**OPINION 6** 

HONOUR THE UNSUNG HEROES

7 KILLED IN CONGO'S MUSIC

**CONCERT STAMPEDE** 

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SINDHU OPENS CAMPAIGN WITH DOMINANT WIN

11 SPORTS

# WHY? WHY? WHY?

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

 $\begin{array}{c} P \text{hones kept buzzing with} \\ \text{messages on WhatsApp} \\ \text{groups with helpless students} \end{array}$ trying to find where their friends — studying at the Rau's Coaching centre's library on Saturday evening were following the death of three civil services aspirants due to rain-induced flooding in the basement of the coaching centre. While reports claimed only

three lives were lost, students who were witness to the tragic incident unfolding before their eyes claimed a higher number.

All the deceased had cleared their preliminary examination, the results of which was declared a few days ago and were burning midnight oil to prepare for the Mains examinations scheduled in October-November which is second stage of Civil Services Examinations to qualify to become an IAS, IPS or allied services officer.

Thousands like the ones who fell prey to lackadaisical civic amenities make national Capital their karambhoomi for a few years to get into elite Government services.

"We have WhatsApp groups of UPSC aspirants. Those groups are full with students asking about the whereabouts of their friends. I am sure that the numbers are much higher



Police detain students protesting outside Karol Bagh metro station after three IAS aspirants died in the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle at Old Rajinder Nagar area, in New Delhi, on Sunday

and the authorities are not their classes, witnessed giving us the full picture," said 27-year-old Ankit, adding that while protesting in the wee hours of Saturday, authorities also threw to be found. drainage water on them to disperse them.

Old Rajinder Nagar, which is usually bustling with UPSC bodies being taken and the aspirants in haste to get to authorities shutting the lights usually bustling with UPSC

protests of angry students who are worried about the whereabouts of their colleagues who are nowhere

Albeit, police claiming three lives, students claimed on seeing at least four to five

off regularly to not let the general public know the exact situation.

Meanwhile, at the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital, there was anger among the relatives of the deceased, who claimed they were not being allowed to see the bodies even though they have been waiting since

Deceased Shreya Yadav's uncle Dharmendra Yadav shared his harrowing experience. "I saw the news about the incident late at night and called Shreva over phone, but she didn't answer," he said.

A resident of Ghaziabad, he said when his niece did not

#### **Library running** illegally in basement

RAJESH KUMAR

The Rau's IAS Study Circle centre in Delhi's Rajinder Nagar, where three students died in raininduced flooding, was functioning illegally as a library.

The coaching institute was issued a fire safety certificate just 18 days before the incident.

Notably, the institute, had falsely shown that the basement was being used for parking and as a store room, as per the building plan and No Objection Certificate (NOC) of the fire department.

respond to his calls, he rushed to the institute in Old Rajinder Nagar. "When I reached the coaching centre, I was directed to RML Hospital, where I learned that a body identified as that of Shreya had been found, but I was not allowed to see her," he

## Two arrested

A fter arresting two people, the Delhi Police has registered an FIR and formed multiple teams to probe the Rau's coaching centre flooding incident which claimed the lives of three IAS aspirants, who had already cleared their prelims exam and were preparing in the library of the coaching institute for the Mains exams of UPSC. According to the police on Sunday, they have arrested owner Abhishek Gupta and coordinator Deshpal Singh of the Rau's IAS Study Circle and booked them for culpable homicide and under other charges. "Multiple teams have been

formed to investigate the entire incident. We have asked the Delhi Fire Services to provide us report about the building and the basement which was being used as a library but mentioned as 'store room," a senior police officer said.

The officer said the basement was eight-feet below the ground level and more than 18 students were

present in it on Saturday evening when it got flooded after heavy rain. According to sources in the police

department, the gate of the basement was closed, but due to high pressure of rain water, it got damaged and water gushed in. "We are checking CCTV footage from the area to

ascertain the sequence of the events. After scanning the CCTV footage, we will identify the people who were standing close to the institute during the time of incident and will record their statements," said the officer.

#### **Govt clarifies on tax** clearance certificate for going abroad

PTI ■ NEW DELH

fter social media outrage over a After social incura outrige.

Budget proposal making it mandatory to get tax clearance certificates for going abroad, the Government on Sunday the proposed amendment i



irregularities or having substantial tax arrears need such clearance. Finance Ministry, in the Finance Bill, 2024, has proposed to add the reference

Money Act, 2015, to the list of Acts, under which any person should clear his liabilities to obtain the tax clearance

certificate.
"The proposed amendment does not require all the residents to obtain the tax clearance certificate," the ministry said in a

As per section 230 of the Income-tax Act, 1961, every person is not required to obtain a tax clearance certificate. Only in the case of certain persons, in respect of whom circumstances exist, which make it necessary to obtain a tax clearance certificate will be required to obtain such a certificate.

## Manu first Indian shooter to win medal at Olympics | Major gubernatorial reshuffle

RISHABH MALIK/AGENCIES

A 22-year-old Haryana girl for India. Manu Bhaker strikes the bronze medal in Women's 10m Air Pistol event in Paris Olympics in 2024. With her medal she becomes the first female shooter to win for India in Olympi

On July 27 Manu Bhaker had qualified for the final of her event with a score of 580 points, finishing third out of 45 competitors with the topeight going through to Sunday's final.

Bhaker scored 221.7 in the final round in which she fought hard against Korea's Kim Yeji who bagged silver and Jin Ye Oh bagged the gold with a games record of 243.2. Bhaker stated, "I was fighting with all the games I have with all the energy I have. Really grateful that I could win the bronze. I read Bhagwat Gita and always tried to do what I am supposed to do, left everything else to god". "We can't fight destiny," said

Bhaker who appeared in her second Olympic stint. Previously she couldn't make it to the final and registered a bronze in this 2024 Olympic ending a drought in Olympic



Manu Bhaker poses for a photograph with her bronze medal after finishing third in the 10m air pistol women's final round at the 2024 Summer Olympics, France, on

This was fifth medal in a distinguished career, having shooting for India. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (silver in Athens Olympics, 2004), Bindra (gold, Beijing 2008), Gagan Narang (bronze, London 2012) and Vijay Kumar (silver, London) have brought prestige to the country in shooting. Bhaker is one of the favourite contenders for India to top

the medals in the Olympic.

Bhaker, who hails from

Jhajjar district in Haryana, is

an accomplished athlete with

secured 15 gold medals at various levels, including nine at the World Cups.

At just 22, she made a stunning debut at the International Sport Shooting Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Guadalajara, Mexico, clinching gold in the 10m air pistol final against top competitors like Olympic gold-medalist Anna Korakaki and three-time World Cup medalist Celine Goberville and in her first appearance in

Common Games she clinched gold in 10m air pistol at the age of 16. In 2018, Manu became the first Indian to win a gold medal at the Youth Olympic Games. She has competed in two Olympic Games but faced challenges during her debut in Tokyo three years when her unctioned in the pistol pistol qualification, preventing her from reaching the finals in both the mixed 10m pistol and 25m pistol events. Despite this setback, Manu is now on a redemption

Olympic medalist. achievement, Bhaker has not only inspired millions of young Indians but has also solidified her position as one of the country's brightest shooting stars. Her bronze medal is a testament to her dedication, hard work, and unwavering belief in her

path, earning the distinction of being India's first female

abilities. India is celebrating this momentous victory, with the entire nation joining in to congratulate the young champion. Her achievement is expected to give a significant boost to shooting in the country, encouraging more young talents to take up

**D**resident Draupadi Murmu effected major gubernatorial appointments with changes in the Governors of some States with Lakshman Prasad Acharya appointed as the Governor of Assam with the additional charge of Manipur while Gulab Chand Kataria replaced Banwarilal Purohit as the Governor of Puniab.

also been appointed the administrator of the Union Territory of Chandigarh, according to a communique issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Saturday night. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan communication Murmu has accepted the resignation of Purohit as the Governor of Punjab and the administrator of Chandigarh, it said. "Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Governor of Sikkim, appointed as Governor of Assam and has also been given additional charge of the Governor of Manipur," the statement said. Anusuiva Uikye has been serving as the Governor of Manipur since February last year. Veteran BJP leader Om Prakash Mathur will be the new Governor of

Sikkim, the communique said. Jharkhand Governor CP Radhakrishnan, who was also holding additional charge of Telangana, has been appointed as the new Governor of Maharashtra, succeeding incumbent

Ramesh Bais. Former Union Labour Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar will be the new Jharkhand Governor in place of Radhakrishnan. Former Deputy Chief Minister of

separate

district

Muvattupuzha and

bifurcation of the State itself as

Kerala and Malabar. The

change in Kerala's religious

demography and the emergence of Muvattupuzha

as a hotbed of religious

extremism are seen as the

factors contributing to the

change in the attitude of the

people. Christian Association

and Alliance for Social action

(CASA) has condemned the

students picketing the principal of the college over

an issue which has nothing to

"We have heard about people

who disrupt normal life and

do with academics.



Tripura, Jishnu Dev Varma, will be the

new Telangana Governor. Former IAS officer K Kailashnathan. one of the trusted aides of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been appointed as Lt Governor of Puducherry with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office. Kailashnathan, chief principal secretary to Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, stepped down on June 30 after holding the post for more

than a decade after his retirement. Senior BJP leader from Maharashtra Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde has been appointed the Governor of Rajasthan, succeeding Kalraj Mishra. Former Lok Sabha member from Assam Ramen Deka has been appointed as the Governor of Chhattisgarh, and C H Vijayashankar, the former Lok Sabha member from Mysore in Karnataka, will be Meghalaya Governor, the communique said. appointments will take effect from the dates they will assume charge of their respective offices, the statement added.

## Row as students seek special space for namaz in Kerala college

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Nirmala College at Muvattupuzha (established in 1953) in Kerala finds itself in the middle of a new controversy as hundreds of Muslim students in the institution are on a warpath with the college management. On Friday, students under the leadership of SFI (the students' wing of the CPI-M) and Muslim League gheraoed the college principal Father Jestin K Kuriakose, for almost two hours demanding special classrooms/auditoriums for offering namaz.

This is a new development in the history of the 71-year-old college, which was established by the Catholic Church to make higher education accessible to students belonging to the State's high

ranges.
"We were taken aback by the action of the students picketing the principal or gheraoing the teachers or management. Till now the Muslim students were making use of the mosques in the neighbourhood for offering Friday prayers. What made them demand for special classrooms or auditoriums remains a mystery," Kuriakose told *The Pioneer* on Sunday. The demand made by the

students has been put up before the college management. "To set apart exclusive prayer auditoriums for students believing in different sects is not an easy task. Though ours is a Christian minority institution, we follow the directives issued by the university and Government,"



said a senior official of the management. Though the church is keen on

resolving the issue amicably, the recent developments in the State have to be seen as factors that made the students resorting to extreme measures The CPI (M)-led Kerala

Government has recently appointed a senior IAS officer as the de facto foreign secretary of the State to communicate and coordinate with Governments in Europe, USA, Australia and Africa. Sources in Government Secretariat said the move has turned out to be a "treatment worse than the disease" as the External Affairs is an area that comes under the exclusive

domain of the Centre.

Another demand that has

been overlooked by the media

traffic by forcibly occupying public places under the pretext religious congregation and namaz.

#### **NTA announces CUET-UG results** in the State is the creation of

PNS NEW DELHI

 $N_{(NTA)}^{\text{ational Testing Agency}}$  announced the results for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET)-UG, paving the way to begin the undergraduate admission process which has been delayed this year. The NTA had on July 7

released the provisional answer keys of the CUET-UG 2024. A retest for more than 1,000 candidates whose grievances were found genuine by the agency was conducted on July 19. The delay in the CUET-UG results came amid a row over alleged irregularities in competitive exams, including in the NEET-UG and the UGC-NET. RANCHI I MONDAY I JULY 29, 2024

## Durand Cup: Jamshedpur FC defeats Assam Rifles

Mohammed's anan double Jamshedpur FC secure a comfortable 3-0 victory against the Assam Rifles Football Team in a Group D encounter of the 133rd IndianOil Durand Cup. The match, played at the JRD Tata Sports Complex, saw Sanan scoring in the 45+2 and 68' minutes, with Imran Khan adding a third goal in the 86th minute.

Jamshedpur FC Head Coach Khalid Jamil fielded an all-Indian starting lineup, featuring Len Doungel, Sanan Mohammed, Nikhil Barla, and Imran Khan leading the attack, supported by Mobashir Rahman and Emil Benny in midfield. Assam Rifles FT, under Head Coach Vikash Panthi, presented a strong 4-4-2 formation.



From the first whistle, Jamshedpur FC dominated possession, keeping the play largely within Assam Rifles'

home launched numerous attacks, but Assam Rifles' defense, playing deep inside their box, managed to keep the score goalless for most of the Goalkeeper Shobhan Dev Biswas made

several key saves, denying efforts from Doungel, Sanan, and Barla. Despite having ten shots on goal in the first

half, Jamshedpur struggled to break through. Assam Rifles had a few counterattacking opportunities but

failed to capitalize on them. The breakthrough came in the second minute of injury time, with Sanan seizing on a loose ball following a corner, firing it past the goalkeeper to give Jamshedpur the lead just before halftime.

Assam Rifles began the second half with renewed energy, but Jamshedpur quickly regained control. Doungel missed a clear chance in front of goal, and substitute Aniket Jadhay's header was saved by the goalkeeper. Sanan extended the lead in the 68th minute, finishing off a well-executed team move. Imran Khan

completing his brace. Jamshedpur continued to push for more goals, creating numerous chances. The

pulled a pass back into the

box, allowing Sanan to sidefoot the ball into the net, third and final goal came in the 86th minute when the Assam Rifles goalkeeper failed to collect a cross from Ashutosh Mehta, and the rebound fell to Imran Khan, who expertly finished it.

Jamshedpur FC comfortably saw out the remainder of the match, securing a strong start to their Durand Cup campaign and earning all three points.

East Bengal will begin their campaign tomorrow against the Indian Air Force Football Team in a Group A encounter Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, with kickoff scheduled for 7 PM.

All 43 matches of the 133rd IndianOil Durand Cup will be broadcast live on the Sony Sports Network (Sony Ten2 HD) and livestreamed on the SonyLiv OTT plat-

#### 200 people got tested in mega health checkup camp

PNS: LOHARDAGA

A mega health check-up camp was organized by Kalyan Hospital and Ayushman Mangalam Trust in Kalyan Hospital Basardih, Vikas Bharati run by Bishunpur. In the camp, mainly by Dr. S. Shankar Ram and Joint Replacement Surgeon, free drug test, X-ray and medical consultation of knee, hip and vein related diseases and medical consultation was provided to the villagers. In the health check-up camp, General Physician Dr. P.P. Singh Dr. SK Sinha Dental Doctor Aastha Singh, while examining and medically consulting the patient, gave him free medicine. On the spot, free Ayushman card and Aadhar card were made to the patients.



#### Social worker couple transform lives in Potka PNS: JAMSHEDPUR contributing to the economic

Social worker couple, Arbind and Barnali Chakraborty have become torchbearers for the primitive tribes of Potka Block, setting a remarkable example of social and economic upliftment through their tireless dedication. Their unique efforts have benefited hundreds of children, enhancing educa-tion and health facilities in the

Arbind Tiwari, a government teacher and the founder of Yuva, has achieved a significant milestone by enrolling four girls in Jamshedpur Women's University for graduation this year. His unwavering commitment to promoting education has been a beacon of hope for many in the area. Barnali Chakraborty, a dedicated social worker and the secretary of Yuva, has played a crucial role in ensuring these educational opportunities for girls, reinforcing the couple's shared vision of an educated community.

One of the couple's most significant contributions has preventing school dropouts. They have tirelessly worked to raise awareness among children about the importance of education and have inspired parents to pri-oritize their children's schooling. Their efforts have not only improved the educational prospects of many children but have also opened new



avenues for their future success. Arbind and Barnali have been instrumental in saving the lives of many children by ensuring timely medical intervention. Their dedication and prompt actions have helped numerous families in the region. The couple has worked around the clock to ensure that health services are accessible to those in need, making a substantial impact on the community's

R SHARMA: BOKARO

The Gua Ore Mines, part of the Jharkhand Group of Mines under SAIL-Bokaro

Steel Plant, has secured the

first prize in the Open Cast

Medium Categories Mines at the Mines Safety Awards

2024. The ceremony was held

at the Biswa Bangla

Convention Centre and organ-

ized by the All India Mines

Safety Association under the

Directorate General of Mines

Incharge of Bokaro Steel

Plant, accepted the award,

Bhowmick, Director Incharge

of Rourkela Steel Plant. Other

The 86th Foundation Day of

the Central Reserve Police

Force was celebrated by the

Garhwa. The program start-

ed with tree plantation, after

which the Commandant Nripendra Kumar Singh paid

tribute to the martyrs of the

force at the Shaheed Smarak

Battalion, ČRPF,

BK Tiwari, Director

Safety (DGMS).

accompanied by

well-being.

The couple's initiatives have also led to economic improvements for the primitive tribes of Potka Block. Barnali Chakraborty has trained women in kitchen gardening and animal husbandry, empowering them to become self-reliant and increasing their household incomes. These training programs have provided the women with valuable skills,

SAIL-BSL's Gua Ore Mines Wins First

Prize at Mines Safety Awards 2024

notable attendees included

Executive Director (Mines) J

Dasgupta, Executive Director

(Collieries) Anup Kumar, and Chief General Manager

Kamal Bhasker, along with senior officers from BSL,

Jharkhand Group of Mines,

(MSA) 2024, a national-level

The Mines Safety Awards

CRPF 172 battalion celebrates 86th foundation day

and the Collieries Division.

upliftment of their families.

The youth organization established by Arbind Tiwary and Barnali Chakraborty, Yuva Sanstha, has made significant strides in education, health, and economic improvement in Potka Block Through various schemes and programs, Yuva Sanstha has brought about positive changes in the social and economic conditions of the area. The organization's initiatives have not only supported the immediate needs of the community but have also laid the foundation for long-term development.

Thanks to the relentless efforts and dedication of Arbind Tiwary and Barnali Chakraborty, a new ray of hope has emerged in the lives of the primitive tribes of Potka Block. Their work stands as a testament to the profound impact that committed social workers can have on a community. With their inspiring example, it is expected that more positive changes will continue to unfold in the society, driven by the spirit of service and compassion demonstrated by this remarkable couple.

Their journey and achieve-ments underscore the transformative power of education, health, and economic initiatives, fostering a brighter and more hopeful future for the underprivileged communities they serve.

## Chanchal appointed state vice president of Akhil Ekta Udyog Vyapar Mandal

PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

In a significant development, Sardar Chanchal Bhatia has been appointed as the State Vice President of the Akhil Ekta Udyog Vyapar Mandal, a prominent national-level organization. This announcement was made under the direction of the National President, Mr. Sanjeev Jaiswal. Alongside Bhatia, Pawan Saav has been appointed as the State The appointment letter,

issued by National Secretary Rajkumar Jaiswal, highlights that Bhatia's new role is a recognition of his notable contributions to social interests and his efforts in addressing business-related issues in Jharkhand. Bhatia, a young Sikh leader from Iron City, is well-regarded for his active involvement with the Bharatiya Janata Party as well as various religious, social, and business organizations. He has earned a distinct reputation in the fields of creative and social work. Congratulatory messages

many others. quarters, including Inderjit Singh, General Secretary of Chanchal the Takht Shri Harmandir Ji appointment is seen as a tes-Patna Sahib Management Committee, the birthplace of

Nauiwan

tament to his dedication and hard work, and it is expected that he will continue to make significant contributions in his new role, furthering the objectives of the Akhil Ekta Udyog Vyapar Mandal and supporting the community in Jharkhand.

Kulwinder Singh, among

Bhatia's

#### MP and MLA iaugurate construction of PCC Road in Bokaro

have poured in from various

Guru Govind Singh Ji;

Gurdeep Singh Pappu of the Jharkhand Sikh Vikas

Manch; former head of the

Sabha, Sardar Satbir Šingh

Sikh

Central



Bokaro, 28th July 2024 -Dhanbad MP Dulu Mahto and Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan jointly inaugurated the construction of a one-kilometer PCC road in Dundi Bagh, Bokaro's main market, costing Rs. 84.66 lakh. The foundation stone was laid by breaking a coconut under the District Unbound Fund.

The existing road, built

around 40 years ago, had become dilapidated, causing significant commuting difficulties. Local shopkeepers and residents had long requested its reconstruction. The leaders noted that the new road would ease commuting challenges and fulfill a long-standing demand of the

MP Dulu Mahto expressed gratitude to the community, promising to uphold the trust

area's residents.

placed in the BJP and work towards comprehensive development. MLA Biranchi Narayan emphasized the BJP's commitment to addressing local issues and developing Bokaro.

The event saw attendance from several BJP leaders and local officials, including Manoj Singh, Dilip Srivastava, Leela Devi, Mukesh Rai, Sanjay Tyagi, Mantu Rai, and

#### **BJP leaders hail** appointment of Gangwar as Jharkhand new Guv



PNS: LOHARDAGA

President Draupadi Murmu has appointed governors of many states including Jharkhand. In this sequence, Santosh Kumar Gangwar has been appointed as the new Governor of Jharkhand. His Excellency Governor C.P. The Bharatiya Janata Party organization congratulated Radhakrishnan on his appointment as the new Governor of Maharashtra. The new His Excellency Governor of Jharkhand, Santosh Kumar Gangwar has been an MP for eight consecutive terms in the past. He has discharged many responsibilities as a Union Minister in the government and in the organi-

Jharkhand state will get

full benefit of his experiences. Among those who congratulated were ST Morcha National President Sameer Oraon, former MP Sudarshan Bhagat, District President Manir Oraon, former MLA Sadhnu Bhagat, Legislative Councilor Praveen Singh, former MLA Ramesh Oraon, State Working Committee member Om Prakash Singh, former Mati Kala Board President Srichand. Prajapati, former president Brij Bihari Prasad, Rajkishore Mahato, Madan Mohan Pathak, Rakesh Prasad, Rajmohan Ram, Tribal Morcha State General Secretary Bindeshwar State Minister Oraon, Ajatshatru, Bajrang Oraon, Kumar Tinku, Naveen Kumar Nalin, Neerai Bhagat, Samela Surajmohan Sahu.

Mahato, Harshanath. Rajkumar Verma Singh Anil Balkrishna Jaganandan Oraon, Puranic, Chedi Ram, Saroj Prajapati, Vimalkant Singh, Baitha, Bharti Bakhala, Sinha, Pashupati Nath Paras, Sajal Kalavati Devi, Kumar, Vishwajit Shahdev, Rajesh Mahato, Ramotar Verman, Triveni Das, Ashok Kumar, Mahato, Verma, Umesh Kanjakar, Suraj Dasondhi, Amresh Bharti, Sudama Prasad,

Yadunandan Tiwari and

other workers

at the Corps Headquarters, Garhwa. After this, a Sainik Sammelan was organized at 172nd Corps Headquarters, in which Commandant Nripendra Kumar Singh honored the Vivek Soni, Mukesh Sahu, valor, sacrifice and devotion Lakhan Oraon, Naveen to duty of the CRPF martyrs. Sahu, Bharat Kisan, Manish He extended warm greetings Shikhar, Sanjay Chaudhary, of the Foundation Day to the Jitendra Mahato, Prakash Nayak. , Balmiki Kumar, force personnel and their families, reminding them of the glorious history of the Vivek Chauhan, Shankar Prajapati, Krishna Modi,

lives. In their honor, all the police forces of India celebrate 'Police Smriti Diwas' on 21 October every year. He also mentioned the bravery of a CRPF company in the Rann of Kutch, which not

also captured

initiative, aims to promote

best practices and enhance

safety in mining operations

across India. The awards rec-

ognize excellence in mine

safety practices in the Coal,

Metal, and Oil & Gas mining

sectors, encouraging a cul-ture of continuous improve-

ment and vigilance in mine

gent of CRPF fought the Chinese soldiers, in which 10 personnel sacrificed their only stopped an artillerymounted Pakistani brigade

Pakistani soldiers.

Also, the heroic tale of foiling the terrorist attack on Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Ayodhya and Parliament House was also narrated.

On this occasion, Deputy Commandant Naval Kishore garlanded the statue of martyr Sepoy/GD Ashish Kumar Tiwari of CRPF of Garhwa district in the school campus his village Garnaha

Inspector/GD (Tolra). Srinivas Dubey garlanded the statue of martyr Sepoy/GD Ashish Kumar Shaurya Chakra (posthumous) in the school campus

of village Chechariya (Atola). Sweets were distributed after the Sainik Sammelan. In the evening, a volleyball match was organized at Headquarters 172 Battalion and a 'Bada Khana' was



**JAMSHEDPUR: Indian Armed forces** performing various arts during the inaugural ceremony and the 1st match of DURAND CUP (Football) between Jamshedpur FC vs Assam Rifles FT on the eve of Kargil Vijay Diwas at JRD Tata Sports Complex in the steel city Jamshedpur, Jharkhand on Sunday, July 28, 2024. Sanjib Kumar Dutta

Singh told how on 21

October 1959, a small contin-

## Santosh Gangwar is new Jharkhand Governor

antosh Kumar Gangwar will be the new Governor of Jharkhand. The current Governor CP Radhakrishnan has been made the Governor of

Maharashtra. Draupadi President Murmu on Saturday night appointed new governors in half a dozen states includ-ing Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. After about 17 months, Jharkhand has again got a new governor. Santosh Gangwar of Jharkhand has been Jharkhand has appointed as the new Governor of Jharkhand.

Santosh Gangwar, the



Jharkhand, has been an MP 8 times. Gangwar was active in BJP for a long the time. He has also been an of MP from Bareilly Lok Sabha seat. He won 6 times in a row from 1989 to 2009. He had to face defeat in 2009. He did not get a ticket in the Lok Sabha elections 2024.

Born on November 1, 1948 in Bareilly, Santosh Gangwar has received education from Agra University and Rohilkhand University of Uttar Pradesh. He is currently the chairman of the Committee on Public Enterprises. Earlier, he was the Minister of State with independent charge of the Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Labor and Employment in the Central Government.

Draupadi President Murmu has appointed new governors of several states including Maharashtra, Rajasthan,

Telangana, Jharkhand and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry. Rashtrapati issued Bhavan said that the President has accepted the resignation of Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator Banwari Lal Purohit. Gulab Chand Kataria, who is currently

Sikkim Governor Sikkim Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya will now be the new Governor of Assam. He has also been given additional charge of Manipur. Om Prakash Mathur has been appointed as the new Governor of Sikkim. C.P. Radhakrishnan will be the Governor

the Governor of Assam, has

been appointed in his place.

Maharashtra. He is current-Jharkhand. He also has charge additional Telangana.

Jishnu Dev Verma has been appointed as the new Governor of Telangana. Haribhau Kishanrao Bagde Haribhau Kishanrao Bagde has been appointed as the Governor of Rajasthan, Raman Deka as the Governor of Chhattisgarh and C.H. Vijayshankar has been appointed as the Governor of Meghalaya. Apart from this, K. Kailashnath has been appointed as the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry. The release states that all the appointments will be the appointments will be effective from the date they take charge.

#### Jamshedpur's climate ideal for roses, experts share at workshop

PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

In anticipation of the forthcoming 41st All India Rose Convention cum Rose Show and the 34th Annual Flower Show, the Horticultural Society Jamshedpur organised a one-day workshop on "Rose Disease and Nutrient Management" at the SNTI Auditorium. The event saw participation from approximately 150 individuals from various organizations and educational institutions, including Kolhan University and other colleges. Attendees hailed from different states, such as Odisha (Cuttack, Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar), West Bengal (Kolkata, Midnapur), and Jharkhand (Ranchi, Noamundi).

The workshop began with the ceremonial lamp lighting by the Chief Guest, Aatrayee Syanyal, Vice President, HRM, Tata Steel. Sumita Nupur, President of the Horticultural Society Jamshedpur, delivered a warm welcome address, highlighting the significance of the workshop in the lead-up to the prestigious rose and flower

In her address, Syanyal emphasized the therapeutic benefits of gardening, particularly in the context of today's screen-dominated lifestyles. She noted that gardening offers a stress free life and peace of mind. Syanyal also pointed out that roses, which require heavy feeding and care, are as prevalent in European countries as marigolds and bougainvillea are in India.

PNS: RANCHI spreading poison is continuously happening in the society. The result of this was that J harkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), on Sunday, attacked BJP MP Nishikant BJP's Godda MP Nishikant gave a statement in the Dubey on his statement of Parliament. This is related to making Santhal Paragana a Bangladesh infiltrators. The Union Territory.

Addressing press meet
JMM Spokesperson Supriyo

Bhattacharya said that BJP has laid the foundation of divisive politics in the country and its result is going to be very serious. "We want to take you back a little. When BJP started its campaign for the Vidhan Sabha elections here, Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was made the election In-Charge. Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma was made the Co-In-Charge. Since the day he entered the election campaign, the poison of religion is being spread in Jharkhand. This work of

MP said that Jharkhand's Santhal Pargana division, Bihar's Koshi division and Bengal's Malda and some

other parts should be sepa-

rated and made a Union

JMM targets Nishikant for his Union Territory demand

Territory," he added. Bhattacharya said that this is not an ordinary statement and this is not a sudden statement. "This is a statement given as part of a wellplanned conspiracy. This is BJP's long-term thinking to Jharkhand, disintegrate Bihar and West Bengal. Elections are to be held in Jharkhand this Elections are to be held in Bihar in 2025. Also, elections

Yellow alert for heavy

are to be held in West Bengal in 2026. Nishikant's statement should be seen in this context," he added.

The party Spokesperson said that on August 5, 2019, Jammu and Kashmir was disintegrated, which was an integral part of India's federal structure. "The State status was taken away. This State was divided into two parts. One is the area of Ladakh and the other is the area of Jammu that is ithe valley. A conspiracy is being hatched to divide three states along with Jharkhand in the same way. The division of Jammu and Kashmir will complete five years on August 5. But assembly elections have not been held there," he added.

"On July 25, BJP MP Nishikant said in Parliament, 'Make Malda, Murshidabad, Araria, Sahibganj, Kishanganj, Katihar union territories or else Hindus will be displaced. Implement NRC. Mamta Banerjee's police and people from Malda-Murshidabad are coming to our place and driving away Hindus.' This statement of the MP is being opposed on a large scale. Yesterday, the JMM Ranchi District Committee burnt the effigy of MP Nishikant Dubey at Firavalal Chowk in Ranchi," said Bhattacharya.

#### Authorities mobilise to tackle potential flood threats, vigil on rising water level

PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

In light of potential flooding dangers in areas prone to Swarnarekha and Kharkai rivers, a crucial meeting was convened under the chair-manship of District Magistrate cum Deputy Commissioner Mittal. The meeting focused on disaster preparedness and coordinated response strategies to mitigate flood

During the review, Mittal directed officials to establish **Incident Command Centers** in identified Panchayat and Municipal Council areas. He emphasized making helpline numbers public, ensuring regular cleanliness, distributing essential medicines and rations, providing tankers for drinking water, and setting up alternative

**CCL** wins 2 awards

CCL won two awards at the

Mine Safety Awards 2024 cer-

emony held in Kolkata on

Limited under the aegis of

Directorate General of Mine

Safety (DGMS), Sayal D

Opencast Mine was awarded

the first prize in the small

opencast mine category and Ashok Opencast Mine was

awarded the second prize in

the medium opencast mine.

For the first time in the histo-

ry of the award, participants

from coal, metal and oil min-

ing companies participated

Director General of Mine Safety Prabhat Kumar was

present as the chief guest on

the occasion, while Chairman

of Coal India Limited PM

Prasad presided over the

DGMS, Coal India Limited and

other companies successfully

demonstrated the importance

of maintaining high safety

standards in mines

The collective efforts of

together.

function.

organized by

In this historic event

Coal India

in mine safety

arrangements for electricity. Emergency service departments were instructed to deploy personnel in alert mode 24x7 and equip them with essential life-saving

medicines and facilities. Mittal also stressed the importance of better coordination between civil society, local public representatives, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and police-administrative

team. To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, he directed regular cleaning, bleaching, and spraying of DDT powder in flood-affected areas. In case of a disaster, departments were instructed to use social media and traditional mike announcements to quickly disseminate information and

alerts to the public. Mechanical departments were tasked with regularly

updating the water levels of Swarnarekha and Kharkai rivers. Coordination with engineers from Chandil Dam in Saraikela Kharsawan and the dam in Mayurbhanj, Odisha, regarding water release was also emphasized. Additionally, steps were mandated for cleaning the garbage at Swarnarekha Barrage. Mechanical departments were instructed to regularly update the water level of Swarnarekha and Kharkai rivers, and to coordinate with the engineers of Chandil Dam located in Saraikela Kharsawan and the dam located in Mayurbhanj of neighboring state Odisha regarding the release of water from the dams. Also, instructions were given to take appropriate steps for cleaning the garbage of

Subarnarekha Barrage

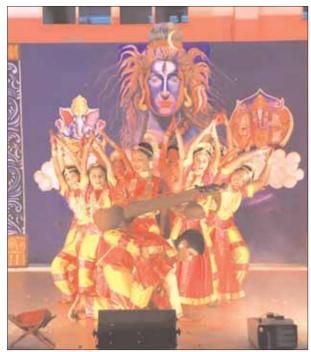
Cultural extravaganza AVIRBHAV 2024 concludes at DPS CHAS

PNS: BOKARO

three-day cultural extravaganza "Avirbhav" concluded on a grand note at Delhi Public School (DPS) Chas, with Jamuna and Sutlei Houses emerging as the winning squads from the primary and secondary wings, respec-

Held at the Bharat Muni Assembly Arena, the event showcased an amalgamation of emotion, artistic movement, and cohesive storytelling with rhythm, captivataudience. Distinguished guests included Dr. Hemlata S. Mohan, Pro-Vice Chairman Mr. Officiating Muralidharan, Principal Deepali Bhuskute. and Headmistress Sudeshna Sinha. Notably specialist judges for the event included Privanka Sharma from DAV Bokaro, Ankita Chakraborty, and Chandrima Ray.

The theme, classical Hindustani and folk-dance classical forms, promoted cultural inheritance and respect for traditions. Young artists from the Primary Wing presented folk dances from Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal. The Secondary Wing troupe performed Durga Stuti, Saraswati Stuti, Ganesh Vandana, and Shiv Stuti. Sutlej House (Secondary Wing) and Jamuna House



(Primary Wing) won the top while Ganga and Chenab Houses secured second place. Jamuna House (Secondary Wing) and Sutlej House (Primary Wing) took third place.

Dr. Hemlata S. Mohan emphasized the importance of cultural pride through dance, reminding students that competitions are about creating values and ideas. Pro-Vice Chairman N. Muralidharan, Headmistress Sudeshna Sinha, and other dignitaries praised the students' dedication and performances.

"Avirbhav" celebrated the diverse talents of students and fostered a deep appreciation for culture and art forms. inspiring young minds to pursue excellence. The school community looks forward to more events that celebrate India's vibrant cultural landscape.

# rain in next two days

Meteorological Department has predicted heavy rains in 10 districts of the state on July 30 and in 14 districts of the state on July 31. A yellow alert has been issued regarding this. Actually, low pressure is forming in the Bay of Bengal. The effect of which Jharkhand.

Meteorological Department says that the widespread effect of this low pressure is going to be seen



PNS: RANCHI

According Meteorological Department, there will be heavy rains in 10 districts of the state on July 30 and in 14 districts of the state on July 31. A yellow alert has been issued regard-Light to moderate rains

have been said in many parts of the state even today whereas heavy rains are forecast in the south and central parts of the state on July 30. On July 31, heavy rains are likely at some

and northeastern parts of the state. The capital Ranchi and its surrounding areas will remain generally cloudy till August 2. There may be light rainfall. The maximum temrainfall. The maximum temperature may remain 29 degrees and the minimum temperature may remain 24

Monsoon has become active in almost all the districts of Jharkhand. Due to which it has been raining intermittently every day for the last one week.

## BJP leaders listen PM 'Mann Ki Baat' at

PNS: RANCHI

The 112th episode of Mann Ki Baat program addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded today. The famous program was heard by BJP workers at the booth level. Party MPs, MLAs, state officials, district, division, booth officials and workers listened to the program in their respective areas.

State President and former Minister



Marandi, State Organization General Secretary Karmveer Singh along with General Secretary and MP Aditya Sahu, Manoj Singh, State Vice President Balmukund Sahay, Vikas Pritam, MLA Viranchi Narayan, Narayan Das listened to the workers' program in the state office.

State President and former

Minister Babulal Marandi said that listening to Mann Ki Baat gives the experience of Bharat Darshan. This address of the Prime Minister introduces the people of the country to the nature, culture, development and heritage of India.

He said that this program is beneficial for all sections. It also introduces the youth and children to the great heritage of India and the new dimen-

sions of progress. Leader of Opposition Amar Kumar Bauri said that Mann Ki Baat program has become the talk of the people. He said that it has patriotism, national power, tradition and progress. He said that this address of the Prime Minister connects the people.

#### Police arrested smuggler with opium in Ranchi

Police arrested a smuggler with opium from Khadgarha bus stand in Ranchi. Police got this success in the raid conducted by SSP's QRT (Quick response team) team under the leadership of

Police has told in this regard that SSP's QRT team has arrested a smuggler with opium from Khadgarha bus stand located in Lower Bazar police station area of the capital Ranchi.

The smuggler caught was trying to take the consignment of opium to Chauparan. However, when the police got a tip-off about this, they raided the bus stand and caught the smuggler. Opium has also been recovered. At present, the police is interrogating the smuggler. Police has not given any information about the cost of the recovered opium.



#### Tagore Hill is now home to Rare Species of Butterflies that the college administra-

**DIVYA MODI: RANCHI** 

F or the first time, a rare species of butterflies called Polyura Agrarius commonly called Anomalous Nawab, have been spotted at the historical Tagore Hill in Ranchi. This variety of butterfly

was discovered by the students Debasish Mahto and John Osga of the session 2021-23 of the Entomology specialisation, PG Department of Zoology, St Xavier's College as a part of their dissertation work on March 25, 2023 under the supervision of Dr Manoj Kumar. The research paper of this discovery has been published in the July issue of Zoo's Print, a scientific research journal available

The species found in Ranchi have not been reported much about and it has not yet received the International Union for



Conservation of Nature (IUCN) category. Butterflies are ecologically important indicators in terms of floralfaunal diversity, habitual quality, pollution indication and human- made disturbances. Their numbers are reducing in the densely populated Ranchi city. Thus spotting it here is an important finding," said Kumar.

This breed of butterfly has earlier been recorded to be sighted in the states of West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. It is known to be found in deep forests with rocky hilly areas. The males of this fast- flying butterfly species are highly territorial and exhibit patrolling, fighting and hill topping behaviour.
"As a part of our disser-





Urban Areas of Ranchi we found a wide variety of butterflies. Finding the Polyura Agrarius in Jharkhand will also fill the distributional gap between Chhattisgarh and West Bengal and also expand its range which will be helpful in further studies of the species and understanding its other parameters. It was spotted perch-

ing on the leaf of an Indian date tree," informed Mahto. Head of the Department

of Zoology Dr Bharti Singh Raipat said, "The entomolo-gy section of the PG Department of Zoology is continuously working on butterfly diversity and this finding is the result of the hard work and dedication of the students."

Raipat further stated



tion including Principal Dr Fr Nabor Lakra, Vice Principals Dr Fr Pradeep Robert Kujur and Dr Fr Ajay Minz have continuously supported the research work and as a result the entomology section has published such good research articles in various scientific journals. Earlier, Deepshikha

Sahu, a student of the session 2022-2024 also discovered a rare Papilio Polymnestor butterfly for the first time from the Dhodri Toli area of Gumla during a survey. This research paper was published in the June 2024 issue of the research journal named EJPMR along with its morphological details. It is believed that the Papilio Polymnestor is a swallowtail butterfly species found only in parts of South India and Sri Lanka.

# **BJP top brass, CMs** deliberate on governance



The Chief Ministers of BJP-I ruled states made presentations on various development schemes going on in their states as the party's top brass, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, held deliberations with them over governance issues for a second consecutive day on Sunday.

Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah and J P Nadda, who is also the National President of the party, were part of the meeting. The two-day 'mukhyamantri parishad' began on Saturday.

In his remarks, Modi emphasised the need to ensure saturation coverage of welfare schemes going on in the BJPruled states, saying they should be seen as an example of good governance.

He, sources said, noted the efforts of the BJP-run Governments to help different sections of society, especially the poor."Our Party is working tirelessly to further good governance and fulfil the aspirations of the people," PM shared on social media.

The "mukhyamantri parishad" organised by the BJP at regular intervals is aimed at reviewing key schemes in States, following the best governance practices and the delivery of Central Government welfare initiatives.

Chief ministers Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh), Himanta Biswa Sarma (Assam), Bhajanlal Sharma (Rajasthan) and Mohan Charan Majhi (Odisha) were among the leaders who attended the meeting. The Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Manipur and Chhattisgarh were also part of the delibera-

The leaders at times also take stock of the political situation. The meeting comes in the wake of the presentation of the Union Budget, with the opposition targeting the Government for allegedly ignoring other states at the expense of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh.

It is also the first meeting following the Lok Sabha polls in which the BJP's performance was underwhelming as the party lost its majority in the Lower House of Parliament. Party leaders, though, added that governance issues are at the centre of the discussions at the meeting. The last such meeting was held in February. Khadi creating jobs, says Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that Khadi Gramodyog's business has crossed ₹ 1.5 lakh crore for the first time and asserted that the rising sales of Khadi and handloom were creating new job opportunities in large numbers

In his Mann Ki Baat monthly radio broadcast, Modi said many people who would not be uśing Khadi products earlier now wear them with great

The Khadi Gramodyog's business has crossed ₹ 1.5 lakh crore for the first time. Do you know how much sales of Khadi have gone up '400 per

The rising sales of Khadi and handloom are creating new job opportunities in large numbers," he said.

Mostly women are associated with this industry so they are benefitting the most, he

"You must be having different types of clothes and till now if you have not bought khadi clothes then start buying them," Modi said.

With the start of the Paris Olympics, the prime minister said the games give our athletes a chance to hoist the national flag at the international level. He urged people to encourage them and 'Cheer for Bharat' During the broadcast, he also

interacted with Indian stu-



dents who performed very well in the recently held Mathematics olympiad.

Olympics took place in the world of mathe-

"A few days

matics also: the International Mathematics Olympiad. Indian students have performed very well in this Olympiad. Our team won four gold medals and one silver medal," Modi said.

The prime minister also hailed the inclusion of the Moidams' in Assam in the UNESCO world heritage list and said it is a matter of immense joy for every Indian. He also recalled unveiling the tallest statue of the great Ahom warrior Lachit Borphukan, a symbol of indomitable courage and

#### Locals' efforts to save tigers lauded

ARCHANA JYOTI

 $F^{
m rom\ Rajasthan's\ 'Kulhadi}_{
m Band\ Panchayat'\ in}$ Ranthambore tiger reserve to Maharashtra's eco-tourism initiatives by tribals in Maharashtra's Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve and Andhra Pradesh's diligent 'Chenchu' tribe to 'Baagh Mitr Karykram' in Pilibhit', various communities across India are playing crucial role in safeguarding India's big cats. India has 70 percent of the global tiger population. On the eve

Mann Ki Baat World Tiger observed on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday in his 'Maan

Ki Baat' made special mention of these local initiatives, stating that "all of them play a crucial role in protecting the country's magnificent creatures. India is seeing positive impacts from these commu-

nity-driven efforts, he said, adding that they are not only inspiring but also crucial for the preservation of our rich wildlife heritage. "Let us applaud and support

these exemplary initiatives," the Prime Minister said.

"In India, Tigers have been an noted the strides made by the integral part of our culture. We all have grown up listening to stories of incidents related to tigers. In the villages around forests, everyone knows how to live in harmony with the tiger. In our country, there are many villages where there is no conflict between humans and



tigers. But where such a situation arises, unprecedented efforts are being made for the protection of tigers there as well.Modi praised the "Kulhadi Band Panchayat" in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve for its pledge that they will not go to the forest with axes and will not cut trees. Due to this one decision, the forests here are becoming green once again, and a better environment is

being created for the tigers, he The Prime Minister also Gond and Mana tribes in Maharashtra, whose reduced forest dependency has supported the tiger population's growth in Tadoba.In Andhra Pradesh.

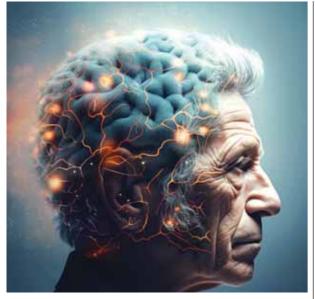
"You will also be surprised at the efforts of the 'Chenchu' tribe living on the Nallamalai

hills in Andhra Pradesh. As Tiger Trackers, they have gathered every bit of information on the movement of wild animals in the forest. Along with that, they also keep monitoring illegal activities in the area.

'Similarly, the 'Chenchu' tribe's role as Tiger Trackers is crucial for monitoring wildlife and preventing illegal activities while the 'Baagh Mitr Karykram' in Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh, exemplifies another successful community initiative by training locals as 'Tiger Friends' to mitigate human-tiger conflicts," Modi said.

These efforts are not isolated. "Many such efforts are underway in different parts of the country.

He also exhorted the countrymen to participate in the 'Ék Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, which recently saw the planting of over 2 lakh saplings in Indore, promoting environment and honoring



## High fat in belly or arms linked to higher risk of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

you have high levels of If you nave inglification body fat, particularly in the belly or arms, it's important to be aware that this may increase your risk of developing neurological progressive conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases (PD). Research suggests that excess fat in these areas can have adverse effects on neurological health, potentially con-tributing to the development of these conditions.

The study's findings are particularly significant for India, where the combination of increasing life expectancy, younger age of disease onset, and a growing population with obesity creates a unique set of challenges.

Effective preventive measures and healthcare strategies tailored to the Indian context are essential for mitigating the impact of these neurodegenerative conditions, according to the experts here.

Conversely, as per the study, individuals who exhibited high levels of muscle strength were less likely to develop these neurodegenerative diseases. This suggests that greater muscle strength might offer protective benefits against the onset of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, according to a study published in Neurology, the medical journal of the American

Academy of Neurology. Managing fat levels through lifestyle changes and medical interventions might be crucial in reducing disease risk, said the study involving 412,691 people with an average age of 56 who were followed for an average of nine years.

At the beginning of the study, researchers assessed participants' body composition

through measurements of waist and hip circumference, grip strength, bone density,

and fat and lean mass. Over the study period, 8,224 individuals developed neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's, other forms of dementia, and Parkinson's disease.

The findings revealed that male participants with high levels of belly fat developed neurodegenerative diseases at a rate of 3.38 per 1,000 person-years, compared to 1.82 cases per 1,000 person-years in those with lower levels of belly fat.

Female participants with high levels of belly fat had rates of 2.55 per 1,000 person-years, versus 1.39 for those with lower levels.

After adjusting for factors such as high blood pressure, smoking, alcohol consumption, and diabetes, the researchers found that individuals with high levels of belly fat were 13 per cent more likely to develop these diseases compared to those with lower levels, the study adding that those with high muscle strength were 26 per cent less likely to develop the diseases than those with low levels of strength.Study author Huan Song of Sichuan University in Chengdu, China said, "the study highlights the potential to lessen people's risk of developing these diseases by improving their body composition.

Targeted interventions to reduce trunk and arm fat, combined with efforts to promote healthy muscle development, may offer more effective protection against neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's than general weight control

## Centre mulls making floodplain zoning law must for States to get funds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With only four States complying despite repeated reminders, the Centre is contemplating making it mandatory for States to enact floodplain zoning legislation if they want to access central flood management funds, officials have said. The four States that have enact-

ed such legislations are: Rajasthan, ?Manipur, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and the erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir. A senior official said the

Ministry of Jal Shakti has been in continuous communication with State Governments, urging them to notify the Flood Plain Zoning Act and demarcate flood zones, Recently, the updated the Model Act, and the Ministry plans to initiate another round of consultations with States, the official

The official said the Ministry has proposed making the enactment of the Flood Plain Zoning Act a prerequisite for States to access funds under the Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP). We are going for a Cabinet approval for the next phase of the Flood Management and Border Areas Programme.

For that, now the condition for any State to access resources under the FMBAP will be that the state must have enacted the Flood Plain Zoning Act.

So, you will not get money if you have not enacted the Flood Plain Zoning Act," the official said. The official said the Ministry has made several other efforts to address these



"In May 2022, the Secretary of

the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation wrote to State Chief Secretaries, urging them to enact appropriate legislation.

the Secretary emphasised the importance of flood plain zoning for comprehensive flood management and minimising flood damage," the official added."The Ministry of Jal Shakti has been persistently urging States to take action. However, the progress remains limited to a few States. Water management, including flood management, is a State Subject under the Constitution. States need to take proactive measures in this regard," another official said.

The legislation provided guidelines for flood zoning authorities, surveys, delineation of flood plain areas, notification of flood plain limits, restrictions on flood plain use, and provisions for compensation and removal of obstructions. Despite these comprehensive guidelines, many States are yet to take significant steps towards

legislation and enforcement. the official said.

The official said even the States that have enforced the law are yet to fully implement it. "Manipur enacted flood plain zoning legislation in 1978, but

the demarcation of flood zones

Rajasthan also enacted legislation in the state; however, enforcement thereof is yet to be done," the official said.

Uttarakhand is one state which has enacted the law as well as undertaken some groundwork by demarcating different seg-ments where development will take place only in regulated matter or will not take place at

"So, this way they have done. Uttarakhand is the only state. Then, based on some an NGT (National Green Tribunal) order, even Uttar Pradesh has done some demarcation on the flood plains," the official said. Some States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have informed about difficulties in implementation of such a law due to large-flood affected areas and other States have yet not taken any action for enactment of a legislation, the official said.

## Cong accuses Centre of bias in flood relief funds allocation

PNS NEW DELHI

Congress on Sunday accused the Central Government of practising "double standards" in allocating funds to flood-afflicted States, alleging that it was exacting "revenge" on the peo-ple of Himachal Pradesh for not voting for the BJP in the Assembly elections.

Congress General Secretary (In-charge, Communications) Ramesh said, Jairam Yesterday, the self-anointed non-biological Prime Minister said that Viksit Bharat depends on Viksit states. Wow, such a profundity.

money where his mouth is!" After the disastrous floods of 2023, the Government of Himachal Pradesh repeatedly demanded that the Union Government declare the floods a National calamity'? a plea which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman repeatedly rejected," Ramesh said in a post on X.

'Now, in her Budget Speech, when allocating funds for irrigation and flood mitigation, the Finance Minister has provided a vivid illustration of the double standards at work in the non-biological PM's Government," he claimed. "Relevant extracts from this section for each flood-afflictstate: Bihar: 'Government'|will provide financial support for projects with estimated cost of ₹ 11,500

crores'. Assam: 'We will provide assistance to

Assam for flood management and related projects. Uttarakhand:

'We will provide assistance to the state.' Sikkim: 'Our Government will provide assistance to the state. Himachal Pradesh: 'Our Government will provide assistance to the state through multilateral development assistance," he said.
Basically, what the finance

minister has said is that BJPruled states will get financial assistance in the form of grants but when it comes to the Congress-governed Himachal Pradesh, the assistance will be "arranged through multilateri.E., loans that it will have to

repay, Ramesh said. Himachal Pradesh, which is historically a fiscally challenged state due to its remote geography and challenging terrain, will be burdened with more loans, he said.

This is nothing but revenge on the people who did not vote for the BJP in Assembly elections, Ramesh said.

In his address to the ninth Governing Council meeting of the NITI Aayog on Saturday, Modi observed that the vision of Viksit Bharat can be realised through Viksit States, and that the aspiration of Viksit Bharat should reach the grassroot level i.E to each district, block, and village.

"For this, each state and district should create a vision for 2047 so as to realise Viksit Bharat @ 2047," he had said.



Bhojpuri PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bhojpuri superstar and BJP MP Ravi Kishan has introduced a Private Member Bill in Lok Sabha to include Bhojpuri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution so that it can be accorded the status of an official language. Kishan, who introduced The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2024, on Friday, said he wants to underline that the Bhojpuri language is not about crass songs but has a rich cultural history and lit-

understand this language. It is

being run in this language and lakhs are getting employment. The music industry is also very big," the BJP MP from Gorakhpur said. This Bill is about promoting Bhojpuri literature which is very rich, he said."People will take the language seriously. The language is not about crass songs. The language is so rich, it also has literature," Kishan said. The literature of Bhojpuri needs to be popularised, the actor-cumpolitician said. "I want to pay back to my community. This language is my identity.

In its statement of objects and reasons, the bill notes that the Bhojpuri language which originated in the Gangetic plains of India is a very old and rich language having its origin in the Sanskrit language. Bhojpuri is the mother tongue

of a large number of people residing in Uttar Pradesh, Western Bihar, Jharkhand and some parts of Madhya Pradesh as well as in several other countries, it further notes. In Mauritius, this language is

spoken by a large number of people and it is estimated that around 140 million people speak Bhojpuri, the bill's note on objective states. The bill notes that Bhojpuri films are very popular in the country and abroad and have a deep impact on the Hindi film industry.

## Conclave to advance development of world's largest museum

PNS NEW DELHI

ome next-week and curators, muse-Cum administrators, and domain experts from across the world will congregate at a three-day conclave from August 1-3 in the national Capital with an aim to advance the development of the proposed 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum' which is set to be the largest museum in the world.

The conclave will be held at the Bharat Mandapam, currently the venue for the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, being held for the first time in India. 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum' will span 154,000 square metres across the North and South Blocks in Delhi. It will feature eight thematic segments covering over 5,000 years of Indian history. Union Minister of Culture and Tourism,

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, will address the gathering.
"The event will provide a platform for

states to present their collections and contribute to the museum's narrative, reflecting India's rich cultural heritage. It will include master classes and work-



shops led by both Indian and international experts on topics like museum architecture, conservation practices, collections management, and curation," said an official from the Union Culture Ministry. Attendees will benefit from hands-on training and networking opportunities aimed at enhancing skills in museum management and administration. The Ministry of Culture will also provide information on avail-

level museum development, including the updated Museum Grant Scheme and the Scheme for Promotion of Culture of Science, the official added. This conclave is set to play a crucial role in shaping the future of India's museum landscape and ensuring that the 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum' meets global best practices in showcasing India's rich cultural heritage.

and the central government in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for the 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum' that aims to exemplify global best practices," the official said. To foster a comprehensive understanding of India's artefact wealth for the 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum', the

"This three-day gathering aims to fos-

ter collaboration among state museums

states have been invited to provide detailed insights into their respective state's collections at the forthcoming state conclave," he said. Master classes will also be held with

experts from India and abroad spanning various topics such as the architecture and materiality of the North and South Block, global best practices in conservation, fine arts handling, collections management, curation and museum management, the official said. Additionally, the Ministry will present

an overview of available funding schemes, including the recently updated Museum Grant Scheme and the Scheme for Promotion of Culture of Science, to support state-level museum development initiatives.

erature which needs to be promoted. "So many people speak and our mother tongue. I wanted to promote this lan-guage as a film industry is also



## Bring back Netaji's remains | Valmiki scam: Is it Nyay to siphon SC/ST money, asks FM from Japan, Modi urged

egendary freedom fighter Legendary recome Subhas Chandra Bose's Chandra grandnephew Kumar Bose on Sunday appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bring back the "mortal remains of Netaji" from Japan's Renkoji temple by August 18.

He also said a final statement should come from the central government on the matter so that "false narratives" about Netaji are laid to rest.

Stating that the NDA-led government took initiative to declassify files related to the freedom fighter, Bose said after the release of all the "10 inquiries — national and international", it is evident that "Netaji perished on August 18, 1945" in an air crash in Taiwan.

"It is therefore imperative that a final statement is made from the Government of India so that false narratives about the liberator of India are laid to rest." Bose wrote in a letter to Modi on Sunday.

"My humble appeal to you is to bring back the mortal remains of Netaji from Renkoji to India by August 18, 2024," he said.

In an interview to PTI Videos, Bose, also a former vice president of the West Bengal BIP, said the declassification process has exposed secret files and "which documents, conclusively establish that Netaji died in this air crash

on August 18, 1945" He said that Netaji wanted to to India after Independence, but could not as he died in the air crash.

"It is highly insulting that Netaji's remains have been kept at the Renkoji temple," Bose said.



"We have been writing to the prime minister for the last three-and-a-half years, that in order to honour the liberator of India, his remains must touch Indian soil," he

Bose maintained that Netaji's daughter Anita Bose Pfaff wants to perform his last rites as per the Hindu tradition. 'I think the Government of

India must respond. If they feel that these remains are not of Netaji, then maintenance should not be provided to keep those at Renkoji. A statement is expected from the prime minister regarding this," he said in the interview. Bose said a few years ago, his family members had visited the Renkoji temple and met the high priest there, who stated that Netaji fought for the freedom of India and as such, his remains should be

taken to India. Netaji's grandnephew said the icon's remains should be brought to Delhi and a memorial built to pay homage to the leader.

"It is very unfortunate that no response has come from the government or the prime minister," Bose said

In his letter to Modi, Bose

said the circumstances of

Netaji's death from an air

crash while leaving Taiwan in

a Japanese military aircraft in the aftermath of Japan's

surrender in August 1945,

perhaps with a plan to make

his way to the Soviet Union to

continue the struggle, was

seen by many as just another

He claimed that his brother

Sarat Chandra Bose and widow Emilie, however, did

not have any definite knowledge of Netaji being

There is no doubt of the genuine disbelief among

some that Netaji perished in

the manner described in a

accounts from multiple

'After all, here was a man

who had once given the slip to the British and undertook

an arduous trek from Calcutta through north India

to Afghanistan, eventually reaching Berlin by air through Moscow. Only a few

years later in the midst of a

raging world war, he survived

an even more perilous voyage

by submarine from Germany

to South East Asia. How

could such a man die!" he

The... Justice Mukherjee

Commission of Inquiry 2005

finding that Netaji did not die

in the said air crash was

found to be based on

fundamental errors and the

appearance of Netaji

said in the letter.

contemporary

of

sources, said Bose.

host

alive after August 18, 1945.

ruse to escape his enemies.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Sitharaman lashed out at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asking him whether it was 'Nyay' (justice) to siphon off money belonging to the tribal Valmiki community. Referring to the Rs 187 crore

scam in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribe Corporation including the illegal transfer of Rs 88 crore, Sitharaman, speaking to reporters at the BJP office here, accused Siddaramaiah of concealing facts and trying to pass the blame on to the central government because bank officials of a nationalised bank were involved. On Siddaramaiah's charge that the union finance minister should be held accountable because were involved, Sitharaman said, "He can say talking like this... That's so irresponsive. You have your minister resigned. You have your people saying that the money has been siphoned into private accounts." minister said that action has already been taken as a first step against the conniving bank officials and further action will be taken against

"No protection will be offered to them for sure." She, however, sought to know, "A minister had to resign under whose oversight? Attempt to deny, attempt to shift blame, or to say that no scandal has taken place. It's SC/ST money. Whose money was taken away Valmiki community's. Is there no sense of outrage?' 'They (Congress) talk about (justice) during election campaign. Is this Nyay for the SC/ST



communities?" Sitharaman said. During the Lok Sabha election, the Congress had the slogan 'Ab Hoga Nyay' to do justice for downtrodden communities and to enact policies for their upliftment. Stating that the bank is already on the job of taking action against the erring the FM asked officials. Siddaramaiah how minister involved in the scam and the chief minister who holds finance portfolio did illegally transferring money. 'You denied the whole thing, your minister did not even

And regarding the money which has gone into the private accounts, you go to the assembly to say it's not Rs 180 crore or Rs 140 crore, it's only some Rs 80 crore. You are concealing it, sir. This is the outrageous thing

that is happening particularly with the SC/ST money," the FM said. Rs 187.33 crore of the Valmiki Corporation kept accounts, different including Rs 40 crore in the government treasury, is said to have been diverted towards the Union Bank of India's MG Road branch in the scam. Of the Rs 187.33 crore, Rs 88.63 crore was illegally transferred to at least 217 bank accounts in Telangana including that of 18 firms. Former Karnataka

arrested by the Enforcement Directorate, is in judicial custody in connection with the case. The scam came to light after the Accounts Superintendent of Valmiki Corporation Chandrasekharan P died by suicide. In his suicide note, he

explained in detail how the money was transferred and what role the corporation and the bank officials had played in the scam. The opposition BJP has accused the ruling Congress of being involved in the scam. It has alleged that the transfer of money could not have happened without the knowledge of Siddaramaiah, who heads the finance ministry.

The chief minister has rubbished the allegation and said he had no information

## Judges should use a 'sense of robust common sense' in bail petitions: CJI

hief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Sunday said the trial judges prefer playing safe by not granting bail on important issues of crime when it is looked at with a degree of suspicion.

The Chief Justice underlined the need for a 'sense of robust common sense' to look at the nitty-gritty of each case.

Government of India thus rejected it," Bose said. "People who should be getting bail in the trial courts and not Maintaining that an array of getting it there, as a result of "unscrupulous persons" found plenty of scope and which, they have to invariably move the high courts. People who should be getting bail in opportunities for exploitation over the issue, he said from the high courts will not around the mid-1960's began necessarily get it, as a result of the phenomenon of the rewhich, they have to move to the Supreme Court. This delay

compounds the problem of According to him, all of these those who are facing arbitrary arrests," Justice Chandrachud

He was replying to a question at the end of a keynote address during the '11th Annual Conference of the Berkeley Centre on Comparative and Discrimination. The question was on the arbitrary arrests.

The questioner said we seem to live in a society where one acts first and seeks forgiveness later. This has become particularly true for public authorities acting in a politically motivated manner by detaining activists, academics, journalists and even politicians, including the chief ministers of opposition parties,

actions are taken with deep trust in the face of justice coming very slowly.

In reply, Justice Chandrachud said the Supreme Court has been constantly trying to convey that part of the reason for it is that there is an inherent distrust in the institutions within the country.

'I think it's important that we learn to trust people who may be in a hierarchical legal system, like much below, which are the trial courts. We have to encourage trial courts to be more receptive to the need for accommodating concerns of people who are seeking liberty," the CII said.

"Unfortunately, the problem today is this, that we look at any grant of relief by trial judges with a degree of suspicion. That means that the trial judges increasingly are playing it safe, not granting bail on important issues of serious crimes," he explained.

According to the CJI, judges have to look at the nitty gritties and see the fine prints of each

"You (judges) have to have a sense of robust common sense. Now, unless we, therefore, separate the grains from the chaff in criminal jurisprudence, it's very unlikely that we will have just solutions and to allow for decision makers to separate the grain from the chaff, it's important that we also place a great deal of trust," Justice Chandrachud noted.

#### Toddler dies after falling into pit in UP

PTI ■ BALLIA (UP)

n a tragic incident, an 18month-old boy died after falling into a pit while playing here on Sunday afternoon, police said.

According to the police, the incident happened in the Ghuri Baba Tola village under the Sikandarpur police station area, where Avyansh Yadav fell into a pit made for draining dirty water.

Sikandarpur Dinesh Pathak said that Avyansh's mother Amrita made him sit in the courtyard and got busy in her daily routine. After some time, when Avvansh was not seen in the courtyard, she started searching for him, and found him fallen in the pit.

## Prohibition of Child Marriage Act applies to all Indian citizens: HC

The Kerala High Court has ruled that the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 is applicable to every citizen of this country irrespective of his or her religion as every Indian is a citizen first and then becomes a member of a

2012 in Palakkad against a child marriage, said irrespective of religion, whether a person is Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi etc., the Act is applicable to all. The petitioners, including the father of the then minor girl, contended before the court that being a Muslim she enjoys the

religious right to marry after attaining puberty, i.E., at the age of 15. "A person should be a citizen of India first, and thereafter only his religion comes. Religion is secondary and citizenship should come first. Therefore, I am of the considered opinion that, irrespective of religion, Justice PV Kunhikrishnan in a recent order on a petition Muslim, Christian, Parsi all," the court said in its July 15 order. It observed that child marriages children their basic human rights, including the right to education, health and protection from exploitation and early marriages and pregnancy can lead to health problems such as infant mortality, maternal



mortality and sexually transmitted infections. "Child marriage often forces girls to drop out of school, limiting their education and future opportunities. Child brides are more

vulnerable to domestic violence and abuse. Child marriage can perpetuate poverty and limit economic opportunities for individuals and communities. "Child marriage can lead to

including depression and anxiety to the children

Child marriage can lead to isolation disconnection from the family and community. Moreover, child marriage is a violation of international human rights law and conventions as well," the court said in its 37-page order An Integrated Child Development Scheme Officer (ICDS Officer) had lodged a complaint to the Vadakkencherry police about a child marriage that took place on December 30, 2012. The court said it was and when they attained sad to hear that even after maturity, let them decide

there are allegations of Child Marriage in Kerala. "The saddest thing is that the petitioners herein are trying to justify the alleged child marriage stating that as per Mohammedan Law, Muslim girl enjoys a religious right to marry after attaining puberty

irrespective of age, even though the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act apply to without and beyond India,"

the judge said. The high court urged the society to let the children study, travel and enjoy their life according to their wishes the enactment of the Prohibition of Child modern society, there cannot be any compulsion

"Majority of the girls are

interested in studies. Let them study and let them enjoy their life, of course with the blessings of their parents. When they attain majority and decided that a partner is necessary in their life, let it happen at the appropriate stage so that child marriage can be eradicated from the society,"

It also suggested that the print and the visual media can play a significant role in raising awareness and prohibiting child marriages.
"It is the duty of the print and visual media to publish articles highlighting the evils of child marriage, sharing stories of survivors victims,

consequences promoting marriage, education empowerment of girls and exposing perpetrators and their actions," the order

The court also noted that the complaint against the child marriage was filed by a person from the Muslim community itself.

every citizen of this country is aware of the evil of child marriage irrespective of their religion," it said. However, the court asked the petitioners to approach the appropriate court on their contention that the date of birth of the child was wrongly mentioned in the concerned school register.

## Bihar Govt directs officials to expedite land transfer for AIIMS Darbhanga

wo days after the Centre's nod for the construction AIIMS Darbhanga district, the state government has directed concerned to complete the process of transfer and hand over the identified land on an urgent

officials of all Senior concerned departments have been asked to complete all required work, including transfer and hand over of the identified land to the Union Ministry of Health and Welfare, Family construction of Darbhanga AIIMS on an urgent basis, Bihar Health minister, Mangal Pandey told PTI on

Sunday. "The Centre has given its approval for the construction of Darbhanga AIIMS. It's a great gift by the Centre to Bihar. We thank PM Bihar. We thank PM Narendra Modi Ji and Union Health Minister J P Nadda Ji, for giving the nod for the construction of Darbhanga AIIMS. Under the leadership of our PM and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the work of improving medical facilities in the state has progressed at a rapid pace and it will continue



"The state health department received a letter from the Centre on July 25 in this regard. Darbhanga AIIMS will be the second in the state after Patna AIIMS. This will lead to a massive expansion of Darbhanga town and its surrounding districts and will create a lot of employment opportunities", said the state health minister.
The Director of Pradhan Mantri Sweether County Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana(PMSSY) of the Union Health ministry in a letter dated July 25 to the Additional Chief Secretary, Bihar Health department, said, "This is to inform that on the recommendation of the central technical team, the

competent authority has approved the establishment of AIIMS at Shobhan in Darbhanga. The team visited

2024 to assess the feasibility and suitability of the site at Ekmi Shobhan in Darbhanga for the establishment of AIIMS there".

The state government is requested to transfer and hand over the required encumbrance-free land to this ministry and initiate necessary action for the provision of permanent electricity connection of 20 MVA from two alternate sources. Besides, four-lane road connectivity and potable water supply of 1.5 MLD required for the establishment

of Darbhanga AIIMS, according to the letter. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), NDA alliance partner expressed happiness over the Centre's permission construction of Darbhanga

Darbhanga on March 18-19, In a post on X, JD(U) national

working president, Sanjay Kumar Jha, wrote, "Darbhanga AIIMS will be built in Shobhan itself, construction will start soon. construction will start soon. For this approval, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the respected PM, Union Health Minister and CM Nitish Kumar, on my behalf and on behalf of all the people of Mithila region. The state government will soon transfer. government will soon transfer the entire land (more than 150 acres) to the Centre free of cost".

"Along with this, the state government will also take necessary steps to arrange electricity and water supply at the site from its own resources and will provide four-lane connectivity to it. This will create employment opportunities in the area. The state government is also redeveloping the Darbhanga Medical College Hospital. A plan of Rs 2,742.04 crore is underway to build a new 2500-bed hospital there.

'After the construction of both the super specialty hospitals, Darbhanga will become a major medical centre not only for North Bihar but also for Nepal", wrote Jha, who also shared the Center's letter on the micro-blogging site.

## Mizoram seeks special package from Centre to implement flagship programme

PTI AIZAWL

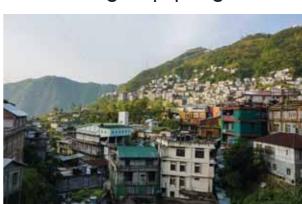
Mizoram has requested a special financial package from the Centre to implement its flagship programme, 'Bana Kaih' or 'Hand-holding' policy, an official from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said

on Sunday.
During the NITI Aayog meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma announced that government will implement the hand-holding policy to reduce economic disparity between urban and rural populations and generate more employment in the state, according to an official.

The policy aims to address the availability of institutional credit, particularly microcredit, for agricultural small industrial endeavours. The programme will integrate various central government schemes and initiatives. The Mizoram government has allocated Rs 200 crore for the policy for the fiscal year 2024-25, in addition

for agricultural assurance. The policy focuses on empowering various sectors, including supporting farmers through the purchase of local agricultural or horticultural

to a Rs 110 crore corpus fund



produce, food processing, marketing agricultural and allied products, promoting entrepreneurship and skill development, creating employment opportunities for youths, and boosting smallscale and agro-based industries.

Horticulture, fisheries, veterinary and animal husbandry, and sericulture activities, which are vital for many in the state, will receive renewed attention under the hand-holding policy.
During the NITI Aayog

meeting, Lalduhoma noted that Mizoram faces high living and project costs due to its remote location. Despite these the challenges, government is striving to match the development levels of other states through

aggressive implementation of

sustainable development

Lalduhoma highlighted Mizoram's need for better roads and communication infrastructure, pointing out that the state's road density is significantly below national average. He also emphasised the state's acute shortages in water, power, education, public health, hygiene, and administrative infrastructure. Unlike other states, Mizoram

has limited industrial income sources and requires special consideration and assistance. The chief minister requested financial aid in the form of a peace dividend, noting that Mizoram has not received funds under the securityrelated expenditure (SRE) scheme like its neighbouring

#### School teacher suspended for cutting students' hair in Telangana

**PTI** ■ HYDERABAD

A Government school teacher in Telangana's Khammam district chopped off the hair of 15 male students as she felt it was long, following which the woman was suspended.

The incident occurred in Kalluru mandal of the district on Saturday and the English teacher has been placed under suspension pending enquiry, education depart officials said on Sunday. department

The teacher trimmed the hair of nearly 15 students of class 8,9 and 10 in the school premises using scissors, they

The students who were upset over the haircut, complained to their parents who in turn staged a protest in front of the school against the teacher's act."It (resorting to hair cut) is not the job of teachers. If they (the students) are irregular and if they were indisciplined, she could have informed their

students)," the official said. The woman teacher on her part said the students were advised several times to get a haircut as they were found attending the classes with long hair.

parents and should not have

acted like that (cutting hair of

# he pioneer

pinion 06

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Enough is enough**

The tragic deaths of three students in basement flooding is a repeat story of administrative apathy and negligence

The incident is both tragic and surreal. It is difficult to comprehend that three students could lose their lives in a coaching centre operated in a basement that gets flooded. In a heartbreaking incident that has once again spotlighted the glaring deficiencies in urban infrastructure and governance, three civil service aspirants tragically lost their lives due to flooding in a basement. This avoidable disaster raises serious questions about official apathy, the flouting of safety norms, and the recurring nature of such incidents. On a fateful evening, heavy rains lashed the city, overwhelming the already inadequate drainage systems. The basement, where the students were studying, was rapidly filled with water. Despite desperate attempts to escape, the rising water levels led to the tragic drowning of the three young lives. The basement, meant for commercial storage, was illegally converted into a coaching centre. With no proper ventilation, emergency exits, or drainage systems, it became a death trap during the downpour. This



incident underscores a stark reality faced by many urban dwellers who are forced to live in substandard and unsafe accommodations due to high real estate costs and inadequate housing policies.

The deaths of these students could have been prevented had there been stricter enforcement of building codes and timely maintenance of drainage systems. However, the incident has laid bare the apathy of the authorities responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of citizens. Residents in the area had repeatedly complained about the poor drainage and the illegal conversion of basements into living spaces. Despite these warnings, no significant action was taken. The inac-

tion of municipal authorities and the lack of accountability have resulted in yet another tragedy. After the death of three students, it is time for the crocodile tears to flood on the social media. A big section of political class would rather do nothing but just be concerned about such incidents. Indeed it is the nexus between the local politicians, bureaucrats and business owners of dubious credentials to indulge in flouting the norms and make a fast buck. They do not mind playing with the lives of innocent people. The incident is not an isolated one, similar incidents have happened in the past. This is part of a disturbing pattern where safety norms are routinely flouted by the powerful. Illegal constructions, unauthorized conversions, and poor maintenance of infrastructure are rampant in many urban areas including the capital city. Builders and landlords often bypass regulations, compromising the safety of residents for profit. Such incidents are alarmingly frequent, each time highlighting the same issues of poor infrastructure, negligence, and lack of accountability. Despite the public outcry and media attention that follows each tragedy, there seems to be little systemic change. Again, a customary enquiry would be instituted which would give its report when the incident is all but forgotten from the public memory and we as a nation wait for another one to happen.



'Kanwariyas' carry Ganga water during their pilgrimage in the holy month of 'Shravan', in Haridwa

# Honour the unsung heroes of operation Pawan



#### The lack of public commemoration for the 1,171 soldiers killed in action during Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka highlights a troubling apathy

ndia's future path to greatness shall be marked with supreme sacrifices by its warriors who if confined to the dustbin of state apathy, as reflected by the Government disinclination towards public commemoration of supreme sacrifice by 1171 Indian soldiers KIA during Operation 'Pawan' in Sri Lanka, may adversely impact the national will during inevitable future military confrontations. To recall Operation 'Pawan,' the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operation in Sri Lanka, was the largest joint services military operation conducted by India, in the 1971 War. It led to the establishment of

Headquarters IPKF, a Corps-size tri-service organisation with nearly 100,000 troops from the three services under its command. Had the proposed Maritime Theatre Command been in existence, Operation 'Pawan' would have come under its ambit.

The intensity of this 32-monthlong 'politico-military peace keeping' operation, undertaken from 29th of July 1987 to 24th of March 1990, is best gauged from the gallantry awards won and casualties suffered by this force. 1172 Indian soldiers were Killed In Action (KIA), and more than 3500 soldiers suffered grievous injuries. The IPKF was awarded 1 Param Vir Chakra, 6 Maha Vir Chakras, 98 Vir Chakras and scores of other gallantry awards. The ghost of the political failure to see through to the end of its first geopolitical foray in near abroad continues to impact Indian policy establishment even in the present times.

As of now, against the backdrop of a sustained Chinese presence in Sri Lanka, India is struggling to adopt a coherent strategy to deal with the continued intransigence by the Sri Lanka Government to implement the political solution of devolution to the Tamils enshrined in the Indian Sri Lanka Agreement (ISLA) of 29th of July 1987. India is bound to invite hostility from the dominant geopolitical This will mandate it to be prepared for Out-of-area military

operations to secure its econom-

future path to greatness therefore shall be marked with supreme sacrifices by its warriors who if confined to the dustbin of state apathy, as reflected by the Government disinclination towards public commemoration of supreme sacrifice by 1171 Indian soldiers KIA in Sri Lanka, may adversely impact the national will during the inevitable future military confrontations. The Government is very vocal in pronouncing its nationalist credentials but sluggish in putting money into building deterrent capabilities.

Last week's defence budget was a green signal for China to race even further ahead under the illusion there will be no war. Still, policy pronouncements are not enough unless backed by a revitalised and reorganised military competent to safeguard its economic interests, all aspirational talk is mere rhetoric. Building National War Memorials is one thing; honouring the fallen braves appropriately is quite another matter regardless of the outcome because victory or defeat on the battlefield is never complete unless it is surrendered as in 1971.

This is where the IPKF comes into the picture because it was not permitted to complete its military mission. Its contribution to the preservation of Sri Lankas territoriai integri ty is fully acknowledged; in Colombo especially. New Delhi must honour its sacriic and geopolitical interests. India's fices on 29 July as a tribute to



THERE IS ANGST

**AGAINST** THE INJUSTICE OF THE **GOVERNMENT** AND THE ARMED **FORCES NOT OFFICIALLY COMMEMORATING** THE IPKF **OPERATIONS** AT THE NWM AS IS DONE FOR THE 1971 KARGIL WARS the valour of the fallen brave. The political parameters of the ISLA had been achieved by the IPKF by December 1988. The ethnic Sri Lanka Tamil predominant Northern and Eastern Provinces were amalgamated into a unitary Northeastern Province, general elections to the North East Provincial Council were successfully conducted, with a duly elected EPRLF-led government sworn in. Had the IPKF stay been extended to tame the LTTE, the military mission could have created conditions for implementing a political solution short of

This would have secured national interest, but the new Indian government should not have endorsed the new Sri Lankan government's demand to withdraw IPKF from the island in August 1989. Ascribing the failure of ISLA to IPKF, which was just a corollary to ISLA, is unfair. The failures lay in the diplomatic and government policy, which the establishment wishes to cover up by laying the blame at the doorstep of its military. The ISLA had weak founda-

tions. The contingency of Sri Lanka and LTTE reneging on the ISLA was not thought through. The withdrawal of IPKF left India without decisive influence to oversee the implementation of the (The writer won Sena Medal is promised political package by Sri Lanka to remove the discriminatory state practices author; views are personal)

against its ethnic Tamil minority, impacting Indian policy towards Sri Lanka even in the present.

The provision of weapons and

allied support by R&AW to the

LTTE even when militarily engaged against IPKF, and the availability of physical infrastructure support to LTTE in Tamil Nadu, was against national interests. Similar primacy to political interests can be sensed by the refusal of the Indian state to commemorate KIA of Operation 'Pawan.' There is angst against the injustice of the government and the armed forces not officially commemorating the IPKF operations at the NWM as is done for the 1971 and Kargil wars. Graves of some of the Indian soldiers killed during Operation 'Pawan' are still in Sri Lanka. It is hard to understand the dichotomy of the Indian leadership, both political and military, paying public tributes at the IPKF war memorial in Colombo, in the heart of Sri Lanka, but failing to honour those KIA during Operation 'Pawan,' at the NWM at New Delhi. The IPKF war veterans are ever hopeful that the Govt will realise the injustice and consent to a befitting annual national homage to 1171 of its Bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice during

an Operation 'Pawan' veteran; he is strategic thinker, and

eration Pawan.

## How generative Al is transforming the workplace.



#### The rapid advancements in generative AI are revolutionising the workplace, reshaping job roles, and redefining the future of work

utomation has been at the core of human evo-Llution since the beginning of time. Humans have always sought out ways to make their jobs faster and easier. From physical labour to mechanized tools and now artificial intelligence, the unprecedented rate at which this sector has evolved has been transformative. With every upgrade, the next set of expectations is demanded immediately. This leads us to the conclusion that the future of work is NOT in the future: It is NOW!

This continuous evolution is significantly impacting the workplace, redefining the nature of work, the role of workers, and the environment in which they operate. As we navigate this transformation, HR and business leaders must understand the implications of AI on the future of work. As I reflect on the developments in the field of AI and its impact on the future of work, I see the following 6 implications that every HR and Business leader must know: Job Transformation Over **Displacement:** There is a widespread concern that AI

will lead to massive job loss-

es. However, historical precedents show that technological advancements tend to transform rather than displace jobs. AI is no different. Ît will change how we work, introducing new methods and enhancing collaboration between humans and machines. According to a report by SHRM and The Burning Glass Institute on Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Workforce, the impact of Gen AI will be less about automation and more about augmenting workers' productivity and effectiveness. According to a Global Report by Thomson Reuters, 77% of professionals believe AI will significantly impact their work within the next five

The 'War for Talent' Will Be **Fought on Newer Terrains:** The traditional paradigms of skills and talent acquisition tool. The case for Reverse

are evolving rapidly. Organizations must look beyond conventional talent pools to find the right candi-

Competitive Edge through Generative AI: A growing number of organizations are already incorporating generative AI into their HR processes, and many are exploring its potential in other functions.

organizations have already introduced the use of Generative AI in their HR processes, and many organizations are exploring possible

Human Creativity: The Ultimate DifferentiatorAs generative AI becomes more accessible, human creativity and ingenuity will become even more valuable. While AI can process data and provide insights, it is human attributes such as creativity, empathy, and strategic thinking that will set organizations apart. The ability to connect disparate ideas and develop innovative solutions beyond AI's capabilities will be crucial. Human ingenuity will be the key differentiator in a world where AI is a common

Augmentation AI's potential is best realized when combined with human intelligence (HI). This synergy enables more effective and differentiated applications of AI, resulting in higher return on investments. By leveraging the strengths of both AI and HI, organizations can achieve superior outcomes and drive innovation. Investing in Leadership **Development:** As generative AI enhances operational efficiencies, the focus on developing leadership talent will become increasingly important. Leadership development will require targeted investments to ensure they are equipped to navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing environment. Organizations must prioritize investments in both technology and human capability development to remain competitive.

Organizations must stay agile, continuously adapting to the changes brought about by AI. The foresight to navigate these changes will be the key to sustaining growth and achieving long-term success.

(The writer is CEO SHRM India, APAPC and MENA; views are personal)

#### PM MODI'S WARNING TO PAKISTAN Madam — This refers to the report "Modi

warns Pak on terrorism," The Pioneer, Jul 27. PM Narendra Modi, while addressing the 25th Kargil Diwas celebrations, has warned Pakistan against continuing its futile policy breeding and sponsoring cross-border terror. Both the message and the timing were perfect. PM Modi has given voice to the frustrations of most Indians, and was echoing the viewpoint of the entire Indian polity and the Parliament by expressing the national consensus that Kashmir belongs to India. No policy of terror or initiation of war-like action will ever deter India was his clear pronouncement. He also reflected our national resolve strongly that India would not think twice about doing all it takes to protect its territory and people. Nevertheless, as Mr Modi rightly said, Pakistan has not learnt its lessons. It continues to wage war in the garb of terrorism and proxy wars. And it still continues to be a sanctuary for anti-India terrorists, if the recent surge in attacks in Jammu is any indication.

Indian leaders have time and again sought to mend relations with Pakistan and have made genuine overtures for peace. But each time we have received only deceit and backstabbing in return. In the last 25 years, the differential between India and Pakistan in terms of economic prosperity and global reputation has sharply widened. But Pakistan has still not grown out of its desire to be hyphenated with India and is, in the process, only harming its own people.

N Sadhasiva Reddy Bengaluru

#### **EMPOWERING MINERAL RICH STATES**

Madam — Due to historic verdict on mining royalty and taxes now the state government is empowered to levy taxes on mining companies and due to this reason concerning States will be hugely benefited and the financial state of these States will be improved. and it is due to a landmark judgment on July 25, a nine-judge constitution bench of the Supreme Court which upheld the right of States to levy taxes on mining activities, recognizing that 'royalty ' and

#### THE EDITOR

#### The historic rise of women leaders



f Kamala Harris wins, she will become the first woman President of the USA. If Donald Trump wins, he will become the second president to serve non-consecutive terms (45th and 47th), following Grover Cleveland, who was the 22nd and 24th president. Franklin D. Roosevelt is the only U.S. president to have served three terms. Whether anyone will surpass that record remains a long-term puzzle. All eyes will be on

'taxation ' are different recognizing both as separate. In the case of Mineral Area Development Authority vs Steel Authority of India, the nine-judge constitution bench of the Supreme Court gave this decision in an 8:1 split. Eight judges including Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud voted in favor of this decision while Justice B V Nagarathana disagreed. The decision, pending for more than 25 years, finally clarifies that States can levy additional taxes on mining activities and land used for such

The decision is a significant development in empowering States to generate more revenue, which can be used to meet local needs and mitigate the adverse effects of mining. The distinction between royalties and taxes was at the centre of the court's decision. Royalties are payments made by mining leaseholders to the lessee on the basis of a specific agreement as stipulated under Section 9 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDRA). These payments are made in exchange for the right to extract minerals and are thus seen as compensation for the

November 5th, 2024, ballot day in the USA. As of July 27, 2024, 29 nations around the world have women as heads of state or government (Presidents or Prime Ministers).

The history of women heads of state and government is fascinating. The world's first woman president was María Estela 'Isabel' Perón of Argentina (1974 to 1976). The first elected woman Prime Minister was Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka in 1960, who served three terms. In the 1970s, three women Prime Ministers—Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka), Indira Gandhi (India), and Golda Meir (Israel)—were known as the "Iron Ladies Trio." Later, Margaret Thatcher, the "Iron Lady No. 4," became the Prime Minister

of the UK. P V Madhu Nivriti | Secundarabad

use of land and resources. Taxes, on the other hand, are more commonly imposed by governments and used to fund public services and infrastructure.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

#### **MODI'S OLIVE BRANCH TO RSS**

Madam — In the lead-up to its 100th year, Narendra Modi just gave a birthday gift to the RSS. Amidst speculations of a deepening rift between the RSS and the Modi-Shah-controlled BJP, the NDA government withdrew the order dated 1966 that prohibits government employees from participating in RSS activities.

Is this an olive branch, considering the inexplicable statement made by J P Nadda, almost declaring independence from the RSS in the middle of the Lok Sabha elections? This comes on top of several grants and appointments going to people and organisations belonging to or close to the

C K Ramanathan | Mumbai

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### **FIRST COLUMN** A PATH TO **PERSONAL LIBERATION**

With unwavering determination and faith, one can conquer even the most persistent habits



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI** 

e are what we repeatedly do, said Aristotle... If we have a look at the dictionary meaning of habit, then it says 'something that you do often and regularly, sometimes without knowing that you are doing it:' To define it simply, habits can be described as involuntary actions. They are a kind of 'automatic behaviour' as it were, for one does not do them after much thought. There is no doubt in it that almost everyone in this world has one or other bad habit. Don't we all have? Like, many people have the bad habit of smoking. But, if you tell them that it is a bad habit, some of them will bring in a little bit of philosophy and some would try to support it with medical opinion also.

They will say, "Smoking is very exhilarating. It is good for my brain because it brings me concentration." Others will say, "Smoking keeps my bowels free." Others still will confess that it is a bad habit that they find hard to give up. Little do most people realise that it is a bad habit that pollutes their physical system and the atmosphere and causes diseases like cancer. Similarly, some people have the habit of talking too much. They just can't keep quiet even for a couple of minutes.

Little do these people realise that much breath and energy is wasted on

This could usefully be spent in silent meditation. But the problem is that he who talks and talks is, today, considered as a smart, clever and wise person, and a person who talks less is thought to be lacking in general knowledge or to be deficient in the art of conversation! Such examples of bad habits can be multiplied, but, what we need to understand from these examples is that, in most cases, people do not realise that it is a bad or a harmful habit and where this truth is realised, there isn't the strong desire to get freed from its grip and that is why some people philosophically say; This habit of mine will die only when I die.

So what is the solution to get over one's bad habits? Is it practically possible? Yes! With a little effort and attention, it is indeed possible. To start with one needs great enthusiasm which is very essential for leaving bad habits. There is a well-known proverb in English: "Well-begun is half done'. So, after realising that the habit which you have decided to give up is



really bad, you should put up a brave and enthusiastic fight against this evil. From the very outset, call forth all your latent energies not only to cut its root and branch but also to destroy its seed, for if the seed remains, the tree is likely to grow up again. When a house is on fire, how promptly and energetically the inmates react? At that time, they are fully concentrated and they use all the means to extinguish the fire.

Put your resolve into action immediately. Secondly, remove the words 'impossible', 'difficult, 'I cannot' etc. from your mind. These are the expressions of a weakling or a timid person. Cheer yourself up. Realize the truth that the evil habit is your own creation, you have given birth to it and nourished it to bring its growth and now you should not say with a weak will that it is difficult to control it.

Always remember! habits are not your original nature; they are your second nature. You have acquired them and you say that you cannot give them up? You are their Master and you believe yourself to be their slave? 'Faith, it has been rightly said, "can move mountains and this your habit is only a molehill. Therefore, rise and take up the bow of endeavour and become an instrument to the Divine to shoot this devil—your bad habit for, God is with you as He always is on the side of the virtuous. But, remember! A mere wish or desire to eradicate evil is not enough. You must have pure and strong will besides a definite aim and purpose. Wish or desire is a small, temporary ripple in the lake of mind but Will is the power that executes the desire to fulfilment. There is nothing impossible for a man of strong willpower to achieve. So let's make a resolve that we will liberate ourselves in the true sense.

(The writer is a spiritual educator and a popular

columnist views are personal)

# Budget is pro-growth but stability concern remains



Major expenditure items may go out of control, raising concerns about the budget's feasibility; moreover, the Government's gross tax revenue target of Rs 38.40 lakh crore is overly ambitious



n top of a GDP (gross domestic product) growth of 8 per cent plus for three consecutive years, the Union Budget for FY 2024-25 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on July 23, 2024, has all the ingredients to sustain the momentum during the current year as well. For the current year, she has proposed capital expenditure at Rs 1111,111 crore, which is 17 per cent higher than the revised estimate (RE) for FY 2023-24.In her Budget for 2019-20, she had laid a roadmap for catapulting the Indian economy to US\$5 trillion by 2024-25. In sync with this target, she had projected an investment requirement of over Rs 100 lakh crore to build the infrastructure over five

Out of this, 39 per cent or Rs 39,00,000 crore was to come from the Centre and states each and the balance was Rs 22,00,000 crore from the private sector. The Centre's capital spend during the previous four years was 2020-21: Rs 439,000 crore; 2021-22: Rs 554,000 crore; 2022-23: Rs 750,000 crore; 2023-24: Rs 1000,961 crore. This adds up to Rs 2700,000 crore. Add to tnis Ks 1111,111 crore for 2024-25, the total over five years comes to Rs 3800,000 crore which is more or less close to the amount the Centre intended to contribute. The Central government has also been helping the states to boost their capital spend. During 2022-23, it provided them with 50year Rs 100,000 crore interest-free loans. During 2023-24, such transfers were Rs 130,000 crore. For the current year, the

transfers are kept at Rs 150,000 crore. To promote investment in the private sector, the Centre has reduced the corporate tax rate to 15 per cent for new manufacturing enterprises and 22 per cent for existing enterprises. In this year's budget, the corporate tax rate on foreign firms has been reduced from extant 40 per cent to 35 per cent. With this and assuming that private consumption/demand remains strong (a relief of around Rs 17,500/- in personal income tax or PIT resulting from the change in tax slabs under the New IT regime and increase in a standard deduction by Rs 25,000/- will give some boost) besides exports getting a leg up, courtesy



**REVENUE** TARGET OF RS 3840,000 **CRORE IS OVER-AMBITIOUS** AND THE BUDGET **ASSUMES** RECEIPTS OF RS 50,000 CRORE FROM DISINVESTMENT OF GOVERNMENT SHARES IN PSUS. A PROGRAM IT HAS DECIDED

NOT TO PURSUE. **EVEN MAJOR EXPENDITURE** ITEMS COULD **GET OUT OF** CONTROL

rebound in the US economy, India could achieve growth even higher than 6.5 - 7 per cent projected in the Economic Survey for 2023-24. But, there is a flip side to it. This has to do with the fiscal deficit or FD (excess of total expenditure over total receipts). Sitharaman has set it at 4.9 per cent of the GDP which is 0.2 per cent less than a target of 5.1 per cent fixed in the interim budget. This has been made possible due to a mammoth dividend transfer of Rs 210,000 crore by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to the Central Government from its operations during the FY 2023-24 which is Rs 130,000 crore higher than the provision of Rs 80,000 crore made in the interim budget. It won't be easy to achieve the 4.9 per cent target during the current year. This is because the gross tax revenue (GTR) target of Rs 3840,000 crore is over-ambitious and the budget assumes receipts of Rs 50,000 crore from disinvestment of government shares in PSUs, a ogram it nas decided not to pursue. Even major expenditure items could get out of control as the year For instance, the 'fertilizer subsidy'

is budgeted at Rs 164,000 crore during 2024-25. This is based on the assumption that the declining trend in the international price of fertilizers and raw materials used in their production seen during 2023-24 continues during the current year as well. It takes a small disruption in the global supply chain (given the current highly uncertain geo-political situation, this is quite likely), for this assumption to go haywire. That apart, to go down from 4.9 per cent to 4.5 per cent next year set by the FM her 2021-22 budget (this by itself is far more generous than FD of 3 per cent that was to be achieved in 2020-21 as per the amendment to daunting, all the more when the

RBI is unlikely to repeat its bonan-za/gift to the Center. During an interactive with the press, Sitharaman alluded to the Centre's plan to design fiscal trajectory in a manner such that from FY 2026-27 onward, its debt to GDP ratio starts declining. Sans target setting, this may not instil confidence. Yet, she won't set the target as these

are often missed. The Center's debt-to-GDP ratio is currently around 57 per cent against the 40 per cent mandated for 2024-25 under the FRBM Amendment Act

Meanwhile, to address the concerns on employment, MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) and agriculture, the budget has proposed several initiatives.For MSMEs, it proposes a new credit guarantee scheme to facilitate term loans to enable them to purchase machinery and equipment without requiring collateral or third-party guarantees (a self-financing guarantee fund is mooted that could provide each applicant with guar antee coverage of up to Rs 100 crore); increase in the limit of Mudra (Micro Units Development Refinance Agency, a subsidiary of SIDBI) loans to Rs 2000,000 for those who have repaid previous loans; expanding SIDBI branches to provide the much-needed access to credit and additional support for

further growth. The initiatives on employment all aligned to the EPFO (Employees Provident Fund Organization) enrollments include Scheme A: a one-month wage payout of up to Rs. 15,000 per month (payable in three instalments) to first-timers in the workforce, with all formal sectors with an eligibility limit of a salary of Rs 100,000 per month. Scheme B: meant for creating 'additional' jobs in the manufacturing sector linked to first-time the FRBM Act, 2018) can be employees; it includes an incentive to employees and employers con-

cerning EPFO in the first 4 years of employment. These schemes are expected to

benefit 240 lakh youth. Scheme C

meant support to employers to enable them to give additional employment in all sectors for those earning up to Rs 100,000 per month. The government will reimburse employers up to Rs. 3000 per month for two years towards EPFO contribution for each additional employee. This Scheme will benefit 50 lakh persons. To make the youth employable, Sitharaman has announced a new centrally spon-sored scheme for skilling in collaboration with States and industry. 2000,000 youth will be skilled over five years under this scheme. One thousand industrial training institutes (ITIs) will be upgraded in the hub and spoke arrangement, with course content aligned to the skill needs of the industry. In agriculture, the measures include initiating 10 million farmers into natural farming in the next two years; releasing 109 climate-resilient new seed varieties across 32 field and horticulture crops in the next 100 days; Jan Samarth-based Kisan Credit Card in five States to give a boost to shrimp farming and export; launch a national cooperation policy; digital public infrastructure (DPI) to create a registry of 60 million farmers with the details of their land over the next three years; developing large-scale vegetable clusters closer to major consumption centres; promoting FPOs, cooperatives and start-ups for vegetable supply chains; pursuing the mission for pulses and oilseeds production etc. All the above announcements sound like the proverbial 'Many a slip between

nudge private firms.' (The writer is a policya nanalyst;

the cup and the lip. For instance,

on employment, Sitharaman clar-

ified 'the' government can only

### Flying towards sustainability: The aviation industry's tryst with carbon neutrality

Through technological innovation and green solutions like adoption of sustainable aviation fuel, the aviation sector is becoming environment friendly

⊣he global aviation industry is undeniably a significant contributor to carbon emissions, accounting for about 2.5 -3.0% of the world's carbon output. Recognising this impact, initiatives like IATA's "Fly Net Zero" are crucial steps towards achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Airlines are actively pursuing various strategies to reduce their environmental footprint, with fleet modernization being a cornerstone. One key pillar of the industry's sustainability strategy is investment in a modern, fuelefficient fleet. Jazeera Airways, for instance, has invested in the Airbus A320 neo aircraft, known for its 20% reduction in fuel con-



airline was also the first to order over 2000 of the world's lightest aircraft seats from Expliseat. These seats will contribute to a weight saving of 1.2 metric tons per aircraft resulting in enhanced fuel efficiency and reduced emissions per flight.Beyond fleet upgrades, airlines are implementing carbon offsetting programs as part of their sustainability efforts. These programs allow passengers to sumption and emissions. The mitigate the environmental and carbon emissions associ-

impact of their air travel by investing in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere. Jazeera Airways' carbon offsetting initiatives specifically sup-port projects in renewable energy and reforestation, allowing passengers to contribute to environmental conservation efforts directly linked to their flights.

Technological innovation also plays a pivotal role in enhancing operational efficiency and passenger experience. Airlines are increasingly adopting digital solutions such as paperless ticketing, digital baggage tracking, and personalized sustainable travel options. These technologies not only streamline operations but also minimize waste

ated with traditional paperbased processes. Addressing plastic waste is another important aspect of the industry's sustainability efforts. Airlines are replacing single-use plastics with biodegradable alternatives and exploring sustainable options like Palmade products made from palm leaves. Energy efficiency is another critical focus area for airlines, extending to both aircraft operations and airport infrastructure. State-of-the-art airport terminals are designed with sustainability in mind, incorporating energy-efficient lighting, climate control systems, and renewable energy sources. The airline industry is active-

ly leading the way towards a more sustainable future for air



environmentally responsible practices that extend beyond its operations. The adoption CORSIA (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation) marks a substantial advancement in its commitment to mitigating environmental impact and combat-

ensures that international aviation contributes to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while continuing to support global connectivity and economic growth. Additionally, the development and adoption of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and the utilization of

advanced software solutions like those offered by NAVBLUE are critical milestones in the airline industry's efforts to achieve net-zero emissions and address climate change.

Achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 requires collaboration among airlines, governments, and passengers. Through ongoing innovation, investment in sustainable technologies like SAF, reduction of plastic waste, and improvements in operational efficiency, the aviation industry is actively leading the way towards a more environmentally friendly future for air travel. These efforts not only aim to reduce the industry's carbon footprint but also set a precedent for sustainable practices that can inspire broader global initiatives beyond aviation.

Aviation industry today is dedicated to collaborating closely with partners, passengers, and communities to foster a greener and more sustainable future for air travel. This commitment drives us to innovate and implement initiatives that reduce our environmental footprint, promote sustainable practices, and contribute positively to the global effort against climate change.

Together with our stakeholders, we aim to lead by example and inspire lasting change in the aviation industry and beyond.

(The writer is regional manager South Asia - Jazeera Airways; views are personal)

## Strike in Israeli-controlled Golan Heights kills at least 12

Arocket strike on Saturday at a soccer field killed at least 12 children and teens, Israeli authorities said, in the deadliest strike on an Israeli target along the country's northern border since the fighting between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah began. It raised fears of a broader regional war. Israel blamed Hezbollah for the strike in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, but Hezbollah rushed to deny any role. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that Hezbollah "will pay a heavy price for this attack, one that it has not paid so far". The Israeli military's chief spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, called it the deadliest attack on Israeli civilians since the Hamas attack on October that sparked the war in Gaza. He said 20 others were wounded. "There is no doubt that Hezbollah has crossed all

the red lines here, and the



A boy walks past bicycles left next to the area that was hit by a rocket on a soccer field in the Druze town of Majdal Shams, in the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights, Saturday, July 27, 2024. A rocket strike Saturday at a soccer field killed at least 11 children and teens, Israeli authorities said, in the deadliest strike on an Israeli target along the country's northern border since the fighting between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah began. It raised fears of a broader regional war.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel "We are nearing the moment

response will reflect that," Katz told Israeli Channel 12. in which we face an all-out

Hezbollah chief spokesman still have sympathies for Syria Mohammed Afif told The Associated Press that the group "categorically denies carrying out an attack" on the town of Majdal Shams. It is unusual for Hezbollah to deny an attack. The office of Netanyahu, who was on a visit to the United States, said he would cut short his trip by several hours, with-

out specifying when he would return. It said he will convene the security Cabinet after arriving. Far-right members of Netanyahu's government called for a harsh response against Hezbollah. But an all-out war with a militant group with far superior firepower to Hamas would be trying for Israel's mil-itary after nearly 10 months of

fighting in Gaza.

Footage aired on Israeli Channel 12 showed a large blast in one of the valleys in the Druze town of Majdal Shams, in the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed in 1981. Some Druze have Israeli citizenship. Many

and rejected Israeli annexation, but their ties with Israeli society have grown over the years.

Video showed paramedics rushing stretchers off the soccer field toward waiting ambu-

Ha'il Mahmoud, a resident, told Channel 12 that children were playing soccer when the rocket hit the field. He said a siren was heard seconds before the rocket hit, but there was no time to take shelter.

Jihan Sfadi, the principal of an elementary school, told Channel 12 that five students were among the dead: "The situation here is very difficult. Parents are crying, people are screaming outside. No one can digest what has happened." Israel's military said its analysis showed that the rocket was launched from an area north of the village of Chebaa in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli military said early Sunday that it struck targets deep inside Lebanon as well as in southern Lebanon. There

and the strikes were no more intense than what has become routine over the past 10 months.

The strike at the soccer field, just before sunset, followed earlier cross-border violence on Saturday, when Hezbollah said three of its fighters were killed, without specifying where. Israel's military said its air force targeted a Hezbollah arms depot in the border village of Kfar Kila, adding that militants were inside at the

Hezbollah said its fighters carried out 10 different attacks using rockets and explosive drones against Israeli military posts, the last of which targeted the army command of the Haramoun Brigade in Maaleh Golani with Katyusha rockets. In a separate statement, Hezbollah said it hit the same army post with a short-range Falag rocket. It said the attacks were in response to Israeli airstrikes on villages in south-

#### **Landslide** in **China kills** 15, injures 6

**Beijing (PTI):** A landslide caused by heavy rains from a tropical storm hit a house in central China's Hunan on Sunday, killing 15 people and injuring six others. The provincial emergency command centre said the landslide hit Yuelin village in Hengyang city at about 8 am.

It washed away part of a residential house, burying 18 peo-

Fifteen people were killed and six others injured in the land-slide, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The landslide was reportedly caused by flash flooding on a mountain. The injured have been taken to hospital.

Over 300 rescuers have been dispatched and rescue efforts have concluded, the report

China has suffered a summer of extreme weather, with flash floods in the north and south-

## US-Japan security talks focus on bolstering military cooperation

apanese and US defence chiefs and top diplomats agreed to further bolster their military cooperation by upgrading the command and control of US forces in the East Asian counand strengthening American-licensed missile production there, describing the rising threat from China as "the greatest strategic challenge". US Forces Japan headquartered in Yokota in the western suburbs of Tokyo, tasked with managing their bases, has no commanding authority. Instead, instructions come from the US Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii. The plans will give the USFJ greater capability while still reporting to INDOPACOM. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin joined their Japanese counterparts, Yoko Kamikawa and Minoru Kihara, at the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee in Tokyo, known as "2+2" security talks where they reaffirmed their bilateral alliance following President Joe Biden's withdraw

al from the November presiden-

We are standing at a historic turning point as the rulesbased, free and open international order is shaken to the core," Kamikawa said. "Now is a critical phase when our decision today determines our

Austin, in his opening remarks, said China is "engaging in coercive behaviour, trying to change the status quo in the East and South China Seas, around Taiwan and throughout the region", adding that North Korea's nuclear program and its deepening cooperation with Russia "threaten regional and global security". In the joint statement issued after the talks, the ministers said China's foreign policy "seeks to reshape the international order for its own benefit at the expense of others" and that "such behaviour is a serious concern to the alliance and the entire international community and represents the greatest strategic challenge in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond". China has been at odds with many countries in the Asia-Pacific for years because of its sweeping maritime claims Sea. It also claims self-governing Taiwan as its territory, to be annexed by force if necessary. In March, Beijing announced a 7.2 per cent increase in its defense budget, already the world's second-highest behind the United States, marking a massive military expansion.

The ministers said the US command reorganisation, set for March to be in line with Japan's own command updating, aimed "to facilitate deeper interoperability and cooperation on joint bilateral operations in peacetime and during contingencies" and enhance intelligence coordination, surveillance, reconnaissance and cybersecurity.

Japan has long suffered from cybersecurity threats that Washington believes are of grave concern. Lately, Japan's space agency revealed it suffered a series of cyberattacks, and though sensitive information related to space and defence was not affected, it has triggered worry and pushed the agency to pursue preventative measures. The ministers in a joint statement reaffirmed the US commitment to "extended deterrence", which includes atomic weapons — a shift from Japan's earlier reluctance to openly discuss the sensitive issue, as the world's only country to have suffered atomic attacks, amid nuclear threats from Russia and

Japan has been accelerating its military buildup and has increased joint operations with the US as well as South Korea while trying to strengthen its largely domestic defense indus-

Tokyo has significantly eased its arms export restrictions and in December accommodated a US request for shipment of surfaceto-air PAC-3 missile interceptors produced in Japan under an American license to replenish US inventories, which have decreased due to its support for

The ministers said they will pursue efforts to expand Japanese production of PAC-3 interceptors for export to the United States, as well as co-production of Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles to meet "critical demand" for such systems to be ready when needed

## Ultra-liberal Kamala Harris will deliver crime, chaos, mayhem and death to US: Trump

**PTI** WASHINGTON

∕amala Harris will deliver Karina Tiarris win decision crime, chaos, mayhem, and death to the US, Donald Trump has said, intensifying his attacks on his Democratic rival as the 2024 presidential election campaign entered a critical final 100 day stretch.

Vice President Harris, 59, is the new presidential candidate of the Democratic party\_after incumbent President Joe Biden, 81, withdrew from the race.

Trump, a former US president and the 2024 Republican presidential candidate, painted his new chief rival, Harris, as worse than President Biden at a rally in Minnesota on Saturday along with his running mate Senator J D Vance.

"Ultra-liberal Kamala Harris will deliver crime, chaos, mayhem, and death to our country. I will restore law and order, justice in America," Trump, 78, said.Trump said on his very first day back in the White House, that he would terminate every single open border polof the Biden-Harris Administration.

"And we will seal the border

#### 'Biden's exit from 2024 race was a coup the 25th Amendment," Trump,

Washington (PTI) Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has said incumbent US President Joe Biden was forced to exit the presidential race, describing it a "coup" by the Democratic Party

The former president's remarks came during an election rally in Minnesota on Saturday.

This was really a coup of and by the Democrats. This was a coup of a man that had 14 million votes. He wanted to run. They wouldn't let him run. They treated him horribly. They said to him, we can do it the nice way, or we can do it the hard way. To Joe, he's president," Trump claimed.

This was a coup with the presidency, he said. "They threatened him with the 25th Amendment. They said, Joe, we're going to threaten you with the 25th Amendment. You're cognitively and physically a mess. And if you don't get out, we're going to take you out with

78, alleged. The 25th Amendment of the US Constitution was passed by Congress to determine the presidential succession after the assassination of former President John F Kennedy. It also gives power to the vice president as well as the Cabinet

to remove a president from office if they are deemed physically incapable. "And he said, I'll go. And then the fake news said, oh, he was so

brave. He was so brave. No, he was forced to leave," Trump claimed. Biden, 81, on July 20 announced his decision to withdraw from the 2024 presidential elections and endorsed Kamala Harris as Democratic Presidential nomi-

This followed a series of fastmoving developments after his disastrous debate performance in Atlanta on June 27 and a failed assassination attempt on Trump.

and we will stop the horrible invasion into our country.... No person in American politics has been more of an open border zealot than Border Czar Harris," he said.

He slammed Harris' political record, saying that she "destroyed San Francisco" as county district attorney. Kamala Harris was the origi nal Marxist district attorney. She destroyed San Francisco and she will destroy our country," he alleged.

'This November, the American people are going to reject Kamala Harris's crazy liberal extremism in a massive landslide... We're not going to let her turn the United States into communist San Francisco," he said. "Harris is so extreme and unhinged that she has even declared the terms 'illegal alien' and 'radical Islamic terrorism to be forbidden and unacceptable," he alleged. Describing her as a 'radical left lunatic' Trump alleged that Harris is "the most incompetent, unpopular, and far-left vice president in American history, probably the most far-left person in

#### UK is 'broke and broken', new govt says ple," saying its policies would should have levelled with the deliver faster economic British public." The govern-

Britain's new left-leaning government said Sunday that the nation is "broke and broken," blaming the situation on its predecessors ahead of a major speech on the state of the public finances that is widely expected to lay the groundwork for higher taxes. In a sweeping assessment three weeks after taking power, Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office professed shock at the situation they inherited after 14 years of Conservative Party rule, while releasing a department-bydepartment analysis of the perceived failures of the previous government.

The critique comes a day before Treasury chief Rachel Reeves is expected to outline a 20-billion-pound (\$26 billion) shortfall in public finances during a speech to the House of Commons.

"We will not shy away from being honest with the public about the reality of what we have inherited," Pat Pat McFadden, a senior member



of the new Cabinet, said in a statement. "We are calling time on the false promises that British people have had to put up with and we will do what it takes to fix Britain." Starmer's Labour Party won a landslide election victory earlier this month following a campaign in which critics accused both major parties of a "conspiracy of silence" over the scale of the financial challenges facing the next govern-

Labour pledged during the campaign that it wouldn't raise taxes on "working peo-

growth and generate the additional revenue needed by the government. Conservatives, meanwhile,

promised further tax cuts in the autumn if they were returned to office. As proof that the previous

government wasn't honest about the challenges facing the country, Starmer's office pointed to recent comments from former Treasury chief Jeremy Hunt confirming that he wouldn't have been able to cut taxes this year if the Conservatives had been returned to power. Those comments came in an interview with the BBC in which Hunt also accused Labour of exaggerating the situation to justify raising taxes now that they've won the election.

'The reason we're getting all this spin about this terrible economic inheritance is because Labour wants to raise taxes," Hunt said on July 21. "If they wanted to raise taxes, all the numbers were crystal clear before the election...They

ment on Sunday released an overview of the spending assessment Reeves commissioned shortly after taking office. She will deliver the complete report to Parliament on Monday. Those findings led the new government to accuse the Conservatives of making significant funding commitments for this finan-cial year "without knowing where the money would come

It argued that the military had been "hollowed out" at a time of increasing global threats and the National Health Service was "broken", with some 7.6 million people waiting for care.

And despite billions spent to house migrants and combat the criminal gangs ferrying migrants across the English Channel on dangerous inflatable boats, the number of people making the crossing is still rising, Starmer's office said. Some 15,832 people have crossed the Channel on small boats already this year, 9%

ment will show that Britain is broke and broken - revealing the mess that populist politics has made of the economy and public services," Downing Street said in a statement.

The quandary the government finds itself in should be no surprise, said Paul Johnson, the director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, an independent think tank focused on Britain's economic policies.

At the start of the election campaign, the institute said that the UK was in a "parlous fiscal position" and the new government would have to either raise taxes, cut spending or relax the rules on public borrowing.

"For a party to enter office and then declare that things are worse than expected' would be fundamentally dishonest," the IFS said on May 25. "The next government does not need to enter office to open the books? Those books are transparently published and available for all to inspect.

#### Cooler weather aids firefighters in battling blaze larger than LA helicopters and numerous air

Forest Ranch (AP): Thousands of firefighters battling a wildfire in Northern California received some help from the weather hours after it exploded in size. scorching an area greater than the size of Los Angeles.

The blaze was one of several tearing through the western United States and Canada, fuelled by wind and heat.

Cooler temperatures and an increase in humidity could help slow the Park Fire, the largest this year in California. Its intensity and dramatic spread led fire officials to make unwelcome comparisons to the monstrous Camp Fire, which burned out of control in nearby Paradise in 2018, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Paradise again was near the danger zone on Saturday. The entire town was under an evacuation warning, one of several communities in Butte County. Evacuation orders were also issued in Plumas, Tehama and Shasta counties. An evacuation warning calls for people to prepare to leave and await instruc-

New British Sikh MP wants to strengthen

tions, while an evacuation order means to leave immediately. Temperatures are expected to be cooler than average through the middle of next week, but "that doesn't mean that fires that are existing will go away", said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service Weather Prediction Centre in College Park, Maryland.

As of Saturday night, the Park Fire had scorched 547 square miles (1,416 square kilome-ters) and destroyed 134 structures since igniting Wednesday, when authorities said a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then fled. It was 10 per cent contained and moving to the north and east near Chico.

The fire is larger than the city of Los Angeles, which covers about 469 square miles (1,214 square kilometers), and now ranks seventh on the list of the state's top 10 largest wildfires by acreage, Cal Fire said in a social media post.

Nearly 2,500 firefighters were battling the blaze, aided by 16

tankers Jeremy Pierce, a Cal Fire operations section chief, said firefighters were taking advantage of the cooler weather while it lasts: "We're having great success today." Susan Singleton and her husband packed their SUV with clothes, some food and their seven dogs and rushed to evacuate their home this week in Cohasset, a town of about 400 northeast of Chico. They have

burned down. "Everything else we had burned up, but getting them out, getting us out, was my priority, Singleton said on Saturday, standing outside her SUV as her dogs rested. They have all been sleeping in the car outside a Red Cross shelter at a church that does not allow animals, and Singleton, 59, said the next thing is to find a place for her

since learned that their house

We've got to have a place to land and stop doing this, because this is what's stressing

pets to stretch out.

## 7 killed in Congo's music concert stampede

Seven people were killed and many others were injured during a stampede at a music concert in Congo's capital Saturday, authorities said. The stampede occurred at the 80,000-capacity Stade des Martyrs stadium in the heart of Kinshasa where Mike Kalambayi, a popular Congolese gospel singer, was performing, Kinshasa Gov. Daniel Bumba said. State television RTNC said seven people were killed in the chaos and some of those injured were admitted to intensive

Authorities did not comment on what caused the stampede, saying an investigation into the incident was underway. However, the



company that organised the when "the security services

troublemakers? An estimated 30,000 people attended the concert, which

tried to neutralise some

featured several other musicians and pastors, the management company Maajabu Gospel said in a statement. Videos that appeared to be from the scene and broadcast of the event showed large crowds gathered outside the stadium in front of barri-cades as they waited to enter. Inside, people could be seen rushing to the centre stage.

Congo has witnessed such stampedes in past years, often blamed on poor crowd control measures such as excessive use of force. Eleven people died in a similar crush at the same stadium last October during a music

#### Labour Party's connection with India PTI ■ LONDON Teevun Sandher, one of Britain's newest members of Parliament elected in the

Labour Party's landslide general election victory earlier this month, is determined to restore trust in politics and strengthen his party's connection with India and its diaspora communities. The British Sikh first-time MP was elected from Loughborough in the East Midlands region of England, considered a bellwether constituency which has reflected the national result in UK general elections over the years. He referenced the visit of UK Foreign

India earlier this week as a symbol of the high level of priority the incoming government places on the relationship as it gets on with the job of "delivering change". "From a personal perspective, I am a part of the Indian diaspora so see it as a natural connection, for the Labour Party and the incoming Labour government," he told PTI in an interview at the Parliament complex in London this week."It is a hugely important strategic partnership for us, which is why David has gone out there to stress that it is an incredibly important partnership for us in the region and globally. India is the world's largest Secretary David Lammy to democracy, there is a trade

deal in the works as well. It is about ensuring that we achieve a lot together for the mutual benefit of both nations," he said.Sandher, in his mid-30s, was born in the eastern England town of Luton to parents who migrated from Punjab and regularly travels back to the region with his family. While these India visits will now face a few more protocol hurdles given his new parliamentary role, his work with voluntary organisations such as Labour Indians keeps him closely connected to the country of his heritage."I think Labour Indians has helped inform policy, helped me personally as well. I'm incredibly proud of what we've

achieved and look forward to achieving even more in the weeks, months and years to come," he said of his party's diaspora outreach."I am really proud of my Indian roots and really proud of the way our contribution is reflected and recognised in this country. We watch football and then go for a curry, that is the country we live in and it says a lot about our culture," he noted.As an economist and political strategist who also spent some time as a teacher in classrooms with disadvantaged children in Somaliland, Sandher feels he has been training all his life for this new challenge in the House of

## Ukraine strikes oil depot in Russia, Moscow claims new gains

Ukraine on Sunday said it struck an oil depot in southern Russia that supplies the Kremlin's troops as Russian strikes in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where Moscow claimed further gains, left five civilians dead and 15 others wounded.

Ukraine's General Staff said in a statement Kyiv's security services were responsible for a drone strike in Russia's southern Kursk region that morning on an oil depot used to meet the needs of the Russian military, and contains 11 tanks with a total volume of 7,000 cubic metres (about 247,202 cubic feet), adding the attack prompted "powerful explosions and a fire...probably involving containers with oil products".

"The defence forces continue to take all measures to undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian occupiers and force the Russian Federation to stop its armed aggression against Ukraine," the statement said. Earlier on Sunday, Russia's Defence Ministry said seven Ukrainian drones were shot down overnight over Russian territory, while a regional offi-

to the oil depot in the Kursk province. Firefighters were battling the blaze on Sunday morning after three fuel tanks went up in flames, according to acting regional Gov Alexey Smirnov. Smirnov said nobody was hurt.

The Kursk region lies on the border with **Ukraine's Sumy** province where Ukraine has in recent months repeatedly targeted various sites, including oil depots and other military infrastructure, inside Russian territory, with drones and other weapons. Ukrainian officials have been pressuring Western allies to be able to use their modern and more sophisticated weapons to strike more valuable targets inside Russian territory.

Also on Sunday, Russian troops continued to eke out gains in Ukraine's war-torn eastern Donetsk province as they pushed westward toward the towns of Pokrovsk and Kurakhove.

Russia's Defence Ministry on Sunday said that its forces had taken control of two neighbouring villages some 30 km (19 miles) east of Pokrovsk, Prohres and Yevhenivka. The day before, Moscow claimed the nearby village of Lozuvatske, one of nearly a dozen it says it has captured in Russia started its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in Feb 2022, sending millions of peo-

the province this month.

ple fleeing to neighbouring countries. Taking control of all of Donetsk, part of the country's industrial heartland that now bears the scars of years of fighting, is one of the Kremlin's main war goals. Five civilians died and 15 more suffered wounds following Russian strikes in the Donetsk region on Saturday and overnight, local Gov Vadym Filashkin reported on Telegram Sunday. Shortly later, other Ukrainian officials said Russian shelling wounded more civilians, including children, in the east and south At least eight people suffered wounds after Moscow's forces on Sunday struck the eastern

ed that same day. Lysak said a toddler and a 10year-old girl were among the victims, six of whom had to be hospitalised.

Ukrainian city of Nikopol,

local Gov Serhii Lysak report-

Russian shelling on Sunday also wounded eight further civilians, including a 10-yearold and two teenagers, in a village in Ukraine's southern Kherson province, local official Roman Mrochko

Russia may deploy new strike weapons in response to the planned US stationing of longerrange and hypersonic missiles in Germany, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday. Speaking at a naval parade in Śt Petersburg, Putin vowed "mirror measures" after the US earlier this month announced that it will start deploying the weapons in 2026, to affirm its commitment to NATO and European defence following Moscow's all-out invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. "If the US implements such

plans, we will consider ourselves free from the previously imposed unilateral moratorium on the deployment of intermediate and shorter-range strike weapons, including increasing the capability of the coastal forces of our navy," Putin said. He added that Moscow's development of suitable systems is "in its final stage".

Both Washington and Moscow have in recent weeks signalled readiness to deploy intermediate-range ground-based weapons that were banned for tests that violated it. agreement in 2019, accusing mounted between Moscow and Moscow of conducting missile the West in the wake of the Ukrainian were ultimately contact that the US weapons to be ballistic missiles.

Putin pledges 'mirror measures' in response to US missiles in Germany



Russian President Vladimir Putin, centre, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov, second right, and Russian Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Alexander Moiseyev, right, greet sailors prior to the main naval parade marking Russian Navy Day in St. Petersburg, Russia, on Sunday

decades under a 1987 US-Soviet The allegations, which Russia er carrying 298 people over treaty. The US pulled out of the denied, came as tensions war-torn eastern Ukraine. Two

downing of a Malaysian airlin-

victed over their role in the

a joint statement this month will be capable of intercepting

placed in Germany would ultimately include SM-6 missiles, Tomahawk cruise missiles, and "developmental hypersonic weapons", including those with a significantly longer range than the ones currently deployed across Europe. Most of Russia's missile systems

are capable of carrying either conventional or nuclear warheads. Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov, said last week that the Kremlin did not rule out new deployments of nuclear missiles in response to the US move

Ryabkov added that defending Kaliningrad, Russia's heavily militarised exclave wedged between NATO members Poland and Lithuania, was of particular concern.

Putin has for years cast US deployment of missile infrastructure in Europe as an aggressive move aimed at hamstringing Moscow's capabilities. The news about the planned stationing of new veapons in Germany came at a NATO summit in Washington earlier this month. At the same event, allies announced that a new US base in Poland Ukraine's western neighbour, is Washington and Berlin said in ready to enter operation and

## Lawmakers from 6 countries pressured not to attend conference in Taiwan

Thinese diplomats are pressuring lawmakers from at least six countries not to attend a China-focused summit in Taiwan, participants told The Associated Press.

Politicians in Bolivia, Colombia, Slovakia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and one other Asian country that declined to be named, say they are getting texts, calls and urgent requests for meetings that would conflict with their plans to travel to Taiwan, in what they describe as efforts to isolate the self-governed island.

The summit begins Monday and is being held by the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, a group of hundreds of lawmakers from 35 countries concerned about how democracies approach Beijing. The Associated Press spoke to the organizers and three lawmak-

ers, and reviewed texts and emails sent by Chinese diplomats to the lawmakers asking whether they were planning to participate in the summit.

'I'm Wu, from Chinese Embassy," read a message sent to Antonio Miloshoski, a member of parliament in North Macedonia. "We heard that you got an invitation from IPAC, will you attend the Conference which will be held next week in Taiwan?"

In some cases, lawmakers described vague inquiries about their plans to travel to Taiwan. In other cases, the contact was more menacing: One lawmaker told AP that Chinese diplomats messaged the head of her party with a demand to stop her from going.
"They sent a direct message to

the President of my party, to stop me from traveling to Taiwan," said Sanela Klaric, a member of parliament in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "He

showed me the message from them. He said, I will advise you not to go, but I cannot stop you, it's something you have to make a decision

China routinely threatens retaliation against politicians and countries that show support for Taiwan, which has only informal relations with most countries due to Chinese diplomatic pressure. Klaric said the pressure was unpleasant but only steeled her determination to go on the trip "I really am fighting against

countries or societies where the tool to manipulate and control peoples is fear," said Klaric, adding that it reminded her of threats and intimidation she faced while suffering through the Balkans war in the 1990s. "I really hate the feeling when somebody is frightening you.' China vehemently defends its claim to Taiwan, a self-governed island that Beijing views

as its own territory to be

annexed by force if necessary Last week, Beijing criticized Taiwan for its annual Han Kuang military drills, saying that Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party was "carrying out provocations to seek independence?

Any attempt to whip up tensions and use force to seek independence or reject reunification is doomed to failure," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters. The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, which aims to coordinate diplomacy in response to perceived threats from Beijing, has long faced pressure from the Chinese government. Some members have been sanctioned by Beijing, and in 2021 the group was targeted by Chinese state-sponsored hackers, according to a U.S. indictment unsealed earlier this year.

## Mobile internet restored in B'desh

The mobile internet connection was restored in Bangladesh on Sunday, 10 days after it was restricted by the authorities across the country to stop the spread of fake news on social media amidst the deadly nationwide violence over reforms in the quota system in government

Addressing a press conference here, Minister of State for Information Communication Technology (ICT) Zunaid Ahmed Palak announced that 5GB internet will be given for free to all users for three days after the connection is restored, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported

The mobile internet connectivity was restored at around 3:00 pm local time.

Users of Robi, Grameenphone, Banglalink and other operators in Dhaka said they could access the internet through their phones around 3 pm, the

On July 18, the government shut down mobile internet following the escalation of violence across the country. At the time, Palak said the decision was made "in light of the current crisis in the country and to stop the spread of fake news on social media", The Daily Star newspaper reported.

The next day, amid escalating violence, the Department of Disaster Management building was set on fire, adjacent to which was a data centre. While Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB) officials said that the fire might cut 30-40 per cent of the bandwidth supply, broadband internet connection for the entire country was disrupted within an hour.

Bangladesh stayed disconnected from both broadband and mobile internet between July 18 and July 23, when broadband internet was restored in

However, mobile internet

remained unavailable until Sunday. Regarding access to social

media platforms, Palak said Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has sent letters to authorities of social media platforms, including Facebook, Tiktok and YouTube.

'Their representatives have to come to Dhaka by July 31 to give explanations. Then, after discussing it with them, we will make a decision," he said. The BTRC is responsible for regulating all matters related to telecommunications Bangladesh.

Bangladesh witnessed violent clashes between the police and mostly student protesters demanding an end to a controversial quota system that reserved 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's War Independence in 1971.

The internet and mobile services were snapped following

the countrywide violence. On Monday last, the apex court slashed the veterans' quota to just 5 per cent. Thus, 93 per cent of civil service jobs will be merit-based while the

ties, transgender and physically challenged people. The violence has reportedly killed more than 100 people, according to local newspapers. However, there are no

remaining 2 per cent reserved

for members of ethnic minori-

official figures available for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday defended her decision to enforce a curfew with a shoot-on-sight order following the clashes, asserting

that tough measures were taken to ensure the security of the lives and properties of the Bangladesh crawled back to normalcy on Wednesday with

rush hour traffic returning to streets in the capital, and limited reopening of banks, garment factories and internet

## Reformist formally takes | Meloni aims to reset | Bilawal's party says ready over as Iran president



In this photo released by an official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader. Supreme Leader Avatollah Ali Khamenei, centre, gives his official seal of approval to newly elected President Masoud Pezeshkian, as acting Presiden Mohammad Mokhber stands at left, in an endorsement ceremony in Tehran, Iran, on Sunday

**AP** ■ TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader on Sunday formally endorsed Masoud Pezeshkian as president, allowing the reformist politician and heart surgeon to take charge of a country weakened by economic sanctions over its nuclear programme. During an endorsement ceremony, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged Pezeshkian to prioritise neighbours, African and Asian nations as well as countries that have "supported and helped" Iran in Tehran's foreign rela-

tions policies. Khamenei criticised European nations for "behaving badly to us" by adopting sanctions, an oil embargo and for calling out alleged human rights abuses. He also condemned Israel for its actions in Gaza in the deaths of children, women and hospitalised people "who did not shoot a single bullet" against

Israeli forces "The Zionist regime is showing

its ugliest face as a war criminal," said Khamenei, accusing Israel of setting a "new record in assassinations" and cruelty. He also denounced the US Congress for allowing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address the legislative body. Speaking at the same ceremo-

ny, Pezeshkian paid homage to Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the architect of Iran's regional military activities, who was killed in ÚS drone attack in 2020. He reiterated his promise to pursue a "constructive and efficient" foreign policy, bolster the rule of law offer equal opportunities to citizens, support families and protect the environment.

In his first official act in office, Pezeshkian appointed Mohammad Reza Aref, 72, as his first vice-president. Aref, who's considered a moderate reformist, held the post between 2001-2005 under former president Mohammad has identified.

Khatami. Aref holds a doctorate in engineering from Stanford University.
Pezeshkian takes over from

his predecessor Ebrahim Raisi whose death in a May helicopter crash that sparked the early election. He will take the oath of office in parliament Tuesday and will have two weeks to form his own cabinet for a vote of confidence in parliament. The new Iranian president

pledged in his election campaign that he would make no radical changes to Iran's Shiite theocracy, embracing Khamenei as the final arbiter in all matters of state. Pezeshkian could bend Iran's foreign policy toward either confrontation or collaboration with the West and faces the constant challenge of hard-liners still pulling the strings in government.

Pezeshkian has tried to walk the line between hard-liners and reformists with whom he

Beijing (AP): Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni is on an official visit to China this week to try to reset relations as fears of a trade war with the European Union are interwoven with continued interest in attracting Chinese investment in auto manufacturing and

other sectors Meloni met Chinese Premier Li Qiang in the Chinese capital on Sunday ahead of a forum with Italian and Chinese business leaders.

Her five-day visit comes several months after Italy dropped out of China's Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of Chinese leader Xi Jinping to build power and transportation infrastructure around the world to stimulate global trade while also deepening China's ties with other nations.

Italy's decision to join in 2019 appeared to be a political coup for China, giving it an inroad into Western Europe and a symbolic boost in a then-raging trade war with the United States. But Italy says the promised economic benefits didn't materialise, and its mem-bership created friction with other Western European governments and the United States. Still, Italy remains keen to pursue an otherwise strong economic relationship with China. Stellantis, a major automaker that includes Italy's Fiat, announced in May that it had formed a joint venture with Leapmotor, a Chinese electric car startup, to begin selling EVs in Europe. Electric vehicles have become a symbol of growing China-EU trade tensions, with the European Union imposing provisional tariffs of up to 37.6 per cent on Chinamade electric vehicles in early

## to talk with Imran Khan tiations, and the PPP would

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Peoples Partyled by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that it is ready to talk with jailed former prime minister Imran Khan if the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder is willing to engage, amidst heightened political instability in the cash-strapped country

"It is being said that the PTI founder is ready to talk. If Imran Khan is ready to talk then that's a positive thing, Senior PPP leader Khurshid Shah said while speaking to the media in Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan. Shah welcomed the possibili-

ty of talks as a positive development. "President Asif Ali Zardari has always tried to solve problems through nego-

play its role if needed," Shah was quoted as saying by the Express Tribune newspaper. The PPP's willingness to engage with Khan's party comes amidst heightened political instability, following the PTI's hard-line stance against the incumbent Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led government. The PPP, along with the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and other allies, supports the PML-N of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The two former rivals recently witnessed a war of words. The ruling PML-N accepted all the demands of PPP over the federal budget and allocation of development funds.

Since Khan's ouster through a vote of no confidence in 2022, the PTI has maintained a

strong opposition to the PPP-PML-N alliance. Political tensions increased after the February 8 elections, which saw the two parties forming a coalition govern-

ment in the Centre. Calls for reconciliation have been growing from various societal and political quarters, urging the PTI to negotiate with the government. Khan's party had previously rejected talks with what it termed the "Form-47 government," instead showing a preference for dialogue with the military establishment. In April, PTI's Shehryar Afridi indicated a preference for negotiations with Army chief Ğen Asim Munir and the Director General of Inter-Services

Intelligence (DG ISI).

## Venezuelan poll to have ripple effects throughout Americas

**AP** CARACAS

 $P^{\rm olls\ have\ opened\ in}_{\rm Venezuela,\ where\ people}$ are voting Sunday in a presidential election whose outcome will either lead to a seismic shift in politics or extend by six more years the policies that caused the world's worst peacetime economic collapse.

Whether it is President Nicolás Maduro who is chosen, or his main opponent, retired diplomat Edmundo González, the election will have ripple effects throughout the Americas. Government opponents and supporters alike have signalled their interest in joining the exodus of 7.7 million Venezuelans who have already left their homes for opportunities abroad should Maduro win another term.

Polls open at 6 am local time. The number of eligible voters is estimated to be around 17 million. Authorities set Sunday's election to coincide with what would have been the 70th birthday of former President Hugo Chávez, the revered leftist firebrand who died of cancer in 2013, leaving his Bolivarian revolution in the hands of Maduro. But Maduro and his United Socialist Party of Venezuela are more unpopular than ever among many voters who blame his policies for crushing wages, spurring hunger, crippling the oil industry and separating families due to migration.

Maduro, 61, is facing off against an opposition that has managed to line up behind a single canto topple the ruling party.

didate after years of intraparty divisions and election boycotts that torpedoed their ambitions González is representing a coalition of opposition parties after being selected in April as

sition powerhouse Maria Corina Machado, who was blocked by the Maduro-controlled Supreme Tribunal of Justice from running for any office for 15 years.

Machado, a former lawmaker, swept the opposition's October primary with over 90% of the vote. After she was blocked from joining the presidential race, she chose a college professor as her substitute on the ballot, but the National Electoral Council also barred her from registering. That's when González, a political newcomer, was chosen.

Sunday's ballot also features eight other candidates challenging Maduro, but only González threatens Maduro's rule. Venezuela sits atop the world's largest proven oil reserves, and once boasted Latin America's most advanced economy. But it entered into a a last-minute stand-in for oppofree fall after Maduro took the

helm. Plummeting oil prices, widespread shortages and hyperinflation that soared past 130,000% led first to social unrest and then mass emigration. Sanctions from US President Donald Trump's administration seeking to force Maduro from power after his 2018 reelection - which the US and dozens of other countries condemned as illegitimate only deepened the crisis.

In recent days, Maduro has crisscrossed Venezuela, inaugurating hospital wards and highways and visiting rural areas where he had not set foot in years. His pitch to voters is one of economic security, which he underscores with stories of entrepreneurship and references to a stable currency exchange and lower inflation rates. The capital, Caracas, saw an increase in commercial activity after the pandemic, bolstering an economy the

International Monetary Fund forecasts will grow 4% this year - one of the fastest in Latin America - after having shrunk 71% from 2012 to 2020.

"They tried to subjugate our people," Maduro said of the United States during his closing rally Thursday in Caracas, "but today we are standing tall and ready for victory on the 28th of But most Venezuelans have

not seen any improvement in their quality of life. Many earn under \$200 a month, which means families struggle to afford essential items. Some work second and third jobs. A basket of basic staples - sufficient to feed of family of four for a month - costs an estimated \$385. The opposition has tried to seize on the huge inequities arising from the crisis, during which Venezuelans abandoned their country's currency, the bolivar, for the US dollar.

## Making exaggerated, bogus claims to get refunds punishable offence: I-T Department

INCOME TAX

The I-T Department has ■ asked income tax return filers to not make bogus claims for expenses, underreport their earnings or exaggerate deductions as this is a punishable offence and causes a delay in issuance of refunds

The ITR filing season for assessment year 2024-25 will end on July 31 for all categories of taxpayers whose accounts are not supposed to be audited.

According to the Income Tax Department and its administrative body Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), over five crore ITRs have been filed, as of July 26. recent communication, the Income Tax Department asked taxpayers to file their returns correctly to get timely refunds. "Refund claims are subject to verification checks, which may cause delays. Accurate filing of ITR leads to quicker processing of refunds. Any discrepancies in the claims made will prompt a request for a revised return (to be filed by the taxpayer)," It cautioned ITR filing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

workspace.

DCCDL

ago period.

 $R^{\text{ealty firm DLF's rental}}_{\text{arm DCCDL has posted}}$ 

an 11 per cent annual increase

in office rental income to Rs

942 crore during the first

quarter of this fiscal on better

demand for its premium

DLF Cyber City Developers

Ltd (DCCDL) is a joint venture between DLF and

Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC.

DLF holds a 66.67 per cent stake, while the GIC has a

33.33 per cent stake in

According to the latest

investor presentation, DCCDL's rental income from

office buildings rose to Rs 942

crore during the April-June period of the current fiscal

from Rs 851 crore in the year-

The rental income from retail

cent to Rs 210 crore in the

first quarter of this fiscal from

On the commercial real estate

segment, DLF said it has achieved "double-digit rental

Rs 192 crore a year ago.

taxpayers that their claims should be "correct and accurate?

"Filing a false or bogus claim is a punishable offence," the public communication said. Taxpayers can claim a variety of deductions and exemptions to lower their tax liability under the old ITR filing regime while those opting for the new regime will get a lower tax rate but cannot avail

DLF-GIC JV firm DCCDL's office

rental income rises in April-June

through

developments".

93 per cent.

and

'Significant increase in retail

presence; portfolio to grow to

2 times in the next 4-5 years,"

DLF said it is unlocking the

development potential and

also modernising existing

On the financial performance

front, DCCDL's revenue has

grown 10 per cent annually to

Rs 1,553 crore in the April-June period of 2024-25 from

organic

"incorrect" Tax Deducted at

Source (TDS) amounts, not

"under-report" their income

or "exaggerate" deductions or

submit claims for "bogus"

The department informed the

these benefits

Chairman Agrawal had recently told PTI during a post-Budget review that more than 66 per cent of ITR filings this time were under the new regime which is being promoted by the government to make the direct tax system better and

The communication stated that in case due refunds are delayed, taxpayers should check their e-filing account to see if the I-T department has sent them any message in this context and if yes, then it should be responded through the "pending action and worklist section" tab.

Rs 1,411 crore in the year-ago

market capitalisation.

DLF has developed more than

178 real estate projects

comprising more than 349

DLF Group has 220 million square feet of development

potential across residential

development and leasing of

and

and retail

the

and commercial segments.

million square feet of area.

asked about the recent Budget proposal of withholding the refund being extended up to 60 days, from the existing thirty days, from the date on which such assessment or reassessment is made.

He said such cases "would not substantial be very numbers.

This is basically in those cases where there is already a demand in the case of the same assessee or the demand is likely to arise," Agrawal

Suppose, he said, the refund has been generated but the assessment proceeding is going on and it is felt that there is a demand that is likely to come.

The provisions are that once the assessment is completed, then an assessee gets 30 days to pay the demand. So, demand gets due 30 days after the assessment and therefore. to adjust the refund, that 30day period has to be there, and therefore, this timeline. "It is just rationalising that

effectively. But then those refunds would be not very Currently, holding

PSU banks may get another 2-year extension to comply with MPS norms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Public sector banks are expected to get another two-year extension to comply with Sebi's minimum public shareholding (MPS) norms, a top Government official has

Out of 12 public sector banks (PSBs), five are yet to comply with MPS norms and the government's holding beyond 75 per cent.

As per the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), all listed companies must maintain an MPS of 25 per cent.

However, the regulator gave special forbearance to stateowned banks till August 2024 to meet the requirement of 25 per cent MPS.
"We have written to the

Department of Economic Affairs for the extension," Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi told PTI in an interview.

Generally, he said, a two-year extension is given and hopefully it should come sooner than later.

Five banks have minimum public shareholding of less than 25 per cent.

Overseas Bank at 96.38 per cent, UCO Bank 95.39 per cent, Central Bank of India 93.08 per cent, Bank of Maharashtra at 86.46 per

It is expected that the government holding in Bank of Maharashtra could come below 75 per cent during the current fiscal, he said.

cent.

However, Joshi said, the banks' will take decision on share sale through Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) or other route depending on capital absorption their needs.

Depending conditions, each of these banks will take a call in the best interest of shareholders, he added.

it will be anchored by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and released during the current fiscal.

"The strategy we have for Vision 2047 will be covered in this document. For example, how many banks will be needed for a Viksit Bharat, and how many global banks like SBI and ICICI Bank will be required by 2047.

"We need a strategy to modernise regulations and regulators in anticipation of changes where banks will not only be banking companies also informationtechnology companies," he

The Department has done some work while legislation is another big area being reviewed, he said, adding, the would completed during the current

#### WTO accepts India, Taipei's request on ICT import duty dispute ruling PTI NEW DELHI

The WTO's dispute settlement body has accepted a request from India and Chinese Taipei not to adopt the ruling against New Delhi's import duties on certain information and technology products till October-end, as both sides are engaged in resolving the matter mutually, an official

The issue came up during a meeting of the dispute settlement body (DSB) in

Geneva on July 26. The DSB agreed to the latest requests from Chinese Taipei and India," the Geneva-based

official said. At the July 26 meeting, India and Chinese Taipei once again requested additional time from the DSB to consider the adoption of the panel rulings in the case initiated by Chinese Taipei

regarding India's tariffs on certain high-tech goods. The two sides had asked that the DSB further delay consideration of the panel reports until October 28, 2024, to help facilitate the resolution of the disputes.

The dispute body had earlier agreed to four previous such requests from India and Chinese Taipei to delay consideration of the reports. As per the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the panel's ruling will have to be adopted by the DSB for implementation within 60 days of the release of the order. However, countries can mutually request the body to delay the adoption of the

In its report, a dispute panel of the WTO on April 17, 2023, said import duties imposed by India on certain information and technology products violate global trading norms.

ruling.

The ruling followed a case filed by the EU, Japan and Taiwan against these duties in

In May 2019, Chinese Taipei filed a case against India in the WTO over the import duties imposed on certain

electronic goods, including telephones for cellular networks; machines for reception, conversion and transmission or regeneration of voice, images or other data; and parts of telephone sets. India has stated that these ICT products are part of WTO's Information not a part of this pact. India is

#### government Delhi-based substantial in number, they Asked about the Budget Punjab & Sind Bank is 98.25 of the would be very minuscule. It is announcement document per cent. It is followed by Chennai-based Indian only enablement," the head of financial sector vision and the direct taxes body said. Indian strategy document, Joshi said FPIs invest ₹33,600 cr in equities in July amid

continued policy reforms, good earnings season

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Poreign investors injected over Rs 33,600 crore into Its profit after tax increased 20 per cent to Rs 470 crore from Rs 391 crore in the Indian equities so far this month on the expectation of continued policy reforms, corresponding period of the sustained economic growth We continue to have a and a better-than-expected positive outlook on the rental earnings season. business and are accelerating

However, they pulled out over Rs 7,200 crore from equities our capex commitments to further strengthen our rental portfolio and deliver healthy in the last three trading sessions (July 24-26) after the growth," DLF said. DLF is India's largest real government hiked taxes on Futures and Options trades (F&O) and capital gains from estate developer in terms of equity investments in the In the past seven decades,

Market experts believe that Indian equity is wellpositioned for the year to attract foreign investments. However, there may be some monthly volatility due to short-term news.

"Indian equity market and bond market are favourably placed for the year. This attract f properties (the Development into the country. There could be some volatility in the flows on a month-on-month basis due to short-term news flows," Nimesh Chandan, properties (the Annuity Business). CIO of Bajaj Finserv AMC,



According to the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of Rs 33,688 crore in equities this month (till July 26).

This came following an inflow of Rs 26,565 crore in equities in June, driven by political stability and the Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty

Mauritius and

sustained rise in US bond

Economically, India stands on a strong footing. Moreover, the better-thanexpected earnings season so far has improved corporate India's balance sheet that would help in building investor confidence.

"Furthermore, there interest rate cut by the US Federal September," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director

Manager Research at Morningstar Investment is that whenever FPIs were consistent sellers, DIIs were consistent buyers. The large inflow of money

Research India, said.

Upward revisions in India's GDP forecast by the IMF and ADB, and a slowdown in China work in India's favour, he added.

A key trend in FPIs and domestic institutional investors' (DII) investment in

equity over the last 30 months

into domestic mutual funds and the growing influence of retail investors domestic strengthened investors compared to their foreign counterparts, VK Chief Vijavakumar, Investment Strategist, Geojit

Financial Services, said. Apart from equities, FPIs invested Rs 19,223 crore in the debt market during the period under review. This has pushed the debt tally to Rs 87,847 crore this year so far. With the international bond indices, foreign flows are expected to come into the Indian bond market. This is likely to push G-Sec yields lower, Bajaj Finserv AMC's Chandan said.

Technology Products (ITA-2) a part of ITA-1, signed in 1997, which did not have any obligation to eliminate customs duties on these

## Ultra Tech to acquire additional 32.72% stake in India Cements

At present, DCCDL has a It is primarily engaged in the

portfolio of 42 million square business of the development

and

commercial

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading cement UltraTech will acquire an additional 32.72 per cent stake in India Cements Ltd from the promoters of the South-based company for Rs 3,954 crore. The board of the Aditya Birla firm on Sunday approved the proposal to acquire the promoters' 32.72 per cent stake at Rs 390 per share, UltraTech said in a regulatory filing on Sunday. It has entered into three share

purchase agreements to acquire 32.72 per cent of the equity share capital of ICL from the promoter family led by Srinivasan N and Gurunath, along with the holding entities.

After the completion of the Rs 3,954 crore deal, UltraTech's stake in India Cements Ltd (ICL) will reach over 55 per cent, mandating it to go for an open offer as per

the Sebi regulations.
The board UltraTech has also approved an "open offer for up to 8.05 crore equity shares representing 26 per cent of the equity share capital of the target, at a price of Rs 390 per equity share from the public shareholders of Target', the

filing said. The price offered by UltraTech is 4.1 per cent higher than the ICL shares' closing price of Rs 374.60 last Friday.



Rs 3,954 crore at Rs 390/share for buying 32.72 per cent stake in India Cements from the promoters & their associates.

associates.
"This will trigger a mandatory open offer at Rs 390/ share. The Open Offer will be done subsequently after obtaining all regulatory approvals," said a statement from the company.

Earlier, in June, UltraTech acquired 23 per cent shares of ICL. It had acquired Damanigroup's stake in India Cements Ltd (ICL) through two block deals, estimated at around Rs 1,900 crore.

"The proposed transaction is, therefore, an endeavour to extend the company's footprint and presence in the highly fragmented, competitive and fast-growing

"Post signing of SPA and obtaining regulatory approvals, UltraTech will pay Province of SPA and country, particularly Tamil Nadu, where it has limited presence," said UltraTech.

This primary acquisition is subject to the receipt of applicable statutory and regulatory approvals from the Competition Commission of India and others.

Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said India Cements opportunity is an exciting one as it enables UltraTech to serve the Southern markets more effectively and also accelerates our path to over 200 MTPA capacity.
"UltraTech Cement's

investments over the years, both organic and inorganic, have been designed to propel India to become a building solutions champion globally. Every investment in a core sector like cement accelerates economic activity and drives

progress." the cement flagship compartments have also of the Aditya Birla Group. Southern market in the

infrastructure powering the growing need for housing, roads, and other vital infrastructure. This, in turn, has had a tremendous impact on the lives and aspirations of people," he added. ICL has a total group capacity of 16 MTPA, including 1.5

MTPA from its subsidiary Trinetra Cement Ltd. While UltraTech has a consolidated capacity of

152.7 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) of grey cement.

24 integrated It has manufacturing units, 33 grinding units, clinkerisation unit and 8 bulk packaging terminals.

Its capacity, over the past two decades, "has grown 11x, far outpacing the industry growth of 4x", according to an earlier statement by the

"It took 36 years for the cement business of Aditya Birla Group to get to a capacity of 100 MTPA. And UltraTech has subsequently added the next 50 mtpa in less than 5 years with an investment of around Rs 32,000 crore," it added. In the last AGM in 2023, Birla

had set a target for 200 MTPA, aiming to become one of the largest cement companies in the world. UltraTech Cement Limited is the cement flagship company

#### Removal of angel tax for startups to help attract investors: Goyal



**PTI** ■ MUMBAI

ommerce ✓Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday said that removal of angel tax, which was introduced in 2012 by the UPA government, for all classes of investors will help startups

investments. He also said that the customs duty reduction for gold and silver from 15 per cent to 6 per cent will not only help small artisans but also promote the country's gems and

jewellery exports. "The Budget 2024-25 has removed the angel tax and through it, we will be able to attract investors into the country," he said here at a post-budget interaction with the industry.

Further Goyal informed that the budget has announced the setting up fair market value.

of 12 industrial townships in the country.

He said that one of these will be in Maharashtra and it will help create jobs and a strong ecosystem for the industry and trade. The budget has

announceď steps diamond trade. India is a world leader in the diamond cutting and polishing industry, which

employs a large number of skilled workers. budget The announced that India would provide for safe harbour rates for foreign mining companies selling raw diamonds in the

country. Angel tax (income tax at 30 per cent rate) was imposed on funding raised by unlisted companies, or startups, if their valuation exceeded the company's

#### Bill for NFIR at advanced stage, likely to be introduced in next session: DEA

The Bill for setting up a National Financial Information Registry (NFIR) is in the advanced stage of preparation, and it may be introduced in the next session of Parliament, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth has said.

"It is at an advanced stage. It is in the closing stages of interministerial consultation. We will finalise the Bill soon," he told PTI in a post-budget interview.

However, he said, it cannot be introduced in the ongoing session of Parliament but may be in the next session

The objective is to build a public infrastructure for credit-related information, and the right information can be made available by the NFIR to lending agencies.

A National Finance

Financial Information Registry will serve as the central repository of financial and ancillary information. This will facilitate the efficient

flow of credit, promote financial inclusion, and foster

financial stability.

The passage of the Bill will enable in setting up of a registry and thus help in consolidating all financial information and facilitating financial inclusion, and take the Indian economy onto a the Indian economy onto a faster growth trajectory.
The Budget 2023-24

proposed setting up of NFIR

as a central repository of

financial information to facilitate the efficient flow of stability in the country.

credit, promote financial inclusion and foster financial Talking about growth projection in the Budget, Seth said it has assumed a

reasonable nominal GDP growth rate of 10.5 per cent, as a higher assumption could have led to a larger fiscal deficit. "As far as the current year is concerned, fiscal prudence

places the demand on us that

we are realistic or a bit conservative in assuming what the potential revenues may be while at the same time providing provisions for productive priorities of the government. That is what this Budget does," he said. Compared to the interim Budget, he said, there is a higher provision of about Rs 90,000 crore, including for newer schemes. In that context, he said, "10.5 per cent, we feel, is a reasonable estimate of nominal growth in the

## India set for double-digit medal haul at Paris Olympics, says Nita Ambani

fter the highs of Tokyo A Olympics where India secured their best ever medal haul, the country is poised to get medals in double digits in Paris, sports administrator and IOC member Nita Ambani has

Talking to PTI in an exclusive interaction on the sidelines of the opening of 'India House' at La Villette, she also said the day India hosts the Olympics is "not far".

In October last year, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi had announced India's bold intent to bid for the 2036 Olympics, pledging to spare no effort to fulfil the dream of 1.4 billion people in the country.

'We are going to do very well. Forty seven per cent of our athletes are girls. All for women power and all for our young boys and girls, we are rooting and cheering for them. I hope we can see double digits in medals for the first time. Go India go, make India proud," Nita said. day after the Paris Olympics began with a



ceremony that had the attention of the world, the India House, the first-ever country house at the Olympics, had a star-studded opening ceremony attended by BCCI secretary Jay Shah and IOC officials and administrators.

'India has arrived. It is time that the flame that was first lit in Athens must light the sky in our ancient land -Bharat. The day is not far when India will host the Olympic Games. Let this be our collective resolve at the

opening of the India House," she added.

"For the first time, India has its own house at the Paris 2024 Olympics. It's a place where we are going to honour our athletes, celebrate their achievements, and wish them well.

"We will celebrate our heritage and our culture, with many of our artisans present and cultural programs scheduled. This is going to be a home away from home for our athletes.

Asked how this idea come to her mind, she said: "When I went to Brazil, Korea Winter Olympics, and then Tokyo, we didn't have an India House. 'I just felt that India, with its

1.4 billion people, needed a house of its own. So that's when I started thinking about having an Indian House at the Olympics for our athletes and everyone to see what the spirit of India really is.

"Envisioned as a symbol of India's Olympic aspiration, we hope that it becomes a home away from home for our athletes where we honour them and salute their achievements," she added.

## Ramita qualifies for women's 10m air rifle final at Olympics



**PTI** CHATEAUROUX (FRANCE)

Tndia's Ramita Jindal gave a **⊥**strong display marksmanship to qualify for the women's 10m air rifle final in fifth place even as Elavenil Valarivan succumbed to pressure to miss out despite being contenders, finishing 10th at the Olympic Games here on Sunday.

Ramita, the Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist in the event, aggregated 631.5 to become

the second shooter from the country after pistol exponent Manu Bhaker to secure a berth in the final, while Elavenil scored 630.7. Ramita had a sluggish start and was not among the topeight till the sixth and final series but she rallied superbly to book a berth in the final while stalwart Elavenil, who had finished 16th at the Tokyo Olympics three years back, held on to the fifth position for much of the qualification round. But a poor last series of 103.8

iunior world champion take a mighty tumble from fifth to 10th slot and miss the eightshooter final.

Ramita, who had scored 636.4 points, 0.1 more than the world record during the Olympic Selection Trials in New Delhi and Bhopal, was patchy initially, shooting a below-par 104.6 in the opening series before she shot 106.1 in the next round. Another ordinary 104.9 was followed by two successive 105.3 and a 105.7 which fetched her a dream entry into the final.

South Korea's Ban Hyojin smashed the Qualification Olympic Record (QOR) with a superb score of 634.5 eclipsing the previous mark of 632.9 set by Norway's Jeanette Hegg in Tokyo Games.

Elavenil, who had struggled following the Tokyo Games and could not enter the squad for the Hangzhou Asian Games last year, kept averaging a score of 10.5 throughout the qualifying round as she shot superb series of 105.8, 106.1, 104.4, 105.3, 105.3 but a rank poor final series of 103.8 saw her

## Sindhu opens campaign with dominant win over Fathimath

 $T^{\text{wo-time Olympic medallist}}_{\text{Indian shuttler PV Sindhu}}$  began her Paris Olympics campaign with a resounding straight games win over Maldives' Fathimath Abdul Razzaq in the women's singles group stage match, here on Sunday

The gulf of class between the two players was evident as Sindhu, who is vying for a third Olympic medal, took just 29 minutes to dispatch her lowerranked opponent 21-9 21-6 in the Group M fixture.

"It was a good start, I am happy. I was able to get used to the court and the atmosphere. It has been a long time, coming back after three years, it's a very special one. 2016 (Olympics) was different and 2020 (2021) was completely different. It is a sort of mixture of both," said Sindhu about her Olympic journey.

'I am enjoying and looking to the second match."

After a couple of unforced errors, Sindhu was quick to assess the condition and took control of the proceedings, racing to a 11-4 lead.

The world No 111 Fathimath



finished the first game in a mere 13 minutes.

The second game followed a similar manner with Sindhu claiming the first four points in the blink of an eye to take an early lead.

However, Razzaq capitalised on Sindhu's error to bridge the gap to make it 3-4. But it

was no match against the became a one-sided contest former world champion who once again as the Indian increased the gap to 10-3.

In the end, Sindhu had as many as 14 match points but the world No 13 needed only one to seal the tie.

The 10th seeded Indian, who won the silver medal in the Rio Games in 2016 and a bronze in the last edition in Tokyo, will take on World No 75 Kristin

Kuuba of Estonia in her second group match on Wednesday. Sindhu has been mentored by legendary Prakash

Padukone in the past few months, and she said the association has been beneficial "I have been with Prakash sir

and it's going on very well.

Everything is coming together.

for more than six months now

very well to work together," she

"Prakash sir is a legend, he is very experienced and he will come and tell me what is required, what I need to

Asked about the aspects of her game which has improved since she started working with Padukone, she said, "Overall, it has not she gad the work I feel but changed the way I feel but there have been add-ons. 'When after I got injured It was

getting difficult to move well

on court and it was at times getting hard to get the momentum back. We worked on that, we worked on strokes, not just on net and defence but on overall game. You need to be at your 100 per cent in every big tournament or on every

She said mental strength is very important for especially during a big event like the Olympics.

"It is very important to be mentally strong. You at times don't know what is happening, everything gone from you. We worked on the mental things also. I tried to be positive, keep

## US women's Olympic basketball team fine-tunes its defense ahead of first game

saw the 24-year-old former

AP PARIS

One of the challenges that the U.S. Women's basketball team faces at the Paris Olympics with limited practice time is getting everyone on the same page defensively. There's no doubt that all 12

players on the roster can score at will, but it takes time to build the chemistry and trust necessary to be a great defensive team.

For now, it's a work in progress, with the first test coming Monday against Japan.

"We spent a little more time on it," U.S. Coach Cheryl Reeve said before practice Sunday. "Each team that you play poses a different challenge. Certainly Japan, you know plays different than the rest of the group. We have to tweak our scheme a little bit."

Japan plays a style with all five players on the perimeter, which negates a little bit of the Americans' interior advantage. That means that players like Brittney Griner, A'ja Wilson and Breanna Stewart may have to guard more on the outside with no true post player for the Japanese team. "I know I may have to play outside more defensively and

I'm ready for it," Griner said. The two teams met for the gold medal in the Tokyo Games and the Americans came away with a 90-75 victory. Griner finished with 30 points, points, making 14 of her 18 shots. It was the most points ever by a U.S. Player in a gold medal game, surpassing the 29 by Lisa Leslie in 1996

While the Americans have been able to outscore their opponents easily during the game Olympic winning streak that dates to the 1992 Barcelona Games, being able to stop the opponent certainly

The U.S. Gave up an average of Games, the most since the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, when the streak of seven straight gold medals started.

There is a wealth of talented defenders on the U.S. Team. It just takes a little bit of time to get used to playing with one another and the defensive plan that Reeve has installed. The U.S. Had only about 14 hours practice time together before the Olympic opener. "I think the biggest thing was

taking away our schemes that we may have with our (WNBA) teams where we just know how to guard people and just trust the process," two-time WNBA defensive player of the year A'ja Wilson said. 'Sometimes we're just so used to schemes and this player wants to get here versus overseas is like literally just play everyone honest. Wilson said the biggest thing is

trust and that just takes time. "The more we play alongside each other, the better," she added. "I think we're slowly starting to trust each other and getting an understanding of just knowing we have to have layers and we're starting

#### **Olympics pre-race triathlon** event in Seine River cancelled over water quality concerns

**AP** ■ PARIS

oncerns over the water Cquality of Paris' Seine River Olympics, with a pre-race triathlon event there canceled Sunday.

Organizers said they nixed the

swimming leg of the triathlon familiarization scheduled for Sunday morning after a meeting about water quality among authorities tasked with carrying out water quality tests. That included representatives of World Triathlon, as well as city and regional authorities. Swimming in the Seine has been banned for over a century in big part due to poor water quality. Organizers have invested \$1.5 billion to prepare the Seine for these Games, and the government has said the river would be clean enough to hold events, including the swimming portion of the triathlon and the marathon swimming

Daily water quality tests in early June indicated unsafe levels of E. Coli bacteria, followed by recent improvements. Parisian Mayor Anne Hidalgo took a famous dip in the river less than two weeks before Olympic events were set to start, fulfilling a promise to show that the long-polluted waterway was clean enough to



host swimming competitions. Heavy rain during the opening ceremony revived concerns over whether the long-polluted waterway will be clean enough to host swimming competitions, since water quality is deeply linked with the weather in the French capital. Since 2015, organizers have invested heavily to prepare the Seine for the Olympics and to ensure Parisians have a cleaner river after the Games. The plan included constructing a giant underground water storage basin in central Paris, renovating sewer infrastructure and upgrading wastewater treatment plants.

Triathleletes have expressed hope that the waters would be clean enough for them to swim

"Hopefully we get to swim, bike and run because I don't swim this much to just run and bike," Spanish triathlete Alberto Gonzalez said.

#### **Australian cyclist undergoes abdominal** surgery after fall during Olympic time trial

ustralian cyclist Lucas underwent abdominal surgery overnight at a Paris hospital following a hard crash on rain-slicked time trial on Saturday, the Australian team said.

AusCycling, Australia's cycling governing body, confirmed the procedure early Sunday. No other details were available.

Plapp was among the last riders to start on the 32.4-kilometer (20-mile) course and was laying down a medalworthy ride at the first time check, trailing then-leader and eventual bronze medalist Wout van Aert by just two seconds. But when Plapp reached a technical portion of the course, his bike slid out from under him and he crashed hard onto the pavement.

The crash was not shown on the race broadcast, but AusCycling said Plapp was conscious and moving afterward. He was lifted into the team vehicle and taken to the hospital for precautionary scans, and later he required the abdominal procedure. "Plapp slid under a barrier

fence shortly after passing the first checkpoint approximately 14 kilometers into the 32-kilometer course," AusCycling said. "His parents



and an Australian team doctor were at the hospital with him."

The 23-year-old Plapp, who won bronze at the Tokyo Games as part of the Australian pursuit team, is the reigning national time trial and road race champion. He was supposed to ride alongside Simon Clarke in support of teammate Michael Matthews in the Olympic road race next Saturday.

Remco Evenepoel won the time trial, giving Belgium two riders on the podium, while Filippo Ganna of Italy finished second. But both the women's and men's races were marred by a series of crashes on a course made treacherous

by the rain.

Among those who fell was American rider Dygert, the reigning time trial world champion, who remounted her bike and rallied to finish third behind gold medalist Grace Brown of Australia and Henderson of Britain.

"If we were in Britain, these (conditions) would be absolutely perfect. The roads are better to take corners on. When we're in Spain, France or Italy, I feel like it's a little more icy," said Dygert, who still plans to compete in the road race and team pursuit this Olympics. "But for sure it definitely plays a factor into the race itself.

## Small town comes to life for Olympics but with fair share of organisational hurdles

PTI ■ CHATEAUROUX (FRANCE),

Norway shooting coach Tore Brovold, the silver medallist at the 2008 Olympics, is being forced to stay away from skeet shooters in the national team as there are not enough rooms available at the Athletes'

Village here. Chateauroux, a quiet town in central France with a population of less than 50,000, is hosting all the shooting events of the Paris Olympics. It is a two-and-ahalf hour train ride from the bustling French capital, leaving 340 Olympians pretty much cut off from the Games

After completing the 270km long journey from Paris, one would struggle to commute within Chateauroux due to limited public transport, which is free for everyone.

For athletes, coaches, officials and media staying outside the Village, the only way to commute between the Games' venues is via the transport provided by the Organising Committee.

These Games have been a disaster on the transport front. I went to the bus stop near the train station last night but this morning they changed the timings and the athletes had to go ahead with



the training in my absence," Brovold, who has also worked with Indian shotgun shooters,

Due to limited availability of rooms, he had a choice to make: either stay at the Games' Village at the expense of a shooter or stay at a hotel outside. Keeping in mind the best interest of the team, he chose the latter.

"I have also come to know that the organisers are offering accommodation to visiting teams outside the village as they are short on rooms,"

said the 54-year-old. Emin Jafarov, the deputy chef de mission of the Azerbaijan

contingent, too is staying in a hotel due to shortage of rooms.

'I am in staying in a hotel as there are not enough rooms at the Village and the athletes need it more than me," said Jafarov.

A majority of Great Britian's shooting squad is staying outside the Athletes' Village by choice as that ensures them the food of their choice.

on condition of anonymity.

"It just works better for us. The hotel staff takes care of our individual requirements and we can also go out to eat in different places," said a support staff from Team GB

too is going out to eat everyday as the shooters are not getting the food of their choice. "If you want food like home,

then it is not possible. The

shooters have been going out

The 21-member Indian team

for meals and that is totally fine," said a coach with the Indian team. On Sunday, a team doctor associated with the Portugal

team arrived here due to a transport delay. "It has only been a day so far.

I can tell you more about the challenges we are facing here after three four days," the doctor said without wanting to be named.

# Suryakumar is a bowlers' captain, says Axar Patel

ndia all-rounder Axar Patel says new T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav is a bowlers' captain who allows them the freedom to execute their plans. The spin all-rounder also said

that the team will look to maximise its batting combinations in the ongoing series against Sri Lanka.

Suryakumar and India made a winning start to the threematch series here on Saturday when they crushed hosts Sri Lanka by 43 runs in a high scoring opening T20I. "I played in the last Australia

series with Surya bhai (as captain). I know that he is a bowlers' captain. He gives you free hand (in a way) that you decide first," Axar said at the post-match press conference on Saturday.

"Whenever you get hit, he comes and says that it was a good ball. He keeps giving you inputs. As a player, there is a good bond with him."

Axar recalled the experience of playing under Suryakumar in the five-match T20I series against Australia in India late last year which the hosts won

"As a captain, I have also played with him in the last matches (against Australia) and when I was playing today, I didn't feel



much change," he said.

"In the first three overs when we were going for runs, he was telling me that we can do this or do that and how we can take a wicket. There is no problem if a four or six goes in it. As a bowler, you get confidence from that if the captain is backing you and telling you that you can do

Axar said India's batting line-up in the opening T20I which did not feature Rishabh Pant at the top was formulated with the idea that the team maximises its left and righthand options.

In the last assignment, the T20 World Cup which India won, Pant batted at No 3

whereas on Saturday skipper Suryakumar came out at the coveted spot and the wicketkeeper-batter dropped down to No 4.

"Our team has four lefties and four righties. If there is a leftright combination (in the middle), it becomes very hard for the bowlers to maintain line and lengths

consistently especially with rotations with singles."

"Now if there are four lefties, how can you use them? If you have that chance (to ensure) that there are no two lefties or two righties (in the middle) at the same time.

"If you have that chance, if you have those players in is not much change in the batting, then why not use team's atmosphere," he added.

Swiatek, Alcaraz and Djokovic start Olympics with win at French Open's site

changing the batting order as per the bowling options that the opposition has got," he added. The spinner said the message from India's new staff under head coach Gautam Gambhir has been that the team will not experience a major overhaul in the way it operated.

While fielding coach T Dilip has continued in his role, Abhishek Nayar, Sairaj Bahutule and Dutchman Ryan ten Doeschate are now a part of Gambhir's support staff for this tour of Sri Lanka as positions will be finalised after the tour ends.

"I have been playing for 10 years. I have played with different coaches and captains. I don't think a lot will change in the team," he

"When we were talking in the team meeting, they also said the same thing that the coach and captain keep changing but the team remains the same and the 11 or 15 players who stay, they have to do it," he said.

They have told us that we will play the way we have been playing. Obviously, the coach and his input can be different. The thinking can be different, they keep telling you here and there. But there



#### **USA Cricket fulfils critical** requirement, appoints **Jonathan as CEO**

PTI ■ NEW YORK

USA Cricket has fulfilled one of the two critical requirements to avoid being disqualified as an ICC Associate nations appointing Jonathan Atkieson as its chief executive officer effective August 1.

The USAC was 'put on notice' by the ICC earlier this month for breaching two norms.

While not having a CEO was one, the other was USAC not fulfilling the governance norms which are set by the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC).

As per the norm, it is necessary for every sport governing body to earn the National Governing Body (NGB) status which is needed for all sports added in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The International Olympic Committee during its 141st Session and Executive Board meeting in Mumbai last year had given its nod for the inclusion of cricket in the Los Angeles Games. "USA Cricket has announced

the appointment of Johnathan

Atkeison as its new CEO, effective August 1st, 2024," the USAC said on its website. Atkeison most recently served as the Chief Operating Officer of USA Rugby. He joins USA Cricket with over 15 years of national governing body experience.

"I'm honoured to join the team at USA Cricket. It's an incredible time for the sport here in the United States with the historic performance of the men's national team in the recent T20 World Cup, the completion of the second season of Major League Cricket, and the first opportunity to showcase cricket in the Olympics here on home soil during the LA28 games," Atkinson said.

Our goal is to build a worldclass organisation to capitalise on that momentum, and firmly establish cricket's position in the American sporting landscape," he added.

Atkieson is credited for leading USA Rugby through a financial restructuring in 2020 followed by 'a four-year period of rapid growth and development'.



### US stays alive with 4-1 win over New Zealand in men's soccer

**AP** ■ MARSEILLE (FRANCE)

early in a 4-1 victory over New Zealand to stave off possible elimination at the Olympics. Mihailovic calmly hit the

penalty in the eighth minute after Nathan Harriel was brought down in the box by Matthew Garbett.

Four minutes later, senior player Walker Zimmerman, a defender, made it 2-0 when he poked in a goal in a scramble in front of the net following a free kick.

Gianluca Busio scored on a rebound at the half-hour mark and celebrated by dancing with teammate Kevin Paredes. Busio later left the game with what appeared to be a hamstring injury, but he said it was just a precaution.

Paxton Aaronson added a fourth goal for the United States in the 58th and New Zealand avoided the shutout with Jesse Randall's late goal.

New Zealand's 2-1 opening victory over Guinea had put the team in a strong position to advance. The OlyWhites, as they are known, started the day second in the group to France.

The United States is set to play Guinea in its final group match Tuesday in Saint-Etienne. New Zealand plays France in Marseille.

Mitrovic said he's not scoreboard watching. New Zealand advanced to the quarterfinals of the Tokyo Games three years

Ukraine 2, Morocco 1There was no reprieve for

Morocco this time.

After the chaos and Mihailovic violence that marred the Diordie Mihailovic violence that marieum end of its 2-1 win over Argentina in the Olympic men's soccer tournament, Morocco conceded late again against Ukraine on Saturday - and this time the

goal stood. On Wednesday, Morocco fans rushed the field and threw bottles in protest when Cristian Medina appeared to score an equalizer in the 16th minute of stoppage time for Argentina - causing the game to be suspended for around two hours. That goal was later disallowed by VAR for offside.

But there was no sign of a repeat of those scenes when Ihor Krasnopir scored in the eighth minute of stoppage time to seal a 2-1 win for 10-man Ukraine at Stade Geoffroy-Guichard.

Morocco looked like it was edging closer to the quarterfinals after Soufiane Rahimi's 64th-minute penalty leveled the game at 1-1. The forward, who took his total to three goals for the Paris Games, won the spot kick when he was fouled by Volodymyr Saliuk. Saliuk was sent off

for the offense. Ukraine had taken the lead in the 22nd through Dmytro Kryskiv.

Ukraine's late win left all four teams in Group B tied on three points after Argentina shook off defeat to Morocco by beating Iraq

Argentina 3, Iraq 1While Iraq threatened to pull off another surprise when Aymen Hussein leveled the game 1-1 in first-half stoppage time, goals from Luciano Gondou and Ignacio Fernandez sealed victory for Argentina.

**AP** ■ PARIS

Iga Swiatek and Carlos Alcaraz got the Paris Olympics tennis competition started with first-round victories under closed roofs at Roland Garros, the site of their French Open titles less

than two months ago. Novak Djokovic also won in straight sets as he, like Swiatek and Alcaraz, opened a bid for a first Olympic gold medal. Djokovic's second-round opponent could be round opponent could be longtime rival Rafael Nadal, who was scheduled to play his opening singles match Sunday - but said he isn't sure whether he will remain in that

what's going to happen," Nadal said Saturday. "I don't know if I'm going to play or not."

In Saturday's last match, Angelique Kerber defeated Naomi Osaka 7-5, 6-3 in a contest between two women who have been ranked No. 1 and own multiple Grand Slam titles. Kerber has said she will retire after representing Germany at these Games; Osaka was hoping for a deeper run than her thirdround exit at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago after lighting the cauldron during the opening ceremony in her native Japan.

Nadal, the Spaniard who won a record 14 of his 22 Grand 'Tomorrow, I don't know Slam titles at the French Open

and owns two Summer Games golds, was a surprise torch carrier during the rainsoaked opening ceremony along the Seine River on Friday night. He won his doubles opener alongside Alcaraz on Saturday night.

Nadal has not made entirely clear whether or not these Summer Games will be the final event of his career. He is 38 and has been dealing with injuries for much of the past two seasons. Nadal and Alcaraz never had played doubles together, but they some past the sixth-seeded Argentine duo of Maximo major championships in Paris and grabbed the last four to beat Romania's doubles together, but they got

claimed four of her five career while reigning French Open



7-6 (4), 6-4. games to beat Romania's The No. 1-ranked Swiatek Irina-Camelia Begu 6-2, 7-5,

Alcaraz defeated Lebanon's Hady Habib 6-3, 6-1.

and Wimbledon champ

Serbia's Djokovic, who is seeded No. 1 in the men's field after Jannik Sinner pulled out with tonsillitis, needed less than an hour for a 6-0, 6-1 win against Australia's Matthew Ebden - a doubles player participating in a tourlevel singles match for the first time in two years. Ebden got into the singles bracket because he was in Paris to play doubles and thus available when 16th-ranked Holger Rune of Denmark withdrew with an injured

Ebden's lone game came after he was already down 6-0, 4-0 - and he celebrated by pulling

the front of his yellow shirt over his head and baring his chest to roars from the flagdotted crowd.

The last time Djokovic was in Paris, early last month, he needed surgery for a torn meniscus in his right knee after getting injured during the French Open. He managed to not only play at Wimbledon but also reach the final before losing to Alcaraz. "I do feel more ready now than I was before Wimbledon and I really do feel better prepared," Djokovic said Saturday. "Olympics, from the beginning of the year, was one of the highest goals and objectives and priorities for this year. So let's see how it

## Australia takes early lead against US On Day 1 of swimming

 $A \begin{array}{ccc} & \text{ustralia took the lead in its} \\ & \text{swimming} & \text{showdown} \\ & \text{against the United States at the} \\ \end{array}$ Paris Olympics by claiming two of three gold medals on the first full day of competition.

Ariarne Titmus turned one of the most anticipated races of the Games into a blowout when she left Katie Ledecky in her wake at La Defense Arena. Titmus led from start to finish in the 400-meter freestyle Saturday night.

The Australian star known as "The Terminator" handed Ledecky a second straight Olympic defeat in an event the American won at Rio de

Janeiro in 2016. Titmus faced her stiffest challenge from 17-year-old Canadian phenom Summer McIntosh, but she won comfortably as McIntosh claimed the silver. Ledecky settled for bronze.

Titmus swept the 200 and 400 free in Tokyo, and she is going for the same double in Paris. Ledecky is going for a double in the 800 and 1,500. Australia then made it 2 for 2

against the Americans in the

women's 4x100 freestyle relay, claiming its fourth straight Olympic title in that event.
The quartet of Mollie
O'Callaghan, Shayna Jack,
Emma McKeon and Meg
Harris set an Olympic record with a winning time of 3

minutes, 28.92 seconds. The Americans -Douglass, Gretchen Walsh, Torri Huske and Simone Manuel - rallied to take silver.

The U.S. Finally got its first gold in the men's 4x100 freestyle relay. The Americans were anchored by Caeleb Dressel, who won the eighth gold medal of his career. Australia took the silver.

CHINA TAKES

**GOLD OF GAMES** The first gold medal of the Paris Olympics went to China when Huang Yuting and Sheng Lihao beat South Korea's Keum Iihveon and Park Hajun in the final of the 10-meter air rifle mixed team event Saturday morning. Shortly before that, Kazakhstan's Alexandra Le and Islam Satpayev became the first medalists of the games when they beat Germany's Anna Janssen and Maximilian Ulbrich 17-5 for the bronze.

FRANCE'S FIRST MEDALS Luka Mkheidze and Shirine Boukli won France's first two medals of the Olympics when Mkheidze claimed silver and Boukli earned bronze in judo. Mkheidze lost 1-0 to Yeldos Smetov of Kazakhstan in the final of the men's 60kilogram division disappointing result for the raucous crowd at Champ-de-Mars Arena. About 30 minutes before Mkheidze's loss, Boukli claimed France's first medal of its home Olympics with a victory over

Paris will have plenty of chances to cheer on its vaunted judo team, which has a competitor in all 14 weight classes in these Olympics. France is one of the world's top judo nations.

bronze-medal match.



TENNIS CONTROVERSY Novak Djokovic was perplexed by the Olympics rules after his 6-0, 6-1 rout in less than an hour against an overmatched Matthew Ebden, a 36-year-old doubles player from Australia who hadn't competed in a tour-level, main-draw singles match since June 2022.

Djokovic felt other singles players deserved a spot at the Olympics instead of Ebden. Ebden was in Paris to compete in men's doubles, where he's been as high as No. 1 and currently is No. 3 and has won two major championships. That made him available for the singles competition when 16th-ranked Holger Rune of Denmark pulled out because of

a wrist injury. Spain's Laura Martinez in a player asked to fill in, but he and was the first to say yes. He hadn't even practiced singles in about two years until playing a

tiebreaker in training on Friday. was pushed to Monday In other tennis action, Rafael because of the showers. The

will compete in singles, saying after he paired with Carlos Alcaraz to win their first-round doubles match Saturday night that he wants to "make the smartest decision possible to have the best chances to bring (a) medal back home."

Nadal's first match in singles, against Hungary's Marton Fucsovics, is scheduled for Sunday.

Also, Angelique Kerber eliminated Naomi Osaka 7-5, 6-3 in the first round in a matchup between former No. 1-ranked players with multiple Grand Slam titles.

RAIN DISRUPTIONS

Rain continued from the opening ceremony through the Ebden was not the first doubles first full day of competition caused several postponements and delays at the Paris Olympics.

Men's street skateboarding was supposed to start Saturday but Nadal is not sure whether he start of play in the scheduled

tennis matches on the 10 smaller courts at Roland Garros was delayed because of rain, but action started as scheduled in the two main stadiums that have retractable roofs.

The rain could threaten the water quality for swimming in the Seine when the triathlon begins Tuesday with the men's event at the Alexander III bridge next to Grand Palais.

10-TIME OLYMPIAN

Georgian shooter Nino Salukvadze made history as the first woman to compete at 10 Olympic Games in a career which began representing the Soviet Union. She has competed at every Summer Olympics since 1988, when she won gold as a 19-year-old

Soviet prodigy. She set her latest record when she stepped into the shooting range for qualification in the women's 10-meter air pistol. Salukvadze placed 38th and didn't advance to Sunday's eight-shooter final. She gets another shot at a medal Friday in qualification for the 25-meter pistol event.

In a career spanning five decades, the 55-year-old has competed on three different Olympic teams: the Soviet Union in 1988, then the Unified Team which was organized for ex-Soviet athletes in Barcelona in 1992 after the Soviet Union collapsed.

She has represented her home country of Georgia following its independence for the last eight Olympics.

#### **Boxer Preeti beats** Vietnam's Vo Thi Kim Anh to enter pre-quarterfinals

**PTI** ■ PARIS

ndian boxer Preeti Pawar **⊥**picked up an unanimous decision win Vietnam's Vo Thi Kim Anh to enter the women's 54kg category pre-quarterfinals at the Paris Olympics.

The Asian Games bronze medallist, competing in her maiden Olympic Games, opened the proceedings for India in the boxing arena as she won her first round by a 5-0 margin on Saturday night.

The 20-year-old

Haryana, who had been hospitalised for a a few days ahead of the Games due to illness, was unimpressive in the first round as her Vietnamese opponent dictated the proceedings. But the Indian made amends in the next two rounds, attacking and landing clear

blows on her opponent. "Happy that we started on a winning note! Despite falling ill before the Games, Preeti not only recovered but fought brilliantly and showed exceptional courage," Boxidet Aire Circle

of India President Ajay Singh

said.

Preeti will face second seed and world championships silver-medallist Marcela Yeni Arias of Colombia in the round of 16 clash on Tuesday.

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