

OPINION 6

WILL BRITISH INDIANS BACK RISHI SUNAK ?

WORLD 8

PALESTINIANS SURROUNDED BY SEWAGE AND GARBAGE

MONEY 10

SENSEX BREACHES 79,000 LEVEL

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BUMRAH 1000
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ME: KAPIL DEV
12 SPORTS



President Murmu slams Emergency

PNS ■ DELHI

In the backdrop of a spate of entrance and job related examinations paper leaks, President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said the Government was fully committed to investigating the recent incidents and ensure that the guilty are punished.

Addressing the 18th Lok Sabha for the first time, Murmu said her Government was working to create an environment to enable youth of the country to dream big and realise their dreams. As she mentioned the steps taken by the Government on the education front, some Opposition members were heard shouting "NEET". Speaking about the recent general elections, Murmu said the whole world is talking about successful completion of India's Lok Sabha polls. "The world is witnessing that the people of India have elected a stable Government with clear majority for a third consecutive term," she told the joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament. In her first address to a joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha after Prime Minister Narendra Modi began his third term, Murmu described the poll result as an endorsement of his Government's policies while ruing attempts to weaken people's faith in electoral process including EVMs, an apparent swipe at Opposition parties. It is like cutting the very branch on which "we all are sitting", she said.

A day after Modi and Lok



President Droupadi Murmu addresses the joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, in New Delhi, on Thursday. The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha began on Monday and the 264th session of the Rajya Sabha will begin on June 27 PTI

Sabha Speaker Om Birla condemned the imposition of Emergency, Murmu too described in her speech the imposition of Emergency in 1975 as the "biggest and darkest chapter" of a direct attack on the Constitution and said the country triumphed over unconstitutional forces.

Opposition leaders, however, dismissed the President's address as a "script given by the Government" that was "full of lies" and also castigated the Government over the repeated mention of the 1975 Emergency. They said there is an "undeclared emergency" in the country and the Constitution is

being attacked under the Modi government. With the Opposition questioning the 'intentions' of the NDA Government as regards the Constitution making it a poll issue in the Lok Sabha polls, Murmu stressed the Government's unwavering faith in the Constitution and efforts to make it a part of "public consciousness". She slammed the Emergency as the "biggest and darkest chapter of direct attack" on the Constitution.

In her 50-minute address, the President highlighted the government's measures in a range of sectors, from economy, defence and farming to the

empowerment of different sections of society, and laid down its priorities in its third term, amid sporadic protests from opposition benches when she referred to issues such as paper leaks and matters related to the North East region.

Though she touched upon some of the things promised in the BJP's manifesto like bullet trains and health insurance for senior citizens, there was no mention of a few of the major highlights of the party's promises such as the Uniform Civil Code and one-nation-one-election. "Many such reforms have taken place in the last 10 years which are greatly benefitting the nation

today. Even when these reforms were being taken up, they were opposed and attempts were made to spread negativity," she added.

On paper leaks, she said, "If due to any reason there is obstruction in examinations it is not appropriate. Sanctity and transparency are a must in government recruitments and examinations." There were incidents of paper leaks in some States earlier as well, the President said, stressing that there was need to rise above partisan politics and support the Government in taking strong steps at the national level. The President said Parliament has also made a strong law to check paper leaks and the Government is further working to reform the examination process.

Modi took to social media saying that President's address to both Houses of Parliament was comprehensive and presented a roadmap of progress and good governance. "It covered the strides India has been making and also the potential that lies ahead. Her address also mentioned some of the major challenges we have to collectively overcome to ensure a qualitative change in the lives of our citizens."

In an apparent message to opposition parties, who are numerically much stronger than the previous two Lok Sabha, Murmu pitched for healthy deliberations, saying opposition to policies and obstruction of parliamentary functioning are two different things.



File photo: PTI

LK Advani discharged from AIIMS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran BJP leader Lal Krishna Advani, who was admitted to the AIIMS here last night, was discharged on Thursday, a hospital official said.

The 96-year-old former deputy prime minister was evaluated by a team of doctors from different specialties including urology and geriatric medicine and is learnt to have undergone a minor procedure.

"Advani was admitted for old age-related issues and has been discharged," the AIIMS official said.

Advani was admitted to the old private ward of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) around 10.30 pm on Wednesday.

CBI makes first arrest in NEET case

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

On a day when President Droupadi Murmu talked tough on examination papers leak during her address in Parliament on Thursday, a series of development related to the raging controversy took place including the first arrest made by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the NEET paper leak case.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has asked the National Testing Agency (NTA) to apprise it if there was a time limit for raising grievances regarding the OMR sheets provided to the candidates who appeared in NEET-UG 2024.

The Delhi High Court too sought response from the NTA to a petition by a NEET candidate alleging 'out of syllabus' question in the entrance examination. In another development, Opposition leaders

under the banner of INDIA Bloc in its Parliament strategy meeting on Thursday evening decided to raise the NEET and NET paper leaks issue in both the Houses of Parliament on Friday.

Continuing their protests on Thursday, members of NSUI (Congress's students' wing) barged into the NTA office in Okhla, raising slogans of "shut down NTA".

After taking over the investigation, CBI made its first arrests in the NEET-UG paper leak case in Bihar, detaining two individuals from Patna, identified as Manish Kumar and Ashutosh. Both were produced before a special court in Patna which sent them to judicial custody. The CBI has registered six FIRs in the NEET paper leak case.

Before the CBI arrests, the police had also taken at least nine person into custody in Bihar, Maharashtra and Delhi.

Demand for three Deputy CMs in Karnataka Govt takes new turn

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

Amid growing demand to have three more Deputy Chief Ministers in Karnataka, Chandrashekhara Swami of Vishwa Vokkaligara Mahasamsthana Mutt has openly asked CM Siddaramaiah to step down and hand over the position to DK Shivakumar.

Sources said the seer made this demand in the presence of both CM Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar during a public event, which was organised to mark the 515th birth anniversary of Bengaluru founder Kempe Gowda.

In his address, Chandrashekhara Swami stated, "It is possible only if Siddaramaiah makes up his mind," requesting the present Chief Minister to consider the transition.

"I urge Siddaramaiah to appoint DK Shivakumar as Chief Minister of the state. Despite others having held this position, DK Shivakumar has not yet served as Chief Minister. I believe it is within Siddaramaiah's power to make this decision, and I



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah pays floral tribute during the 515th birth anniversary celebration of Bengaluru's founder Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, at Kanteerava Stadium, in Bengaluru PTI

request him to fulfill this request," he said.

Echoing similar remarks, Channagiri Congress MLA Basavaraju V Shivaganga urged the party to make Shivakumar the chief minister "and then they can make a dozen people deputy CMs; there won't be any objections".

"Party high command will decide regarding more DCMs, let them (ministers making the demand) be made DCMs if required, we have no objections... We

have seen Siddaramaiah as CM for five years (in the previous tenure) and in this tenure too we have seen him as CM for one-and-a-half years; all legislators have cooperated. It has been a practice in our party that the KPCC president becomes CM, but due to certain developments things changed this time," he said.

When told that the CM post is not vacant, he said, "It is not vacant, similarly the DCM post is also not vacant. The post is occupied (by

Shivakumar)... Under Shivakumar's leadership as KPCC president, we have won nine Lok Sabha seats this time, from one last time. Making Shivakumar the chief minister will further benefit the party."

Reacting to Shivaganga's statement, Minister Rajanna said he is entitled to his opinion in a democracy, and ultimately it is the party that will decide if Shivakumar has to be made the chief minister. Earlier, reacting to the demand to have three more deputy chief ministers in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had said the decision of the Congress high command is final.

Some of the ministers have been pitching for DCM posts to be given to leaders from Veerashaiva-Lingayat, SC/ST and minority communities. Currently, DK Shivakumar from the Vokkaliga community is the only deputy chief minister in the Siddaramaiah cabinet. "Whatever the high command decides is final, Siddaramaiah told reporters in response to a question. A section within the Congress is said to be of the opinion that the statement

by ministers seeking three more DyCM posts was part of a plan by Siddaramaiah's camp to keep Shivakumar in check, amid talks that he might seek the chief minister's post after two-and-a-half years of this government's tenure.

The alleged move apparently seeks to also counter Shivakumar's influence both in the government and party.

Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna, Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan, Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi and a few others — all considered close to Siddaramaiah — once again raised the pitch earlier this week for three more deputy CMs.

The Congress had decided that Shivakumar will be "the only" deputy CM amid stiff competition between him and Siddaramaiah for the chief minister's post after the assembly election results in May last year.

Seemingly expressing his displeasure over the ministers' demand, Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress chief, on Tuesday said the party would respond appropriately.

Rain over Northwest likely to intensify between June 28-30

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Rainfall is likely to intensify over the plains of Northwest India with heavy to very heavy rain likely to lash various regions including the national capital, Punjab and parts of Rajasthan from between June 28 and June 30 June, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

This forecast comes as a welcome development promising relief from a rather long spell of intense heat that posed health risks to the people of all ages. The IMD announcement on Thursday said that heatwave conditions across the country have subsided.

Regionwise, the MET has forecast, fairly widespread to widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm and lightning very likely over Konkan and Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala &



Albert Hall Museum is reflected in the puddle after rain in Jaipur PTI

Mahe, Lakshadweep, Gujarat state, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh while scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall over Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, Rayalaseema, Telangana, Marathwada and Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal during next five days.

BONHOMIE



BSF personnel, along with villagers, offer 'chadar' at Baba Chamliyal shrine after the annual Indo-Pak fair organised on the two sides of the International Border (IB), in Samba district, on Thursday PTI

Free treatment for all above 70 under Ayushman

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Addressing a longstanding gap in healthcare for the elderly, President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday to Parliament on her address to Parliament on Thursday, spoke about the free health services provided by the Government and reiterated the BJP's poll promise of providing Ayushman Bharat coverage to everyone.

"...the Government is going to take yet another decision in this area. Now all the elderly above 70 years of age will also be covered and get the benefit of free treatment under Ayushman Bharat Yojana," she

said. The Ayushman Bharat PMJAY is the largest publicly funded health insurance scheme in the world. It provides health cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year for hospitalisation for secondary and tertiary care.

The expansion of the scheme to bring every Indian citizen aged 70 and above under the insurance cover will provide free treatment to those not covered under existing schemes like the Central Government Health Scheme and others.

According to a study, there has been a significant gap in

healthcare coverage for the elderly with only 20 per cent of the people over the age of 60 years covered under health schemes such as CGHS, Employees State Insurance Scheme (ESIC), Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), cooperative health insurance schemes, medical reimbursement from an employer or privately purchased health insurance.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced this during the manifesto's release in April before the Lok Sabha polls 2024, though the specific age bracket was not detailed in



the manifesto's fine print. It had also announced inclusion of all individuals from the transgender community besides senior citizens.

The government's Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme already provides coverage to 55 crores of the poorest people in the country, with the scheme being extended to the grassroots-level healthcare workers — the ASHA and Anganwadi workers — in the interim budget.

Originally launched by Arun Jaitley, the then Finance

Minister, during the FY19 Union Budget, under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, hospitalisation costs, supports pre- and post-hospitalisation, medication, and more than 1,929 medical procedures including major surgeries and follow-up treatments are included.

This initiative operates paperless and cashless at a vast network of public and private hospitals, ensuring broad and accessible coverage. Moreover, it covers the cost of follow-up care and treatment to ensure full recovery. President Murmu during her

address in Parliament also spoke of another key project of the government in the healthcare sector — Jan Aushadhi Kendras, a network of generic drug stores that offer medicine sometimes costing 50 per cent to 90 per cent less than the branded versions available in the market. After completing the goal of setting up 10,000 such stores across the country, the government increased the target to 25,000. "The opening of 25,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras in the country is also progressing at a fast pace," President Murmu said.

Classifieds

LOST AND FOUND

I, Kartik Sharma s/o Sanjay Sharma r/o Jyoti Nagar, Kurukshetra, Pin Code 136118 declare that I have lost my Matric pass Certificate index No. T/5544/058 Year 2013 issued by ice and done from Ideal Convent School Kurukshetra, and other documents somewhere. If anybody finds reports us at our address. Ph. 98127-86003.

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, Pardeep Kumar S/o Sham Lal R/o H No. 90, Model Town Pnjrore, Kalka, Panchkula declare that my son Barinder Sharma is out of my control. I disown him from my movable & immovable properties. Anybody dealing with him at their own risk.

We Underjeet Singh S/o Arjun Singh and Ranjit Kaur W/o Underjeet Singh, Both Resident of House No. 3503, Sector 23-D, Chandigarh inform that our son Amrinder Pal Singh and his wife Imandeep Kaur and their son Dilkirat Singh are out of our control. We disown them from our all moveable and Immoveable Properties. Anybody deal with them at their own Risk.

We Dalip Singh S/o Roor Singh and Smt Prem Lata W/o Sh. Dalip Singh. R/o House no 3622, Sector 23-D, Chandigarh inform that Our Son Dinesh is out of our control. We Disown him from our all moveable and immoveable Properties. Anybody deal with him at their own risk.

We, Narender Tayal S/o Jai Kishan & Kanta Tayal W/o Narender Tayal R/o H.No. 300, Village Nangli Poona, Alipur, North West Delhi, Delhi has disowned our son Deepak Tayal & his wife Shikha Tayal from our all movable-immovable property as they are out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with them, he/she will do at their own risk.

I, Sabeer S/o Asmail R/o Umedgarh (7), Sonipat, Haryana has disowned my son Amir Khan & his wife Deepika from my all movable-immovable property as they are out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with them, he/she will do at their own risk.

I, Anprej Singh S/o Darshan Singh R/o Gali Masit Wali, Attari, Distt. Amritsar declares that my son Majer Singh is out of my control. I disinherit him from all my movable & Immoveable properties. Anyone deals with him will do so at his own risk, responsibilities.

We, Rajendra S/o Sh. Dhani Ram & Suman W/o Sh. Rajendra, R/o Tehsil & District Rohtak (Haryana), declare that our daughter Deepak Rani and son-in law Sunil Dutt from our movable & immovable property because both of them are beyond our control. We and our family will not be responsible for any of their transactions/police cases etc.

I, Arun Kumar S/o Hari Chand Sodhi R/o# 32/4, Adarsh Nagar, Nai Abadi Sawal Mill, Manimajra Chandigarh declare that my son Anmol Sodhi is out of my control. I disown him from my movable immovable properties. Anybody dealing with him at His/Her own risk.

I, Darshan Lal Thukral s/o Sardari Lal plot no. 42, #2428, B-12, basant vihar, ambala city, Haryana declared that my grandson Naman Thukral is out of my control so I disowned him from my movable and immovable properties. Please note.

We Vipin Garg S/o Shri Shyam Lal and Smt Deepika Garg W/o Vipin Garg R/o H.No. 7924/4 Near Congress Bhawan, Nai Basti Ambala City inform that our son Aman Kumar & his wife Monica Rani are out of our control . So we disown both of them from our movable and immovable properties. if anybody deals with them they will do so at their own risk.

We, Joginder Pal S/o Balwant Rai and Sunita W/o Joginder Pal R/o Subhash Nagar, Khurana Road, Kaithal, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that our son Mukul and his wife Yamini Devi are out of our control. We disown/evict them from our moveable/ immovable properties. We have no concern with them. We are not responsible for their work and dealing. All concerned please note.

I, Tek Chand S/o Govind Ram R/o # 2897, Sector 25-D, Chandigarh, My son Rohan kumar and Krish both are out of my control. I disowned my movable immovable properties. In the future any type anybody deals with him. they will be self responsible.

I, Thath Singh, son of Lachman, resident of village Gondar, Tehsil Nissing, District Karnal, declare that my son Sanjeev Kumar is out of my control, I evict my son from all my movable and immovable properties. In future, whoever deals with my son Sanjeev Kumar, he will himself be responsible for it. I and other members of my family will have no responsibility in this.

I, Ashok Sharma S/O Dwarka Dassen R/O Flat No.4, 1st Floor, Golden Enclave, Godwin Apartments Lohgarh Zirakpur ,Distt Mohali Declare That My Daughter Monika Sharma Is Out Of My Control. So I Disown Her From All My Movable And Immoveable Properties. Anybody Dealing With Them On Their Own Risk.

I, Ramphal s/o Late Sh. Ramchander s/o Fate Singh R/o Vill. Singhwa Khas Teh. Bass Distt. Hisar declare that my son Sonu is out of my control. So I evict him from my all moveable/ immoveable properties. Any body dealing with him at their own risk.

I, Kanail Singh S/o Pritam Singh R/o Tagra Kaliram Kalka (Panchkula) declare that my son Sukhveer Singh and his wife Parvinder Kaur beyond my control and misbehave, I disown Sukhveer Singh and his wife Parvinder Kaur from my all movable/immovable property. Anybody deals them do at their own risk/responsibility, I shall not be responsible for their acts in future.

ਮੈਂ ਜਸਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਾੜ, ਤੇ ਪਰਾਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਵਾਸੀ ਹਰੀਨੋਂ ਵਰੀਦੇਵਟੋ ਸ਼ਿਮਲਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸੁਜੀਵਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਾੜ, ਪਿੰਡ ਉਸੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਸੋਬਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ, ਜੋੜੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਰਿਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੂਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣੀ ਚੋਲ ਅਚੋਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੇ ਬੇਦਾਖਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, No. 14364265A Rank NK TS Harinder Pal Singh R/o House No. 2, Village Raipur Kalan, UT Chandigarh declare that my daughter name Samiranjit Kaur is Wrongly mention in my Army Service Record. But Correct Name is Simranjit Kaur.

I, No. 14364265A Rank NK TS Harinder Pal Singh R/o House No. 2, Village Raipur Kalan, UT Chandigarh declare that my wife name Jasvir Kaur & DOB 16/06/1969 is Wrongly mention in my Army Service Record. But Correct Name is Jasvir Kaur And correct DOB is 10/05/1964.

I, Parul Gupta W/o Rajnish Jain R/o H.No. 429/19, Near S.S Bal Sadan School, Sarogian Mohalla, Chandana Gate, Kaithal, Haryana declare that in my son's Mudit Jain Birth Certificate my name was wrongly mentioned as Parul Jain instead of Parul Gupta. Parul Jain and Parul Gupta is one and the same person.

I, Sakthivel Kulanthai legally father of No. 16113406K Rank Hav Name Sivaguru S Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of D No. 4/37, Periyamuthur, Dhuvaragapuri, Periamuthu, Krishnagiri Project, Distt Krishnagiri, State Tamil Nadu-635101 declare That I have changed my name from K Sakthivel to Sakthivel Kulanthai and DOB from 01.07.1947 to 01.06.1947 vide Affidavit date 27.06.2024

I, Jodu Venkata Subbamma legally mother of No.16122291H Rank L/Hav Name Jodu Prasad Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of 0 Bodasiddayappalli, Gundupalle, Seetarampuram Mandalam, Nellore, State Andhra Pradesh-524310 have changed my name from Jodu Venkat Subbamma to Jodu Venkata Subbamma and DOB from 16.02.1973 to 01.01.1970 vide Affidavit date 27.06.2024

I, Jodu Obaih legally father of No.16122291H Rank L/Hav Name Jodu Prasad Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of 0 Bodasiddayappalli, Gundupalle, Seetarampuram Nellore, State Andhra Pradesh-524310 have changed my date of birth from 05.09.1943 to 01.01.1960 vide Affidavit date 27.06.2024

I, Simmi legally mother of No. 16126780L Rank Hav Name Jeesson T J Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of Tharayil House, VTC : Peramangalam, PO Peramangalam Distt. Thrissur, State Keala-680545 declare That I have changed my date of birth from 07.02.1972 to 01.01.1970 vide Affidavit date 27.06.2024

I, Ramani Sakthivel legally mother of No. 16113406K Rank Hav Name Sivaguru S Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of D No. 4/37, Dhuvaragapuri, Periyamuthur, Krishnagiri, Krishnagiri Project, State Tamil Nadu-635101 declare That I have changed my name from Ramani to Ramani Sakthivel and DOB from 01.07.1959 to 08.02.1965 vide Affidavit date 27.06.2024

I, Manjit Singh S/o Gurdeep Singh R/o VPO. Rampur Bilon, Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur. That I am holder of Indian Passport No. L9304786 issued at Dubai. That name of my wife wrongly mentioned on my aforesaid passport as Manprit Kaur while my wife's true and correct name is Manjit Kaur. kindly treat my correct my wife's name as Manjit Kaur for further references.

I, 14400924X Ex Hav Gurmel Singh S/o Narata Singh R/o Gharama Narru, Teh Rajpura Distt Patiala in my army record my Son Name Wrongly Entered Hashanbir Singh and DOB Wrongly entered 26 Jun 1997 but my son correct Name is Hasanveer Singh And Correct DOB is 26 June 1996

I, Parampreet Singh S/o Sapinder Singh R/o Village Manakpur, Tehsil Bilaspur, Distt Yamunanagar State That In My 10th Marksheet My Mother Name Written As Parvinder Kair, Which Is Incorrect. While My Mother's Correct Name Is Parvinder Kaur.

ਮੈਂ ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਖਨੋਵਾਲ, ਜਿਲਾ ਕਪੂਰਥਲਾ ਬਿਠਾਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਚੋਟੀ ਰਜੀਸਟਰ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸਾਰਾਜੀ ਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਦਰੁਸਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੋਂ ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੱਯਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ravi Yadav S/o Om Parkash R/o H No. 62322-C, Sector 56, Chandigarh have changed my name from Ravi Yadav to Ravi Shukla.

I, Surjit Singh s/o Gurdit Singh Sandhu, R/o #672, Sector 8-B, Chandigarh have changed my name to Surjit Singh Sandhu.

I, Radha Gupta W/o Roshan Lal Garg R/o H.No.167, Ward No-16, Model Town, Pehowa, Kurukshetra, Haryana-136128 have changed my name from Radha Gupta to Radha Rani.

I, Gagan S/o Shyam Lal Goel R/o H.No-1119, Sector 18-C, Chandigarh-160018 have changed my name from Gagan to Gagandeep Goel.

I, Pankaj Kumar Verma S/o Rattan Lal R/o H.No-3287, Sector 21-D, Chandigarh-160022 have changed my name from Pankaj Kumar Verma to Pankaj Verma.

I, Anshika Mittal D/o Sanjay Sehgal R/o #251, Top Floor, Sector-9, Panchkula Haryana have changed my name to Anshika Sehgal.

I, Dhan Bahadur Rokaya S/O Amar Bahadur Rokaya R/O House No. 51-A, Main Market, Hallomajra, Chandigarh. Have Changed My Name From Dhan Bahadur To Dhan Bahadur Rokaya.

I, Aashi Aggarwal w/o Sh.Dineah kumar Aggarwal R/O House no. 92, ward no.08, Diara sector Tehsil Sadar, Distt Bilaspur HP declare that I have changed my name from Chaman Lata to Aashi Aggarwal. All concerned please may note.

I, Vaibhav Kumar S/o Anil Kumar R/o 991-A, Vishnu Nagar, Jagadhri Workshop, Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Vaibhav Kumar to Vaibhav Aggarwal.

I, Rao Singh S/o Balbir Singh R/o 307, Ward No. 22, Street No. 2, Vikas Nagar, Panipat declare that my daughter's name is Suman Devi in my army documents. Whereas in my daughter's papers her name is Suman Panwar. Suman Devi and Suman Panwar Both are names of my daughter. And the date of birth is 08/08/1996

I, Viikram Rajput S/o Sh. Chabeel Dass Ro H.No. 305 N, Tara Nagar, Sonipat, Haryana declares that Vikram & Viikram Rajput both are my names & my name as per my Aadhar Card written Viikram Rajput. In future all Government & Non Government as called & carried my name Viikram Rajput.

I, Naveen Jain S/o Ravinder Naveen Jain R/o 137, Sector-23, Delhi Road, Sonipat have changed my minor son's name from Rishabh jain to Rishabh Jain for all future purposes.

I, Sunil Sharma S/o Sham Rattan Sharma R/o # 57, Kundi, Opposite GHS- 8A, Sector -20, Panchkula Haryana have changed my name to Sunil Kumar Sharma.

I, Nirmala Devi, Adhar Card No. 322676957981, W/O Virender Singh, R/O Village Gullyana, Tehsil And District Kaithal Informs That I Have Changed My Name From Nirmal Devi To Nirmala Devi. Call Me Nirmala Devi In Future.

I, Kulwant Singh S/O Joginder Singh R/O Village Ranipur Teh & Distt Pathankot Declare That I Have Changed My Name Kulwant & Surname Singh Please Note.

I, Aarti W/o Gurjeet Singh R/O House Number 4575, Palam Vihar Colony, Nakodar, District Jalandhar have changed my name from Aarti to Aarty. All concerned please note.

I, Vishal Deep Singh S/o Gurmaj Singh Bham R/o 2838 Sector 125 Kharar Mohali have changed my name from Vishal deep singh to Vishal Deep Singh Bham.

I, Navjot Kaur w/o Vishal Deep Singh Bham R/o 2838 Sector 125 Kharar Mohali have changed my name from Navjot kaur to Navjot Kaur Bham.

I, Sunil Kumar S/o Sh. Satpal R/o Flat No. 466, 2nd Floor, Happy Homes, Omaxe City, Sector-26, Rohtak declare that I have changed my name from Sunil Kumar to Sunil Kumar Mor, for all future purposes.

I, Sweety Chatterjee W/o Sh. Mritunjay Chatterjee R/O C-25, Officer's Colony, DCM Textiles, Millgate, Hisar, Haryana declare That I have changed my name from Sweety Ghoshal to Sweety Chatterjee for all future purposes. In future I would like to be known and recognised as Sweety Chatterjee.

I, Sandeep Mor S/o Sh. Karamvir R/O H No 384, Sector 21-P, Mela Ground Area, Hisar, Haryana declare that I have chanted my name from Sandeep to Sandeep Mor for all future purposes. In future I would like to be known and recognised as Sandeep Mor.

I, Jaswinder Kaur W/o Mohan Singh R/O Village Lehli Khurd, PO Bassi Kalan, Distt. Hoshiarpur 146102 Punjab have changed my name from Jaswinder Kaur to Kulwinder Kaur. Concerned note.

I, Jasbinder Kaur W/o Satnam Singh R/O House Number B-10/476 Gokal Nagar, New Mandi opp. Bharaj Nursing Home Hoshiarpur have changed my name to Jaswinder Kaur. Concerned Note.

I, Supramaniyan S/o Dev Raj, R/o # 6011, Maloya, U.T., Chandigarh have changed my name to Mookan.

I, Sonia D/o Naresh Kumar W/o Nitin Malik R/o H.No. E4/1153, Japani Mill, Backside Police Station, Chheharta, Amritsar, Punjab- 143105 have changed my name after marriage from Sonia to Sonia Malik.

I, Raman Malik D/o Ashok Kumar W/o Ashwani Seth R/O H.No. 185, New Green Field, Majitha Road, Near Saint Sai School, Amritsar-II, Amritsar, Punjab- 143001 have changed my name after marriage from Raman Malik to Raman Seth.

I, Divya Arora W/o Rajkumar R/o H.No.219, Sat Kartar Colony, Street No.4B, Panipat, declare that I have changed my name from Divya Arora to Divya. For all future purposes.

I, Narender Kumar S/o Sh. Risal Singh R/o H.No. 957, VPO Mohana, Sonipat, Haryana have changed my name to Narender Kumar Bamber for all future purposes.

I, Sahil S/O Jarnail R/O Village Balbehra Tehsil Guhla District Kaithal (Haryana) declare that in my 10th Class marksheet my D.O.B wrongly entered as 26.05.1970 while my correct D.O.B. is 15.12.2000.

I, Hari Ram Shukh S/o Siya Ram # 1485, Sector 45B, Chandigarh have changed my name to Hariom Shukla.

I, Siya Ram Shukh S/o Syam Manohar # 1485, Sector 45 Burail, Chandigarh have changed my name to Siya Ram.

I, Bina Devi (Dob 01/07/1945 W/o Shri Krishan R/O Lohri All Patti, Batta, Tehsil - Kalayat, Dist. Kaithal Informs That, I Have Changed My Name From Bina Devi To Veenaa (Dob 21/12/1945)

I, Harmandeep Singh Ghuman S/o Jaswinder Singh R/O VPO Kandila Teh. Batala Distt Gurdaspur has changed my name from Harmandeep Singh Ghuman To Harmandeep Singh. All concerned please Note.

I, Sunaina Sehgal D/O Deepak Sehgal R/O. Flat No. 1101, Sushma Elite Cross, Tower-F, Gazipur, Dhakauli, Po. Dhakauli, District Sas Nagar, Mohali – Punjab. I Have Changed My Name From Sunaina Gupta To Suniana Sehgal.

I, Sonia W/o Sh. Harshad R/O Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Soniya Sukhija to Sonia for all future purposes.

I, Vijay Kumar S/o Suraj Bhan Hooda R/O House No. 108, Near By Munna Sweets, Sector 9-11, Hisar, Haryana 125001 declare that I have changed my name from Vijay Kumar to Vijay Kumar Hooda for all future purpose.

I, Satish Kumar S/o Rameshwar Dass R/O H. No. 47-A, Near PNB Bank, Juglan, Distt. Hisar, Haryana (India) declare that in my passport (V7002557) my name is Satish Kumar. Now my name may be recorded as given name Satish and surname as Kumar in my passport.

I, Naveen Kumari W/o Satish Kumar R/O H. No. 47-A, Juglan, Distt. Hisar, Haryana (India) declare that in my passport (V6603462) my name is Naveen Kumari. Now my name may be recorded as given name Naveen and surname as Kumari in my passport.

I, Vijender Singh S/o Guljari Lal R/O H. No. 119, Chandan Nagar, Balsamand Road, Bir, Hisar (Haryana) declare that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from Gunjan to Naina for future purpose.

I, Renu Devi W/O Of Service No 15203738Y Hav Birendra Ram Of Unit 158 Med Regt C/O 56 Apo, R/O Vill-Duldulia, Po- Manjha Garh, Thana- Manjha Garh, Distt Gopalganj, State- Bihar Have Changed My Date Of Birth From 03-03-1989 To 02-01-1990 In My Husband's Serevice Record.

I, Surjeet Singh am legal dependent (son) of JC-511557P Sub Suminder Singh presently at village Uplana, PO Thakurpura, Teh Barara Distt Ambala, Pin 133203 have changed my name from Surjit Singh to Surjeet Singh vide Affidavit dated 26 Jun 2024.

I, Babita W/o Ravi Arya R/o Dev Kunj Near KN High School, Ghikara road, Charkhi Dadr-127306, Harayana declare that I have changed my name from Babita Arya to Babita for all further purposes.

I, Shruti Arya D/o Ravi Arya R/O Dev Kunj R/O Near KN High School, Ghikara road, Charkhi Dadr-127306, Haryana, declare that I have changed my name from Shruti to Shruti Arya for all further purposes.

I, Surender Kumar Narula S/O Suraj Parkash Narula R/O H.No- 571/11 Shkati Nagar Ambala City have changed my name from Surender Narula S/O Suraj Parkash Narula to Surinder Kumar S/O Suraj Parkash. In future I will be known as Surinder Kumar S/O Suraj Parkash.

I, Inderpal Singh S/o Lakhbir Singh VPO Kahnunav Tehsil/ Distt Gurdaspur have changed my Name from Inderpal Singh to Singh Inderpal. In future, my Given Name is Inderpal and Surname is Singh.

I, Karuna Rani W/o Gulshan Kumar Khullar R/o 1, Friends Colony, Batala , Distt Gurdaspur have changed my name from Karuna Rani to Karuna Khullar. Concerned note.

I, Sunita Devi W/o Narender Singh R/o Village Gharasi, Tehsil Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra (Haryana) declares that I have changed my name from Sunita to Sunita Devi. In future, I will be known by the name of Sunita Devi. All concerned please note.

I, Simran Kaur W/o Sh. Kuldeep Singh R/o Village Ramba Distt. Karnal, Haryana have changed my name from Simran Kaur to Sandeep Kaur for all future purposes.

I, Sukhdeep Kaur Bhachu W/O Manmohan Singh R/O Flat No.752 Gillo Palm, Sector 115, Kharid Distt SAS Nagar Have Changed My Name From Sukhdeep Kaur To Sukhdeep Kaur Bhachu.

I, Subhash S/o Sh. Baru Mal R/o S.C.F. 19/5, Gandhi Nagar, Near Kundan Cinema, Jind, have changed my name from Subhash to Subhash Garg for all future purposes.

I, Manoj S/o Sh. Shamsher Singh R/O Village Kanoh, Teh. Uklana and Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed the name of my son from Manvik to Manvik Poonia for all further purpose.

I, Sonu S/O Sh. Shamsher Singh R/O Village Kanoh, Teh. Uklana and Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed the name of my daughter from Harshita to Harshita Poonia for all further purpose.

I, Aashutosh S/o Sh. Shiv Kumar R/O House No. 402, Kabir Chowk Mohalla Dogran Teh. and Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Aashutosh to Aaliya for all further purpose.

I, Simran Kaur W/o Sajjan Singh R/o Gurudwara Dharamshala, Railway Road, Premgarh, Hoshiarpur, Punjab-146001 have changed my name to Balwant Kaur.

I, Emenual Masih Bhatia S/O Balo Masih R/O H No-2, Ward No-1, Model Town, Dhariwal, Gurdaspur, Punjab-143519 have changed my name to Emenual Masih.

I, Paramjit and Paramjit Kaur wife of Dalbir Singh, Resident of Nathuana Gate, Near Jattiana Gurdwara, Jandiala Guru, District Amritsar, known by above said two names. All concerned note please.

I, Diksha Chhabra wife of Sh. Davinder Kumar resident of House No.307/28, Subhash Nagar, Rohtak-124001 declare that I have changed my name Diksha to Diksha Chhabra.

I, Amardeep S/O Sh. Mohinder Singh, R/O House No.60, Village Tika Nalwari, VTC Nalwari (5/5), PO Bangana, Sub District Bangana, District Una, have changed my name to Amardeep.

I, Surjit Singh S/o Balbir Singh, R/O Village Mehandipur, PO-Abdullapur, Tehsil Mukerian, District Hoshiarpur, Punjab, India declare that surname of my minor son is Singh and Fatehveer is his given name.

I, Satyaveer Kothari S/o Karam Chand Kothari R/O House no 3009 Sector 28-D Chandigarh Declare That I have Changed My name from Satyaveer Kothari to Satyaveer Singh kothari for all purpose

I, Dev Raj R/O Village Attal Garh Tehsil Mukerian Distt Hoshiarpur Have Changed My Name To Dev Raj Ferma

I, Yuvraj Singh S/o Mukhtar Singh, Resident of VPO Gehri Mandi, Tehsil & District Amritsar, Punjab, I have Change my name from Yuvraj Singh to Yuvraj is my Name and my surname is Singh, All concerned note.

I, Shurshida (Old name, which is to be changed) W/O Abdul Aziz R/O H.No. 277/28, Garhi Road, Anand Colony Old Hamida Yamuna Nagar, Haryana, India have changed my name from Shurshida (Old name) to Khurshida (New Name)

I, Simran Kaur W/O Surjit Singh, R/O Village Mehandipur, PO-Abdullapur, Tehsil Mukerian, District Hoshiarpur, Punjab, India declare that Kaur is my Surname and Simran is my given

I Manjeet Kaur W/O Ramesh Kumar Rana R/O H.No. 26 A, Dashmesh Nagar Naya Gaon, District S.A.S.Nagar Mohali have changed my name Manjit to Manjeet Kaur. Concerned may note.

I, Gurdeep Singh son of Banta Ram Resident #13 Gurbaksh Colony Ward no. 5, Rupnagar Tehsil and District Rupnagar have changed my name from Gurdeep Chand to Gurdeep Singh.

I, Lalita Devi W/o Rajinder Parsad Dhoundiyal R/O H.no-2615 Sector- 15 Panchkula, declare that in my some documents my name wrongly mentioned as Kumari Lalita and DOB 26-2-1975, whereas my correct name is Lalita Devi and DOB is 25-07-1969.

I, Elavarasi Krishnan spouse of No. 16113406K Rank Hav Name Sivaguru S Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of 4/37, Dhuvaragapuri, K R P Dam, Krishnagiri, State Tamil Nadu-635101 declare That I have changed my name from S Elavarasi to Elavarasi Krishnan

I, Devassy T P legally father of No. 16126780L Rank Hav Name Jeesson T J Unit 4 Engr Regt. C/o 56 APO Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) permanent resident of Tharayil House, Peramangalam, VTC : Peramangalam, PO Peramangalam Distt. Thrissur, State Keala-680545 declare That I have changed my name from Jose TP to Devassy T P

I, Ravinder Kumar, S/o Ved Prakash, R/o village Jandheri, Tehsil Shahbad, district Kurukshetra, have changed my son's name from Prikshit to Prikshit Arya . In future he should be known with this name.

I, Sumit Jain S/O Sunil Kumar Jain, 953/4 Near Asha Puri Gurudwara Rajguru Nagar, Ludhiana, have changed name to Sumit Kumar Jain.

I, Karmi W/o Gulzari Ram, Vill Kumbhra Fatehgarh Sahib, have changed name to Parmjeet Kaur.

I, Kiran W/o Ramesh Mittal, B-20/1273 Ghumarmandi, Krishna Nagar, Ludhiana, have changed name to Kiran Mittal.

I, Maninder Kaur W/o Sukhdev Singh R/O Teacher Colony Tohana (Fatehabad), have changed my name to Maninder.

I, Rajbir Kaur W/o Gagandeep Singh Aulakh R/O Model Town Tohana Distt. Fatehabad, have changed my name from Rajbir Kaur to Rajbir Kaur Aulakh.

I, Gurdip Singh S/o Sarwan Singh R/o VPO Manghera Tehsil Tohana Distt Fatehabad Have Change My Name Gurdip Singh To Gurdeep Singh.

I, Harjinder Kaur W/o Gurdeep Singh R/o VPO Manghera Tehsil Tohana Distt Fatehabad have change my name Harjinder Kaur to Harjinderjeet Kaur.

SAD withdraws support for its candidate Surjit Kaur in Jalandhar West, Backs BSP

INFIGHTING IN SAD

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

In a dramatic turn of events, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Thursday decided to withdraw its support for its candidate Surjit Kaur in the ensuing Jalandhar by-election, opting instead to back the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). The move, announced by the party's senior leaders during a high-stakes press conference in Chandigarh, highlighted the deepening rift within the party. The infighting within SAD has reached a boiling point, with former Minister Daljit Singh Cheema accusing senior party members — SGPC's former president Bibi Jagir Kaur and former MLA Gurpreet Singh Wadala — of bypassing party leadership to field Surjit Kaur. This rogue decision, according to Cheema, was a "deliberate attempt to undermine the leadership of party president Sukhbir Singh Badal by engineering a likely electoral defeat."

Sukhi, who was also the part of the four-member panel for selecting candidate for Jalandhar (West) by-election, disclosed that Surjit Kaur had initially agreed to withdraw her nomination following the party's decision. However, she later reversed her decision, adding to the internal discord. This unexpected U-turn created a confusing situation in Jalandhar, which the party leaders described as a planned move to ensure her defeat and shift the blame onto the party president.

The decision to support the BSP in Jalandhar West underscored the strategic alliance between SAD and BSP. Cheema reiterated the party's commitment to this alliance, highlighting the need for collective strength to achieve their political goals. He assured that the decision was made in the best interest of the party and its long-term objectives.

Highlighting the gravity of the situation, Cheema accused the dissident leaders of deliberately undermining the party's unity and leadership. He noted that such actions were not new, pointing to past incidents where leaders had defied the party's directives for personal gains. He referenced party's patron and former MP

Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa's past revolt against Sukhbir Badal's leadership after his son and former Finance Minister Parminder Singh Dhindsa, was denied a Lok Sabha ticket.

Cheema used the platform to make a heartfelt appeal to the disgruntled party members, urging them to express their concerns within the party rather than through public dissent. He emphasized that SAD, more than any other party, allows for internal democratic freedom. However, he stressed that once a decision is made by the majority, it is essential to support and promote it to maintain organizational cohesion.

Cheema also touched upon the Jhundan Committee report, which had recommended the principle of one family, one ticket. He lamented that certain leaders had consistently ignored these recommendations, causing further rifts within the party. He cited the example of Harsimrat Kaur Badal, who was willing to forgo her ticket in favour of her husband Sukhbir Badal to adhere to the committee's recommendations.

"Those trying to weaken the khalsa panth as well as the party have already rejected the Jhundan committee report in letter and spirit and have never abided even by the one-family

one-ticket norm," said Cheema, adding that these leaders always say one thing in the meeting and do quite the opposite outside. Stating that the party president Sukhbir Singh Badal is fully devoted to strengthen the party from grassroot level to the top, Cheema announced that he would continue holding meetings with the party cadre in the days ahead.

SAD chief will meet and discuss current issues with the Youth Akali Dal office bearers on June 29, then Istri Akali Dal and SC wing of the party on July 1, and further SGPC members and BC wing of the party on July 2.

"Ironical that Sukhbir will campaign for candidate fielded against the one having symbol of his party," Punjab CM

In a sharp critique of the current turmoil within the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday highlighted the irony of Akali supremo Sukhbir Singh Badal campaigning against a candidate bearing his party's symbol.

The Chief Minister, speaking on the dire straits the Akali Dal finds itself in, with leaders embroiled in a power struggle,

said: "The party is bereft of ideology, and its power-hungry leaders lack any substantial stance." He accused the Akali leaders of shamelessly prioritizing their own political interests over the welfare of the state and its people.

Pointing out the pitiable condition of the once-grand party, Mann emphasized that in the upcoming Jalandhar by-poll, the party president will not campaign for the candidate bearing the Akali Dal symbol. "The 'scales', the symbol of the Akali Dal, is with another candidate, while Sukhbir Badal will campaign for someone else," Mann noted, while criticizing the leaders for taking the people of Punjab for granted, warning that such behaviour will not be tolerated.

Mann further lambasted the Akali leaders, stating that the people of Punjab will not spare them for their sinful acts and will deliver a fitting response in the elections. "These leaders will be shown the door by the people, who will not be swayed by their malicious propaganda," asserted the Chief Minister, while accusing the Akali leadership of consistently deceiving the people by prioritizing their interests over those of Punjab and Punjabis.

Punjab police arrests three shooters, 3 pistols recovered

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/BATHINDA

Bathinda Counter Intelligence (CI), in joint operation with Bathinda Police have arrested three shooters associated with gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar.

Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav on Thursday said that those arrested have been identified as Karandeep Singh alias Kanna of Navi Basti in Maur Mandi; Raghuvir Singh and Kulwinder Singh alias Bittu — both residents of Kot Shamir village in Bathinda.

He said that the Police teams have also recovered three pistols — including one 9 mm pistol and two .32 bore pistols — along with six live cartridges and six magazines from their possession, besides impounding their Hyundai Verna car.

DGP Yadav said that acting on intel inputs that associates of Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar are planning to execute target killings in districts of Bathinda, Mohali, and nearby areas, Police teams from CI Bathinda and Bathinda Police launched an operation and laid a joint naka at Maur Chowk to nab the shooters.

"Police teams have arrested the trio accused persons when they were coming towards Bathinda from Maur in their Hyundai Verna car and recovered three pistols along with ammunition from their possession," he said.

The DGP said that preliminary investigation has revealed that accused Karandeep Kanna was directly in touch with Lawrence Bishnoi and the recovered weapons were meant to be used by them to carry out target killings. Further investigations are on to trace the forward and backward linkages in this case, he said.

Farmers can apply from July 1 for increasing load on agricultural tube wells: CM Saini

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In a move aimed at supporting the welfare of farmers, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has decided to voluntarily increase the load of agricultural tube wells for them. Interested farmers can apply on the portal from July 1 to July 15 to increase the load of their tube wells. While addressing the media persons soon after presiding over the meeting of the State Cabinet, the Chief Minister informed about other significant decisions taken



in the meeting.

Regarding the visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Haryana on June 29, the Chief Minister said that Shah will be visiting Panchkula to address the party's State executive meeting. The meeting will also see the participation of Haryana in-charge, Union Minister, and MP Dharmendra Pradhan, as well as former Tripura Chief Minister

and MP Biplab Kumar Deb. They will collaborate to accelerate the party's momentum in Haryana. The Chief Minister emphasized that the people have decisively chosen to elect the BJP government for a third consecutive term in the state, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Responding to another query about the Samadhan Shivirs, the Chief Minister mentioned that approximately 20,000 complaints have been received during these Shivirs, with about 6,000 of them resolved on the spot. The remaining grievances will be resolved soon.

Responding to another question, the Chief Minister affirmed that all allies of the NDA remain united. He emphasized that the Bharatiya Janata Party has consistently shown utmost respect towards its allies.

Haryana CM warns Gurugram officials on cleanliness; Flags off 50 garbage collection vehicles

PNS ■ GURUGRAM/CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday warned officials of action if they are unable to ensure desired cleanliness standards in Gurugram within a week.

In a move to encourage people to avoid single-use plastics, cloth bag vending machines were inaugurated by Saini. The machines will be installed at several public places across the city, officials said. He also flagged off 50 new electric vehicles for door-to-door garbage collection.

Speaking to reporters after a public grievance committee meeting here, he said he would himself inspect the city's cleanliness after a week and order action against officials found neglecting their responsibilities.

The chief minister chaired the meeting of District Public Relations and Grievance Redressal Committee and resolved 19 of the 20 matters included in the agenda. He



directed officials to transfer Mayfield Garden Society to the municipal corporation within a week if the property tax are not deposited within a week and attach the properties of the builder.

He also ordered action against the accountant of Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority who wrongly measured a pond area in Noorpur village. Before the meeting, Saini flagged off

50 new electric vehicles for door-to-door garbage collection. With this, the total number of such vehicles has now exceeded 500, a senior official said.

The new e-vehicles flagged off by the chief minister will not only speed up the garbage collection from households but will also help to protect the environment, the official said. The official mentioned that the Municipal Corporation of

Gurugram is working diligently to improve cleanliness, including door-to-door garbage collection, by increasing vehicles and machinery.

Nineteen Haryana Civil Services (HCS) officers are monitoring cleanliness in all wards. Under the SWEEP initiative, garbage collection and dumping are being closely watched, with secondary points like Khandas and Vatika Chowk converted to zero garbage points, the official added.

Earlier in the day, the chief minister inaugurated cloth bag vending machines under the campaign to eradicate single-use plastic and polythene carry bags from Gurugram, according to officials. These machines will soon be installed at various public places across the city. People can get cloth bags by inserting Rs 10 coin or using UPI, they said. Saini also inaugurated sanitary pad vending machines, which will allow for the disposal of used pads and provide new ones as well, they added.

Dushyant Chautala Ready to support Cong in Rajya Sabha polls

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ruling out any alliance with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Haryana before or after the next State Assembly elections, Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) leader Dushyant Chautala on Thursday said that his party is ready to support the Congress in the Rajya Sabha election.

He alleged that Congress is running away from the field because former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Bhopendra Hooda's statement that he does not have the numbers shows match fixing with BJP. "If Congress really wants to compete with BJP, then it should field a joint opposition Rajya Sabha candidate, we are ready to support them. The opposition should unite to get a social personality, a player or an artist to lead Haryana in the Rajya Sabha."

The JJP's four-and-a-half-year alliance with the BJP came to an end after the saffron party replaced Manohar Lal Khattar with Nayab Singh Saini as Chief Minister in March. In the recently held General Election, JJP fielded candidates in all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana but drew a blank.

Chautala, the son of JJP chief Ajay Singh Chautala, said the party will in the next few weeks seek feedback from its workers and based on that would decide on entering into an alliance with any party other than the BJP for the Assembly polls slated to be held in the next few months.

About the Assembly polls in the state, Chautala said the JJP will hold meetings with party workers from July 5 to seek feedback and to rebuild the organisation. "The focus is to make our organisation ready for the assembly poll," he said.

Himachal Govt set to roll out Early Childhood Care and Education Tutor Scheme

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Sukhu on Thursday said that the State Government was set to launch the 'Himachal Pradesh Early Childhood Care and Education Tutor Scheme' to overall growth of the children between 3-6 years of age.

He said that presently 6,297 pre-primary schools under the umbrella of primary schools were being run by the State Government catering to approximately 60,000 children and 2,377 anganwari were also co-located with these primary schools.

"In alignment with the National Education Policy, 2020, which recommends comprehensive Early

Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the Education Department would implement a combination of all four ECCE models, said the Chief Minister. These models include standalone Anganwari and Anganwari's co-located with primary schools, pre-primary schools covering at least ages 5 to 6 years co-located with existing primary schools and standalone pre-primary schools," added the Chief Minister.

He said that the State Government would engage ECCE tutors for all 6,297 government primary schools, adhering to NCTE norms. He emphasized, "This initiative highlights the State government's commitment to providing quality early childhood education and ensuring the

holistic development and nurturing the young minds in Himachal."

Sukhu reiterated the State Government's commitment to improving educational accessibility by ensuring quality education closer to student's homes. He emphasized ongoing efforts to introduce innovative schemes in the education sector, including the upcoming recruitment of teachers of various categories. He said that the recruitment process would commence soon so as to avoid any disturbance in studies due to shortage of teachers in schools. In addition to these initiatives, the State Government is also launching Rajiv Gandhi Day Boarding School in every assembly constituency, he added.

HSIIDC gets approval for borrowing Rs 200 crore for infrastructure development

HARYANA CABINET

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Haryana Cabinet which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday approved borrowing of Rs 200 crore by the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) to meet the day to day expenses towards acquisition of land, infrastructure development and payment of enhanced compensation to the ex-land owners and to pay high cost debts.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that the Haryana Finance department has provided its concurrence

with certain terms and conditions, including a 2 percent guarantee fee on the sanctioned credit limit, timely repayment obligations and strict adherence to the purpose of fund utilisation. The approval of Fresh Line of Credit (CC Limit/Working Capital Limit) is a significant step towards realising the vision of developed and progressive Haryana.

The cabinet also approved the enhancement of the sale limit for non-judicial and court fee stamps by licensed stamp vendors from the existing Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 per case. This decision aims to address the long-standing demands of the Stamp Vendors Association and to facilitate the general public.

OTHER DECISIONS

- ★ Grants government jobs to sisters of Martyrs Sepoy Satyawan and Captain Kapil Kundu
- ★ Policy approved to strengthen infrastructure in Medical, Dental, and Nursing Colleges
- ★ Extends Daily Allowance for Police Personnel up to 20 Days in a month
- ★ Expands Old Age Samman Allowance Scheme to include EPF Pensioners with Lower Benefits
- ★ Drafts SOPs for Scrutiny and processing of applications received for grant of TDR certificate

Punjab achieves record power demand, ensures uninterrupted supply despite surge

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In a remarkable feat, Punjab Power Minister Harbhajan Singh ETO on Thursday announced that the state has achieved its all-time highest power demand of 3563 lakh units (LUs) in a single day on June 26, surpassing the previous record of 3427 LUs set on September 9, 2023.

The minister, in a press communiqué, disclosed that Punjab also met its highest-ever peak demand of 15,933 MW on June 19, breaking the previous peak of 15,325 MW recorded on June 23, 2023. This unprecedented surge in power demand reflects the growing energy needs of the state

during the intense summer season.

"The power demand has been persistently high this summer, and Punjab has successfully met 28 percent more power demand in June 2024 compared to the same period last year, supplying 7464 million units (MUs) till June 26, 2024, against 5853 MUs till June 26, 2023," he said.

He further added that in May 2024, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) supplied 7231 MUs, marking a 37 percent increase from the 5270 MUs supplied in May 2023.

Highlighting the efficiency and dedication of the Power Department, the Minister emphasized that the Chief Minister

Bhagwant Mann-led Government has met the highest-ever demand for electricity without imposing any power cuts on domestic, commercial, or industrial consumers. "Maximum Agricultural Pump (AP) supply is being provided to agricultural consumers in the state, ensuring their needs are met during this crucial period," he said.

A day after PSPCL recorded its highest-ever power supply and peak demand on Wednesday, the State experienced a massive dip in power demand by around 4,000 MW due to rain and thunderstorms. Early Thursday morning, power demand, which was around 15,000 MW at 3 am, dropped to 11,000 MW by 9 am as rain hit parts of Punjab, including

Ludhiana, Rupnagar, Nawanshahr, and Hoshiarpur.

Despite this fluctuation, the PSPCL maintained a steady supply, with Punjab "under-drawing" power from the northern grid at just 1,600 MW at one point, significantly lower than the usual 9,000-10,000 MW during this time of year.

Notably, this year saw the first instance of power shortage on Tuesday when the State faced a deficit of around 320 lakh units, leading to the purchase of 835 LUs at a cost of Rs 48 crore through the power exchange.

The State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC) played a crucial role in managing this demand, ensuring stability and reliability in

the power system. Amid record-breaking demand, all thermal power plants, including those owned by private companies, ensured a constant supply of power, particularly crucial during the paddy sowing season. On Wednesday, 6,100 MW of power was supplied from within the State, while 9,700 MW was drawn from the national grid.

Regarding coal stock, officials confirmed that the Lehra Mohabbat thermal plant has enough coal to last 20 days, while Ropar and Goindwal thermal plants have stocks for 15 days each. Among private plants, Rajpura has coal for 26 days, and Talwandi Sabo's stock will last for just four days.

VEER MADHO SINGH BHANDARI
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Online Counselling Notice for Admission 2024-25

Schedule For First Year Admissions, Except Pharmacy Courses

Phase	Online registration & Counselling Fee	Choice Filling	Seat Allotment Date	Selecting (Freeze/Float/Withdraw) option	Date of Reporting in Allotted institution by the candidate
I	28-06-24 to 27-06-24	28-06-24 to 28-06-24	03-07-24	03-07-24 to 04-07-24	04-07-24 to 08-07-24
II	09-07-24 to 15-07-24	09-07-24 to 11-07-24	16-07-24	16-07-24 to 17-07-24	17-07-24 to 21-07-24

Schedule For Second Year Admissions (Lateral Entry) B.Tech & B.Pharm

Phase	Online registration & Counselling Fee	Choice Filling	Seat Allotment Date	Selecting (Freeze/Float/Withdraw) option	Date of Reporting in Allotted institution by the candidate
I	28-06-24 to 27-06-24	28-06-24 to 28-06-24	03-07-24	03-07-24 to 04-07-24	04-07-24 to 08-07-24

Note:
1- Admission to 1st year of pharmacy courses will start soon.
2- Online Counselling will be based on Freeze/Float/Withdraw option. For more information visit the University Website www.utuu.ac.in or Scan the QR

Adv No - 1022 UTU/Counseling-2024/24-25 Dated 26.06.2024 Registrar

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED (A State Govt. Undertaking) "PRESS TENDER NOTICE (E-Tendering Mode Only)" Online tenders are hereby invited for the following works on through rates basis from the contractors listed in the appropriate class having A-Class Electrical License/PWD registration as the case may be.

NOTICE General public is informed that PID No. 8CWTE78 It is in the name of Mukund Lal S/o Sh. Kishna Ram, after his death, the names of his following heirs are Pushpsham (son), Somnath (son), Haridas (grandson), Narendran (grandson), Sandeep (grandson), Krishna Rani (daughter-in-law), Sonia (granddaughter), Debra Devi (daughter-in-law), Ramdas (grandson), Darshan Kaur (daughter), Lakshmi Devi (daughter), Ramkishan (son), Ramesh P. (grandson), Charandas (grandson) are to be entered in the Municipal records for house tax purposes.

Public Notice It is informed to general public that Sh. Krishan Kumar S/o Sh. Sachidanand Yadav has lost his previous sale deed No. 3696 dated 01-09-1999 in favour of Rani Wasis Aggarwal for Property i.e. House No. 191, measuring 50 Sq. Yards situated at Sector 14P, Hisar Tehsil & Distt. Hisar.

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LTD. CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639 Registered Office: Unit No.- 601, 6th Floor, Piramal Amity Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kuria (West), Mumbai- 400070-T +91 22 3802 4000

Public Notice It is informed to General Public that Smt. Savitri Devi W/o Sh. Yuvraj Singh lost her previous Allotment letter No. 5508, Re-allotment letter No. 15052, Regd. Civil Site vide Vaska no. 16627 for Property i.e. House No. 2891P measuring 350 sq. Yards situated at Sector 15A, Hisar Tehsil & Distt. Hisar.

Public Notice It is informed to General Public that Smt. Savitri Devi W/o Sh. Yuvraj Singh lost her previous Allotment letter No. 5508, Re-allotment letter No. 15052, Regd. Civil Site vide Vaska no. 16627 for Property i.e. House No. 2891P measuring 350 sq. Yards situated at Sector 15A, Hisar Tehsil & Distt. Hisar.

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of the Palsora Cooperative Agriculture Service Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 16.07.2024 at Gurudwara Sahib, Village Palsora, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 07.30 pm.

DATE OF E-AUCTION: 16-07-2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 02:00 P.M. (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH), LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 15-07-2024, BEFORE 04:00 P.M. For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in www.piramalfinance.com/e-Auction.html or email us on piramal.auction@piramal.com

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of the Palsora Cooperative Agriculture Service Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 16.07.2024 at Gurudwara Sahib, Village Palsora, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 07.30 pm.

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of the Survey of India Cooperative USETC Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 15.07.2024 at Survey of India Complex, Sector 32, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 04.00 pm.

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of The City Star Cooperative Housing Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 16.07.2024 at Park opposite House No. 138, Sector 45A, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 05.00 pm.

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of The City Star Cooperative Housing Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 16.07.2024 at Park opposite House No. 138, Sector 45A, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 05.00 pm.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

ELECTION NOTICE It is for the information of all members of The City Star Cooperative Housing Society Ltd, Chandigarh that election for the managing committee of the society will be held on Dt. 16.07.2024 at Park opposite House No. 138, Sector 45A, Chandigarh from 10.00 am to 05.00 pm.

THE NIRVANA COOPERATIVE H/B (Hs) SOCIETY LTD. PLOT No. 48, SECTOR 15, CHANDIGARH. (Regd. No. 638 Dt. 28.5.2003)

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Public Notice Name of Original Allottee: Smt. Vinia Devi Bagga (W/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash) Name of Transferee Member: Sh. Sushil Kumar Bagga/S/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash Flat No. 1805, Category: A, Floor: Second Floor

DATE OF E-AUCTION: 16-07-2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 02:00 P.M. (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH), LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 15-07-2024, BEFORE 04:00 P.M. For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in www.piramalfinance.com/e-Auction.html or email us on piramal.auction@piramal.com

Public Notice Name of Original Allottee: Smt. Vinia Devi Bagga (W/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash) Name of Transferee Member: Sh. Sushil Kumar Bagga/S/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash Flat No. 1805, Category: A, Floor: Second Floor

Public Notice This is to notify all the concerned that, on behalf of this client, Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Limited, I hereby give notice to the general public that customers, Sh. Umesh and Smt. Kumari Nisha W/o Sh. Umesh have applied for a loan vide Lead ID: H2024000292. To purchase the Property i.e. House situated at Village Jassran, Sub Tehsil Mandi Gobindgarh, Tehsil Amloh and Distt. Fatehgarh Sahib, area measuring 0-1 Biswa i.e. 50 sq. yds, comprising in Khewat/Khaton No. 9401/53, Kh. No. 3267/219(5-3), Kita 1, Total area 5 Bighas 3 Biswas out of which 0-1 Biswa i.e. 50 sq. yds in the name of Smt. Seema W/o Sh. Darshan Lal vide Sale deed no. 2023-1924/1863 dated 02-08-2023 has been sold and regarding this the DOR has been got lodged in Police station vide no. 484753/2024 dated 27-06-2024.

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LTD. (PCHFL) CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639 Registered Office: Unit No.- 601, 6th Floor, Piramal Amity Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kuria (west), Mumbai- 400070-T +91 22 3802 4000

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DATE OF E-AUCTION: 30.07.2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 1.00 P.M. (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH), LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 29.07.2024, BEFORE 4.00 P.M. For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in www.piramalfinance.com/e-Auction.html or email us on piramal.auction@piramal.com

Public Notice Name of Original Allottee: Smt. Vinia Devi Bagga (W/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash) Name of Transferee Member: Sh. Sushil Kumar Bagga/S/o Late Sh. Ved Parkash Flat No. 1805, Category: A, Floor: Second Floor

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The following borrower(s) has/have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest towards the Loan facility(ies) availed from ICICI Bank. The Loan(s) has/have been classified as Non-Performing Asset(s) (NPA).

Table with columns: Sr. No., Name of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address, Description of Secured Asset to be enforced, Date of Notice sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice, NPA Date. Contains multiple entries for various borrowers and their secured assets.

These steps are being taken for substituted service of Notice. The above borrower(s) and/or guarantor(s) (as applicable) is/are advised to make the outstanding payment within 60 days from the date of publishing this Notice. Else, further steps will be taken as per the provisions of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Steady leadership

Om Birla's re-election as Speaker of Lok Sabha reveals his calibre and his faith in democracy

Om Birla has been re-elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. This marks a significant chapter in parliamentary history. Birla's leadership has been characterised by impartiality, a deep commitment to democratic principles, and a steady hand in navigating the complexities of parliamentary proceedings. "Parliament is the temple of democracy. It is our duty to ensure that it functions efficiently and reflects the aspirations of the people," Birla stated. "I am committed to working with all members to ensure that the Lok Sabha continues to be a vibrant and effective forum for democratic deliberation."



Om Birla, a seasoned politician from Rajasthan and a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), first assumed the role of Lok Sabha Speaker in June 2019. His re-election signifies a continuity of leadership essential for maintaining the stability and decorum of the lower house. It was indeed heartening to observe that his election was met with widespread support, not only from his party but also from various opposition factions.

This cross-party endorsement reflects Birla's ability to maintain neutrality and manage the house with a balanced approach, fostering an environment where diverse viewpoints can be expressed and debated constructively.

Om Birla's political journey began in the early 1990s, rooted in a commitment to public service and grassroots development. Representing the Kota-Bundi constituency in Rajasthan, Birla has held various significant roles in both state and central politics. As Speaker, Birla has championed initiatives to improve the transparency and efficiency of parliamentary procedures. He has been instrumental in modernising the Lok Sabha's functioning, introducing digital tools and processes to streamline legislative activities and enhance accessibility for the public. Birla's tenure as Speaker has not been without challenges. Birla has had his fair share of controversies. Om Birla has faced allegations of bias, with critics accusing him of partiality in parliamentary proceedings, favouring the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) by selectively allowing or disallowing debates on critical issues. Controversies have also arisen from his suspension of opposition MPs for disruptions, which critics argue is a harsh and selectively enforced tactic to suppress dissent. Additionally, Birla has been accused of adopting a high-handed approach toward opposition leaders, often curtailing their speaking time and limiting their opportunities to present viewpoints. Birla has also encouraged greater participation of women and young MPs, fostering a more inclusive and representative parliamentary process. Birla's re-election as Speaker of the Lok Sabha is a reflection of the trust and confidence that the members of the house have in his leadership. His ability to maintain neutrality, coupled with his dedication to upholding the dignity and decorum of the house, has earned him respect across party lines.

PICTALK



Tourists enjoy during rains, at the Taj Mahal, in Agra

Will British Indians back Rishi Sunak?



VIVEK SHUKLA

With the July 4 general election approaching, the key question is whether British Indians will rally behind Sunak and the Conservative Party

Will Rishi Sunak, Britain's first Hindu Prime Minister, remain in office after the upcoming general election on July 4th? Will Sunak's Conservative Party receive the votes of British Indians? Will the Labour Party also receive votes from the Indian diaspora? These are important questions indeed. According to the 2011 British census, there are approximately 1.5 million people of Indian origin in Britain, representing 2.5% of the country's total population. Indians are the largest immigrant group in Britain. They are relatively well-educated compared to other immigrant groups and are considered to be among the wealthiest in Britain.



Hinduja, Lakshmi Mittal, and Swaraj Paul are some prominent Indian-origin individuals who feature in the list of Britain's richest people. Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murthy, daughter of Infosys founder N.R. Narayan Murthy, were ranked 245th in the Sunday Times list of Britain's wealthiest individuals released in May. Historically, Indian immigrants in Britain have leaned towards the Labour Party. It was during the Labour government that India gained independence from British rule. However, recent surveys suggest a growing inclination towards the Conservative Party, the main rival to the Labour Party.

Narendra Modi became India's Prime Minister in 2014. Hindus comprise the majority of these supporters. The total Hindu population among Indians in Britain is over a million. Modi addressed over 60,000 people of Indian origin at a packed Wembley Stadium in London during his 2015 visit to Britain. Gujarati and Punjabi people were in the majority at that time. Boris Johnson, the then British Prime Minister, was known to proudly call himself "India's son-in-law". He was a unique son-in-law. His (second divorced) wife Marina Wheeler's mother, Deep Singh Kaur, was previously married to Sardar Daljit Singh, son of renowned contractor Sir Sobha Singh from New Delhi. Now, let's understand another subtle point. Not all Indian immigrants in Britain think alike politically or support any specific party. It is believed that most Indian Muslims and Sikhs may vote for the Labour Party. They are not fond of the close ties between the Conservative Party and Modi. From the 1960s to the 1980s, a significant number of Indian immigrants settled in Britain from Uganda, Kenya, and the Caribbean Islands. These communities viewed Labour as sympathetic to immigrants.



IN THE PAST 20-25 YEARS, A NEW WAVE OF IMMIGRANTS FROM INDIA HAS ARRIVED IN BRITAIN. THESE ARE DOCTORS, ENGINEERS, IT PROFESSIONALS, ETC. THEY ALL IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS CONSERVATIVE PARTY VOTERS

They were particularly attracted to Labour's commitment to immigrants' rights, especially following the introduction of the Race Relations Act in 1965 by Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson. Thousands of Indian immigrants came to Britain from Uganda after Uganda's cannibalistic president Idi Amin ordered the expulsion of all Indians from his country within 90 days in August 1972. A deeper analysis reveals that British Hindus have been leaning towards the Conservative Party since 2010. This trend includes wealthy and educated second and third-generation Hindus. In the past 20-25 years, a new wave of immigrants from India has arrived in Britain. These are doctors, engineers, IT professionals, etc. They all identify themselves as Conservative Party voters. The Indian diaspora's disaffection with the Labour Party did not happen overnight. It was triggered by Labour's 2019 resolution calling for "the right of self-determination" for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This resolution led a large section of the Indian diaspora in Britain to distance themselves from the Labour Party. They saw it as direct interference in India's internal affairs. Meanwhile, Rishi Sunak

became Britain's first Hindu Prime Minister in 2022. This development deepened the bond between Hindus and the Conservative Party. It is still too early to say whether Hindus will vote en masse for the Conservative Party in the upcoming British general election. However, for the first time, British Hindus have released a manifesto outlining their aspirations and expectations from the next government. They say they will only support those who endorse their demands. Hindus are the third-largest religious group in Britain. 29 Hindu organizations have so far endorsed this manifesto. According to the manifesto, "Hindus are the backbone of the British economy. Our contribution to the country's economy is disproportionately high. We are one of the most law-abiding communities. Yet, anti-Hindu hate is on the rise in the country." One of their key demands is for their safety. Will the Hindu votes be split or go to the Conservative Party? Will the Labour and Conservative parties consider the manifesto of the Hindu organizations? (The writer is Columnist and ex-Information Officer, UAE Embassy, New Delhi; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OM BIRLA RE-ELECTED AS LS SPEAKER

Madam — The re-election of NDA nominee Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker, following a voice vote, comes as no surprise. Unlike his first term in 2019, where he was elected unopposed, this time, elections were necessary. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to retain familiar faces in key ministries during his third term underscores his administration's commitment to continuity. Om Birla's reappointment makes him the first leader of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party to be re-elected as Lok Sabha Speaker twice in over two decades. In a democracy, elections are essential and should be welcomed. The position of Lok Sabha Speaker traditionally requires broad support to ensure the smooth functioning of the House. When a Speaker is elected with bipartisan support, it significantly enhances the role's prestige. Opposition in an election does not necessarily indicate a lack of trust. As Om Birla embarks on his second term, he faces the challenge of surpassing his previous performance, which saw a record number of MP suspensions. While no single party can be blamed, it is evident that all parties will need to exhibit greater maturity and understanding this time.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

AFGHANISTAN REACH SEMIFINALS!

Madam — Giant Australia is out of the T20 World Cup 2024 semifinals, while Afghanistan has secured a place, demonstrating the unpredictable nature of cricket and sports. No one can foresee the winner or loser; sometimes, luck plays a significant role. If Bangladesh had won, Australia might have advanced to the semifinals. We often hear quotes like 'well-coordinated team effort', 'try and try again, you will win at last', 'rise from the ashes like a phoenix' and 'focus on the issue and proceed in an organized and scientific manner'. Today, we witnessed these principles in action by Afghanistan's well-coordinated

Dynamic Opposition in Parliament



The swearing-in ceremony for Members of Parliament at the 18th Lok Sabha was noteworthy, with the opposition members prominently holding mini copies of the Constitution while taking their oaths.

Leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Dimple Yadav, Avadesh Prasad, and Rakibul Hussain were seen holding these mini constitutions as they swore in as elected MPs. This gesture underscores the opposition's commitment to active governance and to reminding the government of its constitutional responsibilities. By swearing with the Constitution in hand, the opposition members are enhancing their personal commitment to the nation. Their duty is now twofold: to fulfill their roles as MPs and to safeguard constitutional values, reminding the government of its duties. Time will tell who upholds these values. Meanwhile, it is encouraging to see a dynamic opposition in the Indian Parliament to provide a robust counterbalance to those in power. Kirti Wadhawan, Kanpur

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

India's assertive foreign policy and global aspirations



PUSHKAR PRIYADARSHI

From bolstering defence capabilities to fostering regional cooperation, India under Modi's leadership navigates a complex geopolitical landscape

Prime Minister Modi's foreign policy initiatives have consistently underscored India's assertiveness and strategic clarity from his first term in 2014 to his current third term in 2024. This period has seen India take decisive actions such as the Balakot Airstrike in 2019 and the banning of TikTok, aimed at countering China and safeguarding national interests. These measures have not been welcomed by neighboring states like China and Pakistan, particularly in light of incidents such as the Galwan clash in 2020, which resulted in the loss of Indian soldiers and prompted a bolstering of border security and a significant increase in the defense budget from approximately Rs 4,73,378 crores in 2020 to Rs 6,21,540 crores presently.



This heightened defense spending underscores India's unwavering commitment to national development and security. Underpinning Modi's governance is the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat 2047' (Developed India), with ambitions to elevate India to the rank of the world's third-largest economy. Since 2014, India has advanced from being the 10th largest economy to the 5th largest, showcasing potential for further growth. The Viksit Bharat agenda prioritizes boosting manufacturing industries, evidenced by substantial subsidies totaling \$28 billion across 14 sectors and an additional \$10 billion allocated to the semiconductor industry. This economic expansion surpasses historical parallels, outstripping even Britain's colonial economic hegemony. India's aspirations extend to securing a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, a move contested primarily by China. Despite these challenges, India is forging independent diplomatic pathways, exemplified by the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) involving India, Japan, the United States, and Australia. While debates on the Quad's efficacy persist, its role in ensuring Indo-Pacific security and countering Chinese influence remains pivotal. Additionally, India is strengthening regional ties through initiatives like BIM-STEC and expanding BRICS to include UAE and Saudi Arabia, key oil suppliers, thereby enhancing its global stature and influence. Modi's foreign policy approach is characterized by a nuanced engagement in global politics, leveraging soft power to augment India's international standing. The 'Neighbourhood First'

policy, emphasized during Modi's third term inauguration, exemplifies India's commitment to fostering regional cooperation. High-profile visits and agreements, such as those with Bangladesh, underscore the policy's success in enhancing regional connectivity and economic collaboration. Beyond tangible policy actions, Modi's government champions India as a 'Vishwaguru' (World Teacher), invoking the country's ancient heritage and cultural legacy. This narrative not only promotes India's soft power but also influences global discourse on geopolitics, art, culture, and values originating from India's ancient civilization. India's advocacy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family) at international forums like the G20 reinforces its role as a leading soft power and positions it closer to superpower status. Modi's third term inauguration signifies a continued assertiveness in foreign policy, aimed at securing India's strategic interests while fostering global partnerships. (The writer is a researcher; views are personal)

est in terms of adults being insufficiently physically active after high-income Asia Pacific region, an international team of researchers, including those from the World Health Organization (WHO), said. This was up by 5 per cent, from 26.4 per cent of adults worldwide insufficiently engaged in physical activity in 2010. In India, a little over 22 per cent of the adults engaged in insufficient physical activity in the year 2000, while in 2010, close to 34 per cent of the adults were insufficiently physically active, the researchers found. They projected that in 2030, 60 per cent of the adults could be insufficiently engaging in physical activity, should current trends continue. This is indeed a cause of concern. India had 101 million diabetics, 315 million people with hypertension, 254 million with obesity, and 185 million with high levels of LDL cholesterol. Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

TOWARDS BETTER TIES WITH BANGLADESH

Sheikh Hasina's visit highlights Bangladesh's pivotal role as a strategic partner for India



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The new Indian Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is back to its foreign policy agenda, which it has carefully curated in the past decade. Mr Modi was in Italy to attend the G7 meetings as a special invitee, within days of his swearing-in. His swearing-in ceremony was in itself a statement of the stated policy focus of Neighbourhood First.

The swearing-in ceremony was attended by leaders from almost all Southeast Asian countries and, some from the Indian Ocean region. Significantly Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was back in India, within a month of her attending the swearing-in ceremony, to further strengthen the bilateral relations. The focus of the meeting as highlighted by Prime Minister Modi during the joint briefing with Sheikh Hasina was "Today we have prepared a futuristic vision for cooperation in new areas. Youth of both countries will benefit from the agreement reached on cooperation in a lot of areas such as Green Partnership, Digital Partnership, Blue Economy, Space. India Bangladesh "Maitri Satellite" will give new heights to our partnership. We have kept in our focus-Connectivity, Commerce and Collaboration." Bangladesh is an important strategic partner for India, not just due to the intimate geographical boundaries, and the shared culture and language, but also as an important corridor connecting India's Northeast to the Bay of Bengal. Prime Ministers of both countries Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi have been at the top job for more than a decade now.

They have developed a working relationship, that is hard to match, underscored by the ten meetings these leaders had in the last five years. Both Prime Ministers jointly inaugurated the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline on 18 March in a virtual format. PM Sheikh Hasina also participated in the Inaugural Session of the Voice of the Global South Summit on 11 January 2023 and the second Virtual Voice of the Global South Summit on 17 November 2023. Bangladesh and India share nearly 4000 km of the international border, security of which is an important pillar of the relationship for keeping a check on the drug trade, smuggling, fake currency, human trafficking, and movement of criminals or terrorists.



As an upgrade to the security partnership, India and Bangladesh have over the years worked on a defence cooperation framework. The recent visit of Bangladesh's PM saw both countries put a special focus on enhancing the defence partnership. In his statement PM Modi highlighted "...on further strengthening our defence cooperation, from defence production to modernisation of armed forces. In the Indian Ocean region, we have a common perspective. We welcome Bangladesh's decision to join the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative. We will continue our cooperation in other regional and international forums, including BIMSTEC."

The strongest pillar of the India-Bangladesh relationship is economics. Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the biggest trade partner for Bangladesh in Asia. The bilateral trade between the two countries is nearly \$16bn. Besides the much sought-after Ilsh fish from Padma River, Bangladesh exports nearly \$2 billion in goods to India, which is the highest in Asia. In the past few years, an aggressive China has tried to take over some of the traditional space, reserved for India in bilateral relationships, through its opaque infrastructure projects. This has been resisted by India by upping the infrastructure partnership and bringing Bangladesh closer towards the Indo-Pacific geopolitical worldview, than a South East Asian outlook. It helps to align Bangladesh with India's multilateral partners such as Australia, Japan, South Korea and beyond in the Middle East. PM Sheikh Hasina's visit as the first state guest of India, under Modi 3.0 is an important reinforcement of the strong bonds between the two neighbours.

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

Macron's calls for snap polls to thwart ultra right

This strategic manoeuvre aims to disrupt the growing momentum of the far-right National Rally and prevent further erosion of his political standing



NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

Macron's Election Gambit by Nilantha Ilangamuwa Emmanuel Macron, the youngest president in French history, is known for taking risks, as evidenced by his recent call for snap elections to avoid further humiliation after a significant defeat in the European Union Parliamentary Elections, where his main contender garnered over 50% of the votes. This move, the first since 1997, invokes Article 12 of the French Constitution, allowing the president to end the Assemblée Nationale's term early, thus advancing the end of the current five-year term from 2027 to 2024. The new parliamentary elections are set for June 30 and July 7, catching many of Macron's allies off guard. France is at a crossroads. As former Prime Minister Lionel Jospin once mentioned, "Politics is not about morality, it's about efficiency." Throughout French history, there have been five notable instances of snap elections.

In 1962 and 1968, Charles de Gaulle dissolved the Assemblée Nationale following a motion of no confidence and widespread protests, respectively, securing significant victories both times. François Mitterrand used snap elections in 1981 to secure a Socialist majority and again in 1988 to address political "cohabitation." Jacques Chirac's 1997 snap election gamble backfired, leading to a left-wing coalition victory. Currently, Macron faces low approval ratings and a paralyzed parliament, with the National Rally (Rassemblement National or RN) capitalizing on the situation. By calling for snap elections, Macron aims to confront the populist movement and disrupt their momentum, leveraging the more challenging two-round system of French national elections compared to the single-round European elections. Marine Le Pen and RN president Jordan Bardella, the party's candidate for PM, are gearing up for the snap elections, which will have higher stakes compared to the European elections. Macron, aiming to dramatize the choice facing the French, challenged voters in a televised address, asking if they truly want to be governed by the far right.

What exactly is the 'far right', a term frequently echoed in European politics? Often, it's a convenient label used to obscure the significant failures of so-called neo-liberals. When individuals dare to address real societal issues on the ground, rather than fabricating crises to vilify "designated enemies" like Vladimir Putin, they are often hastily labelled as "far-right" or conservative. Instead of accurate representation, this knee-jerk reaction by warmongers, fueled by Western media, reflects bias. Recent events in France, where President Macron's centrist coalition faced electoral setbacks, highlight this skewed narrative. The term "far right" is wielded without nuance, disregarding the diverse ideological spectrum and legitimate concerns championed by these movements. The shifting landscape of French politics challenges outdated perceptions. Parties like Marine Le Pen's National Rally are not accurately depicted as "far-right"; instead, they signify a redefinition of mainstream conservatism. Their platforms, focusing on issues such as controlled migration and national defence, resonate with many voters disenchanted with traditional leadership. Understanding these complexities demands a departure from simplistic labels and a recognition of Europe's evolving political dynamics. While Marine Le Pen may not



mirror Trump's trajectory in France, it's crucial to acknowledge the significant support they garner from the public, despite mainstream media's continued misrepresentation. Blaming perceived evils is often easier than confronting one's own side's failures.



MACRON'S LEADERSHIP IN THIS MATTER HIGHLIGHTS HIS DEDICATION TO UPHOLDING NATO'S FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRESERVING ITS STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN THE FACE OF EVOLVING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

In this context, polarized politics in France are teaching a new lesson about the deceptive nature of labelling certain movements as "far right" to deflect attention from the failures of neoliberalism. Unlike the European elections with a 50% turnout, local watchdogs asserted that the national elections could see 70% voter participation, potentially mobilizing moderates and reviving the anti-populist front. Macron's team believes voters will scrutinize RN's policy proposals, particularly as the autumn session promised censure motions likely to collapse Prime Minister Gabriel Attal's government. As per the London Guardian, Macron's gamble may yield three outcomes. First, he might recover his majority, although this seems unlikely given his unpopularity and the normalization of the "far right" across Europe. Second, the National Rally could win a majority, leading to an unprecedented cohabitation with a populist right-wing parliament, which Macron might see as a chance to highlight their governance shortcomings. This scenario poses significant risks as an RN-controlled parliament would handle crucial domestic policies, potentially clashing with Macron on issues like immigration and national security, while creating tensions with Brussels due to RN's nation-first policies. The third scenario, considered most probable by analysts, is that RN increases its seats but fails to gain an absolute majority, resulting in a splintered parliament and potential deadlock. Macron may seek alliances with the mainstream centre-right or centre-left, but success is uncertain. This fragmented parliament could lead to increased political instability.

However, one cannot forget that it was Macron who stood firm against NATO's proposal to establish a liaison office in Japan, marking a significant division within the alliance on the eve of a crucial summit. Macron's decisive opposition reflects his insistence that NATO should not stray from its original North Atlantic focus, particularly amid escalating tensions with China.

His resolute stance accentuates France's commitment to maintaining the alliance's core principles, despite pressure to expand its reach into Asia.

Macron's leadership in this matter highlights his dedication to upholding NATO's foundational principles and preserving its strategic direction in the face of evolving global challenges. Macron's recent interview with Le Parisien sheds light on evolving European attitudes towards Ukraine, acknowledging the potential necessity for ground operations in the future. This represents a significant policy shift amidst rising tensions between NATO and Russia. Macron's acknowledgement of the need to prepare for all scenarios, including ground interventions, signals a departure from previous official denials and underscores the increasing seriousness of the situation in Ukraine. Additionally, France's plan to send Mirage 2000-5 fighter jets adds a tangible dimension to the discussion, indicating a more assertive stance from France and its European allies in response to the ongoing conflict.

This regional tension exacerbated France's already unstable domestic political situation, leading to a humiliating defeat for Macron and bolstering Le Pen's populist narrative. According to local media outlets, the political parties in France held emergency talks to explore potential alliances at the beginning of this week following the announcement of a snap legislative election. The unexpected and risky decision to hold elections soon could potentially shift major polit-

ical power, undermining Macron's presidency three years before its scheduled end. Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire emphasized the high stakes, calling it the most consequential parliamentary election in decades.

This could potentially impact on warmongering President of the European Commission, and France would sooner lose its interest in involving in the Ukraine War, while more focus on domestic issues. RN leaders, including Jordan Bardella, the party's candidate for prime minister, and Marine Le Pen, the party's parliamentary leader, are strategizing to capitalize on their recent success. Bardella expressed his readiness to build a large majority, while the divided French left, comprising hard-left LFI, Communists, Socialists, and Greens, also held talks to forge a united front against the populist right.

Despite the populist right's strong performance in the European elections, analysts suggest that an outright RN majority in the parliamentary elections is unlikely, as voters often use European elections to express dissatisfaction with the incumbent government. The president aims to rally these voters in response to the populist right surge, despite concerns from within his party and criticisms from other political figures. Macron described his decision as an act of confidence in the French people's ability to make the best choice for the country, emphasizing the need for a clear majority to govern effectively.

His previous successes in presidential elections were aided by a "Republican front" that unified various political groups against the populist right, a strategy that was not extended to parliamentary elections, costing him a majority. The upcoming elections will test whether he can restore this principle and rally other political groups to prevent the Le Pen clan from gaining control.

(The writer is a Sri Lankan journalist and author; Views are personal)

India-Arab green strategic partnership: Pioneering sustainable development

This initiative highlights the shared commitment of the two countries to foster a greener and more resilient future

The India-Arab Green Strategic Partnership represents a collaborative initiative aimed at enhancing sustainable development and combating climate change. In today's world, where environmental concerns hold significant global importance, the Green Strategic Partnership between India and Arab countries stands out as a beacon of collaboration and innovation.



PADMALOCHAN DASH

Green Strategic Partnership builds on this foundation by integrating environmental sustainability into the bilateral agenda, reflecting a modern approach to diplomacy in our changing world.

Objectives and Strategic Imperatives: At its core, the partnership seeks to harness the strengths of both India and Arab countries in advancing green technologies, renewable energy solutions, water management practices, and climate resilience strategies. India, as a rising global player in renewable energy deployment and innovation, offers practical solutions to the challenges faced:

Renewable Energy Leadership: India excels in renewable energy technologies like solar photovoltaic and wind power. This aligns well with Arab countries' goals to diversify their energy mix away from fossil fuels. For example, India's collaboration with the UAE has seen investments in solar parks and wind energy projects, demonstrating tangible outcomes of this partnership.

Water Security and Management: Water scarcity poses a critical challenge for both regions, exacerbated by

climate change and rapid urbanisation. India contributes practical solutions through its expertise in sustainable water management practices. Initiatives like community-driven water conservation and wastewater treatment can be adapted and shared with Arab countries facing similar challenges.

Climate Change Mitigation: The impacts of climate change require urgent mitigation efforts. India has committed to ambitious targets under the Paris Agreement, focusing on renewable energy deployment and emissions reduction. Collaborative projects with Arab countries aim to implement climate-resilient infrastructure.

Sustainable Urbanisation and Biodiversity Conservation: As urban populations grow, sustainable urban planning becomes crucial to reduce environmental footprints and improve quality of life. India promotes green building standards, urban green spaces, and effective waste management practices through initiatives like the Smart Cities Mission. Collaborative projects with the UAE in sustainable urban development integrate renewable energy solutions and eco-friendly infrastructure.

Energy Efficiency: Improving energy efficiency is key to reducing carbon footprints and enhancing energy security. India's initiatives like the Perform, Achieve, and Trade (PAT) scheme for industrial energy efficiency offer practical models for collaboration.

Through knowledge exchange and technology transfer, India supports efforts to optimise energy consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Green Finance and Investment: India's experience in issuing green bonds and establishing green funds, alongside initiatives like the National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF), provides pathways for financing renewable energy, energy storage, and sustainable infrastructure projects.

Technological Innovation: Collaboration in research and development (R&D) is crucial for advancing green technologies. India's vibrant start-up ecosystem and research institutions contribute to innovations in areas such as green hydrogen production and bat-

tery storage technologies. Joint innovation hubs and technology parks facilitate technology transfer and accelerate the adoption of sustainable innovations. Despite its potential, the Green Strategic Partnership faces several challenges:

Geopolitical Dynamics: Diverse geopolitical interests and regional conflicts among Arab countries and India may impact the partnership's cohesion and operational effectiveness. India's role as a neutral mediator and advocate for collaborative solutions helps navigate geopolitical complexities and build trust among partner countries.

Technological and Financial Barriers: Scaling up renewable energy projects and adopting advanced environmental tech-

nologies demand substantial investments and technological advancements.

Policy Alignment: Harmonising national policies, regulatory frameworks, and institutional capacities is crucial for seamless collaboration and effective implementation of joint initiatives across borders.

India advocates for policy coherence through dialogue platforms such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and bilateral strategic dialogues, facilitating alignment on climate goals and regulatory standards.

(The author is an ICSSR-Post Doctoral Fellow, School of National Security Studies, Central University of Gujarat. The views expressed are personal)

Calm returns in Bolivia after apparent coup attempt

AP ■ LA PAZ

Calm returned to Bolivia's capital on Thursday after troops led by a top general stormed the presidential palace, then quickly retreated, tumultuous scenes that threatened to pitch the long-troubled South American democracy into chaos. The nation of 12 million watched in shock and bewilderment Wednesday as Bolivian military forces appeared to turn on the government of President Luis Arce, seizing control of the capital's main square with armoured personnel carriers, crashing a tank into the palace and unleashing tear gas on protesters who flooded the streets. The country's army chief, Gen. Juan Jose Zuniga, addressed a scrum of TV reporters from the palace, vowing to "restore democracy," replace the cabinet, and free political prisoners. But

as opposition leaders condemned the apparent coup attempt, it became clear that the coup had no meaningful political support. Arce refused to relent and named a new army commander, who immediately ordered troops to stand down, ending the rebellion after just three chaotic and head-snapping hours. Hundreds of Arce's supporters rushed the square outside the palace, waving Bolivian flags, singing the national anthem and cheering. "Here we are, firm, in the presidential palace, to confront any coup attempt," Arce said after facing down Gen. Zuniga, calling on Bolivians to mobilize in defense of democracy. Authorities swiftly arrested Zuniga as his soldiers retreated from central La Paz, crushing the apparent coup attempt and defusing the latest crisis in a

country wracked by a bitter political rivalry and economic crisis. "Their goal was to overturn the democratically elected authority," Government Minister Eduardo del Castillo told journalists in announcing the arrests of Zuniga along with an alleged co-conspirator, former navy Vice Adm. Juan Arnez Salvador. The short-lived rebellion followed months of mounting tensions between Arce and his one-time ally, former President Evo Morales. Bolivia's first Indigenous president, Morales remains a global leftist icon and towering figure in national politics years after mass protests that prompted him to resign and flee in 2019 — an ouster his supporters view as a coup. Since returning from exile, Morales has staged a dramatic political comeback. Threatening

to challenge Arce in 2025 primaries, Morales has sparked an unprecedented rift in their ruling socialist party. The feud has paralysed efforts to resolve a spiralling economic crisis, with the country's foreign currency reserves diminishing, its natural gas exports plummeting and its currency peg collapsing. As police in riot gear set up blockades outside the presidential palace, Bolivians — though no stranger to political conflict in a country that has witnessed some 190 coups by one count — thronged ATMs, formed long lines outside gas stations and emptied shelves in grocery stores and pharmacies. Flanked by the newly appointed military chiefs late Wednesday, Defence Minister Edmundo Novillo sought to reassure the rattled public and shed light on what had happened.

Police clash with protesters in Kenya as military patrols streets

AP ■ NAIROBI

Kenyan police on Thursday clashed with protesters in Nairobi before planned protests against a contentious finance bill, despite the president's decision not to sign it after the plans sparked deadly chaos in the capital and saw protesters storming and burning part of the parliament building. Protesters who said last week that they would march to the State House on Thursday say they still don't trust President William Ruto, who has said the tax hikes would be withdrawn and budget cuts would be made. Police have hurled tear gas canisters at groups of protesters attempting to congregate within the central business district. The military has been patrolling the city despite a Wednesday court order that suspended their deployment to support police during the protests. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua on Wednesday urged the young protesters to call off planned protests and give dialogue a chance. The leaderless movement began online with young people demanding

that legislators reject the proposed tax hikes. It later morphed into calls for the president's resignation after the bill was passed. On Tuesday, thousands of protesters stormed Kenya's parliament, burning parts of the building and sending lawmakers fleeing. Police opened fire and at least 22 people were reportedly killed in the chaos. Activists were divided about the agenda of Thursday's protests. One protester, Boniface Mwangi, urged others to peacefully march to parliament road where protesters were killed to pay their respects. "Invasion of the State House isn't a solution," he wrote on X. But Francis Githo, one of the many activists mobilizing for the protests online, insisted that young people should march to the State House. Activists and others warned that the stakes were higher than in past protests, because Ruto vowed on Tuesday to quash unrest "at whatever cost". Analyst Javah Bigambo told The Associated Press that the discontent is partly because Kenyans don't trust the president to implement the austerity measures he

announced on Wednesday. "Kenyans still have a problem with the economy and wastage in government," he said. Bigambo said Ruto's U-turn should be a "lesson on humility" as his initial reaction on Tuesday was "not stately and full of emotions" further agitating protesters. He said the government should win back the populace by opening dialogue channels and ensuring a consultative budgeting process. Businesspeople in Nairobi were standing guard outside their shops on Thursday to prevent looting and vandalism, which took place during Tuesday's protests. Major roads leading to key government buildings, including parliament, have been blocked. Outside Nairobi, protests have been reported in Mombasa, Kisumu, Migori and other major towns. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday spoke with Ruto, thanking him for taking steps to reduce tensions. "The Secretary underscored the importance of security forces demonstrating restraint and refraining from violence and encouraged prompt investigations into allegations of human rights abuses," a statement read.

Lawyer accuses Prince Harry of destroying documents

London (AP): An attorney for the publisher of The Sun tabloid Thursday accused Prince Harry of engaging in "shocking" and "extraordinary" obfuscation by destroying evidence it was seeking in his lawsuit claiming that the newspaper violated his privacy by unlawfully snooping on him. Attorney Anthony Hudson said at High Court that the Duke of Sussex had deliberately destroyed text messages with the ghostwriter who penned his bestselling memoir, "Spare." A lawyer for Harry said News Group Newspapers was engaging in a "classic fishing expedition" by seeking documents they should have sought much sooner for a trial scheduled in January. "NGN's tactical and sly approach to disclosure wholly undermines the deliberately sensational assertion that the claimant (Harry) has not properly carried out the disclosure exercise," his attorney, David Sherborne, said in court papers. "This is untrue. In fact, the claimant has already made clear that he has conducted extensive searches, going above and beyond his obligations."

UK PM Sunak tries to override betting scandal in election campaign

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he is "furious" about the scandal engulfing some of his Conservative Party candidates betting on the date of the general election, to be held on July 4, as the campaign entered its final week on Thursday. In the last televised debate before the polls on Wednesday night, Britain's first Prime Minister of Indian heritage went head-to-head with Labour's Keir Starmer and was clearly in attack mode as he challenged the Opposition leader eyeing his job over target issues such as taxes. "Mark my words," the 44-year-old prime minister said, pointing at Starmer, "your taxes are going up if he is in charge." Immigration was also high on the agenda, with both leaders trading blows over a lack of clear policy to tackle soaring illegal migrant figures, with Sunak cautioning voters to not "surrender" the country's borders to



Labour. While the overall media verdict was in his favour as he managed to hold firm during a large share of the fiery contest, the betting scandal continued to dominate the arguments. "You have to lead from the front on issues like this. When one of my team was alleged to have been involved and investigated by the Gambling Commission, they were suspended within minutes, because I knew it made it really important to be swift," said Starmer, with reference to the suspension of a Labour candidate who is

under investigation by the gambling watchdog for betting against himself winning. "The Prime Minister delayed and delayed and delayed until eventually he was bullied into taking action," the 61-year-old Starmer said. Sunak, who told the audience that he was "furious" and "frustrated" over the allegations, has also had to suspend two of his Tory candidates who are under investigation following an internal inquiry. "It was important to me that given the seriousness and the sensitivity of the matters at hand that they were dealt with properly, and that's what I've done," he stressed. It came as four protesters were arrested on suspicion of trespassing on the grounds of Sunak's constituency home in North Yorkshire, while he was away on the campaign trail. North Yorkshire Police said it had arrested the men "within one minute of them entering the grounds" of Sunak's home near

Northallerton. "The prime minister thanks the police for their swift response to keep him and his family safe. As this is a live police investigation, further queries should be directed to the relevant police force," a Downing Street spokesperson said. The arrests are connected to a protest by campaigners from Youth Demand. It describes itself as a group of young people who want "the Tories and the Labour Party to commit to a two-way arms embargo on Israel, and to stop all new oil and gas licences". In the final week of the election campaign, both leaders will try and focus on some of the key swing constituencies starting with the Midlands region of England. Labour has held a firm 20-point lead in all pre-poll surveys over the incumbent Tories throughout the campaign, making this a tough election for the governing party which has been in office for 14 years.

Ship attacked in Red Sea by Houthi rebels in latest maritime assault

AP ■ DUBAI

A ship traveling through the Red Sea on Thursday reported being hit in an attack likely carried out by Yemen's Houthi rebels, a private security firm said, the latest in the campaign targeting shipping over the Israel-Hamas war. The ship issued a radio call off the coast of the rebel-held port city of Hodeida, saying it had been struck, the private security firm Ambrey said. A warship in the area was responding to the attack, Ambrey added. It wasn't clear if anyone was hurt or if the ship was damaged in the assault on the vessel. Neither the British nor US militaries immediately reported the attack. The Houthis did not immediately claim the attack. However, it can take hours or even days for them to acknowledge their assaults. The rebels have targeted more than 60 vessels by firing missiles and drones in their campaign that has killed



a total of four sailors. They seized one vessel and sunk two since November. A US-led airstrike campaign has targeted the Houthis since January, with a series of strikes on May 30 killing at least 16 people and wounding 42 others, the rebels say. The Houthis maintain that their attacks target ships linked to Israel, the United States or Britain. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the Israel-Hamas war — including those bound

for Iran. Late on Tuesday, Houthi military spokesman Brig Gen Yahya Saree claimed an attack Monday on the Liberian-flagged, Greek-managed container ship MSC Sarah V. Late on Wednesday, the Houthis claimed that they used a new hypersonic ballistic missile in the assault, which targeted a ship farther away than nearly all of the previous assaults they've launched in the Gulf of Aden.

Rise in hate speech against minorities in India raises concern: Blinken

Washington (PTI): There has been a "concerning increase" in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, and demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities in India, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said. In his remarks at the release of the annual State Department report on international religious freedom, Blinken said on Wednesday that at the same time, people around the world are also working hard to protect religious freedom. The report stated that senior US officials continued to raise concerns about religious freedom issues with their Indian counterparts in 2023. "In India, we see a concerning increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities. At the same time, people around the world are also working hard to protect religious



freedom," the secretary of state said. Ten of 28 states have laws restricting religious conversions for all faiths. Some of these states also impose penalties specifically against forced religious conversions for the purpose of marriage, the 2023 Report on International Religious Freedom stated for India. During the year, some members of religious minority groups challenged the government's ability and willingness to protect them from violence, investigate crimes against mem-

bers of religious minority groups, and protect their freedom of religion or belief, it stated. India has previously rejected the US state department's annual human rights report on the country, saying they continue to be based on "misinformation and flawed understanding." "Motivated and biased commentary by some US officials only serves to undermine further the credibility of these reports," the Ministry of External Affairs said last year. "We value our partnership with the US, and will continue to have frank exchanges on issues of concern to us," it said. In this year's report, the US state department said that Christians and Muslims were arrested under laws banning forced religious conversions, which religious groups said in some cases were used to harass and imprison members of religious minority groups on false and fabricated charges or for lawful religious practices.

US sanctions Boeing over 737 Max 9 investigation information sharing

AP ■ NEW YORK

Boeing is being sanctioned by US investigators for sharing information about a federal investigation of a door plug blowout that left a gaping hole in a Boeing 737 Max 9. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said Thursday that Boeing "blatantly violated" the agency's investigative regulations as well as a signed agreement by providing non-public investigative information to the media and speculating about possible causes of the January 5 door plug blowout on a Boeing passenger jet in Portland, Oregon. During the incident, a panel that plugged a space left for an extra emergency door blew off an Alaska Airlines Max 9. Pilots were able to land safely, and there were no injuries. The NTSB said that on Tuesday

during a media briefing, a Boeing executive provided non-public investigative information to the media about the Alaska Airlines incident that the agency had not verified or authorized for release. The NTSB said that Boeing portrayed the NTSB's investigation as a search to find the individual responsible for the door plug work, but the agency said it's focused on the probable cause of the accident, not placing blame on any individual or assessing liability. Boeing did not immediately respond to a request for comment early Thursday. Shares of The Boeing Co, based in Arlington, Virginia, were flat before the opening bell. The NTSB said that given its recent actions, Boeing won't have access to investigative information the agency pro-

duces about the Alaska Airlines incident, but it will keep its party status to the investigation. The NTSB is unable to fine Boeing, as it doesn't have enforcement authority. While the agency could have stripped away Boeing's party status, the NTSB may have considered it more important to keep Boeing as a party to the investigation because of its employees' expertise. The NTSB said that it may subpoena any relevant records it requires during the course of the investigation. It also will subpoena Boeing to appear at an investigative hearing in Washington DC on August 6 and 7. The agency said that, unlike other parties, Boeing won't be able to ask questions of other participants. The NTSB said that it will coordinate with the

Department of Justice's Fraud Division, giving them information about Boeing's recent unauthorized investigative information releases related to the 737 Max 9 door plug investigation. In May the Justice Department told a federal judge that Boeing had violated a settlement that allowed the company to avoid criminal prosecution after two deadly crashes involving its 737 Max aircraft. After Max jets crashed in 2018 in Indonesia and 2019 in Ethiopia, killing 346 people, the FAA and other regulators grounded the aircraft worldwide for more than a year and a half. It is now up to the Justice Department to decide whether to file charges against Boeing. Prosecutors will tell the court no later than July 7 how they plan to proceed, the department said in May.

Stella Assange thanks lawmakers for WikiLeaks founder's freedom

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Stella Assange thanked the spectrum of lawmakers who campaigned for her husband, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, to be freed during her visit Thursday to Australia's Parliament House, where political leaders differed over how welcome the convicted felon was in his homeland. "Julian is overjoyed and so grateful to the Australian people, to the members of Parliament and to the government and also the opposition who came together to voice the need for his release," Stella Assange said. Assange has made no public comment since he arrived in Australia on Wednesday after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing U.S. military secrets in a deal with U.S. Justice Department prosecutors that ended his 14-year legal battle for freedom.



The Bring Julian Assange Home Parliamentary Group began with a few federal lawmakers in 2019 and expanded to 47 — one of five of the total in Canberra — as a consensus grew that the prosecution over WikiLeaks' release of almost half a million documents relating to the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2010 had taken too long. His lawyers now want to swing that public and

political support behind a campaign to have Assange's conviction pardoned. "President (Joe) Biden or any subsequent president absolutely can and, in my mind, should issue a pardon to Julian Assange," lawyer Barry Pollack said. But while Australian lawmakers largely agreed that the time had come for Assange to be brought home, they disagreed on whether he deserved the same level of support as Australians recently released from arbitrary detention in China, Iran and Myanmar thanks to government intervention. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has been credited with the diplomatic coup that enabled Assange to be released from a London prison to travel to Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Western Pacific where he pleaded guilty to a single charge under the Espionage Act.

Sanjana Thakur's short story wins UK Commonwealth Prize

London (PTI): Sanjana Thakur, a 26-year-old writer from Mumbai, beat competition from over 7,359 entrants worldwide to be named the winner of the GBP 5,000 Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2024 in London on Thursday. Sanjana's story entitled 'Aishwarya Rai' takes its name from the famed Bollywood actress to reimagine and reverse the traditional adoption story. The literary magazine 'Granta' has published all the regional winning stories of the 2024 Commonwealth Short Story Prize. "I cannot express how wholly honoured I am to be the recipient of this incredible prize. I hope I continue writing stories that people want to read," said Thakur. "For my strange story — about mothers and daughters, about bodies, beauty standards, and Bombay street food — to find such a global audi-

ence is thrilling. Thank you, thank you, thank you," she said. "I've spent 10 out of 26 years living in countries not my own. India, where I'm from, is simultaneously strange and familiar, accepting and rejecting. Writing stories is a way for me to accept that Mumbai is a city I will long for even when I am in it; it is a way to remake 'place' in my mind," she added. Her story revolves around a young woman, Avni, who chooses between possible mothers housed in a local shelter. The first mother is too clean; the second, who looks like the real-life Aishwarya Rai, is too pretty. In her small Mumbai apartment with tooth-thin walls and a too-small balcony, Avni watches laundry turn round in her machine, dreams of stepping into white limousines, and tries out different mothers from the shelter. One of them must be just right, she thinks.

Palestinians surrounded by sewage and garbage

Deir Al-Balah (AP): Children in sandals trudge through water contaminated with sewage and scale growing mounds of garbage in Gaza's crowded tent camps for displaced families. People relieve themselves in burlap-covered pits, with nowhere nearby to wash their hands. In the stifling summer heat, Palestinians say the odour and filth surrounding them is just another inescapable reality of war — like pangs of hunger or sounds of bombing. The territory's ability to dispose of garbage, treat sewage and deliver clean water has been virtually decimated by eight brutal months of war between Israel and Hamas. This has made grim living conditions worse and raised health risks for hundreds of thousands of people deprived of adequate shelter, food and medicine, aid groups say.

Hepatitis A cases are on the rise, and doctors fear that as warmer weather arrives, an outbreak of cholera is increasingly likely without dramatic changes to living conditions. The UN, aid groups and local officials are scrambling to build latrines, repair water lines and bring desalination plants back online. COGAT, the Israeli military body coordinating humanitarian aid efforts, said it's engaging in efforts to improve the "hygiene situation." But relief can't come soon enough. "Flies are in our food," said Adel Dalloul, a 21-year-old whose family settled in a beach tent camp near the central Gaza city of Nuseirat. They wound up there after fleeing the southern city of Rafah, where they landed after leaving their northern Gaza home. "If you try to sleep, flies, insects and cockroaches are all over you."

Over a million Palestinians had been living in hastily assembled tent camps in Rafah before Israel invaded in May. Since fleeing Rafah, many have taken shelter in even more crowded and unsanitary areas across southern and central Gaza that doctors describe as breeding grounds for disease — especially as temperatures regularly reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). "The stench in Gaza is enough to make you kind of immediately nauseous," said Sam Rose, a director at the UN agency for Palestinian refugees. Anwar al-Hurkani, who lives with his family in a tent camp in the central Gaza city of Deir al-Balah, said he can't sleep for fear of scorpions and rodents. He doesn't let his children leave their tent, he said, worrying they'll get sick from pollution and mosquitoes.

Zelenskyy urges EU leaders to fulfill arms commitments

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Ukraine's president called on Thursday to make good on their pledges to provide military equipment to his war-ravaged country, just days after the bloc launched membership talks with his government. "We have to work on next steps," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told reporters in Brussels as he arrived to attend a summit of EU leaders. He said he and the leaders would discuss "the urgent things -- air defense, that is one." Zelenskyy thanked countries that have promised equipment, weapons and ammunition, but underlined that "we need them urgently on the battlefield." Russian forces are seeking to press their advantage in troop numbers and weaponry before Ukraine's armed forces are bulked up by promised new Western military aid, some of which is trickling to the front line, analysts say.



The EU launched membership talks with Ukraine on Tuesday, a decade after Russian troops seized the Crimean Peninsula to deter the country from moving closer to the West, part of a chain of events that set the two neighbors on the path to war. "We waited for this, a long period of time," Zelenskyy said, thanking the EU for its approval. The leaders are expected to sign a document of security commitments to Ukraine, which in

essence encapsulates what the 27-nation bloc has been doing for the country in terms of financial, military and other assistance since Russian forces invaded in February 2022. Several countries already have similar agreements with Ukraine, offering a long-term commitment to help Kyiv, including once its war with Russia is over. Zelenskyy and US President Joe Biden signed one such pact earlier this month which will run for the next decade.

Court denies Imran's appeal to suspend sentence in illegal marriage case

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani court on Thursday rejected the appeals of Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi to suspend their sentences in the illegal marriage case, in a major setback to the former prime minister who has been in jail since August last year. On February 3, Khan, 71, and Bushra, 49, were sentenced to seven years in prison and a fine of Rs 5,00,000 each by a trial court for contracting the marriage during iddat, a mandatory period for a woman in Islam to wait before a second marriage after the death of her husband or divorce. The case was filed by Bushra's ex-husband, Khawar Maneka, against the couple in November 2023, alleging that they married without Bushra observing the mandatory waiting period of iddat. He asked the court to declare the marriage null and void.



Additional District and Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka had reserved the verdict on the conclusion of the process on Tuesday after conducting the hearing. On Thursday, as he announced the verdict to a packed courtroom, and rejected the pleas filed by the couple, it dashed hopes of their release from the Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi where they have been imprisoned.

While Khan is slapped with several cases, his wife Bushra is facing a couple of cases. Reacting to the verdict, National Assembly opposition leader Omar Ayub said Khan's party would challenge the order in the Islamabad High Court. Speaking to the media, he reiterated that there would be no talks with the government until all Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders and workers are

released. Khan's party termed the development "absolutely ridiculous". In a post on its official X account, the PTI said the case was "unprecedentedly despicable in both our country's as well as Islamic history", and had been "globally condemned and brought immense embarrassment to Pakistan". "Every single individual responsible for fabricating and carrying this case will go down in the dirtiest, darkest alleys of history," it asserted. Earlier, the former first couple had challenged the conviction before the district and sessions judge (ADSJ) Shahrukh Arjumand, who recused himself at a time when the hearing had been concluded and the court was supposed to announce the verdict. The case was last week transferred to ADSJ Majoka and the Islamabad High Court ordered the sessions court to decide in 10 days.

'Foolproof arrangements for Chinese citizens security'

New York/Islamabad (PTI): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said Pakistan is "proud" of its friendship with all-weather ally China, as he asserted that "foolproof arrangements" have been made for the security of Chinese nationals working on major infrastructure projects in some restive provinces. Naqvi made the remarks during a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Qi Yanjun at the office of China's mission to the United Nations in New York, Geo News reported. Both ministers are currently here to attend a United Nations conference. "Foolproof arrangements have been made for the security of Chinese citizens," Naqvi said as he briefed Qi about the progress on the investigation of the Dasu terror attack involving Chinese nationals in Pakistan. On March 26, a vehicle-borne suicide bomber targeted the convoy of Chinese engineers in the remote Besham area of Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when they were being driven to a construction site of the Dasu Hydroelectric power station in Kohistan district of the same province. Five Chinese nationals and their Pakistani driver were killed in the attack. "We are all proud of our friendship with China," Naqvi was quoted as saying in the report. Following the briefing, the Chinese minister expressed satisfaction over the case's ongoing probe and said that Pakistani institutions handled the case in a "diligent and professional manner", according to the report. "Pakistan and China are all-weather friends. Pak-China friendship is stronger than steel," he said. The two ministers also discussed bilateral ties and security issues in the region. During the meeting, the two ministers spoke about cooperation on training and capacity building of Pakistan's law enforcement agencies through modern equipment and technology. Qi appreciated the establishment of the Special Protection Unit (SPU) in Islamabad, particularly aimed at protecting Chinese citizens in the country. He also assured "full cooperation" in SPU training and other matters, the report said.

China's former defence minister expelled from Communist Party

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's ruling Communist Party headed by President Xi Jinping on Thursday expelled the former defence minister Gen. Li Shangfu for alleged corruption and launched prosecution proceedings against him, months after he was dramatically sacked from the post. The Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership on Thursday decided to expel Li, 66, for serious violation of Party discipline and the law, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Li, who headed the People's Liberation Army's all-important Rocket (Missile) Force and was personally picked up for the top defence post by Xi himself, went missing last year, sparking speculation that he was being investigated for corruption and indiscipline. Li, who also formerly served as a State Councillor, the top post in the party and as a member of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the over-



all high command of the PLA headed by Xi, was deprived of his qualification as a delegate to the 20th CPC National Congress, according to a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. Li is among dozens of top PLA Generals either sacked or punished for corruption since Xi, 71, assumed power in 2012. The CMC's disciplinary and supervisory agency launched an investigation against Li on August 31, 2023. According to the investigation records, Li seriously violated political and organisational

discipline. He sought improper benefits in personnel arrangements for himself and others, took advantage of his posts to seek benefits for others, and accepted a huge amount of money and valuables in return, the Xinhua report said. He is suspected of the crime of taking bribes. He was also found to have offered money to others to seek undue benefits, constituting the suspected crime of offering bribes. The investigation also found clues of Li's other violations, it said. As a high-ranking official of the CPC and the military, Li betrayed the Party's original aspiration and its principles, the report said, adding that his actions failed the trust of the Party Central Committee and the CMC while severely contaminating the political environment of the equipment sector in the military and the ethics of relevant industries. His disciplinary and law violations brought enormous damage to the Party's cause, the development of national

defence and the armed forces, and the image of senior officials, it said. Li is a Chinese aerospace engineer and headed China's powerful missile force, officially called Rocket Force as the General of the PLA before he was elevated as minister. His sacking followed a major shakeup in the PLA Rocket (missile) Force in which its commander, Li Yuchao, and political commissar, Xu Zhongbo, were replaced without any official explanation. Both their summary dismissals sent shockwaves among the Chinese officialdom besides raising questions over the process of selection of officials for key jobs by Xi. Li was appointed as Defence Minister even though he was sanctioned by the US in 2018 for the purchase of Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missiles by China's Equipment Development Department (EDD) in violation of Washington's sanctions on Moscow.

Le Pen questions President's role as army chief ahead of election

AP ■ NICE

With just three days to go until France's landmark legislative election, the country's far-right leader on Thursday raised the question of who would be in charge of the military if her party takes over the government after the two-round balloting. The early elections are plunging France into uncharted territory, and political scientists are scrambling to interpret how exactly President Emmanuel Macron and a prime minister who is hostile to most of his policies will share power if Marine Le Pen's National Rally wins the majority in the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament. Le Pen has repeatedly said that Jordan Bardella, her protégée and her party's star leader, will lead France's next government if their party wins. She suggested in an interview that Bardella, 28, will also take over at least some decisions on France's defence and its armed forces. Macron has three years

to serve out his final term as president. Serving as a commander-in-chief of the armed forces "is an honorary title for the president since it's the prime minister who actually pulls the strings," Le Pen said in an interview with Le Télégramme newspaper published Thursday. The French Constitution states that "the President of the Republic is the head of the armed forces" and that the head of state also "chairs the councils and higher committees of national defence." However, the Constitution also states that "the prime minister is responsible for national defence." Constitutional experts say the exact role of prime minister in foreign policy and defence appears to be subject to interpretation. France has nuclear weapons and its troops and military personnel have been deployed in many conflict zones around the world. The last time France had a prime minister and a president from different parties, they broadly agreed on strategic matters of defence and foreign policy. But this time the power sharing concept known in France as "cohabitation" could be very different given the animosity between the far-right and the far-left politicians. Both blocs appear to deeply resent the business-friendly, centrist president. On the issue of the country's military command, political historian Jean Garrigues said that "the president is the head of the armed forces, (but) it's the prime minister who has the armed forces at his disposal." In practice, he said this means that "if the president decided to send troops on the ground to Ukraine... the prime minister would be able to block this decision." In March, Macron warned Western powers against showing any signs of weakness to Russia and said Ukraine's allies shouldn't rule out sending Western troops into Ukraine to help the country against Russia's aggression.

China urges global scientists to study lunar samples, cites obstacle with US

AP ■ BANGKOK

China's space officials said Thursday they welcomed scientists from around the world to apply to study the lunar rock samples that the Chang'e 6 probe brought back to Earth in a historic mission, but noted there were limits to that cooperation, specifically with the United States. Officials said at a televised news conference in Beijing meant to introduce the missions' achievements that any cooperation with the U.S. would be hinged on removing an American law that bans direct bilateral cooperation with NASA. "The source of the obstacle in US-China aerospace cooperation is still in the Wolf Amendment," said Bian Zhigang, vice chair of the China National Space Administration. "If the U.S. truly wants to hope to begin regular aerospace cooperation, I think they should take the appropriate measures to remove the obstacle." The Wolf Amendment was enacted in 2011 and prevents direct U.S.-Chinese bilateral cooperation except in cases where the FBI can certify that there is no national security risk to sharing information with the Chinese side in the course of

work. Still, China could cooperate with scientists of other countries. It worked with the European Space Agency, France, Italy and Pakistan in the Chang'e 6 mission. "China welcomes scientists from all countries to apply according to the processes and share in the benefits," said Liu Yunfeng, director of the international cooperation office of the China National Space Administration. Meanwhile, little information about the global first achieved Tuesday was announced. Chinese officials declined to reveal how many samples they actually gathered or any preliminary findings. "I'm afraid this matter will not be revealed until tomorrow, so I hope everyone can wait patiently for another day," Chang'e 6 chief designer Hu Hao said at the news conference. On Monday, Chinese scientists said that they anticipate the returned samples will include 2.5 million-year-old volcanic rock and other material that scientists hope will answer questions about geographic differences on the moon's two sides. The mission had aimed to gather two kilograms (more than four pounds) of material. The near side of the moon is

what is seen from Earth, and the far side faces outer space. The far side is also known to have mountains and impact craters and is much more difficult to reach. The probe's journey to the far side of the moon was historic in that it was the first time a probe had successfully taken off and brought back samples from the far side directly. Previous samples thought to be from the far side of the moon are from meteorites found on Earth. The probe had landed in the moon's South Pole-Aitken Basin, an impact crater created more than 4 billion years ago. The samples scientists are expecting will likely come from different layers of the basin, which will bear traces of the different geological events across its long chronology, such as when the moon was younger and had an active inside that could produce volcanic rock. Officials did announce some future plans, with a planned Chang'e 7 probe to explore resources on the moon's South Pole. Further down the line, they have planned Tianwen-3 for around 2030 to carry out a Mars sample return mission and a Tianwen-4 Jupiter exploration mission.

Rajapaksa to meet Chinese Premier

Colombo (PTI): Former Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa on Thursday left on an official visit to Beijing where he will meet Premier Li Qiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss the island nation's debt restructuring agreement with China. China is Sri Lanka's largest bilateral lender owning 52 per cent of the USD 40 billion external debt when Sri Lanka announced its sovereign default in 2022. President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Wednesday announced that debt restructuring agreements were finalised with bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris, describing the development as a "significant milestone" that will bolster international trust in the cash-strapped island nation. The debt restructuring deal entails allowing time till 2043 to repay USD 4.2 billion of Chinese loans - the bulk of which was drawn during the Rajapaksa presidency 2005-15. On Thursday, Daily Mirror quoted sources to report that 78-year-old patriarch of the Rajapaksa dynasty's visit was on an invitation by Foreign Minister Wang to attend the

commemorative events in Beijing marking the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The event would be attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leading Communist Party of China (CPC) members. China will hold the Conference Marking the 70th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friday in Beijing, a foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday. "On the sidelines of the events, Rajapaksa will hold discussions with Premier Li and Minister Yi on areas of mutual interest and also development projects which will benefit Sri Lanka," the news portal said. Rajapaksa will also discuss Sri Lanka's debt restructuring agreement and express his gratitude for the assistance given by China and the Exim Bank of China, it said. Rajapaksa had steered a massive infrastructure drive by building a port and an airport and a southern highway with Chinese commercial loans. Sri Lanka was facing criticism of falling under a Chinese debt trap under Rajapaksa's presidency.

'Women's rights to be discussed at meeting attended by Taliban'

United Nations (AP): The UN political chief who will chair the first meeting between Afghanistan's Taliban rulers and envoys from about 25 countries answered sharp criticism that Afghan women have been excluded, saying Wednesday that women's rights will be raised at every session. Undersecretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo stressed to a small group of reporters that the two-day meeting starting Sunday is an initial engagement aimed at initiating a step-by-step process with the goal of seeing the Taliban "at peace with itself and its neighbours and adhering to international law," the UN Charter, and human rights. This is the third UN meeting with Afghan envoys in Qatar's capital, Doha, but the first that the Taliban are attending. They weren't invited to the first and refused to attend the second. Other attendees include envoys from the European Union, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the United States, Russia, China and several of Afghanistan's neighbours, DiCarlo said. The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 2021 as United

States and NATO forces withdrew following two decades of war. No country officially recognises them as Afghanistan's government, and the UN has said that recognition is almost impossible while bans on female education and employment remain in place and women can't go out without a male guardian. When DiCarlo met with senior Taliban officials in Kabul in May, she said she made clear that the international community is concerned about four things: the lack of an inclusive government, the denial of human rights espe-

cially for women and girls, and the need to combat terrorism and the narcotics trade. "The issue of inclusive governance, women's rights, human rights will large, will be a part of every single session," she said. "This is important, and we will hear it again and again, I'm sure from quite a number of us." Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International criticized the United Nations for not having Afghan women and civil society representatives at the table with the Taliban. DiCarlo described the meeting as a process.

List of threatened species grows by 1,000

Abuja (Nigeria) (AP): Over 45,000 species are now threatened with extinction — 1,000 more than last year — according to an international conservation organization that blames pressures from climate change, invasive species and human activity such as illicit trade and infrastructural expansion. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released its latest Red List of Threatened Species on Thursday. Now in its 60th year, the list sounds the alarm about animals and plants at risk of extinction, but it also highlights conservation suc-



cess stories such as the Iberian lynx. The list now includes 1,63,040 species, an increase of about 6,000 from last year. Copiapoa

cacti, native to Chile's Atacama coastal desert, the Bornean elephant and the Gran Canaria giant lizard are among the threatened species, IUCN revealed. Copiapoa cacti have long been coveted as decorative plants, driving an illegal trade that has been amplified by social media where enthusiasts and traders showcase and sell the cacti. A staggering 82 per cent of the species is now at risk of extinction, a significant jump from 55 per cent in 2013, the report said. IUCN said that the decline is due to the surge in demand for the Chilean cacti in Europe and Asia

as ornamental species. The smugglers and poachers facilitating the trade, the organization said, have gained increased accessibility to the plants' habitat due to roads and housing expansion in the Atacama area. "It is easy to distinguish if copiapoa cacti have been poached or grown in a greenhouse," said Pablo Guerrero, a member of the IUCN's group on the plants. "Poached copiapoa have a grey tone and are coated in a dusty-looking bloom that protects the plants in one of the driest deserts on Earth, whereas cultivated plants appear greener."

The 2024 update also highlights the Asian elephant in Borneo as an endangered species. It is estimated that only about 1,000 Bornean elephants remain in the wild, according to IUCN analysis. The population has decreased over the past 75 years primarily due to extensive logging of Borneo's forests, destroying much of the elephants' habitat. Conflicts with humans, habitat loss due to agriculture and timber plantations, mining and infrastructure development, poaching, exposure to agrochemicals, and vehicle collisions also threaten the species, the IUCN said.

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HIL will help identify talent for national team: VR Raghunath

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
D ragflick icon VR Raghunath said the upcoming Hockey India League will play a vital role in unearthing players who have the potential to contribute to the national team in future. Making a return after seven years, the tournament, featuring eight men's and six women's teams, will be held across December 2024 and February 2025. "The league will play a major role in identifying the talent for the national team. Players like Manpreet Singh and

Harmanpreet Singh were picked up from HIL. This is a platform for the domestic players to showcase their skills," Raghunath said in a release from the organisers. Hockey India has invited players and support staff from top 15 teams in the world for this event, and Raghunath said it will give a chance for domestic players to learn from experienced pros. "Several young players will be brushing their shoulders with top-quality international players from Europe, Australia and South America. "It will be an opportunity for

them to understand how top players play and how they think about the game and the work that goes into it," he said. Raghunath also praised HI's move to start an exclusive women's league from this edition of the HIL. "Our women's team has been doing well for the past few years. The Hockey India League will be a great motivation for the players. "Through HIL, young players who don't have much access to hockey, will get a chance to showcase their skills and impress the selectors," he added.

Chennaiyin FC rope in Lalrinliana Hnamte for three years



PTI ■ CHENNAI
Chennaiyin FC on Thursday drafted in talented central midfielder Lalrinliana Hnamte on a three-year contract ahead of the ISL 2024-25 season. The 21-year-old has thus become the third midfielder to join the Marina Machans after Lukas Brambilla and Jitendra Singh ahead of the upcoming season. The Mizoram-born Hnamte is one of the brightest talents of Indian football. He made his Indian Super League (ISL) debut at the age of 18 for East Bengal in 2021. Welcoming Hnamte to the club, head coach Owen Coyle said: "With the ability he possesses we haven't seen as much of Hnamte as we should've in the league. He's a fantastic young boy who will offer something different to our midfield options." Before joining Chennaiyin, Hnamte was part of Mohun Bagan Super Giant for three seasons. He won the Durand Cup (2023), the ISL title (2023) and the League Shield (2024) with them. "I'm very excited and grateful to be part of this amazing club and I can't wait to play in front of the fans. I will give absolutely everything I have to help this team win," said Hnamte. Hnamte has made 43 appearances in the ISL, spending more than 1300 minutes on the field. In the last season, he recorded an impressive passing accuracy of 83 percent in 13 matches.



Unprecedented: Over 30 dope sample collection officers at National Inter-State C'ships

PTI ■ PANCHKULA (HARYANA)
A huge posse of more than 30 dope control officers (DCO) from the NADA have descended here for sample collection from the athletes taking part at the National Inter-State Championships, the final Olympics qualifying event, and they have been instructed to do target testing also. Usually, dope samples of the medal winners are also collected at big events like the national championships, and the unprecedented number of DCOs present at the Tau Devi Lal Stadium is expected to lead to a large sample size. The DCOs have mostly come from New Delhi where the National Anti-Doping Agency head office is located. "I can't tell much, but we have a big team here because it's the most important domestic event of the year as it's the final Olympics qualifying event in athletics," one of the officers, who can't be named for obvious reasons, told PTI on Thursday. "We are also doing target selection of athletes for collection of samples. That much I can tell." Even athletes who finished third or below at the heat races in the morning session of the opening day on Thursday were seen being asked by the DCOs to sign the receipt of notification form and agreement to undergo the test. The NADA team landed here on Wednesday, a day before the start of the championships. A source also said there was out-of-competition collection of samples, which would mean that it was done on Wednesday. The officers refused to divulge the exact or the possible sample size. Meanwhile, 100m national record holder Manikanta Hoblidhar of Karnataka made a shock exit in the preliminary round after finishing fifth in his heat race with a time of 11.10 seconds. His national record stands at 10.23s. Gold medal contenders Gurindervir Singh of Punjab, Amlan Borghain of Assam and Animesh Kujur of Odisha won their respective heats easily to make it to the semifinals. In the women's 100m, Assam's Hima Das, who is yet to attain full fitness after an injury, finished sixth in her heat with an unimpressive time of 12.69 seconds. The men's and women's 400m races saw a depleted field as some of the top runners pulled out to concentrate in the mixed 4x400m relay race in which India is hoping for a last minute qualification for the Paris Olympics. The initial entry list had the likes of Jyothika Sri Dandi, Subha Venkatesan and MR Poovamma among women and Muhammed Anas Yahya and Amoj Jacob but they did not run the individual quarter-mile event. But still, Kiran Pahal of Haryana stole the limelight in the women's 400m preliminary round with the fastest time of 52.33 seconds. In men's high jump, national record holder Tejaswani Shankar and Sarvesh Kushare made the finals after finishing first and second in the qualifying round with identical heights of 2.10m.

Kvaratskhelia's Georgia upsets Ronaldo's Portugal 2-0 to reach the last 16 at Euro 2024



AP ■ GELSENKIRCHEN (GERMANY)
A pre-game chat with Cristiano Ronaldo inspired Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Georgia to one of the biggest upsets in European Championship history, beating Portugal 2-0 and advancing to the last 16. Georgia's No. 7 has admired Ronaldo for years and had spoken before the game of how much he wanted his hero's shirt. He got it, along with a goal and a slice of soccer history, on a frustrating night for Ronaldo and Portugal. "Before the match there was a meeting and he wished me success and it was so much for me because I would never imagine that he would come to me and say something to me," Kvaratskhelia said in translated comments. "I realized that I could do and we could do so many things today because it gave me inspiration." For Napoli forward Kvaratskhelia, the win even surpasses his club's historic Italian title last year. "This is the best day in my life because it was more difficult to do it with the Georgian team than with Napoli," he said. A banner at the Georgian fans' end of the stadium said "Believe," and they did. The Georgians needed a win to reach the knockout stage at Euro 2024 and got their opening goal after only 93 seconds. Georges Mikautadze intercepted a poor pass and set up Kvaratskhelia to score with a low shot. António Silva gave away the ball before the first goal and gave away a penalty for the

second, tripping Luka Lochochvili inside the penalty area. Mikautadze hit the spot kick low and past Portugal goalkeeper Diogo Costa in the 57th minute. Georgia advanced in its debut at a major tournament as one of the best third-place teams. Portugal had already qualified from Group F after winning its first two games. The Georgians will next face Spain on Sunday in Cologne, while Portugal plays Slovenia on Monday in Frankfurt. Slovenia is another defense-first team and it upset Portugal 2-0 in a March friendly. Ronaldo is still without a goal at Euro 2024. He felt he deserved a penalty in the first half and kicked away a water bottle when he was substituted in the 66th minute. Ronaldo was given a yellow card for his protests after his penalty appeal was turned down. He wanted the decision after his shirt was pulled in the area by Lochochvili as a cross came in. No foul was given. With Portugal already qualified, Ronaldo was one of only three players kept in the lineup from the previous 3-0

win over Turkey, along with Costa and midfielder João Palhinha. Portugal created little in the second half as Georgia's defense sat deep, but the 2016 champions had chances in added time. Goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili kept Georgia's two-goal lead intact with saves from Nélson Semedo and Diogo Dalot, while Francisco Conceição narrowly missed the target. Portugal coach Roberto Martinez criticized "very inconsistent" video reviews but denied his team had underestimated Georgia. "This was a game where Georgia was playing to be part of history and we didn't match their intensity," he said. At the final whistle, Georgia's players sprinted off the bench to embrace Mamardashvili in a huddle and leapt with joy in front of their raucous fans. Turkey beat the Czech Republic 2-1 in the other group match. The Turks also advanced while the Czechs were eliminated. Georgia's victory also eliminated Hungary, which finished third in Group A.

Belgium advances to last 16 at Euro 2024 after 0-0 draw, Ukraine eliminated



AP ■ STUTTGART (GERMANY)
Belgium got the best out of a 0-0 draw at the European Championship, advancing to the last 16 while Ukraine became the first team with four points in a group to be eliminated. The downside for the Belgians at Euro 2024 is they will next face France and Kylian Mbappe on Monday in Duesseldorf. "We go to win. We are here and qualified for this Euro to be part of the best teams. Now, we face a top team," Belgium coach Domenico Tedesco said. "That's why we qualified, otherwise we could stay at home. These are the games we're looking for, and everything is possible." All four teams in Group E finished with four points.

Romania ended up first, followed by Belgium and Slovakia. Ukraine was last on goal difference. Romania and Slovakia drew 1-1 in Frankfurt and both advanced to the knockout stage. Playing at Euro 2024 against the backdrop of Russia's invasion, Ukraine came agonizingly close to advancing and will finish with more points than at least one of the four best third-place teams. The 3-0 loss to Romania in the team's opening game proved to be decisive. "In the last two games, we showed the character of our nation. But this is life, you make some mistakes, but then it's important how you react," Ukraine coach Serhiy Rebrov said. "I'm very proud of the players. Of course, everyone is

unhappy with the result, but there are no questions for the players." There was nearly a different ending when Ukraine substitute Ruslan Malinovskyi tried to score directly from corner late in the match. Belgium goalkeeper Koen Casteels managed to save the effort at the near post. The third-ranked Belgians had another scare when Georgiy Sudakov ran into the box but shot right at Casteels. Belgium, which lost to Slovakia in its opening game, struggled to get its offense going again with Romelu Lukaku failing to make the

most of his team's best chance in the first half. The Belgian fans booed their players at the end of the game at Stuttgart Arena, while Ukrainian supporters, who earlier held up a banner of a fallen soldier named Nazariy Hryntsevich, showed their appreciation to the national team. "We wanted to bring them joy, to make them proud. We left it all on the field, but it wasn't enough," Ukraine defender Oleksandr Tymchuk said. Belgium will likely need to improve against France, which was the runner-up at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. While the French have also been unconvincing, Belgium was expected to advance with ease from a group without any of the traditional European soccer powerhouses.

Fueled by feeling insulted, Romania draws 1-1 with Slovakia to send both into Euro 2024 round of 16



AP ■ FRANKFURT
Romania coach Edward Iordanescu ruffled insulted by that pre-game chatter he called "shameful" of possibly contriving a low-key draw against Slovakia to send both teams into the European Championship knockout round. It did indeed end 1-1 on Wednesday and Romania finished atop of Group E - ahead of favored Belgium - but not in the way those pundits throwing shade had predicted. And Iordanescu let them know about it after a high-energy game played in severe weather which had wild mood

earlier in the week. "They should have waited to see and then judge us. So this was shameful." "They throw this garbage to us, not just the team but to our fans. We showed we have character," the Romanian coach said, in the only answer in English of his news conference. The quirk of the 24-team Euros format is that Groups E and F playing on the final day of the group stage have an advantage. They know the result they need to be assured of being among the four best third-place teams who must advance to the last-16 bracket. At the start of play Wednesday, all four teams were on three points before

Romania and Slovakia drew in Frankfurt at the same time as Belgium was held 0-0 by Ukraine, which was eliminated. Romania topped the group on the tiebreaker of more goals scored than Belgium, and both had a better goal difference than third-place Slovakia. "Nobody could say my team didn't play to win for the 90 minutes," Slovakia coach Francesco Calzona said. Both Iordanescu and Calzona were right to feel vindicated one day after questions at pre-game news conferences about the option of a contrive a low-energy draw to get the point both needed.

Sreeja attributes recent wins to mental and physical strength, aims to carry momentum to Olympics

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Indian's top-ranked women's table tennis player Sreeja Akula credits her enhanced mental and physical strength over the past two years for her stunning victories against higher-ranked players as she hopes to carry this momentum into the Paris Olympics. Sreeja created history last week by becoming the first Indian table tennis player to win a WTT Contender singles title and on Tuesday she became the country's top paddler with a career-high ranking of 24. "For the last two years, I have been working a lot on improving my mental strength and I think that is the first aspect where I have improved, especially in 2024. I am mentally well prepared to play



against any opponent, whoever it is," Sreeja said in an interview with Ultimate Table Tennis. "I have also been working a lot on my strength and conditioning, especially to prevent injuries, and to

improve my agility on the table. I think that has made a lot of difference in my game. "I have also worked a lot on my first ball attack against the push. I have tried to be more consistent in attacking that ball and I can see these three

Gukesh beats Deac Bogdan-Danielin Superbet Classic chess

PTI ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA)
Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh started off on a positive note, beating Deac Bogdan-Daniel of Romania in the first round of the Superbet Classic chess tournament here. Set to challenge reigning World Champion Ding Liren of China later this year, Gukesh got a bit lucky in the middle game as the both players missed a tactical nuance but the Indian emerged on top soon after to give his campaign a positive start in his first classical game since winning the Candidates tournament. The other Indian in fray R Praggnanandhaa tried hard but had to settle for a draw against Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan in a keenly-contested game. The other winner of the round was Fabiano Caruana of the United States, who beat Firouzja Alireza of France, while the other two games in the 10-player round-robin tournament ended in draws. It was a Nimzo Indian defense by Deac



Bogdan-Daniel that led to a complicated middle game. The Romanian was up to the task in finding counter-attacks and won a sacrificed pawn in the middle game. The position looked promising when Gukesh erred and allowed a tactical skirmish. However, Bogdan-Daniel failed to spot the best move and ended up trading his rook

for a minor piece. The position remained complicated but Gukesh converted it with ease. Praggnanandhaa faced the Ruy Lopez with black against Abdusattorov and, after initial opening duel, won a pawn to reach a rook and pawns endgame. While the position remained within the boundaries of a draw, the Indian tried hard for over sixty moves. However Abdusattorov did not give much as the two players eventually decided to split points. Caruana was in a spot of bother in the middle game arising out of a London system but Alireza could not find the right attacking moves. The American exchanged pieces at regular intervals and his extra pawn came in handy in the ensuing queen and minor piece endgame. In other games of the day, Dutchman Anish Giri played out a draw against American Wesley So, while Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France also had to sign peace against Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi.

SOUTH AFRICA BANISH AFGHANISTAN, ENTER MAIDEN T20 WC FINAL

PTI ■ TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)
South Africa exorcised their agonising semifinal jinx through an exceptional spell of pace bowling as they walloped an emotionally drained Afghanistan by nine wickets to enter their first-ever T20 World Cup final here. They will face the winners of the second semifinal between India and England in the title clash, but the Afghans will go home with their heads held high after a stirring run in the tournament. Marco Jansen (3/16) Kagiso Rabada (2/14) and Anrich Nortje (2/7) ripped the soul out of the Afghanistan top-order while bundling them out for a paltry 56 in just 11.5 overs after being invited to bowl. Despite the early departure of Quinton de Kock, bowled through the gate by impressive pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi, the Proteas had little trouble in reaching 60 for one in 8.5 overs. Reeza Hendricks (29 not out), who put up his highest score in this event, and skipper Aiden Markram (23 not out) navigated them safely to the shores of victory as they have finally freed themselves from the painful tag of chokers in global events. Afghanistan have given their

everything to reach the World Cup semifinal, and in the crucial clash they were left with no energy, and produced a nothing effort that belied their doughtiness until now. It affected their batting as they looked unusually edgy against the South African pacers, who summoned a spell from hell. They reduced the Afghans to 28 for five inside the Powerplay and there was no coming back from that depth as they crashed to their lowest total in a T20 International. Their 56 was also the lowest total in a T20 World Cup semifinal clash. Once reduced to 28 for six, Afghanistan could not even offer a smidgeon of fight as their dream of reaching a maiden World Cup final was squashed even before it began. While the South Africa pacers were on the money, the Afghan batters too should cope some blame for being edgy on a pitch that hid no evils apart from those deliveries that kicked up from a length. Opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz was the first to perish, chasing Jansen's delivery outside the off-stump to give Reeza Hendricks an easy catch at slip. The dismissal of in-form Gurbaz seemed to inject doses of panic in the Afghanistan line-up, and Gulbadin Naib was consumed by a lovely in-



coming delivery by Jansen. But the next two dismissals were a combination of bowler's brilliance and batters' irrationality. Ibrahim Zadran, on whom a lot was riding for the Afghans, did not move his feet at all against a Rabada delivery that came back a bit. There was enough room for the ball to sneak past the bat and pad to rattle Zadran's leg-stump. Three balls later in the fourth over, Mohammad Nabi's dismissal was along similar lines and the only difference was that Rabada disturbed the off-stump this time. Nortje joined the party with the scalp of Azmatullah Omarzai, whose slash found Tristan Stubbs in the deep. Gurbaz, Zadran and Omarzai have been the leading run-makers for Afghanistan in this ICC showpiece, but on the crucial day all they could manage was a paltry 12 runs between them. Skipper Rashid Khan, who could have made some valuable runs, chose to expose all his stumps to Nortje to see the one close to his legs getting cartwheelled across the field. Leg-spinner Tabraiz Shamsi (3/6) applied the coupe de grace on Afghanistan batting line with two wickets in one over, jettisoning Karim Jannat and Noor Ahmad.



Laura calls for more red-ball cricket in women's cricket calendar

PTI ■ CHENNAI
South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt has called for more Tests in women's cricket calendar and inclusion of red-ball tournaments in the rainbow nation's domestic structure, ahead of their one-off Test against India starting here on Friday. India and South Africa will face off here at Chepauk for only their third Test in history and first in nearly 10 years, a contest for which Wolvaardt conceded her side is not fully prepared for. While a multi-day red-ball women's competition was resumed in India last season, South Africa have no such tournaments.

"Most of us don't have any preparation in the format, since we don't play domestic four-day cricket. It's difficult, since I have to leave the balls that I have been cover-driving my whole life, and I still tend to play it by instinct," Wolvaardt said during a press conference here on Thursday. Citing the lack of preparation for red-ball cricket fixtures which are few and far between, the star batter even suggested scrapping the format. "We either need to play more Tests and incorporate it into the domestic level, or we can just leave it because playing one or three Tests is very hard to adapt to," she said. "But I want to have more of it," Wolvaardt added.



South Africa's last outing in the format was earlier this year in February when they were trounced by Australia by an innings and 284 runs in Perth. After this fixture against India, South Africa's next Test assignment will be against England in December. "Getting the opportunity to

play more red-ball cricket is awesome. Having three scheduled in a calendar year is pretty cool," she added. "I personally really enjoy the format. So, this Test will be a huge challenge for us, and hopefully, we will adapt to the conditions well." "Women's Tests, in general, is a bit unknown as neither teams have too much experience in it. India does have a good home advantage and winning here will be a tough challenge, but we are up for it," she added. The pitch is expected to be spin-friendly while there is also forecast of rain. "Preparation-wise, we have been facing a lot of spin in the nets lately since it will be the biggest threat here. The balls

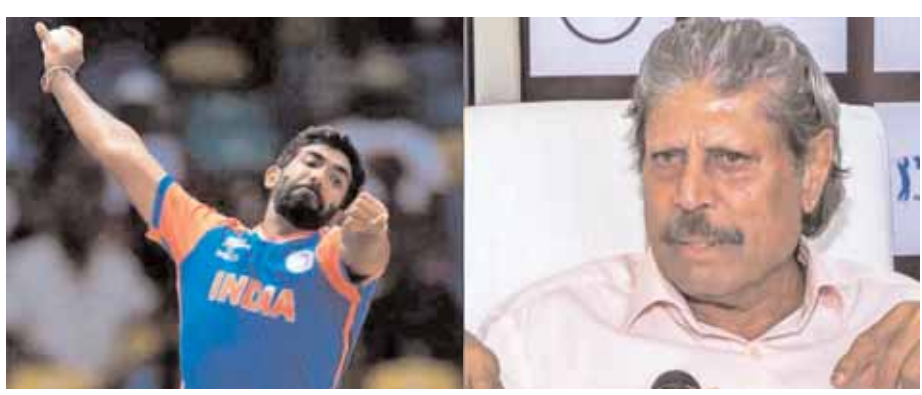
were staying low at the nets yesterday," Wolvaardt said. "Batting-wise, it's going to be a big challenge. But thankfully, we have a few top spinners in our squad who are licking their lips and getting ready for the game tomorrow. Hopefully, they are going to put on a great show," she added. With the South African men's team making it to the final of the T20 World Cup, Wolvaardt said her side would also be keeping an eye on Saturday's final. "Most of us woke up early to watch the game, but only to watch them chase 57. It was absolutely amazing to watch and felt incredible. We will definitely watch the final and cheer them on," she said.

Sri Lanka head coach Chris Silverwood steps down

PTI ■ COLOMBO
Sri Lanka's head coach Chris Silverwood on Thursday stepped down from the role following the team's dismal outing in the ongoing T20 World Cup, the SLC announced. Former captain Mahela Jayawardene had resigned from the post of the consultant coach on Wednesday. "Being an international coach means long periods away from loved ones. After lengthy conversations with my family and with a heavy heart, I feel it is now time for me to return home (England) and spend some quality time together," Silverwood, who played six Tests and seven ODIs for England as a pacer, said in his statement. "It has been a real honour for me to be part of Sri Lanka Cricket and I will be taking away many fond memories,"

added Silverwood. Sri Lanka crashed out of the T20 WC in the group stages itself with two losses, a no result and a solitary win, and it was the former champions' worst performance in the ICC showpiece. During Silverwood's tenure, Lanka won the T20 Asia Cup in 2022 and also reached the final of the 50-over Asia Cup last year where they lost to India. They also secured a slew of bilateral series wins both at home and overseas, including one against Australia in the 50-over format and two away Test series wins over Bangladesh. The SLC has already started the process of finding a new head coach ahead of the team's next international outing against India in a white ball series next month. The Lankans will then head to England for a two-match Test series.

BUMRAH IS 1000 TIMES BETTER THAN ME: KAPIL DEV



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Iconic former India all-rounder Kapil Dev feels Jasprit Bumrah is a "1000 times better" bowler than what he was at his prime. Bumrah, who has been doing exceptionally well in the ongoing T20 World Cup, snaring 11

wickets at an outstanding economy of 4.08 in the 23 overs he has bowled so far. "Bumrah is 1000 times better than me. These young boys are far better than us. We had more experience. They are better," Kapil told 'PTI Videos'. Bumrah, who is widely regard-

ed as the best pacer in international cricket now, has played 26 Tests for India, picking up 159 wickets and an economy of under three. His 89 ODI appearances have yielded 149 wickets while his T20I wicket count stands at 85 from 68 matches. Kapil ended his career with a

then world record 434 Test wickets and is considered one of the best all-rounders of all time who also claimed 253 ODI scalps. The 65-year-old, who led India to their maiden World Cup title in 1983, also lauded the overall fitness levels of the current national team. "They are very good. Outstanding. They are fitter. They are much more hard-working. They are fantastic," he said.

Debutantes in focus as India Women take on South Africa in one-off Test

PTI ■ CHENNAI
The focus will be on young talent, especially the debutants, when the Indian women's cricket team squares off against South Africa in a one-off Test starting here on Friday, a decade after the two teams last clashed in a five-day game. With Test cricket not being a regular affair for women, as many as five in the Indian squad could get a debut in the longest format, after having established themselves and proved their mettle in the limited-overs circuit. Also, with India coming off a 3-0 clean sweep in the preceding ODI series against the same side, the momentum is surely with the hosts although this will be a different format altogether. The likes of Uma Chetry, Priya Punia, Saika Ishaque, Arundhati Reddy and Shabnam Shakil will be the ones to watch as they prepare for their Test debut.

The last time India competed in a red-ball match was December 2023, "which was their first Test outing in two years. Playing back-to-back home Tests against England and Australia (one each), the hosts were successful in both instances. The Indians last played South Africa in a Test back in 2014 in Mysore, winning it by a comprehensive innings and 34-run margin. Although the focus has generally been on white-ball cricket for the Indian women, head coach Amol Muzumdar has mentioned that there will be more red-ball cricket going forward. He has said that having a Women's Test Championship will add more value to the bilateral Tests. "It's not a bad idea to have a (Women's) Test Championship, something we can look forward to. But that is for the Board (BCCI and ICC) to decide. If it happens, it's indeed better for the



game," he had said on Wednesday. While Harmanpreet Kaur will lead the side with five Tests under her belt, vice-captain Smriti Mandhana is the most experienced of the lot, having played a Test more than her skipper. Both Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues were in good form against England and Australia. They would once again back themselves to come up with a solid show with the bat against

the South Africans here. The likes of Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma will also be expected to come good as they are currently the team's second and third-highest run-scorers respectively in the format. As for bowling, Deepti Sharma and Pooja Vastrakar were lethal forces that gave the England and Australia a hard time in December. Also, Sneha Rana's off-breaks could be a nightmare for the Proteas, especially on the

Chennai track, which is traditionally known to assist spinners.

E-AUCTION FOR OPERATION OF PRADHAN MANTRI BHARATIYA JANAUSHADHI KENDRA (PMBJK) AT NEW JALPAIGURI STATION

E-Auction is invited for awarding contract for operation of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK) at New Jalpaiguri station under Kathihar Division for the period of 03 years. **Rate Unit:** Annual Licensing Fee. Trips/Days. 1095.

Auction Catalogue No. PMBJK-NJP		
Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Description
AA/1	PMBJK-KIR-NJP-PMBJK-2-24-2 (PMBJK - Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendras)	Operation & maintenance of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK) on PF no. 1 between pillar no. 15 & 16 at New Jalpaiguri (NJP) Railway Station under Kathihar Division for a period of three (03) years.

Auction Start Date & Time: 11.00 hrs. of 10-07-2024. Auction Close Date & Time: 11.30 hrs. of 10-07-2024. Prospective bidders are requested to visit E-Auction Leasing Module on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in

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REQUIRED

Applications are invited from eligible candidate for the vacant posts in the following Subjects.

Principal, Assistant Professors in English, Hindi, History, Political Science, Public Administration, Environmental Studies, Maths, Economics, Sociology, Geography, Commerce, Computer Science, Accountant and Clerks.

Eligible candidate on prescribed application can apply within 21 days from the date of advertisement along with documents of qualification and Experience etc. through speed post/E-mail. The qualifications will be as per University/ University Grants Commission/ State Government norms. Women candidates will be preferred. **Note:-** A copy of application may be sent directly to Dean of Colleges, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa for information and necessary action.

Contact No.: 70826-23493, 63500-15400, 94161-59277 **President**

South Indian Bank Ltd.
Regional Office-Delhi, Plot No. 21821/1, 3rd Floor, Near Karol Bagh Metro Station, Opposite Metro Pillar No. 98, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005, Ph.: 11 4233 1664/011 4512 8661 | E-mail: ro1008@silb.co.in

Branch Shimla : GMHR building, Phase II sec -5, Below BCS, New Shimla, PPO, Shimla - Himachal Pradesh-171009

[See Rule 8 (1)] POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of The South Indian Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 [54 of 2002] and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice dated 16-12-2023 u/s. 13(2) of the Act calling upon the borrower : **1. Mrs. Neelam Verma W/O Sanjay Verma, Amar Kuteer, 2nd Floor, Near Sangha House Khali, Near Shilma Public School, Shimla Himachal Pradesh- 171002** Also at, W/O Sanjay Verma, Verma Niwas, 1st floor, Near Tower, Sagt Summer Hill, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171005 and guarantors : **2. Mr. Sanjay Verma, Vill Kogi P.O., Durgapur Tech.District, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171010.** Also at, Amar Kuteer, 2nd Floor, Near Sangha House Khali, Near Shilma Public School, Urban (T) Shimla East, Shimla Himachal Pradesh-171002, Also at, Verma Niwas, 1st floor, Near Tower, Sagt Summer Hill, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh-171005 3. **Mr. Yugal Kishore, B-9/14, Barnus Court, Himachal Bhawan, Tehsil-Shimla (Urban) District, H.P.-171002** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 2,94,734.33 (Rupees Two Lakh Ninety Four Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Four and Paise Thirty Three Only) as on 15-12-2023 with further interest and costs within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 21st day of June 2024.

The borrowers/guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of The South Indian Bank Ltd. for an amount of **Rs. 2, 98, 719.94** (Rupees Two Lakhs Ninety Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Nine and Paise Ninety Four Only) as on 21-05-2024 along with further interests, legal charges and costs thereon.

The attention of Borrowers are invited to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the Sarfaesi Act, 2002 entitling you to redeem the property prior to publication of Notice of Sale.

Description of the Immovable Property (Immovable properties secured to the account)

SL NO	Description of Immovable Properties
1.	All that piece and parcel of portion of building with Entire first floor having its covered area of 150.67 sq metres out of three storeyed house building on the part of land comprised in Khata khatoni number 3min/106 min, Khasara number 401, total measuring 0-30-10 Hectares inclusive of rights in common areas and facilities, with all other appurtenant rights over constructions, easementary rights existing or to be constructed & improvements thereon, together with common all rights of paths, drainages, Air, water, Sun light, fittings, fixtures, common stairs thereon situated in Muhai Sangati, Tehsil Shimla (R) District Shimla, Himachal Pradesh owned by Mrs. Neelam Verma and more fully described in the Sale deed No. 971/2009 dated 17-07-2009 registered at SRO - Shimla (Rural) and bounded on North : Open land and land of Sh. Yog Raj comprised in Khasara No. 398 East : Land of Sh. Dalip Singh Comprised in Khasara No. 397 South : Land of Sh. Chaman Lal comprised in Khasara No. 351 West : Open land

Note : Previous Possession Notice dated 10.05.2024 is withdrawn.
Date : 21.06.2024
Place : SHIMLA **Sd/- Authorized Officer**
The South Indian Bank Ltd