**OPINION 6** 

NUANCED SHIFT IN

PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT

**WORLD 8** 

ISRAEL CONDUCTS MILITARY

OPERATION IN WEST BANK

**MONEY 10** NIFTY SCALES NEW LIFETIME HIGH

DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA Late City Vol.13 Issue 183 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

> **ENGLAND FACES SWITZERLAND**

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

## FOR SEMI SPOT 11 SPORTS



RAIPUR, SATURDAY JULY 6, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

## **Scrapping NEET-UG not** rational: Centre to SC



RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

 $A^{
m mid}$  the growing clamour for cancellation of the controversy-ridden NEET-UG, 2024 exam over alleged malpractices, the Ministry of Education and the National Testing Agency told the Supreme Court on Friday that scrapping it would be "counter productive", not rational and "seriously jeopardise" lakhs of honest candidates in the absence of proof of large-scale breach of confidentiality.

The Ministry and the NTA said there was no proof of any breach confidentiality in examination which was taken by over 23 lakh candidates at 4,750 centres in 571 cities.

#### **NEET-PG 2024** exam to be held on August 11

New Delhi: The NEET-PG 2024 entrance entrance examination will be held on August 11 in two shifts, the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences announced on Friday. The examination was earlier scheduled to be held on June 23.

...It will now be held on August 11 in two shifts. The cut-off date for the purpose of eligibility to appear in the NEET-PG 2024 shall continue to be August 15, 2024," the Board said.

Union Education Ministry and the NTA filed separate affidavits opposing the pleas which have sought scrapping of the exam plagued by controversy, a re-

The top court is scheduled to hear on July 8 a batch of pleas, including those alleging irregularities in the examination held on May 5 and seeking a direction that it be held afresh.

test and court-monitored

probe into entire gamut of

issues involved.

The National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH and other

related courses, and the

Union Education Ministry have been at the centre of media debates and protests by students and political parties over alleged largescale malpractices ranging from question paper leak to impersonation in the test held on May 5. In its affidavit, the Ministry

said invalidating the exam would "seriously jeopardise" the efforts of lakhs of honest candidates who appeared in the exam. In the absence of proof of any large-scale breach of confidentiality in the examination, it argued that it would not be rational to take the step. This is the first time that the Centre is placing its stand on holding a retest of NEET-UG for all 24 lakh candidates on record The Ministry has only acknowledged that there were "instances of

irregularities, cheating, i m p e r s o n a t i o n, malpractices" during the conduct of NEET-UG. There is no mention of a paper leak. It goes on to state further that "in the absence of any proof of any large-scale breach of confidentiality in a pan-India examination it would not be rational to the scrap

# Rishi Sunak Exits 10 Downing Street

PTI ■ LONDON

Keir Starmer on Friday promised a phase of "national renewal" as Britain's Prime Minister-elect after he led the Labour Party to a landslide victory landmark UK general election with a gain of over 200 seats, as outgoing leader Rishi Sunak conceded defeat with his Conservative Party suffering its worst election defeat in history.

Starmer, 61, now stands poised to take charge at 10 Downing Street after his audience with Charles III at Buckingham Palace, following Sunak's meeting with the British monarch.

As Labour crossed the halfway mark of 650 constituencies in the early hours of Friday to clinch the minimum 326 required for a majority in Parliament, Starmer stepped up to make his victory speech in London: "Change begins now. And it feels good, I have to be honest.

"A mandate like this comes with a great responsibility. Our task is nothing less than renewing the ideas that hold this country together. National renewal. Whoever you are, wherever you start in life, if you work hard, if you play by the rules, this country should give you a fair chance to get on. It should always respect your contribution and we have to restore that."



Britain's Labour Party leader Keir Starmer reacts on stage as he is elected for the Holborn and St Pancras constituency, in London (I). Britain's outgoing Conservative Party Prime Minister Rishi Sunak speaking outside 10 Downing Street before going to see King Charles III to tender his resignation in London, on

#### **Modi congratulates Starmer**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday Modi on Friday congratulated Labour Party leader Keir Starmer on his party's landslide win in the UK general elections and said he looked forward to their positive and constructive collaboration to further strengthen the India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership.

Modi also praised outgoing British Prime Minister and

British Indian Prime Minister comfortably held on to his Richmond and Meanwhile, the country's first Northallerton seat in northern after 14 years in Government.

active contribution to deepen the ties between India and the UK during his term in office. "Best wishes to you and your family for the future," he said. Congratulating him, Modi "Heartiest said, congratulations and best

Conservative Party leader

admirable leadership of the

United Kingdom and his

Rishi Sunak for

wishes to Keir Starmer on the remarkable victory in the UK general elections...

England with 23,059 votes but failed to turn things around for his party at a national level

and Singh a four-day custody

parole, beginning July 5, in view of the travel from Assam



**Published From** 

#### Fresh trouble for Mahua over remarks against **NCW** chairperson

PNS NEW DELHI

The Commission Women (NCW) has taken suo moto cognisance of the alleged derogatory remark made by TMC MP Mahua Moitra against its chairperson Rekha Sharma and sought an FIR against This came a day after the

TMC, commenting on a video posted on X showing the NCW chairperson's arrival at the site of a stampede that recently took place in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, wrote, "She is too busy holding up her boss's pajamas". Meanwhile, the Uttar

Pradesh Government's Special Investigation Team probing the Hathras stampede has recorded statements of 90 people so far, SIT chief Anupam Kulshrestha said on Friday. Kulshrestha, also the Additional Director General of Police (Agra Zone), is leading the three-member SIT team.

## **J&K Assembly elections** likely after Amarnath Yatra



A sadhu poses while waiting to get registered for Amarnath Yatra at Ram Mandir base camp, in Jammu, on Friday

2014.

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI/JAMMU

The Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir are likely to be announced after the Amarnath Yatra, which will conclude on August 19. Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a late night meeting with Jammu and Kashmir unit party leaders and directed them to be ready for the upcoming Assembly elections.

The two-hour long meeting was attended by BJP chief and Union Minister JP Nadda, MPs Ravinder Raina, Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma — and other top leaders.

Jammu and Kashmir is likely to see its first Assembly election in September this year, according to the timeline fixed by the Supreme

Court after the erstwhile State's special status was scrapped in 2019. The last Assembly election in the erstwhile State was held in

At the meeting, top leadership has made it clear that the party will not enter into a prepoll alliance with any party in It was also the State. conveyed that the party would remain open to seat adjustments and "electoral understandings" with "likeminded parties.

Besides, it was also conveyed that the party will not project any face for the Chief Ministerial candidate in the run-up to the Assembly polls and there will not be any changes in leadership or organisational rejig in the State BJP unit, currently headed by Ravinder Raina. In the coming days, key

leaders national expected to visit the State. The party will also launch a mass contact programme with the people in the State. The Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was in November 2018 ahead of the revocation of the State's Special Status in

August 2019. The BJP-led Government scrapped Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019 and bifurcated the State into two Union Territories. There have been demands from political parties for early Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and restoration of Statehood.

Moreover, during a recent visit to Kashmir, the Prime Minister stated that preparations for elections had begun and that J&K would soon have its own Government.

The revision of electoral rolls will start in J&K on July 25 and culminate on August 20, according to the EC. "After the exercise is over, the EC may announce holding of assembly polls in the UT any time," a poll official said.

The five LS seats in J&K — the first major electoral exercise post Article 370 abrogation — recorded voter turnout of 58.58 per cent, the highest in the last 35 years.

#### Jailed MPs Amritpal, Rashid on parole take oath PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Tailed radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, who were granted parole to take oath as members of the Lok Sabha, were sworn in as MPs on Friday, amid heavy deployn personnel in and around the

Parliament complex. While Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, is in Delhi's Tihar jail in a terror-funding case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Singh is lodged in a prison in Assam's Dibrugarh district for offences under the National Security Act.

They were brought to the Parliament complex



Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid

oath in the chamber of the Lok Sabha Speaker after completing formalities, a source said.

Singh, 31, and Rashid, 56, won the recent Lok Sabha elections from Khadoor Sahib in Punjab and Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir,

security personnel Friday respectively, as Independents morning. The MPs-elect took while being incarcerated. while being incarcerated. They could not take oath as members of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24 and 25 along with the other winning candidates

For taking oath, Rashid was granted a two-hour custody parole, excluding the travel time from Tihar to Parliament,

Pig culling ordered to contain

Their parole orders stated that during their period of temporary release, they can neither speak to or address the media on any issue or make any statements. Their

to Delhi and back.

statement to the media. While Singh, a Khalistani sympathiser who heads the 'Waris Punjab De' outfit, has been allowed to meet his family in Delhi, Rashid's family had permission only to

family members also cannot

attend his oath taking.
The parole for Rashid, who has been in jail since 2019 after his arrest in 2017, was granted by a court in Delhi and that of Singh by the magistrate

barging into a police station in February and clashing with police personnel in a bid to free one of his aides from custody. Both Singh and Rashid are to be accompanied by security

Amritsar from where he was arrested in April 2023 for

personnel at all times during their parole periods, the The Delhi Police and Punjab Police were directed to coordinate with the Secretary

General of the Lok Sabha for procedures insid Parliament complex. inside The name of Rashid, a former

MLA, cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali whom the NIA had arrested for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir vallev.

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE THRISSUR (KERALA)

An outbreak of African swine fever (ASF), a highly contagious and deadly disease affecting both farm-raised and wild boars, has been reported at a private farm in a village in Kerala's Thrissur district. In response, the State Government has ordered culling of 310 pigs at the farm in Madakkathara panchayat to prevent the spread of the disease. This incident follows a recent

outbreak

Maruthonkara, Kozhikode

Nipah

## **African Swine fever in Thrissur**

district, where ASF was confirmed in wild boars last ASF was first identified in

and Assam in 2020. ASF spreads rapidly through direct contact with bodily fluids from infected pigs and has no vaccines or treatment available. "The disease was confirmed

India in Arunachal Pradesh

in the pigs owned by Kuttalapuzha



Velivanthara in the 14th ward. The District Collector has directed the district animal husbandry officer to

cull the pigs and bury them," according to an official from the State Government. team consisting of

doctors, livestock inspectors and attendants will conduct the culling process, and further primary disinfection measures will also be taken,

it said. The area within a one-kilometre radius of the affected farm has been declared a disease-affected area, and the area within the 10-kilometre radius has been declared a disease surveillance area.

The transportation of pork from the affected areas, the operation of such farms, and the movement of pigs, pork, and feed from the affected areas to other parts of the district, as well as the movement of these items from other areas into the affected area, have been prohibited until further orders," the release said.

## Lord Krishna's favourite king of fruits to add flavour to Rath Yatra

**ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

s the much-revered grand ARath Yatra for Lord Jagannath commences in Puri in Odisha on Monday, the International Society for Consciousness Krishna (ISKCON) temple at Dwarka in the national Capital will mark the occasion with a grand offering approximately 5,100 kilograms of various mango varieties.

The celebrations will begin a day ahead and continue into the following day, aligning with the Yatra in Puri. Devotees will offer a range of

mangoes, including Safeda, adorned with an impressive

Dussehri, Langra, Malda, Chausa, Ramkela, Totapari, Bombay Green, and Mallika, as part of the rituals dedicated to Lord Jagannath, his brother Balabhadra, and their sister Subhadra as part of the

Mangoes, revered as the "king of fruits," hold significant cultural and religious value, particularly in Krishna Lila, symbolising the sweetness of devotion in the divine pastimes of Lord Krishna. The celebration will attract nearly 20,000 people from across the city. Preparations are in full swing at the temple. The temple altar will be



display of mangoes, allowing devotees to participate in the "mango service" by offering their fruits at the Vigraha Seva Department on the eve of the yatra. The festivities will also

include a mango-eating competition. Golia, Sindoori, also be offered to the God.

Gulabkhas, Neelam, Kesari, Gola, Lalbagh, Lambori, Ratul, and Alphonso like varieties will Sri Gaur Prabhu, vicepresident of the temple, explained, "Mango, the king of fruits, is loved by both children and adults during

the summer season. This is

why we organise the mango

of Jagannath Yatra. The offering of thousands of mangoes to the deities is beautiful to behold.' Attendees can capture memories at designated

festival every year on the day

selfie points and participate in community service. The significance of mangoes in Krishna Lila is profound. During the rasa dance, the gopis would offer mangoes to Krishna, symbolising the sweetness their relationship. At another time, Krishna accepted mango pits from a poor Brahmana, valuing sincere

devotion over material

offerings. Mangoes also

where he and his mischievous friends would often steal the delicious fruits from orchards. Pritansu Priyadarsini Biswal from Bhubaneswar in

played a role in Krishna's

childhood at Vrindavan,

Odisha was in praise for the ISKON temple's concept of offering mangoes to the Lord Jagannath. "This celebration at the ISKCON temple in the country's capital in Dwarka not only honours the divine but also brings together the community in a shared experience of devotion, cultural heritage, and the simple joy of enjoying mangoes," she said.

## Cops rescue children, arrest kidnapper after 200 km hot chase

The Delhi Police has arrested a 38-year-old man for kidnapping two children, including a 11-year-old girl and 3-year-old boy and demanding 50 lakh as ransom from East Delhi's Vikas Marg. According to the police on Friday, on the evening of June 28, a couple with their 11-years-old daughter and 3years-old son came to Delhi from Faridabad in their Eco Sports car for a long drive and to enjoy street food before the academic year began for the

As the couple parked their car in front of a shop with the engine on mode, leaving their children in the car momentarily to buy sweets from a

Prateek Shrivastava swiftly entered the vehicle, claiming to the daughter that her father had asked him to move the car. When the daughter of the couple protested, the accused brandished a meat chopper and threatened to harm her if she made any noise.

The police deployed four teams to chase the kidnapper based on technical surveillance and other clues. "Immediately, the District Control Room was activated to coordinate with other districts regarding intercepting the vehicle at local pickets and active checkpoints. Night patrolling staff across Delhi was also alerted. Additional teams were sent to Sonipat Border for intercepting the



border," the DCP added

"After about seven to eight minutes, when the parents returned, they were shocked to find their car missing. The father called his daughter's phone, but it was answered by a kidnapper who demanded 50 lakhs for the safe return of the children.

Immediately, the couple approached the nearest police station," DCP East Apoorva Gupta said, adding that a case under section 364A IPC was registered at police station. tion Shakarpur.

"During interrogation, the accused disclosed that he had observed instances where parents briefly left their children in cars with the engine running. This prompted him to

dren along with the car, aiming to demand a significant ransom from their parents," the DCP added.

During his time in Shakarpur, the accused noted the bustling evening hours near Heera Sweets on Vikas Marg, where parents would leave their cars running while quickly visiting the shop, due to the current high temperatures and humidity in Delhi. He metic-ulously planned the kidnapping at Heera Sweets, having conducted reconnaissance of the area a week and four days prior to the incident.

"After an intense chase spanning around three hours and covering approximately 200 kilometers with about 20 police vehicles, when the kidabandoned the vehicle and left the children unattended in the Samaypur Badli Area. Fortunately, both children were rescued safely and were

reunited with their parents," the DCP stated. He added that the accused who worked as an AC mechanic, had planned to collect the ransom using fast delivery app services like Porter, WeFast, or Borzo

within an hour of booking the service in Delhi NCR. Further, he has studied up to class 10th and earlier used to work as a cab driver at Ola and Uber and he has also worked in Swiggy and Zomato, which made him well versed with the topography of Delhi.

## ED conducts searches in probe of STP scam in DJB

**STAFF REPORTER** NEW

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday said it seized Rs 41 lakh in cash, "incriminating" documents and digital devices during searches conducted as part of a money laundering case linked to alleged corruption in the augmentation of some Sewage Treatment Plants by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). The raids were launched on July 3 and covering multiple places in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Hyderabad, the ED said in a statement.

The money laundering investigation stems from an FIR of the Delhi government anticorruption branch (ACB) against a company named Euroteck Environmental Pvt Ltd. And others alleging a scam in the DJB in the name of augmentation and upgradation of 10 Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at Pappankala, Nilothi [Package 1], Najafgarh, Keshopur



[Package 2], Coronation Pillar, Narela, Rohini [Package 3] and Kondli [Package 4]. The four tenders, valued at Rs 1,943 crore, were awarded to various joint venture (JV) entities in October, 2022.

The probe agency has filed Prosecution Complaint before the Special Court on 28-03-2024 against Jagdish Kumar Arora, the then Chief Engineer, Delhi Jal Board (DJB), Tejinder Pal Singh [close associate of Jagdish

Kumar Arora], Anil Kumar Agarwal [proprietor of M/s Integral Screw Industries, Sub-Contractor], DK Mittal [the then employee of NBCC] and M/s NKG Infrastructure Limited [Contractor of DJB] in the case of Delhi Jal Board [DJB] under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The PMLA Special Court has taken cognizance of the Prosecution Complaint

According to the ED, the FIR registered by the ACB alleges that only three JV companies participated in the four tenders."While two JVs got one tender each, one JV got two tenders. The three JVs participated in the four STP tenders mutually to ensure that each one got the tender," as per the ED. The FIR alleges that the tendering conditions were made "restrictive" including adoption of IFAS technology to ensure that select few enti-ties could participate in the four bids, it said.

"The cost estimates initially prepared was Rs 1,546 crore but was revised during the tender process to Rs 1,943 crore. "It is further alleged that the contracts were awarded to the three JVs at inflated rates which caused a substantive loss to the exchequer," according to the central agency. The ED said its probe found

that four tenders related to STPs valued at Rs 1,943 crore were awarded by the DJB to In all the four tenders, two

JVs [out of three common JVs] participated in each ten-der and all the three JVs secured the tenders, the agency said.

The costs adopted by DJB for upgradation and augmentation were same though the cost of upgradation is lesser than the cost for augmentation. "All the 3 JVs submitted the same experience certificate issued from a Taiwan Project to DJB for securing the tenders and the same was accepted without any verifications," it said. All the three JVs "sub-contracted" the work related to the four tenders to Euroteck Environment Pvt.

The verification of the tender documents shows that the initial cost of four tenders was about Rs 1,546 crore which was revised to Rs 1,943 crore without following due process/project reports, according to the ED. "Cash of Rs 41 lakh, various incriminating documents and digital evidence were seized during the searches," it said.

Ltd., Hvderabad.

## HC seeks CBI's response to bail plea filed by Kejriwal

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday issued a notice to the CBI, seeking the probe agency's response to a bail plea filed by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in connection with the liquor policy case. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna sought the response of CBI and posted the case for further hearing on July 17. Initially, the high court agreed with the CBI's con-tention that Kejriwal should have approached a city court first. However, the bench later opted to consider the merits of Kejriwal's direct appeal to the high court during the argu-

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, representing Kejriwal, said the AAP leader is not a flight risk and not a terrorist, and the CBI arrested him after he got bail in the ED's money laundering case. He said Kejriwal has deep roots in society and added he was pressing for an interim relief in the mat-

Advocate DP Singh, appearing for the CBI, raised an objection over Kejriwal directly approaching the high court without first filing the bail plea before the trial court. The high court took note of the objection and said "the contention shall be considered at the time of arguments". "In how many cases the

Supreme Court or the high courts have said that please go back, on propriety. On law, there is no quarrel. I am not on law. They also say don't clog the higher courts when alternate remedy is available. There should be a reason why this (court) is better. We also have the benefit of going through the trial court's decision," Justice Krishna said.

The high court added that parties also have the benefit of first hearing before the sessions court and they may succeed

Chaudhari, also representing Kejriwal, said while remanding him in custody, the trial court had said the arrest was illegal and when that argument has been addressed, there is no point of sending it back and it will be a futile exercise.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener was arrested by the CBI on June 26 from Tihar Jail, where he is still lodged in judicial custody in a connected money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).He has already challenged his arrest in the CBI case and the plea is pending before the high court. The court had issued notice and asked the CBI to file its reply while listing it for arguments on July 17.

Kejriwal, who was arrested by the ED on March 21, was granted bail by the trial court in the money laundering case on June 20. However, the trial court's order was stayed by the high

## LG directs officials to ensure transparency in execution of projects

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Friday issued strict instructions to officials to ensure transparency in the execution of the project by putting a display board that mentions important information actualing name of the fund ing agency, executing agency, cost of the project among Saxena reviewed the status

and progress of projects under the Delhi Development Authority's (DDA) "Dilli Gramodaya Abhiyan" on Thursday, issued strict instructions for ensuring transparency in the execution of the projects.

The LG directed that every project should have a display board wherein name of the funding agency, name of the executing agency, name of the contractor and his phone number, cost of the project, tendered amount, timeline of the project including date of starting and completion and name and number of the District Magistrate for redressal of any of residents' grievances will be mentioned.



Further, he directed that on a portal meant for monitoring the projects under the "Delhi Gramoday Abhiyan", in addition to the information points, the 'before and after' pictures of the location and project being undertaken will also be uploaded along with

"The portal will also have the tender document of the L-1 bidder and the work order issued to it. This information will be available for viewing by all," he said.

The project is being implemented at a cost of more than 960 crore rupees, across the villages of Delhi, for improvements and augmentation of bility of monitoring them.

civic infrastructure in the vil-"Various projects that lages. are being implemented include construction of roads, building of boundary walls, plantation of trees along roads boundaries, drainage, parks, chaupals,

community centres, and cremation grounds, etc," a statement by LG office stated.

These projects are being undertaken in consultation with the residents of the villages as per their requirements, it read. Projects worth 503 crore are already under implementation and the District Magistrates have been entrusted with the responsi-

#### City receives moderate rain, maximum temperature settles at 33.2 degrees C

**STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI

The national Capital received light to moderate rains while the maximum temperature was recorded at 33.2 degrees celsius, 3.4 degrees below the normal. However, high making the weather muggy and uncomfortable. The humidity was 85 per cent

at 8.30 am and 75 per cent at 5:30 pm. The feel like temperature or the heat index, which is affected by both humidity and wind, and conveys how warm or cold it feels stood was 41.6 degrees celsius.

The minimum temperature was recorded at 27.1 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal. The IMD reported that 0.6 mm of rain was recorded at Safdarjung, the city's primary weather station, 0.6 mm at Lodhi Road, 2.1 mm at Aaya Nagar, and 0.2 mm at Palam, 0.5 mm at Jafarpur, 2.7 mm at Ridge and 2 mm at Salwan Public School between 8.30 am on July 4 and 8.30 am on July 5.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had pre-



dicted a generally cloudy sky with light to moderate rain along with thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds. The IMD has further predicted such weather till July 11.

Jafarpur recorded 33.8 degrees celsius as maximum temperature, Najafgarh at 33.5 degrees, Aya nagar at 32.5 degrees, Lodi road at 32.2 degrees, Palam at 32.4 degrees, Ridge at 32.3 degrees, Pitampura at 34.5 degrees, Pusa at 32.1 degrees and Salwan Public School at 30.6 degrees.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) of the national capital was in the "satisfactory" category with a reading of 77 at 4 pm, according to the Central Pollution Control Board.

#### Fake call centre busted in Gurugram



STAFF REPORTER ■ **GURUGRAM** 

Police have busted a fake call center in Gurugram that has been allegedly duping foreign nationals on the pretext of booking tickets of football matches, Rugby matches and music concert, officials said on

A team of the Gurugram police conducted a raid on Friday after receiving inputs that a fake call centre is being run at house number 367, Sector-55 Gurugram and nabbed four

people. Call centre operator Sonu, Aakash Chauhan aka Sky, Suraj Kumar Bharti and Seemant Raghav were arrested on Friday, they said. Police said they have recovered 4 laptops and 4 headphones from their possession.

### Rai slams BJP for transfer orders issued to 5,000 teachers

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

 $S_{\text{transfer}}^{\text{lamming the BJP for the}}$  to 5,000 teachers of Delhi government schools, Delhi minister Gopal Rai on Friday said the party was trying to destroy the education system developed by the Kejriwal government by pressuring officers.

Aadmi Party's Delhi unit convener, said the "Kam Roko Abhiyan" (stop work campaign) of the BJP to create hurdles in the AAP government's work has been going on for years and has now reached an extreme stage. The education system of

Delhi, known not just in the country but all over the world, is getting paralysed, he said at a press conference on Friday. "The BJP under its 'Kam Roko Abhiyan' has decided to destroy the education system developed by the Kejriwal government in Delhi," he said.

"Its biggest example is the mass transfer of teachers of Delhi government schools overnight. The Education department officers have issued an order that the teachers posted in a school for over 10 years should be trans-

BJP chief accuses Kejriwal of



ferred," he said.

Rai said the teachers of government schools are the backbone of Delhi's education system that saw a turn around after the AAP came to power, he said.

A circular was issued by the DoE on June 11, titled "Online requests for transfer of teaching staff of the Directorate of Education", wherein, vide Clause 16, it was directed that all teachers who have served for more than 10 years in the same school shall compulsorily apply for transfer, failing which they will be transferred to any school by

the DoE. Delhi Education Minister Atishi has instructed the chief secretary to immediately stop the transfer of the teachers.

## Govt sets up 24X7 flood control room: AAP

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Ministers Atishi and Saurabh Bharadwaj announced on Friday that the government has set up a 24X7 flood control room that will monitor real time data from the Hathni Kund Barrage from where Yamuna water is

released in Delhi. The announcement by the senior AAP leaders was made following a meeting of the apex committee on supervising, recommending and coordinating flood control measures in the National Capital Territory. Officers from the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, PWD, Urban Development, MCD, Delhi Jal Board, DDA, NDMC, Army, Navy, NDRF, Delhi Police, Home Guard, Health Department and other departments attended this meeting. In the meeting, the ministers reviewed the preparations of the departments to deal with



were instructed to take lessons from the flood situation in Delhi due to the rising water level of Yamuna last year and prepare themselves complete-

The ministers said the flood control room will be manned officials from different agencies including the Municipal Corporation of Authority (DDA) and the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC).

Last year, the Yamuna reached its highest levels in 70 years. The Delhi government is gearing up to tackle any possibility of floods. The control room is in touch with officials at Hathini Kund barrage from where Yamuna river discharge is received. After release of one lakh cusecs of water, relief and rescue machinery starts working," Atishi said. Bharadwaj claimed that the control room will monitor data in real time and will be entirely comput-

Atishi added that NDRF officials have also attended the meeting because it plays an important role along with the Revenue Department for relief and rescue operations during floods. "The details of all the machinery used in relief and rescue operations by all the concerned departments like motor boats, life jackets etc. were also placed before the Apex Committee. We hope that this time there is no flood situation in Delhi. But even if there is a flood, the Delhi government is fully prepared to

deal with it," she added. Meanwhile, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva said, "Hearing Atishi's claims about the flood, the people of Delhi are stunned to see how a government that made false promises of water supply in summer and cleaning drains during monsoon can serve another bowl of lies to the public for the third time."

He said that the flood control Minister Arvind Kejriwal for approving tree felling near claims of Delhi's Irrigation Chhatarpur and making bind-Flood Control Department Minister Atishi ing remarks to the Lieutenant seems 'laughable and hollow'. Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. He also held Atishi responsi-In a press conference by the Delhi BJP, Sachdeva showed ble for making grand promises of uninterrupted water supthe documents related to the ply throughout the summer. file of Tree felling signed by the Keiriwal himself on January 24 'However, by June, her claims collapsed when Delhi faced a and said that the whole AAP severe water crisis," he said. He also mentioned the rains stands exposed. on June 28 which created flood like situation in the country. "Following this, Atishi made grand claims

about cleaning the drains and

ensuring the sewage and water

drainage system during the

monsoon, which failed miser-

ably with the first rain on June

28th," Sachdeva stated.

"The Chief Minister not only approved the tree felling but



also made a binding remark that the Lieutenant Governor is bound by the advice of the Chief Minister and cabinet in this matter," Sachdeva alleged.

He added that Kejriwal left no space for Saxena to deny approval to the felling of trees. Delhi BJP chief stated that senior AAP leaders and Delhi Ministers, who have been holding press conferences in the matter and accusing Lt Governor of approving the tree felling, always knew of the matter. "For the last two weeks Delhi

Ministers Saurabh Bhardwaj, Gopal Rai and other leaders of AAP had been constantly raising in the media through press conferences that the DDA allowed Tree felling under the pressure of the Lt. Governor.

#### **DTC CLARIFICATION**

caved in section of a road in Mehrauli on June 26. The Pioneer has inadvertently mentioned it as a DTC bus. The error is regretted

Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has clarified that it was a cluster bus which was stuck in a



## Poisonous gas kills nine in C'garh

**STAFF REPORTER** 

JANJGIR-CHAMPA/KORBA

 $N^{\mathrm{ine}}$  persons suffocated to death after inhaling suspected poisonous gas in wells in two separate incidents on Friday in Janjgir-Champa and Korba districts of Chhattisgarh.
Ramchandra Jaiswal (60), Ramesh Patel

(50), his two sons Rajendra (20) and Jitendra (25) and Tikeshwar Chandra (25) died in Kikirda village, Janjagir-Champa Additional Superintendent of Police Rajendra Kumar Jaiswal

Jaiswal entered the unused well in his house to retrieve some wooden planks which fell inside. Jaiswal's wife shouted for help when he fainted. Then Patel and his sons entered the well one by one and fell unconscious.

Finally, Chandra too entered the well and lost

Preliminary investigation suggests they died after inhaling poisonous gas but the exact reason behind the deaths will be known after the

In similar circumstances, four persons including an elderly man and his teenage daughter died in Korba district.

Jahru Patel (60), his daughter Safeena,



Shivcharan Patel (45) and Manbodh Patel (57) died in Jurali village, Korba Superintendent of Police Siddharth Tiwari said. The girl entered the water body to save her father who fell into the well. The two others followed her. All of them

became unconscious

The four died drowned after inhaling poisonous gas. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai announced a financial aid of Rs 9 lakhs each to the kin of every deceased.

## Govt to expand health facilities across C'garh

Chhattisgarh Health Minister Shyam Bihari Iaiswal on Friday announced the establishment of super specialty hospitals in Bastar and Surguja as well as 700-bed hospitals in Raipur and Bilaspur.

He said this at the second round table conference on 'Health Innovation Care in Chhattisgarh" at the IIT Bhilai. Officials from IIT, IIM, AIIMS, NIT and multinational companies were present.

The conference focused on how to improve access to medical services in remote

Jaiswal assured all possible support from the government to



developing new technologies to improve healthcare. He spoke about the medical drone delivery facility in Ambikapur and the introduction of robotic surgery in Dr. Bhimrao

Ambedkar Memorial Hospital in Raipur.

He urged youths to undergo medical screening before marriage to eradicate diseases like sickle cell anaemia.

#### Jal Jeevan resolves water crisis in remote Bastar



STAFF REPORTER

The residents of a remote village, Kariyapahar, in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district now have uninterrupted access to drinking water thanks to the Jal Jeevan Mission, an official statement said on Friday. Drinking water is scarce in this village due to the high mineral

**Drinking** water is scarce in this village due to the high mineral content.

Normal life was highly disrupted during the summer due to the drying of water sources.

The Jal Jeevan Mission has ensured water supply to the homes, schools and Anganwadis, bringing ease and convenience in the lives of residents, the statement said.

#### Three Maoists surrender



**STAFF REPORTER** 

Three Maoists including a woman on Friday surrendered to security personnel in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh.

Hidma Sodhi, Kosa Veko alias Prem Kumar Veko and Babita Oyam alias Bhime turned themselves in, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai said.

They were active in Bhairamgarh and Katekalyan Area Committees of the outlawed Maoist outfit. So far, 844 Maoists, including 186 carrying cash rewards, have quit violence in the district since June 2020.

## **Education a medium to fulfill dreams: CM**

#### Shala Praveshotsava launched at CM's native village Bagiya

STAFF REPORTER RAIPUR

hhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Friday said education

was a medium to fulfill one's dream. He was speaking to students at the state-level 'Shala Praveshotsav' programme held in a government school in village Bagiya in Jashpur

Sai tried his hand on a potter's wheel and prepared an earthen lamp. An exhibition was also organised at the programme venue in Bagiya where different departments showcased their models related to education, training and research.

The Chief Minister distributed free bicycles to girl students taking admission in Class 9. The students expressed their joy by simultaneously ringing the bells of the bicycles.

Jashpur MLA Raimuni Bhagat, Finance Minister OP Choudhary, Raigarh MP Radheshyam Rathia,



Arang MLA Guru Khuswant Saheb Pathalgaon MLA Gomti Sai and



Under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, an initiative by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Friday planted a sampling of Rudraksh in his village Bagiya.

## **Govt employee jumps off** from 4 th floor to end life



STAFF REPORTER RAIPUR

AChhattisgarh Housing Board (CGHB) employee on Friday ended his life by jumping from the Paryavas Bhawan in Nava Raipur in Chhattisgarh.

The incident took place around 11 am, Raipur Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Kirtan Rathore said.

Naresh Kumar Sahu (36) leaped from the fourth floor

He worked in the Senior **Assistant Accounts Department in** the Chhattisgarh **Housing Board** 

of the building. No suicide note was found

He worked in the Senior Assistant Accounts Department Chhattisgarh Housing Board. He hailed from Bhilai city in Durg district.

## **Bastar women S-HG learn brick** making to become self dependent

STAFF REPORTER DANTEWADA

Women of Geedam in Chhattisgarh's Bastar have taken to brick making to be economically dependent.

The women of Maa Gauri Self-Help Group in the remote Hidpal Gram Panchayat, located 30-35 km from the district headquarters of Dantewada, are engaged in the labour-intensive task of manufacturing cement bricks.

Five male masons trained the women in operating the brick-making machine and mixing the correct proportion of cement, sand and dust. The primary knowledge



rioritization of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana has increased the demand for bricks in rural areas.

Kamla Korram of the Maa Gauri Self-Help Group was happy to learn brick-making as this would help her earn livelihood and support her family. Another member, Tulsi Kashyap, said the district administration provided free dust and cement. They also got brick molds under the National Livelihood Mission and free training from the administration.

The Self-Help Group has taken a loan of Rs 3 lakh from the bank. Previously, they were involved in making red clay

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## India's defence production hits record ₹1.27 lakh cr in 2023-24

India's annual defence production has hit a record high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, with the Make in India programme crossing new milestones, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday. The value of defence production in FY 2022-23 was Rs 1,08,684 crore. Welcoming the "encouraging development", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Compliments to all those who have contributed to this feat. We are fully committed to nurturing a supportive envi-ronment to further enhance our capabilities and establish India as a leading global defence manufacturing hub". He also said, "This will enhance our security apparatus and make us Aatmanirbhar!"in a social media post.

Rajnath said the Government is committed to creating a more conducive regime for developing India as a leading global defence manufacturing hub.

"The Ministry of Defence has achieved the highest-ever growth in indigenous defence production in value terms during financial year (FY) 2023-24, on the back of successful implementation of the policies and initiatives of the government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, focussing on achieving "Act manishbarts." achieving 'Aatmanirbharta'," the defence ministry said in a statement. The annual defence production has hit a record



high of approximately Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, it said. "As per the data received from all Defence Public Sector undertakings (DPSUs), other PSUs manufacturing defence items and private companies, the value of defence production in the country has gone up to a record-high figure, i.E., Rs 1,26,887 crore, reflecting a growth of 16.7 per cent over the

ment said. The defence minister congratulated the Indian industry, including defence public sector undertakings and other public sector undertakings manufacturing defence items, and the

defence production of the pre-

vious financial year," the state-

private industry for the feat. The Make in India programme is crossing new milestones, year after year, under the leadership of PM Shri

@narendramodi," he said. "India has registered the highest ever growth in the value of defence production in 2023-24. The value of production has reached to Rs. 1,26,887 crore in 2023-24 which is 16.8 per cent

higher than the value of pro-

duction of previous financial

year," he wrote on X. The defence ministry said that of "the total value of production (VoP) in 2023-24, about 79.2 per cent has been contributed by DPSUs/other PSUs and 20.8 per cent by the private sector". The data shows that in terms of absolute value, both DPSUs/PSUs and private sector have recorded a steady growth in defence production,

the statement said The feat has been achieved due to the policy reforms and initiatives and ease of doing business brought in by the government in the last 10 years with focus on attaining self-reliance,

the ministry said

"The indigenisation efforts have been pursued aggressively on a sustained basis, that resulted in the highest ever VoP. Moreover, the spiralling defence exports have contributed tremendously to the overall growth in the indigenous defence production," the statement said.

Defence exports touched a record-high of Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 32.5 per cent over the last fiscal when the figure was

Rs 15,920 crore, it added. In the last five years (since 2019-20), the value of defence production has been increasing steadily, and grown by over 60 per cent, the statement said and also shared year-wise data in

#### BRS member's resignation from RS accepted



PNS NEW DELHI

A fresh vacancy was created in the Rajya Sabha on Friday with House chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar accepting the resignation of K Keshava Rao who had quit his membership as a BRS MP after joining the Congress.
As of now, 16 seats in the

Upper House are vacant.Rao was a Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) member of the Rajya Sabha from Telangana since

He joined the Congress on Wednesday and resigned from his membership of the Upper House of Parliament on Thursday.On Friday, Dhankhar accepted his resignation, fol-lowing which his seat in the Rajya Sabha became vacant, official sources said.

With Rao's resignation, as many as 16 seats in the House are vacant.Before this, 15 seats -- four from Jammu and Kashmir, three from Maharashtra, two each from Assam and Bihar, and one each from Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tripura

were vacant in the Rajya Sabha,

according to the latest tally.

## Cong slams Centre for delay in printing Class VI textbooks

The Congress on Friday criticised the Centre over the delay in publishing new Class 6 textbooks, alleging the Education Ministry is "sabotaging" the education of children after doing the same with the examination process through the "incompetent" National Testing Authority.
Congress general secretary
Jairam Ramesh hit out at the government over the issue, saying that either the "rot runs deep", or the incompetence scales new heights everyday. In a social media post, he said, "After sabotaging the examination process through the incompetent National Testing Authority, the non-biological PM's Education Ministry is sabotaging the education of our

children." "Even as the school year has begun, the NCERT - the National (read Nagpur) Council of Educational Research and Training - has failed to publish new textfor Science, books Mathematics, and Social Sciences for Class 6 students," Ramesh said.

The textbooks themselves have not been finalised by the National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC), he said.

Ramesh pointed out that printing will take another 10 to 15 days. Officials expect a delay of two months before they can make new books available to

incompetence scales new heights everyday!" Ramesh said. Later, Ramesh shared a

media report which said the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is working on a proposal to recreate 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' in a virtual format via a web platform. They cannot ensure leak-

proof Parikshas, and they cannot ensure schoolchildren get their textbooks on time -- but this is what the Ministry of Education is spending its time

The blame for these warped priorities lies entirely on the non-biological Pradhan Mantri," Ramesh said.

His remarks come a day after Minister Education Dharmendra Pradhan reviewed the development of school textbooks in accordance with the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) at a meeting here. The meeting came in the backdrop of a delay in the publication of Class 6 textbooks students, he claimed. that were supposed to be taught from April and are yet to hit the

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had earlier announced that new textbooks for Classes 3 and 6 will be introduced from the 2024-25 academic session.

For the academic year 2024-25, new and engaging textbooks will be introduced in Classes 3 and 6.

The textbook development

work is in the final phase and nine textbooks for Grades 3 and 6 are already available. The remaining eight will be

available very soon," a senior Ministry of Education (MoE) official said. The NCERT had an initial aim

of releasing the new textbooks based on the NCF 2023 only for Classes 3 and 6 this year. While the textbooks for Class 3 are available in the market, those for Class 6 have been delayed.

It was only this week that the NCERT released new English and Hindi textbooks for Člass 6 in the middle of the academic

#### BJP retains most of its office bearers in States

PNS NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday appointed its in-charges and coincharges for states, retaining the incumbent office-bearers in most places.

Its national general secretaries Vinod Tawde, Tarun Chugh and Radha Mohan Das Agarwal will continue to steer the party's organisational affairs in Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka respectively. while Prakash Javadekar and Satish Poonia will be the respective in-charges of Kerala and Haryana. Bihar MLA Nitin Chhattisgarh, Ashish Sood of Goa, Shrikant Sharma of Himachal Pradesh, Laxmikant Bajpai of Jharkhand, Mahendra Singh of Madhya Pradesh and Vijaypal Singh Tomar of

Former Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani and party's national general secretary Dushyant Kumar Gautam will continue to be the in-charge of Punjab and Uttarakhand respectively. BJP MP Sambit Patra has also been retained as the coordinator for the northeastern states The party had appointed a co-incharge for most of the states

## Foreigners must comply with organ transplant rules

PNS NEW DELHI

With India emerging as a preferred destination for organ transplants among foreign nationals, the Union Health Ministry has urged the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs to educate these visitors about the country's regulatory guidelines. The move aims to ensure com-

pliance with legal requirements governing organ transplant procedures in India, emphasising transparency and ethical standards in medical tourism

Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Chandra highlighted the necessity for sensitizing foreign nationals about these regulations. The initiative aims to ensure transparency and compliance with regulations, especially in light of concerns over potential commercial dealings in organs involving

foreign citizens Chandra outlined measures including the preparation of scroll messages and creatives to be displayed at airports, on Bureau of Immigration portals, and on Ministry of External Affairs' websites and embassies



kindly look into the matter permay be circulated extensively through immigration for wide reach," the letter said

The scroll messages stated that when the donor or recipient is a foreign national, then prior approval of the authorization committee shall be required before removing or transplanting human organs or tissue or both.

A senior official of the embassy of the country of origin in India is required to certify the relationship between the donor and the recipient as per form 21, the message states.

In case a country does not have an Embassy in India, the cer-

"I shall be grateful if you could tificate of relationship, in the same format, shall be issued by In a letter addressed to Union sonally and direct the con- the government of that coun-Home Secretary Ajay Kumar cerned authorities to ensure try. Foreign patients needing donor for transplant, can also seek registration in India through their treating hospital after which their name will be included in the waiting list registry. However, such cases would be considered for allocation of organs only when there is no Indian patient avail-

able to take that organ. Dr. Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services (DGHS), had earlier urged States and Union Territories to monitor and report all transplant cases, emphasizing the need for strict action against any illegal activities, including suspension of hospital registrations.

## **SC** to review same-sex marriage verdict on July 10

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to consider on July 10 a batch of pleas seeking review of its last year's judgement which refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex mar-

According to the cause list of July 10 uploaded on the apex court website, a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud would consider in chambers the pleas seeking review of the October 17 last year verdict.

As per the practice, the review pleas are considered in chambers by judges.

members of the bench will be Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Hima Kohli, B V Nagarathna and P S Narasimha.

In a setback to gay rights activists, the apex court had on October 17 last year refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage with the exception of those that are recognised by law. The apex court, however, had made a strong pitch for the rights of queer people so they don't face discrimination in accessing goods and services that are available to others, safe hous-



all districts to provide shelter to members of the community facing harassment and violence and dedicated hotline it was within Parliament's numbers which they could use ambit to change the law for val-

Holding that transgender people in heterosexual relationships have the freedom and entitlement to marry under the existing statutory provisions, the top court had said an entitlement to legal recognition of the right to union, akin to marriage or civil union, or conferring legal status to the relationship can be only done through "enacted law".

A five-judge constitution bench headed by CJI Chandrachud had delivered four separate verdicts on a batch of 21 petitions seeking legal sanction for same-sex marriages. All the five judges were unanlegal recognition to same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act and had observed

While the CJI had written a separate 247-page verdict, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul (since retired) had penned a 17-page judgement in which he broadly agreed with Justice Chandrachud's views.

Justice S Ravindra Bhat (since retired), who authored an 89page judgement for himself and Justice Hima Kohli, had disagreed with certain conclusions arrived at by the CJI including on applicability of adoption rules for queer couples.Justice PS Narasimha had said in his 13-page verdict that he was in complete agreement with the reasoning given and

conclusions arrived at by Justice Bhat.The judges were unanimous in holding that queerness is a natural phenomenon and not "urban or elite" occurrence.In his judgement, the CJI had recorded the assurance by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Centre will constitute a committee chaired by the a committee chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for the purpose of defining and elucidating the scope of entitlements of queer couples who are in union.

The LGBTQIA++ rights activists, who had won a major legal battle in 2018 in the Supreme Court which decriminalised consensual gay sex, had moved the apex court sex marriage and consequential reliefs such as rights to adoption, enrolment as parents in schools, opening of bank accounts and availing succession and insurance benefits. Some of the petitioners had urged the apex court to use its plenary power, "prestige and moral authority" to push the society to acknowledge such a union which would ensure LGBTQIA++ lead a "dignified" life like heterosexuals. LGBTQIA++ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two-spirit, asexual

and allied persons.

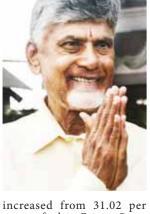
## Naidu presses for more Central funds ahead of Union Budget

PNS NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, pressing for enhanced financial support to the debt-burdened state. The meeting came ahead of union budget presentation. Sources said Naidu, during the meeting in North Block, highlighted various ongoing projects in Andhra Pradesh that require urgent central assistance.

"The CM presented a detailed memorandum outlining the state's financial requirements and the rationale behind the demand for increased allocation," the sources added. TDP ministers in the Centre were pre-

sent during the meeting. Naidu also met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Health Minister J P Nadda. According to the state government data, the public debt of Andhra Pradesh has



cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in 2019-20 to 33.32 per cent in 2023-24 fiscal, indicating deterioration in the fiscal health of the state in the last

five years. Key among Naidu's demands were funds for the Polavaram irrigation project, special assistance for backward regions, and support for the development of the new cap-

The chief minister also sought resolution of pending issues stemming from the bifurcation of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh.

The meeting assumes significance as it comes just weeks before the presentation of the Union Budget 2024-25. The sources indicated that Sitharaman gave a patient hearing to Naidu's concerns and gave an assurance that she will look into Andhra Pradesh's demands within the broader fiscal constraints. Naidu has been vocal about the state's financial distress and sought increased central support to tide over the fiscal challenges, when he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Ministers on Union

Thursday. The Naidu-led Telugu Desam Party is a crucial partner of the NDA with its 16 Lok Sabha MPs supporting the Narendra Modi-led govern-

## India-DRC Secretary-level meeting aims to boost bilateral defence ties

PNS NEW DELHI

viving a boost to bilateral defence ties, the first Secretary-level meeting Defence between the Ministries of India and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was held here on Friday, Defence Ministry

The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and included senior officers of Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs and the Armed Forces. The Congolese delegation was

led by Permanent Secretary of Defence, Ministry of Defence, DRC Major General Lukuikila Metikwiza Marcel and included the senior officers from the Ministry and a representative of Embassy of DRC in India. The meeting was aimed at identifying areas for collaboration to fulfill the potential of defence cooperation between

the two countries. Detailed discussions were held to promote cooperation in training and defence industry.

The Indian delegation high lighted the significant progress India has made in defence manufacturing capability. The DRC side shared the need for modernisation of their Armed

They expressed confidence in the capability of the India defence industry and suggested areas of co-production and co-development. Earlier, the visiting delegation called on Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi.

India enjoys cordial and friendly relations with the DRC. İndia was among the first countries to establish a diplomatic mission in Kinshasa in 1962.

The visit is expected to open up new avenues for defence cooperation between the two

## CJI calls for participation in special Lok Adalat

PTI NEW DELHI

hief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Friday urged citizens, who have pending cases before the Supreme Court, to take part in the special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 to get their disputes resolved amicably and speedily.In a bid to lessen the pendency of cases in the top court, the special Lok Adalat will be organised in the 75th year of the establishment of the apex court, which came into existence on January 26, 1950 with the coming into force of the Constitution.In a video message uploaded on the apex court's website, the CJI said, "From the 29th of July to the third of August 2024, the Supreme Court is organising a special Lok Adalat. This is part of a series of activities, which the Supreme Court is observing to commemorate the 75th year since the establishment of the Supreme Court."

He said most significantly, the judges, who are dedicated to the institution of justice, are



concerned about the large backlog of cases.

"The Lok Adalat represents a very informal technology based solution to resolve cases involving our citizens to their satisfaction in a purely voluntary, consensual mode.

"Therefore, on behalf of all my colleagues, and the staff of the Supreme Court, I would appeal to all citizens who have cases before the Supreme Court, or lawyers, advocates on record, to take the advantage and benefit of this opportunity in an attempt to resolve the cases speedily in a manner which is acceptable to every contesting party," Justice Chandrachud said. Earlier, the top court had

component of the judicial system in the country, enhancing alternative dispute resolution as a means of expediting and fostering amicable settlements. It had said organising of the Lok Adalat was pursuant to the commitment to accessible and efficient justice delivery for all sections of the society. It had said cases having ele-

said Lok Adalats are an integral

ments of settlement, including those relating to matrimonial disputes, property disputes, motor accident claims, land acquisition, compensation, service and labour which are pending before the apex court, would be taken up to facilitate speedy disposal.

## Budget sops not poll gimmicks, in sync with allocations: Ajit Pawar

The schemes announced in the Maharashtra budget for women, youth and farmers are not "election gimmicks", said Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Thursday, slamming the opposition for ridiculing the government over initiatives.

During the debate on the budget he presented in the legislative assembly last week, Pawar, who holds the finance portfolio, said this was his 10th budget and he was well aware that the schemes were in sync with budgetary allocations.

Maharashtra's economy is in a stable condition, said the finance minister. Even though debt has increased by 10.67 per cent compared to the previous year, it is 18.35 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) which is well within the prescribed limit of 25 per cent, he said.

Presenting the last budget of the Eknath Shinde government, before the state goes to polls later this year, Pawar had announced sops for women, youth and



of society that entailed an outlay of more than Rs 80,000

"torrent of assurances" but said there was no clarity on how money would be raised for the schemes announced. NCP (SP) Lok Sabha member Supriva Sule on Thursday targeted the much-publicised 'Ladki Bahin' scheme saying though good for women it was nothing but a "jumla' (gimmick).

Under the 'Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana'

farmers and other segments Rs 1,500 per month. Pawar said women have

welcomed the scheme. 'I am facing criticism from The opposition had called it a the opposition for the scheme which aims to empower women," said the NCP leader, adding that the government is

open to improving it. We extended the age limit from 60 to 65 years and also the time for relaxed registration. Even if women get registered in August, they will be eligible for the (Ladki Bahin) monthly allowance from July," he assured.

said additional announced in the budget, budgetary provisions will be eligible women will be given made in the supplementary

women will benefit from the Ladki Bahin scheme which would cost the state Rs 46,000 crore yearly, he said. He slammed the Congress for promising a monthly dole of Rs 8,500 to women, before the Lok Sabha polls.

"Prithviraj Chavan (ex-CM) while speaking in the assembly on the budget said Congress would give Rs 8,500 per month. If that were to be implemented, a budgetary allocation of Rs 2.5 lakh crore would be needed," Pawar said, terming the rival party's promise an election jumla.

In 2003-04, Pawar claimed the Congress-led government had promised free electricity to farmers before elections and even implemented it for a few months. "After the results, the decision was withdrawn,' he said.

Pawar said three cooking gas cylinders will be given free per year to 52 lakh families for which Rs 1,600 crore will be spent.

He reiterated that the objective making Maharashtra a one trilliondollar economy achieved by 2028.

# Hisar firing incident: Traders decry poor law and order, observe bandh rain las

Traders observed a camber on Friday and the raders observed a bandh shops and petrol pumps remained closed to protest the delay in arrest of miscreants even after 12 days of firing of gunshots outside a car dealership by unidentified persons, who had also demanded a ransom of Rs 5

The traders have alleged that after the firing incident, two owners of an automobile showroom and a car accessories shop had also received ransom demands of Rs 2 crore each from unidentified miscreants on their mobile phones.

Raising questions on the alleged inaction of police in these recent cases, the traders said that the culprits were vet to be arrested.

Meanwhile, Hisar District Bar Association President Viney Kumar Bishnoi said the lawyers of the association suspended their work on Friday in support of the bandh

Petrol Pumps Association chief Raj Kumar Salemgarh said all the 15 petrol pumps in Hisar remained closed due to non-arrest of the miscreants. The day-long shutdown was called by the Haryana



Pradesh Beopar Mandal and other traders organisations. During the bandh, all establishments and shops of Hisar remained closed and the markets wore a deserted look. More than 70 market associations joined the bandh. The traders' organisations alleged that the police have nothing except assurances. The shops remained closed in armed miscreants, who had all areas, including Auto Market, Nagori Gate, Moti also demanded Rs 5 crore from its owner. Bazaar, Gandhi Chowk, Bhagat Singh Chowk, Rajguru On June 24, Market, New Raju Market, Market, Bishnoi

Mandir Market, Arva Samai Mandir Market, Subhash Market, Cloth Market, Sabzi Mandi and Anaj Mandi. Haryana Pradesh Beopar Mandal State President Bajrang Dass Garg said the bandh was successful.

said should administration immediately arrest those who opened fire outside a car dealership and also apprehend

Laxmi

who demanded a ransom from two other traders of Auto Market, Hisar. The shops of Auto Market New Grain Market and Bazaar Khajanchiyan had remained closed on Friday last week to protest against the June 24 incident of firing of gunshots outside a car dealership here recently by

unidentified men had opened fire outside a car dealership in Hisar and demanded Rs 5 crore from its owner.

A video that surfaced on social media showed two of them leaving the showroom with their faces covered.

The police had earlier said that the three miscreants arrived on a motorcycle, barged into the dealership, left a note with a ransom demand, and fired shots in the air outside the showroom before leaving.

## rain lashes parts of Rajasthan



PTI JAIPUR

Rajasthan continues to see heavy rainfall, with rainfall, with Malpura in Tonk district recording 176 mm rain in the hours, meteorological department said on Friday.

Significant rainfall was recorded across the state --116 mm in Sajangarh (Banswara), 107 mm in Tijara, 101 mm in Danpur, 102 mm in Nainwan (Bundi), 97 mm in Thanagazi, 90 mm in Pipalda (Kota), 88 mm in Tapukda, 82 mm in Fagi of Jaipur, 75 mm in Karauli, 75 mm in Ramgarh, 68 mm in Nawalgarh of Jhunjhunu and 65 mm in Baswa of Dausa.

Many parts of the state received received moderate to heavy rainfall in the last 24 hours, the weather office said. A circulation system formed over southwestern Uttar Pradesh and adjoining eastern Rajasthan contributed to the heavy rains, with the monsoon trough line passing through Bikaner and Sikar on

Monsoon is expected to remain active in most parts of eastern Rajasthan on Friday, with a significant amount of rainfall predicted for Jaipur, Kota, Bharatpur, Udaipur divisions. Heavy rain is expected in Tonk and adjoining districts, the weather department said. Heavy rain is likely to

Sunday and Monday. Rain activities are expected in some parts of northeastern Rajasthan on Sunday and Monday, which are expected to increase again on July 9-10. Bikaner division and eastern and northern parts of

Friday.

continue in eastern Rajasthan on Saturday, which could decrease subsequently on

Jodhpur division are also expected to receive rain in the next 2-3 days, the weather

## **MUDA scam: Karnataka Govt transfers Deputy Commissioner of Mysuru**

**PTI** ■ BENGALURU

Amid a controversy over alleged land scam in Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), the Karnataka government on Friday transferred Mysuru Deputy Commissioner K V Rajendra Senior BJP leader R Ashoka

had earlier alleged that Rajendra had written several letters to MUDA stating that the allotment of alternative sites to land losers, in lieu of land acquired from them to form residential layouts under a "50:50 ratio" scheme, was improper. Rajendra was among the 21

IAS officers who were transferred Government in a bureaucratic reshuffle. He has been posted as the Director of Tourism in Bengaluru.

presently the Managing Director of Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation (KUIDFC), Bengaluru.

Ashoka, the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, had alleged that Rajendra had also sought details about the process adopted to allot alternative sites but MUDA did not bother to respond. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

on Thursday rejected BJP's demand for a CBI probe into the alleged irregularities in allotment of sites to land losers, including his wife Parvathi, by MUDA, as he stoutly denied any wrongdoing. Mysuru is the home district of the Chief Minister.

alternative sites were also envisages allotting 50 per cent allotted to Parvathi in an of developed land to the land



value as compared to the location of her land which had been "acquired" by the MUDA, and sought his resignation.

The MUDA had allotted plots to Parvathi under the scheme in lieu of over three acres of her land, where MUDA developed a residential layout.

The BJP has alleged that The controversial scheme oser in Lakshmikanth Reddy, who is which had higher property land acquired for forming CBI...We too had demanded,

The BJP has alleged that irregularities to the tune of Rs 4,000 crore had taken place in distribution of sites to land losers by MUDA. "Apparently 4.500-5,000 sites were allotted by flouting norms," a BJP leader claimed.

"Have they (BJP) given any case (to CBI) during their tenure? I have given seven cases (including his earlier tenure as CM). This is not a did they give (any case to CBI for probe)," Siddaramaiah had said in response to a question on BJP demanding for a CBI probe. The Chief Minister had said

the plots were given to his wife by MUDA in 2021 when BJP was in power. "They (BJP) are the ones who

gave the site, now if they themselves call it illegal, how should one take it? We did not ask for sites to be given in Vijayanagar 3rd or 4th stage (in Mysuru)," Siddaramaiah

The Chief Minister said earlier this week that housing sites allotted by MUDA under the scheme have been put on hold pending an investigation into the alleged irregularities. He had also said he wouldn't resign. "What role do I have in this case?" he had asked.

## No evidence of sale, receipt of medical exam question papers: Kerala police

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Police on Friday said presently there is no evidence that anyone has received the Foreign Medical Examination Graduate question papers and answer keys as was circulated on social media a day ago.

The police, in a statement by the State Police Media Centre (SPMC), requested candidates to be careful and not fall for such scams or transfer money for the

question papers. It also said it has intensified investigation into announcement on social media that the question papers and answer keys were

available for sale. Police said that any attempt to subvert the examination strict legal action would be

taken against those who try to It further said that all types of

social media were under strict surveillance 24 hours of the After completing MBBS studies abroad, those who

wish to practice in India are required to pass the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination (FMGE) conducted by the National Board of Examinations.

The City Cyber Crime Police in Thiruvananthapuram had on Thursday registered a case against groups that advertised, on Telegram groups, the sale of question papers for the July 6 exam. The case was registered under the Public Examinations

(Prevention of Unfair Means) Act 2024, making it the first case of its kind in the state to

Rahul visits UP stampede site, interacts with victims' kin

## Flood situation in **Assam critical, CM** visits Dibrugarh

**PTI** GUWAHATI

The flood situation in Assam was critical on Friday with nearly 22 lakh people affected and all major rivers flowing above the danger mark.

Minister Himanta Chief Biswa Sarma reviewed the situation in Dibrugarh town, which has been under water and facing severe power shortage for the last eight

He visited some areas on foot and interacted with the

"We will be engaging experts and the local residents to find a community-driven solution to the problem of inundation in Dibrugarh town," he said. The town is witnessing waterlogging due to clogged drains, and with the Brahmaputra flowing above the danger level, it was posing more difficulties to drain out the water, officials

The locals urged Sarma to restore the power supply, but he said that it had been turned off to ensure that there were no mishaps due to electrocution.

Sarma, however, directed the deputy commissioner to restore the supply by making public announcements so that people are alert.

Nearly 22 lakh people have been affected in 29 districts. The toll in this year's flood, landslide and storm has increased to 62, while three persons are missing.

worst-hit Among the districts are Dhubri where 6,48,806 people are affected, Darrang with 1,90,261 people hit and Cachar with with 1,90,261 1,45,926 people affected. A total of 39,338 affected

people have taken shelter in 698 relief camps, while 7,24,322 people have been provided with relief materials.

An alert was issued in Kamrup (Metro) district where the Brahmaputra, Digaru and Kollong rivers were flowing above the danger marks with vast tracts of land inundated.

The Brahmaputra is also flowing above the danger marks at Nimatighat, Tezpur, Guwahati, Goalpara and Dhubri. Its tributaries Subansiri at Badatighat, Burhi Dihing at Chenimari, Dikhou at Sivasagar, Disang at Nanglamuraghat, Dhansiri at Numaligarh, and Kopili at Kampur and Dharamtul are flowing above the danger

The Barak river was flowing above the danger mark at AP Ghat, BP Ghat, Chota Bakra and Fuletrak, while its tributary Dhaleswari was above the red mark in Gharmura, Katakhal in Matizuri and Kushiyara in Karimganj town.

State ministers are also camping in various floodaffected districts.

PNS HATHRAS/ALIGARH

The grieving families of the 'satsang' stampede victims who met Rahul Gandhi in Hathras and Aligarh on Friday said the Congress leader has assured them he will make efforts to get their compensation enhanced.

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha also assured that he would raise the stampede issue in Parliament in a bid to prevent such incidents in the future, they said.

Gandhi met with some families first in Aligarh's Pilkhana village around 7.30 am and then in Hathras' Vibhav Nagar area around 9 am, hours after he began his

pre-dawn journey from Delhi, accompanied by some party leaders, to console the families of those killed in the Tuesday incident.

His meetings with the families in the neighbouring districts in western Uttar Pradesh took place amid deployment of large number of security personnel by the state police. Hari Mohan, a resident of Nai ka Nagla locality in Hathras, lost his paternal aunt Omvati, 55, in the stampede.
"Rahul Gandhi interacted

with us, extended his sympathies. He said he would make effort to get the compensation amount for victims enhanced," Mohan



Mrityunjay Bharti, 22, lost her asked about's Gandhi visit, maternal grandmother Asha Devi, around 55, in the tragedy. Bharti, who lives in Aligarh, has come to Hathras to be with her relatives who

Navipur area. "He (Gandhi) spoke to us and tried to understand our issues. He said he would raise the issue in Parliament so that such incidents do not

happen in future," Bharti told PTI. Aligarh's Pilkhana village, Monu, a family member of the when deceased,

said, "He also said that he will try his best to help (us), and will talk to the government as his party is not in power." Khusboo, who lost her

of help during the interaction with the former Congress president.

Another woman, who lost her sister-in-law in the stampede, told reporters, "He (Rahul Gandhi) told us that the (Congress) party will help us, and assured us help. He also inquired from us how it (the incident) took place."

According to police, of the 121 people who died due to the stampede on July 2, 17 were from Aligarh and 19 were from Hathras.

Pradesh The Uttar government on Wednesday formed a three-member judicial commission headed by a retired high court judge to probe the Hathras tragedy,

possibility that a conspiracy was behind the stampede.

The government has also announced compensation of Rs 2 lakh for the kind of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured. The police are investigating

the matter and have so far arrested six volunteers who were members of the organising committee of the satsang of Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba on July 2 in Fulrai village of Hathras.

The godman is not named in the police FIR as accused but a senior officer told media on Thursday that he would be questioned if required for investigation.

#### Mica mines in Jharkhand free of child labour, says child rights' body

instead, I feel overwhelmed

PTI RANCHI

 $A^{\text{pex child rights body}}_{\text{NCPCR}} \text{ on Friday}$ declared mica mines in Jharkhand 'child labour-free', confirming that all kids are now enrolled in schools. According to Nobel laureate

Kailash Satyarthi's non-profit organisation Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), which spearheaded the 'Child Labour-Free Mica' campaign in collaboration with the district administration and local communities, more than 20,000 kids were previously engaged as child labour in

these mines. "Today, as I declare that all children are free from exploitation in mica mines and are attending schools

and proud. The success of the Child Labour-Free Mica programme, supported by village panchayats, state government, and district administration, demonstrates how persistent efforts and a singular focus can ensure safety and justice for National children, Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) chairperson Priyank Kanoongo said. "In 2004, a conducted by research Bachpan

Bachao Andolán identified

over 5,000 children involved

in mica mining and collection. By 2019, this

number had escalated to

more than 20,000. Through

collaborative efforts involving

children, communities, civil society organisations, and government, the 'Child government, the 'Child Labour-Free Mica' initiative was born. Every child previously out of school was identified, withdrawn from labour, enrolled, and retained in schools," said BBA. Child rights activist Bhuwan

Ribhu, who initiated the research identifying child labourers in 2004, said, "Identifying and withdrawing 22,000 children from mica mining and ensuring their enrolment in schools marks a landmark achievement for the government and civil society organisations. This should serve as a global example for eliminating child labour in unorganised sectors within global supply chains."

#### molesting woman pilgrim in Kedarnath **PTI** ■ DEHRADUN Two police sub-inspectors have been suspended on

charges of molesting a pilgrim from Madhya Pradesh Kedarnath a year ago. Sub-inspector Kuldeep Negi

and Kedarnath Station House Officer Manjul Rawat were suspended on the basis of the recommendation of an committee, inquiry Rudraprayag Superintendent

of Police (SP), Vishakha Ashok Bhadane told PTI. The woman had come to visit Kedarnath in May, 2023 along with eight of her friends. After visiting the Himalayan temple, her friends returned by the heli service. However, she was left

behind as there was no space

in the helicopter.

Two cops suspended on charges of

While she was waiting for the next sortie to be ferried back the weather turned bad and the heli service had to be suspended for the day.

As there were no proper lodging arrangements at the temple, she sought Rawat's help. He asked her to stay at the police camp for the night saying a woman constable will be deployed there for her security, the SP said quoting the woman's complaint in this regard. However, no woman constable was sent to the police camp in Kedarnath as promised.

Instead, sub-inspector Negi

himself.

administration indicting the two cops following which an FIR was lodged against them at

committee headed Guptkashi circle officer to look into the matter. However, the probe did not make much progress. The woman then lodged a complaint on CM helpline Uttarakhand in

and lodged a complaint with

The SP instituted an inquiry

WhatsApp.

October, 2023.

Rudraprayag SP on

After that Dehradun's SP (city) Pramod Kumar was asked to investigate the matter He submitted his report to the

came to the camp under the influence of alcohol and Sonprayag Kotwali on June 28 and both of them were molested her, she alleged in suspended, the Rudraprayag her complaint. She returned to Indore the next morning

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Momentous meeting**

The meeting of PM Modi with President Putin would solidify India's role as a key player in the emerging global order

rime Minister Narendra Modi is set to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin. It was a meeting for which preparation was underway for a long but was delayed due to the elections. Indian Russian ties are historic but have become more important in the evolving multipolar world order. This will be Modi's first visit to Russia since the onset of the Ukraine war in February 2022. Despite the West's increasing isolation of Russia due to the Ukraine conflict, India has maintained a neutral stance. India has called for dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the dispute but has refrained from condemning Russia outright. This approach aligns with India's historical policy of non-alignment and strategic autonomy. India continues to buy Russian oil despite Western sanctions. India and Russia share a long-standing relationship dating back to the Cold War era. The two countries have traditionally enjoyed strong defence and economic ties, with Russia being a major supplier of military hardware to India. This relationship has per-



sisted through various political changes and has been marked by cooperation in multiple areas, including nuclear energy, space exploration, and trade.Indeed, the Ukraine war has had far-reaching implications for global politics, economics, and security. The conflict has disrupted global energy markets and supply chains, contributing to inflationary pressures worldwide. India nonetheless did not snap ties with Russia despite its good relations with the US and the Western pressure. While maintaining its stance of neutrality, it has continued its trade relations with Russia, including increased imports of discounted Russian oil. In this backdrop the meeting of Modi with Putin is sig-

nificant. It is expected to cover a broad range of topics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of India-Russia relations. PM Modi may seek to secure long-term energy supplies from Russia to ensure stability in its energy markets. Both leaders may discuss ongoing and future defence projects, including the delivery of military hardware and the joint development of defence technologies. India's defence modernization plans, which include acquiring advanced weaponry and upgrading its military capabilities, are likely to be a focal point of discussion. Modi and Putin are expected to discuss the evolving international order and regional security issues. India's position as a rising global power and its role in regional stability will likely be a major point of discussion. The conversation may also touch upon India's vision for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, where it seeks to counterbalance China's influence. Bilateral trade has seen growth despite sanctions on Russia, and both countries may seek to expand this further by identifying new areas of cooperation. Though it may not augur well for the US which may frown but then for every country its interests are paramount. This balancing act could position India as a crucial player in mediating global conflicts and fostering international cooperation, enhancing its role on the world stage.



Locals move their belongings on a boat as they move to a safer place during floods, in Darrang district

# Nuanced shift in parliamentary conduct



As parliamentarians navigate new complexities, the emphasis remains on upholding the dignity, decorum, and effectiveness of legislative processes

he 18th Lok Sabha has been ushered in with customary procedural formalities on the 25th of June, 2024. Certain rituals convert the reality of Lok Sabha into the sanctified existence of a group of people meant to lead this country through such vicissitudes as it may face. This is, as it should be, an extraordinary phenomenon. The nation can be legitimately proud of this event. Yet in certain ways, it's different from some of the preceding Lok Sabhas because this time there was no consensus on the identification of a Speaker for the Lok

It is not as if in each of the pre-

ceding Lok Sabhas, the selection of the speaker was unanimous. There were instances when the Speaker was chosen by ballot and the Lok Sabha still, functioned with a fair degree of cohesiveness. The unique situation in the 18th Lok Sabha included a demand by the opposition to promise it a Deputy Speaker's position. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, it did not seem to matter to many peo-An assurance here and now 'seemed to be the demand. The matter seems to have would have been settled. The crux of the situation seems to be putting up the Deputy Speaker's position as a factor in negotiation. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, a consensus was built around these issues, which this time around did not seem to bother many people. This is a settled and yet important proposition about the style of conduct of affairs. An illustration may help to establish the point with better clarity. In one of the preceding Lok Sabhas, at a time when Jawahar Lal Nehru dominated the scene in Indian politics, there was a bye-election schedule from Muzaffarpur Constituency in Bihar. Then socialist parties sought to put up Acharya Narendra Dev as their candidate for election from this constituency. Jawahar Lal Nehru, who was one of the tallest figures in the political make a point.

He felt that even if Acharya Narendra Dev was a candidate for the opposition, yet there was and goodwill of parliamentar-



**PARLIAMENTARY** TRADITIONS ARE IMPORTANT, AND IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE 18TH LOK SABHA WILL HAVE SOME DARING CHALLENGES TO ITS METHOD OF WORK, TO WHICH BOTH THE **RULING PARTY AND** THE OPPOSITION, LED BY SOME OLD VETERANS, WILL NEED TO ADAPT AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

ians will prevail and matters take their course in a more enlightened way.Be that as it may, one is not quite sure what the adamancy of a prior commitment about the Deputy Speaker's position being given to the opposition has been all

In any case, the convention has been for the Deputy Speaker's position to be given to the opposition, so ultimately, the contention was only about the timing of the formalization of this kind of prior agreement. It is indeed a small matter, but if the loftiness of parliamentary traditions were to be seen in its due weightage in the conduct of affairs, it is important. Running a parliament cannot and should not be solely about positions, it has also to be about patterns, graces, decency, and above all, dignified conduct in electoral and consensual politics. The people show their class through their representatives, behaviours, and the way arguments are made or not made.

This becomes the algorithm for the conduct of public affairs. Every parliament loses at least 20 to 40% of its members who fail to return for various reasons or who

may only serve for one term. Therefore, being a member of parliament, especially the Lok Sabha, carries a huge moral weight that goes beyond simple political votes.

Parliamentary traditions are important, and it may well be that the 18th Lok Sabha will have some daring challenges to its method of work, to which both the ruling party and the opposition, led by some old veterans, will need to adapt and take responsibility.

This is a simplified version of what happens, as the method of working is nearly as critical as the methods of resolving differences. All said and done, even parliament has to operate within the bandwidth of rules, regulations, bylaws, practices, and more. It is best done through goodwill and grace. Senior members in the Lok Sabha need to conduct affairs with statesmanship and dignity. The Prime Minister has done well to emphasize that for a nation to work well, all must work together, not just the majority.

( 1 ne writer is a weil-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are

## Give freebies only when essential and unavoidable



While 'feebies' schemes are intended to offer immediate relief to the targeted groups, their effectiveness and necessity remain suspect

1st July 2024 buckled down for implementing the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana, which aims to provide aid of Rs 1,000 to Delhi women above 18, baring the taxpayers, government employees and other government

pension plan beneficiaries. An amount of Rs 2,000 crore has been set aside for this scheme. Several such schemes or freebies are

provided by different state governments across the length and breadth of the country. Many times these freebies of diverse nature are strategically planned to precede elections and are highly poll-driven in a bid for electoral success.

These freebies or Rewari culture as mentioned by PM Modi, have been defined by the Reserve Bank of India report as "a public welfare measure that is provided free of charge". They are generally aimed at benefiting the targeted population in the short term and are different from long-term welfare schemes which are categorized as public/merit goods disposable income of the ment, by encouraging their

elhi Government on and are a way of promoting 1st July 2024 buckled social justice, equity, and human development. Some examples of welfare schemes are the Public Distribution System, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural **Employment Guarantee Act** 

> (MGNREGA), the midday meal scheme, etc. While freebies are frequently used by political parties to build public trust, it is worthwhile to analyse them as a necessity or waste. <

> Such schemes stimulate economic growth by incentivising and increasing the productive capacity of the workforce along with providing necessities and social welfare to the poor and marginalized sections of society. For example, freebies such as uniforms, textbooks, bicycles or health insurance can improve the literacy, mobility, health, and quality of life of the needy and vulnerable groups. By increasing the

poor, freebies can stimulate demand for goods and services, thereby boosting economic activity. Besides, if rationally devised, they can also reduce income inequality. For example, loan waivers, or cash transfers can empower the weaker and indebted households by giving them access to

assets, credit, or income support. However, freebies are like a doubleedged sword, with heavy economic and social costs. Foremost, large-scale public expenditure comes with a huge and permanent fiscal burden and macroeconom-

ic distortions. It leads to an immediate increase in demand, disrupting inflation; diverting funds from repaying govern-ments' previous obligations causing accumulation of public debt; and diverting funds from more productive and essential sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, industry, etc. leading to resource misallocation. Besides the freebies in the form of free water, electricity, or fuel can lead to the deterioration of the environoveruse and wastage of natural resources.Freebies can also lead to negative externality by creating a dependency culture and loss of productivity, reducing the incentive for individuals to seek employment or improve their economic situation through their efforts. Additionally, cash vs. kind grants are always debatable and in general cash benefits generally lead to misuse of funds such as gambling, liquor consumption, adultery, etc. which leads to deviation from the desired

In conclusion, freebies can play a crucial role in addressing immediate social and economic challenges, they must be implemented with careful consideration of their long-term impact and sustainability. A rational policy framework is needed foremost, to define the targeted section and then design the nature and amount of benefit to minimize inappropriate utilization of resources

(The author is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi; views are personal)

#### **NEW BUILDING NORMS**

Madam — This letter refers to the news titled "Haryana Permits Stilt plus Four-Floor Construction" published on July 3.In Haryana, the government led by Nayab Singh Saini has given approval for the construction of Stilt plus Four floors for homeowners, builders, and

Muzaffarpur against Narendra

Dev. Those times were differ-

ent. There was a predomi-

nantly universal sentiment for

merit and goodwill, and

Narendra Dev sailed home

well on that argument. As

stated, with the main opposi-

tion and Congress working

together for Narendra Dev, it

was not difficult for him to get

elected to the Lok Sabha.

Those times were different, and

those times still resonate with

many people as to what good

traditions in the parliamentary

system are all about. It's remark-

able that during the arguments

for Deputy Speakership, no one

in public even recalled this

episode from the perspective of

parliamentary history. It is

indeed a case for a two-tiered

split on which way the parila

mentary traditions could be

heading. One can only hope

that over time, the good sense

property dealers. This decision has sparked a mixed response from both society and the construction industry. There is a requirement to obtain permission from neighboring plot holders before commencing Stilt plus Four construction. However, many Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) across the state have expressed opposition to the government's decision through various channels. The government's intention seems to be to increase the income of those involved in the construction sector, despite some technical and legal challenges. It is crucial, however, to strike a balance between the structural changes, such as the reconstruction of sewage systems, public facilities, and the concerns of the pub-

For residents of builder floors, the use of parking spaces will be significantly improved. Nevertheless, the construction of Stilt plus Four buildings will pre-

sent both opportunities and challenges. Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

#### **MAKE QR CODE PAYMENTS UNIVERSAL**

Madam — There is a recurring problem with currency change across various services, including both government and private sectors such as transportation (RTC buses, metro trains), and e-seva centers. To address this issue, it is crucial to provide the option of QR codebased online payments everywhere. Additionally, offering a choice between partial cash payment and partial online payment would be beneficial.

QR code payments are a secure, contactless method that reduces the risk of account hacking compared to credit or

#### **Vigilance urged for Zika virus**

HE EDITOR



mong Pregnant WomenDear Editor,The Union Health Ministry has called on states to maintain constant vigilance by screening pregnant women for Zika virus infection

those who test positive. Each health facility and hospital has been assigned a nodal officer responsible for ensuring that the premises remain free from Aedes mosquitoes, the carriers of the Zika virus. States have also been directed to enhance their entomological surveillance and intensify vector control efforts in residential areas, workplaces, schools, construction sites, institutions, and health facilities. The spread of Zika has been reported in Pune, where two more cases have recently emerged, bringing the total to six, with both new cases involving pregnant women from Erandwane. The rising number of cases poses a significant health risk, and it is imperative that the government takes appropriate action to curb the spread of the virus across

and monitoring the development of fetuses in

Shanthi Ramanathan | Ghaziabad

advantageous to install ticket vending machines inside metro coaches for last-minute passengers. This would enhance convenience for both employees and customers, reducing arguments, stress, and conflicts, ultimately leading to a more harmonious and healthy lifestyle. In any case the digital payment is the future so why not embrace it wholeheartedly.

PVS Sreelekha | Secunderabad

#### PM ON MANIPUR

Madam — Prime Minister's Response to Manipur Crisis Questioned Dear Editor, Regarding the news "Modi Silences Critics on Manipur" published on July 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, facing criticism from the opposition over the handling of the ethnic conflict in Manipur, broke his silence on July 3, claiming that violence in the state has been declining.

This statement is characteristic of Modi's tendency to address issues long after they have escalated, often offering debit card payments. It would also be little more than empty promises. Despite

both central and state governments being under BJP control, there has been minimal action to address the crisis effectively.Kuki residents have been unable to use Imphal airport since May 3, 2023, and essential supplies have to be transported through Mizoram. Modi's recent comments seem insincere and detached from the reality on the

ground.
The Prime Minister, who has ample time for inaugurating projects and foreign visits, has not visited Manipur, which has been plagued by violence for the past 14 months. The Supreme Court has expressed its distrust in the Manipur government, reflecting the sentiment of the people towards Modi's assurances. Even as Manipur starts to stabilize, it is imperative for the Prime Minister to prioritize visiting the state and addressing the issues directly, rather than focusing on his image and political importance. Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

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## **FIRST COLUMN**

### A TALE OF DECEIT, DESIRE AND DEVASTATION

Buddha once reflected, those captivated by lust fall into the cyclical suffering of existence



hose who are lust-infatuated fall back into the swirling current (of samsara) like a spider on its self-spun web," said Buddha. Aeons ago lived an old farmer whose wife was young and alluring. The prepossessing woman was not satisfied physically by her aged husband and fantasized about young men. She hardly attended to the household chores and was perpetually looking for the company of youngsters to fulfil her carnal desires.

A trickster came to know about the quandary of the winsome one and seeing her alone went up to her uttering, "I am a widower. The moment I saw you I was ensnared by your voluptuous body. I beseech you to give me the pleasure of your company. However, I have very little wealth at my disposal." Delighted at the offer, the woman blurted, "O handsome one, my husband has plenty of lucre. He is old and infirm. I will embezzle the mammon and jewellery at our house and let us scoot from this place to some far away place where we can spend

The stripling trickster possessing a chiselled frame became excited and asked the damsel to bring the loot and gold to a place where he would be waiting for her. "We will then leave the place as it darkens," he informed her. The farmer's wife waited till it was dark and when her husband fell asleep robbed the money and gold and left the house in the cover of darkness to meet her lover. The mountebank took the



bag full of money and gold on the pretext that he would carry it and they began their journey. After travelling some distance, they halted as there was a river to cross. The hoodwinker pondered, "What do I do with this libidinous woman? If someone were to set his eyes on her, he would perforce have to protect her. Let me scoot with the loot," he decided. His mind was cannonaded with all these thoughts, "Look, my dear, it would be arduous to cross the river. Let me first ferry the money bag to the other side of the river. I will come back and we can swim across to the other bank.

The ludicrous woman gave the bag to the young charlatan.

He requested her to give up her apparel as the clothes could hinder swift swimming. The naïve lewd woman agreed to the proposal. The youthful trickster was now left with the bag and her clothes. Covering her naked body with her hands, the woman began waiting restlessly for the deluder to return. Suddenly a jackal with a piece of meat in his mouth happened to pass by. The jackal happened to see a fish that emerged from the water and in attempting to grab it dropped the piece of meat and ran towards it. However, the fish, seeing the rushing jackal, jumped back into the water.

Disappointed, the jackal went back to pick up the piece of meat. Unexpectedly a kite swooped and took it away before the jackal could reach it. The naked woman laughed at the jackal that had lost the fish and also the piece of meat. Hurt by the woman's behaviour, the jackal said, "You may be twice as intelligent as I am. But what is the use? You have lost your husband, your lover and your wealth too. The distraught woman realized her folly and entered a temple to pray for her sins as the priest draped her nudity and uttered, "Cover your nudity with the cloak of purity. Lust is ephemeral, Godliness is permanent."

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

# Paper leak: Call for fair and a political resolution -



Paper leaks are not merely procedural failures; they erode trust in the examination system. This matter transcends political divides and requires a systemic reform



he recent NEET paper leak has caused a stir in the nation. Paper leaks are a serious issue that must be addressed sensitively and apolitically. No government can condone such malpractices, and addressing them must prioritize fairness over political gain. This issue needs to be handled sensitively and free from political agendas. Addressing the root causes and implementing robust measures are essential to ensure the integrity of the examination process and restore trust among students and their families. Paper leaks aren't new and have happened before. It's crucial to take this issue seriously and work on solutions. Understanding why parents and students are influenced by leaked papers and addressing these root causes will help maintain exam integrity and ensure a fair process.Instances of paper leaks have undermined trust in the examination system, leading to the temptation for guaranteed selection through illicit means. It is essential to stop this practice, implement stringent security measures, enforce strict penalties for malpractices, and ensure transparent and fair examination processes to restore trust and uphold the principle of merit-based success. We must remember that the National Testing Agency (NTA) was established as a premier, specialist, autonomous, and self-sustained testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institu-

The NTA is governed by a body consisting of esteemed members such as former UPSC Chairmen, Directors of IITs, NITs, IIMs, and Vice Chancellors of JNU and IGNOU, whose integrity should not be doubted. However, the issues lie at both the policy and execution levels, and solutions are needed at both levels. Here are some proposed solutions:For examinations with over 500,000 students, a two-tier filtering system should be



**COLLABORATIVE** EFFORT BETWEEN

GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATIVE

AGENCIES LIKE THE CBI IS ESSENTIAL IN ADDRESSING

**MALPRACTICES** AND RESTORING TRUST IN THE **EXAMINATION** SYSTEM used, including preliminary and main exams. If the number of candidates exceeds 2,000,000, a more rigorous three-tier system should be adopted: preliminary, main stage 1, and main stage 2 exams. The final merit list should be based on the average marks obtained in main stage 1 and stage 2.

This approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation process, maintaining fairness and integrity by filtering candidates through multiple stages. Implementing this system would address the chal-lenges of managing large numbers of candidates and reduce the malpractice risk, leading to a more reliable and credible examination process.It is important to designate certain cities or centres as sensitive or extremely sensitive, similar to how polling booths are identified by the Election

These centres should be under constant CCTV surveillance to maintain the integrity of the examination process, deter malpractice, and ensure fairness and

transparency. This proactive approach will help restore confidence in the examination system and mitigate the risk of irregularities. The distinction between the Examination of Selection and the Examination of Rejection must be clearly defined and resolved. High-stakes exams like NEET and JEE are designed to be rejection-based, aiming to filter out unqualified candidates. This means the primary goal is to eliminate those not meeting the necessary standards. To achieve this, paper setters need specialized training to craft exams that effectively serve this purpose.

Each question should act as a hurdle designed to bifurcate and challenge candidates and comprehensively test their knowledge and skills. This approach ensures that only the most capable and prepared students succeed.A strong question bank, online testing, and AI-based proctoring can enhance the credibility of exams. Involving all teachers in contributing to the question bank and testing items for difficulty promotes participation.

Implementing global standard cybersecurity protocols is essential to maintain the integrity of the examination process. Implementing biometric verification for handling question papers can prevent incidents like the NEET 2024 leak. Technological measures like constant surveillance, digital encryption, and secure transmission methods are crucial for ensuring fairness and security. The recent government notification of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act on June 21 is a significant move to ensure the integrity of India's examination system. This Act introduces stringent penalties, including jail sentences of up to 10 years and fines of up to Rs 1 crore, for those involved in organized paper leaks and exam malpractices. It aims to combat examination fraud and restore public confidence in the examination process, clearly conveying that cheating and corruption will not be tolerated.

This legislation deserves widespread support as it seeks to protect honest students' hard work and aspirations, ensuring a fair and transparent system for all. The grace marks system

should be eliminated as it relies on subjective measures like answering speed and accuracy, leading to inconsistency and unfair advantage. Examination bodies should avoid awarding grace marks to ensure a level playing field for all candidates, maintaining the credibility and fairness of the examination sys-

The government's prompt action in conducting NEET again for 1,563 students in seven centres is commendable. Recently, the CBI was appointed to investigate NEET irregularities and has been rigorously probing the entire examination fraud, leading to the arrest of numerous brokers, teachers, principals, and others involved in the wrongdoing.

This swift response demonstrates the government's commitment to maintaining the integrity of the examination process and ensuring a fair opportunity for all students. The collaborative effort between the government and investigative agencies like the CBI is essential in addressing such malpractices and restoring trust in the examination system. Focusing on creating and enforcing fair exam policies is essential rather than engaging in political finger-pointing. Opposition parties should provide helpful solutions for issues such as exam leaks and fraud, and we need to come together to solve these problems proactively. We must prioritize students' well-being and create a secure, transparent exam environment to support their academic and career goals, positively impacting the country's future. (The writer is a professor and a BJP leader; views are personal)

## How Assange redefined the political terrain for modern whistleblowers

#### Julian Assange has become a symbol of the complex battle for press freedom and the protection of whistleblowers worldwide

n recent years, the narrative surrounding whistleblow-press freedom has garnered significant global attention. Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, remains a prominent figure in this ongoing dis-cussion. His latest legal and personal developments provide a lens through which we can examine the broader issues of press freedom, whistleblower protection, and the intricate dynamics of state power.

Julian Assange is best known for founding WikiLeaks in 2006, a platform designed to publish classified, censored, or otherwise restricted information of political, ethical, diplomatic, or historical significance. WikiLeaks gained international notoriety in 2010 when it released a cache of U.S.



military documents and diplomatic cables, revealing controversial actions and policies of the U.S. government.

This move cemented Assange's reputation as a champion of transparency and press freedom but also made him a target of intense legal and political scrutiny. As of mid-2024, Assange remains detained in the United Kingdom's Belmarsh Prison, fighting

States, where he faces charges under the Espionage Act. His legal team argues that extradit-ing Assange would set a dan-gerous precedent for journalists worldwide, potentially criminalizing the publication of classified information in the public interest. His health has been a significant concern, with reports indicating deteri-orating physical and mental well-being.

Human rights organizations have repeatedly called for his release, citing the harsh conditions of his detention and the potential impact on global press freedom.In addition to his legal battles over WikiLeaks, Assange has faced rape allegations in Sweden. In 2010, Swedish authorities issued an arrest warrant for extradition to the United Assange on charges of sexual

misconduct, including rape. Assange denied the allegations, claiming they were part of a political smear campaign. He sought asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in 2012, where he remained for seven years until his asylum was revoked in 2019, leading to his arrest by British authorities. In 2019, Swedish prosecutors dropped the investigation, but the allegations continue to cast a shadow over Assange's public Julian Assange's influence on

global journalism and transparency cannot be overstated. Named Time Magazine's Person of the Year in 2010, Assange's work through WikiLeaks has inspired a new era of investigative journalism. By leveraging technology to expose hidden truths, Assange has empowered journalists and activists worldwide to challenge powerful institutions and demand accountabil-

Julian Assange's plight is part of a larger narrative that includes other notable whistleblowers like Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning. Snowden, a former NSA contractor, leaked classified information in 2013, revealing extensive global surveillance programs conducted by the NSA and its allies. Currently residing in Russia, Snowden continues to be an advocate for privacy and government transparency. Chelsea Manning, a former U.S.

Army intelligence analyst, leaked classified military and diplomatic documents to Act, 2014, which aims to pro- for press freedom and the

WikiLeaks in 2010. Her disclosures included the infamous "Collateral Murder" video, showing U.S. helicopter gunship attacks that killed civilians in Baghdad. Manning was convicted in 2013 and sentenced to 35 years in prison, but her sentence was commuted by President Barack Obama in 2017 after seven years in custody

India, with its complex sociopolitical landscape, has its own history of whistleblowing and press freedom challenges. Cases like those of Sanjiv Chaturvedi, an Indian Forest Service officer who exposed corruption in the Haryana Forest Department, highlight the risks faced by whistle-blowers in India. Despite the Whistle Blowers Protection

tect individuals exposing corruption or wrongdoing, whistleblowers in India often face retaliation, including harassment, legal action, and even physical harm. The cases of Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, and Chelsea Manning illustrate the critical intersection of press freedom and whistleblower protection. While their actions have unde-

niably contributed to public awareness and accountability, they have also faced severe repercussions. These cases underscore the need for robust legal protections for whistleblowers and journalists to ensure that the pursuit of truth does not come at the cost of personal freedom and safe-

In India and globally, the fight

far from over.

protection of whistleblowers is As governments continue to navigate the balance between national security and the public's right to know, the outcomes of these high-profile cases will undoubtedly influ-ence future policies and the broader discourse on transparency and accountability. In the context of the Emergency period's media compliance, L.K. Advani's comment, "You were asked to bend, but you began to crawl," remains relevant today as a stark reminder of the dangers of compromised press freedom and the importance of journalistic integrity in holding power to account.

(The writer is an associate professor, views expressed

## Pope to preside over interfaith meeting in Indonesian mosque

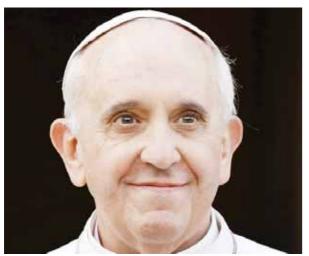
**AP** ■ ROME

Pope Francis will preside over an interfaith meeting in a mosque in the world's largest predominantly Muslim country during a four-nation Asian visit in September that will be the longest and most complicated foreign trip of his pontificate.

The Vatican on Friday released the itinerary for Francis' September 2-13 trip to Indonesia, East Timor Papua New Guinea and Singapore. The packed schedule makes clear that the 87year-old pontiff, who has battled health problems and is increasingly reliant on a wheelchair, has no plans to slow down.

After a day of rest upon arrival in Jakarta on September 3, Francis launches into a typically rigorous round of protocol visits to heads of state and government, speeches to diplomats and meetings with clergy and public Masses.

Francis will be the third pope to visit Indonesia, after Pope Paul VI in 1970 and Pope John Paul II in 1989. About 87 per cent of Indonesia's 277



Confucianism

Francis is also expected to

walk through a tunnel, called the "Tunnel of Friendship,"

connecting the grand mosque

to the neo-Gothic Our Lady

of The Assumption Cathedral,

which was constructed by

Indonesian authorities in

As a result, the first leg of

Francis' four-nation trip is

likely to heavily emphasise

interreligious harmony and

tolerance, a theme he has

hammered home on many of

million people are Muslim, but the country also has Southeast Asia's secondlargest Christian population, after the Philippines, and the third-largest in Asia after the Philippines and China.

In Jakarta, he'll preside over an interfaith meeting at the capital's Istiqlal Mosque, expected to be attended by leaders of the six religions in Indonesia that are officially recognised and protected: Islam, Protestant, Catholic, Buddhism, Hinduism and

with young people, poor and disabled people, elderly people and Francis' regular meetings with his Jesuit confreres. The trip was originally planned for 2020 but was called off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. At 11 full days, it's the longest of Francis' 11-year papacy, outpacing by a few days some of his long trips to the Americas and recalling some of the strenuous, globe-hopping trips of St. John Paul II.

Sprinkled in the mix in all

four countries are encounters

majority nations.

It will bring the Argentine Jesuit to the world's most populous predominantly Muslim nation, Indonesia, as well as one of the world's newest countries, the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, where the Catholic Church wields enormous

influence. About 98.3 per cent of its 1.34 million population is Catholic, according to the 2022 census, and it's the Asian country with the highest proportion of Catholics after the Philippines.



Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei casts his vote for the presidential runoff election in Tehran, Iran, Friday, July 5, 2024. Iranians began voting Friday in a runoff election to replace the late President Ebrahim Raisi, killed in a helicopter crash last month, as public apathy has become pervasive in the Islamic Republic after years of

## Israel conducts military operation in West Bank city of Jenin, 7 Palestinians killed

Dalestinian authorities say Pseven people were killed Friday during an Israeli mili-tary operation in the area of the West Bank city of Jenin, where the Israeli military said it had been carrying out "counterter-rorism activity" that included an airstrike.

The military said Israeli soldiers had "encircled a building where terrorists have barricaded themselves in" and the soldiers had exchanged fire with those inside, while an airstrike had "struck several armed terrorists" in the area. The Palestinian Health Ministry said a total of seven people had been killed, but did not specify whether they died in the exchange of fire or the airstrike. The Islamic Jihad militant group named four of the dead as its members. The clashes in Jenin, a known militant stronghold where the army frequently operates, came a day after an Israeli anti-set-



tlement monitoring group said the government plans to build nearly 5,300 new homes in settlements in the occupied West

The construction plans revealed by the Peace Now group are part of the hard-line government's efforts to beef up settlements as part of a strate-gy of cementing Israel's control

a future Palestinian state. The Palestinians seek the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza - areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war — for an independent state.

Violence has spiralled in the West Bank since the start of Israel's war in Gaza, sparked by the October 7 raid into south

raids and violent protests. The dead also include bystanders and Palestinians killed in attacks by Jewish settlers. In Gaza, the war has so far killed more than 38,000 Palestinians, Gaza's Health Ministry says. The ministry does not differentiate between combatants and civilians in its count, but it includes thousands of women and children.

ern Israel by Hamas militants who killed around 1,200 peo-

ple, mostly civilians, and took

more than 200 others as hostages. The Palestinian

Health Ministry says over 500 Palestinians have been killed by

Israeli fire in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most have been killed during Israeli

Cease-fire talks appeared to be reviving after stalling for weeks. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Thursday he was sending negotiators to resume the talks, a day after Hamas handed mediators its latest response to a US-backed proposal for a deal.

## Nepal PM Prachanda to face floor test on July 12 after key ally's withdrawal of support

Nepal's embattled Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who lost support from two major alliance partners earlier this week, is set to seek a vote of confidence from the House of Representatives on July 12, it was announced on Friday.

The prime minister sent a letter to the Parliament Secretariat asking the latter to make arrangements for the vote. In a letter addressed to the federal par-

liament on Friday, Prime Minister Prachanda mentioned that after one of the members of the ruling alliance withdrew the support to the government, he will seek a vote of confidence on July 12 under Article 100 (2) of the constitution of

Earlier, Prachanda, 69, had announced

that he would not quit after the resignation of eight Cabinet ministers belonging to the largest party and instead face a vote of confidence in Parliament.

His announcement was prompted after Nepali Congress (NC) president Sher Bahadur Deuba and Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman K P Sharma Oli, both former premiers, inked a power-sharing deal on Monday night to form a new NC UML alliance government.

According to the understanding, UML chair Oli will lead a coalition for a year and a half. As per the understanding, NC President Deuba will be the prime minister for the remaining term of the present parliament.

The Nepali Congress, which is the largest party in the 275-member House of Representatives (HoR), has 89 seats,

while CPN-UML has 78 seats. Prachanda's party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre (CPN-MC), has 32 seats. The CPN-Unified Socialist (CPN-US)

which has 10 seats in the Lower House, has said it will vote in favour of the Prachanda-led government. Despite that support, Prachanda enjoys support from just 63 members of the HoR.

He requires 138 votes for the government to win the vote of confidence in the House. This will be the fifth time Prachanda will seek a vote of confidence within a term of one and a half years. It is required for the coalition government to seek a vote of confidence within 30 days if a coalition partner withdraws support. Nepal has had 13 governments in the last 16 years, indicating the fragile nature of the Himalayan nation's political system.

## Brazil's Bolsonaro indicted for alleged money laundering

AP SAO PAULO

ing and criminal association in connection with undeclared diamonds from Saudi Arabia marked the far-right leader's second formal accusation with more potentially in store. Two sources with knowledge of the case confirmed Thursday's indictment by Federal Police, which followed another formal accusation in May against Bolsonaro for allegedly falsifying his COVID-19 vaccination certificate. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to speak publicly. Brazil's Supreme Court has yet to receive the police report with the latest indictment. Once it does, the country's prosecutorgeneral, Paulo Gonet, will analyse the document and decide whether to file charges and force Bolsonaro to stand the divisive ex-leader that are value.

Bolsonaro did not immediately comment, but he and his lawyers have previously denied any wrongdoing in both those cases, as well as other investigations into the former president. One is probing his possible involvement in inciting an uprising in capital Brasilia on January 8, 2023 that sought to oust his successor from power. Last year, Federal Police accused Bolsonaro of attempting to sneak in diamond jewellery reportedly worth USD 3 million and selling two luxury watches.

Police said in August that Bolsonaro received cash from the nearly USD 70,000 sale of two luxury watches he received as gifts from Saudi Arabia. Brazil requires its citizens arriving by plane from abroad to declare goods worth more than USD 1,000 and, for any amount

but not Bolsonaro's to keep for himself. Rather, it would have been added to the presidential collection. The investigation showed that Mauro Cid, Bolsonaro's former aide-decamp who allegedly falsified his COVID-19 records, in June 2022 sold a Rolex watch and a Patek Philippe watch to a store in the US for a total USD 68,000. They were gifted by Saudi Arabia's government in 2019. Cid later signed a plea bargain with authorities and

confirmed it all. Flavio Bolsonaro, the former president's eldest son and a sitting senator, said on X after Thursday's indictment that persecution against his father was "blatant and shameless". In addition to Bolsonaro, police indicted 10 others, including Cid and two of his lawyers, Frederick Wassef and Fábio

The indictment dramatically above that exemption, pay a tax raises the legal threats facing equal to 50 per cent of their of the sources. Wassef said in a statement that he didn't have investigation that is supposed to be proceeding under seal. "I am going through all of this solely for practising law in defence of Jair Bolsonaro," he

> On X, Wajngarten said police have found no evidence implicating him. "The Federal Police knows I did nothing related to what they are investigating, but they still want to punish me because I provide unwavering and permanent defence for former President Bolsonaro," he said. Bolsonaro retains staunch allegiance among his political base, as shown by an outpouring of support in February, when an estimated 185,000 people clogged Sao Paulo's main boulevard to protest what the former president calls political persecution. His critics, particularly members of his rival President

Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's political party, have cheered every advance of investigations and The indictment of former applauded by his opponents but denounced as political perbut denounced denounced as political perbut denounced denounced as political perbut denounced career as a staunch advocate of Brazil's military dictatorship, and was a lawmaker for nearly three decades. When he bid for the presidency for the first time, in 2018, he was widely dismissed as an outsider and too radically conservative. But he surprised analysts with a decisive victory, in no small part due to his self-portrayal as an upstanding citizen in the years following a sprawling corruption probe that ensnared hundreds of politicians and executives.Bolsonaro insulted adversaries since his earliest days in office while garnering critics with his divisive policies, attacks on the Supreme Court and efforts to undermine health restrictions during the pandemic. He lost his reelection bid in the closest finish since Brazil's return to democracy in 1985.

### Post-communist generation hoping for new era of democracy in Mongolia

**AP** ULAANBATAR

Tsenguun Saruulsaikhan, a member of Mongolia's parliament, is unhappy with belowcost electricity rates that she says show her country has yet to fully shake off its socialist past. Most of Mongolia's power plants date from the Soviet era and outages are common in some areas. Heavy smog envelops the capital Ulaanbaatar in the winter because many people still burn coal to heat their homes.

It's stuck in how it was like 40, 50 years ago," said Tsenguun, part of a rising generation of eaders who are puzzling out their country's future after three decades of democracy. "And that's the reason why we need to change it."

Democracy in Mongolia is in a transition phase, said Tsenguun, who at 27 is the youngest member of a new parliament sworn in this week.

means," she said in a recent

Discontented voters deliver a ruling party setback

Mongolia became a democracy in the early 1990s after six decades of one-party communist rule. Many Mongolians welcomed the end of repression and resulting freedoms but have since soured on the parliament and established political parties.

Lawmakers are widely seen as enriching themselves and their big business supporters from the nation's mineral wealth rather than using it to develop a country where poverty is widespread.

Voters delivered an election setback to the ruling Mongolian People's Party last week, leaving it still in charge but with a slim majority of 68 out of the 126 seats in parliament. Tsenguun was one of 42 winning candidates from the main

"We are trying to figure out opposition Democratic Party, what democracy actually which made a major comeback after being reduced to a hand-

2020 elections. She articulates a vision for Mongolia that dovetails with small government Republicans

in the United States. In her view, too many people think the government will take care of them, and the large budget just feeds corruption. Government should be as

invisible as possible, she said, and give people the freedom and responsibility to build their own lives. "I don't think that (the) free

market has developed yet because the people are not used to this mentality," she said. "People are afraid of competition." The detention of a couple of journalists in the past several months has fuelled worries that the government may be edging backward, eroding the freedoms that democracy brought.

## Beryl makes landfall on Mexico's Caribbean coast near Tulum

**AP** ■ TULUM

Hurricane Beryl made landfall on Mexico's coast near the resort of Tulum as a Category 2 storm early Friday, whipping trees and knocking out power as it came ashore after leaving a trail of destruction across the eastern Caribbean.

The US National Hurricane Centre said that Beryl is expected to rapidly weaken to a tropical storm as it crosses over the Yucatan Peninsula before it re-emerges into the Gulf of Mexico and likely regains hurricane strength.

Once in the warm waters of the Gulf, Beryl is forecast to head toward northern Mexico near the Texas border, an area had already been soaked by Tropical Storm Alberto just a

couple of weeks ago. Once the earliest storm to

develop into a Category 5 hurricane in the Atlantic, Beryl spread destruction in Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Barbados in recent days. Shortly after landfall, Beryl's maximum windspeeds had decreased to 100 mph (160 kph), according to the US Hurricane Centre.

Mexican authorities had moved some tourists and residents out, of low-lying areas around the Yucatan peninsula prior to landfall, but tens of thousands remained to tough out the 100 mph (160 kph) winds and expected storm surge. Much of the area around Tulum is just a few yards (metres) above sea

The city was plunged into darkness when the storm knocked out power as it came ashore. Screeching winds set off car alarms across the town. Once a sleepy, laid-back village,

in recent years Tulum has boomed with unrestrained development and now has about 50,000 permanent inhabitants and at least as many tourists on an average day. The resort now has its own international airport.

Early Friday, the storm's center was about 15 miles (25 kilometers) north-northwest of Tulum and was moving west-northwest at 15 mph (about 24 kph),

the hurricane center said. On Friday, Beryl was expected to weaken as it crossed over the Yucatan peninsula and reemerge in the Gulf of Mexico, where the surprisingly resilient storm could once again become a hurricane and make a second landfall around Mexico's border

with Texas next week. As the wind began gusting over Tulum's beaches, fourwheelers with megaphones rolled along the sand telling

people to leave. Tourists snapped photos of the growing surf, but military personnel urged them to leave Authorities around the Yucatan

peninsula have prepared shelters, evacuated some small outlying coastal communities and even moved sea turtle eggs off beaches threatened by storm surge

In Tulum, authorities shut things down and evacuated beachside hotels. Tourists were also taking pre-

cautions. Lara Marsters, 54, a therapist visiting Tulum from Boise, Idaho, said "this morning we woke up and just filled all of our empty water bottles with water from the tap and put it in the freezer ... so we will have water to flush the toilet." "We expect that the power will go out," Marsters said. "We're going to hunker down and stay safe.

## Fireworks light up skies across US as Americans celebrate July 4

**AP** WASHINGTON

 $M_{\text{celebrated}}^{\text{illions of people in the US}}$ under heat warnings as they flocked to beaches and travelled in droves to toast their nation's birth with July 4 parades, cookouts and the always anticipated fiery splashes of colour in the evening sky. In Washington, neon bursts of light illuminated the night above the National Mall. The Boston Pops performed a musical fireworks spectacular at that city's Hatch Memorial Shell. And at parades all across the country, revelers dressed up in red, white and blue and waved the Stars and Stripes in commemoration Independence Day.

Travel records were projected to fall with people jamming airports and crowding high-ways to reach Thursday's Independence Day celebrations, which will stretch into a long weekend for many.

On the East Coast, some would-be beachgoers in Connecticut were turned away as parking at state parks along the shore filled to capacity, including a 2-mile (3 kilométer) stretch at Hammonasset

Beach State Park — the state's largest shoreline beach. Across the West, meanwhile, residents dealt with stifling heat as the National Weather Service warned of a "significant and extremely dangerous" heat wave across much of the region. A heat advisory in Philadelphia that came with temperatures tipping into the 90s didn't stop crowds from gathering at historic sites in the city where the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776.Outside the National Constitution Centre, volunteer actors dressed in Revolutionary War-era costume made of heavy wool, despite the heat. Participants said it was worth it. "It keeps you connected to

your neighbourhood and where you live," said Adrian Mercado, who was donning a 6th Pennsylvania Regiment uniform. Evening fireworks were scheduled over the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, after a concert by Ne-Yo and Kesha.Fireworks crackled in backyard displays and an anticipated 16,000 professional shows were planned to light up the horizon from sea to shining sea. Millions of people were expected to watch the Macy's 4th of July Fireworks show in New York City, where cross rings, strobing comets, waterfalls and other effects can reach up to 1,000 feet (305 metres) in the air. Excited viewers crowded along both the New York and New Jersey sides of the Hudson River as

dusk turned to dark, and they hoped rain would stay away. This is how we celebrate. It's the bombs bursting in air. It's the rockets' red glare. That's how people show their pride and patriotism," said Julie Heckman of the American Pyrotechnics Association.

All signs pointed to big celebrations: The Transportation Security Administration reported that a record of near ly 3 million people travelled through airports in a single day last week, a figure expected to be broken this week. AAA projected that 60.6 million people will travel by car during the holiday period. Part of the boost was attributed to easing inflation, though many Americans remain concerned about the economy. On much of the West Coast, residents were advised to take precautions to avoid overheating on the holiday.

## Hungary PM Orbán meets Putin for talks in Moscow

ussian President Vladimir Prime Minister Viktor Örbán to Moscow on Friday for a rare meeting with a European leader to discuss peace proposals for Ukraine.

Orbán's visit comes only days after he made a similar unannounced trip to Ukraine, where he met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and proposed that Ukraine consider agreeing to an immediate cease-fire with Russia.

"The number of countries that can talk to both warring sides is diminishing," Orbán said. "Hungary is slowly becoming the only country in Europe that can speak to everyone.

In comments at the beginning of their meeting that were televised, Putin suggested that Orbán had come to Moscow as a representative of the European Council, despite several European officials having condemned the visit.

The Hungarian prime minister, widely seen as having the warmest relations with Vladimir Putin among all

routinely blocked, delayed or watered down EU efforts to assist Ukraine and impose sanctions on Moscow for its actions in Ukraine. He has long argued for a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine but without outlining what that might mean for the country's territorial integrity or future security. That posture has frustrated Hungary's EU and NATO allies, which have broadly considered Russia's actions as a breach of international law and a threat to the security of countries in Eastern Europe. Putin told Orbán that he wanted to hear about the position of his "European colleagues" on Ukraine and discuss Moscow's plan for peace as well as bilateral relations. Orbán noted that the meeting was the fourteenth time the leaders have held bilateral talks since 2009. European officials and leaders have heavily criticised Orbán's visit to Moscow, something only one other European leader has done since the start of the

"This is about appeasement. It's not about peace," European



Commission spokesperson Eric Mamer said

Hungary at the beginning of the month took over the sixmonth rotating presidency of the EU Council, a largely formal role that can be used to shape the bloc's policy agenda. Orbán has said he wants to use the presidency to advocate for an end to the fighting in Ukraine The EU's foreign policy chief,

Hungarian Prime Minister is Josep Borrell, said in a statement that Orbán's visit to thus not representing the EU in Moscow "takes place, exclusiveany form ly, in the framework of the

He noted that Putin has been indicted by the International Criminal Court and an arrest warrant released for his role in relation to the forced deportation of children from Ukraine to Russia

Kaja Kallas, the outgoing Estonian prime minister nominated to become the next EU foreign policy chief, accused Orbán of "exploiting" the presidency and said the Hungarian leader is trying "to sow confusion."

"The EU is united, clearly behind Ukraine and against Russian aggression," Kallas, a staunch supporter of Ukraine, wrote Friday on the social media platform X.

media platform X.
In an email on Friday, Orbán's press chief, Bertalan Havasi, said the Hungarian leader's trip comes "as part of his peace mission" — reflecting the image of a peacemaker that the populist leader has cultivated since Putin sent his troops since Putin sent his troops into Ukraine in February 2022. Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó also joined the trip to Moscow, according to a post on his Facebook page. Speaking to Hungarian state

radio before departing Friday morning, Orbán said he was aware that his country's presidency of the EU "does not entitle us to negotiate on behalf of anyone." Without mentioning reports of his planned trip to Moscow, he said his trip earlier this week to Kyiv did not "need a mandate, because I do not represent anything. The only thing I do is go to those places where there is a war or the threat of war that has negative consequences for Europe

and Hungary as well."
Other EU officials have expressed dismay that Orbán undertook the trip unilaterally and without the approval of the bloc's member states.

European Council President Charles Michel on Thursday said on the social media platform X that "the EU rotating presidency has no mandate to engage with Russia on behalf of the EU."

"The European Council is clear: Russia is the aggressor, Ukraine is the victim. No discussions about Ukraine can take place without Ukraine," Michel wrote.

Orbán is the first European leader to visit Russia and sit down for talks with Putin since Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer visited Moscow in April 2022, just weeks after Putin ordered his troops into Ukraine. During that visit he said he raised the issue of crimes allegedly committed in Ukraine by Russian forces.

#### Lanka achieved \$8 billion relief through debt restructuring: Prez

Colombo (PTI): President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Friday said Sri Lanka saved USD 8 billion over the past two years due to "effective economic management" and emphasised that the nation is now recovering from economic turmoil due to debt restructuring. Sri Lanka finalised debt restructuring agreements with bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris on June 26. Earlier on June 12. the International Monetary Fund (IMF) disbursed the third tranche of USD 336 million from its USD 2.9 billion bailout package to Sri Lanka. In April 2022, the island nation declared its first-ever sovereign default since gaining Independence from Britain in 1948. The unprecedented financial crisis led President Ranil Wickremesinghe's pre-decessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to quit office in 2022 amid civil unrest. "Thanks to the harvest in 2022-2023, the country's production increased, and tourism thrived. As a result, we've achieved USD 8 billion relief and paved the way to debt relief," the President said on Friday. "When the economy collapses, it affects ordinary people the most. When it recovers, its benefits reach another segment," the President's Media Division (PMD) said in a statement quoting Wickremesinghe.

The President was speaking at a ceremony held in Kurunegala, about 100 km northeast of Colombo. "Now, our country has emerged from bankruptcy. We have a fouryear plan to repay our loans, offering reduced burdens and interest cuts that will yield USD 5 billion in savings. We are currently in negotiations with private contractors. As a result, approximately USD 3 billion has been withdrawn, he said. "In total, USD 8 billion has been allocated for our use. Additionally, we have been granted USD 2 billion under relaxed terms. This does not account for funds expected from China or assistance from India. As a result, we have saved USD 8 billion over the past two years,' Wickremesinghe, also the

## on July 12 after key ally's withdrawal of support

**PTI** ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's embattled Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who lost support from two major alliance partners earlier this week, is set to seek a vote of confidence from the House of Representatives on July 12, it was announced on Thursday. The prime minister sent a letter to the Parliament Secretariat asking the latter to make arrangements for the vote, local media reported.

"Dahal chose to go for the floor test by the article 100(2) of the Constitution which says 'if the political party which the prime minister represents is divided or a political party in coalition government withdraws its support, the prime minister shall table a motion in the House of Representatives for a vote of confidence within thirty days," The Kathmandu Post reported. Earlier, Prachanda had announced that he would not quit after the resignation of eight Cabinet ministers

belonging to the largest party and instead face a vote of confidence in Parliament.

His announcement was prompted after Nepali Congress (NC) president Sher Deuba and Bahadur Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman K P Sharma Oli, both former premiers, inked a power-sharing deal on Monday night to form a new NC-UML alliance gov-The Nepali ernment. Congress, which is the largest party in the 275-member House of Representatives (HoR), has 89 seats, while CPN-UML has 78 seats. Prachanda's party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre (CPN-MC), has 32 seats. The CPN-Unified Socialist (CPN-US), which has 10 seats in the Lower House, has said it will vote in favour of the Prachanda-led government. Despite that support, Prachanda enjoys support from just 63 members of

## Prachanda to face floor test | Vatican declares US ex-envoy Vigano guilty of schism

bilateral relations between

"Prime Minister Orbán has

not received any mandate from

the EU Council to visit

Moscow," Borrell said, adding

that his "position excludes offi-

cial contacts between the EU and President Putin. The

Hungary and Russia.'

**AP** ■ ROME

The Vatican has excommunicated its former ambassador to the US, Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, after finding him guilty of schism, an inevitable end for the firebrand conservative who became one of Pope Francis' most ardent critics. The Vatican's doctrine office imposed the penalty after a meeting of its members on

Thursday and informed Vigano

of its decision Friday, a press

statement said It cited Vigano's "refusal to recognize and submit to the Supreme Pontiff, his rejection of communion with the members of the church subject to him, and of the legitimacy and magisterial authority of the Second Vatican Council.

The Vatican excommunication means that Vigano is formally outside the church, and cannot celebrate or receive its sacraments, for having committed one of the gravest crimes in canon law: schism. A schism occurs when someone withdraws submission to the pope or from the communion of

Catholics who are subject to him. It is considered particularly dangerous to the faith because it threatens the unity of the church. And in fact, Vigano had created a following of likeminded conservatives and traditionalists over the years as he delved deeper and deeper into conspiracy theories about everything from the coronavirus pan-

demic, to what he called the

"Great Reset" and other fringe

Vigano knew the schism declaration was coming after the Vatican informed him that it was launching a penal process against him last month. He defiantly called it "an honor" and refused to appear in person or in writing to defend himself. Vigano, who issued a lengthy public statement last month justifying his conduct, didn't directly respond to the schism declaration on X, his usual forum. About an hour before the Vatican decree was made public, he announced he would be celebrating a Mass on Friday for those who have been supporting him and asked for donations.

Vigano first burst into the pub-

lic's awareness in 2012, during the first Vatileaks scandal, when Pope Benedict XVI's butler leaked the pontiff's private papers to an Italian journalist to try to draw attention to corruption in the Holy See.

In some of the leaked letters Vigano, then the No. 2 in the Vatican City State administration, begged the pope not to be transferred after exposing corruption in the awarding of Vatican contracts that cost the Holy See millions of euros (dollars).

By the time the letters were published, Benedict had transferred Vigano to be the Vatican's ambassador to the United States certainly a prestigious post but one that took him far from Rome and out of the running to one day be a cardinal. Vigano reappeared on the scene during Francis' 2015 visit to the United States, which as nuncio Vigano helped organize. Everything was going fine until Vigano arranged for Kim Davis, a Kentucky clerk at the center of the U.S. gay marriage debate, to be among a small group of people at the Vatican residence to greet Francis.

violation of an election law. The court said that both the man and prosecutors have one week The attack happened ahead of er said he's about 67.

#### **Man who stabbed South Korea opp leader gets** 15 years in prison the country's crucial parlia-mentary elections in April, Seoul (AP): A man who

stabbed South Korea's opposition leader in the neck earlier this year was sentenced to 15 years in prison on Friday, court officials said. The knife-wielding man

attacked Lee Jae-myung, head of the liberal Democratic Party, South Korea's biggest political party, in January after approaching him asking for his autograph at an event in the southeastern city of Busan. After being detained by police, he told investigators that he wanted to kill Lee to prevent him from becoming South Korea's president.

The Busan District Court said the man was handed the prison term after being found guilty for an attempted murder and a

dence on the basic liberal democratic principles," according to Yonhap news agency. It cited the verdict as saying the because of differences of polit-

attacker had long loathed Lee ical opinions, practised stab-bing his neck in advance and followed him on five public events. The court's public affairs office couldn't immediately confirm details of Friday's verdict. The court didn't disclose the man's identity. Police earli-

which ended with Lee's

Democratic Party and other

opposition parties winning a

massive victory against President Yoon Suk Yeol's con-

A court verdict called the attack

'a grave challenge" to the coun-

try's election systems and an act

that "significantly destroys

social consensus and confi-

servative governing party.

#### finance minister added Pak Punjab province to ban social media platforms for 6 days during Muharram

YouTube, platforms WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok — for six days between July 13 and 18, citing the need to control "hate material" during the Islamic month of Muharram.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's cabinet committee on law and order has recommended banning all social media platforms — YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, among others — during the 6th to 11th day of Muharram (July 13-18) in Punjab, a province of over 120 million people, to "control hate material, misinformation to avoid sectarian violence", according to a notification issued here late Thursday night.

The Punjab government has also requested her uncle Shehbaz Sharif's government at the Centre to notify the suspension of all social media platforms on the internet for six days (July 13-

The provincial government has decided to go beyond the routine measures of internet suspension and mobile jamming over Ashura. , after getting reports that 'external forces' including elements from across the border, were involved in the sharing of hate content and memes, Dawn News reported. Sources said the Punjab government had initially deliberated that social media apps be shut down on Muharram 9 and 10. Muharram — the period of recalling and mourning the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain by the community of Shia Muslims — marks the first month of the Islamic Calendar. A greater amount of importance is placed on the first ten days of the festival. On the tenth day, Shia Muslims take out processions via streets.

Cabinet Minister Sved Ashig Hussain Kirmani acknowledged that the cabinet committee had put forward a suggestion to close social media apps to avoid dissemination of hate content. Kirmani said a meeting over the issue discussed that hate content

Lahore (PTI): The government media apps, particularly and added that shutting down in Pakistan's Punjab province is Facebook and X during social media apps was recombecomes a bone of contention between two sects instead of the two persons involved.

> "Dissemination of hate content creates bad blood and spoils the overall environment, particularly during Muharram," he said

day after Muharram.

Pakistan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir has already declared social media a "vicious media" and underscored the need to fight what he called "digital ter-

GHTP-48/24

## Af wants to dust off postal Pope to preside over interfaith meeting in service and modernise nies don't deliver even to the

 $\mathbf{I}^{ ext{n}}$  parts of Afghanistan where there are no street names or house numbers, utility companies and their customers have adopted a creative approach for connecting. They use mosques as drop points for bills and cash, a "pay and pray" system. Now the national postal service wants to phase this out by putting mailboxes on every street across the country, part of a plan to modernise a service long challenged by bureaucracy and war. The lofty aspirations include

introducing access to shopping via e-commerce sites and issuing debit cards for online purchases. It will be a leap in a country where most of the population is unbanked, air cargo is in its infancy and international courier compa-

capital, Kabul. The changes mean Afghans will pay higher service fees, a challenge as more than half the population already relies on humanitarian aid to survive. The Afghan Post, like much of the country, still does everything on paper. "Nobody uses email," said its business development director, Zabihullah Omar. "Afghanistan is a member of the Universal Postal Union, but when we compare ourselves to other countries it is at a low level and in the early stages.

The postal service has 400 to 500 branches across the country and is key for completing administrative tasks like obtaining a passport or driver's licence. It distributes up to 15,000 passports daily.

Another popular service is the certification of documents for

admission to higher education or overseas institutions. The main Kabul branch has dedicated counters for it along with VIP lanes and a womenonly area.

Post offices in Afghanistan are vital for women wanting to access services or products they would otherwise be denied, since they are often barred from entering ministries or other official premises. But the spectre of the Taliban's edicts targeting women and girls also looms at the Afghan Post. At the entrance to the main Kabul branch, a sign tells women to correctly wear hijab, or the Islamic headscarf. One picture shows a woman with a red cross over her visible face. The other has a green check mark over the face because only her

#### Indonesian mosque Rome (AP): Pope Francis will preside over an interfaith meeting in a mosque in the world's largest predominantly Muslim

country during a four-nation Asian visit in September that will be the longest and most complicated foreign trip of his pontificate.

The Vatican on Friday released the itinerary for Francis' September 2-13 trip to Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. The packed schedule makes clear that the 87-year-old pontiff, who has battled health problems and is increasingly reliant on a wheelchair, has no plans to slow down. After a day of rest upon arrival in Jakarta on September 3, Francis launches into a typically rigorous round of protocol visits to the four countries' heads of state and

government, speeches to diplomats and meetings with clergy and public Masses in each loca tion. In Jakarta, he'll preside over an interfaith meeting at the capital's Istiqlal Mosque.

Sprinkled in the mix are encounters with young people, poor and disabled people, elderly people and Francis' regular meetings with his Jesuit confreres. The trip was originally planned for 2020 but was called off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Francis had to cancel his last planned foreign visit -- a quick trip to Dubai last year to participate in the UN climate conference -- because of a recurring case of bronchitis. He has seemed in relatively good form in recent months, including during day trips to Italian cities and visits to Roman

expanses of territory in the north and northeast, including

increases manifolds on social

rorism". PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.

Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact Number 9646117607) Tender Inquiry No. 105/GHTP/MM-II/CS-49(X) Dated 04-07-2024 Dy. Chief Engineer / MM-II/ GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-tender for the work of "AMC for Repair, Laying & Joniting of Conveyor Belts and Pulley Laggings of Conveyor System of CHP Stage-I & II at GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat as per detail in tender specifications.

Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813

For detailed NIT and tender specifications please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 05-07-2024, 11:30 AM onwards. Note: Corrigendum and addendum if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in only

76155/12/3069/2023/35373 Dated CHD :- 7/5/2024



Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact Number 9646118754) Tender Enquiry No. 321/HPs/ED-I/S-426 Dated 04-07-2024 Dy. CE/ Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-3, Shankti Vihar, PSPCL. Patiala invites E-tender for REPAIR OF ONE NO.15 MW PELTON TURBINE RUNNER HAVING SR. NO. 03/RE/SHANAN FOR SHANAN, HEP

PSPCL, JOGINDER NAGAR, DISTT. MANDI (H.P.) For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

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

76155/12/3072/2023/35378 Dated CHD :- 7/5/2024

verka SCO 153-155. SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812.66

e- tender is hereby invited for the supply of following item : Period/Tentative Qty Name of Work/Item For Verka Head Office Chandigarh i. Ghee Ceeka Cartor 1 Ltr NOTE 1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e.

www.verka.coop & e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.

2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase NA/12/23917/2023/35350 Dated CHD :- 7/5/2024

ing Mandalay region with the support of local forces there. Since then, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army has joined in, and by Friday, combined forces from the two allied militias had reportedly encircled the strate-

Army, one of three powerful

militias that launched a sur-

prise joint offensive last

October, renewed its attacks on

regime positions last week in

northeastern Shan state, which

borders China, Laos and

Thailand, and the neighbour-

gically important city of Lashio, headquarters of the regime's New fighting has broken out in northeastern northeastern military command. This is the next phase of October's "1027" offensive, said Myanmar, bringing an end to Lway Yay Oo, spokesperson for a Chinese-brokered cease-fire the TNLA, which last week said and putting pressure on the military regime as it faces the military provoked retaliaattacks from resistance forces tion with artillery and airstrikes on multiple fronts in the coundespite the cease-fire. try's civil war. "In phase two, our number one The Ta'ang National Liberation

aim is the eradication of the military dictatorship, and number two is the protection and safety of local people," she said. Thet Swe, a spokesperson for the military regime, which seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021, accused the militias of putting civilians in jeopardy by restarting the

"As the TNLA are starting to violate the cease-fire, the Tatmadaw is protecting the lives and the property of the ethnic people," he said in an

military by its Burmese name. There was no indication that the third ethnic armed organization that makes up the Three Brotherhood Alliance, the powerful Arakan Army, has joined in the renewed fighting in Shan state, but its troops have never stopped fighting in its home Rakhine state, which was not covered by the Jan. 11 cease-fire.

Fierce fighting breaks out as militias launch new attacks

email to the AP, referring to the

The TNLA claims to have already captured more than 30 army outposts, and to now control the western part of Mogok, whose ruby mines make it a lucrative target. There is also fighting for the town of Kyaukme, which sits at a highcrossroads, and

Nawnghkio to the southwest, which leads toward the major military garrison town of Pyin Oo Lwin along the same high-

"That's where you need to cut as the militias took large

Singapore-based analyst with the International Institute of Strategic Studies who runs its Myanmar Conflict Map project. In Mandalay, the region west of Shan, a local People's Defense Force — one of many armed resistance groups that have spung up in support of the underground National Unity Government, which views itself as Myanmar's legitimate administration — joined the TNLA's offensive. Osmond, a spokesperson for

it off to prevent the military

from sending reinforcements,"

said Morgan Michaels, a

the Mandalay People's Defense Force who would only give his nom de guerre because of safety concerns, said his and other local resistance groups have seized nearly 20 military outposts. The October offensive by the Three Brotherhood Alliance made rapid advances

multiple important border crossings with China and several major military bases. The alliance militias have close

ties to China, and it's widely believed that the offensive had Beijing's tacit approval because of its growing dissatisfaction with the military regime's seeming indifference to the burgeoning drug trade along its border and the proliferation of centers in Myanmar at which cyberscams are run, with workers trafficked from China and elsewhere in the region.

China then helped broker the cease-fire in January, bringing the major fighting in the northeast to an end, even as other ethnic armed organizations and PDF groups launched their own attacks on regime positions elsewhere around the country.

## Sebi issues new guidelines to streamline Nifty scales new lifetime high operations of credit rating agencies

Markets regulator Sebi has issued new guidelines to streamline operations and enhance the ease of doing business for credit rating agencies.

The circular introduces specific timelines for dealing with appeals made by companies regarding rating actions carried during periodic surveillance of ratings.

These modifications will be applicable, with effect from August 01, 2024, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular on Thursday.

"In order to promote ease of doing business and bring about uniformity in dealing with appeals, based on consultation with stakeholders, including



(Credit Rating Agencies), it has been decided to provide specific timelines for dealing with appeals made by the issuer in respect of rating actions carried out pursuant to periodic surveillance of ratings," it added.

The changes mandate that CRAs communicate ratings to companies within one working day of the rating committee meeting, with an outer limit set to ensure promptness. Further, companies will have

review or appeal of the rating and the dissemination of the press release on the CRA's website and intimation of the same to the stock exchange or debenture trustee must occur within 7 working days of the rating committee meeting.

"CRAs shall continue to maintain records in respect of the said disclosures for a period of 10 years, which may be shared with debenture trustees upon request.

"Further, disclosures in respect of the said aspects shall continue to be made available by the CRAs on their website under the issuer-specific press releases/ rating rationale section of the respective issuer, wherever applicable," regulator said. the

Sebi has also outlined specific timelines for certain types of disclosures, such as a list of non-cooperative issuers that should be updated daily, ensuring that stakeholders are promptly informed about issuers who fail to cooperate with rating agencies.

For disclosures regarding ratings that have not been accepted by issuers, CRAs are required to maintain this information for 12 months. To ensure compliance, the circular will be monitored

through the half-yearly internal audit for credit rating agencies, as mandated under the CRA norms, Sebi said. The process aims to uphold investor protection and foster development

regulation of the securities

dropped 53.07 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 79,996.60. Among the 30-share Sensex pack, State Bank of India, Industries, Reliance Hindustan Unilever, NTPC, Larsen & Toubro, Nestle

Sensex retreats

from record to

slip below 80K

The broader benchmark Nifty advanced to at an all-time

further to settle at an all-time high for the third straight

session on Friday, while the

BSE gauge Sensex retreated

from the record to slip below the 80k level. The broader NSE

Nifty rose 21.70 points or 0.09

per cent to close at its lifetime

The 30-share BSE Sensex

high of 24,323.85.

**PTI** ■ MUMBAI

"The domestic market traded Sun

and Pharmaceuticals were the

major gainers. On the other hand, HDFC Bank, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, UltraTech Cement, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies and Asian Paints were among

with a mixed bias, with the heavy-weight banking sector acting as a laggard. Adding to the worry are the top lending banks, which recorded a sequential decline in deposit growth in the June quarter.

Midcap and Small Cap outperformed, and the respective BSE indices hit an

Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. Asian markets were closed on a mixed note on Thursday. The US markets were closed Thursday

Independence Day. On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex scaled an intraday record high of 80,392.64 in early trade. Later, the Sensex closed 62.87 points or 0.08 per cent higher at 80,049.67,

its all-time closing high.

The broader Nifty also hit an intra-day record high of 24,401 in early trade before closing almost flat. The 50issue index rose by 15.65 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at a record 24,302.15. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets Thursday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 2,575.85 crore, according to

## Passenger vehicle retail sales dip as heatwave curtails showroom visits

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $P_{\text{sales in India witnessed a 7}}^{\text{assenger vehicle retail}}$ per cent on-year decline in Īune as severe heatwave conditions resulted in 15 per cent less showroom walk-ins, industry body FADA said on

Overall passenger vehicle registrations stood at 2,81,566 units last month, as compared to 3,02,000 units in June 2023. "Despite improved product availability and substantial aimed discounts stimulating demand, market sentiment remains subdued due to extreme heat resulting in 15 per cent less walk-ins and delayed monsoons," the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Manish Raj Singhania said in a statement. Dealer feedback highlights

decisions, he added. Singhania also highlighted that inventory levels of passenger vehicles have reached an all-time high, ranging from 62 to 67 days.

With the festive season still some time away, it is crucial for passenger vehicle Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to exercise caution, he stated. Effective

essential to mitigate financial strain from high interest costs, Singhania stated. "FADA strongly urges passenger vehicle OEMs to implement prudent inventory control and

Two-wheeler registrations rose 5 per cent year-on-year to 13,75,889 units in June.

proactively with the market,

he added.



Factors such as extreme heat resulted in 13 per cent less probable by walk-ins customers in showrooms, Singhania said.

election-related particularly slowdowns affected rural sales, which fell from 59.8 per cent in May to 58.6 per cent in June, he

racks tailored to the varied

interests of participants, and a

pavilion where startups and

data security teams can

Commercial vehicle sales dropped 5 per cent to 72,747 units last month, from 76,364 units in June 2023.

The industry continues to levels and ongoing low face de-growth, impacted by high temperatures affecting the agricultural sector and infrastructural project slowdowns," Singhania stated. project Tractor sales last month declined 28 per cent year-on-year to 71,029 units in June. three-wheeler

registrations rose 5 per cent to 94,321 units in June, as compared to 89,743 units in the year-ago month. Overall retail sales rose marginally year-on-year to

18,95,552 units in June. On the business outlook. FADA stated that for twowheelers, the arrival of the monsoon is expected to provide a boost, although challenges such

cash

constraints and regional market variations remain. In the passenger vehicle segment, high inventory

market sentiment necessitate

cautious management, the

industry body said.

Meanwhile, the commercial vehicle sector looks forward to potential growth driven by renewed infrastructure and projects seasonal demands, despite current slowdowns, it said.

Based on current market conditions, the overall rating for July auto performance is cautiously optimistic with a moderate outlook," FADA, represents over dealership outlets, stated.

It stated that vehicle registration data for the month was collated from 1,567 out of 1,700 RTOs across the country

#### Only 7 per cent of MSME credit to women: RBI ED

exchange data.

PTI MUMBAI

Reserve Bank's executive Migam on Friday said low labour force participation among women is a barrier to financial inclusion efforts and also to broader economic growth.

He said there is also a need to up the credit supply to women, pointing out that only 7 per cent of the overall outstanding loans to micro, small and medium enterprises are to women-led businesses.

"One significant barrier for financial inclusion and indeed to economic growth and development participation of females in economic activities," he said, pointing out that official data suggested female labour force participation at 32.8 per cent in FY22, as against over 77 per cent in men. Women constitute only 7 per cent of the outstanding credit to Micro,

Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), he said, adding that this is very low when compared to nearly a fifth of the MSMEs being women-led. Speaking at the 'Financing

Collaborative Women conference organized by Niti Aayog and Transunion Cibil Nigam expressed satisfaction on the access to financial services front, pointing out that the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme and social security transfers have helped. With the challenges on supply taken care of, he said there are issues on the demand side which warrant attention.

There are structural issues like low level of capital, labour participation, societal norms like restricting women from inheriting property that limit their ability to show collateral for lending and also lower access to education and

## Startups to showcase cybersecurity innovations in mega summit

**D**rominent founders, global cybersecurity experts and chief information security officers (CISOs) of large unicorns will gather at the Accel Cybersecurity Summit scheduled to be held in Bengaluru on July 25.

The mega summit will provide a platform for startups to showcase their cybersecurity innovations and pitch to a select group of CISOs from both big enterprises and tech unicorns, including PhonePe, Groww, Cred, and Flipkart, according to a release by Accel. "Accel is set to host India's largest Cybersecurity Summit on July 25, 2024, in Bengaluru," the global venture capital firm

To evangelise the early-stage cybersecurity startup ecosystem in India, the event will bring together security operators, CISOs and notable founders from across the world. The summit comes at a time India's cybersecurity landscape is witnessing remarkable growth, and demand for products and services is rising at a fast clip.



According to a report by the Data Security Council of India, market reached approximately USD 6 billion in 2023, clocking a CAGR (compounded annual growth rate) of over 30 per cent from 2019 to 2023.

The products segment alone grew by more than 3.5X, reaching close to USD 3.7 billion in 2023 from USD 1 billion in 2019.

"India's cybersecurity landscape is maturing quickly. With the exponential growth of large SaaS (software as a service) and consumer companies in India, security teams have become highly

skilled at combating increasing threat surfaces," said Prayank Swaroop, partner at Accel.

Swaroop said Accel has funded 50 cybersecurity companies globally, many of which have Indian-origin founders.

are significant "There opportunities for the founders in India to build the next generation of global cybersecurity companies focusing on areas like AI (artificial intelligence) in ty, application cybersecurity, security, operations," he added. The upcoming summit will

have four distinct knowledge

`application security setting up a high-quality

showcase their products.

AppSec programme, which involves practices and tools to protect applications from threats and vulnerabilities during development and deployment, and automating tasks across the AppSec stack. The `security operations' track will look at how to leverage Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) and Security Orchestration, Automation, and Response (SOAR) for automating operations and security explore strategies for scaling security operations

organisations grow.
'AI in security' will explore the role of AI in enhancing the AppSec stack and large model (LLM) language security.

And finally, the 'founders in security' track will offer deep insights into best practices for scaling go-to-market strategies and selling to security teams

#### Veg thali gets dearer by 10 per cent in June on onion, tomato price jump: Crisil

flow

agricultural

The average cost of a ■ vegetarian thali became dearer by 10 per cent in June due to the jump in onion, report said on Friday.

However, a decline in the broiler price contributed to a decrease in the cost of a nonvegetarian meal, as per Crisil Market Intelligence and Analysis' monthly "Roti Rice Rate" report.

The cost of veg thali, which comprises roti, vegetables (onions, tomatoes potatoes), rice, dal, curd and salad, increased 10 per cent to Rs 29.4 per plate in June from Rs 26.7 in the year-ago period, and was higher when compared to Rs 27.8 in May 2024, it said.

The overall hike in vegetarian thali prices is attributed to a 30 per cent increase in prices of tomato, 59 per cent in potato and 46 per cent in onion.

In the case of onion, there were lower arrivals due to a significant drop in rabi acreage, while potato acreage, while potato witnessed lower yields due to unseasonal rainfall in March, it



On the surge in tomato prices, it said virus infestation in the summer crop due to high temperatures in key growing regions of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh reduced tomato arrivals by 35 per cent year-on-year.

Additionally, there was a 13 per cent increase in rice prices due to a dip in acreage, resulting in subdued arrivals, while the pulse prices rose 22 per cent owing to a dry spell in key kharif months, the report

In the case of non-vegetarian thali, which comprises all the same ingredients but dal gets replaced by chicken, the price declined to Rs 58 in June as compared to Rs 60.5 in the year-ago period, but was considerably higher when compared with the preceding May's price of Rs 55.9 per thali.

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY **NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

30-Elect-33-T-2024-25-E3 Name of Work and

Electrical work regarding repairing of Air-Conditioning System installed at Dormitories in DLI Main Railway Station with other works and provision of VRF type ai conditioning plant along with CAMC.

Sr. Divil. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi Address of the Office:-Bid Security:-Rs. 198300.00 Date & time of submission of 31.07.2024, 12.00 Hrs. 31 07 2024 12 00 Hrs Opening of tender:-

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

कार्यालय नगर निगम, देहरादून

सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत 100 वाडों में स्थित विद्युत पोल जो जैसे है जहां है उसी स्थिति

में पोल क्योरक के माध्यम से विज्ञापन प्रदर्शित करने हेतु अनुबन्ध की तिथि से कुल 2 वर्ष हेतु सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना प्रकाशन की तिथि से दिनांक 23.07.2024 की अपरान्ह 2.00 बजे तक पोल क्योस्क विज्ञापन की ई0 निवदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है– पोल क्योस्क स्थल का विवरण कुल पोल निगम द्वारा आरक्षित घनराशि

निविदा प्रपत्र के अनुसार निविदा के साथ निविदा सचना प्रपत्र में अंकित निविदा धनराशि की 10 प्रतिशत

धनराशि रू० 26,12,050/ की सी०डी०आर०/एफ०डी०आर० के रूप में एवं निर्धारित निविदा फार्म शुल्क का डिमांड ड्राफ्ट जो नगर निगम देहरादून के नाम प्लेज होगी एवं निविदा फार्म में अंकित अन्य तकनीकी दस्तावेजों को दिनांक 22.07. 2024 की सांय 4.00 बजे तक मूल में निगम कार्यालय में जमा कराना अनिवार्य होगा। दिनांक 22.07.2024 तक दस्तावेज मूल में निगम कार्यालय में जमा न किये जाने पर निविदादाता को असफल माना जायेगा।

निविदादाता दिनांक 23.07.2024 को अपरान्ह 2.00 बजे तक ई०निविदा हेतु उत्तराखण्ड शासन की ई० टैन्डर वेबसाईट www.uktender.gov.in पर अपलोड करना सुनिश्चित करें। निविदा दिनांक 23.07.2024 सायं 4.00 बजे गठित निविदा समिति के समक्ष खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रपत्र एवं शर्ते नगर निगम देहरादून की वेबसाईट www.nagarnigamdehradun.com पर भी उपलब्ध है

नगर आयुक्त, नगर निगम, देहरादून

यूनिपोल/ निगम द्वारा विज्ञापन

हेतु आरक्षित

## Training for interns held



PNS SONEPAT

National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship Kundli Management, Kundli (NIFTEM-K) under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has launched its second trainingcum-internship programme food technology entrepreneurship development starting from

### Govt makes ISI mark must for stainless steel, aluminium utensils

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has made it mandatory for stainless steel and aluminium kitchen utensils to conform to national quality standards, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) said on Friday, in a move aimed at enhancing consumer safety and product quality.

Department Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under Ministry of Commerce and Industry, issued a Quality Control Order on March 14, making the ISI mark compulsory for these kitchen

Indian Standards Institution (ISI) mark is developed by BIS, assuring of product quality and safety.

According to BIS, the order prohibits the manufacture, import, sale, distribution, storage, or exhibition for sale of any stainless steel or aluminium utensils that do not bear the BIS standard mark.

Non-compliance with the order will attract penalties, underscoring government's commitment to consumer safety and product integrity, it said in a

#### **JSW Energy plans ₹15K** crore capex in FY25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

**T**SW Energy Chairman & Managing Director Sajjan Jindal on Friday said the company has planned a capital expenditure of Rs 15,000 crore during the current fiscal year. In his address to shareholders at the annual general meeting, he said, the company intends to spend around Rs 1,15,000 crore to reach the goal of 20 GW generation and 40 GWh storage under 'Strategy 2.0'. He further said the company's plan is to spend approximately

Rs 15,000 crore in current fiscal year and it is also actively scouting for acquisition opportunities in the power The company is on track to commission ongoing projects for power generation, battery storage and green hydrogen

production, it said. The growth capital secured through recently completed QIP (qualified institutional placement) strategically positions the company to accelerate the execution of returns accretive

growth plans, he noted. In April 2024, JSW Energy had raised Rs 5,000 crore of equity through a QIP issue to build a war chest for accelerating its growth ambitions. The issue was subscribed over

investors, Jindal said.

3.2X and met with an overwhelming response by high quality blue-chip global domestic institutional He told shareholders that during fiscal 2024, the company achieved significant

milestone by securing 3.4 GW

of renewable energy projects through competitive bidding.

### कार्यालय नगर निगम, देहरादन

नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत नये सम्मिलित क्षेत्रों में यूनिपोल / होर्डिंग के माध्यम से विज्ञापन प्रदर्शित करने हेतु अनुबन्ध की तिथि से कुल 02 वर्ष हेतु सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना प्रकाशन की तिथि से दिनांक 26.7.24 की अपरान्ह 2.00 बजे तक ई० निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है:

स०	514 50 515	होर्डिंग हेतु कुल साईट	हेतु आरक्षित निविदा धनराशि
	मसूरी डाईवर्जन से डोम गांव सीमा तक 38 साईट, साई मन्दिर बगल से काठबगला होते हुए कृशाली चौक तक—03 साईट, सहस्त्रधारा रोड आई०टी०पार्क से पैसेफिक गोल्फ तक—06 साईट, रायपुर रोड डील फैक्ट्री के आगे पुलियापार से महाराणा प्रताप स्पोर्ट कालेज सांग नदी पुल तक 12 साईट, रायपुर चौक किददूवाला होते हुए डोमाल चौक तक 02 साईट, छः नॅम्बर पुलिया से अम्बीवाला गुरुह्वारा—03 साईट, छः नॅम्बर पुलिया से रिंग रोड होते हुए रायपुर रोड—03 साईट, शिमला बाईपास चौक से सेन्टज्यूड चौक से शिवालिक कालेज जी०एम०एस०रोड एवं सेट ज्यूड चौक से नगर निगम सीमा आसन नदी पुल तक—04 साईट, चन्द्रबनी चौक से आधारोड़ी नगर निगम सीमा तक 14 साईट, शास्त्रीनगर ढाल से कुआंबाला नगर निगम सीमा तक 15 साईट, बल्लुपुर चौक से पण्डितवाडी नगर निगम सीमा तक 14 साईट, शास्त्रीनगर ढाल से कुआंबाला नगर निगम सीमा तक 15 साईट, बल्लुपुर चौक से पण्डितवाडी नगर निगम सीमा तक 12 साईट।	112	2,53,44,000/-

निविदा के साथ निविदा सूचना प्रपत्र में 10 प्रतिशत निर्धारित धनराशि रू0–25,34,400/– की एफ०डी०आर०/सी०डी०आर० ज नगर निगम, देहरादून के नाम प्लेज होगी। निविदायें ई०निविदा के माध्यम से निर्धारित तिथि एवं समय उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी निविदादाता को निविदा में अंकित समस्त तकनीकी दस्तावेजों एवं निर्घारित धनराशि की एफ०डी०आर० / सी०डी०आर० को मूल रूप में दिनांक 25.07.2024 की अपरान्ह 4.00 बजे तक निगम कार्यालय में जमा कराना अनिवार्य होगा। दिनांक 25.07.2024 तक दस्तावेज मूल में निगम कार्यालय में जमा न किये जाने पर निविदादाता को असफल माना जायेगा। तकनीकी निविदा का परीक्षण दिनांक 26.07.2024 की सांय 4.00 बजे गठित समिति के समक्ष किया जायेगा। तकनीकी निविदा के परीक्षण के उपरान्त तकनीकी निविदा में सफल निविदादाताओं की वित्तीय निविदा समिति द्वारा खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रपत्र एवं शर्ते विज्ञप्ति प्रकाशन की तिथि से यू०के० टैन्डर की वेबसाईट www.uktender.gov.in एवं नगर निगम वेबसाईट www.nagarnigamdehradun.com से भी डाउनलोड की जा सकती है । निविदा ई० निविदा के माध्यम से www.uktender.gov.in पर उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी। नगर आयुक्त

पत्रांक:-2074 / मूमि-2024-25

नगर निगम, देहरादून

## YOUR INPUTS WILL HELP 2036 BID: PM ASKS ATHLETES TO SHARE OBSERVATIONS ON CONDUCT OF OLYMPICS

onfident that India's bid the 2036 will be successful, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged athletes bound for this month's Paris Games to share views arrangements in the French to help government's ambitious plan to bring the quadrennial showpiece here.

In an interaction with Parisbound athletes, conducted both in person and online on Thursday, Modi said those travelling to the French capital would do the country a huge service by providing inputs from their experience.

"We are hoping to host the Olympics in 2036, it will help in creating a sporting atmosphere (in the country). Work is in progress to prepare infrastructure for it," he said in the interaction, which was attended by the national men's hockey team, the shooting contingent, boxers and trackand-field stars such as Neeraj Chopra among others.

The complete video of the PM's light-hearted conversation with the athletes was shared by his office on Friday. The meeting with the contingent was also attended by sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Indian Olympic Association (IAO) Indian



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with the athletes of the Indian contingent who are going to represent the country for the first time in the Paris Olympics, in New

UEFA suspends Turkey player Merih

"I won't ask you to do anything in the middle of your events but when you are free, I would urge you to observe the arrangements. Your inputs will help our bid for 2036. We will have an understanding on how to make sure that we are better-prepared," he added in his closing remarks to the athletes.

The upcoming Games will be held from July 26 to August 11 and India would be hoping to better its best ever tally of seven medals, including Chopra's historic javelin throw gold, achieved in the Tokyo Games.

sportspersons have qualified for the Games, including an unprecedented 21 shooters, who would be aiming to end the medal drought of last two

India has repeatedly asserted its desire to host the Games and found support from International Olympic Committee (IOC) chief Thomas Bach.

However, it would be no walk in the park to secure the rights as several other strong contenders such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia are also expected to throw their hats in the ring. A decision on the 2036 Games host is not expected before next year's IOC elections where a new President is expected to take charge.



### Abhay leads India's charge on first day of Asian doubles squash

Asian Games medallist Abhay Singh led India's charge on the opening day of the Asian Doubles Squash Championships by registering comfortable wins in both his events along side his respective partners in Johor, Malaysia.

The Indian contingent registered four wins in five outings on the opening day of the event on Thursday. Abhay and Velavan

and Senthilkumar beat David Pelino and Reymark Begornia of Philippines 2-0 (11-4 11-6) in the men's doubles group

stage.
Abhay then teamed up with experienced Joshna Chinappa in the mixed doubles, with the Indian pair starting with a bang, winning both their Pool C matches on Thursday. Abhay and Joshna accounted for Philippines pair

of Yvonne Dalida and Reymark Begornia 11-4 11-3 and then returned to the court Anders Ong Wee Jun of Singapore 11-3 11-6.

The women's doubles pair of Rathika Suthanthira Seelan and Pooja Arthi R won one and lost one.

INDIA'S RESULTS:
Men's doubles: Abhay/
Velavan bt David Pelino/ Reymark Begornia (PHI) 11-4 11-6.

Women's doubles: Rathika/ Pooja bt Raifa Putri Yattaqi/ Zalzabila (INA) 11-1 11-4, Rathika/Pooja lost Ho Tze Lok/Fung Ching Hei (HKG) 4-11 6-11.

Mixed doubles: Abhay/ Joshna bt Yvonne Dalida/ Reymark Begornia (PHI) 11-4 11-3, Abhay Joshna bt Naisha Singh/Anders Ong Wee Jun (SGP) 11-3 11-6.

## Misfiring England faces in-form Switzerland for semifinal spot



who came off the bench in

extra time in that game, is the

favorite to replace him in the

center of defense alongside

■ Stones wore heavy strapping

on his right knee in training Wednesday but said Thursday

Bellingham, forward Phil

Foden and full back Kieran

Trippier are among five England players who would miss the semifinals if booked

against Switzerland. Captain

Granit Xhaka is one of four Swiss players in the same

By the numbers: Southgate is

marking his 100th game in

charge and it could be his last.

His contract expires after the

■ Switzerland hasn't beaten

England for 43 years. Harry

Kane scored the winning goal

when England had a comeback 2-1 win the last

time they played in a 2022

■ It's only the third time the

Swiss team is playing in the

quarterfinals of a major

tournament. It has yet to reach

shootout loss to Spain in the

quarterfinals of Euro 2020 was

Championship showing.

What they're saying: "The

other night, I thought we were

going home after 60 minutes

of the game. To change the

mindset of us all and keep that

belief and faith, it's got a lot of

power behind that for

ourselves, other teams.

Everyone watching at home

knows that we're there to do it

right until the last minute,

literally. And, I think we

should take great confidence

from that." - England defender

"Every team participating in

the Euro wants to win, and so

do we. But in the end, we are

having both feet on the ground. We know who we are

and where we're coming from.

We know our basics. That is

keeping us in the tournament

John Stones.

best

semifinal. A penalty-

European

Stones.

he's fit to play.

situation.

tournament.

 $E_{\text{Switzerland}}^{\text{ngland}}$ in quarterfinals of Euro 2024 on Saturday. England faced from fans who criticism thought the team underperformed in its extratime win over Slovakia, while Switzerland exceeded expectations by knocking out

The winner will play either the Netherlands or Turkey in the semifinals. Here's what to know about the match:

defending champion Italy.

Match facts: England is playing its fourth quarterfinal game at a major tournament under manager Gareth Southgate and won two of the previous three. Southgate's cautious tactics have brought hefty criticism from England fans, some of whom threw plastic cups at him in the group stage.

Jude Bellingham's last-minute overhead kick to send England's last-16 game with Slovakia to extra time was one of the most dramatic moments of Euro 2024 so far. Defender John Stones said surviving that brush with elimination gave the team new confidence.

Switzerland coach Murat Yakin has won a reputation for smart tactics at Euro 2024, especially by outclassing an Italy team packed with more famous names in the round of

■ England is playing two days after a general election ended 14 years of rule by the Conservative Party. It didn't make waves in the England camp, which Stones called a "politics-free zone

Team news: Bellingham is under investigation by UEFA after seemingly making a gesture toward his crotch during England's last game. He has denied he was mocking Slovakia, saying it was an "inside joke gesture towards some close friends who were at

the game. ■ England defender Marc Guehi is suspended after picking up a second booking Demiral for 2 games for making nationalistic gesture at Euro 2024 The Union of European Associations

(UEFA) has suspended Turkey player Merih Demiral for two matches for making matches for making a controversial gesture at the European Championship. Friday that it had banned the defender "for failing to comply with the general principles of conduct, for violating the basic

rules of decent conduct, for using sports events for manifestations of a non-sporting nature and for bringing the sport of football Berlin on Saturday.

into disrepute.

Demiral scored both goals Tuesday in a 2-1 win over Austria to earn Turkey's place in the quarterfinals and celebrated with a hand sign associated with an ultranationalist group.

After scoring the second goal that is used by Turkish nationalists and associated with the Turkish ultranationalist organization Ulku Ocaklari, which is more widely known as the Gray Wolves. Demiral will miss Turkey's match with the Netherlands in

### **Jude Bellingham avoids** immediate ban at Euro 2024 over offensive gesture

AP DUESSELDORF (GERMANY)

Jude Bellingham has avoided an immediate ban after the England midfielder appeared to make an offensive gesture in his team's win over Slovakia. Bellingham will be available for England's game against Switzerland on Saturday for a place in the semifinals after UEFA on Friday imposed a one-game ban but said it "is not immediately enforced and is subject to a probationary

period" of a year.
The Real Madrid midfielder will have to pay a fine of 30,000 euros (\$32,500).

UEFA said the punishment was "for violating the basic Slovakia game.

Bellingham seemed to make a gesture with his hand toward his crotch after scoring an overhead kick to level the score Sunday as England went on to win 2-1 in extra time.

Bellingham's goal with about 80 seconds left in the game



England from saved humiliating exit in the first knockout round. Bellingham previously denied suggestions he gestured toward

the Slovakia bench. "An inside joke who were at the game. Nothing but respect for how that

UEFA also fined England a total of 11,000 euros (\$11,900) for crowd disturbances and the "lighting of fireworks" at the Slovakia game.

Slovakia team played tonight," Bellingham wrote on X.

#### in doubles with his brother There were tears from Andy reach No. 1 in the rankings. Murray. Standing ovations Murray ciblings h

A video tribute replete with messages from Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Venus Williams.

And, yes, a doubles match Murray played alongside his brother on Thursday, all part of the first stop on the two-time Wimbledon champion's farewell tour at a tournament that meant so

much to him. The Murrays lost 7-6(6) 6-4 in the first round of men's doubles against Rinky Hijikata and John Peers - but the result

was, truly, beside the point on this evening. "The match itself, it was tough, physically. It was hard for me. I was fortunate I was even

able to get on the court to play,' said Murray, who had surgery to remove a cyst from his spine less than two weeks ago, forcing him to withdraw from "It was pretty singles. emotional," Murray said about the postmatch tribute.

"Watching the video was nice, but hard as well, for me. Because you know it's coming to the end of something that you absolutely loved doing for such a long time. So that was difficult.'

It was the first time a men's doubles first-round match was played in the event's main stadium in nearly 30 years, a fitting way for him to begin to say goodbye - and for his many fans to offer their thanks and well wishes, too.

Murray, a 37-year-old from Scotland, has said he will head into retirement after playing at the All England Club, where he is also entered in mixed doubles with 2021 US Open winner Emma Raducanu, and the Paris Olympics, which begin later this month.

"I'm ready to finish playing," Murray said, "because I can't play to the level I want to anymore.

Murray occasionally fidgeted with his back and looked a tad uncomfortable while playing, but he also let out a celebratory scream after hitting a forehand

type of shot that helped him This was the first time the together at the All England

Club. They bumped fists before the match began; they slapped palms between points. Their mother, Judy, who taught both boys tennis, was in a guest box, sitting with Andy's wife, Kim, and two of the couple's four children.

"It was a fun experience for me to be out there and play with him," Jamie said.

"It was sort of strange knowing what the background was." Jamie's younger brother became a superstar in these parts by winning Wimbledon in 2013, making him the first British man to triumph in singles at the All England Club

in 77 years. He won the title again in 2016. His other Grand Slam trophy came at the US Open in 2012, the same year he won his first singles gold medal at the London Olympics at Centre Court - "One of my favourite days I've ever had, certainly as

an athlete," he said on Thursday - and the next, at Rio de Janeiro in 2016, made him the only player with two in a There were some of his usual

mannerisms, whether it was tugging on the brim of his white hat or leaning over to pull on the tongues of his shoes or clenching a fist while looking up at the stands. There wasn't as much of the fire and brimstone he was famous for, the cursing and muttering directed at his team or, just as frequently, himself.

'Sometimes," Djokovic said during the four-minute video, "it looked like you against the world."

Then it was Federer's turn to say: "But you were never alone. Because while you you carried your own dreams, you also carried theirs," referring to Murray's many fans.

After the ceremony, Murray was greeted by several current and former players, including Djokovic, Iga Swiatek, Lleyton Hewitt, Holger Rune, Cam Norrie, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe.

## Verstappen's emerging F1 rivalry with Norris goes another round at British GP

**AP** ■ SILVERSTONE (ENGLAND)

ax Verstappen's emerging Mrivalry with Lando Norris goes another round at the British Grand Prix this week and this time Norris has home fans behind him.

Sunday's Formula 1 race follows their crash at last weekend's Austrian GP, the home race of Verstappen's Red Bull team. It cost both drivers a victory chance and ended Norris' hopes of a second win after the Miami GP.

Norris retired his McLaren and felt let down by Verstappen, saying the Red Bull driver impeded him by moving under braking. Norris cleared the air with Verstappen when the friends spoke twice this week. 'I don't think he should apologize. I thought it was good racing, at times very close to the edge, but we've spoken about it and we're both happy to go racing again," Norris said

on Thursday. 'Some of the things I said in the (TV) pen after the race were more just because I was frustrated at the time. A lot of adrenaline, a lot of emotions." Verstappen's main concern

protecting friendship. "He's a great guy. Of course he loves racing, he's very passionate," Verstappen said. You also have to realize he's fighting for his second win, I'm fighting for my 62nd. Naturally, your emotions are a



podium finishes compared to Norris' 19, and in pole positions leads him 40-2. . Verstappen felt Norris may have panicked a bit.

"I always said to Lando, when you go for moves up the inside, outside, you can trust me that I'm not there to try and crash you out," Verstappen said.

'I felt everything that I did was nothing massively over the Another heated incident at

Silverstone could change that and jog some memories. At the 2021 British GP, Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton collided heavily on Lap 1 at the high-speed Copse corner. Verstappen went to hospital for checks and

Hamilton won. It sparked a bitter feud lasting until the last lap of the last race Abu Dhabi, where

after a controversial restart to win his first world title and deny Hamilton a recordbreaking eighth. Observers have

comparisons between Silverstone 2021 and Austria 2024 with Verstappen coming in for some unfair criticism, according to his former Red Bull teammate Ricciardo.

probably "People are hammering Max a bit," said Ricciardo, who now races for the RB team. He defended Verstappen as an

"elbows out" and "tough" racer who imposes himself. He knows that given they raced together from 2016-18, the year they collided at the Azerbaijan GP and scored no points.

Ricciardo said the late incident at the Red Bull ring, where Verstappen recovered from a

extend his championship lead over second-placed Norris to 81 points, was blown out of proportion. It was hard, but you're also fighting for a win. So you're not

going to just wave someone ov," he said "The outcome was bigger than what was actually happening on the track. Was it pushing the edge? Probably. But was it

puncture to finish fifth and

anything dangerous or reckless? From what I've seen, Mercedes driver George Russell, who benefited from

the late crash to win in Austria, seemed to agree. "Max is one of the best and he's a hard racer," Russell said.

"He'll push the rules to the limit, as all the top drivers do.' British hopes Home fans could be in for a treat with three British drivers

Norris, Russell, Hamilton

possibly in contention. There is fresh hope in a season producing five different race winners in 11 races, compared to just three in 22 in 2023 with Verstappen winning staggering 19.

Verstappen has seven wins this year while Ferrari duo Carlos Sainz Jr. And Charles Leclerc have one win each. Although Hamilton has won

Silverstone a record eight times, the 39-year-old British driver has not won anywhere since the penultimate race of the 2021 campaign. return winner to go up a break

# Andy Murray's Wimbledon farewell tour begins with a loss

## New look India start their journey without Virat, Rohit against Zimbabwe

new-look Indian T20 team would embark on a journey of self-discovery without their constant talismans, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, hoping to unearth their mainstays for the future in a five-match series against Zimbabwe starting here on

Even as the euphoria of T20 World Cup triumph sweeps through the length and breadth of India, Shubman Gill, who was a reserve in that squad, will hit a refresh button along with a bunch of IPL performers.

All the fresh faces are expected to make their international debut during the series scheduled to be played entirely in the Zimbabwean capital.

Two young men, who are lined for debut could be Punjab's Abhishek Sharma, who had a stupendous IPL for Sunrisers Hyderabad and the young Assamese lad Riyan Parag, who has given ample demonstration of his capabilities as a competent T20 batter. Both of them tick all the boxes for this

While over the past few years, Rohit and Kohli have skipped a lot of bilateral series, especially in the

shortest format, their international retirement from the format is bound to be felt more strongly.

The skills and quality that the two modern greats brought to the table will be hard to replicate but as it is the order of nature, the old guard has to make way for the new one. Zimbabwe certainly isn't the most

formidable opposition but in T20

format, the gulf between sides is comparatively lesser than the other two traditional forms of the game. The hosts, led by the gutsy Sikandar Raza, who played for Punjab Kings in the IPL recently, could prove to be a handful on nippy afternoons at the Harare Sports Club where the

ball will jag around during the

afternoon starts. Some solid performances in this series will keep these youngsters in contention for future when the first team players of the world champion

side are back on national duty. Shivam Dube, Sanju Samson, and Yashasvi Jaiswal will be available from the third match onwards and some of the young men would only get a couple of games to prove their mettle.

In future, the likes of T20 captain-In future, the likes of 120 captanin-waiting Hardik Pandya, his likely deputy Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, and Kuldeep Yadav will also be back



playing the format and there won't be too many vacancies in the playing eleven. From now till the 2026 T20 World Cup in India, the national team will play 34 games in the shortest format.

the shortest format.
While skipper Gill is expected to open, one needs to see whether his best friend Abhishek gets his maiden India cap or the seasoned CSK skipper and captain of the Asian Games gold medal-winning team Ruturaj Gaikwad ends up being the chosen one. In case Abhishek opens, Gaikwad

could come in at No.3 or swap positions with the Punjab southpaw. Parag's chances of a debut are brighter compared to Abhishek as he can bat at No. 4 in the first match, a slot he made his own for the Royals.

Rinku Singh, the designated finisher of the Indian T20 team for years to come, is expected to arrive at No. 5 in this new look line-up while one among Jitesh Sharma or Dhruv Jurel will bat at No. 6 while donning the big gloves. If one looks at selection pattern,

Jurel was the second keeper behind Sanju Samson for this series and Jitesh was a late entrant because of the unavailability of the World Cup squad members.

impressive Test debut against England is likely play in the first two games before Samson arrives. In the bowling department, Avesh

Khan and Khaleel Ahmed, the two standbys during the T20 World Cup are certainties and Mukesh Kumar, who is a very steady death bowler could be the third seamer pipping Harshit Rana, who is a better slogger with the willow.

Washington Sundar with his allround abilities will hold his place till Dube arrives while leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi is expected to play all

#### **SQUADS** India (first 2 games): Shubman Gill

(c), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Riyan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande, Sai Sudharsan, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Harshit Rana. Zimbabwe: Sikandar Raza (captain), Faraz Akram, Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell,

Tendai Chatara, Luke Jongwe, Innocent Kaia, Clive Madande, Wessly Madhevere, Tadiwanashe Marumani, Wellington Masakadza, Mavuta, Blessing Brandon Muzarabani, Dion Myers, Antum Naqvi, Richard Ngarava, Milton



## Inspirational, emotional: New-Gen India stars hail T20 WC triumph, eye their own glory

**PTI** ■ HARARE

India's emotional and epochal triumph in the just-Itriumph in the just-concluded T20 World Cup found its resonance in Gen-Next stars such as Shubman Gill and Riyan Parag who termed it as an "inspiration" while vowing to bring more glory to the nation in future.

The new line of Indian players is here to play a five-match T20I series against Zimbabwe, which is starting from Saturday at the Harare Sports Club.

Gill, who is leading the contingent here, was travelling reserve with Rohit Sharma's men before returning to India after the group stage of the T20 WC which was held in the USA.

The 24-year-old rated the victory as a "feather in the cap". "This must have been very special for all of them, and special for me. They have been working very hard for this. So, it's a feather in the cap," Gill told BCCI while sharing his feelings about India's thrilling seven-run win over South Africa in the title match at Barbados last week

Abhishek Sharma, who had a stellar run for the Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2024. had a special companion while watching the final - multiple World Cup winner Yuvraj Singh.

"I was watching the match (T20 WC final) with the one and only Yuvi paji (Yuvraj Singh). He got very emotional when India won the final Watching that, I felt very good and got very inspired.

Tndian golfer Diksha Dagar

Ishot an impressive bogey-free 5-under 68, best round of

the second day, to rise 45

PTI ■ LONDON

it for India many times," Sharma said.

moment, and then we went outside and celebrated. I think this World Cup was very special and now I am really

motivated to win a Cup for the country," he added.
Riyan Parag, who is set to make his T20I debut against Zimbabwe, called the victory an inspiration to all budding

It's an inspiration for all of us, cricketers in India," said Parag. watching the final.

Jurel did not want to jinx retiring from T20Is with a title

"To have a win of this kind, where we were almost in the jaws of defeat, and then to come back from there and win

"It's a dream for all of us to win an ICC trophy, and he has won

"I will never forget that

the young players here in this squad to win a World Cup, to win something this big in stature. I think it's motivating for all of us, and the young Wicketkeeper batter Dhurv Jurel used inverse logic while

India's chances of winning the match, hence he was telling everyone that South Africa would lift their maiden World Cup. "I was thinking that if I say India will win, then SA might win. So, I was saying SA will win, and eventually India won. I was celebrating like a kid after that," Jurel chuckled. Ruturaj Gaikwad was delighted to see three modern day giants in Virat Kohli, Rohit and Ravindra Iadeia, his teammate at the Chennai Super Kings,

is a special moment. Obviously, a great end to the

T20I career of three legends (Kohli, Rohit and Jadeja) For pacers Mukesh Kumar and Tushar Deshpande, the victory was nothing short of a

> "As we say, the game is not over, till it's over. The final was the best example for it. We believe that miracles can happen," said Deshpande. Mukesh joined him. "God! It was a different feeling seeing

them winning."
Pacer Avesh Khan shared the and now he wants to create his own piece of history.

"There is a place near my native - Raiwada - where people gather in a public space to watch big matches. I also went there to watch the match. I celebrated with everyone.

"I feel so proud to watch those videos and photos coming out in social media after our trophy win, and we will strive to maintain this standard of performance in future too," he noted.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi exploited the luxury of loneliness inside a hotel room to scream his lungs out, while all-rounder Washington Sundar said the win has created an emotional chord with the country.

"It was a great feeling that day. I was alone in the hotel and I was screaming all along inside the room," said Bishnoi.

'It's a huge thing for all of us. We saw it on TV as it was emotional for every one of them. It's a huge inspiration and huge congratulations to every one of them," said Washington.

Diksha rises to tied 4th in Aramco Series London, Tvesa makes cut

## Kohli, Jadeja thank Mumbai Police for phenomenal job managing victory parade

**PTI** MUMBAI

 $F^{
m loored}$  by the grand reception and also the comprehensive police presence that ensured an comprehensive conduct proceedings for most part, star India Virat Kohli on Friday thanked the Mumbai Police for doing a "phenomenal job" in crowd control during the victory parade of the T20 World Cup-winning Indian team here.

The side returned to a euphoric reception on Thursday after a 16-hour nonstop flight from Barbados. It was hosted for breakfast by

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi before heading to Mumbai for the victory parade which was attended by lakhs of fans.

It culminated into a felicitation

Wankhede stadium where the players danced and took a victory lap after sharing their thoughts on the triumph that ended a trophy drought of 11

"Deep respect and heartfelt thanks to all the officers and staff of @MumbaiPolice & @CPMumbaiPolice for doing a phenomenal job during Team India's Victory Parade. Your dedication and service is highly appreciated. Jai Hind," Kohli posted on 'X'.

The 35-year-old, who was adjudged player of the match in the seven-run final win over South Africa last Saturday, flew out to London early this morning after completing the engagements here. had announced T20

international retirement at the



All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja also posted a similar note of thanks for the police force that was deployed to manage the of humanity that descended on Marine Drive to greet the players and be a part of the celebrations.

police. You did a fantastic job last night #realhero," he said. India captain Rohit Sharma, who also announced his T20 international retirement at the end of the World Cup, was welcomed enthusiastically by his neighbours and friends at "Big thank you to Mumbai his Mumbai house.

Fans also thronged the complex to catch a glimpse of him and he duly obliged amid heavy police presence, waving and smiling at them.
"...This is for you," read his

post, prefixed with the emoji of the national flag, on 'X'. Senior off-spinner R Ashwin, who was not a part of the squad in the Americas, said he felt overwhelmed while

watching the celebrations.
"Watching all the videos and pictures from the celebrations yesterday in Mumbai just fills my heart. This nation has given and continues to give so much to the sport. Once again so proud of the champions," he

At least 11 persons were rushed to hospitals for sustaining minor injuries or feeling dizzy during the massive fan gathering.

## want Sikandar to lead from front: Zimbabwe coach Sammons

Raza's ⊃ikandar Dexperience of playing in various T20 leagues would certainly come in handy for an inexperienced Zimbabwe outfit, which would like to punch above its weight against a talented Indian side full of IPL performers, head coach Justin Sammons said ahead of five-match series, starting Saturday.

"I think we're very fortunate to have a player like Sikandar Raza leading the side. He brings great experience, We want him to lead from the front. He's been superb in the changing room and taking the players under his wing. We want his bat to do the talking. As well as his bowling," Sammons told PTI Videos in an exclusive interview from Harare.

Over the years, Indian selectors have always rested its top players during the summer months when the team tours the African nation where a five-match T20I series' broadcast rights helps in keeping the host country's

shot 66-72 for 8-under and

England's Georgia Hall (70-

70) was second at 6-under.



cricket board in good health and best of spirits.

Even then three players from the T20 World Cup winning Shivam Dube, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sanju Samson are expected to be available from the third game of the series and all four stand including skipper Shubman Gill are part of the set-up, taking the count up to

"This is an opportunity for this team to do that and to showcase their skills against the best and obviously to get an understanding of where they're at," said Sammons, who was Africa's

under-par, they will feature in a

play-off for victory at Centurion Club at the end of the third

2023.

Sammons said that his focus is on the future and he wants to build a good team in next two years with players improving their game awareness and also honing their skills adequately for the elite level.

"I don't want to dwell on what's happened in the past, but what I want to do is obviously focus on the future. We've created a clear vision in terms of where this team wants to go within the next two or three years...

We're encouraging players to continually want to up-skill and improve. And they know they're going to be taken out of their comfort zone in doing that," he added.

about young India skipper Shubman Gill, praising his work ethic which translated into a golden period of 18-odd months across formats.

"Shubman is a superb cricketer, I remember first seeing Shubman, I think I was with the Proteas. We were playing that Test series against India. I think it was December 2021. He didn't get any game time there, but you could see his work ethic and how professional he was in the way he went about his business in the nets during that test series something exciting to watch. And like I say, his record

swashbuckling southpaws Rinku Singh and Shivam Dube, the coach said, "They're exciting, they're dangerous. They have proven records against their names. It's an amazing opportunity for us...I think as a youngster growing up you always dream of playing against the best in the

world." The coach also heaped praises on newbie Riyan Parag. "We can see how dangerous

Riyan Parag is. He had a great IPL, showed his worth there. Again, another exciting prospect for India. Again, it's another opportunity for our guys to test themselves against the best," he concluded.

#### **POSSESSION NOTICE**

speaks for itself."

Whereas, Muthoot Housing Finance Company Limited under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) ("said Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("said Rules") issued a demand notice dated 21-Aug-2019 & 21-Aug-2019 & 25-Oct-2019, calling upon the borrower viz. Somnath Haridas Sukhdeve, Nilesh Haridas Sukhdeve AND Pratima Somnath Sukhdeve, Nilesh Haridas Sukhdeve, Nilesh Haridas Sukhdeve AND Pratima Somnath Sukhdeve, Nilesh Haridas Sukhdeve,

mentioned in the table below:

And whereas subsequently, Muthoot Housing Finance Company Limited has vide Assignment Agreement dated 31-03-2023 assigned all its rights, title, interest and benefits in respect of the debts due and payable by the borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) arising out of the facilities advanced by Muthoot Housing Finance Company Limited to borrower/ guarantor(s) alongwith the underlying Immovable Property to Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited acting in its capacity as Trustee of ARCIL-Retail Loan Portfolio-086-A-TRUST ("Arcil") for the benefit of the holders of Security Receipts. Therefore, in view of the said assignment, Arcil now stands substituted in the place of Muthoot Housing Finance Company Limited and Arcil shall be entitled to institute/continue all and any proceedings against the borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) and to enforce the rights and benefits under the financial documents including the enforcement of guarantee and security interest executed and created by the borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) for the financial facilities availed by them.

The borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) and the initial data data as a state of the said amounts, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Arcil has taken possession of the underlying Immovable Property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on "AS IS WHERE IS & WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" on the date mentioned below

Borrowe Somnath Haridas Sukhdeve

Sukhdeve AND

**Borrower Name** 

and Guarantors

7,80,674.17/-(Rupees Seven Lakhs Eighty Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Four and Seventeen Paise Only) as on 13-Aug-2019 & Rs.1,92,479.33/-(Rupees One Lakhs Ninety Two Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Nine and Thirty Three Paise Only) as on 13-Aug-2019 along with future interest at the contractual rate on the foresaid amount with effect from 13-Aug-2019 together with cidental expenses, cost, charges etc. & Rs.2,27,903.94/-(Rupees Two Lakhs Twenty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Three and Nine Pour Paise Only) as on 16-Oct-2019 along with future BOUNDED BY: East: Plot Of Other, West: interest at the contractual rate on the aforesaid amount with effect

etc. Notice dated: 21-Aug-2019 & 21-Aug-2019 & 25-Oct-2019

**Demand Notice** 

**Description of Property** Property owned Somnath Haridas

eve, Nilesh Haridas Sukhdeve AND Pratima Somnath Sukhdeve ALL THAT PLACE OR PARCEL OF PLOT NO 17/H, MAUZA SAI NAGAR, URLA (EAST), WARD NO. 58, KH NO 845 12 PART P H NO 17, MOUJA URLA, RNM DURG 1 & 2 TEHSIL Open Plot, North: Plot Of Other, South: Road. Hereinafter referred to as

The borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned that Arcil is in the lawful possession of the Immovable Property mentioned above and under Section 13(13) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002, the borrower/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) or any person whatsoever, shall after receipt of this notice not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate the Immovable Property, without prior written consent of Arcil and any dealings with the Immovable Property will be subject to the charge of Arcil for the amount as mentioned above along with future interest at the contractual rate on the aforesaid an



time available to redeem the above mentioned Immovable Property Date - 06.07.2024, Sd/-, Authorized officer, Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited Trustee of ARCIL-Retail Loan Portfolio-086-A-TRUST Place - Chattisgarl ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY (INDIA) LTD.

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## Diksha, who started her

she carded 68 to get to 8-under for 36 holes to climb up the leaderboard. second round late in the

T-49th place when the first

round finally ended, made big

amends in the second round as

places to tied fourth spot at the Aramco Series London here. Another Indian Tvesa Malik (73-77) was 4-over and T-41st, as top 60 and ties made the cut afternoon from the 10th tee, at the Par-73 Centurion Golf had two birdies on the back nine on 11th and 16th. She Club. Pranavi Urs, who had a added three more birdies on disappointing 80 in the first round, retired with an injury. the first, seventh and ninth. Diksha, who was way down in

Another Indian making the cut was Tvesa, runner-up at the Swiss Ladies Open last week. She was T-24 after the round but first dramatically on the back nine. Even par for the first round, she parred the entire front nine but dropped shots on 10th and 11th. Then came a roller-coaster, as she birdied the Par-3 14th, but dropped a double bogey on Par-5 15th. Then she birdied Par-4 17th

and dropped a second double bogey on Par-5 18th to close at 4-over 77 and was T-41st. Diksha, winner of two Ladies European Tour titles and third last vear at Hero Women's Indian Open, is five shots behind the leader, Leona

Maguire of Ireland. Maguire

Diksha shared the fourth place with Welsh golfer Chloe Williams (69-74), Ines Laklalech of Morocco (72-71) and Laura Fuenfstueck of Germany (70-73) at 3-under. In team competition, Team Nadaud with France's Nastasia Nadaud, Czechia's Kristyna Napoleaova, Spain's Mireia Prat and amateur George Brooksbank, set the early pace to reach 24-under. They were joined by Team Hall, which had Georgia Hall,

Hannah Burke alongside

Morocco's Lina Belmati and

With both teams level on 24-

amateur Shane Hart-Jones.

Austrian Sarah Schober (67-75) was sole third while round on Saturday afternoon. THE PIONEER O CHANGE OF NAME

> I, Rakesh Khadhe alias Dhanau Ram S/o Lakhan Khadhe Salihapara Tarhul Kanker Chhattisgarh-494635 changed my name to Dhanau Ram Khadhe.