



Residents of Anand Parbat area fill drinking water from a Delhi Jal Board tanker amid a water crisis in the national Capital Photo: Ranjan Dimri / The Pionee

Delhi remains hot, thirsty; neighbours plough water

RAJESH KUMAR MEW DELHI

s Delhiites are reeling Aunder the double blow of a relentless heatwave and water crisis, blame game continued between Delhi, Harvana and Himachal Pradesh in the Supreme Court on Thursday. In a twist in the Supreme Court battle over Delhi's spiralling water crisis, Himachal Pradesh has said it does not have surplus water to send to the national Capital, a day after the hill State said it

had released water for Delhi a vacation bench of Justices and the supply needs to go through Harvana while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led Delhi Government filed a fresh affidavit saying it and sensitive issue and this "cannot" take action against tanker mafia as they are operating on the "Haryana side of the Yamuna River." Haryana should explain why action was not taken," the Delhi Government said in the affidavit shifting the responsibility. After hearing all stakeholders,

Prashant Kumar Mishra and Prasanna B Varale said sharing of Yamuna water between States is a complex court does not have the technical expertise to decide on it even on an interim basis. The bench, therefore, left it to the Upper Yamuna River Board to examine if some relief can be extended to Delhi in terms of releasing additional water supply.

Continued on Page 2 | surge of top scorers during

NEET-UG for 1,563 candidates on June 23

mid a raging row over the Anica raging rout of Anice Agency the National Testing Agency (NTA) will re-conduct the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, Undergraduate (NEET UG) 2024 exam for over 1,563 aspirants on June 23 while the result will be declared on June 30. For those who do not wish to appear, their original scorecards (without the grace marks) will be considered.

The NTA informed a vacation bench of justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta that all 1,563 candidates who suffered as they got less than the allotted time to write NEET 2024, will be given the option for the re-test.

"If they choose to take the re-exam, their earlier NEET score will stand cancelled (and the new score after the re-exam will be counted instead). If these students choose not to take the retest, their original scores would remain but without counting grace marks awarded earlier on account of the loss of time," the NTA told the court. The NTA conducts the all India pre-medical entrance test. The development has come

amid controversy that the "arbitrary" award of grace marks led to a shocking



the NEET, with several claims being made of malpractices, cheating and irregularities in the conduct of the exam. Scores of students and their parents are protesting at the Jantar Mantar against the irregularities in the NEET-UG examination and demanding a probe by the Central Bureau of

Investigation (CBI). Refusing to stall the counselling for NEET-UG, scheduled 2024,to commence from July 6, the bench said, "As per the recommendations it has been suggested that scorecard of affected 1,563 candidates will be cancelled and withdrawn and actual scores will be informed without grace marks and re exam will be conducted for them.

Result of those who do not take the retest will be the exam's actual scores without grace marks".

Continued on Page 2

Centre cancels grace marks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In his first statement after taking over once again as Union Education Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan, on Thursday rejected allegations of paper leak in the medical entrance exam NEET-UG. saving there is no evidence to substantiate the claims and added that the Government is ensuring no student is at a disadvantage. Pradhan said the Opposition-led by Congress is spreading lies on sensitive issues without knowing facts. Soon after a series of developments during the day, the number of top rankers in NEET-UG is to come down to 61 from 67 after the NTA's decision to withdraw grace marks awarded to 1,563 students. Six of these 1,563 candidates who appeared in the medical entrance exam from a centre in Harvana had shared the top rank with 61 others. 'There is no evidence of

paper leak in NEET-UG. The allegations of corruption in NTĂ are unfounded, it is a very credible body," said the



Deal with J&K terror with iron hand: PM

in Jammu and Kashmir are

bracing for a bigger challenge

of peaceful conduct of the 52

day-long Amarnath yatra

starting June 29. The meeting,

meanwhile, also took stock of

deployment of security forces

and counter-terror operations

and Modi was given a

comprehensive overview of

the security situation in

The Prime Minister directed

officials present at the

meeting to deploy the full

spectrum of the country's

counter-terror capabilities to

Terrorists struck at four

places in Reasi, Kathua and

Doda districts over the past

four days, killing nine pilgrims and a Central

Continued on Page 2

Reserve

restore peace in the region.

counter-terrorism efforts.

Kashmir,

ongoing

Police

and

Jammu and

including the

MOHIT KANDHARI/PNS JAMMU/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday directed officials to deploy a full spectrum of counter-terror measures in Jammu and Kashmir in a high-level meeting attended by National Security Advisor (NSA)Ajit Doval and other senior officials. The review was held in the backdrop of four terror attacks in as many days in Reasi, Kathua and Doda. Given this development, Modi also spoke to Home Minister Amit Shah and Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and discussed the deployment of security forces and anti-terror operations. Sinha briefed Modi on the efforts being undertaken by the local administration.

Force(CRPF)jawan In the wake of a sudden leaving seven security upswing in the terrorist violence across different personnel and several others Minister. Continued on Page 2 the security forces deployed districts of the Jammu region, injured.

Pakistani, Filipino,

NEWS BRIEFS **Ex-IPS** officer Doval reappointed NSA

New Delhi: The Government on Thursday reappointed former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Aiit Doval as the National Security Adviser (NSA), according to an official order. His appointment will be co-terminus with

the term of Prime Minister



BJP shows

High airfares pinched Minister, vows to check flyaway prices RAJESH KUMAR 📕 NEW DELHI

Reiterating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'hawai chappal se hawai jahaz tak', the newly appointed Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu on d to revie v vow

DNA tests on to identify Kuwait victims PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI

An IAF plane is on standby to bring back the mortal remains of Indians killed in a devastating fire in southern Kuwait's Mangaf area on Wednesday. Forty of the 49 killed were Indians including 24 from Kerala. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an gratia payment of ₹two lak



assistance to Indians injured in the fire and to ensure early repatriation of mortal remains those killed offici ls said who described the inci

Egyptian and Nepali nationals. "In an unfortunate and tragic fire incident earlier today in a Labour housing facility in Mangaf area of Kuwait, around 40 Indians are understood to have died and over 50 injured, the Ministry of External Affairs(MEA) had said in a statement late on Wednesday night. Prime Minister Modi,

'saddening", reviewed the

lent as

might at Khandu's oath-taking

PNS IITANAGAR/NEW DELHI

 $B^{JP} \ \text{leader Pema Khandu} \\ \text{Minister of Arunachal Pradesh} \\$ for the third consecutive term on Thursday. Khandu, who was re-elected unopposed from the Mukto constituency in the border district of Tawang, was sworn-in by Governor KT Parnaik in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president JP Nadda, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma and Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, among others. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Khandu and said his team will ensure that the state develops at an even faster pace.

Eleven other MLAs were also sworn-in as Ministers at the function held in the Dorjee Khandu State Convention Centre.

Among them were Deputy CM Chowna Mein, former Assembly Speaker PD Sona, BJP State president Biyuram Wahge, and Dasanglu Pul and other leaders.

surging prices of air fares so that it becomes 'affordable' for the common man. Naidu said to make it a reality, the ticket prices have to be affordable and that

benefits of the aviation sector should reach every corner of the country, with focus on Tier two and Tier three cities. "I am going to hold review meetings. Definitely, my intention would be to bring down the (ticket) prices because that is a challenge for the common man. Our intention is to take air travel to the common man, unless you make it affordable, it is not going to happen," Naidu, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) MP said soon after he assumed the charge of Civil

Aviation Minister. The 36-year-old three-time MP is the youngest Cabinet Minister in the Modi 3.0 Government. Increase in airfares is an

important issue and it has been a talking point. Dynamic pricing fluctuating airfare prices have been an issue with travellers across India. Over the past few months, ticket prices have seen sharp increases, impacting the ease



of flying for both domestic and international routes.

Besides, due to Go First's insolvency, flight suspension, high demand during the busiest travel season, and capacity issues, travellers now have to pay more for their tickets.

Additionally, Indian airlines do not have enough aircraft to launch new routes right now.

Naidu said the key priorities of the Ministry would be to create an 'ease of flying' scenario, making air travel more accessible and convenient for every citizen. In February, a parliamentary panel proposed that the Government should frame guidelines to control sudden surges in airfares, adding that a route-specific fare ceiling can be examined, keeping in and mind the interests of both the airlines and the customer. Moreover, the country's

aviation sector has been grappling with global supply chain disruptions, which

have delayed plane deliveries and pushed fares higher. Domestic air traffic has grown by 23 per cent in 2023 reaching a record 153 million passengers, with analysts forecasting this number to climb to 300 million by 2030. Naidu expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Modi Narendra for entrusting him with the crucial responsibility of leading the Ministry of Civil Aviation. He emphasised that the choice of a young and energetic leader signifies a forward-looking approach, focused on shaping the future of the aviation industry for the next 25 years. Naidu acknowledged the support of the people of Srikakulam and Andhra Pradesh, thanked Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and recalled the role of his father, Late Kinjarapu Yerran Naidu, a distinguished politician from Andhra Pradesh. Continued on Page 2

each to the families of the deceased. The Kerala Government also announced payment of ₹five lakh each. Most of the Indian victims are from Kerala Minister of state for External

Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh left Kuwait following a for

They also said Kuwaiti authorities are conducting DNA tests on the bodies of

here on Thursday.

those killed adding total number of people killed in the Al-Mangaf building is 49 and 42 of them are learnt to be Indians; the remaining ones

situation at a meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, NSA Ajit Doval, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and Principal Secretary to PM PK Mishra among others.

Detailed report on Page 4

Narendra Modi or until further orders, it said. "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Ajit Doval, IPS (Retired) as National Security Adviser with effect from 10.06.2024," said the order.

Modi leaves for Italy to attend G7

New Delhi: India will artificial focus on intelligence, energy, Africa, and the Mediterranean at the outreach session of the G7 summit in Italy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi

said on Thursday. Modi left for Italy in his first foreign trip after becoming Prime Minister for the third term. He will attend the outreach session on Friday and is scheduled to hold bilateral talks with a number of world leaders on the margins of the summit. Detailed report on P4

thumb flavour in butterscotch cone, Mumbai ishtyle Frozen

PTI MUMBAI

 $E^{njoying\ a\ cone\ of\ ice\ cream}_{turned\ out\ to\ be\ a\ bitter}$ experience for a Mumbaibased man as he was appalled to find a piece of flesh, apparently a severed human thumb, in the frozen dessert that he ordered online, police said on Thursday. The incident occurred on

Wednesday afternoon, following which the man lodged a complaint with the police, they said.

The complainant, Brendon Ferrao (26), is a doctor with an MBBS degree and is a

resident of Malad area in the metropolis.

"In his complaint, he said he ordered a butterscotch icecream cone from Yummo company through an e-Commerce app. While consuming the ice cream after lunch, he found a piece While of flesh with a nail in it," a (IPC) police official said. The man, who is pursuing his post-graduate studies, then took up the matter with

the ice cream company by complaining about it on its Instagram page. But since there was no proper response from the

firm, the complainant put the piece of flesh in an ice

bag and approached went to the Malad police station, where he lodged a complaint, the official said. Based on his complaint, the police registered a case under Indian Penal Code sections 272 (adulteration of food or drink intended for sale), 273 (sale of noxious food and drink) and 336 (act endangering life or personal safety of others), against Yummo ice cream company officials, he said. "The piece of flesh, suspected



to be a piece of human finger, has been sent for forensic examination to ascertain whether it is a part of the human body," the official said.

Speaking to media persons about the incident, complainant Ferrao said while eating the ice cream, he found a big piece in 1 he found a big piece in his mouth and initially thought it to be a nut.

But as he suspected that something was wrong, he took out the piece from his mouth and was appalled to find a piece of flesh, he said. He said since he is a doctor,

he knows the human body parts well and figured out that the piece of flesh that he found was of a thumb. "After finding the piece of flesh in the ice cream, I was almost trembling. It left me traumatised," he said.

Senior police inspector Ravindra Adane said the piece of flesh with a nail measured around one-anda-half centimetres.

After registering the case, the police have launched a probe to find out from where the ice cream was brought, and where and when it was manufactured, he said.



Traffic congestion on a road owing to tourists' rush near Rohtang Pass, in Manali, on Thursday

CHILLING OUT his



Security upped for Amarnath yatra amid rising terror threats Football coach TK Chathunni

MOHIT KANDSHARI JAMMU

In the wake of a sudden upswing in the terrorist violence across different districts of the Jammu region, the security forces deployed in Jammu and Kashmir are bracing for a bigger challenge of peaceful conduct of the 52day-long Amarnath yatra starting June 29. This year's annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Amarnath is expected to attract over 5 lakh pilgrims.

In 2023, over 4.45 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance inside the cave shrine.Since the yatra is taking place in the shadow of 'audacious' terror strikes on pilgrims and security forces the entire focus is shifted to ensuring the safety and security of the pilgrims reaching here to offer special prayers.On June 9, the terrorists targeted a bus carrying Shiv Khori pilgrims killing nine persons and injuring 41 others while two encounters took place-one each at Hiranagar and



Chattargalla in Bhaderwah on June 12. Two foreign terrorists were eliminated in the operation by the joint team of security forces while one CRPF jawan attained martyrdom during the encounter. The fourth encounter started

between security forces and terrorists at Kota Top, Gandoh in Doda district. Constable Fareed Ahmed of Special Operations Group (SOG) Gandoh was injured in the initial firefight. To ensure and Yatri niwas along the

transit accommodations, and community halls, the forces will be using drone cameras to maintain 24x7 vigil.CCTV sophisticated surveille the safety of pilgrims along surveillance gadgets would the entire yatra route including Jammu-Srinagar remain in place to track down National Highway the Union the footprints of miscreants in Home Ministry has already the area. In addition, sniffer given its nod to rush additional companies of the central paramilitary forces for the exclusive yatra duty. These security personnel would be deployed for area domination duties along the Yatra route, securing the outer ring of base camps at Baltal,

dogs would remain deployed at base camps, and strategic yatra points to check unwarranted entry suspected personnel along with explosives to execute a terror plot. Senior officials of the Jammu and Kashmir police along with top brass of the CAPF, Pahalgam, community halls, Indian army are regularly

holding security review Yatra route.The shrine board meetings to fine-tune their ground strategy and improve coordination to ensure peaceful conduct of the yatra. Special emphasis is laid on ensuring foolproof security of camps, communication network, regulation of traffic management on the national highways and other roads, parking of vehicles, and deployment of forces on both the vatra routes of Pahalgam and Baltal, etc. To ensure the safety of

pilgrims undertaking the Special Yatra security checkpoints have been activated along the Yatra route. Quick reaction teams will be deployed near the Yatri base camps at different locations to ensure the safety of the pilgrims. The base camps and other vital transit points including refreshment counters, and resting places will be kept under close watch with the help of drone cameras to record any suspected movement of miscreants.

passes away, leaves a legacy

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN KOCHI

residents of Chalakkudy, a small town in Kerala's Thrissur district bid a tearful farewell to T K Chathunni, one of the frontline football coaches in Thursday. India on Chathunni, rated as the Man with the Midas Touch was instrumental in making teams like MRF, Goa, Churchill Brothers Goa, Salgaokar, FC Kochin and the Kerala State as India's leading football powers breathed his last on Wednesday in a private hospital . He was 79 and leaves behind his wife Swarnalatha and daughters Rekha and Rinku.

Chathunni was one of the ace football players in the country and had represented Orkay Mills, Vasco Goa, EME Centre, for years in various all-India tournaments during 1962-1979. Along with legendary Inder Singh, Magan Singh, Bernard



nation 02

PNS DELHI

The Department of Mechanical Engineering is delighted to announce the launch of five-year Integrated M Tech. Programme in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Engineering.Students will be awarded with B. Tech. Degree after completing four years. Admission to this years. Admission to this program will be based on the University entrance exam to be held on June 28, 2024 and last date of online registration is June 20, 2024.Visionary guidance of Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Jaspal Singh Sandhu and Head, Dr. Harminder Singhmarked a significant milestone in our commitment to student development and future-readiness.

The Department of Mechanical Engineering remains dedicated to providing exceptional educational opportunities and fostering a dynamic learning environment.

Massive fire engulfs Chandni Chowk shop, no injuries reported

New Delhi: A major fire broke out in a shop in Chandni Chowk area of north Delhi on Thursday while no one was reported hurt, according to the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) officials. "A call related to the fire was

received at 5 pm from the Chandni Chowk area. The fire was in Marwadi Katra, Nai Sadak in Chandani Chowk," DFS Chief Atul Garg said. Initially 14 fire tenders were rushed to the spot, but later 16 more tenders pressed into service, Garg said. However, according to sources a total of 50 tenders were pressed to douse the fire.

JK police chief warns against enemy's tactics MOHIT KANDHARI 📕 JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir Police Chief RR Swain on Thursday came out strongly against the neighbouring country while accusing it of trying to disturb peaceful atmosphere the through its mercenaries and asserted that the Indian forces were determined to give a befitting response to the enemy.

enemy. The police Chief also warned the "enemy agents" that they would repent their decision to support terrorism. Swain said, "these enemy agents have stakes including families, land, and jobs, unlike Pakistani terrorists who have nothing to lose". Meanwhile, massive search

operations continued on Thursday in different districts Jammu and Kashmir, of especially Doda and Reasi and Jammu, to track down and



neutralize terrorists involved in recent attacks in the union territory. So far Reasi police have detained 50 individuals in connection with the recent terrorist attack on a pilgrims' bus in the Kanda area of police station Pouni.

The detentions were made following an intensive investigation led by the police at the Kanda Area Police Station, Pouni.

Interacting with the reporters in Katra on the sidelines of a security review meeting DGP Swain said, "The starting point (of terrorism in J&K) is across the border. The clear intent of

Pradesh,

Delhi,

the adversary is that if they cannot motivate locals for subversive activities to disturb the peaceful atmosphere in Kashmir, send their people, Pakistanis, after recruiting them there and forcibly pushing them into this side".

expected to provide

lodging

other electronic

of

and

facilities to a rush of 10,000

pilgrims across three yatri

niwas complexes of Jammu,

Srinagar and Ramban during

transit.To keep a hawk's eye

on the movement of

suspicious personnel in and around vital installations including Yatra base camps,

boarding

The meeting, among others, was attended by Reasi Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, Udhampur-Reasi Range Deputy Inspector General of Police Rayees Mohammad Bhat, and Reasi Senior Superintendent of Police Mohita Sharma.

Commenting on the role of some of the local over-ground workers, DGP maintained, "The enemy agents are doing it (helping foreign terrorists) for money and narcotics. They will be identified and dealt with sternly. We want to warn them that while the (foreign) terrorists will get killed," the police chief said.

Adhikari refuses to own up loss liability SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

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m acing}$ attack from a section of the State BJP and having received a reported rap on his knuckles from the national leadership for his party's poor show in Bengal, State Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari has refused to take responsibility for the BJP's uninspiring performance in concluded recently the parliamentary elections. Adhikri who has been held responsible for the electoral defeat by many a senior State leaders including former State party president Dilip Ghosh said he never interfered in the organizational matters. Many senior State leaders had

earlier accused him of meddling too much in the organizational affairs and of arbitrarily choosing candidates like Rekha Patra of Sandeshkhali for Basirhat seat

and Rajmata Amrita Roy for Krishnagar seat - both of which were lost by huge margins.

Refuting the charges Adhikari on Thursday said that he had never interfered in the matters of organization and that he alone cannot be held responsible for the party's loss.

"I have never interfered in the party's organisational matters ... save perhaps for the fact to

that I visited areas where I was invited to attend public rallies and programmes ... I ning and programmes in a programmes in a programme in a candidates in my own East Midnapore district when I was asked to do so and the party won there," Adhikari and the caid a calling the statement of the second holding said the weakness organizational

Periera, Shyam Thapa, and

Ranjit Thapa, he was a regular

player of the Indian national

side that had played in

various tournaments in Asia.

Old timers still remember

how this player with a

continental get-up, guarded

the danger zone while single handedly fed the strikers through mesmerizing passes and dribbling. Chathunni was

at home playing as a stopper back but caught the rivals

with his lightening speed in taking the ball to their areas

which always culminated in

goals.

responsible for the defeat. "We have not been able to counter the Trinamool contreat the frinamool Congress organizationally ... which is one reason of the loss," he said alleging "there are some leaders who take credit when the party performs well but blames me when there is a defeat." Interestingly the senior saffron leader made his

options clear on the issue of organizational duty saying that neither had he meddled in the organizational matters nor he had any desire take organizational

responsibilities. Adhikari who had gone to Delhi for a brief period to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime NMinister Narendra Modi was reportedly sent back by the national leadership with an instruction to contain the party leaders including MLAs from joining the TMC particularly ahead of the upcoming Assembly by-

elections to four seats. This at a time when five panchayats controlled by the BJP in Coochbehar district went to the TMC after several of their members joined the ruling outfit. The BJP's Nishith Pramanik lost the Cooch Behar seat.

"We cannot say that the BJP has done all that bad in the elections if we consider the fact that we have been leading in 92 Assembly segments which is an achievement.'

Deal with J&K terror with iron hand: PM

From Page 1

Massive search operations were launched by security forces in forest belts of different districts of Jammu and Kashmir to track down and neutralise the ultras involved in the recent terror attacks in the Union

Jammu and Kashmir Police leased four terrorists involved in two attacks in Doda district

leading to their arrest. "Jammu and Kashmir Police have released sketches of four terrorists who are believed to be in the upper reaches of nine people and injuring 41 Bhaderwah, Gandoh and carrying out On Tuesday, terrorists fired terror-related activities," a at a joint checkpost of the 4 terror-related activities," a police spokesperson said. On Sunday, terror

Territory. carrying pilgrims when and announced a reward of from the Shiv Khori temple. security personnel, including Rs 20 lakh for information The bus, ferrying pilgrims a policeman.

from Uttar Rajasthan and Thathri, others.

Rashtriya Rifles and police at Sunday, terrorists Chattergalla in Bhaderwah opened fire on a 53-seater while a search party in the Gandoh area o district

This year's annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Amarnath is expected to attract over 5 lakh pilgrims. In 2023, over 4.45 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance inside the cave shrine.

Since the yatra is taking place in the shadow of 'audacious' terror strikes on pilgrims and security forces e entire focus is sh uifted to

NEET-UG for 1,563 candidates on June 23

Taking note of the submissions, the bench said all the pleas, including the one filed by Alakh Pandey, the chief executive of EdTech firm Physics affected 1563 candidates. Wallah over the issue of of grace award marks, will be taken up for hearing on July 8. The Court was hearing petitions questioning the manner in which the NEET for undergraduate medical college admissions was held this year. The petitions included those questioning the award of grace marks, with some seeking the cancellation of the NEET results announced on June 4. At the outset, lawyer Kanu Agarwal, appearing for the Centre and the NTA, said the committee set up to look into the grievances decided on June 12 to "allay the fears of the students". It was of the view that the grace marks be withdrawn and replaced with an option of re-test for these candidates which will be conducted on June 23. A notification to this effect will be issued during the day. He said the committee was of the view that the award of grace marks on grounds of loss of time while taking the test resulted in a "skewed situation" as it had to be limited only to the questions that remained un-attempted. Inat remained un-attempted. After examining all aspects, the panel concluded that it would be appropriate to recommend cancellation of scorecards of these beneficiary candidates. "According to the recommendations, it has been suggested that the score cords of the suggested that the score-cards of the affected 1563 candidates issued on June 4, 2024 will stand cancelled and

withdrawn.

These affected 1563 candidates will be informed of their actual scores without compensatory marks. Further, reexamination will be conducted for the

examination process and results of NEET (UG) 2024."

He has, in his plea filed through lawyer Rohit Jain, the managing partner of law firm 'Singhania & Co', also sought a direction to the expert panel he has to come up wit monted

From Page 1

NFR inaugurates renovated retiring rooms at Guwahati railway station PNS DELHI

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR)

commitment to enhancing passenger comfort with h е

of 12 renovated retiring rooms at Guwahati Railway Station. The inauguration ceremony took place on 12th June 2024, led by Chetan Kumar Shrivastava, General Manager of NFR, alongside senior railway officials. The newly renovated retiring rooms offer 12 fully air-conditioned accommodations with modern interiors, adorned with wall paintings and wellfurnished attached washrooms.

it was en route to the Mata was attacked on Wednesday, Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra resulting in injuries to seven

Minister, vows to

High airfares pinched

check flyaway prices

From Page 1 In line with Prime Minister Modi's vision

for Viksit Bharat, he said "we are going to

formulate and implement a 100-day action

aviation sector. This plan will serve as a stepping stone towards achieving the long-

term Vision of Viksit Bharat as India

celebrates 100 years of its independence in

2047". The Union Minister also

emphasised on the importance of use of

passenger concerns effectively. He assured

that the ministry would prioritise passenger comfort and convenience in all

Regarding the completion of the Greenfield airport in Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district, the Minister

expressed his personal commitment to

ensuring the safety and security of the pilgrims reaching here to offer special prayers.

Centre cancels grace marks

From Page 1 He said, "It conducts exams for more than 50 lakh school students annually, besides exams at the higher education level."

"If these candidates do not wish to take the re-test, then their earlier marks, sans the grace marks, will be given for the purpose of results. The grace marks that were awarded earlier were not at the whims and fancy of NTA but were based on a Supreme Court formula, there is a basis to those calculations. If there are certain anomalies, those will be rectified and we will ensure that no student is at a disadvantage," Pradhan said.

The education ministry last week set up a four-member panel to review the grace marks awarded to 1,563 students to compensate them for "loss of time" due to delay in starting the examination at certain centres

The results of the affecte who do not wish to appear for the reexamination will be declared on their actual marks without compensation obtained by them in the examination held on May 5, 2024 and the marks obtained by the candidates who will appear in the retest will be considered and their marks based on the examination held on May 5, 2024 will be discarded," the bench noted in the order. The results of the re-test will be declared on June 30 and the counselling for admissions to MBBS, BDS, and other courses will start on July 6, the Centre said.

Lawyer J Sai Deepak, appearing for Alakh Pandey, the chief executive of EdTech firm 'Physics Wallah', assailed the random award of grace marks and said the option of re-test be given to all those students who could not approach the court alleging loss of time.

The bench declined the plea saying that it cannot expand the scope of the case to those who had not approached the court.

The bench issued notices to the Centre and the NTA on three petitions and tagged them with the pending pleas. It said they all will be taken up together on July 8 after the summer vacation. Pandey has assailed the alleged random award of grace marks to over 1,500 candidates and urged the top court to set up an expert panel under its supervision to "enquire into the

Lieutenant-Governor

of

in the process of conducting NEET examination and without hampering the interest of the other students". Another petition filed by Abdullah Mohammed Faiz and Dr. Shaik Roshan Mohiddin sought recall of the NEET-UG 2024 results and conduct of a freeh UG 2024 results and conduct of a fresh exam over allegations of paper leak and other malpractices. The third plea, filed by NEET-UG aspirant Jaripiti Kartheek challenged the award of grace marks as compensation for alleged loss of time during the exam.

The examination was held on May 5 across 4,750 centres and around 24 lakh candidates took it. The results were expected to be declared on June 14 but were announced on June 4, apparently because the evaluation of the answer sheets got completed earlier.

The allegations have led to protests in several cities and filing of cases in seven high courts as also the Supreme Court. Scores of students protested in Delhi on June 10 seeking a probe into alleged irregularities.

As many as 67 students scored a perfect 720, unprecedented in the NTA's history, with six from a centre in Haryana's Faridabad figuring in the list, raising suspicions about irregularities.

It has been alleged that grace marks contributed to 67 students sharing the top rank.

Delhi remains hot, thirsty; neighbours...

From Page 1

The bench has asked the Delhi government to submit an application to Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) for water supply, seeking water for the national capital on humanitarian grounds. "The issue should be left to be considered by the body constituted with the agreement of parties in the memorandum of understanding dated 1994.

"Since UYRB has already supply even as residents directed Delhi to submit an continue to scramble for the supply. Exhausted women application for the supply of and children could be seen walking long distances and standing and sitting in additional 150 cusecs of water on humanitarian grounds, such an application be made, if not already made, serpentine queues for a few buckets of water that the tanker would bring. Many today by 5 pm, and thereafter the board shall convene a meeting tomorrow and take would return home with not decision in the matter at the enough water to cook a meal earliest. If need be, the board or quench their thirst. A large part of the national can convene on a day to day basis," the bench said while disposing of the plea filed by capital has been getting sufficient water supply since the start of the summer the Delhi government. season. The DJB's production The ongoing water crisis in Delhi has escalated into a is hovering around 950 blame game as the AAP and million gallon water per day (mgd) while demand is over office of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, with 1300 mgd daily here. South Delhi, Central and West and both accusing each other of shielding the water tanker North East are among the mafia and mismanagement of worst affected areas in the

policy decisions.

expedite the project.

national capital.

The national capital was in for a huge disappointment when the Himachal Pradesh government took U turn on Thursday and told the court it does not have surplus 136 cusecs of water, recanting an earlier statement. "We could not convey it properly earlier. Our correct statement may come on record. Maybe we made a mistake earlier, but I have been briefed. I will correct and withdraw the earlier statement that flow was obstructed," the counsel of Himachal Pradesh said. This drew a warning from the court. "We can haul you up for contempt and summon your Chief Secretary," it said. The Himachal government counsel apologised and said they will submit an affidavit and

withdraw their response

In an affidavit filed before the Delhi top court, the government said water tankers are needed to cater to areas not connected to water supply lines or where the supply is inadequate.It said the total water supplied by the Delhi Jal Board and private tankers in the city is around 5-6 million gallons per day which constitutes only 0.5 per cent of total supply. "DJB has been trying to

improve the availability of water tankers so that even private tankers can be replaced by public tankers. Multiple letters have been written by the Petitioner Government to

earlier

charge action)."The tanker mafia is operational on the Haryana side of the Yamuna river over which DJB has no iurisdiction," Highlighting the steps taken by the Delhi government to stop water wastage, it said it has reduced losses in water transmission from Harvana

the crore in constructing Carried

Lined Channel (CLC) and the of Delhi (who is at present in losses reduced from 30 per ensuring cent in the river course to 5

per cent. Delhi government's advocate Abhishek Singhvi said everything possible to augment water availability will be done. He, however, it said. suggested that the court should consider constituting a committee as boards have been reduced to bureaucratic to Delhi from 30 per cent to 5 per cent. "Earlier the raw bodies, an apparent swipe at UYRB. Highlighting the steps water from Yamuna and Ravi, taken by the Delĥi government to stop water Beas sources used to come in Delhi at Wazirabad and Singhvi wastage, said instructions like ban on car Haiderpur through river course and unlined Delhi sub washing have been issued. He Branch (DSB), resulting in 30 said the water level at Wazirabad barrage was not per cent loss in unlined canal. "DJB spent about Rs 500 being maintained at its optimum level.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for the government, Haryana disputed his claim and asserted that the requisite water level was being maintained in Wazirabad. Divan said since the matter involves highly technical aspects of water allocation, it should be left to UYRB to decide. Additional Solicitor General Vikramjeet Banerjee, representing UYRB, agreed with him and said the issue can be resolved by the board. Meanwhile, as Delhi continues to reel under a severe water crisis, city police patrolling has begun around Munak Canal (Bawana Nahar) to keep a check on the tanker mafias, who are reportedly active in the area.

inauguration



capital 03



Cops patrol Munak canal to check activities of tanker mafia

Minister Atishi inspects pipeline network supplying water to South Delhi residents STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

elhi Water Minister Atishi on Thursday inspected a pipeline network supplying water to South Delhi residents in the national Capital while the police began patrolling the Munak canal area to check the activities of tanker mafia as the water crisis in the city worsened.

A senior officer said police teams have set up pickets and started patrolling the 15-kilometre stretch of the canal on the Haryana borders, supplying water to the national capital.

The canal enters Delhi from Bawana and reaches the Haiderpur Treatment Plant. Teams from Bawana, Narela Industrial Area, Shahbad Dairy and Samai Pur Badali police stations have been tasked with patrolling the Munak Canal and its nearby

areas. "Police personnel have been asked to prevent anyone from taking water from the canal in their tankers," the officer said. Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena on Wednesday Saxena on Wednesday directed the Delhi Police chief to ensure a strict vigil along the Munak canal to prevent the theft of water and sought an action taken report within the

week. According to sources, police are also inspecting the posh colonies of Delhi, asking about their water consumption. Atishi.

Meanwhile, hv accompanied senior officials of Delhi Jal Board and Revenue Department, the South Delhi inspected Mains pipeline network that supplies water from the Sonia Vihar water treatment plant to



millions of people across

South Delhi. "Along with senior officials of Jal Board and Revenue Ial Department, inspected the South Delhi Mains pipeline network that supplies water from Sonia Vihar WTP to millions of people across South Delhi. The Delhi Government is ensuring through patrolling by ADMs and SDMs across the city that

not even a single drop of water is wasted due to leakage from the main pipelines. During the water crisis, when Delhi is getting less water, the production of WTPs has decreased. In such a situation, wastage of water will not be tolerated," she said on X (formerly Twitter).

The plight of Delhiites braving an unprecedented high summer heat has been further

shortage of water supply. Delhi is getting less water and the production at water treatment plants has decreased. In such a situation, wastage of water will not be tolerated, she said. During the inspection, Atishi said that the production of water has gone down by 40 MGD in Delhi and unless Harayna releases more water for the city through the Yamuna, the shortfall cannot be met.

She stated that the government is ensuring that not even a single drop of water is wasted due to pipeline leakage in this hour of crisis.

"Efforts are also being made to get additional water from Haryana and Himachal because in the current situation as Delhi is not getting enough water, which has affected the production of our water treatment plants. In such a situation, it is very important that not even a single drop of the water available is wasted," added Atishi.

BJP raps AAP Government over water crisis, seeks answers from Kejriwal over DJB loss STAFF REPORTER IN NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP on Thursday Government over the water crisis in the national Capital, demanding an answer from Chief Minister Arvind Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal government about how Delhi Jal Board, which was in a profit of Rs. 600 crores ten years ago, is in a loss of Rs. 73000 crores. It accused the AAP of failing to prevent wastage of water and

misleading people on the issue. Addressing press а conference, New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj and Delhi BJP Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor said due to the shortage of water, people are being fleeced by the tanker mafia. "The Kejriwal Government is answerable that the Delhi Jal Board which was running at a profit of 600 crores during the tenure of the then Chief Minister of Delhi Sheila Dikshit, has today reached a loss of 73000 crores. This question needs to be properly discussed," she said. Earlier in the day, Delhi Police here began patrolling the Munak canal area to check the activities of the tanker mafia and Water Minister Atishi inspected a pipeline network



supplying water to south Delhi residents.

Hitting out at Atishi, Swaraj alleged that instead of ensuring action against the tanker mafia, the minister is extending protection to them. "Atishi says that even if the tanker mafia is stopped, not much water would be saved. This is very unfortunate because people facing water shortage are being fleeced by the tanker mafia," she said. The BJP leader also criticised the AAP government for "failing" to prevent wastage and leakage of water and "misleading" people on the

issue. "I want to ask the AAP government and Atishi how long will they continue to come up with excuses and mislead people. They should come out of their airconditioned press conference rooms and see the plight of the people," Swaraj said.

Atishi's letter Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena seeking a probe into alleged collusion between senior officers and the tanker mafia, Swaraj said the Delhi government faced the Supreme Court's wrath on the issue of the tanker mafia but it was trying to shift the blame on the officers.

"It is regrettable that the Kejriwal government, which failed to stop water theft and wastage in Delhi, tried to put the problem arising out of its own mistakes on the neighbouring states by calling it a water shortage crisis," she said, adding that Supreme Court's statement that if the Delhi Government cannot stop tanker theft, then it should be handed over to the Delhi Police is a slap on the Kejriwal Government.

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Delhi government to approach the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) for water supply as Himachal Pradesh took a U-turn and told the top court that it did not have surplus water to spare. The court asked the Delhi government to submit an application to the UYRB by 5 pm seeking supply of water to the national capital on humanitarian grounds.

Delhi Congress president seeks From Tihar, Kejriwal directs Ministers to take action to address water, power woes probe into ₹17,575 crore DJB scam

STAFF REPORTER MINEW DELHI

A midst the persisting water national Capital, Delhi Water Minister Atishi and AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha on Thursday met Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal lodged in the Tihar jail and were directed to take measures to curb the problems as soon as possible.

The AAP convener is lodged in Tihar jail's number 2 in the excise policy-linked money laundering case. "Today I met Kejriwal, who is lodged in Tihar jail in a fake case by the central government. But, he still worries about the people of Delhi, more than himself," Atishi said.



related to power and water and he told me that he said. The education minister watched the water crisis in thinks about the people of Delhi on television in Tihar," she stated, adding that Kejriwal has directed them to Delhi and their problems, even while staying behind bars. According to Tihar sources, both Atishi and take all necessary steps and arrangements that could be Chadha met Kejriwal for halfmade to overcome the water Atishi said. crisis as soon as possible. "He inquired about the issues "He has directed all the AAP an-hour in the visitor's room (Mulakati Jangla) in Tihar.

provide water to the people in their areas," she said. Atishi further said that Kejriwal STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI inquired about the power cuts in Delhi which had occurred

Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav wrote to the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) seeking a probe into the Rs 17,575 crore scam in the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) over leakage of wrate from the DIB being diverted for of water from the DJB being diverted for the 'tanker mafia' to misappropriate. Following AAP and Congress not continuing their alliance for the Delhi Assembly elections in 2025, Yaday, in his letter to the CVC, pointed out that there has been a "ignificant unticle" in tha department officials to prevent the power crisis from happening in the future," she has been a "significant uptick" in the further said that Kejriwal only volume of leakage of water in recent years, as indicated by Governmentprovided data.

Highlighting the figures climbing from 42 per cent in 2019-20 to 58.28 per cent in 2022-23, he said "This 16.28 per cent surge in the leakage of water over a span of three years is deeply worrisome,



despite the fact that the Delhi Jal Board had made substantial spend from its budgetary allocation for the replacement and installation of supply lines. With an annual allocation of approximately Rs 30 crore for metering and plucking the water leakage, the escalation of water leakage has become

more perplexing." He added that even if 10-20 per cent leakages are justified due to transmission and distribution loss, the approximate loss of Rs 17,575 crore suffered by the DJB is much bigger. "In the three areas where Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects are operational, leakages stand at just 26 per cent, and such a significant disparity has raised suspicions of organised malpractice by the tanker mafia, officials and ruling party politicians in the water supply," he stated.

LG approves MACP benefits to 194 principals, education officers



Cops launch NashaMukt Bharat Pakhwada with grand event at Red Fort



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG)Vinai Kumar Saxena on Thursday approved the grant of financial upgradation under Modified Assured Career Progression (MACP) scheme in the pay scale of Rs. 37400-67000/- with Grade Pay of Rs. 8700/- (pre-revised) to 194 serving / retired Principals, Vice Principals, Education Officers and District Education Officers.

Taking decision in a long pending matter of government servants, not belonging to organized services, last year, Saxena had ruled that the benefits of MACP Scheme must be given to retired Principals / EOs/DEOs/DDEs of the Education Department.

After the decision they were entitled to draw salary in the higher grade pay from the date of

found

implementation of the scheme i.e. 01.09.2008 or their respective entitlement, whichever is later. Despite this, retired officers eligible for financial upgradation from year 2008, and such eligibility being upheld by various courts including the Supreme Court, these officers had to go through trauma and harassment all these years for no fault of theirs due to indifferent and inhuman attitude of the Education Department. With the decision of LG, they get their due benefits pending for 15 years.

While approving the file in this respect, LG also took a serious note with respect to inordinate delay in providing information regarding cost involved in litigation and fixing responsibility of officers in the matter.

Earlier in February, Saxena had approved proposal of grant of MACP to 151 serving / retired Principals, Vice Principals, Education Officers and District Education Officers of Education Department and also directed to provide information regarding ascertaining the cost involved in litigation in the matter, fixing responsibility of officers involved and details of Show Cause Notices issued in the matter.

In order to provide relief to government employees due to stagnation in their post, central government had brought MACP Scheme effective from 01.09.2008 under which financial upgradations are granted to government employees after completion of 10, 20 and 30 years of their service. The benefits under the scheme are granted from the date an employee becomes eligible and he is also eligible for arrears on the benefits in case of delays. The Education Department has been directed to furnish the compliance report with respect of Litigation cost, fixing responsibilities of Officers involved and details of Show Cause Notice

issued within seven days.

Haryana earns ₹1,756 crore from liquor shop auctions

STAFF REPORTER GURUGRAM

The Haryana Government has earned Rs 1,756 crore from the auction of 162 liquor shops in East and West zone, via e-tenders in Gurugram, officials said.

According to the new excise policy, online tenders were opened on Wednesday for 162 shops in the East and West zone. The East area is an upscale locality of the city. Officials said earlier, that there were a total of 69 sectors in the east zone, which have now been reduced to 40. Liquor traders can now open four liquor shops in one zone.

There are around 342 liquor shops in Gurugram, and the excise department in the city is divided into two zones - and Taxation C East and West. The wine shop located Amit Bhatia said.

on the golf course road in East zone attracted the highest bid of Rs 50.57 crore. A liquor vend located near Bristol Chowk was sold for Rs 48.28 crore.

'Tenders were opened for wine shops under the online tender process on behalf of the headquarters, the department has collected revenue of Rs 1,756 crore from 162 shops in East and West zones," a senior officer of the, Excise Department, Gurugram said.

"The auction of two zones in the west and 20 zones in the east is scheduled to take place in the second phase on June 14. After the auction of all the liquor shops, the amount of revenue will increase further," Deputy Excise and Taxation Commissioner (East)

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police launched 'NashaMukt Bharat Pakhwada' on Thursday at Red with hundreds of enthusiastic Fort participants gathered to support the cause of a drug-free India. The inauguration ceremony was a vibrant and engaging affair, setting the tone for the two-week-long campaign aimed at eradicating drug abuse

and raising awareness across the nation. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government of India is Vigorously pursuing a policy of 'Zero Tolerance' against drugs. The Union Home Minister Amit Shah is committed to eliminating the drug problem and has repeatedly stressed and ordered to take the strongest possible measures for detection and demand/harm reduction. The same is being sincerely implemented by Delhi Police under the guidance of Commissioner of Police Sanjay Arora," Special Commissioner of Police (crime) Shalini Singh said. The Delhi Police has planned several

impactful events and activities, promising widespread community involvement and education. The event includes district-wise awareness campaigns, pantomime shows, Delhi Police band performance, mega epledge events and painting competition. One of the standout events will be a Walkathon at India Gate on 23 June to be

graced by the presence of the Commissioner of Police, Delhi. This event aims to bring together thousands of Delhi residents in a united front against drug abuse, promoting health, fitness, and community spirit.We warmly invite all Delhi residents to participate in this noble cause," Singh stated.



Minister orders third party audit of drain desilting ahead of monsoon

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Thursday directed the Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to immediately provide the list of drains desilted by June 10 and ensure an independent third-party audit of these works is

audit of these works is conducted by June 30. On June 5, Bharadwaj had instructed Kumar to send a report of the desilting progress reminding him of the water logging situation in the national capital of the last monsoon season. In the monsoon season. In the review meeting dated June 10, concerning the desilting process, PWD had claimed that out of 2156 km drains about 61 per cent of drains i.e. 1293 km drains have been de-silted. completely Similarly, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had also claimed that 87.14 per cent of drains taken under Ph.-I have been completely de-silted.

"Therefore, it is directed that all the claims of the desilting by the agencies like PWD and MCD should be audited by the third party independent agencies. It is also worth noting that these claims must be verified well before the monsoon arises in the City because once it rains in the city, the department will take excuse that the silt in the drains has been deposited recently due to rains," Bharadwaj stated. He said a few years back the

Petitions Committee of Delhi Legislative Assembly had taken up this matter of desilting of drains.

Vector borne diseases increased during monsoon season last year: Report

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The breeding of vector-borne diseases like dengue, malaria and chikungunya spiked by nearly 90 per cent in Delhi during the monsoon season last year as compared to 2022.

According to the MCD report, which also outlines the action plan of the corporation for the prevention and control of vector-borne disease for the forthcoming monsoon season, there has been a spike in the number of such breedings 2021, Delhi recorded 1,96,303 instances of such breedings. In during home inspections in the last four 2020, instances of mosquito breeding at homes in Delhi stood at 1,09,550. years since 2020. Monsoon is expected to arrive in the national capital by the end of

The report also shows, the number of legal notices issued this month, around June 27. Delhi recorded 3,25,875 cases by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to owners of of mosquito breeding at home in 2023, nearly 90 per cent higher than 1,71,931 in 2022, households where the breeding of vector-borne diseases was found also increased to 1,72,481 in 2023 from 1,22,282 the data in the report shows. The year 2022 also saw a considerable dip in the number of house breeding cases by over 24,000 cases. In in 2022, which is a 41 per cent the MCD

which was ramped up by conducted 41,476,581 house nearly 15 per cent than the inspections in 2023 to look out for the breeding of vectorprevious borne diseases in the city, 36,076,419 house inspections

were conducted, up from 30,795,251 in 2021 and 12,286,481 in 2020. Of the total number of legal notices sent to the householders in 2023, the MCD launched prosecution against 74,342 people for violation of the MCD (Malaria

vector-borne other and diseases) bye-laws 1975. In 2022, legal action was taken against 45,934 people, up from 27,427 people in 2021 and 10,372 people in 2020, data shows. The MCD has not year. In 2022,

shows.

released its weekly data on the number of cases, dengue deaths, and status of vectorborne diseases since August 7 2023.

The exercise was stalled in the run-up to the G-20 summit in Delhi, the civic body officials had said. When asked for the tally, the MCD officials refused to provide data stating it was not ready. However, sources at the municipal corporation said that the records were regularly maintained and the numbers are believed to be high.



nation 04

Kuwait fire: IAF aircraft on standby to bring back victims' mortal remains to India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

An IAF plane is on stand by to bring back the mortal remains of Indians killed in a devastating fire in southern Kuwait's Mangaf area on Wednesday. Forty of the 49 killed were Indians including 24 from Kerala. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia payment of Rs two lakh each to the families of the deceased. Kerala government also announced payment of Rs five lakh each. Most of the Indian victims are from Kerala.

Minister of state for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh left for Kuwait following a direction from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to oversee assistance to Indians injured in the fire and to ensure early repatriation of mortal remains of those killed, officials said here on Thursday. They also said Kuwaiti authorities are conducting DNA tests on the bodies of those killed adding total number of people killed in the Al-Mangaf building is 49 and 42 of them are learnt to be Indians; the remaining ones are Pakistani, Filipino, Egyptian and Nepali nationals.

"In an unfortunate and tragic fire incident earlier today in a Labour housing facility in Mangaf area of Kuwait, around 40 Indians are understood to



Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh on his arrival in Kuwait

sible assistance.

External Affairs Minister S

Jaishankar spoke to his Kuwaiti

counterpart Abdullah Ali Al-

Yahya on phone and urged him

Spoke to Kuwaiti FM

have died and over 50 injured," the Ministry of External Affairs(MEA)had said in a statement late on Wednesday night.

Prime Minister Modi, who for the early repatriation of the described the incident as "sadmortal remains of those killed. dening", reviewed the situation at a meeting with External Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya on the fire tragedy in Kuwait. Apprised of the efforts made by Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, NSA Ajit Doval, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and Principal Secretary to PM PK Kuwaiti authorities in that regard. Was assured that the Mishra among others. Following the meeting, the incident would be fully investigated and that responsibility prime minister announced exwill be fixed," Jaishankar had

gratia relief of Rs 2 lakh to the said in a social media post. 'Urged the early repatriation of families of the deceased Indian nationals from the PM Relief the mortal remains of those who lost their lives. He empha-Fund and directed that the government should extend all possized that those injured were

getting the requisite medical attention," he had said. The officials had said most of the Indian victims are from Kerala. In a related development, the Kerala government on Thursday said it will provide Rs 5 lakh financial assistance to the families of the people from the state who died in the Kuwait fire tragedy that claimed 49 lives and left 50 others injured.

The decision was taken at an emergency cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the morning, a statement issued by his office said.

The Cabinet also decided to provide Rs one lakh financial assistance to those injured in the incident, it said.

A decision was taken to immediately send state Health Minister Veena George to Kuwait to coordinate the efforts to provide treatment for the injured people as well as ensure the earliest repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased to Kerala, it further said. The minister will be accompanied by Jeevan Babu, State Mission Director (NHM), it added.

The statement also said prominent businessmen M A Yusuff Ali and Ravi Pillai have informed the Chief Minister that they will provide Rs 5 lakh and Rs 2 lakh, respectively, to each of the families of the Keralites who died in the fire.

Rajnath sets ₹50,000 crore defence equipment export target by 2028-29

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath assumed charge here on Thursday and said the target for his Ministry is to export Rs 50,000 crore worth of defence equipment by 2028-29. He also chaired review meering on first 100 days' action plan with focus on ex-servicemen welfare.

Earlier, Rajnath was welcomed at South Block by Minister of state for defence Sanjay Seth, who was accompanied by Chief of Defence Staff(CDS)General Anil Chauhan, Army chief General Manoj Pande, IAF chief V R Chaudhari, Navy chief Admiral Dinesh Tripathi and Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane besides Defence Research and D e v e l o p m e n t Organisation(DRDO)chief Samir Kamat besides others. National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval called on Rajnath.

Talking to reporters on the occasion, Rajnath outlined his vision for the next five years and stated that focus would be on carrying forward the priority areas with renewed thrust to establish a more secure, selfreliant and prosperous nation. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, our aim will be to further strengthen the security apparatus of the country, with focus on achiev-ing self-reliance in defence manufacturing. Armed Forces modernisation and the wel-



fare of the soldiers, both serv-Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare were discussed. He ing and retired, will continue to be our main focus," he said. instructed the officers to re-Rajnath added that the objecdedicate themselves to fulfill the tive will be to increase defence agenda laid out in the 100 exports in the times to come. days' Action Plan. With a view to enhance defence "Defence exports had touched a record Rs 21,083 crore in preparedness and continued Financial Year 2023-24. It was thrust on Aatmanirbharta in historic. Our target will be to defence, Rajnath stated that he export over Rs 50,000 crore will be conducting regular

worth of defence equipment by 2028-2029," he said He asserted that the Armed Forces are being equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and platforms and they are ready to face every challenge. He commended the military personnel for protecting the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the nation with valour and commitment. Immediately after assumption of charge, Rajnath chaired a review meeting on the first 100 days' Action Plan of his ministry.

The meeting focused on the welfare of veterans, wherein major issues pertaining to the

India has ample wheat stocks. no plans to alter import duty: Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ndia has sufficient wheat stocks to meet domestic requirements and undertake market interventions, if required, to keep prices stable, the Government said on Thursday, adding that it has no plans to alter the import duty on the grain for now.

The Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, is closely monitoring the market price of wheat, it said in a

statement. "Suitable interventions, as warranted, shall be undertaken to ensure that there is no hoarding by unscrupulous elements and the price remains stable," the statement said.

During the 2024 rabi marketing season, the department reported wheat production of 112 million tonnes. The staterun Food Corporation of India (FCI) has procured around 26.6 million tonnes of

the grain until June 11. After meeting the require-ment for the public distribution system and other welfare schemes, estimated at around 18.4 million tonnes, sufficient wheat stock will be available for market interventions when needed, it said.

Prime Minister Modi will be

accompanied by a high-level

delegation that is likely to

include External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar, Foreign

Secretary Vinay Kwatra and

Security

al challenges.

Modi heads for G7 summit in Italy Delhi's efforts to address glob-

NFW DFI HI

 $P_{\text{Modi on Thursday said in}}^{\text{rime Minister Narendra}}$ his departure statement during the G-7 summit in Italy the focus would be on artificial intelligence, energy, Africa and the Mediterranean.

Before leaving for Italy, he also said "it will be an opportunity Presidency and the forthcomon issues which are crucial for

At the invitation of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, I am travelling to Apulia region in Italy to participate in the G7 Outreach Summit on 14 June



The G7 summit, to be held in the luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia in Italy's Apulia region from June 13 to 15, is likely to be dominated by the raging war in Ukraine and the conflict in Gaza.

US President Joe Biden, his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are among the top leaders attending the summit. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is also scheduled for a session on the Russian invasion of his countrv.

We have always maintained that dialogue and diplomacy is the best option to resolve it," Kwatra said when asked about the Ukraine conflict. The foreign secretary said India's regular participation in

the G7 summit points to

DMI HOUSING FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED ("COMPANY") CIN U65923DL2011PTC216373

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This is to inform the public in general, and the customers in particular, that the management of the Company has decided to relocate the following branch:

Name, Address and contact details of Closing Branch	DMI Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. 2-A, Block - R, Third Floor, Uttam Nagar West, New Delhi - 110059. (parmoad.kapoor@dmihousingfinance.in) (Mr. Parmod Kapoor, +91 9924092184)
Date of Closure	15.09.2024

It is clarified that due care is being taken by the Company to ensure that no inconvenience whatsoever is caused to the Company's customers during the process of relocation. The loan accounts of all the valued customers shall continue with the new branch (i.e. F/F H. No RZ-1, Gali No 2, Sita Puri, near Dabri Mor Metro, New Delhi - 110045). Customers holding loan accounts may transfer their account to any other branch of our company, provided the same is approved by the competent authority. The relevant Application form is available at the branch. Customers are hereby requested to kindly take note of the aforesaid change which will be effective tentatively from 15.09.2024.

In case any further clarification is required and/or in case of any difficulty, the customer may contact the officials of DMI Housing Finance Private Limited (Mr. Parmod Kapoor - +91 9924092184

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

to bring greater synergy between the outcomes of the G20 Summit held under India's ing G7 Summit, and deliberate the Global South. I am also looking forward to meeting other leaders participating in the Summit.

2024.



last year.

review meetings to fast-track the progress of the flagship

schemes and the initiatives of

Region in the defence calculus,

he has decided on his first visit

in this tenure to the Eastern

Visakhapatnam, wherein he

will be interacting with the offi-

cers and sailors. After being

elected to the Lok Sabha from

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh for

the third consecutive time.

Rajnath Singh took oath as a

Union Cabinet Minister on

Command,

the defence ministry. Emphasising the growing salience of the Indian Ocean

Naval

June 9

National Advisor(NSA) Ajit Doval, it was learnt. The prime minister is set to hold a number of bilateral meetings including with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Modi had attended the previous G7 summit in Hiroshima in May last year. On the sidelines of the summit, he had held talks with

Zelenskyy and a number of other leaders. The G7 comprises the US, the UK, France, Italy, Germany,

Canada and Japan. Italy is holding the current presidency of the G7 (Group of Seven) and is hosting the summit in

Place: New Delh

Date: 10th June 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is a PUBLIC NOTICE from JAY SAFE VAULTS (a division of Vansh Impex Pvt. Ltd.) to the below mentioned persons who have been non-responsive on their given adresses and are in default of their Lockers/Vaults held at E-11, Kailash COLONY New Delhi 110048, Phone no. +91-8595996313.

You are herby called upon to contact us within 7 working days of this notice, faling which approprirate action will be taken to break open the said lockers without any notice, and Jay Safe Vaults will not be liable, at fault or legaly responsibile for its action.

Sr. No.	Name	Address	Locker No.	A/C No.	Default Since
1	Dr. Manmohan Singh & Dr. C.S. Anand	75 Hemkunt Colony, New Delhi 110048	775	39	06.03.2017
2	Amiteshwar Singh & Harpekhna Singh	S-37 Greater Kailash Part 1, New Delhi 110048	1271	62	24.07.2019
3	Koshy Alexander	29/179 FF Vikram Vihar Lajpat nagar IV new Delhi-110024	666	79	12.11.2003
4	Kapil Bhateja	S-290 Greater Kailash Part 1, New Delhi 110048	93	206	01.03.2008
5	Prabha Manchanda & Sunil Manchanda	45 A/26A DLF Phase I Gurugram 122002	836	293	22.09.2011
6	Nitin Gupta & Goldy Gupta	H 1 Rameshwar Orchid Kuasmbi Gaziabad U P 201010	1428	485	10.08.2018
7	Ramneet Kaur	A/103 MK Residency Sector 11, Dwarka New Delhi	878	516	21.05.2014
8	Rajiv Anand	32 H Ashoka Avenue Sainik Farms New Delhi-110062	1708	594	08.06.2015
9	Shelesh Prasad & Sandeep Anand	5/6 Sarva Priya vihar New Delhi110017	1709	636	01.03.2016
10	Shelesh Prasad & Sandeep Anand	5/6 Sarpriya Vihar GF New Delhi-110017	1844	1062	15.12.2016
11	Anoop Mamtani & Amita Mamatani	R-118 Greater Kailash Part I New Delhi-110048	1348	866	26.05.2020
12	Shirley sinclair & Nasreen Sinclair	A-79 FF East of Kailash New Delhi-110065	1777	1164	09.12.2018
13	Vishnu Lamba	S-46 Greater Kailash -I New Delhi-110048	1645	1675	03.10.2019
14	Amit Seth & Neena Seth	K-32 Jangpura Ext. New Delhi-110014	153	416	26.10.2017
15	Randheer Kapoor & Sunita Kapoor	16 Mission Compound Meerut 250001. UP	1745	546	10.04.2021

held under India's presidency am glad that my first

ing prohibited animals.

said.

Madani said.



Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan assumes charge of his office in Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi, on Thursday. Ministers of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary, Sukanta Majumdar also assumed the charge Ranian Dimri

Muslims told to follow Government guidelines on Eid-ul-Azha 'Qurbani' and avoid sacrific-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prominent Muslim organi-sation Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind on Thursday urged Muslims to strictly follow government guidelines while offering sacrifice on Eid-ul-Azha and not share pictures of slaughtered animals on social media. Eid ul-Azha, also called the festival of sacrifice, will be celebrated on Monday. In his message to Muslims on Eid-ul-Azha, Jamiat president

Maulana Arshad Madani said there is no substitute for sacrifice in Islam and it is a religious duty which is obligatory on every Muslim for whom it is prescribed.

"It is important that Muslims take precautionary measures while offering sacrifice. Avoid advertising, especially sharing pictures of slaughtered animals on social media," Madani said.

He also urged Muslims to strictly follow government guidelines while performing

Kargil Vijay Diwas: Army flags off motorcycle rally

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 \mathbf{I}_{1}^{n} a poignant tribute to Ibravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice during Operation Vijay during the Kargil war, Dras Thunder Motorcycle Rally was cere-moniously flagged off here by Army Vice Chief Upendra Dwiwadi Dwivedi.

Dras Thunder Motorcycle Rally comprises of an Officer and 19 soldiers of 13 JAK RIFLES (KARGIL). Subedar Mehar Singh, Vir Chakra and Naib Subedar Kewal Kumar, Sena Medal, members of the team, are Operation Vijay gallantry awardees and had actively taken part in capture of Pt 4875 and Pt 5140.

Dras Thunder Motorcycle Rally will embark on a journey from Cariappa Parade Ground, New Delhi to the Kargil War Memorial, Dras and is part of Rajat Jayanti celebrations of the Kargil Vijay Diwas. The rally aims to pay homage to Indian Army braves, who brought victory during the Kargil War 25 years ago. Riding with a sense of purpose, the motorcycle rally will cover a distance of 1,029 "If mischievous elements, at any place, prevent the sacrifice Km through challenging terof a buffalo also, some sensirain, echoing the spirit and determination displayed by ble and influential people should take the administration into confidence and then Indian Army in the battlefield. sacrifice should be offered," he This unique initiative seeks to pay tribute to the war heroes "If, however, there is no way and endeavours to inspire to fulfil this religious obligayounger generation by contion, then a sacrifice should be ducting motivational talks at offered in a nearby place premier institutes enroute. where there is no difficulty," The team is slated to meet over 100 Gallantry Award Winners,

veterans and Veer Naris enroute and convey gratitude for their contribution in Op Vijay. The Motorcycle Rally will culminate at historic Kargil War Memorial, Dras on June 20. Twenty-five years ago on the same day, Indian Army etched an indelible mark in the annals of history by capturing Pt 5140. Subedar Mehar Singh, Vir Chakra and Naib Subedar Kewal Kumar, Sena Medal, had shown immense courage and valour against adversary and had actively participated in capture of strategic peaks during Kargil War, which turned the tide against the adversary.

To pay lasting tributes to the sacrifices made by Veer Naris and next of kin, Rahul Manhas, son of late Lance Naik Ranbir Singh, who fought gallantly in Kargil War and made the supreme sacrifice during the capture of Pt 5140, is also part of this motorcycle rally.

13 JAK RIFLÉS (KARGIL) has actively participated in two major wars, the 1971 Indo-Pak War and Operation Vijay. The unit achieved its peak of glory during Operation Vijay, when only after three days of acclimitisation, the unit hoisted the tricolour on Pt 5140 and Pt 4875, the most dominating features of Dras and Mushkoh Valleys respectively.

This unique journey symbolises the enduring bond between the armed forces and the nation, that resonate with the spirit of courage, sacrifice and patriotism.

nation 05



Despite opening Kerala account BJP is plagued with infighting

(UMAR CHELLAPPAN KOCH

 $D_{the recent Lok Sabha election by getting its candidate elected from Thrissur constituency (Suresh Gopi),$ there is total chaos and confusion in Kerala BJP. The insiders describe the

party as a rudderless ship. This is the first time in the electoral history of Kerala, a BJP candidate got elected as member of parliament. A controversy has been erupted in the State over the paternity of Suresh Gopi's win with the BJP leaders claiming the victory was only because of the State leadership's relentless campaign.

But records prove that the State leadership has no role in Suresh Gopi's election. He was a candidate fielded by the party high command and the State leaders had no role in it," said Sudheer Damodaran, a political critic based in Thrissur.

Suresh Gopi has managed to win the hearts of a section of the Christian community through his actions of charity and social activities irrespective of case, community and religion, added Sudheer.

Equally important is the fate of Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who finished a close second behind Sashi Tharoor at Thiruvananthapuram , M L Ashwini at Kasaragod and Shobha Surendran who gave her Congress and CPI(M) rivals a run for their money. "Had Shobha been fielded from Attingal, where she had put up a superb performance by polling 2.48 lakh votes, this time we would have seen the BJP tally going up by two seats," said P Sujathan, author and former editor of Kerala Kaumudi.

Though Suresh Gopi was elected from Thrissur, the per cent of BJP votes showed just a marginal increase this time (16 per cent). While BJP polled slightly more than 33 lakh votes this time in Kerala, it did not show any improvement



from the morass it has stuck in, "The performance of K Surendran as party chief was a disaster as he is thoroughly incompetent," said a veteran party leader. There is widespread resentment against Surendran and the cartel of party activists who are his acolytes.

People who were associated with BJP since its previous avatar as Jana Sangh suspect that there is a secret deal with the CPI(M). The statements made by Surendran and former union minister V Muraleedharan are with an eye to help the CPI(M), they allege. Surendran using derogatory and despicable words to humiliate political commentator Sreejith Panickar during a TV interview too has not gone down well with the people, according to Sujathan.

Rajeev of The performance Chandrasekhar at Thiruvananthapuram is proof that the constituency is no more invincible for the Hindutva party. A team over Kerala.

of citizens led by former diplomat T P Sreenivasan led the election campaign for Chandrasekhar though the latter lost by 16,000 votes in a cliffhanger. "This was Chandrasekhar's first hustings in electoral battle and he put up a good show," said Sreenivasan. Even party insiders in BJP are of the view that services of people like Sreenivaan should be made use of by the party in future.

Prakash Javadekar, the party in charge of the State did a wrong thing by going around Kerala and claiming that the BJP would win at least five seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. The Prime Minister claimed that the party's tally would touch the double digit mark in this election and it is widely believed that Javadekar fed the PMO with wrong information.

The chorus for ousting Surendran from the post of State party chief is growing day by day and it is likely to spread all

Naidu 4.0 will be about performance: Andhra CM

PTI TIRUPATI (ANDHRA PRADESH)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said here on Thursday that people had seen his three versions in the past, and will see his 4.0 avatar which will be about performance. Naidu took oath as the CM

for the fourth time at Kesarapalle on Wednesday. "You have seen 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, now you have come to 4.0 and you will see. That's why I am appealing to all, including officials, employees and political activists, we have suffered losses (past five years) and we have to recover. Let us all work together and go ahead," Naidu told reporters.

the

Devasthanams (TTD).

be on top," he said.

According to Naidu, Lord

Venkateswara is their family

deity and he always prays to

Though it is important to

create wealth, Naidu said 'it should also go to the poor,

without being 'concentrated

only in a few hands' and there

should be a poverty-less

said the

Sri

build

he

to

Announcing that the people's temple government has started, he said in the past five years the state had regressed and added that he would work to see the Lord Venkateswara for a state regain its glory. However, he predicted that by

anv work. 2047, India will be in first or to Venkateswara Swamy for second position in the world the prosperity of the state. and wished to see Telugu people on top. "My vision for 2047...Telugu people should be number one Nowadays, I make a simple

in the world. Poverty removal should be done as soon as possible. Zero-poverty state. Andhra Pradesh has to be the number one state. Telangana should also do good. I will be an elder to the Telugu community, not for 50 per cent or 30 percent of them,"

society. he said. Further, government will initiate a Following his visit to the Sri Venkateswara temple in plan Tirumala along with his family, the CM said cleansing Venkateswara Swamy temples across the world. Naidu also said a Chief of the system will start from



Minister doesn't belong to any Tirupati single person but to all the TTD is the official custodian five crore people in Andhra of the Lord Venkateswara Pradesh.

Earlier in the morning, he offered prayers at the Sri Venkateswara temple at nearby Tirumala accompanied by family

moment before undertaking members. Naidu's son and cabinet "After I wake up, I pray briefly member Nara Lokesh also accompanied him.

He was accorded a traditional welcome by the authorities prayer for India to be numero and priests and offered uno in the world. Also among theertham (sacred water) and Indians, Telugu people should prasadam.

Following the visit, the CM is scheduled to return to Amaravati to assume office at the secretariat at 4:41 pm. Later, he will clear several files such as the mega DSC (teacher recruitment) revocation of the Land Titling Act and increase of welfare pensions to Rs 4,000 per

month. He is also expected to clear

files on reviving 'Anna Canteens' and skills census.

NSF urges people to elect Nagas by blood in civic elections PTI KOHIMA

The Naga Students' Federation (NSF) has appealed to the people of Nagaland to elect "Nagas by blood and not by adoption" in the June 26 elections to 39 urban local bodies in the state. The students' body claimed that electing non-Nagas to local governance positions pose a significant risk to the preservation of the Naga cultural heritage.

"The NSF, in collaboration with our federating units and subordinate bodies, hereby reiterates our firm stance on the paramount importance of indigenous representation in the upcoming urban local body (ULB) elections in Nagaland," the body's vice president Mtseisuding said on Wednesday.

NSF underscores the necessity of ensuring that the voices and aspirations of the indigenous Naga populace are authentically represented in decision-making all

processes, he said. Naga people have a rich history and vibrant culture that are intricately woven into the fabric of the governance structures, he said, adding that central to this governance is the observance of customary laws and traditional practices, which are not merely symbolic gestures but are the very essence of Naga identity.

These practices have been handed down through generations and are vital for maintaining social cohesion, he said.

TMC's attempts to keep me out of Bengal will not succeed, says BJP leader Malviya

PTI KOLKATA

Aday after saying he would defamation case against Kolkata-based lawyer Santanu Sinha for allegedly making *'slanderous* comments against him, BJP leader Amit Malviya on Thursday asserted that these are attempts by the TMC to keep him out of West Bengal, which will not succeed.

Malviya, who is BJP's Bengal co-in-charge and the party's IT cell chief, challenged Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee to about Sandeshkhali through proper channels rather than resorting to smear campaigns. "Mamata Banerjee must find other legitimate means to wipe the taint of #Sandeshkhali instead of using fringe elements to fling muck on me. Such attempts to keep me out of Bengal won't work. I ain't leaving till @BJP4Bengal ensures justice for the women of Sandeshkhali and ousts the TMC from power," he posted on X.

of



Malviya, also the convener of the BJP IT cell, added, "For the uninitiated the BIP and the uninitiated, the BJP and inheritance, snare, sale, squeenen, base, notice the uninitiated the BJP and stress or advance is brefyre required to infinite even the Left had branded Hindu Samhati as Trinamool's Hindutva wing". against him and demanded false

an apology. In the legal notice, Malviya's lawyer said Sinha, in a post on Facebook, made "some

defamatory a legal fight and added that for such misinterpretation and allegations" with an intention he will not withdraw the post. harm his to client's reputation." Sinha had said he is ready for and/or undermines my party

PUBLIC NOTICE Ρ It is fo Dhara Dhan 6. Vas 11007

Be it known to all that I, KASHISH SHOKEEN W/O BHUPINDER LAKRA R/O-46, INDER ENCLAVE PASCHIM VIHARNEW DELHI-87,1 am the mutatee/legal owner of PLOT NO.495 AREA-66.96 SQM. WITH ROOF RIGHT UP TO SKY_SEC-19, DWARKA,NEW DELHI which is allotted by the DDA.I have lost the ORIGINAL ALLOTMENT LETTER, SITE POSSESSION SLIP, POSSESSION LETTER of the above Plot.FIRV NCR to this effect has lodged in P.S.Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No.1814179/2024,Dated 13-G6-2024.Any personfsclaiming any right, interest having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/ contact with above named person at above address/phone No.9599331990 within 15 days mine I Dharm record aaress/phone No.9599331990 within 15 di rom the date of publication of this notice. A erson claiming any right, interest, or havi ny objections with respect to this prope an also personally inform/contact me. is Dha be am

'If my post hurts Mr Malviya

PUBLIC NOTICE It is publically notified that the Flat No B-

308A, Sector-19, Noida has been allotted in

the name of Sayeeda Khatun W/o Late Shr Sharif Ahmed R/o 2170, Turkman Gate Delhi

110006, had sold the said flat, on the basis o

GPA to the following persons: A GPA was executed in favour of Anil Kumar Jain S/o

Late Shri Moti Ram Jain R/o F-58 Near Jair

Mandir Jawahar Park West Laxmi Ngar Delhi-110092 executed at GPA executed at

Sub Registrar Delhi Vide Book No IV Volume

No 1311 on pages 74-79 at Document No 1364 dated 4.3.1987 and Agreement to Sell

was not registred. So with the help of the

notice it is informed the transfer of the above

and edited version, I do express my heartfelt sorrow for the same. Since I have not written anything untoward in

my post, with the mission to malign, Ι am withdrawing the post, the bone of contention," he had said in a Facebook post.

UBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ (छ.ग.)
r general information that I	I, Urmila Devi wife of Shri Jai Narayan resident of F-12, Vijay Block, Street No. 3, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092 do hereby	क 649 / लो.क.वि/ न.पा.नि. / 2024 रायगढ दिनॉक 13.6.24
n Pal Singh S/o Late Shri Singh R/o 203, Ganga-2, D-	inform that I Do horoby discownod my son	।। ई-निविटा आमंत्रण सचना एव।।
ant Kunj, South West Delhi-	their legal heir from all my moveable and immoveable properties and have reserved	नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ द्वारा विभिन्न कार्य हेत टेडर नं. 154863, 154867, 154875
0 declare that name of	all our relations with them as they are	तथा 154881 कुल 04 कार्यों के लिए की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत
as been wrongly written as	control and mispenavior and other some	ि निविदा विज्ञप्ति, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेन्ट वेब पोर्टल
Pal Singh in my service . The actual name of mine	unavoidable circumstances arises by them. Anyone dealing with them will do so	https//eproc.cgstate.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।
ram Pal Singh which may	at their own risk and cost, we will not be responsible for their any act or deeds as	
ended accordingly.	we have not relation with them. Urmila Devi	कार्यपालन अभियंता, नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ़

Treat transgenders as special category for employment, education: Madras HC

PTI CHENNAI

Holding that the transgenders should be treated only as a special category irrespective of their caste, the Madras High Court has directed the Tamil Nadu government to not bring them under either female or male category for education and employment.

Justice V Bhavani Subbaroyan in an order passed on June 12, 2024 said in 'every employment and educational avenues, the government shall prescribe separate norms for transgenders. The government shall direct all the state recruiting agencies to specify transgender as a special category and prescribe separate norms for their cut-off mark. The age relaxation open to other special categories shall also be extended to transgenders, irrespective of their caste, in future employment and educational avenues. The transgender at no point of time in future shall be brought under male or female categories, the judge made it

clear.

Hindutva Malviya was referring to allegations leveled by lawyer and Hindu Samhati leader not binding on our client. Aiay Giri (Advocate) "H No. 26/161. Basement. Santanu Sinha. Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024"

ame to the undersigned at our address within 07 day rom the publication of this notice with documentar

vidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim,

uch person shall be considered to have been waive

and/or abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 07 days shall not be binding upon the

A-38, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048 Tel. :+91-1149774545

Adv. Shweta Garo

I-911.

PD(524)C

aid property or my client.

He also shared a photograph PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE is hereby given that Sh. Parveen Kumar & Smt. Komal Wadhwa (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagors/ Borrovers) are purchasing Entire Second Floor, built on Plot No. 45, admeasuring 189 Sq. Mits., Block B-2, Janakpuri, New Delhi (hereinafter referred to as the said property) from Shri Keshav Gandhi & Sh. Vgesh Gandhi, who are it's absolute owners vide Conveyance Deed dated 21.09.1955, regd. as Doc. No. 13910, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 8127 on page no. 43-44 on 21.09.1993 read: with Surviving Members Certificates dated 11.02.2022 & 12.03.2024 issued by Revenue Department Govt. d NCT of Delhi. The Borrowers will create mortgage in respect of the said property in favour four clients Axis Bank Limited, 5th Floor, Magnum Tower, Tower J, Golf Course Extension Road, Sector S6, Gurgaon, Haryana-122011. Any person, body, individual, institution having any claim and/or objection in respect of the said property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement of the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at our address within 07 days Sinha outside TMC Bhawan with the post. Reacting to it, Sinha told PTI, "Last year on August 16, we on behalf of Hindu Samhati had organized a programme and had invited all political parties including TMC, CPI(M), Congress, BJP and others. This photograph was taken after I came out of the

TMC Bhawan after giving the

(kotak ndra Bank

and



Locker Hired by Mr. Kashmiri Babbar having address at 42 AGCR ENCLAVE OPP KARKARDOOMA COURT Delhi-110092 Delhi India with Shop No 1 to 6 , Gr & 1st Floor, Plot NO 9,LSC Mandawali, Fazalpur, IP Ext, Patparganj Delhi 110092 remains un-operated from last 8 year 5 months and the rent due for the last 2 year.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Kashmiri Babbar calling upon him to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and he is not contactable

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by Mr. Kashmiri Babbar within 90 days

from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on September 12, 2024 at around 12p.m.



NOTICE

Locker Hired by Ms. Parveen Malik having address at D-500 WEST VINOD NAGAR 2ND FLR NEAR BHARAT HOSPITAL Delhi-110092 Delhi Indiawith Shop No 1 to 6, Gr & 1st Floor, Plot NO 9,LSC Mandawali, Fazalpur, IP Ext, Patparganj Delhi-110092 remains un-operated from last 8 year 2 months and the rent due for the last 2 year.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to Ms. Parveen Malik calling upon him to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and he is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by Ms. Parveen Malik within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on Sept 12, 2024 at around 12p.m.

My Clients have disowned and debarred their son Shri Dheeraj kapoor and his wife Smt. Kritika Kapoor who are residing at H.No.7 Road no.60, West Puniabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026 from their moveable and immoveable properties from the date of publication due to their cruel and aggressive behavior, and my clients have severed all their relationship with them because of their violent, cruel, aggressive and abusive conduct towards my clients, my clients shall not be responsible for all the acts, deeds and things done by both of them in future. SOM PAL SINGH VERMA ADVOCATE CHAMBER NO.Y-12 CIVIL SIDE TIS HAZARI COURT, DELHI-110054

Plot No. 5B, Sector 19 B,

Madhya Marg, Chandigarh.

Phone No 0172-2700179.

CC/36/2024

Charanjit Batra

Versus

Club Resorto Hospitality

Limited & anr.

1. Managing Director, Club Resorto Hospitality Limited, Head

Office, Club Resorto Building No.

24, 3rd Okhla Phase-3, Okhla

Industrial Estate, New Delh

Whereas in the above noted case,

it has been proved to the

satisfaction of the Commission

that the above noted opposite

party cannot be served in the

ordinary manner of service

Hence proclamation is hereby

issued for his/her/thei

appearance in the above said

Commission on 06.09.2024 at

10:30 a.m. in person or through

pleader or duly authorized agent

failing which ex-part

proceedings shall be taken against

Given under my hand and seal of

District Consumer Disputes

Redressal Commission-II

Presiden

U.T., Chandigarh

him/her in accordance with law.

this Commission on 29.05.2024.

110020. Phone - 8183939393.

Publication issued to:

Next Date:-06.09.2024

... Opposite Party No. 1

flat goes in favour of Neeta Jain W/o Shr Anil Kumar Jain R/o Flat No 134, BHEL Society Mamoora Chowk Sector-62, Noida U.P if any one/above partners has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her objection in the Housing Department o Before the District Consumer Noida Authority along-with sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication this notice. **Disputes Redressal Commission-II** Union Territory Chandigarh 160019

🛣 Karnataka Bank Ltd. 📖

N2	Your Family Bank, Across India,		
Regional Office: Delhi Plot No 8-B first floor	Phone : 011-40591567 Fax: 011-40591567 E-Mail : del.ro@ktkbank.com		
Rajendra Park Pusa Road	Website: www.karnatakabank.com		
New Delhi-110060	CIN : L85110KA1924PLC001128		
A	AUCTION NOTICE		

The following person who have availed loan against Pledge of Gold ornaments have not repaid the amount in spite of our demand notice. Therefore, please take notice that if the principal / interest and other charges are not paid on or before 21-06-2024 the pledged ornaments will be publicly auctioned on 21-06-2024 at Agra Branch 11:00 am in our Bank's premises subject to rules and regulations of the Bank. The Bank reserves the right to cancel / postpone the auction to any other convenient date without further notice and assigning reasons therefore.

SI.No	Gold Loan A/c No. & date	Name of the Borrower	Liability	
1	0307002000080901 27-10-2023	Seema Sharma	89700 +Interest+charge	
	Rajendra Place, Delhi 3-06-2024	By Order Deputy General Manager		

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, Shal Tower, 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005

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.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
	Ravi Chaudhary/ Reema Singh/ LBFDB00005934551/ LBFDB00005819656	Flat No. D6-607, 6th Floor, Tower D6, Situated at Habitat Residencies, Sector-78, Faridabad, Haryana. (Along With 1 two Wheeler Parking)/ June 11, 2024	January 17, 2024 Rs. 21,16,263/-	Faridabad/ Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Date: June 14, 2024 Place: Delhi

Sincerely Authorised Signatory For ICICI Bank Ltd.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

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. Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the management of the said Notice.

undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
	Sanchit Thakur/ Neelam Thakur/ LBDEL00006034755	Plot & Building Constructed On Plot No.368, 2nd Floor (Without Roof Rights) Surya Nagar Phase- II, Residential Scheme, Sector-91, Tehsil & Distt. Faridabad Haryana 121001./ June 11, 2024	February 26, 2024/ Rs. 49,20,916/-	Delhi/ NCR
The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the				

amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

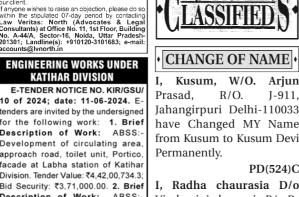
Date: June 14, 2024 Place: Delhi/ NCR

Sincerely Authorised Signatory For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Public Notice This is to inform the general public that Smt. Janki is the Owner of Fist No. G-2 area measuring 600 so. It. on Ground Floor built on Plot No. 6520 situated in colony Shalmar Garden Extn-01 Ghaziabad Tehsil & Distt, Ghaziabad U.P. This ownership was legally acquired through a Sale Deed dated 01.01.2014 doc. No. 55 h. Laxmi Narayan Sharma in favour of Smt. Janki inrespect of the said flat. Smt. Janki intends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of aforementioned flat to Mr. Aman Kumar. Subsequently, Mr. Aman Kumar is in the process of mortgaging the said SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.) Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so ATHE PIONEER O Jour client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-day period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Lega Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor. Building No. A-44/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101683; e-mail accounts@lvnorth.in ENGINEERING WORKS UNDER KATIHAR DIVISION E-TENDER NOTICE NO. KIR/GSU/ 10 of 2024; date: 11-06-2024. E

for the following work: 1. Brief Description of Work: ABSS Development of circulating area, approach road, toilet unit, Portico, facade at Labha station of Katiha Division. Tender Value: ₹4,42,00,734.3 Bid Security: ₹3,71,000.00. 2. Brief Description of Work: ABSS: Improvement of facade, portico and provision of toilet block at Kumedpur, Araria Court, Salmari and Improvement to Circulating area at Kumedpur, Araria Court along with other ancillary works Tender Value: ₹4,18,80,386.89; Bid Security: ₹3,59,400.00. E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 05-07-2024 and Opened at 15:30 hrs. on 05-07-2024. The complete information with the tender document of above e tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs on 05-07-2024 in website http:// www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Engineer NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY 0



Jahangirpuri Delhi-110033 have Changed MY Name from Kusum to Kusum Devi Permanently. I. Radha chaurasia D/o

Vindvasini chaurasia R/o B-385, First floor, Sector-19, noida, U.P.(201301) declares that name of mine and my father is wrongly written as Radha chourasia and Bindvasni chourasia in my all education certificate. The

actual name of mine and my father is Radha chaurasia and Vindvasini chaurasia. Which may be amended

(Gati Shakti), Katihar accordingly.

PD(525)C

NEW DELHI | FRIDAY | JUNE 14, 2024

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Looming catastrophe

The ongoing heat and water crisis across north India is claiming lives, and there is no relief in sight

serious heat and water catastrophe that has already claimed lives and is threat-An unfavorable weather pattern marked by extreme heatwaves and weak rainfall is making it worse. For millions of people, the situation is getting unbearable as temperatures rise and water supply becomes scarce. North India is experiencing one of the worst heatwaves in recorded history. Many locations have regularly seen temperatures above 45 degrees Celsius, with some recording considerably greater values. Many occurrences of heatstroke, dehydration and other heat-related ailments have been reported. There is an increased danger for vulnerable groups, especially for youngsters and the elderly. The number of people enduring the heat in hospitals is overwhelming, and the availability of healthcare resources is limited. Compounding these problems, the monsoon season has started abnormally slowly. Rain, which



usually provides much-needed relief, has been irregular and delayed. There are serious ramifications for both urban and rural communities from this delay. The lack of rain in cities like Delhi makes the heat unpleasant and living conditions nearly intolerable. The delayed monsoon in rural areas is disastrous for agriculture as it greatly depends on timely rainfall. Food security and livelihoods are expected to be threatened by crop failures and lower yields. There is severe water deficiency in northern India as a result of the heatwave and delayed monsoon. The levels of major rivers and reservoirs are perilously low, and groundwater has fallen.

Delhi's water supply is significantly impacted by the historically low levels of the Yamuna river; in fact, some areas get water for only a few hours a day. Concerns over waterborne illnesses have been raised, which has led to disputes over access to water and forced many people to rely on contaminated sources. Water rationing, the establishment of cooling facilities and the distribution of drinking water to communities badly impacted by the problem are just a few of the steps the administration has taken. However, because of the situation's seriousness, these actions have not seen much success. Long-term fixes are necessary to preempt disasters. This entails making investments in infrastructure for water conservation, such as effective irrigation systems and rainwater collection, as well as encouraging the groundwater resources to be used sustainably. To counter the urban heat island effect, green spaces and cooling strategies must be included in urban planning. Furthermore, raising people's knowledge of climate change and its effects helps promote a resilient culture. Millions of people are starkly reminded of their vulnerability in the face of climate change by the heat and water crises in north India. The people of this country continue to be its greatest strength as it fights this humanitarian and environmental crisis.



Time for BJP to set its house in order



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

The party must ponder Venkaiah Naidu's advice and start working towards repairing its ties with the RSS, besides looking for a proactive president

he swearing in of Narendra Modi 3.0 is over and it is now business as usual. But there is an eerie uncertainty pervading across India as the BJP Government is dependent on the life-support system provided by the TDP's Chandrababu Naidu and the JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar.

The BJP had won 282 seats on its own in the 2014 elections (31 per cent) while the party had a dream run of scoring 303 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls (37 per cent) despite Naidu's best efforts to defeat the party. This is the first time in his tenure that Modi is dependent on allies for Government survival. The old slogan "Minimum Government and Maximum Governance" has been dusted out of the cupboard. The BJP's mission to enact the Uniform Civil Code, 'One Nation, One Poll' and its dream Agniveer project too would come a cropper without the support of Naidu and Nitish. The speech delivered by M Venkaiah Naidu, former Vice-President, at the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) should be noted seriously. "There is a message in the election. I hope people under-stand the message. The ruling BJP failed to reach the majori-ty mark in the Lok Sabha on its own though it emerged as the single largest party while the Opposition put up an impres-sive performance," Naidu said. A discernible feature of this election was the absence of RSS volunteers from the campaign. What upset the RSS was the declaration made by party president JP Nadda that the BJP has no relation with the Bhagwa Dhwaj, the saffron flag that is emblematic of Sanatana Dharma. "Our flag was apparently created by lord Indra himself. The flag carries the saffron color of the lord. We chose the flag for our kingdom. The flag represents humanity and we need to ensure that we live up to its representation," Shivaji, the



people through his words or actions. Nadda should read and learn about two gentle-men from south India, K Kamaraj and S Nijalingappa, both former presidents of the Congress who were rated as titans of Indian politics.

Public memory is not that short as they remember the efforts undertaken by Naidu to topple Modi in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The nation saw Naidu holding hands with Sonia Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee, MK Stalin and, above all, the two most intelligent persons in the world; viz, Sitaram Yechury and D Raja as a prelude to oust Modi and Amit Shah. No political parties have absolute majority of their own to form the Government though the National Democratic Alliance (also termed as Non-Dependable Allies) has nearly 300 MPs, 27 more than the half way mark. Though the Congress, the main player in the Opposition, could not touch the three-digit mark, together with its allies, the party has emerged as a striking force.

with national ambitions. Even before the NDA held its first meeting, Kumar and Naidu have put forward a set of demands, including conducting the caste census and scrapping of Agniveer scheme.

It was Jagan Mohan Reddy, leader of YSR Congress and the outgoing Chief Minister, who forced Naidu to take refuge in the BJP camp. Reddy had launched a thorough probe into the charges THE BJP'S MISSION of corruption against Naidu, TO ENACT THE for which he was arrested and imprisoned. When it was UNIFORM CIVIL time for the 2024 Assembly elections, Naidu felt the need CODE, 'ONE NATION, to cast his lot with BJP and Modi. Having got more than what he aspired for, Naidu is ONE POLL' AND ITS DREAM AGNIVEER eyeing bigger rewards. We cannot expect anything bet-**PROJECT WOULD** ter from a person who back-**COME A CROPPER** stabbed his father-in-law NT Rama Rao, the founder of the WITHOUT THE TDP, and usurped the party proprietorship. Nitish is no SUPPORT OF different from Naidu. He is a CHANDRABABU NAIDU living example of the Aaya Ram, Gaya Raam politics. Naidu and Nitish are two AND NITISH KUMAR deceiving crutches and can

ber the five-day long crisis in Maharashtra when Devendra Fadnavis, the then leader of the Opposition, was sworn in as Chief Minister in 2019 with Ajit Pawar (NCP) as his deputy, only to make an ignominious exit after two

davs Fadnavis and the other senior BJP leaders had termed Ajit as the embodiment of corruption but they found no qualms in forming a coalition Government with him. Despite Ajit returning to the Pawar Parivar within two days of swearing in, Fadnavis solicited him again and the former is now back in the Hindutva fold. How come BJP, which claims from rooftops that it is always against dynasty politics, forge an alliance with a purely family-run enterprise?

Fadnavis' hurry forced him to commit the political harakiri. His case reminds us of the kamikaze by Chaudhary Charan Singh in 1979, ostensibly to teach the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai a lesson. Chaudhary Saheb went down with the Janata ship

A boy follows the cooling water mist released by an anti-smog gun, in New Delhi

Al's influence on India's e-commerce industry



AI reshapes Indian e-commerce with personalisation, efficiency, security and stronger customer bonds, revolutionising shopping

n the bustling landscape of Indian e-commerce, Lthe integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a transformative force, reshaping the industry in profound ways. From personalised shopping experiences to efficient logistics, AI has emerged as a cornerstone of success for online retailers in India. AI has a multifaceted impact on e-commerce and has implications for businesses, consumers, and the overall economy. One of the most noticeable effects of AI in Indian e-commerce is the enhancement of consumers.

the shopping experience for Through advanced algorithms and data analytics, online retailers can now offer personalised product recommendations tailored to individual preferences and purchase histories. This level of customisation not only increases customer satisfaction but also drives sales and fosters brand loyalty. Moreover, AIpowered chatbots and virtual assistants provide roundthe-clock customer support, addressing queries and concerns in real time, thereby



engagement and retention. AI has also revolutionised the way products are discovered and marketed in the Indian e-commerce landscape. Sophisticated search algorithms powered by Natural Language Processing (NLP) enable users to find products

more efficiently, even with vague or misspelt search queries. Additionally, image recognition technology allows consumers to search for products using images, streamlining the search process and enhancing the experience. user Furthermore, AI-driven targeted advertising helps businesses reach their target

audience more effectively, maximising the return on investment for marketing campaigns.

In the realm of supply chain management, AI has

for Indian e-commerce businesses. By analysing vast amounts of data, including sales trends, inventory levels, and external factors like weather and transportation conditions, AI algorithms optimise inventory management, forecasting, and logis-tics operations. This results in reduced costs, minimised

stockouts, and faster order fulfilment, ultimately leading to improved operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Moreover, AI plays a pivotal role in enhancing security and mitigating fraud risks in Indian e-commerce transactions. Advanced fraud detection systems leverage machine learning algorithms to identify and prevent fraudulent activities in real time, safeguarding both businesses and consumers from financial losses. Additionally, biometric authentication technologies, such as facial recognition and fingerprint scanning, provide enhanced security for online payments, bolstering consumer trust and confidence in the ecommerce ecosystem.

Despite its numerous beneimproving overall customer emerged as a game-changer fits, the widespread adoption

of AI in Indian e-commerce also presents certain challenges and concerns. Data privacy and security remain paramount, with the need for robust regulatory frameworks to protect consumer information from unauthorised access and misuse. Moreover, the increasing reliance on AI-powered systems raises questions about algorithmic bias and fairness, highlighting the importance of transparency and accountability in algorithm development and deployment.

In conclusion, the impact of Artificial Intelligence on Indian e-commerce is undeniable, revolutionising the way businesses operate and consumers shop in the digital age. As AI continues to evolve and permeate every aspect of the industry, it is essential for businesses to embrace innovation, adapt to technological advancements, and prioritise ethical considerations to harness the full potential of AI while ensuring inclusivity, fairness, and security in the e-commerce ecosystem.

(The author is BU head at Snapdeal; views expressed are personal)

great Maratha emperor, told This year presents an entire-his ministers and commanders. ly different scenario. The It is time for Nadda to move out charismatic, uncompromisof party presidentship. He has ing and powerful Modi is at neither inspired nor enlightened the mercy of two satraps

ETTERS 10 THE EDITOR

INADEOUATE PENALTIES FOR CRUELTY

Madam - Apropos the news story "Animal laws need more teeth say activists," published on June 12, this is my response. Reading about the brutal beating of a dog in Pune, resulting in a mere ₹50 fine, is both disheartening and infuriating. This case, alongside similar instances in Mumbai and Delhi, highlights the urgent need for stricter laws against animal cruelty in India. The proposed Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Bill, 2022, seeks to address these issues by introducing harsher penalties, including fines up to ₹75,000 and imprisonment for severe offences.

This amendment is crucial, as the current laws are woefully outdated and ineffective. Strengthening these laws is not just about protecting animals; it's about fostering a compassionate society where brutality is not tolerated. It's high time for the government to act, ensuring that offenders face appropriate consequences and that we cultivate a culture of empathy and respect. Our future generations deserve to grow up in a world where cruelty to animals is met with swift and severe justice.

Devansh Khatri | Jaipur

SURGE IN GREEN ENERGY

Madam - Apropos the news story "India's green energy rise, including 'Green Coal'," published on June 12, this is my response. Reading about the Reserve Bank of India's latest report brings a sense of optimism about Îndia's economic future, particularly in the energy sector. With green energy projects worth Rs 700 billion set to start this year and projected investments reaching Rs 765.2 billion by 2025-26, it's clear that sustainable energy policies are paying off.

India's achievement of full electrification, with significant hours of power for rural and urban areas, coupled with its position as the third-largest renewable energy producer, is commendable. The innovation of green coal, which reduces CO2 emissions significantly, exemplifies India's commitment to sustainability. NTPC's ini- ues necessary to create a socio-politico-



propos the news story "The Garhwal Regiment's glorious military heritage," published on June 12, this is my response. The still air of Lansdowne's Bhawani Dutt Joshi Parade Ground reverberates with the historic war cry "Jai Badri Vishal Ki Jai" from the Agniveers of the Garhwal Regiment. Established in 1887, the regiment boasts a legacy of val-

tiatives, especially the Varanasi Harit Koyla Pariyojna, showcase impressive advancements. The green coal project, part of the "Make in India" initiative, symbolises a major stride towards the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat" mission. MBL's success in converting municipal waste into eco-friendly coal is not just a technological breakthrough but also an effective solution to waste management, marking an important milestone in India's green energy journey.

Árya Sundaram | Chennai

DREAMS OF A BETTER WORLD

Madam — Apropos the news story "Blueprint for a Better Society," published on June 12, this is my response. We all envision a world filled with peace, happiness, and harmony. Nobody desires environmental degradation, the loss of lives through violence, or the erosion of the human spirit due to crime, corruption, and poverty. Instead, we seek a life defined by health, wealth, and happiness. To achieve this, we must identify the val-

Lansdowne's rich military legacy

our, earning numerous military honours, including Victoria Crosses and Ashoka Chakras. Lansdowne, named after a British Vicerov. remains a testament to colonial heritage with its scenic ridge-top cantonments and hill stations

Colonel Mainwaring's bungalow, now MES property, and the Darwan Singh War Museum reflect the regiment's storied past. The Garhwali Officers Mess, with its Victorian charm and unique artefacts like the Sun Dial and the billiards table, epitomises the regiment's historical opulence. Despite attempts to rename Lansdowne, locals cherish its colonial past and its connection to military excellence. The Garhwal Regiment's symbols—Lord Badrinath, the Unknown Soldier, and the Royal Rassicontinue to inspire courage and pride among its soldiers

Aadhya Chawla | Chandigarh

economic system that fosters such a society. Most would agree that reducing wars, violence, poverty, unemployment, pollution, corruption, crime, and social injustices is crucial. Additionally, fostering freedom, reducing hunger, and promoting love and cooperation are essential.

A survey would likely reveal that people expect scientists to embrace spirituality, religious leaders to adopt a scientific approach, and doctors to treat both body and soul. Education should include moral and spiritual development and societal attitudes towards women and children need to improve. Achieving these goals requires each societal segment to fulfil expectations and contribute time and talent. Global cooperation is essential, possibly through a new kind of bank where individuals and institutions can contribute towards building a better world.

Rohit Kapoor | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

lead Modi to no-mans land". The current political

imbroglio is BJP's own making. How many of us remem-

and could not stage a come-back even at a later stage. (The writer is a special correspondent with The Pioneer; views are personal)

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FIRSTCOLUMN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY UNDER MODI 3.0

Modi's G7 debut amidst global turmoil underscores diplomatic finesse



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

n less than a week of assuming office as the Prime Minister for the largest democracy in the world, Mr Modi is back where he excels. He was in Italy this week, meeting the leaders from the powerful group of nations also known as the G7. On the sidelines were several bilateral meetings with leaders of African, and Arab nations, besides several clear messages to the primarily American and European groups leaders

This was PM Modi's first trip abroad, after assuming office for a third time (a remarkable feat in itself), where nearly 670 million voters patiently waited in queues under an extremely harsh summer sun over a period of nearly two months to choose the leader of the largest democracy. PM Modi and his party, despite setting ambitious expectations, could not manage a majority by themselves and are now dependent on a bunch of pre-poll alliance political parties to lead the National Democratic Alliance government. This assumes significance at a time when several parts of Europe, not to mention the US are going their own set of democratic churns. The US goes to poll end of the year, and voices on either side of the aisle, are getting harsher and louder. Similarly, the elections to the European Parliament have thrown a resurgence of far-right parties, which is likely to have an impact on the geopolitical dynamics for a long time. What Mr Modi may be comforted by is the fact that he may not need to look around for carefully worded diplomatic statements while explaining the state of Indian democracy to the Western nations.



In the past few years, several questions have been raised across the Western nations and in the US regarding the health of the Indian democracy, its report card on minority rights, religious freedom, the existence of the press etc. The near majority verdict, by the Indian electorate, with ample scope of checks and balances to keep the party with the highest seats under leash, a robust opposition presence in the parliament would be a clear talking point for the PM and his set of diplomats to set out a gold standard for democracy when engaging with several nations. Mr Modi, with his nearly three decades of experience as head of the state and nation, is not new to diplomacy and in several interviews, leading up to the general elections, has articulated his target of enhancing India's global image. The grand spectacle around G20 (not to forget backroom diplomatic negotiations to arrive at a joint statement), several high-level state visits, a bunch of rescue operations carried out for citizens and neighbours from war-torn areas, supply of emergency medicines during COVID are all pointers towards the focus the Prime Minister's Office attaches to global reputational management. PM's third-term visit to G7 assures continuity and explores fresh engagement strategies with current and potential allies, emphasizing continuity and innovation. Mr Modis' visit to Italy comes at a time when the Ukraine war is unrelenting, and despite severe reluctance, there seems to be chinks in the united European approach towards the aggressor Russia. Many of them, would have, similar concerns regarding Israel's war on terror, which has refused to die down in months. It may be recalled that both Israel and Russia are close allies of India, and India has so far walked a tightrope when commenting on both of these volatile situations. The dynamics of the past relationship, while building deeper relations with recent allies such as the US are likely to be a sensitive diplomatic trope. It is no wonder, that PM Modi has picked up S Jaishankar, a seasoned diplomat as the External Affairs minister for a second term, to retain the continuity and foreign policy focus achieved during his last term. The evolving geopolitical landscape and India's role in global affairs would continue to be tested and chiselled in days to come.

Populism cripples revival of discoms



analys \$ 07

The twin problems of AT&C losses and under-recoveries on sale to certain households or farmers in some States have existed for close to a quarter century

he Centre is planning to launch another' scheme to enable public sector power distribution utilities (discoms) to cut technical losses via "transition financing" of the required capital expen-diture. The discoms stand at the core of the power supply and distribution network in the country. Mostly owned and controlled by State Governments, they buy electricity from the generating companies (call them gencos) in the public sector such as National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) etc and gencos in the private sector commonly referred to as independent power producers (IPPs) and supply to the consumers.

Technical losses to be more precise, the aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses are a sophisticated nomen-clature for leakage from the system or power theft. According to Union Power Minister RK Singh, AT&C's losses used to be high at 27 per cent. When, out of say 100 units of electricity that leaves the generating stations/power dispatch centre, 27 units are stolen and hence not paid for, this is bound to have a debilitating effect on the discoms' operations.

The discoms could charge more on sale of the balance 73 units to compensate for the 'nil' revenue on the 27 stolen units. But this is theoretical. So, the discoms would end up making a loss to the extent of revenue lost on stolen units. There is another potent factor that exacerbates their loss-

The Electricity Act (2003) and the Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Power require the discoms to fix the tariff on electricity supplied to consumers in a manner such that the average revenue realisation (ARR) from its sale is equal to the average cost of purchase, transmission and distribution (ACS). Yet under diktat from the State Government, either they don't bill certain households (HHs) at all (on consumption up to 200/300 units a month in Delhi/Punjab) or a flat subsidy of ₹800 on consumption (between 201 and 400 units a month in Delhi), besides free supply to farmers as in Punjab.

The discoms seek to make up for the resulting under-recoveries by charging more from industries and businesses for which the tariff can go up to a high of ₹16 per unit (this indeed is a major reason for making Indian products and services uncompetitive in both the domestic and international markets). While the States also promise to compensate for a good portion of the under-recoveries, most of them make only partial reimbursement and that too after considerable delay. This further adds to discom losses. The twin problems of AT&C losses and under-recoveries on sale to HHs/farmers have existed for close to a quarter century. Since the beginning of 2000, the Centre has come up with four financial restructuring packages (FRPs) to help discoms. While, the first two (2002, 2012) merely sought to condone their losses, the third namely Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) launched in November 2015 required discoms to set their house in order and achieve certain milestones in exchange for financial assistance. Under UDAY, discoms' staggering debt of about ₹400,000 crore was condoned. Of this, while 75 per cent was taken over by the States, for the balance, they were allowed to issue bonds at a concessional rate of interest. In lieu of the FRP, discoms



were required to reduce AT&C losses from 20.7 per cent during 2015-16 to 15 per cent by 2018-19. Further, they were to reduce the ACS-ARR gap from ₹0.59 per unit of electricity during 2015-16 to 'zero' by 2018-19. But, the dis-coms failed to deliver.

During 2019-20, their AT&C losses were 18.9 per cent against the 15 per cent target for 2018-19. The ACS-ARR gap during 2019-20 stood at ₹0.42 per unit against target of 'zero' for 2018-19. During 2020-21, even these limited WHILE STATES improvements were reversed as ALSO PROMISE TO ATC losses zoomed to 22.3 per cent and ACS-ARR gap ₹0.69 COMPENSATE FOR paise per unit. As a consequence, discoms losses which had decreased from ₹52,000 crore during 2015-16 to ₹17,000 crore during 2017-18 (courtesy, FRP) increased to about ₹30,000 crore during 2019-20 and further to ₹58,000 crore during 2020-21. Correspondingly, this has led to their ballooning debt which at the end of FY 2021-22, stood at ₹620,000 crore. This prompted the Centre to come out with a fourth package called 'Reforms-Linked, Result-Based AFTER Scheme for Distribution' (RLRB-SD). The scheme was unveiled by **CONSIDERABLE** Finance Minister Nirmala DELAY Sitharaman in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22. Involving an outlay of ₹300,000 crore, it was aimed at trimming discoms AT&C losses to 12-15 per cent and gradual-ly narrow the ACS-ARR gap to 'zero' by March 2025. This was to be achieved by upgrading the distribution infrastructure and capac-

ity building, thereby improving the reliability and quality of the power supply. It had a provision for compulsory pre-paid and smart metering component to be implemented across the power supply chain, including in about 220 mil-lion households.

Apart from gross budgetary support (GBS) of close to ₹100,000 crore by the Centre, implementation of the Scheme involves fund-ing by State-run sector-specific lenders; viz, Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) under irrevocable State Government guarantee. The funds release is subject to discoms meetscheme was ₹112,000 crore for 16 States, while sanctioned amount was ₹133,000 crore.

As for the gross budgetary support, the release of funds by the Centre during FY 2023-24 was a mere ₹6,000 crore against budget allo-cation of ₹12,000 crore. That things are moving at a snail's pace may be seen from the fact that 'against the sanctioned smart meters of around 220 million, only about 0.8 million have been installed so far'. One wonders whether the money is being used by discoms to merely pay back the loans taken earlier to fund their recurring losses --- as happened

under UDAY. Now that the tenure of this scheme

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

A GOOD PORTION OF THE UNDER-RECOVERIES, MOST OF THEM MAKE ONLY PARTIAL REIMBURSEMENT AND THAT TOO

ing the pre-qualifying criteria and achieving the basic minimum benchmark in reforms.

The RLRBSD launched in FY 2021-22 talks of achieving the targets, which should have been achieved by 2018-19, by March 2025. This by itself is laughable. What about the progress? According to the Power Ministry, the Government has so far identified 57 discoms from 32 States and Union Territories under the scheme and has prepared detailed project reports (DPRs) for these. Further, in reply to a question in Parliament given by then Power Minister RK Singh in December 2023: "Till today, DPRs having total outlay of ₹120,000 crore has been approved for loss reduction works and ₹130,000 crore for smart metering works." Beyond this paperwork, as of

January 2024, the total loan dis-

bursed by PFC-REC under the

(launched in 2021-22) will end in just about 10 months on March 31, 2025, the Government is keen to launch its second version call it RLRBSD- II with similar aggregate outlay of ₹300,000 crore. Who knows, even the funds garnered under this scheme could end up being used to clear the continuous pile up of discoms' debt. The

vicious cycle continues. The problem is entirely political. In a bid to win elections (these are held round the clock), almost every political party promises sops which include, among others, power supply to farmers and poor households at throwaway price or even free; they even ignore theft happening in slums/jhuggis that promise votes en masse. They use discoms as 'guinea pigs' for achiev-

ing these populist goals. (The writer is a policy analyst, views are personal)

Govt must reboot its 'Neighbourhood First' policy

Modi's top priorities should include strengthening of bilateral ties with neighbours and herald a new era of dialogue to counter China's influence

The Narendra Modi Government must give priority to wean away neighbours who have drifted towards China. The presence of leaders from the neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region at the inauguration of Narendra Modi's third term as Prime Minister highlights the significance New Delhi accords to these countries. Notable attendees included Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan President Rani Wickremesinghe. The swearing-in ceremony also witnessed the participation of Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Seychelles Vice-



KS TOMAR

President Ahmed Afif and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu. The inclusion of President Muizzu is being interpreted as a good diplomatic move, especially when both nations currently have strained ties .It may be recalled that Modi invited leaders from the eight member States of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

(SAARC) to his swearing-in ceremony in 2014. For his 2019 inauguration, the guests included leaders from the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-

Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIM-STEC), along with Mauritius and Kyrgyzstan. The Modi-led Government

will have its plate full of national and international



immediate attention and formulation of strategy and action plan. Experts feel that India must resolve the US threat to impose sanctions if the Chabahar Port deal with Iran was not scrapped. Interestingly, the US did not raise any objection when India took up the construction of the port because it suited the issues, which will warrant US owing to its occupation of

Afghanistan. But now that the US has moved out, it has no interest in the port. Former Prime Minister Pt Jawaharlal Nehru's Indian National Congress achieved a remarkable victory, securing 44.7 per cent of the vote and winning 361 out of 494 seats

in 1962. In contrast, the BJP,

under Narendra Modi, won

NDA collectively securing 294 seats. Unlike the BJP, which relies on coalition part-ners like the TDP and others, the Congress under Nehru stood strong on its own. This scenario isn't unique to India. In Britain, leaders like Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair also managed to secure three terms. However, managing a coalition Government with a thin majority presents its own challenges. The reduced strength can increase the bargaining power of smaller coalition partners. The Modi Government's foreign policy has alienated neighbours like the Maldives,

India should respond to its initiative to have trade ties by keeping the political issues aside. The Sharif brothers may not be averse to it. China's expanding ties in the region are evident, and India needs to tread cautiously to counter its influence, as seen in the case of Nepal. The recent political shift in Nepal towards a communist Government ideologically aligned with China is concerning, especially considering China's 'Debt Trap' strategy. Pakistan serves as a stark

example, with China extending a massive debt of \$23 bil-Nepal etc. Hence it needs a lion, a substantial portion of 'relook' as they have drifted which is tied to the Belt and towards China, which is using Road Initiative. Pakistan's them to expand its influmounting debt to China, 238 seats out of 543, with the ence. Regarding Pakistan, totalling \$67.2 billion from

2000 to 2021, underscores the risks associated with this debt dependency.

Regarding neighbours, India needs to be worried as Maldives has already moved in the lap of China, and Nepal has also shown red flag as the communist Government led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has moved closer to China. Modi will govern India for

the next five years with a relatively weakened position but he has shown resolve to carry on economic reforms to make India a world power. In this backdrop, the Opposition is expected to play a constructive role in the interest of people of the country. (*The writer is a political ana-*

lyst and senior journalist based *in Shimla; views are personal.)*



G7 summit opens with deal to use Russian assets for Ukraine

AP BORGO EGNAZIA

Group of Seven summit Aopened on Thursday with agreement reached on a US proposal to back a USD 50 billion loan to Ukraine using frozen Russian assets as collateral, giving Kyiv a strong show of support even as Europe's political chessboard shifts to the right. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni

welcomed the heads of state of the G7 leading industrialised nations to a luxury resort in southern Italy, saying she wanted the message of the meeting to be one of dialogue with the global south and unity.

She likened the G7 to the ancient olive trees that are a symbol of the Puglia region, with their solid roots, and branches projected toward the future".Beyond discussions on Ukraine, the war in Gaza and China's industrial policy, Pope Francis will become the first pope to address a G7 summit. adding a dash of celebrity and moral authority to the annual gathering. He'll be speaking on Friday about the promises and perils of artificial intelligence, but is expected to also renew his appeal for a peaceful end to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

The G7 includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Italy, which is hosting the summit, has invited several African leaders -Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, Kenyan President William Ruto and Tunisian President Kis Saied — to press Meloni's development and migration

initiatives on the continent. Other guests include Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, fresh off his own election, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. With Biden, UK Prime

Minister Rishi Sunak and now

AP DUBAI/ KUWAIT CITY

Kuwait Thursday said Kauthorities have identi-fied the bodies of 45 Indians

and three Filipino nationals

killed in the tragic fire incident

in a building housing foreign workers as the Gulf Kingdom

vowed to promptly investigate

ssured

the inc

French President Emmanuel European Parliament election Macron facing elections in the than in the national general election in 2022 that made her coming months, pressure was on the G7 to get done what it Italy's first female premier. Known for its revolving-door can while the status quo lasts. Frozen Russian assets to supgovernments, Italy is now in port Ukraine The US propos-al involves engineering a USD 50 billion loan to help Ukraine in its fight against Russia that the unusual position of being the most stable power in the EU. would use interest earned on

The leaders of the G7's two other EU members, Germany and France, didn't fare nearly as central bank assets, most of well, rattled after hard-right parties made strong showings in the vote. Macron called a snap election and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz saw his Social Democrats finish behind mainstream conservatives and the far-right Alternative for Germany.

As a result, Meloni is likely to be able to steer the three-day meeting to her key priority items as she further cements her role on the world stage, analysts said. One sign of her flexed far-right muscles: Meloni's office denied media reports that Italy was trying to water down language about access to abortion in the final communique.

tional leverage to frame this as an essentially Mediterranean

Summit," said Nick O'Connell,

deputy director of the Atlantic

Council.That includes pushing

her migration agenda as

Meloni seeks to leverage her

relationship with Africa to

as one of many arrangements he hoped to see finalised dur-A French official, speaking anonymously in line with Macron's office's customary ing the summit, including a bilateral security agreement with the US. practices, said there were "I am grateful to our partners for their belief in us and our diverging views with Italian negotiators on some topics, including on sexual and repro-

profits from Russia's frozen

them held in the European

A French official, briefing

reporters on Wednesday, said a political decision by the lead-

ers had been reached but that

technical and legal details of the

mechanism to tap into the

assets still had to be worked

out. The issue is complicated

because if the Russian assets

one day are unfrozen - say if

the war ends - then the wind-

fall profits will no longer be

able to be used to pay off the

loan, requiring a burden-shar-

ing arrangement with other

Zelenskyy listed the asset deal

countries.

Union, as collateral

victory," he said in a post on ductive health and vaccines. social media platform X. Italian Foreign Minister Sunak, for his part, announced up to 242 million pounds (286 million euros or USD 310 mil-Antonio Tajani confirmed abortion was being addressed, lion) in nonmilitary aid to but said discussions were con-Ukraine and a new round of tinuing. "While it's unlikely the recent results will radically shift the sanctions against suppliers of munitions and other aid to Russia's military located in focus of the upcoming G7 summit, this electoral win China, Israel, Kyrgyzstan and offers Premier Meloni addi-

Turkiye. Washington also sent strong signals of support, with widened sanctions against Russia to target Chinese companies that are helping its war machine.

EUROPE'S NEW POLITICAL CHESSBOARD Meloni goes into the meeting

Kuwait vows to promptly

investigate fire incident

Thursday.

Affairs

boost development while curbfortified at home and abroad ing illegal migration to Europe The pope and artificial intelafter her far-right party had an even stronger showing in the ligence

Pope Francis has called for an international treaty to ensure AI is developed and used eth-ically, acknowledging the promise it offers but emphasising the grave and existential threats it poses.

He'll bring that campaign to the world's industrialised countries as wars are raging across multiple fronts. One of his greatest concerns has been on the use of AI in the armaments sector. But Francis is also concerned about what AI means for the poorest and weakest in daily life: technology that could determine the reliability of an applicant for a mortgage, the right of a migrant to receive political asylum or the chance of reoffending by someone previously convicted of a crime. It's happening where?

The G7 summit is taking place in a sprawling luxury resort that's something of a theater set, a faux town made to resemble one of Puglia's medieval white-stone hamlets but that actually only dates from 2010.

Located next to an actual archaeological park, Borgo Egnazia features narrow streets villas, restaurants and a town square complete with a clocktower. A favourite of celebrities it was sealed off to outsiders for the duration of the summit. No such five-star accommodations await the 2,000-plus police and Carabinieri forces who have been brought in to provide security. Authorities on Wednesday sequestered the decommissioned cruise ship that had been housing them in Brindisi's port, after the police union complained about unacceptable hygienic conditions on board.

As with any G7, an assortment of anti-global, anti-war and climate activists are staging protests around the summi venue, but far from where the leaders are meeting. One group is staging a "dinner for the poor" on Friday night calling program for a nonexploitative for "peace, the rights of peoples and against the Big 7 who claim to decide the destiny of the world and our planet".

Top EU court fines

Hungary \$216 mn for

syste



From left; European Council President Charles Michel, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, French president Emmanuel Macron, Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, U.S. President Joe Biden, Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and European Commission President Ursula AP/PTI von der Leyen pose for a family photo at a G7 world leaders summit at Borgo Egnazia, southern Italy, Thursday.

Sunak to push for 'decisive' support for Ukraine

ative in our efforts to support Ukraine and end (Russian

President) Putin's illegal war at this critical moment," Sunak

said in a statement ahead of the

The UK remains at the fore-

summit talks.

Bari (Italy) (PTI): Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) nations on Thursday began their threeday summit on global affairs in the southern Italian region of Apulia, where Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been invited for the Outreach

front of the international session to be held on Friday. Japan – are hosted by Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni at the luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia on the Adriatic coast. While India has reiterated its stance on "dialogue and diplomacy" as the best approach, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is leading calls for "decisive" efforts to support Ukraine "whatever it takes

"We must be decisive and cre-

Starmer vows to end era of 'gestures'

humanitarian, energy and sta

bilisation needs, and lay the

foundations for longer-term

economic and social recovery

and reconstruction. "A priority

for the PM at the Summit will

be to work with partners to

agree a way to use immobilised

Russian assets to support Ukraine," a Downing Street

Meanwhile, in his pre-visit media briefing in New Delhi on

Wednesday, Foreign Secretary

Vinay Kwatra recalled Modi's

statement in September 2022

that "today's era is not of war."

"We have always maintained

that dialogue and diplomacy is

the best option," he said, point-

ing to the consequences of the

war such as an impact on food

fuel and fertiliser availability,

challenges to global supply

chains and disruptions in the

global economy.

statement said.

AP MANCHESTER

 $T_{
m aiming \ to \ become \ Britain's}^{
m he \ left-of-centre \ politician}$ ernment has taken a hard line on people entering the country prime minister in three weeks' ple entered Europe in 2015, time said on Thursday he will most of them fleeing conflict in lead a government that's both Syria. The case concerns changes "pro-business and pro-worker" and restore stability after Hungary made to its asylum years of economic and polital turmoil leader Keir Starmer said that if he's elected on July 4, he will end the "desperate era of gestures and gimmicks" of the Conservative Party's turbulent tenure

under five different prime ministers.

business leaders. Starmer called the party's plat-The Conservatives jettisoned two prime ministers without form a manifesto for "wealth creation", and its ambitious an election in quick succession goals were largely long-term in 2022: first Boris Johnson, felled by scandals, then Liz ones: establishing a new Truss, who rocked the econindustrial policy, developing a omy with drastic tax-slashing 10-year infrastructure strategy, building 1.5 million new plans and lasted just seven eeks in of Starmer, a former chief pros-Labour pledged to improve ecutor who is widely seen as competent but dull, is trying to turn his stolid image into an asset. His core message is that he has transformed Labour from its high-taxing, big-The plan's spending commitspending days under former leader Jeremy Corbyn into a party of the stable centre.

bodies of those killed in the minister and the leadership of devastating fire incident in Kuwait for pro-active facilitasouthern Kuwait's Mangaf area tion being provided by Kuwaiti authorities, the Indian mission and an Indian Air Force aircraft is on standby to bring said back the mortal remains of Indians killed in the incident,

Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber al-Sabah officials said in New Delhi on has issued directives for the distribution of financial assis-Minister of State for External tance to the families of the

Mashaan began their inspec-

tion campaign in Al-Mangaf,

Al-Mahboula, Khaitan, and

Jileeb Al-Shuyoukh, the paper

The Interior Ministry, Kuwait

flouting asylum law AP BRUSSELS

The European Union's top court ordered Hungary to pay a fine of 200 million euros (USD 216 million) on Thursday for persistently breaking the bloc's asylum Sheikh Fahad said rules espite a previous without mentioning the quan-European Court of Justice rultum of the compensation. ing, plus an additional 1 million euros for every day it fails to Additionally, the Emir has ordered the preparation of comply going forward. military aircraft to repatriate Hungary had not implemented a 2020 ruling from top EU the bodies of deceased Indians judges in Luxembourg, the back to their homeland. Sheikh Fahad is heading an ECJ wrote in a press release. "That failure, which consists in overall inspection campaign on illegal properties in many deliberately avoiding the appliareas in Kuwait on Thursday cation of a common EU poli-The minister, accompanied cy as a whole, constitutes an by the Minister of Public unprecedented and extremely Works and Minister of serious infringement of EU Municipality Dr. Nora Allaw."

response as we have been from The Russia-Ukraine conflict is the outset. We must move from set to dominate the agenda as leaders of the G7 – the United 'as long as it takes' to 'whatever it takes' if we are to end this ille-States, United Kingdom, gal war," he said. "From Ukraine Canada, Germany, France and to the Middle East, we will be discussing significant global

threats at the summit. Such threats are why it is so vital to strengthen the UK's national defence, through our commitment to spend 2.5 per cent of GDP on defence by 2030," he added. According to Downing Street, at the summit, Sunak will announce up to GBP 242 million in bilateral assistance to Ukraine, to support immediate

and gimmicks' if he wins power



Fistfight erupts

Rome (AP): Tensions in

Italy's lower house erupted

into a fistfight, sending an

opposition lawmaker to hos-

pital, over a controversial

government proposal that

opponents say will further

impoverish the poor south. Video of the fight

Wednesday shows lawmak-ers converging on 5-Star

Leonardo Donno, who

opposes the changes, after he

tried to hand an Italian flag

to regional affairs minister Roberto Calderoli. Calderoli,

a firebrand lawmaker from

the Lega party with northern

roots, drafted the contested

expansion of regional auton-

omy that would mostly ben-

efit regions like Lega strong-

holds of Veneto and

won the support of many

Movement

Lombardy.

lawmaker

in Italian

Parliament

support in repatriating the mortal remains of the victims. At least 49 foreign workers were killed and 50 others injured in the fire on Wednesday at the seven-storey building where 196 migrant workers were staying in the southern city of Mangaf.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah, serving as the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Minister of Defence, said that authorities have identified 48 bodies, among which 45 are of Indians and three are of Filipino nationality, English language daily Arab Times reported.

The efforts are still underway to determine the identity of one remaining body, said the first deputy prime minister. Kuwaiti authorities are conducting DNA tests on the

who reached Kuwait to oversee assistance to Indians injured in the fire and to ensure early repatriation of mortal remains of those killed, met Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya who assured full support and vowed to promptly investigate the tragedy.

Singh also met some of the Indians injured in the massive fire and assured them all support from the Indian government. Later, he called on First

Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad, who conveyed condolences on behalf of the Emir and his instructions to ensure all necessary assistance and

support. Municipality, Kuwait Fire Singh conveyed Prime Force, Ministry of Electricity Minister Narendra Modi's and Water and Public Authority for Manpower took greetings to the Emir and thanked the deputy prime part in the campaign.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán slammed the ruling as "outrageous and unacceptable.

"It seems that illegal migrants are more important to the Brussels bureaucrats than their own European citizens," he wrote on the social media platform X.

Hungary's anti-immigrant gov-

sis, when some 400,000 people passed through Hungary on their way to Western Europe. Hungary built fences protect ed by razor wire on its southern borders with Serbia and Croatia and a pair of transit zones for holding asylum seekers on its border with Serbia. Those transit zones have since

the wake of that cri

since well over 1 million peo-

closed. The measures were part of Orban's increasingly strict antiimmigration policies and the extreme minimisation of Hungary's asylum system.

Back in 2020, the ECJ found that Budapest's policies had restricted access to international protection, unlawfully detained asylum applicants and failed to observe their right to stay in Hungary while their application went through the full due process, the court

recalled on Thursday.

Launching Labour's election manifesto in the northwest England city of Manchester, Starmer said a Labour government would "stop the chaos, turn the page and start to rebuild our country"

Next month British voters will elect lawmakers to fill all 650 seats in the House of Commons, and the leader of the party that can command a majority — either alone or in coalition — will become prime minister. Labour currently has a double-digit lead in opinion polls over Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's governing Conservatives, who have been in power for 14 years

Starmer said his platform was "a manifesto for wealth creation", and acknowledged that a Labour government would face "hard choices" about public spending. "We cannot play fast and loose with the public finances," he said. He said he rejected the idea that "the only levers are tax and spend" and would get the economy expanding after years of sluggish growth. Starmer's cautious economic approach dis-

mays some in his party, who

want bolder change, but has

ties with Britain's former partners in the European Union. but ruled out a return to the bloc's frictionless single market and customs union.

ments were modest. The manifesto forecasts that taxes will rise by 7.4 billion pounds (USD 9.25 billion) by 2028-29, through measures including by closing loopholes related to the recent abolition of the "non-domiciled" tax status, which has allowed some wealthy individuals to avoid paying UK taxes.

The party is also planning to extend a windfall tax on energy companies. Starmer said personal taxes would not rise under a Labour government, but that did not stop the Conservatives casting Labour as the high-tax party.

In initial victory for Argentine Pres Milei, Senate gives overall approval to key reform bills

said

AP BUENOS AIRES

Argentina's Senate has approved key state overhaul and tax bills proposed by President Javier Miliei, delivering an initial legislative victory to the libertarian leader in his efforts to deliver on his promises of radical change. Senators voted 37 to 36 late Wednesday to give their overall approval to the overhaul bill after 11 hours of heated debate as protesters urging lawmakers to reject Milei's harsh austeri ty clashed with police outside Congress. The lawmakers still must approve individual measures in an article-by-article vote that will stretch throughout the night.

In a reflection of the fierce backlash to the legislation and deep polarisation gripping Argentina's Congress, Vice President and head of the Senate Victoria Villarruel cast the tiebreaking vote in favour



lawmakers debate a reform bill promoted by Argentine President Javier Milei in AP/PTI Buenos Aires, Argentina, Wednesday

of Milei's agenda. investors, tax amnesty for those The legislation delegates broad with undeclared assets and powers to the president in plans to privatise some of energy, pensions, security and Argentina's state-owned firms. other areas and includes sev-If the Senate approves the artieral measures seen as controcles with modifications, the versial, including a generous lower house still has to okay them before Milei can claim incentive scheme for foreign

passing his first law since entering office last December. As Senators pored over the bills, protesters in downtown Buenos Aires hurled sticks, stones and Molotov cocktails at police who fired water cannons and tear gas to disperse the crowds.

The fiery right-wing economist rose to power on promises he would resolve Argentina's worst economic crisis in two decades, with annual inflation climbing toward 300 per cent and a recession deepen-

But his political party of relative novices holds just a tiny minority of seats in Congress and he has struggled to strike deals with the opposition.

Senators approved two bills, a tax package that lowers the income tax threshold and a 238-article state reform bill that passed the lower house of Congress in late April after weeks of negotiations.

Don't let difference become a chasm, Chinese Premier warns NZ as it mulls joining AUKUS

AP BEIJING/ WELLINGTON

hinese Premier Li Qiang, Cwho is visiting New Zealand amid the country's plan to join the AUKUS alliance, has warned that both countries must stop their differences from becoming a "chasm" between them.

AUKUS, comprising Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, a trilateral security alliance is intended to strengthen the ability of each government to support security and defence interests, building on longstanding and ongoing bilateral ties by promoting deeper information sharing and technology sharing and fostering the integration of security and defencerelated science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains.

Beijing avers the partnership is aimed at containing China's

rise. It is "natural" that the two countries "don't always see eye-to-eye with each other on everything", Li told a joint press conference with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon after their talks in Wellington on Thursday.

Such differences should not become a chasm that blocks exchanges and cooperation between us," Hong Kongbased South China Morning Post quoted Li as saying.

He added the two countries should use differences to "learn from each other and grow together".

An official text of Li's speech released by the Chinese Foreign Ministry here said: The two sides should work to remove the disturbance of non-economic factors to bilateral trade and economic relations, and provide stable expectations and a sound business environment for the operation and development of companies". He also announced a visa-free policy for New Zealanders to visit China. The unusually strong words

from Li, 64, a close associate of Chinese President Xi Jinping, come in the backdrop of reports that New Zealand plans to join the AUKUS alliance which involves the transfer of nuclear submarine technology and the latest cutting-edge technologies, including quantum computing, artificial intelligence and hypersonic weapons. China regards both Quad, (US, India, Japan, Australia) and AUKUS as alliances aimed at containing its rise and is bitterly critical of both. Reports from Wellington quoted Luxon as saying that he discussed with Li the significant China-New Zealand economic relationship with two-

way trade in goods worth nearly USD 23.43 billion, mainly New Zealand's dairy products. Luxon said he told the Chinese premier he would have "no tolerance" for foreign interference in New Zealand's affairs. Luxon said Li had raised concern about Wellington's possible participation in a trilateral security pact with Australia, the United States and Britain, the AP news agency reported. New Zealand is among the candidates to join Pillar 2 of an expanded AUKUS, the Post reported earlier. Launched in 2021, AUKUS has two key pillars: Pillar 1 supports Australia's acquisition of conventionally armed nuclearpowered submarines, while Pillar 2 focuses on cuttingedge technologies, including quantum computing, artificial intelligence and hypersonic weapons.



S Africa parties cobble Judge accuses ISI together unity govt

AP 📕 JOHANNESBURG

South African lawmakers are expected to elect the country's president on Friday after being sworn in at the first sitting of Parliament that will also reveal the kind of unity government the ruling African National Congress has managed to cobble together after losing its majority for the first time since 1994.

The lawmakers are also expect-ed to elect Parliament's new speaker and deputy speaker, choices that will be determined by negotiations that have taken place between the ANC and opposition parties since the country's election results were declared nearly two weeks ago. Parties are under pressure to conclude negotiations by Thursday to fulfil the constitutional requirement to swear in lawmakers and elect the president within 14 days of election results being declared.

The African National Congress won 40 per cent of the national vote during the country's highly contested elections, followed by the Democratic Alliance with just over 21 per cent and the newly formed uMkhonto weSizwe Party with about 15 per cent of the vote in their first-ever elections. The ANC has opted to form a national unity government that will include most political parties that contested the elections instead of a straightforward

coalition with a few parties. However, initial negotiations have laid bare the deep divisions between South Africa's political parties, with some already rejecting the proposed unity government while others have agreed to be part of it. The ANC's national executive committee, the party's highest decision-making body between conferences, will meet in Cape Town on Thursday to finalise the agreements it has made with the other parties and will make an announcement afterwards. On Wednesday, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the fifth-biggest party with 3.85 per cent of the vote, confirmed it had decided to join the national unity government that will be led by the ANC.



A woman walks past Luthuli House, the ANC headquarters in Johannesburg. South Africa, on June 5

proceed

South Africa's independent

electoral commission and inde-

pendent observers have

declared the elections free and

fair. As the deadline to reach an

Democratic Alliance, and the

fourth-biggest party, Economic

Freedom Fighters, appeared to

be one of the main sticking

points. The leftist Economic

Freedom Fighters have said

they will not be part of any

centrist Democratic Alliance,

which they accuse of being

cies that aim to address the

injustices of South Africa's past,

empowerment and land redis-

The parties remain ideological-

ly at odds, with the Democratic

Alliance declaring the EFF its

top rival last year. The animos-

ity between the two suggests

tribution.

second-biggest

party,

It said it had also started negotiations to form a coalition with the ANC and the Democratic Alliance in the KwaZulu-Natal province where the MK Party got the most votes. We will participate in the

government of national unity for the sake of our country and for the sake of our people, who want life to continue with a stable government that will address their challenges," said IFP president Velenkosini Hlabisa

While the MK Party emerged arrangement that involves the as arguably the biggest winner in the elections with an impressive performance despite being anti-Black and opposed to poliformed only six months ago, it has refused to join the unity government and sought to preincluding black economic vent the sitting from going ahead. The Constitutional Court on Thursday dismissed the party's application to interdict the chief justice from convening the first sitting, giving a go-ahead for it to proceed. The party continues to dispute the election results, claiming widespread vote-rigging, and has said its 58 elected lawmakers will boycott the sitting. South Africa's constitution says

only one-third of Parliament's 400 lawmakers need to be present for a quorum and for the vote to elect the president to

of harrassment for desired verdicts

PTI LAHORE

n anti-terrorism court Aⁿ anti-terroritories related to attacks on military installations in May last year by workers of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party, has accused Pakistan's powerful intelligence agency ISI of harassing him and his family members to get desired verdicts. Anti-Terrorism Court Judge (Sargodha) Muhammad Abbas has written a letter to Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan informing him how spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) officials harassed him and his family members

The judge has been hearing the cases against Opposition Leader in Parliament Omar Avub and other workers of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) related to attacks on military installations in May last year.

Ayub had alleged that last agreement approached on week at a hearing in a case in Thursday, the rift between the Sargodha ATC Judge Abbas was made hostage by the intelligence agencies. In March, six judges of the

Islamabad High Court (IHC) reached out to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) informing alleged intrusion of intelligence operatives in judicial matters.

The six judges - out of a total strength of eight - wrote a letter to the Supreme Judicial Council members, regarding alleged attempts to pressure judges through abduction and torture of their relatives as well as secret surveillance inside their homes.

All judges of IHC also unanimously acknowledged that intelligence agencies are interfering in their judicial functions.

the ANC might have to form a The judges accused the intelnational unity government that ligence operatives of coercing does not include the EFF and the MK Party, a pattern that them to extract desired vermay also play out in coalition dicts in the case of former governments at the provincial prime minister Imran Khan and other PTI leaders. Khan level, where the ANC also failed to maintain a majority in has been in jail since August last year in different cases

The Supreme Court has sought proposals from high courts as to how to protect the independence of the judiciary from the interference of intel-

ligence agencies. On the ATC judge's allega-tions, Lahore High Court Chief Justice Ahmad Khan summoned Punjab Inspector General of Police Dr Úsman Anwar for Thursday.

"In today's hearing IGP Anwar told the LHC that police have launched an investigation into 'serious threats' given to the ATC judge," a court official told PTI on Thursday. The LHC CJ asked the IGP

why the roads leading to Sargodha ATC, some 200 km from Lahore, were closed by police when the judge refused to meet an ISI officer. The IGP said: "The roads were closed as the judge was facing serious threats.

The chief justice reserved the verdict on the alleged harassment of the ATC judge by the ISI. Khan's party had strongly condemned the incident in which the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and PTI Central Secretary General, Omar Ayub, along with other members of Parliament, were pre vented from entering the ATC Sargodha by the unelected and mandate-thief govern-

ment. "As part of a malicious and well-thought-out plot to coerce the judiciary into making decisions of their choice, a PTI spokesperson said. He said that the mandate thief Pakistan Muslim Leaguethe NA Opposition Leader and other MPs from entering the court was to coerce the court to decide at gunpoint while denying justice to pub-

Pak budgetary allocation for def falls to 1.7% of GDP PTI ISLAMABAD separate channels, obscuring

Pakistan's budgetary alloca-tion of Rs 2,122 billion for defence for 2024-25 constitutes just 1.7 per cent of the cash-strapped but nucleararmed nation's GDP, which is the same as the previous year, despite the higher than the Rs 1,804 billion set aside during the outgoing fiscal 2023-24, according to budget docu-ments. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday presented a Rs 18,877 billion heavily taxed

budget for 2024-25. The finance minister's speech and various budget documents show that Rs 2,122 billion allocated for the next fiscal year is Rs 318 billion higher than Rs 1,804 billion budgeted for the outgoing fiscal year 2023-24, ending on June 30.

According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2023-24, which is a key document showing the budget and performance of the economy each year and is released ahead of the budget each year, defence spending as a percentage of the GDP has come down since 2020. It shows that the defence spending was 2.6 per cent of the GDP in 2020 but it decreased to 2.4 per cent in 2021, and

went down further to 2.1 per cent in 2022, followed by 1.9 per cent in 2023 and 1.7 per cent in 2024. For the year 2025, defence spending has been retained at 1.7 per cent of the GDP, showing that there was no change in the share of the army in the overall pie despite it getting more money in the budget. The document lists defence spending as per GDP since 2016 when it was 2.3 per cent, and increased to 2.5 per cent of the GDP in 2017 and further to 2.6 per cent in 2018. It remained unchanged at 2.6 per cent from 2018 to 2020 and then decreased.

However, the data released by the government may not convey the real picture of defence spending as several militaryrelated expenses are budgeted in the civilian expenditures. For example, a sum of Pakistani Rs 662 billion, allocated for retired military personnel, which equals to about 31 per cent of the allocation for the armed forces, will not be drawn from the defence budget but rather from the government's current expenditure.

Similarly, it is believed that key military acquisitions or funding for nuclear weapons and missile programmes are believed to be financed through

the exact military spending. However, the budget document provides some details about the latest allocation, showing that the share of the three services and inter-services organisations has remained fairly consistent since 2019, with the Army getting 47.5 per cent, the Air Force 21.3 per cent, the Navy 10.8 per cent and the inter-services organisations 20.3 per cent of the budget.

world 09

It shows that this year the Army, Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Navy and inter-services organisations will receive an equal percentage increase of 22.3 per cent in their respective allocations, a rare display of par-

ity in funding distribution. The allocation is divided into four categories: 'Employees Related Expenses', covering salaries and allowances for ser vicemen; 'Operating Expenses', which include costs for transportation, fuel, rations, medical treatment, training, and other essential services; 'Physical Assets', which funds the procurement of arms, ammunition, and related equipment through local purchases and imports; and 'Civil Works' dedicated to maintaining existing infrastructure and financing new construction projects.

Pact with IMF for new loan next month: Pak minister

finance minister Mohammad Aurangzeb on Thursday said an agreement to secure a fresh loan to address the country's economic woes is expected to be reached with the International Monetary Fund next month. Aurangzeb, while addressing a post-budget press conference here, a day after unveiling the Rs 18,877 billion budget, announced that negotiations with the IMF were underway and going in the right direction. 'I don't want to say anything in finality other than the fact that it's (IMF talks) moving positively," he said and expressed hope that a staff-level agreement (SLA) is expected in July too. He, however, declined to talk

further on the topic of SLA. The budget, which many believe is designed to meet IMF requirements for securing another USD 6 billion to USD 8 billion loans under the medium-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF), marks a 25 per cent increase over the outgoing fiscal year's outlay.

The government has proposed historically-high additional taxes through various adjustments and new levies, potentially increasing the burden on already strained taxpayers. The increase in the taxes is aimed at collecting additional revenues of Rs 3.8 trillion in line with the IMF demands and it appears that a historic increase in both direct and indirect taxes is aimed to convince the fund. In July 2023, the IMF approved a USD 3 billion Stand-By Arrangement for debt-trapped Pakistan to support immediate efforts to stabilise the economy and guard against shocks while creating space for social and development spending to help the people of the country.

The minister also said that the tax base will be broadened with the tax to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio to be taken to 13 per cent in the next 2-3 years as the existing 10 per cent tax-to-GDP ratio is unsustainable. The minister said digi tisation of the economy is a priority for the government, as it will help reduce corruption

and increase transparency.

IMF releases \$336 mn | NATO def ministers thrash out new security tranche to Sri Lanka aid and training support plan for Ukraine mulate. However, "despite these

PTI COLOMBO

The IMF has disbursed the million from its USD 2.9 billion bailout package to Sri Lanka, even as it cautioned that the economy of the cash-strapped nation remains vulnerable and the path to debt sustainability is "knife-edged". The third tranche under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement was released during an executive board meeting of the International Monetary Fund held on Wednesday, the Washington-based global lender said in a statement. With the release of the third tranche amounting to USD 336 million, the total IMF financial support disbursed so far to Sri Lanka under the bailout package is about USD 1 billion, the statement said. Two tranches of USD 330 million each were released in March and December 2023 The IMF noted that Sri Lanka's economy has started recovering, inflation remains low, revenue collection is improving, and reserves continue to accu-

positive developments, the economy is still vulnerable and to debt sustainability ie nath

AP BRUSSELS

several provinces.

Thursday's meeting, said that more packages of these motors forced to take part. \mathbf{T} ATO defence ministers armed **IN** gathered on Thursday forces need longer-term prehoping to agree on a new dictability about the kinds of plan to provide long-term weapons, ammunition and funds they can expect to security assistance and military training to Ukraine amid receive. Russia's full-scale invasion, 'The whole idea is to minafter Hungary promised not to imise the risk for gaps and veto the proposal as long as it's delays as we saw earlier this year," Stoltenberg told reporters. The hold-up, he not forced to take part. The ministers are meeting over two days at NATO headsaid, "is one of the reasons why quarters in Brussels in the last the Russians are now able to push and to actually occupy high-level talks before a summit hosted by US President Joe more land in Ukraine' Since Russia's full-fledged Biden in Washington on July invasion in February 2022, 9-11, where the military orga Ukraine's Western backers nization's leaders are expected to announce financial suphave routinely met as part of port for Ukraine. the Ukraine Defense Contact Ukraine's Western allies are Group, run by the Pentagon, to trying to bolster their military drum up weapons and ammusupport as Russian troops nition for Kyiv. A fresh meetlaunch attacks along the more ing was held at NATO headquarters on Thursday. Canadian Defence Minister than 1,000-km (620-mile) front line, taking advantage of Bill Blair said that his country a lengthy delay in US military aid. European Union money would send Ukraine 2,300 rocket motors, and that 80,000 was also held up by political infighting. more of the devices are being NATO Secretary-General Jens tested. "Pending the results of

Stoltenberg, who is chairing those tests, we intend to ship veto the plan as long as it's not to our ian partners ir

lic representatives.

Suspected missile attack by Houthi rebels strikes ship in Gulf of Aden

corridor They say the attacks are aimed at stopping the war and supporting the Palestinians,

though the attacks often target

vessels that have nothing to do

The war in Gaza has killed more

than 36,000 Palestinians there,

according to Gaza health offi-

cials, while hundreds of others

with the conflict.

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's

Nawaz had a long history of armed attacks on courts to force judges to make favourable decisions, adding that this move was seen as a blatant attempt to intimidate the judiciary and prevent them from delivering justice. He said the purpose of preventing

remains knife-edged," it warned.

Strong reform efforts, adequate safeguards, and contingency planning help mitigate these risks, the IMF said. 'To restore fiscal sustainabili-

ty, sustained revenue mobilisation efforts, promptly finalising the debt restructuring in line with programme targets, and protecting social and capital spending remain critical. Advancing public financial management will help enhance fiscal discipline, and strengthening the debt management framework is also needed," it underlined.

The EFF-supported programme aims to restore Sri Lanka's macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, mitigate the economic impact on the poor and vulnerable, rebuild external buffers, safeguard financial sector stability, and strengthen governance and growth potential, the IMF the future," he told reporters. While the contact group meetings have resulted in significant battlefield support, they have been of an ad-hoc and unpredictable nature. Stoltenberg has spearheaded an effort to have NATO take up some of the slack.

The idea is for the 32-nation military alliance to coordinate the security assistance and training process, partly by using NATO's command structure and drawing on funds from its common bud-

get. Stoltenberg said he hopes Biden and his counterparts will agree in Washington to maintain the funding level for military support they have provided Ukraine since Russia launched its full-fledged invasion in February 2022. He estimates this at around 40 billion euros (\$43 billion)

worth of equipment each year. On Wednesday, Hungary announced that it would not

to make it clear that all military action outside NATO territory can only be voluntary in nature, according to NATO rules and our traditions, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said. "Hungary has received the guarantees we need."

The world's biggest security alliance does not send weapons or ammunition to Ukraine as an organisation, and has no plans to put troops on the ground. But many of its members give help on a bilateral basis, and jointly provide more than 90% of the country's military support.

The other 31 allies see Russia's war on Ukraine as an existential security threat to Europe, but most of them, including Biden, have been extremely cautious to ensure that NATO is not drawn into a wider conflict with Russia

NATO operates on the basis that an attack on any single ally will be met with a response from them all.

Asuspected attack on Thursday by Yemen's Houthi rebels saw missiles strike a ship in the Gulf of Aden, authorities said, setting the vessel ablaze, in what would be the latest such assault in their campaign over the Israel-Hamas war.

have been killed in Israeli operations in the West Bank. It began The attack happened in the Gulf of Aden off Yemen, the after Hamas-led militants British military's United attacked Israel on October 7 Kingdom Maritime Trade killing about 1,200 people and taking around 250 hostage. The Operations center said. It said the vessel caught fire in the Houthis have launched more attack. The private security than 50 attacks on shipping, firm Ambrey said a merchant killed three sailors, seized one vessel and sunk another since vessel made a radio distress call saying it had been struck November, according to the US by a missile. The ship "was en Maritime Administration. A USroute from Malaysia to led airstrike campaign has target Venice, Italy," Ambrey said. It ed the Houthis since January added that the ship was with a series of strikes on May 30 "aligned with the Houthi killing at least 16 people and target profile," without wounding 42 others, the rebels elaborating. say

The Houthis did not immediately acknowledge Thursday's attack, but it typically takes the rebels hours or even days to claim them. The attack follows the Houthis launching a boat-borne bomb attack against a commercial ship in the Red Sea on Wednesday. The Houthis, who seized Yemen's capital nearly a decade ago and have been fighting a Saudi-led coalition since shortly after, have been targeting shipping throughout the Red Sea

(TCN) No.FAPEDP/POS-06/2023/99 issued vide dtd.05/06/2024 for the work "Facility Management of Integrated Port Operation System (POS) and SagarSetu". The date and time of submission of tender is hereby extended as per the following schedule. (i) Document download end date: 19/06/2024; 17.00 Hrs., (ii) Bid submission end date: 19/06/2024; 17.00 Hrs., (iii) Bid opening date: 19/06/2024; 17.00 Hrs., (iii) Bid open Sd/- Dy. Director (EDP), EDP Cell, Paradip Port Authority

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY

FINANCE & ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT No.FA/EDP/POS-06/2023/106 Date:12/06/2024

CORRIGENDUM-1

1st CORRIGENDUM to Short e-Tender Call Notice (TCN) No.FA/EDP/POS-06/2023/99 issued vide

PA/PR/16/2024-2025 dtd.12.06.2024

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot (Admission Branch)

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Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot Admission Notice for PPBNET (Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing) Course, session 2024

Online applic tions are invited alongwith requisite fee for admission to Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing course in all the Govt./University constitute Private colleges of Punjab through University website from 14.06.2024 to 30.06.2024. Prospectus for admission to Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing course will be available on university website from 14.06.2024. The Entrance Test (PPBNET-2024) for admission to Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing course will be conducted on 14.07.2024

Note:- Any Notification/Corrigendum/Amendment by Govt. of Punjab will be fllowed.

For Prospectus/fee details/schedule/online counseling/details & updates visit us at: www.bfuhs.ac.in.

NIL/12/182/2023/34461 Dated CHD :- 6/12/2024

REGISTRAR

One year later, migrants who survived wreck off Greece seek justice

AP ATHENS

Desperate hands clutched at Ali Elwan's arms, legs and neck, and screams misted his ears, as he spat out saltwater and fought for three hours to keep afloat in the night, dozens of miles from land.

Although a poor swimmer, he lived — one of just 104 survivors from the wreck of a dilapidated old metal fishing boat smuggling up to 750 migrants from North Africa to Europe

"I was so, so lucky," the 30-yearold Egyptian told The Associated Press in Athens, Greece, where he works odd jobs while he waits to hear the outcome of his asylum application. "I have two babies. Maybe I stay(ed) in this life for them? Thousands have died in Mediterranean Sea shipwrecks in recent years as migrants from the Middle East, Asia and Africa seek a better life in the affluent icised Greece's handling of the European Union.

But the sinking of the Adriana a year ago Friday in international waters 75 kilometres (45 miles) off Pylos in southern Greece was one of the worst. Only 82 bodies were recovered. so that hundreds of families still lack even the grim certitude that their relatives are dead. Elwan, a cook whose wife and children are in Cairo, says he still gets phone calls from Egypt from mothers, brothers and wives of the missing. "We (left) home to get best life for family and until now (their families)

know nothing about them," he said. And after a year there are only hazy answers as to why so many lives were lost, what caused the shipwreck and who can be held answerable.

Migrant charities and human rights groups have strongly crit-

sinking and its aftermath. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said Thursday "a credible process for accountability" was needed. "It is unconscionable that one year since this horrific tragedy, the investigation into the potential liability of (Greece's) Coast Guard has barely progressed," HRW official Judith Sunderland said in the groups' joint statement

The Greek coast guard, migration ministry and other officials did not respond to AP requests for comment ahead of the anniversary.

Authorities had a coast guard boat on the scene and merchant ships in the vicinity during the trawler's last hours. They blame smugglers who crammed hundreds of people into an unseaworthy vessel — most in an airless hold designed to store a

catch of fish — for a nightmare voyage from Libya to Italy.

They also say the Adriana capsized when its passengers some of whom wanted to press on for Italy after five dreadful days at sea, others to seek safety in Greece — suddenly surged to one side, causing it to lurch and turn turtle. And they insist that offers to take the migrants off the ship were rebuffed by people set on reaching Italy.

Elwan — who says he was on deck with a clear view of what happened — and other survivors say the lurching followed a botched coast guard attempt to tow the trawler. He claimed the coast guard hurriedly cut the towline when it became evident the Adriana would sink and drag their boat down with it.

"If you find the ship (at the bottom of the sea), you will find this rope" still attached to it, he said But the logistics make such a feat

nigh-on impossible, Greek authorities say, as the ship rests some 5 kilometres (more than 3 miles) down, at one of the Mediterranean's deepest points. The coast guard has denied any towing attempt, and allegations that its vessel tried to shift the trawler into neighbouring Italy's area of responsibility. A naval court began investigat-

ing last June, but has released no information on its progress or findings Separately, in November Greece's

state ombudsman started an independent probe into authorities' handling of the tragedy, bemoaning the coast guard's "express denial" to initiate a disciplinary investigation. Last month, a Greek court dropped charges against nine Egyptians accused of crewing the Adriana and causing the shipwreck. Without examining evidence for or against them, it determined that Greece lacked jurisdiction as the wreck occurred in international waters.

Effie Doussi, one of the Egyptians' defence lawyers, argued that the ruling was "politically convenient" for Greek authorities

"It saved the Greek state from being exposed over how the coast guard acted, given their responsibility for rescue," she said. Doussi said a full hearing would have included testimony from survivors and other witnesses, and let defence lawyers seek additional evidence from the coast guard, such as potential mobile phone data.

Zeeshan Sarwar, a 28-year-old Pakistani survivor, said he's still waiting for justice, "but appar ently there is nothing?

'I may be looking fine right now, but I am broken from the inside. We are not getting justice," he told the AP.

money 10

India's Mav

GTRI: Strategic reforms in customs duties, GST, commerce to push India's inclusive growth

the pioneer

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Implementation of key strategic reforms such as of key simplification of customs duty structure, GST, and not incentivising low value-added electric vehicles would help India ensure its sustainable development and inclusive growth, GTRI said on Thursday. Economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) also said that India is standing on the cusp of a transformative era and there is an urgent need for comprehensive economic reforms.

NEW DELHI | FRIDAY | JUNE 14, 2024

simplifying the "From convoluted customs duty structure to pioneering regulatory sandboxes for cryptocurrencies, and from boosting the MSME sector through GST (Goods and Services Tax) reforms to fortifying our energy security, this agenda lays the foundation for a robust, resilient, and globally competitive India," it said. It said that the current basic customs duty structure, which affects USD 680 billion worth of imports, has not been reviewed in 20 years, leading to over 27 different duty rates and over 100 specific or mixed duty slabs

Currently, 85 per cent of customs duty revenue comes from less than 10 per cent of tariff lines (or product categories), while 60 per cent of tariff lines contribute less than 3 per cent of revenue.

"With some adjustments, the average import tariff could be reduced from 18.1 per cent to below 10 per cent without lakh,



impacting important products. "Simplification is necessary to avoid global criticism, as highlighted by former US President Donald Trump calling India the tariff king," it said.

The think tank suggested increasing the GST exemption limit for a firm's annual turnover from 40 lakh to 1.5 crore as this will be transformative for India's MSME sector, promoting job creation and growth. Firms with less than Rs 1.5 crore turnover make up over 80 per cent of registrations but contribute less than 7 per cent of the tax collected, it said

adding a yearly turnover of 1.5 crore equals 12-13 lakh monthly turnover, translating to just Rs 1.2 lakh at a 10 per cent profit margin. "The new limit would reduce the GST system's load from 1.4 crore taxpayers to less than 23

allowing for

introduction of invoice exports. matching for 100 per cent compliance, eliminating fake invoices and tax theft. Increased tax collection will

offset the 7 per cent tax loss," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. It also asked the government not to incentivize low valueadded Electric vehicles (EVs). Due to restrictions from the US and EU on Chinese EVs, China is shifting its focus to Southeast Asian markets, including India. "In few years, every third EV

on Indian roads, as well as numerous passenger and commercial vehicles, could be made by Chinese firms, either independently or through joint ventures with Indian companies," it said.

Since current EVs rely heavily on Chinese batteries and parts, accounting for 60-90 per cent of their cost, India should the avoid incentivizing low valueadded EVs" the GTRI said

adding It is crucial to balance increased EV adoption with the need to protect and develop the domestic auto industry.

Further, it suggested focusing on developing capacity to produce inputs and intermediates for both chemical and fermentationbased Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).

India imports 70 per cent of its APIs and over 80 per cent of its biosimilars from China, posing a significant risk to the industry and national security. It added that simplification of e-commerce export rules will help in boosting India's

India has more than 20 lakh firms that produce good quality products and services but less than a lakh of these export. "Simplifying RBI, banking, Customs, GST and DGFT rules related to e-com export will help them to start Handicrafts, exporting ethnic jewellery, wear decorative paintings, Ayurveda and many more products,' Srivastava said.

He added that India relies on China for 30 per cent of its industrial product imports, with imports soaring tenfold in the past two decades.

China is also the top import supplier in each of the major industrial product categories. "As Chinese firms expand their operations in Indian markets, imports are expected to rise This escalating further. dependence calls for a strategic approach to cut reliance on China," he said.

India's consumer market represents long term structural opportunity: Chandrasekaran

PTI NEW DELHI

India's consumer market Lepresents a long-term structural opportunity, driven by population, a growing middle class, rapid class, urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes and raising aspirations, Tata Consumer Products Ltd Chairman N Chandrasekaran said on Thursday.

The Tata group's FMCG arm is well positioned to capitalise the on the significant opportunity, he said, while addressing the annual general meeting (AGM) of TCPL. Chandrasekaran said the India economy has been

growing "very strongly" and the current momentum continues to be high. India is likely to maintain similar growth momentum in the coming years, he said, adding that the global economic landscape has been

rather volatile with the geopolitics reshaping supply chains, energy security, and overall resilience. The baseline forecast for the

world economy is to continue to grow over 3 per cent during 2024 and 2025. However, "India has been

growing very strongly with the economic growth rate of 8.2 per cent for the fiscal 2023-2044. Looking at the future, the momentum continues to be high and India should maintain similar growth momentum in the coming years, said Chandrasekaran.

Notably, India's consumer market represents a "longterm structural" opportunity, Chandrasekaran said and noted that this is driven by a



young population, a growing middle class. rapid class, rapid urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes, and raising aspirations.

Chandrasekaran also added that the Indian middle class is growing rapidly, which will create opportunities for the company.

"India's middle class is expected to grow from about 30 per cent of the population to 50 per cent by the end of this decade. That is about an additional 300 million people who will be entering the middle class," he said.

Apart from this, rapid increasing urbanisation, disposable incomes and ever increasing aspirations of consumers, all bode well for Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL), which is well positioned to capitalise on the significant opportunity.

Over the latest acquisition of Capital Foods and Organic India by TCPL, by India Chandrasekaran said, this is to expand the company's addressable market into highgrowth, high-margin segments.

The company has scaled its distribution to reach 4 million retail outlets in India, which

represents a two-fold increase since 2020. The company has also focused on innovation and has replaced a 5x growth in innovation revenue since the fiscal year FY21," he said. TCPL, new innovations contributes 5 per cent to sales distribution, which is in line with the best metrics in the industry.

company's digital "The transformation agenda has been progressing well," he said.

On Tata Starbucks, its 50:50 JV with Starbuck, he said it has opened 95 new stores in FY24, setting a record for the highest number of stores opened in a single year since inception. "The company's international business has been progressing well," he said.

In FY24, TCPL delivered revenue of Rs 15,206 crores, with a growth of 10 per cent. TCPL was formed in 2020, after merging the consumer products business of Tata Chemicals with Tata Global Beverages. It owns brands as — Tata Salt, Tata Tea, Tetley, Eight O'Clock Coffee, Good Earth Tea, and Tata Sampann. It also operates coffee chain Tata Starbucks.

Palm oil imports jump 74 per cent on rising demand PTI 🗖 NEW DELHI

India's palm oil imports surged 74 per cent to 7,63,300 tonnes in May this year from 4,39,173 tonnes in the year-ago period, as the world's largest vegetable oil buyer stocked up the commodity to meet rising domestic demand, industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA) said on

Thursday. The total vegetable oil imports rose to 15.29 lakh tonnes in May this year from 10.58 lakh tonnes in May 2023, it added.

Palm oil constitutes a major part of imports. Crude palm oil (CPO) imports rose to 5,32,555 tonnes in May this year from 3,48,118 tonnes in the yearago period, while RBD Palmolein imports surged to

2,25,746 tonnes from 85,205 tonnes. However, Crude Palm Kernel Oil (CPKO) imports fell to 4,999 tonnes from 5,850 tonnes a year earlier.

Sunflower oil imports climbed to 4,10,727 tonnes from 2,95,206 tonnes, and sovbean oil rose to 3,24,016 tonnes from 3,18,887 tonnes. For the first seven months of the 2023-24 marketing year started on November 1, Palm oil imports fell to 49.77 lakh tonnes from 53.48 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period, while soybean oil imports were down at 85.67 lakh tonnes against 90.55 lakh tonnes in the said period.

Market share of top five cement makers to rise to 55 per cent by March 2025: ICRA

PTI NEW DELHI

Top five domestic cement manufacturers could expand their market share to up to 55 per cent by March 2025, through organic and inorganic expansions, leading to further consolidation, said a report from rating agency ICRA. Helped by a healthy large demand prospect, companies operating in the cement sector are looking to increase their capacity and maintain market share, it said. "ICRA estimates that the market share of the top five cement companies witnessed a steep rise to 54 per cent as of

expects it to further increase to 55 per cent by March 2025, resulting in consolidation in the cement industry," it said. While organic growth is expected to continue in the medium-term, cement companies are also preferring the inorganic route to boost capacities rapidly, leading to consolidation in the industry, it

added. "Except the ACC and Ambuja acquisitions by the Adani Group, other mergers and acquisitions (M&As) were largely owing to the cash flowstarved nature of the acquired entity or the group's financial stress," it said. According to



Association, the country has installed a cement capacity of 541 Metric Tonnes (MT).

The Indian cement market is led by Aditya Birla group firm UltraTech Cement Ltd, which has a consolidated capacity of 152.7 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA).

This is followed by Adani Group firm Adani Cement, which owns Ambuja Cement and its subsidiaries ACC Ltd, which has the capacity to produce 77.4 million tonnes of cement annually. Besides, there are other large players such as Dalmia Bharat, Shree Cements and J K Cement.

According to the report, bulk

internally and the excess transported to adjacent regions. "The consolidation, taking place across India, is primarily led by the eastern and the western regions. The share of the top five cement companies in the eastern and the western regions is estimated to increase to 76-79 per cent in FY2025 from 54 per cent in FY2015," it said.

While the southern region is highly fragmented with only 40 per cent share held by the top five cement players in FY2015.

"This may go up to 50 per cent by FY2025," the report said, adding "the northern and highly centr region

per cent in FY2015) and are expected to remain in the range of 75-85 per cent by FY2025," it said.

It further added that till March 31, 2024, 947 corporate insolvency cases across the sectors were resolved under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) with an average

haircut of 68 per cent. According to ICRA Vice President and Co-Group Head, Corporate Ratings Anupama Reddy said the credit profile of cement producers are likely to remain stable, driven by healthy growth in operating income, improvement in operating and CO fortal

Fund launched to back net zero transition in emerging markets

PTI NEW DELHI

 $B^{rookfield}_{\text{Management (Brookfield)}} \ \, \text{Asset}$ and ALTERRA Management on Thursday announced the setting up of a fund to support companies' transition to a net-zero entity in emerging markets including India.

Brookfield has opened the fundraising for the Catalytic Transition Fund (CTF) with anchor commitment from ALTERRA, a joint statement said.

"With the urgent need to cut emissions and accelerate the climate transition, the Brookfield-managed CTF will harness a USD 1 billion commitment by ALTÉRRA funds (ALTÉRRA) to catalyze up to USD 5 billion in total capital for deployment into markets," emerging the statement said.

South and Southeast Asia represent a key focus for CTF. The fund will target large and emerging markets like India, which have clear targets and policy directives supporting the transition to a net-zero economy, strong corporate demand for decarbonization, and areas where Brookfield can leverage its platform capabilities to source and

execute opportunities. The investments will also be made in the Middle East and Eastern Europe. At least 10 per cent of the Fund's total capital will be contributed by Brookfield ensuring that its align interests with

investment partners. A first close for CTF is expected by the end of 2024. It said the developing economies outside China receive less than 15 per cent of global clean energy investment. despite representing nearly one-third of global emissions and often yielding greater emissions reductions per dollar invested than in developed countries. "The first fund in the Brookfield Global Transition

2024," the statement said. Brookfield Asset

Management, said, "CTF is a private market solution to the global challenge of delivering transition investment to emerging markets. Brookfield is already a leading transition investor in these regions and has first-hand knowledge of the incredible opportunity and impact that is available in chronically these

underfunded markets." Nawal Saini, Managing Director, Renewable Power & Transition, Brookfield Asset Management, said, "Emerging markets will require USD 1.6 trillion per annum to help achieve their Paris-aligned

Indian ship recyclers revenue seen rising 15 per cent this fiscal

PTI NEW DELHI

The Indian ship recycling industry will see revenue growth of 15 per cent this fiscal after two years of decline, Crisil ratings said on Thursday.

The rating agency said the growth will be supported by the increased availability of ageing vessels for recycling due to addition of new vessel capacity globally and higher competitiveness of Indian ship

Fund series (BGTF I) raised a record USD 15 billion in

2022. In February 2024, the second fund in the series (BGTF II) announced a first close of USD 10 billion and is on track to be larger than its predecessor. CTF's first close is expected by the end of Mark Carney, Chair and Head of Transition Investing at

decarbonisation targets.

recyclers compared to key rival nations — Bangladesh and Pakistan.

"The Indian ship recycling industry will see revenue growth of 15 per cent this fiscal after two years of decline 22 per cent in fiscal 2024 and 8.5 per cent in fiscal 2023,' it said. According to the rating agency, the increased availability of ageing vessels will bring down input cost for ship recyclers. "This, along with higher



capacity utilization leading to better efficiency, will improve operating profitability by 75 basis points (bps) to 6.5 per cent this fiscal," it said.

Crisil ratings said higher cash generation and absence of capital expenditure (capex), along with healthy balance sheets, will keep credit profiles stable for Indian ship recyclers.

Indian ship recyclers are expected to grab a lion's share of the increased volume of

condemned vessels, given their higher competitiveness leading to likely volume growth of around 20-23 per cent, it said.

Key competitors — Bangladesh and Pakistan, are facing a severe crisis of foreign

currency availability and ship recyclers in these countries are hence taking longer to complete vessel purchases and thus owners of condemned vessels are likely to avoid these markets.

Rupee falls 6 paise to 83.54 India exports first batch of against US dollar in early trade super sweet pineapples to UAE

PTI 📕 MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 6 paise to 83.54 against the US dollar on Thursday, weighed down by the broad strength of the American currency in the overseas market and elevated crude oil prices

Forex traders said the local unit also faced some resistance owing to subdued macroeconomic data on the domestic front.

cent.

global

Brent crude futures, the

declined 0.34 per cent to USD

Fed initiating the rate cut in

2024 and overall strong

economic fundamentals of

the Indian economy, the sentiment for the dollar is

likely to be negative. This could push the DXY (Dollar

Index)towards 103.50 and

lead to an appreciating rupee,

benchmark,

oil

82.32 per barrel.

Pabari said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.52 and lost According to CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari, declining US CPI with the further ground to trade at 83.54 against the greenback, registering a loss of 6 paise from its previous closing level.

On Wednesday, the rupee appreciated 11 paise to close at 83.48 against the US dollar. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 104.78, higher by 0.14 per Additionally, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), with substantial reserves of USD 651 billion, is poised to intervene to prevent significant rupee depreciation.

"Given these factors, the rupee is forecasted to oscillate within a range of 82.90 to 83.70," Pabari added.

domestic On the macroeconomic front, India's industrial production growth slipped to 3-month low of 5 per cent in April 2024, mainly due to poor show by the manufacturing sector, though mining and power segments performed well, according to

official data. Meanwhile, retail inflation continued its downward slide to reach a one-year low of 4.75 per cent in May due to a marginal decline of prices in the food basket and remained within the Reserve Bank's comfort zone of below 6 per according cent, to government data released on Wednesday.

ARCHANA JYOTI - NEW DELHI

n what could be called as a **L**sweet and juicy milestone, India has made its debut in the premium pineapple market by exporting its first batch of high quality MD2 'Golden Ripe' also known as 'Super Sweet' pineapples to the UAE, a sector traditionally dominated by Costa Rica, Thailand and the

Philippines The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Development Export Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, facilitated the successful export of the first consignment of MD 2 variety pineapples to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The consignment, comprising 8.7 metric tons (650 boxes) of the MD 2 pineapples, was ceremoniously flagged off by Chairman, APEDA, Abhishek Dev, in the presence of senior officials from APEDA and the Indian Council of



Agricultural Research Central Coastal Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR CCARI).

"This marks a pivotal moment in India's agricultural export history, showcasing our ability to produce and supply premium quality pineapples to global markets," said Abhishek Dev. "The MD 2 variety is renowned for its exceptional sweetness and quality, and we are thrilled to introduce it to the UAE market", he said.

The MD2 or Dinar is developed pineapple is develo through hybridization by Del Monte scientists in Costa Rica and holds great popularity in the international market. Its superiority in terms of color,

flavor, shape, lifespan, and ripeness set it apart from other varieties.

As a result, it has become the gold standard in the pineapple industry, with significant cultivation in countries like Costa Rica, the Philippines, and Thailand.

An official said that ICAR CCARI provided essential technical support for post-harvest management and development of sea protocol for the MD 2 pineapple produced in the Sindhudurg district of the Konkan region in Maharashtra. A private firm successfully grew this variety on 200 acres in partnership with local farmers, ensuring optimal quality and yield.

The harvested pineapples were meticulously graded, sorted, packed, and stored in Panvel, Navi Mumbai. From there, the consignment was transported to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) for its onward journey to the UAE.

a region is usually consumed consolidated in the past (65-75 leverage metrics.

sports 11



Quota belongs to country, not to athlete: Bindra backs NRAI's team selection for Olympics

PTI MUMBAI

lympics gold winner Ábhinav Thursday Bindra on said promising Rudrankksh shooter Patil was unfortunate to miss the flight to Paris Games, but emphasised that the quota belongs to the country and not to one athlete

Patil, who had bagged a 10m air rifle quota for the Paris Olympics, could not find a place in the 15-member Indian squad for the quadrennial extravaganza after finishing behind Sandeep Singh and Arjun Babuta in the selection trials organised by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI)

As per the Olympic guidelines, a country can only send top two shooters in one event from trials to the Games "See, it's not a call. It's a matter

of selection. There's a due process laid out and they followed the process," Bindra

told the media here on the sidelines of the IISM sidelines of the Convocation Ceremony 2024. 'You'll ask the same question in case the process was not followed. But a fair process was put out for everybody, and it was followed," Bindra added. Bindra further explained his point. "Well, that is the process laid down for the country. Many countries follow that process. It's not just that India is following that process. The quota doesn't belong to an athlete per se. It belongs to the country and a process was put out well in advance," he said. Bindra backed the method

which NRAI followed and said a clear system should be followed. "I think credit the Federation

for following the process. I think, as athletes, what do we need? We need a clear system. We need a clear process and we need that clear system and policies followed," he said. That is what has been done, which I think is fair. You know,

when you (an athlete) make (it to the Olympics), when (another) athlete doesn't make it, there will be a few who will be disappointed. It is natural. It is fair. It is a normal thing," he added. Bindra said he was not aware if Patil had reached out aware if Patil had reached out to the Federation. The 2022 Asian Games gold medallist has written to NRAI to take his past performances into consideration for selection. "I am not aware of all of this. I just saw a press release of the

just saw a press release of the team being announced so I have no idea of who he's in talks with," he said.

"Of course, I feel bad for Rudrankksh, who is a good athlete and who's been doing consistently well. But he's young and I'm sure that there will be will be many more opportunities for him in the future," Bindra said.

Bindra admitted that hopes will be high on the Indian shooting contingent in Paris after having notched up seven medals - India's best-ever tally

AP OKLAHOMA CITY (USA)



- at the Tokyo Olympics. "I think (it is) the largest ever (medal haul) in history and I think I'm very positive that we'll do well. Of course, I know

very well what your next athletes," he said. question is going to be, which is we didn't do too well in Tokyo, but I'm positive of a

Generational talent Kennedy Blades, 20,

seeks Olympic gold in women wrestling

"There are so many athletes who have qualified with strong They've performances. undergone a rigorous domestic good performance by our

selection process as well this time. So, I'm quite hopeful and positive that we'll come back with some good results in Paris," he noted.

"We won seven (medals) in Tokyo without shooting, firing at all. So, if we come close, or if at all. So, if we come close, or if we, it is realistic to expect close to 10, which will put us in double digits so I'm hopeful of that," he continued.

Bindra, however, did not pick any favourite to bring a medal. "I don't want to discuss any particular athlete. But I think all of them who have meda the all of them who have made the team have the potential to go and do well," he said.

"Of course, Manu (Bhaker) has done well. She's experienced. She has experience of competing in Tokyo, and now I think she's competing in three odd events in Paris so I wish her well.

"I wish her all the best and hope for good results from her, but also from the rest," he said. Bindra did not read too much into theories like facing mental

blocks on a big occasion. "Well, the event has not happened, so where is the mental block? Let's give them a chance at least," he said.

The first Indian to have won an individual Olympics gold medal, Bindra offered a word of advice for star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, a gold

winner from Tokyo. "It's important and all athletes know, and Neeraj would know for sure, in sport yesterday never counts - you're only as good as what you're on the present day," he said. "The only advice to him would be to focus on his process, to remain in the present and to keep all distractions at bay because obviously with the profile that he enjoys, there will be a lot of eyeballs on him," Bindra said. "There will be a lot of expectations on him. But I think it is for him to put that aside and remain focused on doing what he does so well," said Bindra, adding that he would be travelling to Paris.



UEFA promises more clarity for fans and players on refereeing decisions at Euro 2024

larity for players and Cspectators and zero tolerance for serious foul play and dissent - that's what referees have been tasked with the European Championship.

UEFA had already announced last month that it would do more to explain decisions to teams, requiring in turn that only captains can approach the

referees to discuss them. And that was emphasized on Wednesday at a media briefing on refereeing guidelines for Euro 2024 that took place at Munich's Allianz Arena, two before host nation kicks off the Germany tournament in the same venue against Scotland. present "Only the captain will approach the referee, the other players they have to think about (playing). That's it, finish," UEFA managing director for refereeing Roberto Rosetti said. UEFA has promised that the referees will attempt to give the captains an explanation of key incidents during the match, including what was discussed with VAR.

AP MUNICH

broadcast on the giant screens in stadiums. "This is something new. I think it's very, very, very interesting," Rosetti said. "So we want to give, after the opinion of VAR, a technical explanation for the public. In live, simultaneously,

the UEFA expert will prepare the explanation, a technical explanation about what happened in the specific situation.

the referee awards a penalty for handball...technical explanation: Germany number nine touch the ball with his left

wrestling is the fastest-growing high school sport.

Blades solidified herself as a Paris favorite with the win over Gray, and U.S. Women's coach Terry Steiner believes she has the ability and the confidence to win it all.

just don't see very often," Steiner said. 'But it's one thing having that talent and another thing being ready for the stage that she's on. She's just shown us the past few years that she's ready to be on that stage.'

In 2016, the Chicago native became the first Illinois girl to win an Illinois Wrestling Kids Federation Tokyo Olympic Trials in 2021 as a 17year-old, then won a junior world championship later that year.

for Paris.

"It made me feel really good because I was right there," she said. "I did get some shots on her, so my technique and everything's right there, I think I just needed to mature a little bit.



These last three years, I've been focusing on just maturing, wrestling smart, not letting the girls get in my head

As Blades has matured, she has learned how to use her exceptional quickness and reach. Her height

makes her difficult to prepare for. Blades said she can surprise opponents with holds in positions where her opponents normally think they're safe.

Blades, who is Afro-Latina, said she was happy when Mensah-Stock

a wrestling gold medal. Blades said she is proud to represent several groups, including women and young people - but she wants to inspire all. She noted the importance of representation while telling the story representation while telling the story of a young girl who noticed they looked alike and had the same kind of hair. The girl said she wants to be just like Blades and looks forward to watching her in Paris. "It gave me butterflies," Blades said. Steiner said another young person, Amit Elor, has helped Blades reach this point. Elor, the U.S. Olympic qualifier at 68 kg., won world titles in 2022 and 2023. Like Blades, Elor is just 20 years old. Blades said her younger sister, Korina,

became the first Black woman to win

Blades said her younger sister, Korina, has also helped her prepare. Korina is 10 months younger and was an under-15 world champion in 2019 and a junior world bronze medalist in 2021. Injuries kept her out of the Olympic trials.

"It's always nice because having each other, we kind of make each other a better version by competing," Kennedy Blades said. "But we compete in the best way as far as just to help each other grow.

Prannoy, Sameer Verma enter arm which was in an unnatural position above the shoulder and making his body bigger." Australian Open quarters



Blades barely cracked a smile, already thinking ahead to possibly becoming the third American woman to win an Olympic wrestling gold.

"I felt there's something more that I wanted," she said. "And I think I've just manipulated my mind to going for gold, bringing home a gold medal from the Olympics. So that (beating Crav) was just the first star." Gray) was just the first step." Women's wrestling made it's Olympic

debut in 2004, but the U.S. Didn't earn its first gold until Helen Maroulis won at 53 kg in 2016. Tamyra Mensah-Stock followed by winning 68 kg at Tokyo 2020.

Blades, who dominates at nearly 6feet tall in a sport that often favors stockier athletes, could be the next great star for a country where girls

"For example, on-field review,

 $K_{to \ fully \ appreciate \ her \ biggst \ moment \ on \ the \ math the math the$ already was on Olympic gold. Blades, just 20 years old, defeated six-

time world champion and Tokyo 'We have a generational talent that we Olympics silver medalist Adeline Gray at the U.S. Olympic Wrestling Trials in April to qualify for the Paris Games in the 76-kilogram class.

Blades has been a standout for years. championship against boys. She lost to Mensah-Stock in the finals of the

She said Mensah-Stock overpowered her at the trials, but it was a learning experience that helped set her course

Any teammate ignoring his captain's role and approaching the referee showing any sign of disrespect or dissent will receive a vellow card.

Fans, meanwhile, will also get a better understanding of VAR decisions as they will be

Rosetti has met with all the teams participating at Euro 2024 and their coaches to

including hammering home that any dangerous tackles will be severely punished.

"One of the most important prioritv in refereeing guidelines is to protect the players," Rosetti said. "To protect the image of the game, but in particular to protect the safety of the main actors of the games. "We showed them a couple of clips that we are asking to the referees to be very strong in these kind of situations," he added. "So for such situations we asked to the referees to be zero tolerant because this is something that

present the refereeing guidelines for the tournament, Open

victories over their respective opponents here on Thursday. While fifth seed Prannoy, a former world No.1, took just 46 minutes to get the better of Misha Zilberman of Israel 21-17 21-15 in the round of 16, Verma had to toil hard for one hour two minutes to upset eighth seed Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 21-14 14-21 21-19. Prannoy will be up against second seed Kodai Naroaka of Japan in the next round, while Verma will take on Chinese Taipei's Chun-Yi Lin on Friday.

with

PTI SYDNEY

Indian shuttlers HS Prannoy and Sameer Verma progressed to the men's singles quarterfinals of the Australian contrasting However, it was curtains for

Kiran George in the men's singles event as he lost 20-22 6-21 against seventh seed Kenta Nishimoto of Japan.

Among the Indian women shuttlers, eight seed Aakarshi Kashyap beat Australia's Kai Qi Bernice Teoh 21-16 21-13 to progress to the quarterfinals, where she will be playing third

seed Yu Po Pai of Chinese Taipei.

But the tournament ended for Anupama Upadhyaya and Malvika Bansod in the women's singles second round. While Anupama lost 11-21 18-21 against sixth seed Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia, Malvika was shown the door by another Indonesian, eight

Ester Nurumi Tri seed Wardoyo 17-21 21-23. It was also the end of the road for Panda sisters, Rutaparna and Swetaparna, in the women's doubles. The seventh seeded India pair were shocked

5-21 9-21 by Malaysian combination of Pei Jing Lai

and Chiew Sien Lim. The mixed doubles pair of B Sumeeth Reddy and N Sikki Reddy, however, continued to march ahead as the eighth seeded Indian duo defeated Australia's Kai Chen Teoh and Kai Oi Bernice Teoh 21-11 21-11 to enter the last-eight.

But a tough contest awaits the mixed doubles duo in the quarterfinals. They will be up against top seeds Zhen Bang Jiang and Ya Xin Wei of China.

Diksha to lead strong Indian challenge in Italian Open golf

PTI ROME

Experienced Diksha Dagar will look to leave behind a rare missed cut, when she leads a strong five-member Indian contingent at the 2024 Ladies Italian Open starting here tomorrow.

Diksha will return to action here, after a rare missed cut last week

The Indian star, who is headed to the Olympic Games in Paris, is just outside the Top-10 on the Ladies Order of Merit, where she was third last year. Diksha is one of the five Indians in the field this week, with rookie Pranavi Urs, experienced Tvesa Malik, Vani Kapoor and Ridhima Dilawari also teeing up at the Golf Nazionale, which is hosting the event for the first time.

Diksha had nine Top-10s last year including a win in the Czech Ladies Open and a third place finish at the Hero Women's Indian Open.

the legendary This year she has had two Top-10 finishes, including a third place at Joburg Open. She will tee off in the afternoon

year achieved her first international win on the Sunshine Tour in South Africa,

In 2021, Tvesa had five tops,

while Pranavi and Vani will play in the morning session.

on the LET Order of Merit, Pranavi, with three Top-10s this season, is 13th. Her best came in her last start, the Dormy Open in Helsingborg, where finished tied third, after

being in lead for a while.

college. Now she is the highest ranked Italian women's player. This year she was runner-up in the season-opening Magical Kenya Ladies Open before finishing T-14 in the Aramco Saudi Ladies International. She had a back injury after that, but

session, as will Tvesa, who this is now ready to go.

and had her first Top-10 on the LET since 2021.

including T-10 at the Italian Open. Also teeing off in the afternoon will be Ridhima,

While Diksha is currently 11th

Among the locals looking for a win will be Alessandra Fanali, 24, who is hoping to become the first Italian player to lift the famous trophy. She finished runner-up as an amateur last time when she was just out of

Lionel Messi says Inter Miami will be my last club

"It was a difficult step to leave

we cannot accept.

AP ATLANTA (USA)

Lionel Messi says Inter Miami will be "my last club.

The 36-year-old World Cup champion isn't thinking about joining an Argentine club to write the last chapter of playing career.

"I think Inter Miami is going to be my last club. Today I think it is going to be my last club," the Argentina captain said in an interview with ESPN.

Messi is preparing with his national team to compete in the Copa América in the United States. Argentina is the defending champion.

The former Barcelona star has join the MLS club. nothing left to prove in the Messi's contract with Inter game and filled the only Miami is set to expire at the end of the 2025 season. significant unchecked box on his resume by leading Argentina to the World Cup Europe to come here," he said. title in Qatar in 2022.

"Having become a world champion helped a lot, and He has won a record eight Ballon d'Or awards and left also to see things differently. European football last year to But I don't think about it. I try



is less and less to go and I have a good time.' Many Argentine fans hoped Messi would close his career with Newell's Old Boys, the

club where he began his training as a child in his native

city of Rosario. The star said he's trying to enjoy the final stretch of his career to the fullest.

"I have a good time at the club, am lucky enough to have teammates and friends (Luis Suárez, Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba, all former Barcelona players) by my side," he said. "I had a good time in

the national team, where I have teammates and friends too. I enjoy the little details that I know that when I don't play anymore, I'm going to miss," he added. "My whole life I did this. I love playing ball and I enjoy training, day-to-day life and match days.

New Sports Minister Mandaviya meets IOA chief Usha; takes stock of Olympic preparations

PTI NEW DELHI

Newly-appointed Sports Minister Mansukh Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday took stock of India's Olympic preparations during a meeting with IOA President P T Usha here.

Mandaviya took charge of the ministry on Tuesday after the new NDA government, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was sworn to office on June 9. Mandaviya replaced Anurag Thakur in the position. During the over one hour long meeting, which was also attended by new Minister of State for Sports, Raksha Khadse, Sports Secretary Sujata Chaturvedi, and Sports Authority of India Director General Sandip Pradhan among others, Mandaviya was briefed about country's preparations for Paris Games. 'I today visited the IOA officials for the first time where they briefed me about India's



for Paris preparation Olympics. The government is committed to extend all possible support," Mandaviya said in a brief address to the

media. Usha said the interaction with

the minister went well but did not divulge the details. "The Sports Minister today visited IOA along with the Minister of State for Sports and I am so happy that they wanted

Paris preparations. "We have done everything good this time and I have briefed him. We will be in contact every week and I hope that this is good for our Olympic athletes," she said.

Usha hoped, that like the Games, India's contingent would be in excess

sportspersons. Whatever the players have wanted, we have done this time. So we are expecting more medals than Tokyo. I don't want to put any number and give tension to the

players

"We have done everything for

Already, 97 athletes have qualified and we are expecting

to know about IOA and about around 115 to 120 athletes in all to represent India in Paris Olympics,"

athlete added. The Paris Olympics will be held from July 26 to August 11 this year.

Tokyo

of 100 even this time

sports 12



All round Afghans eye win over PNG, Super 8 entry

PTI TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

fghanistan will eye another all-round effort to crush an inexperienced Papua New Guinea here and enter the Super Eights of the T20 World Cup, and the result will have another underlying effect -- knock out New Zealand Zealand.

The win will carry Rashid Khan's side to Super Eight from Group 'C' alongside the West Indies, who have qualified on Thursday with a win over New Zealand

It will also mean curtains for the 2021 finalists New Zealand who have lost two out of two.

That Rahamanullah Gurbaz (156 runs) and Fazalhaq Farooqi (9 wickets) are currently leading the chart of run-makers and wicket-takers respectively is a just reflection of their fine run in this ICC showpiece.

Apart from Gurbaz, the experienced Ibrahim Zadran too has contributed well to Afghanistan's totals, making 114 runs with a highest of 70.

In bowling, pacer Farooqi has made a fine combination with Rashid, who has so far taken six

wickets from two matches.

It has ensured that Afghanistan's opponents do not have any let-up either upfront or in the middle passage

The PNG might be a spirited side, but it looks way beyond their abilities to overcome a formidable Afghanistan.

TEAMS (FROM)

Afghanistan: Rashid Khan (c), Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Ibrahim Zadran, Azmatullah Omarzai, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Ishaq, Mohammad Nabi, Gulbadin Naib, Karim Janat, Nangyal Kharoti, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Naveen-ul-Haq, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Fareed Ahmad Malik.

Papua New Guinea: Assadollah Vala (c), Alei Nao, Chad Soper, CJ Amini, Hila Vare, Hiri Hiri, Jack Gardner, John Kariko, Kabua Vagi Morea, Kipling Doriga, Lega Siaka, Norman Vanua, Sema Kamea, Sese Bau, Tony Ura.

Match starts at 6AM IST (Friday).

WORRY OVER USA-PAK IRELAND CLASH: In a strange scenario, a non-playing Pakistan will be more keen on the result of USA and Ireland Group A match at

Lauderhill, Florida on Friday. A win for USA, currently second in this group with four points, will put an end to the World Cup campaign of Pakistan, who have two points from three matches.

Of course, it will also take the cohosts into the Super Eight from this group along with India. Ireland are a competitive side with

experienced players in their ranks, but they look woefully out of sync

here and the task might be heavier against the US, who are playing some very good T20 cricket at the moment

They will be keeping an eye on the fitness of skipper Monank Patel,

who missed the match against India on Wednesday with a left-shoulder injury.

Aaron Jones did the duty of skipper against Rohit Sharma's men in New York.

There is also a strong rain threat to the match as per weather predictions, and even a washout can end the campaign of Pakistan. It will take the USA to five points and beyond the reach of Pakistan, who can now log a maximum of

four points. **TEAMS (FROM) Ireland:** Paul Stirling (c), Mark Adair, Ross Adair, Andrew Balbirnie, Curtis Campher, Gareth Delany, George Dockrell, Graham Hume, Josh Little, Barry McCarthy, Neil Rock, Harry Tector, Lorcan Tucker, Ben White, Craig Young.

USA: Monank Patel (c), Aaron Jones, Andries Gous, Corey Anderson, Ali Khan, Harmeet Singh, Jessy Singh, Milind Kumar, Nisarg Patel, Nitish Kumar, Noshtush Kenjige, Saurabh Nethralvakar, Shadley Van Schalkwyk, Steven Taylor, Shayan Reserve Players: Jahangir. Gajanand Singh, Juanoy Drysdale,

Yasir Mohammad Match starts at 8 PM IST (Friday).

ENGLAND FACE OMAN: England will look to resuscitate their fast-sinking title defence with a win over inexperienced but capable Oman in their T20 World Cup Group B match.

England need to win both their remaining matches by a good margin to equal Scotland on five

margin to equal Scotland on tive points, and also hope that the latter lose badly against the Antipodeans. **TEAMS (FROM) England:** Jos Buttler (c), Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Jonathan Bairstow, Harry Brook, Sam Curran, Ben Duckett, Tom Hartley, Will Locks Chris Iordan Liam Will Jacks, Chris Jordan, Liam

Will Jacks, Chris Jordan, Liam Livingstone, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Reece Topley, Mark Wood. **Oman:** Aqib Ilyas (c), Zeeshan Maqsood, Kashyap Prajapati, Pratik Athavale, Ayaan Khan, Shoaib Khan, Mohammad Nadeem Naseem Khushi Mehran Nadeem, Naseem Khushi, Mehran Khan, Bilal Khan, Rafiullah, Kaleemullah, Fayyaz Butt, Shakeel Ahmad, Khalid Kail. Reserves: Jatinder Singh, Samay Shrivastava, Sufyan Mehmood, Jay Odedra.

Rampaging Rutherford powers West Indies into T20 World Cup Super 8

PTI TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

Sherfane a Rutherford career-best unbeaten half-century before pacer Alzarri Joseph and leftarm spinner Gudakesh Motie ripped through the New Zealand line-up to steer West Indies into the T20 World Cup's Super Eight stage with a 13-run win here.

Rutherford came up with the innings of his life, smashing half a dozen sixes and two fours for his 39-ball 68 to lift West Indies to 149 for 9 from 76 for 7 in 12.3 overs after New Zealand opted to bowl in a virtual knock-out Group C fixture.

In reply, West Indies restricted the Kiwis to 136 for 9 with Rutherford's fellow Guyanese Motie returning with splendid figures of 3/25. Joseph turned up the heat lower down the order to become the wreckerin-chief with his 4/19.

With three wins in a row, the tournament co-hosts qualified for the Super Eight stage, while New Zealand's hopes were all

but over following back to

back losses. They had earlier lost to Afghanistan by 84 runs after being shot out for 75. The 2021 runners-up, among the most consistent sides in World Cups, have been found wanting this time.

wanting this time. They made the semi-final in the 2015, 2019 and 2023 editions of the ODI World Cup, and in 2016, 2021 and 2022, the Black Caps ensured a last-four appearance in the T20 World Cups. It was half past midnight in Trinidad but the locals erupted

in joy to celebrate their team's Super Eight qualification, erasing the disappointment of successive setbacks in the big event.

The two-time former champions were eliminated in the Super-12 stage of the competition in UAE in 2021, while in 2022 in Australia, they failed to make the tournament proper and exited in the group stage. "It was fantastic. I was sitting there with Nicholas (Pooran)



and it was such a beautiful night for someone to stand up and be counted," skipper Royman Powell said That (Rutherford) innings

gave us confidence and belief We watched what they did well and tried to replicate it." "It is one tick in the box, but it

is only the start of something big to come. Hopefully we can continue the momentum," said Rutherford on making Super Eight. Willilamson rung in three

changes to the lineup beaten convincingly by Afghanistan and the intent was clear when Trent Boult dismissed Johnson Charles (0) in the first over, forcing the opener to chop on

to his stumps. The Kiwi left-arm pacer ended up with splendid figures of 4-1-16-3

Nicholas Pooran rode some for three quick luck boundaries, becoming the West Indies' highest T20I rungetter, moving past Chris

Gayle. But New Zealand took ascendancy, forcing Pooran (17) and then Roston Chase (0) to both top edge straight to catchers in successive overs The wicket of captain Rovman Powell capped off a dominant

powerplay for the Kiwis --23/4 at the six-over mark --with pacer Tim Southee (2/21) picking up two of the scalps. There was more misery in store as opener Brandon King was dismissed by James Neesham (1/27) and half of the West Indies side was back in the dugout by the seventh

over. But Rutherford had other ideas and played one of the

best innings of his career. The 25-year-old Guyanese allrounder hung around before turning up the heat in the final five overs, blasting five fours and two sixes

Rutherford brought up his 50 off the final ball of the 19th over and pounded 18 runs of it in all, leaving Mitchell Santner

Kuldeep Yadav will be India's preferred

spinner in Super 8 stage: Piyush Chawla

perplexed. Rutherford scored all 37 runs

in the closing partnership with Motie which became a new 10th wicket record in the ICC T20 World Cup history. In reply, New Zealand got off to a poor start and lost both their openers -- Devon Conway (5) and Finn Allen (26) -- in the powerplay.

(26) -- in the powerplay. Thereafter left-arm spinner Motie foxed the Kiwi batters finishing with a match-turning spell of 4-0-25-3 before Joseph turned on the heat with his form with the heat heat with his four-wicket haul. Motie dismissed Rachin Ravindra after he ended up flicking straight to Russell at

deep mid-wicket. He bowled shorter and induced a faint edge from Williamson, who looked to cut it away. The ball went straight into the hands of Pooran.

Glenn Phillips kept the Kiwi hopes alive with his 33-ball 40 before being dismissed by Joseph.

New Zealand needed 33 runs from the last over and Mitchell Santner smashed three sixes off the first four balls but eventually fell short.

It was special: Netravalkar on catching up with Surya, Rohit after more than 10 years

PTI NEW YORK

He tormented them as long as the match was on but once the game was done and dusted, India-born American medium pacer Saurabh Netravalkar had a happy reunion with his former Mumbai teammates Rohit Sharma and Suryakumar Yaday.

The software engineer has been nothing short of sensational in the ongoing T20 World Cup and was in his Wednesday too

"I'm still digesting what is happening right now. The last two games have been very high-profile. I'm glad we have done well as a unit. Always happy being myself, irrespective of the situation," said the soft-spoken player, whose family is Mumbai. "It was about being clear with our plans and executing our processes rather than thinking about who we are facing and what the result would be. I'm glad that first spell worked for me," he added about his effort last night. There was also assistance from the two-paced drop-in pitch and Netravalkar said it all boiled down to hitting the right areas. "The pitch plays a crucial role. Bowlers didn't have to do much, just hit the top of the stumps and let the pitch create the variation rather than us doing it. Credit to the coaching staff for giving us this clarity," he said

Netravalkar is quite literally

From scripting an incredible

Super Over win over Pakistan

to dismissing Virat Kohli for a

golden duck, the late bloomer said he is still trying to process

living a dream.





Nassau Stadium, home to tense T20 World Cup matches, set for demolition

PTI NEW YORK

The makeshift Nassau County cricket ground, which was built specifically for the T20 World Cup, is all set to be demolished after the New York leg of the event came to an end with India's sevenwicket victory over co-hosts USA here.

Built in just over 100 days, the stadium became notorious for its challenging drop-in pitches, which were sourced from Adelaide. The massive structure sat on the edge of the 930-acre Eisenhower Park in Long Island here.

The stadium had 10 drop-in pitches, four for the main ground and six for the adiacent training facility in Cantiague Park.

"After the last match is held at East Meadow on June 12, the stadium will be dismantled, the parts shipped back to Las Vegas and another golf event, and Eisenhower Park will return to normal, but with a world-class cricket pitch left behind," a New York Times

acknowledging that the "pitches have not played report had stated a few days The stadium that "almost

consistently" popped up overnight" will be The highest successful chase at the venue was only 111 runs by dismantled over a period of six weeks. It had a capacity of 34,000 and hosted a housefull India in their win over USA on Wednesday. Canada's 137/7 against Ireland crowd during India's marquee was the highest total recorded, while India successfully defended a low total of 119 clash against Pakistan on June 9 with some tickets sold at an astronomical price of USD 2500 to USD 10,000. against Pakistan In a nail-biting match, South

India played four matches at the venue, including a warm-up game against Bangladesh after the ground was thrown open on June 1.

The drop-in pitches hosted eight matches and produced unpredictable and occasionally dangerous bounce, resulting in particularly low scores in the first two matches where no team crossed 100 runs.

In India's match against Ireland, who were bowled out for 96, Rishabh Pant and Rohit Sharma also copped body blows

It led to widespread criticism and prompted the International Cricket Council to issue statement а

PTI MUMBAI

Former cricketer Piyush Chawla feels that wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav will be India's preferred specialist spinners when the Indian team competes in the Super Eight stage of the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean

India won all three matches in tough batting conditions at the Nassau County Stadium in New York against Ireland, Pakistan and USA and will now take on Canada in their last Group stage match at Lauderhill, Florida before the Super Eight stage.

Chawla said while the conditions in New York did not support spin bowling, the Indian spinners will now come into play in the tournament. India have four spin bowling options in Kuldeep, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja.



"The pitch in New York was very dicey and the way India performed on that pitch and won three out of three games, so there are very good chances going forward," Chawla told media on the sidelines of IISM Convocation Ceremony here on Thursday.

as much in New York but once you enter the second leg for the Super Eight, the spinners have had a big role in the West Indies. Our spinners will come into play now," he added. Chawla picked Kuldeep as his

"The spinners were not needed

Kumble wants Arshdeep in side if India opt for two seamers in Caribbean

PTI NEW DELHI

Africa barely chased down 103

runs against the Netherlands

losing six wickets in the

process, and later defended 113

runs against Bangladesh,

winning by a narrow margin of

The venue was finalised by the

ICC in 2023 and was built in

The playing field, with the

rectangular pitch in the middle, was fashioned from

special grass grown in Florida. "The grandstands borrowed materials

recently used at Las Vegas's

Formula 1 race and professional golf events," the

NYT report added.

are

most

four runs.

just 106 days.

Spin legend Anil Kumble feels going by current form, Mohammed Siraj should make way for left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh if India decides to play just two specialist fast bowlers in the West Indies-leg of the ongoing T20 World Cup. Arshdeep was lethal in India's

seven-wicket win over USA, snaring four wickets for just nine runs in New York on Wednesday.

Jasprit Bumrah is India's preferred choice and Kumble

has no doubt that Arshdeep also gives you an extra variety should combine with him with his left-arm pace. So along side all-rounder Hardik overall, he must be happy." Arshdeep has done well for India in the three T20 World Cup matches so far, picking up seven wickets at an economy

Pakistan, and also the way he Siraj," the former India coach told ESPNCricinfo.

India will play Canada in their final Group A match at Lauderhill, Florida on "If at all India takes that option of going with just the two seamers and Hardik Pandya. Saturday before departing for So yes, in that sense, plus he the Caribbean.

To be very honest only one will play, and I think Kuldeep will be the first preference because of what he has done in the last one and a half years. You have Axar and Jadeja who can give you the batting depth so I feel Kuldeep will get the nod," he said. Chawla said the 'tricky' pitch in

New York brought the best out of 'good teams' such as India. "It was tricky, no doubt, but good teams have done well. Like India defended 120 runs against Pakistan " he said

When they had made just 119 I do not think many people would have given them the chance but the way the Indian bowling unit bowled, especially Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik, that was really a treat to watch," he added.

dismissing both Rohit and Virat Kohli in the group stage match of the T20 World Cup first choice even though Chahal finished the Indian Premier League (IPL) as one of here. But India won by seven the most successful bowlers. wickets in a chase of 111 riding on Survakumar's unbeaten half century to enter the Super Eight stage. Netravalkar has been close to

> Suryakumar as the two played together for Mumbai. He was seen having a long chat with the swashbuckler and India captain Rohit after the match. "I met them after more than a decade. It was special. We were old remembering times because we played since childhood in U-15, U-17. It felt like we carried on from where we left off. Jokes from those

times, casual conversations, and dressing room banter," Netravalkar, who returned with brilliant figures of 2/18 on Wednesday night, revealed in a media interaction after the

> 'I did talk to Rohit Sharma, who was my senior in Mumbai. I've played with him there. I haven't played much with Virat, but he acknowledged our efforts after the game. It's good that they see potential in this team," he said

32-year-old Oracle The employee, who also happens to be a competent Ukelele player and a decent singer, represented India in the 2010 Under-19 World Cup before moving to the US on a scholarship to pursue higher studies in the prestigious In comparison, Siraj has Cornell University. managed just one wicket from cricketing journey His three games at a strike rate of restarted once here and he is

now a key player for the US which team, is an amalgamation of talent primarily from India, Pakistan and the West Indies. At the ongoing World Cup,

Asked how he effected Kohli's dismissal, Netravalkar said: "That's my stock ball. I don't want to give too much away. The first ball, I tried to hit the top of off-stump, as simple as that. I didn't try to do anything special or get a wicket. It was a good ball and seamed nicely." He loves cricket but at the same

time, he also enjoys his job and would never give up on it. "I love my job at Oracle, and I

enjoy entering the field and bowling every ball. I'm blessed that I get to do what I love the most. That's how it works.'

Asked about his journey, he said it's hard to describe it in a few sentences. "It's been a journey of almost a

decade with ups and downs. I had to take a practical call when I wasn't making it big in India due to the strong competition there," he recalled. "I got a good offer from one of the top universities, so I thought it was practical to pursue my other love and came here. I'm glad that God has given me another chance to pursue cricket again.'

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Pandya. It will help India field an extra spinner on the slow Caribbean pitches. "I think the way he (Arshdeep) of 6.225 and strike rate of bowled that last over against 10.28.

can bowl in different areas in the T20 game, I think certainly puts him ahead of Mohamed