towards the southern direction in East Karbi Anglong district.

However, no death of animals has been reported as of now due to floods or accidents while crossing the highway.

Floodwaters have submerged a total of 101 forest camps, of which six have been vacated,



across Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, according to a flood report.

It said 35 camps in Agorotoli range, 21 in Kaziranga, 10 in Bagori, five in Burhapahar range and nine in Bokakhat are submerged.

Besides, 21 forest camps in Biswanath Wildlife Division of the national park have been inundated, the report added.

"Kaziranga National Park is well-prepared for the upcoming flood season with comprehensive measures in place to ensure the safety of wildlife, staff and visitors. Continuous monitoring and timely interventions will be prioritised to mitigate the impact of flooding," the report said.

It said that herds of elephants have begun moving towards East Karbi Anglong through Hati Dandi corridor and animal sensors are in place to detect the

movement.

"Joint patrolling by commando action groups and forest teams is being conducted regularly. Additional staff from neighbouring divisions have been deployed to intensify patrolling. Joint patrolling in the fringe

areas of the park is being carried out by Forest and Police Departments," the report said.

The Kaziranga National Park (KNP) authority has set up a dedicated floodwater gauge station with support from the Central Water Commission,

mechanized boats have been strategically deployed in key areas for swift response," the bulletin said. Meanwhile, the Golaghat district administration on Sunday evening issued prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC to safeguard the animals crossing the NH-715, which passes through KNP.

Stating that the highway attracts huge traffic, Golaghat District Magistrate Vivek Shyam Pangyok said, "Plying of vehicles during active flood attracts unwarranted risk and a cause for imminent threat to wild animals."

He said the animals use the corridors to temporarily migrate to the natural highland (hillocks) for shelter falling under Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. Accordingly, a set of orders have been issued for traffic management along NH-715

passing through the KNP with effect from Monday.

It said no commercial vehicle shall be allowed to move through Kaziranga National Park and only private ones will move at the regulated speed during the daytime.

"Only local private vehicles will be allowed to cross KNP during night hours," it added.

The order further mentioned various traffic diversion points for both commercial and private vehicles. The flood situation across the state continued to deteriorate with incessant rains inundating many districts, affecting lakhs of people.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday enquired about the prevailing flood situation in Assam and assured of all support to handle the crisis, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

# New policy for hoardings in Mumbai metropolitan region soon

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

The Maharashtra government will soon unveil a policy regarding hoardings in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), state Minister Uday Samant told the legislative assembly on Monday.

Samant made the statement during a discussion about hoardings erected in the city by violating rules and the hoarding collapse incident in which 17 people lost their lives last month.

"A policy will be unveiled once the code of conduct for the legislative council polls ends after the results are declared for the graduates and teachers constituencies," the minister said.

He said the committee headed by former Allahabad

High Court chief justice Dilip Bhosle is probing the May 13 hoarding collapse in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area.

BJP legislator Ram Kadam alleged that Bhavesh Bhide, whose firm erected the hoarding that collapsed, was photographed with Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, and his role should also be probed.

Samant further said that permissions are not taken from the civic authorities to erect hoardings on railway land.

Of the 1,025 hoardings in Mumbai, 306 are on railway land, he said.

BJP leader Ashish Shelar demanded an inquiry into hoardings erected since the COVID-19 pandemic.

He alleged that hoarding owners received subsidies and a 50 per cent discount on



licences.

"The then Uddhav Thackeray-led government

held secret meetings with hoarding owners for liaisoning. They received a 50

per cent waiver on their license. This conspiracy must be investigated. According to a report by the IIT, drivers face inconvenience due to the intense light of LED hoardings. Will this be taken into serious consideration? Permissions were granted to install LED on hoardings during the pandemic," Shelar said.

The BJP leader also pointed out that of the 1,025 big hoardings in Mumbai, 179 are in the railway limits and do not have permission from the BMC.

Samant assured that the decision taken by the previous government regarding hoardings during the pandemic will be investigated by the committee probing the Ghatkopar hoarding collapse.

# Haryana CM Saini approves initiative for free renal, liver transplants up to ₹3 lakh

**PTI ■ CHANDIGARH**

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has approved an initiative that will provide free renal and liver transplantation services up to Rs 3 lakh for eligible beneficiaries under the Mukhya Mantri Muft Ilaj Yojana (MMMIY).

The chief minister has also sanctioned the creation of a specialized fixed renal and liver transplant package of Rs 3 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana - Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY-AB) scheme, according to an official statement.

Giving further details, Health Minister Kamal Gupta on Monday said the BJP government in the state is

committed to healthcare reform and patient welfare.

With this new initiative, the patients will be able to receive critical renal and liver transplants at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) in Rohtak without worrying about the prohibitive costs, Gupta said.

The decision aims to offer life-saving medical treatments to those in dire need, ensuring no one is denied essential healthcare due to financial constraints, he added. Gupta said that by alleviating the financial burden associated with complex medical procedures, the Govt is paving the way for a future where healthcare is a fundamental right accessible to all regardless of economic status.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Cosmetic makeover

The new criminal laws have retained old laws with minor changes while others could impact civil liberties harshly

India has finally shed its colonial legacy in jurisprudence, embracing a new era with indigenous criminal laws. The big question being asked is whether it has truly moved beyond nomenclature or if it's merely a name change. The archaic Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Indian Evidence Act, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) have been replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, respectively. This historic change, taking effect from July 1, 2024, has stirred considerable debate among legal experts, practitioners, and the broader public. While some provisions break from the past, others are just old wine in new bottles, adding a layer of confusion in the legal system. The IPC, established in 1860, and the Evidence Act, enacted in 1872, have long been the cornerstones of India's criminal justice system. Both were products of the British colonial administration and have been criticized for their outdated and colonial-era perspectives. The CrPC of 1973 also formed a significant part of the legal framework governing criminal procedures in India.



The new legal laws Replacing the IPC, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita aims to update and Indianise the criminal code. There are some provisions that are definitely new while others are mere replicas of the old ones. One notable change is the adoption of the definition of terrorism from the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). This new definition encompasses a broad spectrum of activities intended to threaten the unity, integrity, and security of India. However, critics argue that this broader definition could lead to misuse and the criminalisation of legitimate dissent. Another stark

departure is Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam which replaces the Indian Evidence Act and seeks to modernise the rules of evidence in line with contemporary technological advancements. A significant change is the new stance on electronic evidence. Last but not the least, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, replacing the CrPC, introduces several changes aimed at streamlining criminal procedures. The new law redefines the use of handcuffs and expands the scope of police custody beyond the initial 15 days, a change that has sparked considerable concern regarding potential misuse and the risk of increased custodial violence. So far, the legal fraternity has been rather jittery about the new laws. Prominent legal luminaries, State Bar Councils, and Bar Associations have expressed apprehensions about the potential implications of these changes. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has commented that the new laws could create a positive impact only if there are concurrent investments in infrastructure development and capacity building for forensic experts and investigating officers. The expanded powers of the police and the handling of electronic evidence are areas of particular concern, highlighting the need for careful implementation and oversight to ensure that the new laws do not lead to increased misuse of power or injustice.

### PICTALK



Pilgrims wait in a queue to get themselves registered for the annual Amarnath Yatra, in Jammu

# A new dawn in Tibetan diplomacy



PRAFULL GORADIA

## A seven-member American delegation led by US House Representatives met with the Dalai Lama, indicating a shift in the US stance on Tibet

A seven-member American delegation led by Michael McCaul, and Nancy Pelosi, both leading lights of the US House of Representatives, recently met the Dalai Lama at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh; this is a particularly significant event. They delivered a clear message that the USA no longer accepts Tibet as a part of China; and the US Congress will be soon passing an Act to be made into a law, called the "Resolve Tibet-China Act". The delegation told the Tibetan spiritual leader that "things have changed now". This American message has unmistakably resisted in Chinese ears. This US delegation first called on His Holiness at Dharamshala, indicating they were calling on the Tibetan government-in-exile, calling on Prime Minister Narendra Modi only thereafter. The Government of India has not hesitated to welcome the delegation. Xi Jinping may have forgotten that Mao Zedong's regime had first claimed 'suzerainty' over Tibet.

Before long, it asserted that Tibet was a Chinese province, before attempting to erase Tibet's culture, heritage and language. These events have their roots in what happened towards the end of World War II. By allowing Stalin's Red Army to enter Berlin first and occupy it, the US made the Russians believe that they were the prime victors of WWII. In 1949, the Soviet Communist regime, by hook or crook, acquired the atom bomb. This made them believe even more they were now a superpower. Eco-militarily though, the Soviet Union was no 'super' but only a Eurasian power, as it had historically been. Similarly, the US overestimated the Communist Chinese as well. Compared to Chiang Kai Shek and his Kuomintang (KMT) on the mainland, the Maoists were much more committed. That, however, was no reason to dump the KMT as well as Formosa, now Taiwan from the UN as an official member. In fact, India should have been the correct replacement, but the Nehru gov-



ernment was insistent on giving the right of way to Red China, believe it or not. The USA, or at least its State Department continued to believe for years that the Soviets and the Chinese were a single communist bloc. The extent of the animosity between the two was fully realized only after the Sino-Soviet clash along the Ussuri River in 1969.

It was only thereafter that President Nixon decided to call on Chinese Premier Mao Zedong in 1972, which brought a great deal of prestige to Dr. Henry Kissinger. The ultimate beneficiary of this resumption of relations was China, when Deng Xiaoping introduced economic reforms, emphasizing manufacturing and exports. The surplus of trillions of dollars accumulated by China came largely through exports to America. The course of these events explains why the State Department of the USA until now ignored the treatment of the hapless Tibetans by successive Chinese regimes over the last seven decades, beginning in 1959. The question is: is this because of repeated provocations over Taiwan, or could there be some larger reason unknown to us? The intentions should become clearer with the unfolding of time. India's stand has also been important.



XI JINPING MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT MAO ZEDONG'S REGIME HAD FIRST CLAIMED 'SUZERAINTY' OVER TIBET. BEFORE LONG, IT ASSERTED THAT TIBET WAS A CHINESE PROVINCE, BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO ERASE TIBET'S CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANGUAGE

Unfortunately, the Leftists and communists in the country had clamoured for the (then) newly formed Red Chinese regime, which had requested its recognition within a few days of its winning the civil war. Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel, on the other hand, was of the clear view that there was no hurry to recognize the new Chinese regime. In November 1949, Patel invited the American charge d'affaires Donovan to verify if there was an urgency in the recognition of Red China.

Knowing the Sardar through his long correspondence with Jawaharlal Nehru on the subject of China, uppermost in his mind must have been the concern that the Sino-Indian border should be mutually recognized. But Jawaharlal Nehru was in a hurry and without consulting the Sardar, informed the Chinese of India's decision to recognize their regime in the December of that year itself. While expressing its delight at Nehru's message, China also laid down a few preconditions. India would pass on to the new regime all properties and assets of China. Secondly, India would not recognize any members of the KMT. Thirdly, India should support the expulsion of Nationalist China from the UNO, as well as its replacement by the

communist regime. China's perfidious intentions can be gauged from the fact that its communist regime announced the 'liberation' of Tibet as the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) task just one day before the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Tibetans had expelled the Chinese Amban, although he had been a Kuomintang government appointee.

The Chinese blamed India for it, abusing Nehru as "a lackey of British imperialism" and complicit in the British humiliation of China, which Mao sought to reverse. The People's Daily of China in an editorial denounced the concept of suzerainty as feudal and oppressive—the very thing China demanded over Tibet. It even called on the UNO to examine India's relationship with Bhutan. The reality, which the Nehru government chose to ignore despite even Ambassador K.M. Pannikar's warnings was that China was eyeing Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan too. But India's first prime minister, a votary of international peace and brotherhood was oblivious to this. The sufferers were from Tibet and India.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### REFORMING JUSTICE

Madam — India is poised to undergo a transformative shift in its criminal justice system with the implementation of three groundbreaking laws starting July 1st, 2024. However, the primary concern lies in the readiness of our institutions to handle these changes, necessitating a nationwide audit. There has been no thorough assessment of the preparedness across various criminal justice institutions in different states. Additionally, the transition from old laws to new ones is likely to create significant confusion. It would be prudent to postpone the implementation of these laws until a comprehensive and independent audit of institutional readiness is conducted. Alternatively, a phased implementation to test the waters would be a more sensible approach.

Noopur Baruah | Tezpur

#### A DEMOCRACY IN DISARRAY

Madam — The signs were clear for all to see. We eagerly awaited the end of the elections and patiently anticipated the results. Yet, once Parliament convened, it quickly became apparent that walk-outs and paralysis were the order of the day. The drama of democracy played out in full view, with heightened agitation across the country. On the anniversary of the Emergency, Parliament was divided, and the opposition was relentless in disrupting proceedings at every turn, reflecting the turbulence within our so-called democratic framework. Opposition leaders harshly criticized President Droupadi Murmu's address, dismissing it as a government-scripted speech riddled with falsehoods. They accused the government of imposing an undeclared emergency and challenged its claims of economic growth and investment.

Leaders highlighted issues facing farmers, unemployed youth, and recent national events. The true nature of our parliamentarians has been laid bare,

#### India's T20 World Cup victory



India celebrated a momentous victory over South Africa in the T20 World Cup 2024 final, marking a glorious return to World Cup triumph after a 13-year hiatus since their last ICC trophy win in 2011. Under the astute leadership of Rohit Sharma, the team showcased exceptional prowess

and resilience, dominating the tournament with consecutive victories. This win was particularly poignant as it marked a grand farewell for two Indian cricket stalwarts, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, along with head coach Rahul Dravid, who had not previously won a World Cup trophy. Both Rohit and Virat announced their retirement from T20 internationals, making this victory an emotional and proud moment for all Indians. Rohit's tactical brilliance and Virat's consistent performances have been instrumental in India's crickering success over the years. Their departure signifies the end of an era. The Indian cricket team displayed outstanding skill and determination, ensuring that they lifted the ICC trophy and gave their beloved captain and star player a memorable send-off. This victory will be cherished as one of the most emotional and proud moments in Indian cricket history. Bishal Kumar Saha, Murshidabad

Bishal Kumar Saha | Murshidabad

with their election appearing to serve only as a means to create chaos, disrupt parliamentary decorum, and hinder smooth functioning. The disarray within Parliament serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for a recommitment to democratic principles and decorum. The behavior of our elected representatives, which seems aimed more at creating chaos than fostering progress, threatens the very foundation of our democratic institutions. It is imperative that we, as citizens, demand accountability and a return to a more respectful and effective form of governance.

Jayanty Subramaniam | Mumbai

#### FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

Madam — India's head coach, Rahul Dravid, is not one to seek the spotlight. Yet, it inevitably finds him, whether during his illustrious playing career or his post-retirement role as a coach for both junior and senior Indian cricket teams. As his era of strategic brilliance and mentorship draws to a close, we bid

farewell to a coach whose wisdom has guided Team India to new heights. Dravid's tenure has been marked by unforgettable victories and moments of crickering genius, from nurturing young talent to instilling a culture of discipline and resilience.

His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of cricketers, embodying the values that define our beloved sport. A World Cup win would be the perfect capstone to Rahul Dravid's remarkable journey. As we celebrate Rahul Dravid's contributions to Indian cricket, we also honor a figure whose integrity, dedication, and humility have left an indelible mark on the game. His departure marks the end of an era, but his legacy will continue to inspire and shape the future of Indian cricket for years to come. What a distinguished man and an outstanding cricketer!

Jayanthi S Maniam | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Unveiling the deception: Decoding food labels for healthier choices

It's vital to scrutinise food labels beyond their claims. Decoding the fine print ensures that what we eat aligns with our health goals

Decoding Food Labels As a dietician, I strive to provide the best possible tailored meal plans to my clients, so why would I not stop and flip food packages to scrutinize labels to ensure what goes on my plate and my family's? Albeit, every time I do that I stop to think about the actual intent of documenting the ingredients on the package and I feel deceived. The idea behind all this 'extra work' was to keep the consumer informed and help them make intelligent choices for themselves. But then

I see a granola bar labelled "whole grain" and "healthy snack," only to find sugar listed as the first ingredient! Has the food industry turned food labels into a game of hide-and-seek with our health? Food manufacturers have become masters of a deceptive language game. Over time, they've developed tactics to maximize sales and keep their customers hooked, often at the expense of health. Buzzwords like "natural" and "low-fat" create an illusion of health, while hidden sugars and cleverly disguised serving sizes make it difficult to deci-



pher the truth. These tactics paint a picture of a healthy snack, obscuring the reality which can be quite different. So, does this mean we're doomed to fall victim to marketing tactics? Absolutely not! With a little knowledge, we can become empowered to decode food labels, making informed choices about what purchases we make.

Here are a few key areas to focus on during your next grocery run and fill your shopping cart with what is right for you: As I said earlier, don't allow the food companies to trick you into buying their products just because they claim to be "natural," "low-fat" or "multi-grain." Low fat doesn't alone mean that literally. The term also implies added sugars and the use of unhealthy fillers. For the longest brown

rice has wooed Indian buyers, but this does not mean that brown rice syrup is any good and a healthy replacement for sugar! High fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, palm, etc are scattered through the list of ingredients keeping even the most discerning customer, from grasping the true sugar content. When you see "sugar-free" on the label, know that other forms like sugar alcohol or artificial sweeteners might be in play. The latest in line is, "natural sweeteners" or "fruit extract" which again is sugar; no less, no more.

The biggest gamble lurks in the Serving Sizes. As a standardized directive laid down by the FDA, it is ideally meant to help consumers compare the same products from different brands, empowering them to make the best choice for themselves. But, most manufacturers shrink the serving size per package, compared to what an average consumer would typically eat. Consider finishing a whole bag of munchies in one go while the manufacturer suggests two servings per container. All ingredients are specified per serving and

you ended up twice what you thought was good for you! Ensure you keep a tab of serving size and calculate your portion and calorie/sugar intake accordingly. "Rich in protein," "Fiber-rich" etc are another set of crowd pullers that mostly tend to divert customer's attention from other not-so-healthy ingredients. Bearing these points in mind, your next trip to the supermarket will be a game-changer for your household. Don't get carried away by big claims made on the face of the package, TURN IT AROUND & be sure to read the numbers. Whether it is calories, saturated and trans fats, sodium or added sugars, learn the limits and decide for yourself what suits you best. Employ help from label-reading apps that can demystify tricky labels and provide additional information about ingredients. See-through those marketing gimmicks and bring to the table what is healthier and more wholesome for you and your family.

(The author is a dietician and Clinical Nutritionist Ambassador of FIT INDIA Movement of GOI; views are personal)



KOMAL PATEL



## FIRST COLUMN

## THE EVOLVING PATH TO SUCCESS WITH UPSKILLING

Success is more than just good intentions. It's a journey paved with education and skill



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

The saying "Where there's a will, there's a way" offers a reassuring belief that sheer determination can overcome any obstacle. However, navigating the complexities of real-world success involves more than just good intentions. It requires a foundation built on education, experience, and often, a blend of both. The path to achievement is multifaceted, demanding a strategic combination of willpower, continuous learning, and specialization. Enter the upskilling advocate. These individuals champion the importance of lifelong learning, asserting that the pursuit of new knowledge can unlock doors that even traditional qualifications cannot. The argument holds weight, especially in an era where technology evolves at breakneck speed. The ability to adapt to these changes is crucial. However, the journey of upskilling can sometimes feel like an endless treadmill—each completed course leads to another, creating a perpetual cycle of learning without a clear endpoint. On the other hand, we have the specialist.

Specialists possess targeted expertise, backed by rigorous education in a specific field. Their qualifications often serve as a shortcut past initial professional hurdles, providing a clear and direct path to success. Yet, this path can be fraught with its own challenges. As industries transform and new technologies emerge, specialization that once seemed advantageous may become obsolete. The clear road that once led to career success can abruptly end, leaving the specialist in need of new directions. So, who holds the advantage in this dynamic landscape? The truth, as with many aspects of life, is that the ideal path is a balanced



one. The most successful individuals often embody a blend of both approaches. They possess a solid foundation in a core discipline but are equally committed to continuous learning and adaptation. For instance, someone with a degree in marketing might pursue courses in digital analytics to stay relevant in an increasingly data-driven world. This duality—rooted in depth of knowledge but flexible in acquiring new skills—is what makes them particularly valuable. Employers who recognize the importance of this balance are making the smartest investments. They seek out candidates who not only have the expertise to excel in their current roles but also the agility to navigate the shifting landscape of the professional world.

These employers understand that a blend of foundational knowledge and a willingness to upskill can create a workforce capable of responding to change with confidence and competence. The key takeaway? While willpower is essential, it must be channeled effectively. Start by building a strong educational foundation in a chosen field, then continually seek opportunities for growth and learning. This approach fosters a mindset of perpetual improvement, positioning individuals to thrive amid the uncertainties of the modern workplace. Yet, the journey doesn't end with acquiring new skills. The future of work demands the ability to unlearn outdated practices and embrace new paradigms. The most successful professionals will be those who approach each challenge with a growth mindset, eager to expand their knowledge and reshape their skills. They understand that change is the only constant and that adaptability is the ultimate competitive advantage. Rather than seeing your career as a ladder to climb, envision it as traversing a vast, ever-shifting landscape. The willingness to learn and grow continuously is key to unlocking a fulfilling and successful career in an ever-evolving world. So, abandon the notion of being a finished product and embrace the journey of lifelong learning. It's a marathon, not a sprint. With the right mindset, you'll be well-equipped not just to survive but to thrive in the ever-changing world of work. Are you ready for the adventure?

(The writer is an author and has penned three books; views are personal)

## Focus shifts to prudent public wealth management



UTTAM GUPTA

The new Govt is overhauling India's disinvestment policy. It is supporting non-profit enterprises, and maintaining a strong presence of State-run firms in strategic sectors

The new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is reviewing the existing disinvestment policy to shift its focus from selling central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) to prudent public wealth management (PWM), supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors'. A CPSU is an undertaking in which the Union government has majority share holding meaning it holds more than 50 percent of its shares. Disinvestment is fancy nomenclature for sale of these shares to private investors. When, disinvestment results in reduction of the government's shareholding in the CPSU to below 50 percent and concomitant transfer of ownership and management control to private entity, this is termed as 'strategic' disinvestment or privatization.

The extant policy on disinvestment was announced by the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22.

Under it, CPSUs were classified into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors viz. industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and marketing and so on. The government's intent was to sell all undertakings in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector.

As for undertakings in non-strategic sectors, it wanted to reduce its shareholding to below 50 percent in 'all' of them. Put simply, they would all be privatized. All loss-making undertakings in this category would be closed.

Also tagged to this policy was government's intent to use the proceeds from disinvestment for meeting its fiscal deficit (excess of total revenue over total expenditure) or FD target. This part was a continuation from the past when the Modi - government started selling its shares in CPSUs in 2015-16 with particular focus on 'strategic' disinvestment. In the backdrop of devastation caused by Covid-19 pandemic and debilitating effect on its finances during 2020-21 (in that year, FD had scaled to 9.2 percent of GDP), in the budget for 2021-22, Sitharaman had put even greater reliance on proceeds of disinvestment by setting an ambitious target of Rs 175,000 crore. During that year, the government had planned big ticket disinvestments such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), IDBI Bank, NMDC Steel and Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and so on.

But, the process has remained stuck in the slow lane even as the targets of proceeds from sales were missed year-after-year. Only during two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19, it achieved the target. That was primarily because, in those years, it had conducted two big-ticket sales of its shares from one CPSU to another.

During 2017-18, the government sold



51.11 percent of its shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) yielding Rs 37,000 crore. In the following year, it undertook the sale of its 52.63 percent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) yielding Rs 13,000 crore. But, those sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU namely ONGC/PFC, the Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC.

The results during 2021-22 and 2022-23 were particularly disconcerting. During 2021-22, against a target of Rs 175,000 crore, the actual proceeds from disinvestment were a meager Rs 15,440 crore. During 2022-23, against a target of Rs 65,000 crore, the actual was nearly half at Rs 31,059 crore. For 2023-24, the FM had lowered the target to Rs 51,000 crore which during the course of the year was further revised downwards to Rs 30,000 crore. Even against this, the actual proceeds were a meager Rs 14,564 crore.

What does the interim Budget for 2024-25 say? In a briefing following the presentation of the Budget by Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan had stated that the "government no longer views disinvestment from the perspective of balancing the budget". Can it be taken to mean that it has shed its age-old stance of using proceeds from share sale for reducing FD. The answer is 'No' as it has set a target of Rs 50,000 crore for 2024-25 under the head "miscellaneous capital receipts" which includes disinvestment proceeds besides receipts from asset monetization.

The very idea of garnering resources from the sale of government shares in CPSUs is inherently flawed. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty based on the existing tax rate and a reasonable assessment of the growth in nominal GDP, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated.

In cases where the strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favorable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of its kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moves a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

In view of above, the government shouldn't put any number to

receipts from share sale while preparing the budget as the end of the year, slippage is inevitable. Even so, the government's tax revenue is buoyant (for three years in a row since 2021-22, these have exceeded the target) and it is getting higher dividends from CPSUs as also higher dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (for its FY 2023-24, the RBI has made a huge dividend transfer of Rs 210,000 crore to the Centre for latter's use during 2024-25) and public sector banks (PSBs). These positive trends should be good enough for managing fiscal deficits; hence, no need to depend on 'miscellaneous capital receipts'.

What happens to strategic sale? From the emphasis on public wealth management (PWM), strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors, one gets sense that the government has completely abandoned the path of privatizing CPSUs in these sectors. As it is, under the 2021-22 policy, it had intended to retain at least one (and a maximum of four) undertakings in the strategic sector. Now, it seems it won't privatize even one. The government's decision to drop its plan for sale of BPCL which was on its agenda since 2019-20 is an indication of things to come.

Changing horses midstream won't be in the best interest of the country. Fundamentally, the State shouldn't be in the business of running enterprises. There always remains a risk of political interference and bureaucratic red tape which can seriously hamper the working of CPSUs. The government should continue the process of share sale and focus on de-bureaucratizing it.

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



IN CASES WHERE THE STRATEGIC SALE IS MOOTED, THE GOVT FACES A BIGGER CHALLENGE AS APART FROM A FAVOURABLE MARKET, IT NEEDS BIDDERS WITH DEEP POCKETS

## Surviving the scorch: Strategies for managing heat waves in India

The summer of 2024 has seen record-breaking temperatures. It is imperative for policymakers to understand the underlying causes and implement effective measures

The country is in the midst of intense heat waves causing severe hardship in the entire North, Central and Western India for more than a month. India may have recorded the hottest-ever temperature in 2024. On 29th May 2024 Delhi recorded 52.3 Degrees Celsius temperature at a weather station in Mungeshpur a suburb of Delhi though later on it was proved that it was slightly on the higher side. Even cooler places like Dehradun have noticed the highest temperature of the last 53 years this year. More than 30 crore people in India are prone to high risk due to lack of means to escape heat waves. The people are feeling severe shortages of power and water and many grids are collapsing due to overload lead-



V K BAHUGUNA

ing to prolonged outages. Several people have died due to heat waves across the country. According to official sources, 150 people have died due to heat waves and around 30,000 people suffered heat stroke from March to mid-June 2024. The people from Delhi and other adjoining areas are rushing to hill stations of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and other hills to escape the heat torture

and in the process causing heavy traffic jams and throwing in disarray the civic amenities in several towns and cities. The River width of Ganga in Varanasi has reduced by 35 % and similar reports are forthcoming of the narrowing of other streams and rivers.

The experts have been warning the government and the society at large about the changing weather trends of the country. The policy makers, professionals and administrators is to assess the causes of such an unprecedented rise in temperature and how to mop up resources to deal with it. If the mandarins in power in the centre and state do not change the way to deal with it efficiently and effectively many disasters will be ruining the stabil-

ity and cohesiveness in the society.

One thing all must learn is the fact that high temperatures are the results of the combined effects of global warming, increasing urbanisation/concretization leading to changing weather patterns. As far as Delhi and nearby areas are concerned the dry and warm westerly winds from Rajasthan and Haryana are the causes of the heat wave. Now these winds continue during the night and do not allow the night temperature to fall and this is further accentuated when these westerly winds lead to cloud formation in the sky which prevents cooling the temperature. To find the solution our planners and civic administrators in cities must meet the challenges of the

'urban heat island effect'. In nature trees and other vegetation in the landscape along with green roofs help in reducing the urban heat island effects by releasing moisture through transpiration, and by shading reflecting the sun radiation back into the atmosphere. Therefore, the massive dense urbanisation, buildings, roads and pavements absorb and retain the heat and hence the urban heat island effect with disastrous consequences. On the other hand, the effects of heat waves in rural areas are different; there is less or minimal heat island effect but the heat effects mostly relate to health issues like severe dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion and gastro-intestinal diseases exacerbated by the long power cuts and water

shortage. India is not the only country affected by heat waves. Europe is also suffering from heat waves since April 2024. The temperature is above 30 degrees Celsius in south Europe, particularly in Spain. This year in Europe the highest temperature was noticed in Zeneca and Bosnia at 33.3 degree Celsius on 14th April 2024. The European country's architecture is such that they cannot cope up well with continuous heat waves. The objective of this article is to stress that in India the Central and State governments should jointly devise a policy to effectively deal with summer weather. The first thing to be done is to declare the temperature beyond a certain limit as a nat-

ural disaster/climate emergency and put in place standard operating procedures to deal with it for the different cities and rural areas. In rural areas, the government must ensure a supply of potable water and electricity as well as a mobile dispensary to provide quick health care services. In each village lakes and ponds should be created compulsorily so that people including farmers and cattle get water. It needs short-term planning risk assessment and early warning systems based on the India Meteorological Department forecast. One of the fundamental requirements is the need to remould the district administration by creating an integrated and holistic approach so that climate-resilient develop-

ment is ensured and preparations are made in advance to deal with any emergent situation. However, real change in the entire civic administration is essential in urban areas. The town and country planning needs complete overhauling as also revisit the power-centric civic bodies. The drainages are in shamble and must be protected so that the next emergency in rainy weather does not derail the life and property. Will the Urban Development Ministry set up a task national force to recommend action?

(The author is the former Director-General of the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and Chancellor of FRI University; views are personal)



# French far right leads after elections' 1st round

AP ■ PARIS

France's National Rally surged into the lead in the first round of legislative elections, according to results released early Monday, bringing the far-right party to the brink of power and dealing a major blow to President Emmanuel Macron's centrists in an election that could set the country, and Europe, on a starkly different course. The results confirmed polling that showed the party — with a history of racism and xenophobia and once shunned by the mainstream — is no longer taboo, confined to the fringes of French politics. There remains another torrid week of campaigning before the decisive final voting Sunday, and whether the National Rally will be able to win an outright majority and form France's first far-right government



since World War II remains uncertain. Marked by high turnout of nearly 68 per cent that reflected the high stakes, voters handed the Marine Le Pen's National Rally a strong lead, with about 33 per cent of the vote. The number includes the votes from a

group of conservative candidates of The Republicans party who had allied with the far-right party in the first round. The New Popular Front, a leftist alliance, finished second with about 28 per cent. The president's centrist group came third with around 20 per cent, accord-

ing to figures released by the Interior Ministry. When Macron dissolved the National Assembly on June 9, after a stinging defeat at the hands of the National Rally in French voting for the European Parliament, the deeply unpopular and weakened president gambled that his rivals wouldn't repeat that success when the country's own fate was in the balance. He and his allies, as well as politicians on the left, are still hoping they can head off an outright win by the National Rally, and horse-trading began Monday, with some efforts to block far-right candidates taking shape. The leftist coalition said it would withdraw its candidates in districts where they arrived in third position in order to support other politicians opposed to the far right. Macron's centrist alliance also said some of its candidates

would step down before the runoff. In Sunday's voting, 78 of the National Assembly's 577 seats were won outright, by candidates who got more than 50 per cent of the vote in their district, according to French newspaper Liberation's analysis of the Interior Ministry data. Of those, 38 were from the National Rally, including Le Pen herself. That triumph provided an additional boost for the far-right parties in Europe as Viktor Orbán's Hungary takes over the European Union's rotating presidency for six months. To underline her party's triumph, Le Pen said that National Rally lawmakers would meet at the parliament on Monday and symbolically claim their seats. Addressing a jubilant crowd waving French tricolour flags of blue, white and red, Le Pen

called on her supporters and voters who didn't back her party in the first round to push it over the line and give it a commanding legislative majority. That scenario would make the party's young leader, Jordan Bardella, prime minister — and force him and Macron into an awkward power-sharing arrangement. Macron, first elected in 2017, has said he will not step down before his second term expires in 2027. "The French have almost wiped out the Macronist bloc," Le Pen said Sunday night. The results, she added, showed voters' "willingness to turn the page after 7 years of contemptuous and corrosive power." If the National Rally is able to form a government, it has promised to dismantle many of Macron's key domestic and foreign policies, including taking a more confrontational

approach to the European Union and stopping French deliveries of long-range missiles to Ukraine. The National Rally has historical ties to Russia, which invaded its neighbour two years ago. At home, the party's plans include the rollback of Macron's pension reform that raised the retirement age and promises to boost voters' spending power without clearly detailing how it would pay for the pledge that could also spook European financial markets. National Rally opponents fear for civil liberties if it takes power. Macron himself warned that the far right could set France on a path to civil war. Its plans to boost police powers and curb immigration also alarm many, including minorities. The National Rally has long been hostile toward France's Muslim community.

## EU accuses Meta of breaking digital rules

London (AP): European Union regulators accused social media company Meta Platforms on Monday of breaching the bloc's new digital competition rulebook by forcing Facebook and Instagram users to choose between seeing ads or paying to avoid them. Meta began giving European users the option in November of paying for ad-free versions of Facebook and Instagram as a way to comply with the continent's strict data privacy rules. Users can pay at least 10 euros (\$10.75) a month to avoid being targeted by ads based on their personal data. The US tech giant rolled out the option after the European Union's top court ruled Meta must first get consent before showing ads to users, in a decision that threatened its business model of tailoring ads based on individual users' online interests and digital activity.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said preliminary findings of its investigation show that Meta's "pay or consent" advertising model was in breach of the 27-nation bloc's Digital Markets Act. Meta's model doesn't allow users to exercise their right to "freely consent" to allowing their personal data from its various services, including Facebook, Instagram, Marketplace, WhatsApp, and Messenger, to be combined to target them with personalised online ads, the commission said. Meta's model also doesn't give users the option of a service that's less personalised but still equivalent to its social networks, it said. The commission had opened its investigation shortly after the rulebook, also known as the DMA, took effect in March. It's a sweeping set of regulations aimed at preventing tech "gatekeepers" from cornering digital markets under threat of heavy financial penalties. One of the DMA's goals is to rein in the power of Big Tech companies that have collected vast amounts of personal data on their users, giving them an edge on rivals competing in online ad or social media services.

## North Korea test-launches two ballistic missiles

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea test-fired two ballistic missile Monday, South Korea's military said, a day after the North vowed "offensive and overwhelming" responses to a new US military drill with South Korea and Japan. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles were launched 10 minutes apart in a northeastern direction from the town of Jangyong in southeastern North Korea. It said the first missile flew 600 kilometres (370 miles) and the second 120 kilometres (75 miles), but didn't say where they landed. North Korea typically test-fires missiles toward its eastern waters, but the second missile's flight distance was too short to reach those waters. South Korean media said an unidentified South Korean military source reported that it was highly likely the second missile crashed in an inland area of the North. Possible damages on the North's ground weren't immediately reported. The reports said the first missile landed in the waters off the North's eastern city of Chongjin. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, which did not comment on the media reports, said South Korea maintains a firm readiness to repel any provoc-

ations by North Korea in conjunction with the military alliance with the United States. The launch came two days after South Korea, the US and Japan ended their new multidomain trilateral drills in the region. In recent years, the three countries have been expanding their trilateral security partnership to better cope with North Korea's evolving nuclear threats and China's increasing assertiveness in the region. The "Freedom Edge" drill was meant to increase the sophistication of previous exercises with simultaneous air and naval drills geared toward improving joint ballistic-missile defence, anti-submarine warfare, surveillance and other skills and capabilities. The three-day drill involved a US aircraft carrier as well as destroyers, fighter jets and helicopters from the three countries. On Sunday, North Korea's Foreign Ministry issued a lengthy statement strongly denouncing the "Freedom Edge" drill, calling the US-South Korea-Japan partnership an Asian version of NATO. It said the drill openly destroyed the security environment on the Korean Peninsula and contained a US intention to lay siege to China and exert pressure on Russia. The statement said North

Korea will "firmly defend the sovereignty, security and interests of the state and peace in the region through offensive and overwhelming countermeasures." Monday's launch was the North's first weapons firing in five days. On Wednesday, North Korea launched what it called a multi-warhead missile in the first known launch of a developmental, advanced weapon meant to defeat US and South Korean missile defences. North Korea said the launch was successful, but South Korea dismissed the North's claim as deception to cover up a failed launch. In recent weeks, North Korea has floated numerous trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea in what it has described as a tit-for-tat response to South Korean activists sending political leaflets via their own balloons. Last month, North Korea and Russia also struck a deal vowing mutual defence assistance if either is attacked, a major defence pact that raised worries that it could embolden Kim to launch more provocations at South Korea. Meanwhile, North Korea opened a key ruling party meeting Friday to determine what it called "important, immediate issues" related to works to further enhance Korean-style socialism.

## Israel releases director of hospital it says was used as Hamas base

AP ■ KHAN YOUNIS

Israel released the director of Gaza's main hospital on Monday after holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command centre. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured. The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selmia, apparently taken in order to free up space in overcrowded detention centres, sparked uproar across the political spectrum, with government ministers and opposition leaders saying he should have remained behind bars. They reiterated allegations that he had played a role in Hamas' alleged use of Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the nearly nine-month war with Hamas. Abu Selmia and other health officials have repeatedly denied those accusations, and that fact that he was released without charge or trial was likely to raise further questions about them. Abu Selmia was released back into Gaza along with 54 other Palestinian detainees, many of

## Ultra-Orthodox protest turns violent in Jerusalem

Jerusalem (AP): Thousands of Jewish ultra-Orthodox men clashed with Israeli police in central Jerusalem on Sunday during a protest against a Supreme Court order for them to begin enlisting for military service. The landmark decision last week ordering the government to begin drafting ultra-Orthodox men could lead to the collapse of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's governing coalition as Israel wages war in Gaza. Tens of thousands of men rallied in an ultra-Orthodox neighbourhood to protest the order. But after nightfall, the crowd made its way toward central Jerusalem and turned violent. Israeli police said protesters threw rocks and attacked the car of an ultra-Orthodox Cabinet minister, pelting it with stones. Water cannons filled with skunk-scented water and police mounted on horses were used to disperse the crowd. But the demonstration was still not under control late Sunday. Military service is compulsory for most Jewish men and women in Israel. But politically powerful ultra-Orthodox parties have won exemptions for their followers to skip military service and instead study in religious seminaries. The long-standing arrangement has bred resentment among the broader public, a sentiment that has grown stronger during the eight-month war against Hamas.

whom also alleged abuse. The allegations could not be independently confirmed but matched other accounts of Palestinians who have been held in Israeli custody. "Our detainees have been subjected to all kinds of torture

behind bars," Abu Selmia said at a news conference after his release. "There was almost daily torture." He said guards broke his head and caused his head to bleed during beatings, in which they used batons and dogs.

He said the medical staff at different facilities where he was held had also taken part in the abuse "in violation of all laws". He said some detainees had limbs amputated because of poor medical care. There was no immediate response from the prison service, which has previously denied similar accusations. Israeli forces raided Shifa Hospital in November, alleging that Hamas had created an elaborate command and control centre inside the facility. Abu Selmia and other staff denied the allegations and accused Israel of recklessly endangering thousands of patients and displaced people who were sheltering there. The military uncovered a tunnel beneath Shifa Hospital leading to a few rooms, as well as other evidence that militants had been present inside the medical centre, but the evidence fell short of what it had claimed before the raid. Abu Selmia was detained on Nov 22 while escorting a UN-led evacuation of patients from the hospital. He said his detention was "politically motivated", adding that he had been brought to court at least three times but was never charged or allowed

## Three killed in shooting near University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati (US) (AP): Five people were shot, including three fatally, near the University of Cincinnati campus early Monday, police said. Two people were taken into custody, including one of the wounded. "There were multiple firearms recovered at the crime scene and two subjects (one of which was also shot) are being detained at this time," Cincinnati police Capt Mark Burns told The Associated Press in an email. He said he had no further information. Earlier, the university's public safety department posted on the social platform X that police were responding to an emergency shortly before 3 am.

## Albania's world-renowned novelist Kadare dies at 88

Tirana (AP): Renowned Albanian novelist Ismail Kadare has died after being rushed to a hospital in Tirana, his publishing editor said on Monday. He was 88. Kadare has long been mentioned as a possible contender for the Nobel Literature Prize. Onufri Publishing House editor Bujar Hudhri said the noted author died Monday morning. A nurse at the hospital, who spoke on condition of anonymity because she was not authorised to talk to the press, said he was taken to the emergency room after suffering a cardiac arrest. Kadare became internationally recognised after his novel "The General of the Dead Army" was published in 1963 when Albania was still governed by the communist government of late dictator Enver Hoxha. Kadare fled Albania to France in the fall of 1990, just a few months before the fall of



the communist regime following student protests the previous December. He lived in Paris and had recently returned to Tirana. Last year, French President Emmanuel Macron awarded him the Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor title during a visit by the French president to the Albanian capital. France had previously also made him a foreign associate of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, as well as Commander of the Legion of Honor.

## Aus appoints second woman governor-general in 123 years

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Australia appointed Sam Mostyn on Monday as only its second woman governor-general, a largely ceremonial role representing the British monarch who is the nation's head of state. It is the first such Australian appointment since the reign of King Charles III began in 2022 and the first by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's centre-left Labor Party government that wants to replace the British monarch with an Australian president as head of state. The business-woman and gender equality advocate, who in 2005 became the first woman Australian Football League Commissioner, was sworn in as Australia's 28th governor-general since 1901. In her first speech in her new role, Mostyn quoted Australia's first woman governor-general

Quentin Bryce, who described her role in 2013 as "striking a balance between observing traditions and protocol and being thoroughly contemporary." "I will be an optimistic, modern and visible governor-general, committed to the service and contribution that all Australians expect and deserve from the holder of this office," Mostyn said. Mostyn said she had spoken about the role with all five surviving former governors-general, including Bryce who was appointed by Queen Elizabeth II on the advice of a Labor prime minister and served from 2008 and 2014. Albanese's government was elected in 2022 advocating for a referendum to create an Australian republic with an Australian citizen as head of state. But he gave preference to holding a referendum in his government's first three-year

term to enshrine in the constitution an Indigenous panel that would advise the government on Indigenous issues. That referendum was defeated last year and though Albanese has not yet announced plans for a republic referendum, the office of Assistant Minister for the Republic has been created to prepare the nation for change. Critics of Mostyn's appointment highlight her past activism. She had also supported an Australian republic and described Australia Day, the arrival of the first British colonists at the site of Sydney on January 26, 1788, as "Invasion Day," a term used by some Indigenous leaders. Mostyn said she had met the king in Britain in May and passed on Australians' best wishes for the health of both he and Kate, Princess of Wales, who are being treated for cancer.

## US lawmakers pledge support to Indian-Americans

Washington: Prominent American lawmakers have pledged their support to Indian Americans to fight against increasing Hinduphobia and discrimination against the minority Hindu community in the US. Organised by the Coalition of Hindus of North America (COHNA), the 3rd National Hindu Advocacy Day attracted several Hindu students, researchers, and community leaders on June 28 to discuss the concerns faced by the Hindus living in the US. "We are here, and we are fighting," Congressman Shri Thanedar said in his address at the day-long advocacy here. "The voice you all have, the voice the Hindu community has in Congress," said Thanedar, a Democrat, who has introduced House Resolution 1131 (H.Res 1131), which condemns Hinduphobia and attacks on temples, while celebrating the

contribution of the Hindu American community. He said that he would not tolerate Hinduphobia, discrimination, or other forms of hate. Congressman Rich McCormick welcomed the continued and growing engagement of the Hindu American and Indian American community in policy making and its potential to transform the future of America. The Republican Party lawmaker called attention to his support for House Resolution 1131, honouring the contributions of Hindu Americans, and asked the community to continue pursuing the American dream, which celebrates innovation, hard work, success, and its traditions. Republican Congressman Glen Grothman expressed solidarity with the community, and Congressman Ro Khanna celebrated the growth of the community's advocacy over the past decade. **PTI**

## Storms in Switzerland and Italy cause flooding and landslides, at least 4 dead

AP ■ BERLIN

Storms in Switzerland and northern Italy caused extensive flooding and landslides, leaving at least four people dead, authorities said Sunday. The bodies of three people were recovered following a landslide in the Fontana area of the Maggia valley in the Italian-speaking Ticino canton (state) on the southern side of the Alps. Storms and heavy rain pounded southern and western Switzerland on Saturday and overnight. Camping sites along the Maggia River were evacuated, and part of the small Visletto road bridge collapsed. One person was missing in the nearby Lavizzara valley. Further north, the Rhone River burst its banks in several areas of Valais canton, flooding a highway and a railway line.



Police said that side valleys south of the Rhone saw particularly heavy rain, and the body

of a man whose partner had reported him missing was found early Sunday at a hotel

in the Alpine resort of Saas-Grund. They said he is believed to have been caught by surprise by floodwaters. Another man has been missing since Saturday evening in the Bin area, in the upper Rhone valley near the Italian border, police said. Floods, thunderstorms and landslides also hit various regions in northern Italy. Firefighters said they carried out about 80 rescue operations, evacuating dozens of people in the northern Piedmont region. Between Montanaro and San Benigno Canavese, two adults and a 3-month-old girl were rescued after the rising waters of the Orco torrent left them stuck in their car, firefighters said. Several villages were isolated due to overflowing streams, storms and landslides in the Valle PES9

## Dangerous Hurricane Beryl restrengthens to Category four off Grenada

San Juan (AP): Hurricane Beryl closed in on the southeastern Caribbean late Sunday after strengthening into what experts called an "extremely dangerous" Category 4 storm, and government officials pleaded with people to take shelter. The storm was expected to make landfall in the Windward Islands on Monday morning. Hurricane warnings were in effect for Barbados, St. Lucia, Grenada, Tobago and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. "This is a very dangerous situation," warned the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami, saying Beryl was "forecast to bring life-threatening winds and storm surge." Beryl was centred about 150 miles (240 kilometres) southeast of Barbados late Sunday. It had maximum sustained winds of 130 mph (215 kph) and was moving west at 20 mph (31 kph). It is a compact storm, with hurricane-force winds extending 30 miles (45 kilometres) from its centre. A tropical storm warning was in effect for Martinique and Trinidad. A tropical storm watch was issued for Dominica,

Haiti's entire southern coast, and from Punta Palenque in the Dominican Republic west to the border with Haiti. Beryl was expected to pass just south of Barbados early Monday and then head into the Caribbean Sea as a major hurricane on a path toward Jamaica. It was forecast to weaken by midweek, but still remain a hurricane while heading toward Mexico. Beryl initially strengthened into a Category 3 hurricane Sunday morning, becoming the first major hurricane east of the Lesser Antilles on record for June, according to Philip Klotzbach, Colorado State University hurricane researcher. It took Beryl only 42 hours to strengthen from a tropical depression to a major hurricane — a feat accomplished only six other times in Atlantic hurricane history, and with September 1 as the previous earliest date, hurricane expert Sam Lillo said. Beryl then gained more power, becoming the earliest Category 4 Atlantic hurricane on record, besting Hurricane Dennis, which became a Category 4 storm on July 8, 2005, hurricane specialist and storm surge expert Michael

Lowry said. "Beryl is an extremely dangerous and rare hurricane for this time of year in this area," Lowry said in a phone interview. "Unusual is an understatement. Beryl is already a historic hurricane and it hasn't struck yet." Hurricane Ivan in 2004 was the last strong hurricane to hit the southeastern Caribbean, causing catastrophic damage in Grenada as a Category 3 storm. "So this is a serious threat, a very serious threat," Lowry said of Beryl. Reecia Marshall, who lives in Grenada, was working a Sunday shift at a local hotel, preparing guests and urging them to stay away from windows as she stored enough food and water for everyone. She said that she was a child when Hurricane Ivan struck and that she doesn't fear Beryl. "I know it's part of nature. I'm OK with it," she said. "We just have to live with it." Forecasters warned of a life-threatening storm surge of up to 9 feet (3 metres) in areas where Beryl makes landfall, with up to 6 inches (15 centimetres) of rain for Barbados and nearby islands.



# China deploys second aircraft carrier

PTI ■ BEIJING

China has deployed its second aircraft carrier 'Shandong' which was spotted patrolling waters off the Philippine coast as Manila stepped up efforts to assert its claims over a shoal in the disputed South China Sea firmly opposing Beijing's counter-claims. Shandong, an aircraft carrier with a displacement of about 70,000 tonnes, was seen patrolling the waters of the Philippines which serves as a deterrent against "continuous Philippine provocations" on Chinese islands and reefs in the South China Sea, state-run Global Times media reported on Monday. The aircraft carrier is likely on a scheduled exercise that could also prepare it for a potential far sea voyage into the West Pacific, it quoted Chinese experts as saying. Shandong's deployment comes after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) deployed major surface combat ships, including large and medium destroyers as well as

the main amphibious landing ship in the South China Sea as the maritime territorial conflict with Manila escalated. Ni Lexiong, a defence professor in the Department of Political Science at Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, was quoted by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post as saying that the Shandong's passage was meant to be a deterrent to Manila and Washington and underline "China's determination to protect territorial sea sovereignty" amid tensions over the Second Thomas Shoal. Chester Cabalza, president and founder of International Development and Security Cooperation, a Manila-based think tank, said the carrier's patrol was an example of "performative politics" by Beijing that could become a frequent event. If so, it "would mean that there is a red flag on their national security", he said, adding that "once we see massive military force, that means that Beijing is preparing for a war", the Post reported.

## SOUTH CHINA SEA TENSION

ed. The China-Philippines confrontation to assert their claims in the disputed South China Sea took a violent turn last month as their naval ships collided in the first such incident after Beijing issued new rules to act against foreign vessels and detain foreigners "suspected of violating" regulations in the Chinese waters. A few weeks ago, a Philippines naval ship and a Chinese vessel collided near the Second Thomas Shoal of the South China Sea claimed by Manila. The navies and the coast guards of the two countries were having face-offs in the last few months as the Philippines, backed by the US, made a strong bid to assert its claims over the Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea (SCS) claimed by China. China claims most of the South China Sea (SCS) which the Philippines, Malaysia,

Vietnam, Brunei and Taiwan hotly dispute. China alleges that the Philippines deliberately ran a naval ship aground in 1999 at the Second Thomas Shoal, which it calls Renai Jiao, and converted the damaged ship into a permanent installation manned by naval personnel. The Philippines, backed by the US, is trying to assert its claims over the SCS based on the 2016 ruling by a tribunal of the UN Convention of Law of Seas, (UNCLOS) endorsing its rights. China, which boycotted the tribunal, however, rejected the tribunal findings and fiercely asserted its claims. Last month, China promulgated a new law authorising its coast guard to seize foreign ships that illegally enter China's territorial waters and to detain foreign crews for up to 60 days. The law empowers China's coast guard to fire upon foreign ships if necessary. For its part, the US has

deployed the mid-range Typhon missile systems in the Philippines as a show of strength for its backing for Manila's claims. The Philippines has also imported India's Brahmos missiles. China currently has two aircraft carriers, Liaoning, which was a refit of the Soviet-era ship, and Shandong, which is an indigenously built 2nd aircraft carrier commissioned in 2019. China's third aircraft carrier Fujian, which is larger than the two carriers with a displacement of 80,000, is currently undergoing trials. It is the "first fully domestically developed and constructed" aircraft carrier with an electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) similar to that of the American aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford according to official media reports. China's other two aircraft carriers are equipped with ski-jump take-off ramps while the Fujian features a flat-top flight deck. China operates its indigenously built J-15 aircraft for its carriers.



A propane tank explosion at a restaurant in the western Turkish city of Izmir on Sunday left five people dead and 63 others injured, authorities said. Security cameras recorded the explosion, which devastated the street and caused minor damage to surrounding buildings. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya announced on social media that dozens of rescue personnel were immediately dispatched to the scene. Izmir Gov. Suleyman Elban visited the injured at the hospital and announced that 40 of them had already been released. Authorities have detained one suspect who might be responsible. The man had replaced the propane tank with a new one on Saturday

AP/PTI

## Bolivian president orchestrated 'self-coup,' Evo Morales claims

La Paz, Bolivia (AP): Former Bolivian President Evo Morales on Sunday accused his political ally-turned-rival President Luis Arce of deceiving the Bolivian people by staging a "self-coup" last week to earn political points among the electorate, marking a sharp downturn in an already fraught relationship. Morales was initially among the country's most powerful voices to say that approximately 200 members of the military who marched on Bolivia's government palace alongside armoured vehicles on Wednesday had attempted a "coup d'état."

"We are convinced that democracy is the only way to resolve any difference and that institutions and the rule of law must be respected," Morales wrote in a post on the social media platform X on the day of the military action. "We reiterate the call for all those involved in this riot to be arrested and tried." But on Sunday, Morales joined others who believe Arce himself orchestrated a "self coup" to win the sympathy of Bolivians at a time when his popularity is extremely low. Arce "disrespected the truth, deceived us, lied, not only to the Bolivian people but to the whole world," Morales said in a local broadcast program on Sunday. Morales is throwing his support behind an accusation made by former Gen. Juan José Zúñiga, who allegedly led the coup attempt. Morales said Zúñiga informed colleagues and family of his plan before carrying it out, and that while in custody he told authorities that Arce had "betrayed" him. "The president told me: The situation is very screwed up, very critical. It is necessary to prepare something to raise my popularity," Zúñiga quoted the Bolivian leader as saying. That theory was quickly adopted by Arce's political enemies, who dubbed it a "self-coup." "At some point the truth will be known," a handcuffed Gen. Juan José Zúñiga told reporters while being transferred to prison Saturday. Morales called for an independent investigation into the Wednesday military action in a post on X on Sunday.

## Ukraine's convicts offered release at high price: Joining the fight against Russia

AP ■ DNIPROPETROVSK REGION

At a rural penal colony in southeast Ukraine, several convicts stand assembled under barbed wire to hear an army recruiter offer them a shot at parole. In return, they must join the gruelling fight against Russia. "You can put an end to this and start a new life," said the recruiter, a member of a volunteer assault battalion. "The main thing is your will, because you are going to defend the motherland. You won't succeed at 50 per cent, you have to give 100 per cent of yourself, even 150 per cent." Ukraine is expanding the draft to cope with acute battlefield shortages more than two years into fighting against Russia's full-scale invasion. And its recruiting efforts have turned, for the first time, to the country's prison population. Although Ukraine does not announce any details of troop deployment numbers or casualties, frontline commanders openly acknowledge that they

are facing serious manpower problems as Russia continues to build up forces in eastern Ukraine and make incremental gains westward. More than 3,000 prisoners already have been released on parole and assigned to military units after such recruitment was approved by parliament in a controversial mobilisation bill last month, Ukrainian Deputy Justice Minister Olena Vysotska told The Associated Press. About 27,000 inmates could potentially be eligible for the new program, according to Justice Ministry estimates. "A lot of the motivation comes from (inmates) wanting to return home a hero, and not to return home from prison," Vysotska said. Ernest Volvach, 27, wants to take up the offer. He's serving a two-year sentence for robbery, at the penal colony in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region. He works in the kitchen, ladling dollops of food into tin bowls. "It's stupid to sit here doing nothing," Volvach said, adding

that since the start of the war he's wanted to "do something for Ukraine" and have the opportunity to enlist. "Now it's appeared." Ukrainian soldiers on active duty are typically identified only by their first name, or a call sign, for security reasons. Many of the inmates at the Dnipropetrovsk penal colony also asked to be identified only by their first names to avoid difficulties if they enlist. Another inmate, 30, who gave his name only as Volodymyr, makes rivets at a penal colony workshop. He said he plans to volunteer after his sentence ends in one year, but wouldn't do so now because there's effectively no home leave under the parole program. Prisoners can get the conditional release after an interview, medical exam, and a review of their conviction. Those convicted of rape, sexual assault, murdering two or more people or crimes against Ukraine's national security aren't eligible. Ukrainian officials are keen to draw a distinction between

their program and recruitment in Russia of convicts to serve in the notorious Wagner mercenary group. Those fighters typically have been funnelled to the deadliest battles, the officials say, but the Ukrainian program aims to integrate the inmates into regular Ukrainian frontline units. The country has a prison population of some 42,000, according to figures forwarded by the government to the European Union. While recent reforms have reduced the number of prisoners and are credited with improving conditions at some facilities, the US State Department noted credible reports of "degrading treatment or punishment" by prison authorities in its annual report on human rights last year. After screening, paroled inmates are rushed to basic training at camps where they learn how to handle weapons and other combat fundamentals. Training is completed later once they join the individual units.

## Nepal's Prachanda-led govt faces uncertainty amidst Deuba-Oli talk

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

A high-level meeting between Nepal's two largest parties - Nepali Congress and CPN-UML - has led to fresh speculation that days of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'-led government are numbered. Nepali Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba went to the residence of Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman and former prime minister K P Sharma Oli, who is part of the ruling coalition, on Saturday to discuss the latest political situation in the politically fragile country. Although the details of the closed-door meeting have not been made public, there is speculation among some political circles that the two leaders might have discussed the formation of a new coalition government to oust Prachanda. Oli, eying premiership once again, was unhappy with the recent budget allocations made by the government for fiscal

year 2024-25, which he had publicly spoken about. However, sources close to Prime Minister Prachanda have dismissed "rumours about change in the power equation", saying that the two top leaders of the ruling alliance CPN-Maoist Centre chairman Prachanda and CPN-UML chairman Oli are determined to continue the present coalition for the full term. Prachanda and Oli held two meetings on Sunday and Monday at the Prime Minister's Office at Baluwatar during which "the two leaders discussed the latest political situation and ways to strengthen the present coalition government," claimed Prime Minister's Press advisor Govinda Acharya. The two leaders discussed ways to make the performance of the government more efficient and take forward the ongoing coalition government in a consolidated manner, he said. "There is no truth in rumours about a change in the present coalition government and formation of a new

alliance," he added. The two leaders agreed to include some other political parties like Nagarik Unmukti Party which voted in favour of the government during the vote of confidence in the government, he said. Despite having taken a vote of confidence in Parliament thrice, Prime Minister Prachanda in his one-and-a-half-year term, the country is still plagued by political instability, pointed out Gunaraj Luitel, chief editor of Nagarik Daily. Political stability will be maintained only if the largest party in the Parliament Nepali Congress and the second largest party CPN-UML join hands and share power, argued Luitel. "It seems unnatural when the third largest party Maoist Centre is steering the government and the largest party NC is sitting in the opposition," he added. The Nepali Congress has 89 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives whereas CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist Centre have secured 78 and 32 seats respectively.

## Female suicide bombers kill 18 in Nigeria attack

AP ■ NIGERIA

Female suicide bombers targeted a wedding, a funeral, and a hospital in coordinated attacks in northern Nigeria that killed at least 18 people, local authorities said Sunday. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks in Borno state, which has been heavily affected by the insurgency launched in 2009 by Boko Haram. The extremist group previously has used women and girls in suicide bombings, prompting suspicions that some attackers come from the many thousands of people the militants have kidnapped over the years, including schoolchildren. The first suicide bomber detonated a device during a marriage celebration in the north-eastern town of Gwoza, Barkindo Saidu, director-general of the Borno State Emergency Management Agency, told reporters. "Minutes later, another blast

occurred near General Hospital," Saidu said, and the third bomber at the funeral service was disguised as a mourner. Children and pregnant women were among those killed. At least 30 others were wounded, and, Saidu said, injuries included abdominal ruptures and skull fractures. Nigerian President Bola Tinubu said in a statement that the attacks were "desperate acts of terror" and "an isolated episode." The insurgency, which has spilled across borders around Lake Chad, has killed more than 35,000 people, displaced 2.6 million others and created a humanitarian crisis. Boko Haram, with one branch allied to the Islamic State group, wants to install an Islamic state in Nigeria, West Africa's oil giant of 170 million people divided almost equally between a mainly Christian south and a predominantly Muslim north.

reported. The increase in petroleum product prices has been based on the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority's (Ogra) recommendations and with the prime minister's approval, The Express Tribune said. The new ex-depot petrol price for July 1 to 15 would be Pakistani Rs 265.61 per litre compared to Rs 258.16 in the previous fortnight, up by 2.9 per cent, the Dawn reported. However, petrol would be available for over Pakistani Rs 266 per litre in the retail market, it said. On the other hand, the new ex-depot price of HSD is Pakistani Rs 277.45 per litre, or 3.6 per cent higher than the Pakistani Rs 267.89 over the past fortnight. Hours before the price hike announcement, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb announced on Sunday evening that the petroleum levy would not be increased. Although its ceiling

## Petrol and high-speed diesel prices hiked in Pak after Eid

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Weeks after slashing the prices of fuel ahead of the Eid ul Adha festival, the cash-strapped Pakistan government on Monday sharply hiked their prices for the next fortnight as it began the new fiscal year. According to a notification, the prices of petrol and High-Speed Diesel (HSD) were raised by Rs 7.45 and Rs 9.56 per litre respectively on the first day of a tax-laden budget for 2024-25. The Express Tribune newspaper reported. Last month, the government slashed the prices of petrol and HSD by Pakistani Rs 10.20 and Pakistani Rs 2.33 per litre respectively, ahead of Eid ul Adha. The Ministry of Finance in a late-night announcement said the prices of petroleum products have seen an increasing trend in the international market during the last fortnight, the Dawn newspaper

had been increased to Pakistani Rs 70 per litre in the budget from Pakistani Rs 60 to create "headroom" for the future, the Dawn reported. Officials said the prices of petrol and HSD had increased in the international market by about USD 4.4 and USD 5.5 per barrel, respectively, in the last fortnight, the report said. Since May 1, the prices of both petrol and HSD have been going down mainly because of a slump in the international market. Petrol prices dropped by nearly Pakistani Rs 35 to about Pakistani Rs 259 per litre on April 30. Likewise, the HSD price came down by about Pakistani Rs 22 to Pakistani Rs 268 per litre in the second fortnight of April. Finance Minister Aurangzeb on Sunday conceded that the people were stressed due to new taxes imposed in the budget after his revenue measures were criticised by almost everyone.

leader re-elected Secy Gen of Workers' Party

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore's Indian-origin leader of Opposition Pritam Singh has been re-elected secretary-general of the Workers' Party (WP), ahead of the city-state's next general election. A total of 14 members, led by re-elected chairwoman Sylvia Lim, were voted into the Central Executive Committee (CEC) — the top decision-making body of the Workers' Party (WP). Singh, 48, was elected unopposed on Sunday. He has been WP's secretary-general since 2018. "Fantastic result. We're looking forward to working with this CEC for the next two years," Singh told reporters. "This wasn't about candidature, this was an internal party election, so my comments will

be restricted to that," Channel News Asia quoted Singh as saying. Media reports say the WP CEC, elected for two years, is set for the city-state's next general election, which has to be called by November 2025 but could be held earlier, sometime in November this year. Singh was charged in court on March 19 for lying in Parliament about a case involving former WP member Raeesah Khan. Khan had allegedly lied in Parliament in 2021 over a sexual assault case and accused the police of mishandling the case. Singh, who has pleaded not guilty to the charges, is set to go on trial in October. His trial is set for October and November, media reports said, citing court records on May 31.

## Veteran SL politician & Tamil leader passes away

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Rampathan, a veteran Sri Lankan politician and a moderate Tamil leader, who relentlessly pursued a life of peace, justice and dignity for Tamil nationals in the island nation, passed away on Sunday night. Rampathan, 91, passed away while receiving treatment in a hospital, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) announced. Rampathan led the TNA from 2004 and became only the second Tamil to become the main opposition leader in the Sinhala-majority country. He was ailing for a long time and had missed the current parliamentary sessions for a long time. In a message, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe said that

He will be deeply missed by his friends and followers in Sri Lanka and India," Modi wrote. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar consoled Rampathan's death on X, noting that he dedicated his entire life to fighting for equality, dignity and justice for Tamils in the island nation. "Deeply saddened to hear about the passing away of Sri Lankan Tamil leader Shri R. Rampathan," he said. "Recall my many meetings and conversations with him over several decades. He dedicated his entire life fighting for the equality, dignity and justice for Tamils in Sri Lanka. Condolences to his family and followers," he said. Indian High Commissioner Santosh Jha also took to X and said the veteran politician would be remembered for his

"seminal contribution to the Sri Lankan Tamil cause" and "goodwill towards India." "Deeply saddened at the demise of TNA leader Shri R Rampathan. Met & interacted with him on many occasions," Jha said in a post. "He will be remembered for his seminal contribution to the Sri Lankan Tamil cause & for his goodwill towards India. Heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones," he said. Former Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa also consoled the politician's passing. "My deepest condolences on the passing of TNA Leader R. Rampathan. He was an old friend and colleague and we shared many a day discussing various issues. His demise is a loss to Sri Lanka political fraternity and may his family &

friends overcome this sad loss," he said in a post on X. Sri Lankan Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa also mourned the loss. "Today, we mourn the loss of Mr. Rampathan, who served Sri Lanka for over half a century. His dedication to equal rights for all Sri Lankans is a beacon of hope. His fair and just leadership will continue to inspire me and many others. Truly, it is the end of an era," he said in a post on X. "Deeply saddened to hear of the passing of MP R. Rampathan, a veteran Tamil politician who worked to create a cohesive, peaceful society within Sri Lanka. His advocacy for equal rights for minorities helped advance broader human rights for all Sri Lankan citizens and encouraged unity. On behalf of the United States,

I extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and loved ones," said US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Julie Chung. Rampathan was a moderate Tamil who had been leading the political movement to achieve a negotiated political settlement to the Tamil demand for political autonomy. The Tamils put forward their demand for autonomy since gaining independence from Britain in 1948, which, from the mid-70s, turned into a bloody armed conflict. He took office as the leader of the opposition in 2015 and was actively involved in the process of drafting a new Constitution until 2019. A brilliant lawyer, Rampathan entered Parliament for the first time in 1977 from the eastern port district of Trincomalee.

**उत्तराखण्ड सहकारी चीनी मिल्स संघ लि०**

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पत्रांक- 446 / क्रम / 22 / 2024-25 दिनांक-01 जुलाई, 2024

**चार्टर्ड एकाउन्टेन्ट की नियुक्ति हेतु विज्ञापित**

उत्तराखण्ड शुगरर्स के अधीनस्थ सहकारी एवं सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की चार चीनी मिलों क्रमशः किच्छा / बाजपुर / नादेही / डोईवाला में वित्तीय वर्ष 2024-25, 2025-26 व 2026-27 में वाह्य चार्टर्ड एकाउन्टेन्ट के स्तर से लेखा सम्बन्धी कार्यों क्रमशः- कम्प्यूटरीकृत लेखांकन का कार्य, इन्वेन्ट्री का कार्य एवं पर्यवेक्षण के कार्यों हेतु इच्छुक चार्टर्ड एकाउन्टेन्ट फर्मों के आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं।

उपरोक्त वांछित कार्य सम्पादन हेतु इच्छुक फर्म / संस्था अपने पक्ष में विभागीय वेबसाइट ([www.uttarakhandsugars.com](http://www.uttarakhandsugars.com)) में अंकित विवरणानुसार अनुभव / पंजीकरण सम्बन्धी प्रश्न एवं वांछित अभिलेखों को संलग्न करते हुए अपने दर प्रस्ताव विज्ञापित प्रकाशित होने के तिथि से 10 दिवस अर्थात् दिनांक-11.07.2024 की सांय 04:00 बजे तक पंजीकृत डाक एवं स्वयं के माध्यम से उत्तराखण्ड शुगरर्स कार्यालय में जमा कराना होगा। तिथि समाप्त होने के उपरान्त किसी भी चार्टर्ड एकाउन्टेन्ट फर्म के आवेदन पत्र पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

प्रबन्ध निदेशक, उत्तराखण्ड शुगरर्स देहरादून को किसी एक अथवा सभी प्रस्तावों को विना कारण बताये निरस्त करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित रहेगा। प्रस्तावों से सम्बन्धित नियम एवं शर्तें कार्यालय की वेबसाइट ([www.uttarakhandsugars.com](http://www.uttarakhandsugars.com)) पर उपलब्ध हैं।

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**प्रबन्ध निदेशक**



# Sensex, Nifty hit fresh record

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rose by 443 points to close at a new record high while Nifty settled above the 24,100 mark on Monday on buying in banking and IT shares in line with gains in Asian and European markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex settled higher by 443.46 points or 0.56 per cent at an all-time high of 79,476.19. During the day, the barometer soared 528.27 points or 0.66 per cent to 79,561. The broader Nifty rose by 131.35 points or 0.55 per cent to close at a fresh lifetime high of 24,141.95. Intra-day, the index hit a high of 24,164, just 10 points short of its lifetime high of 24,174 hit on Friday.

Among Sensex shares, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consultancy Services, JSW Steel, Infosys, HDFC Bank,



Tata Motors and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled higher. European markets were trading with gains. US markets ended lower on

laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled higher. European markets were trading with gains. US markets ended lower on

Friday. "The domestic market sustained its upward momentum, with a reduction in US PCE inflation raising hopes for a rate cut by the US Fed in September. This optimism contributed to the strong performance of IT stocks," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.51 per cent to USD 85.43 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 23.09 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. The BSE benchmark declined 210.45 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 79,032.73 on Friday. During the day, it jumped 428.4 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a fresh record trading peak of 79,671.58. The Nifty went lower by 33.90 points or 0.14 per cent to 24,010.60. During the day, it climbed 129.5 points or 0.53 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 24,174.

# GST reduced tax rates on household goods, brought happiness, relief to every home: FinMin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Goods and Services Tax (GST), which completed 7 years of implementation on Monday, has brought happiness and relief to every home through reduced taxes on household appliances and mobile phones, the finance ministry said on Monday. GST, which subsumed about 17 local tax and cesses, was rolled out on July 1, 2017. The theme of the 7th GST Day is Sashakt Vyapar Samagra Vikas (empowered trade overall growth). "With reduced tax rates on household goods after GST implementation, #7yearsofGST has brought happiness and relief to every home through lower GST on household appliances and mobile phones," the ministry said in a post on X. The GST taxpayer base has increased to 1.46 crore in April 2024 from 1.05 crore as



consumption after GST implementation. The rate of food items like unpacked wheat, rice, curd, and lassi, which were taxed at 2.5-4 per cent before GST implementation, is at nil after the GST rollout. Household goods like cosmetics, wrist watches, sanitary plastic ware, doors and windows, furniture and mattresses are taxed at a lower rate of 18 per cent in the GST regime, lower than 28 per cent in the erstwhile excise and

VAT regime. The ministry said mobile phones, TVs up to 32 inches, refrigerators, washing machines electrical appliances (other than air conditioners), geysers and fans which attracted 31.3 per cent taxes in the pre-GST era, are now in the 18 per cent tax slab in GST regime. It further said the compliance burden was reduced for small taxpayers, and the GST Council has recommended to waive off annual return filing requirement for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 2 crore in fiscal 2023-24. The quarterly return filing and monthly payment of taxes (QRMP) scheme has reduced the number of returns filed in a year from 24 to 8, for more than 44 lakh small taxpayers, IFF (Invoice furnishing Facility) ensured seamless passage of ITC (Input Tax Credit), the ministry added.

# TVS Mobility arm acquires Italy-based automotive components supplier



PTI ■ MUMBAI

TVS Mobility group on Monday said its subsidiary SI Air Springs has acquired Italy-based automotive components supplier Roberto Nuti Group, which will help it broaden the product range and strengthen its position in the global market. The pact between the two partners includes the 100 per cent purchase of Roberto Nuti Group by TVS Mobility indirectly, through its wholly-owned Indian subsidiary, SI Air Springs Private Limited and investments appropriate to the full re-launch of the company, TVS Mobility group said in a statement. It also said that both companies will continue to operate normally during the integration period. TVS Mobility has a well-established presence in Europe with some of the other businesses that are part of the group such as TVS Supply Chain Solutions and TVS Srichakra Ltd. Following this collaboration, the Bologna (Italy)-based group will now operate on a more international scale, benefiting from the market and product leadership of TVS Mobility, it said. "This acquisition marks a

significant step in our global expansion strategy, allowing us to combine our distinctive skills in air spring business with the Nuti Group's suspension systems expertise," said P Srinivasavaradhan, Director of SI Air Springs. SI Air Springs, which operates from Madurai in Tamil Nadu provides air spring solutions to major commercial vehicles, Bus OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers), trailer manufacturers Tier 1 suspension System suppliers and Indian Railways. On the other hand, Roberto Nuti Group produces and distributes shock absorbers and air springs for the aftermarket mainly for industrial and commercial vehicles. "We are excited about the international growth potential this agreement brings us and we are confident that partnering with SI Air Springs will allow us to take advantage of their capabilities. "Both companies will continue to operate normally during the integration period, and we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for all our stakeholders," said Luca Randighieri, General Manager at the Nuti Group.

# FirstCry's parent firm Brainbees Solutions gets Sebi's go ahead to float IPO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Brainbees Solutions Ltd, the parent firm of online e-commerce platform FirstCry, has received Sebi's approval to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO), an update with the markets regulator showed on Monday. According to the fresh draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), Pune-based Brainbees Solutions' proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares, aggregating up to Rs 1,816 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 5.44 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. Under the OFS, SVF Frog, a Cayman Islands-registered entity of Softbank, will sell 2.03 crore equity shares of

January and May 2024 -- obtained the regulator's observations during June 25-28, according to the update. In Sebi's parlance, obtaining its observations means its approval to float the public issue. According to the fresh draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), Pune-based Brainbees Solutions' proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares, aggregating up to Rs 1,816 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 5.44 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. Under the OFS, SVF Frog, a Cayman Islands-registered entity of Softbank, will sell 2.03 crore equity shares of



Brainbees Solutions Ltd, and automaker Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) will offload 28.06 lakh shares of the company. Currently, Softbank holds a

25.55 per cent stake in Brainbees Solutions, and M&M owns a 10.98 per cent stake in the multi-brand retailing platform. Apart from Softbank and

M&M, other entities selling shares in the OFS are PI Opportunities Fund, TPG, NewQuest Asia Investments, Apricot Investments, Valiant Mauritius, TIMF Holdings, Think India Opportunities Fund and Schroders Capital. Brainbees Solutions re-filed preliminary papers with Sebi in May after the company was directed by the regulator to re-file the draft papers, citing insufficient disclosure of key performance indicators (KPIs), market sources had said. The company's key performance indicators include its number of orders, average order value and annual transacting customers.

Unicommerce's issue is entirely an offer for sale (OFS) aggregating up to 2.98 crore equity shares by the selling shareholders. Under the OFS, SB Investment Holdings (UK) Ltd, an affiliate of Japan's SoftBank, will offload 1.61 crore shares, promoter AceVector Limited (formerly known as Snapdeal Limited) will sell up to 1.14 crore shares, and B2 Capital Partners will be selling up to 22 lakh shares. Since the IPO is completely an OFS, the entire proceeds will go to the selling shareholders. Shares of these four companies will be listed on the BSE and NSE.

# Rupee falls 11 paise to 83.45 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 11 paise to settle at 83.45 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking rising crude oil prices in international markets. However, a firm trend in domestic equity markets, positive manufacturing PMI data and a weak US dollar against major currencies overseas capped the sharp fall, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.39 and moved between the high of 83.38 and the low of 83.47 against the greenback during the session. The unit finally settled at 83.45 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 11 paise from its previous closing level. On Friday, the rupee settled 11 paise higher at 83.34 against the US dollar. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the rupee depreciated on a surge in US treasury yields and rising crude oil prices. Oil prices were hovering at nearly two-month high levels while the US bond yields above 4 per cent pressurised Asian



currencies. However, positive domestic markets and a rise in manufacturing PMI supported the rupee. Choudhary further said the rupee is likely to trade with a slight positive bias on gains in domestic markets and expectations of fresh foreign inflows. "Traders may take cues from ISM manufacturing PMI and construction spending data from the US. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.10 to Rs 83.70," he added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 105.24, lower by 0.28 per cent. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.41 per cent to USD 85.35 per

barrel. In the domestic equity market, The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 443.46 points, or 0.56 per cent, to close at 79,476.19 points. The broader NSE Nifty settled 131.35 points, or 0.55 per cent, higher at 24,141.95 points. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) increased from 57.5 in May to 58.3 in June, indicating a sharper improvement in business conditions. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Friday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 23.09 crore, according to exchange data. India's forex reserves jumped by USD 816 million to USD 653.711 billion in the week ended June 21, the RBI said on Friday. In the previous week, the overall reserves had dropped by USD 2.922 billion to USD 652.895 billion. The central government's fiscal deficit was 3 per cent of the annual estimates at May-end 2024-25, the first two months of the financial year during which model code of conduct was in place due to Lok Sabha elections.

# ATF price hiked 1.2%, commercial LPG cut by ₹30

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jet fuel or ATF price on Monday was hiked by 1.2 per cent while that of commercial LPG used by hotels and restaurants cut by Rs 30 per 19-kg cylinder in line with international oil price trends. Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was hiked by Rs 1,179.37 per kilolitre, or 1.2 per cent, to Rs 96,148.38 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. The increase followed a steep 6.5 per cent (Rs 6,673.87 per kl) reduction effected on June 1. The ATF rate in Mumbai was increased to Rs 89,908.30 per kl from Rs 88,834.27. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Alongside, oil firms cut the price of commercial LPG by Rs 30 to Rs 1,646 per 19-kg cylinder. This is the fourth straight monthly reduction in rates. The price was last cut by Rs 69 per cylinder on June 1. Prior to that, rates were on



May 1 reduced by Rs 19 per cylinder, and by Rs 30.5 on April 1. Rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on 1st of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate. Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut by Rs 2 per litre in mid-March. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62.

# Gold flat at ₹72,350 per 10g, silver rises by ₹200

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices traded flat at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams while silver gained Rs 200 per kg in the local market on Monday, according to HDFC Securities. Silver prices rose by Rs 200 to Rs 90,300 per kg from the previous close of Rs 90,100 per kg. "In Delhi markets, spot gold prices (24 carats) are trading flat at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams, unchanged from the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said. In the overseas markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,327 per ounce, slightly up USD 1 from the previous close. Gold struggled to find direction on Monday and moved in a narrow range above the USD 2,320 level during the European trading session, Gandhi said. "...Traders appear cautious about making aggressive directional bets given uncertainties about the US Federal Reserve's interest rate-cutting plan, resulting in sluggish range-bound price activity," he added.

# Digi Yatra policy should spell out all rules on passenger info deletion, suggests study

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The policy for Digi Yatra — a digital platform to verify air travellers using biometric data — needs to spell out all the rules related to deletion of passenger information from the database once the travel is complete, according to a study instituted by NITI Aayog. There have been privacy concerns in various quarters about Digi Yatra user data. Based on Facial Recognition Technology (FRT), Digi Yatra provides for contactless and seamless movement of passengers at various checkpoints at airports. As per the policy for Digi Yatra, facial biometrics are deleted from the local airport's database 24 hours after the departure of the

passenger's flight. "However, the rules related to deletion of other information collected from the passengers, as well as any facial biometrics that are stored in other registries, must be clearly set out in the policy," the study said. Digi Yatra envisages an identity management ecosystem for Indian airports, which can enhance the capabilities of Indian civil aviation infrastructure, digitise manual processes at airports, improve security standards and lower the cost of operations of airports. "While the Digi Yatra Policy states that it is completely voluntary in nature, if the use of Digi Yatra is made mandatory in any way then the same must comply with the principles laid down in



K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (case) relating to the constitutional right to privacy. The study recommended that there must be frequent

cybersecurity audits and vulnerability testing of the Digi Yatra platform to ensure that reliability, usability, information security in the

ecosystem is a subject of continuous engagement and is adaptive to the rapidly evolving threats that exist in this sphere. In addition to cybersecurity audits, it is imperative to establish a mechanism for performing algorithmic audits by independent and accredited auditors, prior to system deployment at periodic intervals, it added. According to the study, the Digi Yatra SOP must specify timelines and purposes for retention of different types of data within the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem, beyond which personal data is deleted. "Internal SOPs for handling personal and sensitive personal data must be identified," it said. The study also noted that there must be a provision for

the ongoing monitoring of the performance of the entire system. It also suggested that the use of facial recognition data and other relevant subject data for providing value-added services should only be activated through an opt-in rather than an opt-out method of consent with an ability to revoke consent at any time. Digi Yatra proposes use of FRT to authenticate a passenger's travel credentials, which allows other checkpoints at an airport to be operated in an automated form with minimal human involvement. The use of FRT prima facie has the potential to streamline operations at airports and provide tangible benefits to the civil aviation ecosystem.

Amid persisting concerns over user data privacy, the Digi Yatra Foundation, in April, said the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem (DYCE) never stores any of the ID credentials data, which has Personally Identifiable Information (PII) anywhere in any central repository. The foundation is the nodal agency for the app. In India, as part of its efforts to improve travel experience, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has initiated the Digi Yatra programme using the FRT, and facial verification technology (FVT) to be used at different process points. FRT refers to an AI system that allows identification or verification of a person based on certain images or video data interfacing with the underlying algorithm.





# NEERAJ CHOPRA OPTS OUT OF PARIS DIAMOND LEAGUE: REPORT

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Olympic and world champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has opted out of this Sunday's Paris Diamond League, citing the adductor niggle that has been troubling him for the past couple of months, according to a report. Speaking to ESPN, Chopra said he is focussing on training and strengthening his blocking leg. "I need to strengthen my blocking leg when I throw because that's when my groin

gets pulled. We're working on that to see how we can reduce the impact on the groin and control the pressure on it," he said, explaining the issue for which he will consult "different doctors" after the Paris Games. "I could have competed in more events for sure and that was the plan. But I have realised that my health is paramount, that comes first. Even if I feel the slightest discomfort or like I am pushing myself too much in training, I've learnt to pause for a bit," he added.

The block phase is a crucial maneuver as it is the point at which the pace generated by the run-up is transferred to the hip and then to the throwing arm before the javelin is sent flying. Chopra, who topped the field in last month's Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, with a throw of 85.97m, said he has become wiser over the years and no longer puts himself at risk to fulfill commitments like he used to do before his Olympic gold. "Back then, if I had an entry in

a competition, I would definitely go and compete no matter what happened. But now with more experience, I am better placed to make correct decisions," he said. "I was happy with my performance in Turku, but I felt there was more work to do. I was slow on the runway compared to my normal speed. I want that speed back and for that, I need proper confidence that I am fully fit and that my groin is fit. I want to feel confident when I run on the runway," he pointed out.

# Praggnanandhaa misses against Wesley So on another day of draws



**PTI ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA)**  
Grandmaster Praggnanandhaa yet again squandered promising position to settle for a draw against American Wesley So in the fifth round of Superbet Classic tournament as none of the five boards produced any decisive result, here. The lead positions remained unchanged with Fabiano Caruana of United States still ahead on 3.5 points, enjoying a half point lead over world championship challenger D Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa. French duo of Alireza Firouzja and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia and Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan. Local hopeful Deac Bogdan-Daniel is still at the bottom with 1.5 points. Gukesh also enjoyed some advantage that slipped away against Abdusattorov while Vachier-Lagrave played solidly to hold Caruana. Bogdan-Daniel drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi in the 10-

player double round-robin event, offering USD 350000 as prize money. Praggnanandhaa is usually spot-on when it comes to accurate calculation or tactics but somehow here he has been missing on advantageous positions and also some winning moves. Having missed out on a technically winning endgame against Gukesh, Wesley So found himself lucky as the Indian missed a not-so-difficult manoeuvre that he would find in seconds on another day. Inspired by the presence of Garry Kasparov in the playing hall, Praggnanandhaa chose the King's Indian defense as black, faced the Fianchetto variation and did not have many troubles in maintaining the balance. Wesley became a little ambitious towards the final stages of the middle game and this is where Praggnanandhaa could have penetrated his king side decisively. Wesley survived with the skin of his teeth. Gukesh also had a chance

against Nodirbek through a tactical stroke that would have ensured consistent pressure and a long-term advantage. The game was drawn without much ado once Gukesh missed out on the opportunity. Caruana showed his opening expertise to hold Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in a Ruy Lopez open. The American went for a little known variation as black and it was clear that his home-work ran deep. Vachier-Lagrave decided not to take his chances for too long and drew wide repetition in just 28 moves. Monday is the only rest day in the tournament and the sixth round will be played on Tuesday. Results round 3: D Gukesh (Ind, 3) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 2.5); Wesley So (Usa, 2.5) drew with R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 3); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 2.5) drew with Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 3.5); Anish Giri (Ned, 2) drew with Firouzja Alireza (Fra, 2.5); Deac Bogdan-Daniel (Rou, 1.5) drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi (FID, 2.5).



# Canada Open: Fourth seed Lakshya Sen hopes to regain form as defending champion

**PTI ■ CALGARY (CANADA)**  
With fond memories of his past, defending champion Lakshya Sen will look to end his title drought when he begins his campaign at the Canada Open badminton tournament here on Tuesday. The world No 14 Sen is the only Indian competing in the BWF World Tour Super 500 meet who will compete in the Paris Olympics. The reigning Commonwealth Games gold medallist's form has slipped since his Canada Open triumph around this time last year as he is yet to win a title since then. Sen will look to find his rhythm back as he gears up for the Paris Olympics, which begins in less than a month's time. With a No 4 seeding, Sen finds himself in the bottom half of the draw which also features the Japanese duo of Kodai Naraoka (WR 6) and Koki Watanabe (WR 20). The former world championship bronze medallist Sen will start off against a qualifier and may head into a potential quarterfinal clash with Hong Kong's WR 23 NG Ka Long Angus. There are three other Indians in the men's singles main draw. Priyanshu Rajawat will face eighth seed Rasmus Gemke of Denmark. Rajawat recently had a notable last-eight finish in the US Open Super 300 event, wherein he lost to Lei Lax Xi. Kiran George will take on Yushi Tanaka of Japan, while Ayush Shetty is the fourth Indian in the draw, starting his campaign against the sixth seed Watanabe (6). On a high after her semifinal finish in the US Open last week, Malvika Bansod will face Julie Dawall Jakobsen of Denmark in her opening women's singles fixture. Malvika is also in the bottom half of the draw which has WR 14 Nozomi Okuhara as the second seed. But her immediate next challenge may be against WR 21 Line Højmark Kjærskeld of Denmark. The Danish player has got a fourth seed and could be Malvika's last 16 challenger. If she is able to overcome the pre-quarters hurdle, Malvika may face fifth seed Sung Shuo Yun, who is WR 24.

# Mbappé says he feels like he is in a virtual reality game wearing his mask at Euro 2024



**AP ■ DUESSELDORF (GERMANY)**  
Kylian Mbappé felt like he was in a virtual reality game when playing in a mask to protect his broken nose at the European Championship. The France star was smiling while telling the story Sunday on the eve of facing Belgium in the round of 16. But clearly he does not enjoy playing his role as the masked man of Euro 2024 - "an absolute horror," he said. "I had the impression in the first game that I was playing in 3D," Mbappé told reporters,

putting his hands to the sides of his head and mimicking wearing a VR headset. "I saw people but I had the feeling it was not me that was playing," he said of his comeback in a 1-1 draw against Poland on Tuesday. Mbappé's nose was broken in an accidental collision with an Austria defender's shoulder during a 1-0 win for France in its opening game on June 17. Without its captain and key goalscoring threat, France drew 0-0 with the Netherlands and on his masked return he played tentatively though

scored with a penalty in a second straight draw. "It's really difficult. It limits the vision, the sweat stays blocked so you have to keep lifting it to flow out," Mbappé said. "As soon as I can take it off, I will. It's annoying, it's annoying, it's annoying." "Now, I don't have a choice, I can't play without. So I have to stay thank you to the mask," he said. Those two draws dropped France to second place in Group D - won by Austria - and sent Les Bleus into the top half of the draw that few expected. Belgium also unexpectedly landed in the top half, by finishing runner-up in a group to Romania after a 0-0 draw with Ukraine as boos rained down from its fans. It set up a rematch of a semifinal at the 2018 World Cup that France won 1-0 six years ago en route to Mbappé's star role in the final. The winner on Monday in Duesseldorf will find a difficult path to the final. Portugal, which plays Slovenia on Monday, is potentially waiting in the quarterfinals, then Germany and Spain are possible semifinal opponents. "The teams that are considered to be the big nations on paper, we're doing everything we can to stay in it," France coach Didier Deschamps said. "But actually it's something that's quite intense, highly, highly intense." Deschamps acknowledged his team has not been scoring, but he at least has his biggest threat back.

# Portugal sure to respect Slovenia in Euro 2024 round of 16 with fresh memory of upset losses

**AP ■ FRANKFURT**  
Portugal coach Roberto Martinez knows to respect the underdog, having already seen his team lose to Slovenia when the round of 16 opponents at the European Championship met in a friendly in March. Portugal lost by the same 2-0 score to Georgia in a Euro 2024 group game, and Martinez was asked Sunday about the underdog trend at the same time that Slovakia was frustrating England with a lead that lasted until the last seconds. "All the teams here have a lot of personality. They believe that they can win," Martinez said ahead of Portugal facing Slovenia again on Monday. "The same applies to Slovenia. They are very well organized,



competitive, and believe in what they're doing," he said in translated comments. Portugal, the European champion in 2016 and still with the veteran presence of Cristiano Ronaldo and Pepe, is a big favourite. Slovenia is playing its first elimination game in the knockout rounds at a major tournament, its fourth in 32

years as an independent soccer nation. "It's a historical moment for Slovenian football," Martinez said, praising his counterpart Matjaž Kek. "We admire what their coach is doing because their national team plays like a club." "They attack very quickly. (Andrej) Sporar and (Benjamin) Šeško have a very strong bond, and they kept a clean sheet against England." That 0-0 against England was a third straight draw for Slovenia, one of six teams still unbeaten at Euro 2024. Kek joined in the mutual respect, calling Martinez "a gentleman, he always behaves like that." The game is likely to follow a pattern. Portugal leads the tournament in most time possessing the ball and Slovenia has the least, with UEFA assessing their scores as 64.3 per cent and 36.7 per cent. "They don't need a lot of possession to be dangerous," Martinez said. Portugal midfielder Bruno Fernandes expects patience to be key to beating goalkeeper Jan Oblak, who he described as one of the world's best.

# Spain beat Georgia 4-1 to reach Euro 2024 quarterfinals, next plays host Germany

**AP ■ COLOGNE (GERMANY)**  
Spain recovered from conceding a Searly own-goal to beat Georgia 4-1 for a spot in the Euro 2024 quarterfinals, ending one of the tournament's most compelling underdog stories. Goals from midfielders Rodri and Fabián Ruiz brought Spain back into the game after Robin Le Normand's own-goal in the 18th minute had given Georgia a shock lead. Nico Williams and Dani Olmo took the game out of Georgia's reach with two more goals late in the game as heavy rain fell.

Spain will play host nation Germany in the quarterfinals on Friday in Stuttgart. The loss ends Georgia's first ever major tournament campaign, which included a 2-0 upset win over Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal. Despite the lopsided score, Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili had another standout game with nine saves to prevent a rout. Spain had beaten Georgia 7-1 in qualifying last year, but this game was a close contest until the last 20 minutes and testament to Georgia's rapid improvement under coach Willy Sagnol.



Playing its fourth game of Euro 2024, Spain had yet to concede a goal all tournament. That soon changed when Otar Kakabadze surged down the right flank for Georgia and crossed low. Le Normand chested the ball past his own goalkeeper, with the defender apparently distracted by Khvicha Kvaratskhelia arriving behind him to meet the cross. Spain took its time to get back into the game, but Rodri -- back from a one-game suspension -- leveled the score in the 39th with a low shot from just outside the box.

# Bellingham's stunning goal rescues England in 2-1 win over Slovakia, advance to Euro 2024 quarters

**AP ■ GELSENKIRCHEN (GERMANY)**  
Jude Bellingham needed to produce something special to keep England at Euro 2024. And he did. England was seconds away from slumping to one of the biggest upsets in the history of the European Championship when trailing 1-0 to Slovakia deep into stoppage time in the round of 16 on Sunday. But Bellingham's spectacular overhead kick in the fifth of six added minutes at Veltins Arena sent the game into extra time, and Harry Kane sealed a 2-1 win that keeps alive England's hopes of a first major trophy since 1966.

"I think it was 30 or 20 seconds until we were out of the European Championship," Bellingham said. "It's hard to deny that it was one of the most important moments of my career so far." He's had a few. The midfielder, who turned 21 on Saturday, has just completed a stunning debut season at Real Madrid, winning the Champions League and the Spanish title. At such a young age, he is one of England's most important players at Euro 2024 and delivered a moment of magic when all hope seemed lost. "His world is different to pretty much every other 21-year-old in the world... What

he can provide are these moments where he grabs things by the scruff of the neck and his character and his personality creates moments that can change in a big game," England manager Gareth Southgate said. England - one of the pre-tournament favorites and runner-up at the last Euros - trailed 1-0 to 45th-ranked Slovakia after Ivan Schranz's 25th-minute goal. With the clock running down, Bellingham's time came. Kyle Walker launched a long throw from the right. Marc Guehi leapt to flick the ball on. Bellingham was in the box and had to readjust his body



to execute a perfect overhead kick, sending the ball into the bottom corner to leave Slovakia goalkeeper Martin Dubravka stuck on his line as he watched it nestle into the back of the net. Some England fans had already left the stadium. Those inside erupted. "I had a funny feeling the game wasn't dead and I know that sounds ridiculous. We were pushing and probing," Southgate said. Bellingham's goal was England's first shot on target in the match. It didn't have to wait long for its second as Kane headed home to score his seventh goal in his last seven knockout

games at major tournaments. It was also a record-extending 65th for his country. England will play Switzerland in the quarterfinals in Duesseldorf on Saturday. But for so long it looked like being a humbling exit for Southgate's team - bringing back memories of its elimination at the hands of Iceland at Euro 2016. "It's knockout football and anything is possible," Southgate said. England had faced fierce criticism for its performances in the group stage and boos rang around the stadium in the first half as frustration grew among its fans following Schranz's strike.

It needed to improve in the second half. Phil Foden had a goal ruled out by VAR, Kane headed wide from close range and Declan Rice hit the post in the 81st. Slovakia had already produced a shock by beating No.3-ranked Belgium in the group stage and it looked like doing it again against the No. 5-ranked team in the world. That was until Bellingham struck. "They scored a goal from a player who is valued at 100 million euros. This was a team worth 1.5 billion (euros). You concede just half a meter and you will get punished," Slovakia coach Francesco Calzona said.



# SIX INDIANS IN ICC TEAM OF TOURNAMENT



**PTI ■ DUBAI**  
The International Cricket Council has picked six Indians in its 'Team of the Tournament' for the just-concluded T20 World Cup but there was no place for star batter Virat Kohli, who played a match-winning knock in the final against South Africa. In his new role as an opener, Kohli had an underwhelming World Cup before rising to the occasion in the big final where he was adjudged man-of-the-

match for his 59-ball 76. India pipped South Africa by seven runs in a sensational comeback in the death overs to win their second T20 World Cup title after 17 years. The ICC XI featured Indian skipper Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel and two pacers in Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh. Rohit led from the front with 257 runs at a splendid strike-rate of 156.7 to his name. He was the second most leading

run-getter after Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz. The Player of the Tournament and India's trump card in their title win, Bumrah returned with 15 wickets. But more than his wickets, his impact in restricting the scoring rate of teams made Bumrah India's most important player right through the tournament. His economy rate of 4.17 was the best ever by any bowler in a single edition of the men's T20 World Cup.

Following their historic semifinal finish, Afghanistan found three players in the ICC team, including left-arm quick Fazalhaq Farooqi, who topped the wicket-takers chart jointly with Arshdeep (17 wickets each). Wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz, who topped the runs scorers' list with 281 runs as an opener for Afghanistan, also found a place alongside skipper Rashid Khan. The crafty leg-spinner

brilliantly led Afghanistan in their historic run and returned with 14 wickets with a tidy economy of 6.17. Marcus Stoinis of Australia and Nicholas Pooran of the tournament co-hosts West Indies completed the XI. Runners-up South Africa did not find a player in the XI and pacer Anrich Nortje was named the 12th man. Nortje began the tournament with a brilliant 4/7 against Sri Lanka and took at least one wicket in all but one match.

In the final, he was the pick of South Africa's bowlers with figures of 2/26 from his four overs. **ICC TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT:** Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh (all Indians); Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Rashid Khan, Fazalhaq Farooqi (Afghanistan); Marcus Stoinis (Australia) and Nicholas Pooran (West Indies); 12th man: Anrich Nortje.



## Seniors will be there in CT and WTC; next T20 captain to be decided by selectors: Shah

**PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN**

ICC Secretary Jay Shah on Monday asserted that "seniors will be there" in next year's Champions Trophy and the World Test Championship final if India qualifies for it, while a decision on whether Hardik Pandya succeeds Rohit Sharma as the next T20 captain will be taken solely by the selectors.

Talking to select media here, Shah lauded the contribution of senior players in the side's T20 World Cup triumph at the end of which skipper Rohit, senior batting star Virat Kohli and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja announced their retirement from the shortest format's international assignments. "Transition has already happened with three greats retiring," Shah said when asked about his thoughts on the team's next phase following the retirement of the seasoned trio. "The way this team is progressing, our target is to win the World Test Championship final and Champions Trophy. There will be a similar squad playing there. The seniors will be there," he added. This means that fitness permitting, senior players are likely to be available for the

nine ODI matches that India will play before the Champions Trophy scheduled in February-March in Pakistan. India's ODI assignments before that include three games each against Sri Lanka (away), New Zealand (home) and England (home). On Hardik Pandya's all-round performance in the World Cup and chances of him taking over captaincy from Rohit in the T20 format, Shah said: "Captains will be decided by the selectors and we will announce it after discussing with them." "You asked about Hardik, there were lot of questions over his form but we and selectors showed faith in him and he proved himself." Pandya served as Rohit's deputy in the format. India broke the shackles of a tormenting 11-year run during which the side failed to win a single ICC title. After losing two ICC finals over the last 12 months, the trophy drought finally ended here and Shah hoped the winning run will continue. "I would want India to win all the titles. We have the biggest bench strength, only three players from this team are going to Zimbabwe. We can field three teams if the need arises," he said.



## All three white ticked off; one red to go, tick it: Dravid to Kohli

**PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN**

Staying true to his no-nonsense taskmaster image, outgoing India head coach Rahul Dravid had an assignment for star batter Virat Kohli even on his last day at work and within hours of India winning the T20 World Cup. "All three white ticked off, one red to go. Tick it," Dravid told Kohli in a video of the Indian dressing room celebrations shared by the ICC on its Instagram page. By three white he meant the limited-overs global trophies -- the T20 World Cup, the ODI World Cup and the Champions Trophy -- all of which Kohli has collected as a player. What's left now is winning the World Test Championship Final. India have lost the WTC Final twice (against New Zealand in 2021 and Australia in 2023). The 35-year-old Kohli, who retired from T20 Internationals after the World Cup triumph here on Saturday, merely smiled at Dravid as he repeated himself to assert his point, albeit with a warm smile on his face. "Go tick it." The 51-year-old Dravid, who was appointed India coach in 2021, ended his tenure with this event. India defeated South Africa by seven runs in the humdinger to claim their second overall T20 world crown, having won the

title in its inaugural edition in South Africa back in 2007 under Mahendra Singh Dhoni. In the ODI format, India won the 1983 and 2011 World Cups before snaring the 2013 Champions Trophy. The congratulatory video also featured Suryakumar Yadav, whose blinder of a catch to dismiss David Miller proved crucial in the final here. The Mumbaier said it would take him at least two days to fully grasp the enormity of the achievement. "No feelings right now, I don't know what to say," he said. Pacer Arshdeep Singh flaunted a couple of polaroid shots of his, one taken on the morning of the final and the other with the winner's medal around his neck and the trophy in his hands in the afternoon. "This is what belief can do," he said. The Indian team is currently stranded here as Barbados has been shut down due to hurricane Beryl, originating in the Atlantic. The category 4 hurricane has intensified with maximum sustained winds of 210 kmph. The Indian team was supposed to take an Emirates flight from New York via Dubai. A source told PTI that the plan now is to take the team back to India on a charter flight. The Indian contingent, including support staff, families, and officials, consists of about 70 members.

## India to tour Australia for multi-format Women A series in August

**PTI ■ SYDNEY**

India and Australia will lock horns in a multi-format women's A series in Queensland next month, in what is seen as a preparation for the upcoming T20 World Cup in Bangladesh in less than four months' time. The tour will comprise of three T20Is in Brisbane, three ODIs in Mackay and a four-day match at Gold Coast. Cricket Australia on Monday confirmed the schedule and named three Australia A squads for the series. Australia vice-captain Tahlia McGrath will lead the 20-over and 50-over sides, while

Charli Knott will be in charge of the four-day game. "I'm really looking forward to being a part of this series and for the challenge that India A will pose," McGrath said in cricket.Com.Au. "It presents those of us not playing in The Hundred with the chance to prepare for a huge summer against a strong opposition," she added. Fellow Australia quicks Megan Schutt, Kim Garth and Tayla Vlaeminck will also feature in the white-ball matches, which will be their first hit-out since April's tour of Bangladesh as they begin preparations for the T20 World Cup scheduled in

October. **SCHEDULE**  
**First T20I:** August 7; Second T20I: August 9; Third T20I: August 11 (at Allan Border Field).  
**First one-dayer:** August 14; Second one-dayer: August 16; Third one-dayer: August 18 (at Great Barrier Reef Arena, Mackay).  
**Four-day match:** August 22-25, Gold Coast District Cricket Club.  
**AUSTRALIA A SQUADS**  
**T20 squad:** Maddy Darke, Sophie Day, Nicole Faltum (vc), Tess Flintoff, Charli Knott (c), Katie Mack, Lilly Mills, Grace Parsons, Kate Peterson, Courtney Sippel, Georgia Volt.

Courtney Sippel, Tayla Vlaeminck, Tahlia Wilson.  
**One-day squad:** Maitlan Brown (2nd and 3rd matches only), Maddy Darke, Sophie Day, Nicole Faltum (vc), Tess Flintoff, Kim Garth, Charli Knott (vc), Katie Mack, Tahlia McGrath (c), Grace Parsons, Megan Schutt (1st match only), Courtney Sippel, Tayla Vlaeminck, Tahlia Wilson.  
**Four-day squad:** Maitlan Brown, Maddy Darke (wk), Sophie Day, Emma de Brouhe, Nicole Faltum (vc), Tess Flintoff, Charli Knott (c), Katie Mack, Lilly Mills, Grace Parsons, Kate Peterson, Courtney Sippel, Georgia Volt.

## India overcome resilient South Africa to win one-off Test by 10 wickets

**PTI ■ CHENNAI**

India were made to wait a tad longer for the winning moment by centurion Laura Wolvaardt, but they eventually went past the line convincingly by 10 wickets on the fourth and final day of the one-off Test women's Test against South Africa here on Monday. India were required to chase a modest 37 after bowling out South Africa for 373 in their second innings and the hosts accomplished the task in 9.2 overs without losing a wicket. India had declared their first innings closed at 603 for six. The opening duo of Shubha Sathesh (13 not out) and Shafali Verma (24 not out) steered their side home comfortably. This is India's second 10-wicket triumph in Tests after a scoring a similar win over the Proteas at Paarl in 2002. After getting bundled out 266 in their first innings, South Africa fought well through hundred-makers Wolvaardt (122, 314b, 16x4) and Sune Luus (109, 203b, 18x4) in the second innings. However, SA could only delay the inevitable.



Resuming at the overnight 232 for two, and trailing India by 105 runs, Wolvaardt and Marizanne Kapp appeared to be in good touch. The former brought up her maiden Test century, also becoming the first woman batter to score a Test, ODI and T20I ton in the same year. However, Kapp was soon trapped leg-before by Deepti Sharma for 51, while Sneha Rana ousted Delhi Tucker for a duck as the tourists slipped to 266 for four. With still work to be done for the South Africans to take the lead, Wolvaardt tried to anchor the innings but was

dismissed for 122 when Rajeshwari Gayakwad trapped her in front to reduce the visitors 281 for five. But the Proteas marched on and went past the 300-run mark, their highest team total in Tests against the Indians. The previous best was the 266 that made in their opening innings here. South Africa needed less than 50 runs to take the lead at this stage. Nadine de Klerk and Sinalo Jafta stuck together until the lunch break and SA were 302 for five then. However, in the post-lunch session, Jafta retired hurt due to cramps, as the visitors sent Anne Dercksen to join De

Klerk. But Dercksen departed for five, falling to Pooja Vastrakar with SA trailing by 27 runs. Meanwhile, the tourists went past 316 to register their highest score in Test cricket, going past the 315 they made against England at Shenley in 2003. Although South Africans closed in on a lead they struggled to get the partnerships going. The next stand was worth 14 runs between De Klerk and Tumi Sekhukhune before the latter was run out for six. Jafta returned to bat, but she could add just nine more runs and departed for 15 and they went to tea at 336 for eight. The hosts eventually conceded the lead in the final session. This was the third instance of India giving away the lead after enforcing a follow-on and the fifth overall. The partnership between De Klerk and Masabata Klaas produced 23 runs before the latter fell to Shafali, who cleaned her up. De Klerk, who was dropped on fifty by Renuka Singh and Vastrakar during a mix-up, brought up her half-century soon but Rajeshwari Gayakwad knocked her out for 61.

## RCB appoint Karthik as batting coach, mentor

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**

Former India wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik, who announced his retirement from all forms of cricket last month, on Monday was appointed as batting coach and mentor by Royal Challengers Bengaluru. "Welcome our keeper in every sense, Dinesh Karthik back into RCB in an all new avatar. DK will be the batting coach and mentor of RCB Men's team," RCB posted on 'X', formerly twitter. "You can take the man out of cricket but not cricket out of the man! Shower him with all the love, 12th Man Army," the post added. Terming this an exciting opportunity, Karthik stated: "Coaching at a professional level is incredibly exciting for me and is something I'm truly passionate about as a new chapter in my life. Hopefully, the breadth of my experiences as a player can contribute to the development of the group and bring added value. "I believe that cricket success hinges not only on technical proficiency but also on match



intelligence and composure. I am eager to coach and mentor our batting group, helping them to not only refine their method but also to develop the keen match awareness needed to excel under pressure. "It's also great that I can continue my association with RCB as the franchise continues to move from strength to strength," he stated in a release issued by RCB. The cricketer, who is also into commentary, had a spectacular last season for RCB where he played the role of a finisher and scored 326 runs at an average of

36.22 with a massive strike-rate of 187.36. He was given an emotional farewell after RCB lost the Eliminator to Rajasthan Royals. Overall, the wicketkeeper-batter played 257 matches in IPL representing five franchises -- Kolkata Knight Riders, Mumbai Indians, Delhi Daredevils, Kings XI Punjab and RCB. He had amassed 4,842 runs at an average of 26.32. Playing for India, Karthik scored 1,752 runs and struck nine half-centuries in 94 ODI matches. In 26 Tests, Karthik has 1,025 runs to his name, which includes a century against Bangladesh. In 60 T20Is, he has scored 686 runs at an average of 26.38 with a 142-plus strike-rate. Speaking about Karthik's appointment, RCB Director of Cricket Mo Bobat said he will be just as impactful as a coach. "His longevity and track record as a player speaks volumes about his skill and dedication. I know he will bring that same quality and commitment to this new professional chapter," Bobat said.

## Stay in moment, keep flexible mindset: Bindra's advice to Paris-bound Indian athletes

**PTI ■ CHANDIGARH**

As India's first individual Olympic gold-medallist, Abhinav Bindra knows a thing or two about handling big-stage pressure and he has a simple piece of advice for those aiming for the podium in the upcoming Paris Games -- stay in the moment and have a flexible mind. Bindra, who won the yellow metal in men's 10m air rifle event in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, wants

Indian athletes to enjoy their time at the world's greatest sporting extravaganza. "I want to wish all the athletes the very best of luck. They've done us all proud already by giving it their all and doing consistently well over so many competitions. And now it's their moment to shine on the world stage," Bindra said during a meet and greet programme organised by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) here on Monday.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **DULESHWAR S/o Ghanshyam R/o Uranv-Mohalla, Chandrapur Janjgir-Champa Chhattisgarh-495692** changed my-minor son's name **Deepak Kumar Dewangan alias Purab Dewangan** to **Deepak Kumar Dewangan** aged-14-Years. **PD/564/A**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

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The following borrower(s) has/have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest towards the Loan facility(ies) availed from ICICI Bank. The Loan(s) has/have been classified as Non-Performing Asset(s) (NPA). A Notice was issued to them under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, at their last known addresses. However, it has not been served and are therefore being notified by way of this Public Notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/Guarantor/ Loan Account Number/ Address	Description of Secured Asset to be enforced	Date of Notice sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Buddhi Ram Dubey/ Sangita Dubey/ Mlg/1/90, Kabir Nagar, Tatibandh Bindrawangarh, Tehsil Raipur District Raipur Chhattisgarh Raipur- 492099/ LBRPRO0004302473	Plot No. M.I.G./21, Phase 1, Kabir Nagar, Chhattisgarh Grih Nirman Mandal, Kabir Nagar Housing Board Yojna, Khosra No. 713, 720 (Part), Ward No. 02, Ramkrishna Paramhansa Ward, Mouza Jarvai or Hirapur, P.H. No. 35, R.N.M. Raipur-1, Tahasil and District Raipur, Chhattisgarh (Admeasuring an area of 108 Sq. Ft. 1162.08 Sq. Ft. Along With 800 Sq. Ft. Constructed Area on The Ground Floor	May 14, 2024 Rs. 27,54,617/-	06-05-2022

These steps are being taken for substituted service of Notice. The above borrower(s) and/or guarantor(s) (as applicable) is/are advised to make the outstanding payment within 60 days from the date of publishing this Notice. Else, further steps will be taken as per the provisions of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. Date: July 02, 2024 Place: Raipur Sincerely, Authorised Signatory For ICICI Bank Ltd.

**COUNCIL OF ARCHITECTURE**  
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**CONDUCT OF POST GRADUATE ENTRANCE TEST IN ARCHITECTURE (PGETA-2024)**

**Notification for PGETA-2024**

All candidates, institutions and other stakeholders are hereby informed that the Council of Architecture shall be conducting a national level Postgraduate Entrance Test in Architecture (PGETA - 2024) for admission to Postgraduate programme being imparted at the architectural institutions approved by the Council for the academic session 2024-2025, as required as per Council of Architecture Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Guidelines for Postgraduate Degree Programme, 2022.

**PGETA - 2024 shall be conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2024 and 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2024.** The brochure containing relevant details of the Test and the eligibility criteria for admission to Post Graduate Programme is available at [www.pgeta.in](http://www.pgeta.in). A list of institutions imparting Postgraduate programme in Architecture approved by the Council in the country is available at the website of the Council-[www.coa.gov.in](http://www.coa.gov.in). The registration for PGETA-2024 shall commence from 03.07.2024.

The candidates desirous to take admission into Postgraduate programme in Architecture are advised to register themselves for **PGETA-2024** at [www.pgeta.in](http://www.pgeta.in).

**New Delhi Dated : 02.07.2024**

**Registrar**