OPINION 6

WILL BRITISH INDIANS

BACK RISHI SUNAK?

WORLD 8

SEWAGE AND GARBAGE

PALESTINIANS SURROUNDED BY

MONEY 10

SENSEX BREACHES

79,000 LEVEL

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RAIPUR, FRIDAY JUNE 28, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

BUMRAH 1000 TIMES BETTER THAN ME: KAPIL DEV 12 SPORTS

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In this combo photo, men arrested in the NEET-UG paper leak case being taken to

CBI makes first arrest in NEET case

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

President Murmu slams Emergency

 \mathbf{I}^{n} the backdrop of a spate of entrance and job related examinations paper leaks, President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said the Government was fully committed to investigating the recent incidents and ensure that the guilty are pun-

Addressing the 18th Lok Sabha for the first time, Murmu said her Government was working to create an environment to enable youth of the country to dream big and realise their dreams. As she mentioned the steps taken by the Government on the education front, some Opposition members were heard shouting "NEET". Speaking about the recent gen

eral elections, Murmu said the whole world is talking about successful completion of India's Lok Sabha polls. "The world is witnessing that the people of India have elected a stable Government with clear majority for a third consecutive term, she told the joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament.

In her first address to a joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha after Prime Minister Narendra Modi began his third term, Murmu described the poll result as an endorsement of his Government's policies while ruing attempts to weaken people's faith in electoral process including EVMs, an apparent swipe at Opposition parties. It is like cutting the very branch on which "we all are sitting", she said.



session of the 18th Lok Sabha began on Monday and the 264th session of the Rajya Sabha will begin on June 27

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

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

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

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

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

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

were being taken up, they were opposed and attempts were made to spread negativity," she On paper leasks, she said, "If

due to any reason there is obstruction in examinations it is not appropriate. Sanctity and transparency are a must in government recruitments and examinations.

There were incidents of paper leaks in some States earlier as well, the President said, stressing that there was need to rise above partisan politics and support the Government in taking strong steps at the national level. The President said Parliament has also made a strong law to check paper leaks and the Government is further working to reform the examination process. Modi took to social media say-

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

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



LK Advani discharged from AIIMS

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

Demand for three Deputy CMs in Karnataka Govt takes new turn

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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

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

Sources said the seer made

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

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



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

request him to fulfill this request," he said l. Echoing similar remarks, Channagiri Congress MLA Basavaraju V Shivaganga urged the party to make Shivakumar the chief minister "and then they can make a dozen people deputy

CMs; there won't be any objections". "Party high command will decide regarding more When told that the CM post DCMs, let them (ministers is not vacant, he said, "It is making the demand) be made DCMs if required, we

have no objections... We

have seen Siddaramaiah as CM for five years (in the previous tenure) and in this tenure too we have seen him as CM for one-and-a-half years; all legislators have cooperated. It has been a practice in our party that the KPCC president becomes CM, but due to certain developments things changed this time," he said. not vacant, similarly the

DCM post is also not vacant.

The post is occupied (by

this time, from one last time. Making Shivakumar the chief minister will further benefit the party."
Reacting to Shivaganga's

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

Some of the ministers have been pitching for DCM posts to be given to leaders from Veerashaiva-Lingayat, SC/ST and minority communities.

Currently, DK Shivakumar Vokkaliga from the community is the only deputy chief minister in the Siddaramaiah cabinet. "Whatever high command decides is final," Siddaramaiah told reporters in response to a question. A section within the

Congress is said to be of the

opinion that the statement

Shivakumar's leadership as more DyCM posts was part KPCC president, we have of a plan by Siddaramaiah's camp to keep Shiyakumar in check, amid talks that he might seek the chief minister's post after two-and-a-half years of this government's tenure.

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

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

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

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

Rain over Northwest likely to intensify between June 28-30

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{\text{ainfall is likely to intensify over the plains}}_{\text{of Northwest India with heavy to very}}$ heavy rain likely to lash various regions including the national capital, Punjab and parts of Rajasthan from between June 28 and June 30 June according to the India Meteor Department (IMD).

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

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



Albert Hall Museum is reflected in the puddle after rain in

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

BONHOMIE



two sides of the International Border (IB), in Samba district, on Thursday

Free treatment for all above 70 under Ayushman

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

and others. According to a study, there has

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

healthcare coverage for the

medical employer privately purchased health insurance. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced this during the manifesto's release in April before the Lok Sabha polls 2024, though the specific been a significant gap in age bracket was not detailed in



the manifesto's fine print. It had also announced inclusion of all individuals the

transgender community besides senior citizens. The government's Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme already provides coverage to 55 crores of the

Originally launched by Arun

included. poorest people in the country, with the scheme being extended to the grassrootslevel healthcare workers — the ASHA and Anganwadi accessible coverage. workers — in the interim

to ensure full recovery. Jaitley, the then Finance President Murmu during her

Union Budget, under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, hospitalisation costs, supports pre- and post-hospitalisation, medication, and more than 1,929 medical procedures including major surgeries and follow-up treatments are This initiative operates paperless and cashless at a vast

Minister, during the FY19

network of public and private hospitals, ensuring broad and Moreover, it covers the cost of

follow-up care and treatment

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

address in Parliament also

LG temporarily dissolves DDCD amid favouritism allegations

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved temporary dissolution of the Delhi Dialogue and Development Commission (DDCD) and removal of its non-official members, till a mechanism is developed for screening and selection of domain experts as its vice chairman and members, as per the rules.

In a file sent to the Delhi chief secretary, the Lieutenant Governor noted the incum-Vice-Chairperson Jasmine Shah has already been restrained to function on the post due to his political activities and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, chairman DDCD is in a judicial custody in a money laundering case. "Moreover, as per the Planning Department, it is also on record that there is no work allocation amongst the Members of DDCD. of Therefore, the continuation of non-official Members, whose appointment was made in an arbitrary manner with-

out following any procedure, drawing huge salaries is not only undesirable but also patently illegal," LG noted. Saxena said that it is a blatant and clear case of nepotism and favouritism in utter disregard of all rules. He has asked the Finance Department to humanly explore the possibility of recovering salaries paid to these non-official members of DDCD.

"The whole exercise of creating the DDCD by the incumbent Government was only to extend financial benefits and extend patronage to certain favoured political persons of partisan inclinations. Politically appointed persons holding these positions, were allowed to continue on these positions at the whims and fancies of the Chief Minister. There was no screening through a transparent process, and huge salaries were paid from the public exchequer, which were incommensurate to the duties assigned. The Planning Department of Delhi

DDCD and, therefore, the continuation of non-official Members, drawing huge salaries is not only "undesirable" but also patently illegal," the Lieutenant Governor said in a note to Chief Secretary. Saxena further said that all the Members of DDCD were being paid salary in the rank and pay equivalent to the Secretary to the Government of India. The Lieutenant Governor

highlighted how Dven more baffling is the case of appointment of Gopal Mohan as Non-Official Member in March 2020. The Three-Member Committee constituted by the then Lt. Governor in 2016 to look into executive actions of the incumbent government had commented in respect of the appointment of Mohan as Advisor to Chief Minister. The Committee had pointed out as to how the political dispensation with some deft moves and sleight of hand elevated his position and arbitrarily decided his pay and perks. Despite these

observations, Mohan was again accommodated, this time by appointing him as Non-Official Member of DDCD in the rank, pay and facilities equivalent to Secretary to the Government of India. It appears this decision was only made with an objective of accommodating Mohan and other politically affiliated persons by offering them disproportionate pay and perks.

In view of the arbitrary nature of appointments, it is abundantly clear that all the actions taken in the appointment of

Vice-Chairperson, non-official members without following due process are void abinitio. The incumbent Vice-Chairperson Shri Jasmine Shah has already been restrained to function on the post due to his political activities and Shri Arvind Kejriwal, Chairman DDCD is in a judicial custody in a money laundering casé.

DDCD was established by the GNCTD through a Cabinet Decision No. 2131 dated 27th February, 2015. Some changes were made in its constitution and mandate vide subsequent The DDCD was intended to be an institution of public impor-

tance to advise Govt. of NCT of Delhi on governance and technological solutions to various problems afflicting Delhi, therefore, there was a requirement to attract persons of eminence as Vice-Chairperson and Non-official Members. It is on record that the suggestion of Planning Department, GNCTD for framing the terms of reference to include eligibility/ selection criteria for these positions and also for setting up a search committee for identification of suitable candidates for selec-

dispensation. Saxena's note further states that it transpires from the record that the politically appointed persons holding nese positions, were allowed to continue on these positions at the whims and fancies of the Chief Minister. There was no screening through a transparent process, and huge salaries were paid from the public

Delhi Police set to implement three new criminal laws

mensurate to the duties assigned. It appears that the whole exercise of creating the DDCD by the incumbent Government was only to extend financial benefits and extend patronage to certain persons of partisan inclina-Ostensibly, the Commission

was created to serve as a pol-

icy think-tank manned by domain experts, on the lines of the Planning Commission / NITI Aayog, so as to provide inputs of governance that a political executive assisted by mostly generalist civil services may be deprived of. It tion to these positions, did not was not meant to accommofind favor with the political date favoured individuals, unelected friends or politically partisan people," Saxena in a note to Services Department. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva has welcomed the temporary dissolution of the DDCD and said it is regrettable that the Kejriwal government misused the DDCD which was intended to facilitate development work, for the financial upliftment of politi-

the commission, created with good written objectives, in controversies since its incep-

Reacting to the development, Delhi cabinet minister Saurabh Bharadwai accused Saxena of doing "petty politics". "LG's dissolving Delhi Dialogue Commision is petty politics. This is well known that all Commissions, Committees, boards of Central Govt or BJP ruled state Govts have political appointees with-

out any test/interview. "It's an old practice. Women Commission, SC/ST Commission r all live examples. Irony is even Mr Viay Saxena's appointment as LG is a political appointment without any

The AAP leader said if there was an advertisement in newspapers for the post of LG, then he must enlighten the people of this country. Probably he competed in the written exam for becoming LG, Bharadwaj

advertisement, test or inter-

view, (sic)" he said in a post on

Atishi discharged from hospital

Government has put on record

that there is no work allocation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior AAP leader and Delhi Water Minister Atishi was discharged from the Lok Nayak JP Hospital on Thursday morning where she was admitted after her health deteriorated during a hunger fast demanding the release of Delhi's due share of water by Haryana.

According to a hospital official, the minister was discharged from the hospital at 10.30 am. Lok Nayak (LNJP) Hospital Director Suresh Kumar said Atishi had hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). She was initially shifted from the hospital's Intensive Care Unit (IĈU) to a normal ward after her condition improved and was discharged on Thursday morning.

"She was advised hospitalisation on Monday evening after her sugar levels dropped and ketones were detected in her



Her ketone test later came back negative and she is currently stable with mild weakness expected for a few days until she fully recovers," Dr Kumar said, adding that her pulse and blood tests have returned normal. The AAP leader, holding mul-

tiple portfolios in the Delhi cabinet, was on an indefinite hunger fast demanding the BJP-ruled Haryana release Delhi's due share of water. She was admitted to the hospital in the early hours of Tuesday after her blood sugar fell following the five-day hunger

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police is all set to implement the three criminal laws in the national Capital starting July 1, with the completion of training of 25,000 personnel.

It has also launched a dedicated application — 'E Pramaan' for carrying out procedures under the Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) to help its personnel record videos and audio of search and seizures related to the crime, they said. This app, being handled by the crime branch, will help them to directly feed the content to the police record which will help in

the further investigations, they According to a senior police officer, all the FIRs of the cases lodged on and after July 1 will be registered under section 173 of the Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in

place of section 154 of the Code



of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). The sections under Indian Penal Code (IPC) will replaced BNS (Bhartiya Nyay Sanhita) and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 by BSA, according to the new criminal laws, the officer said.

Delhi Police has imparted training to its 25,000 personnel from the ranks of assistant sub-inspectors and inspectors to assistant commissioners of police (ACP) and deputy commissioners of police (DCP), who are responsible for registering the FIRs and conducting investigations.

According to officials, Delhi Police is among the first force in the country which started training its personnel regarding the new criminal laws.

In January this year, a 14member committee was constituted to study the laws and prepare the study material for its personnel. The committee

was led by Special Commissioner of Police Chhaya Sharma and comprised DCP Joy Tirkey, Additional DCP Uma Shankar and other ACP, inspector and SI ranks

The training will continue to be imparted to their lower subordinates at district and police stations level, another officer said.

For the cases lodged on or before June 30 and their FIRs registered on or after July 1, the sections will of CrPC and IPC will be applicable, the officer said. For instance, if a cheating committed on June 29 and it is reported after July 1, the case will be registered and investigated under IPC and CrPC, he explained.

The charge sheets in the cases that occurred before July 1 will be filed according to the CrPC, however after July 1, they will be done under the procedure of

The Delhi police have given booklets to their officers with old sections of CrPC and IPC and their corresponding sections under the BNSS and BNS on the same page, officials said. These booklets will help police personnel with handy information about the new laws, they added.

The police have also filed some dummy FIRs and conducted their trial investigations to help officers get the idea of the complete procedure one the new laws are effective. It has been under practice in several districts, the officer said. Another officer said once the laws come into force, the Delhi police will have to tweak some of their orders and circulars, which were issued for the force.

has 15 police districts and around 200 police stations in them. It has a strong force with the capacity of 95,000 police

Rain causes traffic congestion, waterlogging in many parts of city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital woke up to a pleasant morning as heavy rain lashed several parts of the heat struck Delhi, waterlogging in low-lying from near Akshardham from the heat to Delhiites. However, the downpour resulted in traffic congestion and waterlogging in several areas across the city.

Commuters at many places in the city faced inconvenience as traffic police received several calls for waterlogging issues, traffic congestions and fallen trees.

The city's primary weather station Safdarjung recorded a maximum temperature of 35.4 degrees celsius, 1.8 degrees below the normal. The minimum temperature in Delhi was recorded at 28.6 degrees Celsius. The heat index or feel like temperature was recorded at 44.9 degrees celsius. The relative humidity oscillated between 82 per cent and 61

per cent. mileage dipped
The India Meteorological 12.6 due to hea
Department (IMD) earlier in frequent stops.

the day forecasted moderate to heavy rain over parts of Delhi and adjoining areas will cause him around one hour to reach slippery roads, low visibility, his home. "The traffic was traffic disruption and localised very heavy on the stretch

Amid the heavy rain, several parts of the city reported traffic snarls including heavy traffic from the Akshardham area to Ghazipur meat market due to waterlogging. Vehicles were seen crawling on the stretch. Similarly, the traffic was also heavy on the Akshardham-Sarai Kale Khan road.

A resident of Noida Ramesh Sharma shared how near Ghazipur it took him more than an hour to cross a half a kilometre stretch because of heavy traffic jams. "There were no traffic police and lorries and trucks carrying material for the construction site of Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) created chaos. It made the traffic worse," he said, adding that his average mileage dipped from 14.9 to 12.6 due to heavy traffic and

Avadesh Mehra, a resident of Ghaziabad, said that it took logging near the Ghazipur meat market roundabout. It took me an hour to pass the stretch and reach my home. The condition of traffic was very bad," Mehra said.

Akshita Sharma, who works at a firm in central Delhi, said that the traffic was very heavy from near the toll gate on NH-48. Traffic was also affected at ITO due to waterlogging. Meanwhile, the BJP slammed the AAP for waterlogging on several road stretches in the city with light rain on Thursday, alleging that around 150 of 700 drains were desilted in the city.

'Those (AAP) who used to curse the MCD earlier for all the civic problems are now themselves ruling the civic body and they can not have the excuse that they are powerless. The AAP government



is least concerned with Delhi people and their well-being," Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva stated, attacking the that need to be desilted before Monsoon every year, Sachdeva said and claimed "Our information is only around 150 were desilted so far and rest are filled with silt."

"The Delhi people are left with no option but to tolerate such a government where no minister is ready to be accountable for anything," he said, warning if the drains were not cleaned on a war footing, the Delhi people were in for worse days in the rainy season. The Monsoon is delayed this year and the agencies like MCD and PWD, both under AAP dispensation, had ample time to desilt the drains, he added.

A wall of a vacant plot collapsed due to rain in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. The police said no one was injured in the incident. "We

are investigating the matter. CCTV footage shows no one was around when the wall collapsed," a senior police officer AAP run Municipal said. People took to social Corporation of Delhi (MCD). media platforms to share the by them. Commuters said that there was heavy traffic on the airport route from Raja Garden marble market till Naraina, from Meera Bagh/Vikaspuri flyover towards Peeragarhi, and on the Mahipalpur-Gurgaon route. Nishant Yaduvanshi, a resident of Bhopura in Ghaziabad, said, "I was going to Patparganj to see an ailing relative. However, the traffic condition was very pathetic from Anand Vihar to Ghazipur roundabout."

Police said they received calls of waterlogging from 32 areas including near Mayapuri flyover, Jhandewalan temple, Peeragarhi Chowk, Paschim Vihar, Punjabi Bagh, Tilak Bazar, Lodi Colony, Burari, Mohan Garden, South Patel Nagar, Rohini, Nawada Extension, Shahdara, Extension,

Hamidpur, Najafgarh, Dwarka Mor, Mundka Industrial area among others.

Traffic related calls were received from 15 areas including Anand Vihar to Ghazipur, Pankaj Central Market I.P. Extension, Kashmere Gate, Nalwa Road, Janpura and other areas.

While the IMD has not said when the monsoon is expected to arrive in Delhi, private weather forecasting agency Skymet Weather Services had said on Wednesday that the monsoon current could arrive in Delhi by the end of this week. The monsoon current typically enters Delhi between June 27 and 29.

Last year, it arrived on June 26 while the first monsoon showers of 2022 were recorded on June 30, according to official data. Temperatures are expected to dip further in the coming days as IMD predicts 35 degrees on Saturday and Sunday, 33 degrees on Monday and Tuesday and 34 degrees on Wednesday.

Agencies make plans to handle waterlogging ahead of monsoon

AM eteorological Department (IMD) may predict the arrival of monsoon in the next two days in Delhi, agencies here are putting lastminute touches to their plans to handle waterlogging in the

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has set up six control rooms equipped with over 160 pumps to ensure that Lutyens' Delhi does not face waterlogging. According to officials, CCTV cameras have already been installed at all the waterlogging hotspots in the area. The feed from these cameras will be monitored through the day at the Integrated Command Control Centre at Palika Kendra, they said.

The civic agency has identified five vulnerable points of water stagnation -- Africa Avenue, Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Panchkuian Road, Purana Quila Road and Lodhi Estate -- on the basis of feedback from public and traffic police officers. The drainage control rooms

have been set up at Sangli Mess, Khan Market, Netaji Nagar, Malcha Marg, Mandir Marg and Connaught Place. These will be manned by senior officers and will function round the clock to address waterlogging com-plaints," an official said. "There are 99 permanent pumps for draining out water and 62 temporary pumps," he

Apart from the setting up of control rooms, the focus of the agency is also on desilting of drainage system, the official said, adding that it will be completed by June 30. There are 14 drainage systems across the NDMC area and the length of transverse drainage

line is 270.82 km. Public



Department, which has a major chunk of roads under its jurisdiction, said they have repaired the permanent pumps and temporary pumps have been procured to drain out water

The Delhi Traffic Police had identified 308 locations that had witnessed waterlogging last year. There are 214 locations under the PWD. Out of these, there were around 40 locations that required engineering intervention for

waterlogging. At other places, maintenance work, like cleaning of bellmouth, removing of debris, etc, was required," the official said. The CCTV cameras have been set up at waterlogging hotspots and they will be monitored by a control room. The feed from these cameras will also be available on the cellphones of the concerned area officials and they will be able to keep tabs on whether there is waterlog-

The department will also be deploying maintenance vans and teams to move in Delhi during monsoon. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has completed almost 95 per cent of desilting work. "The MCD has completed approximately 95.46 per cent of work for desilting of drains till date. Their target is to complete this work by June 30. MCD

has a total of 20,884 drains

that are less than four feet deep across its 12 zones and 713 drains that are more than four feet deep. The cleaning of these drains are done at the departmental level and through tender process, respectively," a department official said. The civic body has set a tar-

get to remove 1,27,368 metric tons of silt in two phases under its action plan for the year 2024-2025. In the first phase, the target to remove 78,062 metric tons of silt was set till June 15. In the second phase, the target to remove 49,305 metric tons of silt is set till January 15, 2025. The silt released during cleaning from all the drains has been disposed at sanitary landfill sites at Bhalswa, Okhla and Ghazipur. The concerned department ensures that the silt taken out from the drain is picked up within three to five days and sent to the landfill site, the official said. | Mata Ki Jai". The Opposition

BJP, Congress protest against AAP Govt over water crisis in MCD meeting

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The House meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)on Thursday witnessed stormy scenes both BJP and Congress councillors protested against the Arvind Kejriwal Government over the water crisis in the national cap-

As soon as the meeting started on Thursday, after the condolence motion, BJP councillors started a ruckus over the water problem. BJP councillors came to the well and started sloganeering.Soon after the proceedings began at 11.55 am after an hour's delay, opposition councillors rushed into the well of the House and raised slogans against the Kejriwal-led AAP Government creating ruckus in the house over water problems. BJP councillors carried earthen pots and raised slogans like "Jai Shree Ram" and "Bharat



BJP Councillors raise slogans as they protest against water crisis during the House meeting at Civic Centre

councillors also carried placards that had 'puche Delhi ek sawal, pani kab degi Kejriwal' and 'har ghar bacha bimar hai, saf pani ki darkar hai' written over it. Amid the sloganeering, Mayor Shelly Oberoi passed several proposals and adjourned the House till the next meeting. Leader of Opposition Raja Iqbal Singh said that there is a serious problem of water in the national capital holding the Delhi government responsible. "Due

to the failures of the Kejriwal

Delhi are yearning for every drop of water. The BJP is with the people and is raising their voice in the House," he said. Singh alleged that water is being wasted due to leakage in the pipeline. Taking a jibe at the indefinite fast of Water Minister Atishi, he said that the public is being misled by pretending to fast. BJP will also 'gherao' the Delhi Legislative Assembly

against the demand for water

and corruption.

Government, the people of



CM for probe into embezzlement of farmer's money

STAFF REPORTER RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai Chief on Thursday ordered a probe into the alleged embezzlement of money from a farmer's account and fraud committed in farm loans in Bilaspur district.

During the Jandarshan programme at his official residence, Sai sought details of the grievances of the people. Farmer Om Prakash from Bilaspur said that money had been fraudulently withdrawn from his cooperative bank

from his cooperative bank account. Besides, a Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan had been fraudulently obtained in his name.

Acting on his complaint, the Chief Minister instructed the Bilaspur Collector to investigate into the matter. He



called for strict action against those responsible for the fraud and called for return of the misappropriated amount to the farmer.

Om Prakash, a farmer from Navagarh village in Bilaspur, alleged that Ramesh Sahu, a computer operator at the Seva Sahakari Samiti Sipat, had withdrawn Rs 27,000 from his cooperative bank account on three occasions by

forging his signature.

Upon examining the withdrawal slips, it was discovered that Ramesh Sahu had indeedy withdrawn the

money. Ramesh Sahu apparently enticed Om Prakash's daughter, obtained the bank passbook and withdrew money. Om Prakash told the Chief Minister that a loan of Rs 16,000 has been taken in his name in 2019.

Court rejects Soumya Chaurasia's bail plea



STAFF REPORTER

A special Anti-Corruption Bureau/Economic Offences Wing (ACB/EOW) court here on Thursday rejected the bail plea of suspended deputy secretary Soumya Chaurasia in an alleged coal levy scam.

ACB/EOW Special Judge Nidhi Sharma passed the order, ACB/EOW Deputy Director (Prosecution) Mithlesh Verma told The Pioneer.

ACB/EOW Special Judge Nidhi Sharma passed the order, ACB/EOW Deputy **Director (Prosecution)** Mithlesh Verma told The Pioneer. She moved her bail application on Monday.

She moved her bail application on Monday. In January 2024, the ACB/EOW had named 36 persons including two former cabinet ministers in the FIR related to the alleged multi-crore coal scam based on the complaint by the Enforcement Directorate.

Reappointing Pitroda unmasks Congress' true character: BJP



 $T^{he\,BJP\,in\,Chhattisgarh\,on}_{Thursday\,\,said\,\,the\,\,reap-}$ pointment of Sam Pitroda as Chairman of the Oversees Congress had unmasked the true character of India's oldest political party.

In a statement, tribal leader and Chhattisgarh Forest Minister Kedar Kashyap said Pitroda made racist remarks and had advo-cated inheritance tax, both of which were highly objection-

Pitroda had said that ..people in the East (of India) look like Chinese, people in the West look like Arabs, people in the North look like maybe White and people in the South look like Africans," Kashyap recalled.

The reappointment of Pitroda proves that the people of the country are not the priority of Congress "but the racist Pitroda is", Kashyap said. The removal of Pitroda during the election time was merely a gimmick, he added.

17 Maoists with Rs 5L bounty surrender



STAFF REPORTER

Seventeen Maoists, five of them carrying a cumulative reward of Rs 5 lakhs on their heads, surrendered in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh.

Sunita Nag and Botti Mandavi as well as Pankaj Markam, Rodda Madkam alias Dashru, Bhima Bhogami and 12 others turned themselves in on Wednesday, Dantewada

Gaurav Rai said. The first five, including two women, carried a bounty of Rs 1 each on their heads.

Superintendent of Police

So far, 841 Maoists, including 186 carrying cash rewards, have quit violence in the district since June 2020

Artificial limb, calipers fitting camp on June 30

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Narayan Seva Sansthan is set to hold a free artificial limb and calipers fitting camp on June 30 for the differently-abled in the Chhattisgarh capital.

The camp will be held at the Jain Dadawadi premises on MG Road from 8 a.m. to

More than 1,500 patients had attended a free artificial limb measurement camp held in March this year at Dada Badi in Raipur.

Of these, 750 people will benefit from artificial limb and calipers at the

amp.
This is part of the group's Compassion" plan. Established in 1985

41,000 artificial limbs

Sansthan has provided over The incident took place when Constable



STAFF REPORTER

A Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) trooper was on Thursday critically injured after he shot himself with his service rifle in a suicide bid in Bijapur district.

Manoj Dinkar was in his barrack in the CAF

camp in Rampuram village, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Kumar Yadav said.

Dinkar, from the 15th battalion of the CAF, shot himself, leaving him seriously injured. He was rushed to a hospital and then to Jagdalpur in Bastar district for further treat-

No suicide note was found at the spot.

Multi-Village scheme to quench thirst of rural Chhattisgarh

STAFF REPORTER

Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Public Health Engineering Arun Sao inspected work on a water treatment plant as part of the Bhelwatikra-Sambalpuri Multi-Village Water Supply Schemel to provide drinking water to 29 nearby villages.

The scheme has been



about the operation and told them to complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

He also visited the

Sao sought details

intake well at Kelo Dam, where the base construction is finished and work on the upper parts has ommenced.

Sao also reviewed the progress of work on the Raigarh-Punjipathra-Gharghoda-Dharamjaigarh road and sought updates on other ongoing projects.

He stressed the importance of maintaining quality in all the projects and instructed officials to conduct regular field inspections to ensure timely comple-

under the Jal Jeevan

launched to cater the need for potable water

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINETENDING ENGINEER PUBLIC WORK DEPARTMENT, BILASPUR CIRCLE **BILASPUR, CHHATTISGARH** AMENDMENT NOTICE

Amendment are made in N.I.T. No. 22, 23, 24 dated

24.06.2024:-	, , ,
Existing Description	To be read
नि.आ.सू.क्र 1, 2, 3	नि.आ.सू.क 22, 23, 24

G- 242500629/3

Other conditions will remain same. Superintending Engineer PWD, Bilaspur Circle Bilaspur (CG)

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER E/M LIGHT MACHINERY TUBEWELL & GATE DIVISION SIHAVA BHAVAN PARISAR CIVIL LINE WRD RAIPUR (C.G.)

CORRIGENDUM No-01

IN NIT No. 03/SAC/2023-24 Raipur Dated 07/03/2024 System Tender No. 153715 Renovation of Sluice gate under Kodar project in block Mahasamund, District Mahasamund, Amount of Contract Rs. 99.12 Lakh following amendments are made -

S.No.	Particulars	Previous Published	Amendment As
1	Bid start date & time	14-03-2024, 17:31 Hours	28-06-2024, 17:31 Hours
2	Bid Due date & time	28-03-2024, 17:31 Hours	12-07-2024, 17:31 Hours
3	Bid Open start date & time	01-04-2024, 17:31 Hours	15-07-2024, 17:31 Hours

All other terms and conditions of NIT will remain unchanged. G.No. 08429 Dated 11/03/2024

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER E/M LIGHT MACHINERY TUBEWELL AGATE DIVISION WRD RAIPUR (C.G.) G-242500639/3

Mission

Officials from the

Health Public **Engineering Department** told the Minister that raw water will be sourced from Kelo Dam and treated before distribution to the villages.

Public Works Department Sector-19, North Block, Naya Raipur (C.G.)

E-Procurement Tender Notice

E-mail: tenders-pwd.cg@gov.ii NIT No.027/TC/EinC/PWD/2024-25

The Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh invites percentage rate bids on electronic tendering system under RCPLWE RRP-III in the district Bijapur for construction of 01 Bridge with estimated cost amounting Rs 773.28 Lacs including their maintenance for five years from the contractors registered with unified registration system (eregistration) in Chhattisgarh. Non registered bidders may submit bid; however the successful bidder must get registered in appropriate class under "Unified Registration System (e-Registration) of Chhattisgarh before signing the agreement.

The bid document shall be available to bidders online free of cost and should be submitted online e-procurement system of government of Chhattisgarh in https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in. Bids form will be available on the website from 25.06.2024 and may be submitted up to 17:00 Hrs. on 11.07.2024 For participating in bidding process, bidders are required to register in the above web-site with nominal fee of Rs 500/- to be paid onine to service provider. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have a valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from authorized certifying

The bidders are required to submit (a) original bid security in approved form and (b) original affidavit duly verified and notarized as per clause 4.4 B (a) (ii) and 4.4 B (c) to Chief Engineer, Tender Cell, First Floor, Nirman Bhawan, PWD, North Block, Sector-19, Naya Raipur (C.G.) 492-002 as per provisions of bid document through Speed/ Registered post, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive.

Detailed schedule of important dates may be seen on notice board of offices and also available on website of Public Works Department http://pwd.cg.nic.in

G-242500633/6

(Central Tender Cell) Office of Engineer-In-Chief P.W.D. Nava Raipur Atal Nagar (C.G.)



Thousands of people from across Chhattisgarh throng the first day of the weekly Jandarshan programme at Chief Minister's official residence on Thursday. They were warmly welcomed following the tradition of 'Atithi Devo Bhawah'.

CM promises to help **Ankita play Olympics**

STAFF REPORTER

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Thursday assured archery player Ankita Maurya from Charoda town that the government will help fulfill her dream of playing in the Olympics.

Ankita got the assurance while attending the 'Jandarshan' programme at the Chief Minister's House here. She told Sai that she has

won a bronze medal in the Khelo India Games. She requested the Chief Minister for a new kit to practice as her old kit was worn out.



was committed to promote sports talent in Chhattisgarh. A government official

forwarded to the Sports Department and she would get every possible support.

She told Sai that she has won a bronze medal in the Khelo India Games. She requested the Chief Minister for a new kit to practice as her old kit was worn out.

Ankita thanked the Chief Minister for listening to her patiently.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisements.

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Rahul takes umbrage at Speaker's Emergency reference

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

eader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi met Speaker Om Birla on Thursday and voiced his displeasure over the reference to Emergency made by the chair, saying it was "clearly political" and could have been avoided. It was a courtesy call during which Gandhi also raised the issue of Emergency being invoked by the Speaker in the House, Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal told reporters after the meeting in the Parliament House. "It was a courtesy call. The

Speaker declared Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition and after that, he along with other INDIA bloc partner leaders met the Speaker," he said. Asked whether Rahul discussed the issue of Emergency being raised in the House, Venugopal said, "We discussed so many things about Parliament functioning. Of course, this issue also came up."



Opposition, informed the Speaker about this issue and said it could have been avoided from the Speaker's reference. That is clearly a political reference, it could have been avoided," the Congress leader said.

Separately, Venugopal also wrote to Birla, expressing the party's displeasure over the bringing of the resolution on the Emergency as his first task after assuming office. "I am writing this in the con-

impacting the very credibility of the institution of Parliament. Yesterday, that is 26 June 2024, at the time of offering felicitations on your election as Speaker Lok Sabha, there was a general camaraderie in the House as such occasions generate," he said in his letter to the Speaker.

"However, what followed thereafter, which is a reference from the Chair after your acceptance speech, in regard to the declaration of Emergency half a century ago, is deeply shocking. Making such a political reference from the Chair is unprecedented in the annals of the history of Parliament. This coming from the Chair as one of the 'first duties' of a newly elected Speaker assumes even graver proportions.

I, on behalf of the Indian National Congress, express our profound concern and anguish over this travesty of Parliamentary traditions," Venugopal said in his letter to

Soon after his election as Lok

Sabha Speaker, Birla had or Wednesday set off a firestorm by reading out a resolution condemning the imposition of Emergency as an attack on the Constitution by then prime minister Indira Gandhi, an act that triggered vociferous protests by Congress member in the House.

Birla recalled that it was on June 26, 1975, that the country woke up to the cruel realities of Emergency when the Congress government jailed opposition leaders, imposed many restrictions on the media and also curbed the autonomy of the judiciary.

Rahul Gandhi's meeting with the Speaker was the first after he assumed charge as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

He was accompanied by Samajwadi Party's Dharmendra Yadav and Dimple Yadav, DMK's Kanimozhi, NCP's (SP) Supriya Sule, RJDs Misa Bharti and TMC's Kalyan Banerjee, RSP's NK Premachandran and

The BJP, meanwhile, has hit back at the Opposition over its 'sengol' offensive. "The Samajwadi Party earlier attacked and abused Ramcharitmanas and now Sengol, which is part of Indian culture and particularly Tamil culture. The DMK must clarify if they support this insult of 'sengol', a senior BJP func-

tionary was reported as saying. Tamil Nadu BJP chief K

save the Constitution."

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

controversy after he demand-

Tamil Nadu connection - be

replaced with the Constitution

in the Lok Sabha, prompting

reactions from the Opposition

In a letter to pro-tem Speaker

Chaudhary called Sengol an

"anachronistic symbol of monarchy" in a democratic

India. Explaining his reasoning,

Chaudhary stated, "Sengol

means 'Raj Dand'. It also means

'Raja ka Danda'. After ending

the princely order, the country

became independent. Will the

country be run by 'Raja ka

danda' or the Constitution? I

demand that Sengol be

removed from Parliament to

Mahtab,

and BJP leaders.

Bhartruhari

NEW DELHI



removal of Sengol from LS

Row after SP MP seeks

Annamalai questioned whether this was the INDIA bloc's collective stance on the issue and said that DMK's comments on the same are awaited. He said that the Sengol was in fact banished by former Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and reinstated to its rightful place by PM Narendra Modi. "We wish to educate the illinformed Samajwadi Party MP that Sengol is a symbol of righteousness, which was banished by Pandit Nehru and is restored to its rightful place today by PM Narendra Modi,' he wrote on X (formerly Twitter). The Tamil Nadu BJP chief further mentioned that the Sengol was reinstated in the New Parliament building in the presence and with the blessings of the Adheenams from Tamil Nadu. BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla questioned, "If it was a symbol of monarchy, then why did the first Prime Minister Nehru accept it? Was he accepting that symbol and monarchy?" LJP (Ram Vilas) MP Chirag Paswan also responded, asserting that Congress and

Congress-led governments have always tried to misrepresent historical symbols. "These people cannot do positive politics... They only engage in politics of division," he said. Amid the controversy, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav explained that Chaudhary was highlighting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not bow before the Sengol after taking his oath in the Lok Sabha. He suggested that the PM, having bowed before the Sengol during its installation might have for installation, might have forgotten to do so when taking the oath. Senior Congress leader and MP B Manickam Tagore echoed the Samajwadi Party MP on the 'sengol' row. RJD MP Manoj Jha and Lalu Prasad Yadav's daughter Misa Bharti also supported SP's MP on Sengol controversy.

The war of words between the Opposition and the BJP over Sengol, is not new. At the time when it was installed in the new parliament building, it had already turned into a bone of contention between the ruling side and a large section of the Opposition. The Opposition's 'sengol' strategy unfolds alongside the INDIA bloc's focus on the Constitution to challenge the third Narendra Modi government. Throughout this session, the Constitution has been prominently displayed at Opposition meetings.

Govt to strengthen IITs, NITs, IIMs, AIIMS, says President

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $P^{\text{resident Droupadi Murmu}}_{\text{on Thursday said the gov}}$ ernment is aiming to strengthen institutions like IITs, NITs, IIMs and AIIMS and increase their numbers as per requirement. In her address to the joint sitting of Parliament, Murmu said that earlier students who studied in Indian languages faced an unfair situation but with the implementation of the new National Education Policy (NEP), the injustice has been removed. IITs, 16 IIITs, 7 IIMs, 15 new AIIMS, 315 medical colleges and 390 universities have been

established. It is the endeavour of the government to further strengthen these institutions and increase their numbers as per requirement," Murmu said. The president said the government is working towards estab-lishing a digital university as "Programmes like Atal

Tinkering Labs, Start-up India and Stand-up India have helped improve the capacity of youth of the country. It is due to these efforts that today India has become the third largest start-up ecosystem in the world," she added.

ernment is creating an enabling environment for the youth of this country to dream big and realise those dreams.

"Earlier, the students who studied in Indian languages faced an unfair situation. With the implementation of the new National Education Policy, my government has been able to remove this injustice. Now students can take up engineering courses in Indian languages, she said.



Murmu cited self-attestation of certificates and abolishing interviews for certain categories of government job recruitment as key good governance initiatives of the gov-

"In the last 10 years, every such obstacle which caused trouble to our youth has been removed. In the past the youth had to run from pillar to post in order to get their certificates attested. Now their self-attestation is suf-

Interviews for recruitment into Group-C and Group-D posts of the central government have been abolished," Murmu

Citing self-attestation of certificates and abolishing interviews for certain categories of government job recruitment as Murmu said it has been an electives, President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said all such obstacles for the country's youth have been removed.

Murmu said the government is working towards creating an enabling environment for the youth of this country to dream big and realise those dreams. "In the last 10 years, every such obstacle which caused trouble to our youth has been removed. In the past the youth had to run from pillar to post in order to

get their certificates attested. Now their self-attestation is sufficient. Interviews for recruitment into Group-C and Group-D posts of the central government have been abolished," the president said. She said it is the continuous

endeavour of the government to provide right opportunities to the youth of the country to demonstrate their talent. "Whether it is competitive

examinations or government recruitment there should be no reason for any hindrance. This process requires complete transparency and probity,' Murmu said

She said the Lok Sabha poll has been an election of trust in policy, intention, dedication and decisions.

decisive government", "trust in good governance, stability and continuity" and "trust in honesty and hard work" among

"It is a stamp of approval for my government's mission of service and good governance undertaken in the past 10 years. It is a mandate that the work of making India a developed nation continues uninterrupted and India attains its goals," the president said.

Four per cent Indians lacked access to urban centres in 2020: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In 2020, only four per cent of India's population lacked access to an urban centre — a densely populated built-up area - and three per cent could access only towns within an hour of travel, according to a study published in the journal Nature Cities. The research, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Italy, looked at over 30,000 urban centres around the world and, based on the number of people accessing them, classified them as one of four -- town, small city, intermediate city or large city. While a town had about 20,000

people living there, accessing basic facilities, such as groceries and primary education, a large city housed more than a million people and offered the most diversified facilities, including an airport, according to the research. Even with half the world's

population living outside the urban centres, the authors found "substantial interconnectedness" as 92 per cent were able to access them in could be seen as 'commuting distance'. Of the 92 per cent, 55 per cent were found to live in or near a town or a small city, while 37 per cent were found to live in or near an intermediate or a large city.

Further, in 2020, 41 per cent of the 7.8 billion world population could access multiple tiers (such as a town and a small city) within an hour's travel, while 57 per cent and 64 per cent (five billion) were able to



ling for two and three hours, respectively. However, many locations close to a town or a small city can also access a higher tier within an hour's travel and, therefore, the authors summed up that twothirds of the people around the world (five billion) live within an hour's travel from either an intermediate or a large city providing more specialised services.They added that "large cities are less relevant than smaller ones in regard to engaging populations outside their urban core". The study represented the "first systematic worldwide delineation of cityregions across multiple urban tiers," according to lead author Andrea Cattaneo, Senior Economist at FAO. "This unprecedented dataset

(spanning across 213 countries erful tool for understanding how societies are organised around urban centres, unlocking new insights for sustainable development strategies," Cattaneo said.

In a warmer world and with commuting on the rise, such studies are increasingly imperative for assuring energy-efficient and equitable transportation, as well as effective natural resource management," the lead author said.

Six new Rajya Sabha members take oath

PNS NEW DELHI

Six newly-elected MPs from Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh took oath as members of Rajya Sabha on Thursday. Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar welcomed the new members. The first among those who took oath was Congress MP Akhilesh Prasad Singh (Bihar), followed by Sarfaraz Ahmad of JMM and Pradip Kumar Varma of the BJP (both Jharkhand).

BJP leaders Banshilal Gurjar, Maya Naroliya and Balyogi Umeshnath also took oath as members of the Upper House. They represent Madhya Pradesh. All BJP members and the lone Congress members took oath in Hindi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Leader of the House J P Nadda and Leader of the were present in the House during the oath-taking.

On the day Nadda was appointed leader of the upper House, the first day of the 264th session of the Upper House. "Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda has been appointed as the Leader of the House in the Council of States," Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar announced, amid thumping of desks. BJP had earlier decided to appoint Nadda as the leader of the



House and the same was conveyed to the Rajya Sabha. Later Modi introduced his Council of Ministers in the Rajya Sabha, amid clapping and thumping of desks.

The prime minister had introduced his Council of Ministers in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday after the election of the speaker. Nadda, Leader of Opposition

Kharge and Congress leader Sonia Gandhi were among those present in the House. Thursday was the first day of the 264th session of the Rajya Sabha. The House met after President Droupadi Murmu addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. The President's address was also tabled in the Rajya Sabha. The House will pass a Motion of Thanks on the President's address after a discussion.

having Deputy Speaker in LS, say sources PTI ■ NEW DELHI

NDA open to

The ruling Democratic ruling National (NDA) is open to the idea of having a Deputy Speaker in the Lok Sabha, sources said on Thursday, stressing that a call on the matter will be taken

They said the NDA has not rejected the Opposition's claim on the post but criticised its insistence that its nominee should be given the position, saying such a precondition could not be considered during the speaker's election.

There was no Deputy Speaker during the previous Lok Sabha.

It may be noted the a consensus on Om Birla's choice as the speaker fell through as the opposition INDIA Bloc insisted that it should be promised the position of his deputy as per "convention".

The NDA's brains trust had said that the opposition's demand can be considered when the election for the deputy speaker takes place but it should not impose any precondition.

Desi firms met 70 per cent defence needs last year, says President Murmu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Nearly 70 per cent of the total procurement of defence forces was sourced from domestic firms last year, President Droupadi Murmu said on Thursday, outlining the government's focus to boost production of critical military ĥardware within India.

In an address to a joint sitting of Parliament, Murmu said modernisation of the armed forces is essential for a strong India and that reforms in the military should be a continuous process to ensure that it maintains "supremacy" during

Listing steps to boost domestic defence production, she said the reforms undertaken in the sector have resulted in India now manufacturing defence equipment worth more than Rs one lakh crore.

The president said the BrahMos missile deal with the Philippines has strengthened India's standing in the defence export sector.

"Modernisation of our armed forces is essential for a strong India. Reforms in our armed



defence sector in the last 10 years. Reforms like CDS (Chief of Defence Staff) have given new strength to our defence forces," she said. Murmu also highlighted the

duced many reforms in the

government's focus on boost-ing domestic defence industries and how it is working on developing two defence corridors one in Uttar Pradesh and the other in Tamil Nadu.

"It is a matter of joy for all of us that last year nearly 70 per cent of the total procurement of the defence forces has been sourced from Indian manufacturers only," she said.

"Our defence forces have decided not to import over 500 defence items. All these arms and defence

related equipment are being procured only from Indian companies," Murmu noted. The president also talked about

India's rising defence exports. "In the last decade, our defence exports have increased more than 18 times to the level of Rs 21,000 crore," she said. The BrahMos Missile defence

deal with the Philippines has strengthened India's standing in defence export sector," Murmu said. Two weeks back, Defence

Minister Rajnath Singh said the government will work assiduously to increase the defence exports to Rs 50,000 crore by 2028-29 from current Rs

Under a 2022 deal, India is supplying three batteries of the missiles, their launchers and related equipment to the Philippines. In April, India delivered the

first batch of the missile to the The president mentioned various steps initiated by the gov-

ernment to make the defence sector self-reliant. "The defence sector has great-

ly benefitted from the reforms in ordnance factories. More than 40 ordnance factories have been restructured into seven defence sector enterprises, resulting in improvement of their capacity and efficiency," she said. "It is due to such reforms that

India is now manufacturing defence equipment worth more than Rs one lakh crore," she added. The value of defence production in 2022-23 crossed the fig-

ure of Rs one lakh crore for the first time, according to the defence ministry. The president said the government has always given priority to the needs of the person-

nel in the armed forces

Loneliness raises risk of stroke among older adults quences," said Soh.Dr. Jyoti

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

hronic loneliness isn't just Ctied to cardiovascular risks anymore; a new research shows it significantly increases stroke risk in older adults-up to 56 per cent higher for those chronically lonely. This highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to tackle this growing public health issue, particularly in India too where the prevalence of loneliness among elderly has been found to be as high as 13.4 per cent, as per a survey. The present study by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, published in eClinicalMedicine emphasises the importance of addressing loneliness to improve long-term health outcomes and prevent serious conditions like stroke. "Loneliness is increasingly considered a major public health issue. Our findings further highlight why that is," said lead author Yenee Soh, research associate in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. "Especially when experienced chronically, our study suggests



which is already one of the leading causes of long-term disability and mortality worldwide."This study is one of the first to examine the association between loneliness changes and stroke risk over time. Using 2006-2018 data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), the researchers assessed the association between changes in loneliness and stroke incidence over time. During 2006-2008, 12,161 participants-all adults ages 50 and above who never had a strokeresponded to questions on the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale, from which the researchers created summary loneliness scores. Four years later (2010-2012), 8,936 participants who remained in the study responded to the same questions again. The loneliness may play an imporresearchers then placed the tant role in stroke incidence, participants into one of four

groups according to their loneliness scores across the two time points: "consistently low" (those who scored low on the loneliness scale at both baseline and follow-up); "remitting" (those who scored high at baseline and low at follow-up); "recent onset" (those who scored low at baseline and high at follow-up); and "consistently high" (those who scored high at both baseline and follow-up). Among the participants whose loneliness was measured at baseline only, 1,237 strokes occurred during the follow-up period (2006-2018). Among the participants who provided two assessments of loneliness over time, 601 strokes occurred during the follow-up period (2010-2018).

" If we fail to address their feelings of loneliness, on a micro and macro scale, there could be profound health conse-

Kapoor, Founder-Director and Senior Psychiatrist, Manasthali who is not related with this study too expressed concern that loneliness has significant effects on the brain, influencing various aspects of cognitive and emotional functioning. Acute loneliness can change the neurochemistry of the brain, turning off the dopamine neurons and causing some degeneration in the brain. Chronic loneliness often leads to elevated levels of stress, which in turn raises cortisol levels in the body. Persistently high cortisol can result in high blood pressure, a major risk factor for stroke, she added. The inflammation associated with chronic stress and the impaired immune response due to loneliness further exacerbates the

JR Gupta, from the Senior Citizens Council of Delhi, highlighted the alarming findings of the study, emphasizing how loneliness profoundly impacts health, particularly among older adults. He stressed the urgent need for increased attention and support for this critical public health issue, especially for those in their later years.

risk of stroke, she added.

Dushyant rules out alliance with BJP in Haryana | Dibrugarh grapples

annayak Janta Party leader Dushvant Chautala on Thursday said his party is ready to support the Congress in the Rajya Sabha election and ruled out any alliance with the ruling BJP in Harvana before or after the next Assembly polls.

The JJP's four-and-a-half-year alliance with the BJP came to an end after the saffron party replaced Manohar Lal Khattar with Navab Singh Saini as chief minister in March.

In the recently held general elections, JJP fielded elections, JJP fielded candidates in all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana but drew a blank. Congress' Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda won the Rohtak Lok Sabha seat, leading to a seat in the Upper House of Parliament becoming vacant.

At his first news conference here after the announcement of Lok Sabha results, Chautala, the former Harvana deputy chief minister, was asked how much of a benefit or loss his party had because of its earlier tie-up with the

The recent Lok Sabha results have shown that "what BIP had to face, we too had to face that", Chautala said and admitted that his JJP also bore the brunt of farmers' anger. Dushyant Chautala, the son of



JJP chief Ajay Singh Chautala, said the party will in the next few weeks seek feedback from its workers and based on that would decide on entering into an alliance with any party other than the BJP for the Assembly polls slated to be held in the next few months. Ruling out any truck with BJP, he said, "I can make it clear there is no point of going with the BIP in future. Even after elections, we will not have any truck with BJP," he said. Dushyant Chautala claimed

that the JJP's loss in the Lok Sabha polls was "because of our alliance with the BIP". About a Rajya Sabha seat from Haryana falling vacant

following Deepender Hooda's election to the Lok Sabha, the JJP leader said his party is

ready to support the Congress for the Upper House polls, provided they field a prominent personality or an eminent sportsperson as a candidate.

The Congress is the main opposition in Haryana But leader of opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda has remarked that other outfits should join hands and field a candidate as the grand old party does not have the required numbers to put up its candidate, Chautala said. He said, "If the Congress really wants to take on the BJP, they should not look at win or loss. If they put up any candidate which is acceptable,

we will support them. The

candidate can be any

prominent personality or

eminent person, including from the sports field and he can be joint candidate of the opposition."

But if the Congress actually does not want to put up its candidate when polls are held for the Rajya Sabha seat, it would indicate that "there is match-fixing between Congress and BJP", Chautala

"If our party had around 30 MLAs like the Congress, we would have definitely fielded candidate without thinking about winning or losing.

About the Assembly polls in the state, Chautala said the JJP will hold meetings with party workers from July 5 to seek feedback and to rebuild the organisation. "The focus is to In reply to a question, Chautala alleged both the BJP and the Congress were working to weaken regional

Hitting out at the Nayab Singh Saini-led BJP government in Haryana on the law-and-order front, the IIP leader demanded the state should have "a full-time home minister".

To another question, Chautala reiterated that the Saini government has been in the "minority" after three Independents withdrew their support last month.

"As against the Assembly's effective strength of 86, BJP has the support of 43, but the majority mark is 44," he said, adding the JJP has written to the Haryana Governor, urging him to hold a floor

Chautala also said that party leaders will meet the Assembly Speaker and seek the disqualification of two JJP

MLAs.
The JJP recently moved a petition before the Haryana Assembly Speaker, seeking the disqualification of two party MLAs — Ramniwas Surjakhera and Jogi Ram Sihag — under the antidefection law for allegedly indulging in anti-party

after heavy rain

Dibrugarh town has been grappling with flash floods, with most streets waterlogged after heavy rains Thursday morning. Mancotta Road, one of the busiest stretches in this Upper Assam town, is now submerged in knee-deep water. For decades, Dibrugarh, located on the banks of the Brahmaputra, has faced persistent flash flooding and waterlogging due to an unplanned drainage system, residents alleged.

"Every year, waterlogging occurs mainly because of poor drainage system. Although the department concerned constructs roads in every ward, they refrain from digging up drains adjacent to these roads," said Parimal Banik, a resident of Dibrugarh.

An official, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed encroachments near the Dibrugarh Town Protection drain prevents

rainwater from flowing out 1.4 lakh people are still of the town, resulting in waterlogging in several

'We need a scientific drainage system that can flush out water from the town. Dibrugarh is one of the oldest towns in Assam and is worst hit during the rainy season," said Ismail Ahmed, a retired professor. flood Meanwhile, the situation in Assam continues to improve, although almost affected across seven districts as of Wednesday

evening. Cachar is the worst hit, with 75,000 people followed by nearly affected. Karimganj with more than 56,500 people and Dhemaji with almost 3,800 people reeling under floodwaters. So far, 41 people have lost their lives in the state in this year's floods, landslides, and

Nine candidates in fray for bypoll in MP's Amarwara Assembly seat

PTI BHOPAL

Nine candidates will fight for the Amarwara (ST) assembly seat in Madhya Pradesit, where a bypoll was necessitated after Congress leader representing constituency crossed over to the BJP and resigned, an official said on Thursday. After the last date for withdrawal of nominations Wednesday,

candidates remained in the fray for the bye election, which will be held on July 10, the state's Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan said. Seven candidates withdrew from the contest Wednesday, he said.

The main contest here is between the former Congress MLA-turned-BJP leader Kamlesh Shah and



old grand Dheeran Shah Invati, sources said.

In a major setback to the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Shah, a threetime party MLA from Amarwara seat under Chhindwara Lok Sabha constituency and confidante of former chief

minister Kamal Nath, had resigned on March 29 and joined the ruling BJP soon

Shah later resigned from the membership of the state assembly, paving the way for the bypoll on Amarwara

In the November 2023 assembly elections, Shah, on a Congress ticket, had BJP's Monika Manmohan Shah Batti by a margin of 25,086 votes from Amarwara. After 1972, the BJP won

from the Amarwara seat twice in 1990 and 2008, while the Congress won nine times. Tribal outfit times. Tribal outfit Gondwana Gantantra Party (GGP) bagged this seat once in 2003. The bypoll will be held on

July 10 and votes will be counted on July 13, the official said.

Section of people creating disturbances in Assam: Himanta

PTI ■ NALBARI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday accused a section of people of creating disturbances in the state following the recent Lok Sabha election results, directing police to handle such forces firmly. "We have observed that

certain people are trying to disrupt peace in the state through serious criminal activities," Sarma told Sarma told reporters after a cabinet meeting here.

The CM highlighted five incidents, including recent rape cases in Mazbat, Dhekiajuli, and Dudhnoi, along with mob violence in Barpeta and Kokrajhar villages. "While such crimes had significantly reduced over the past three years, there has been a troubling spike in incidents over the

last month," he remarked. "During the last three years, such crimes had declined remarkably, but in the last one month, there has been a series of incidents and this is a matter of concern," he said. Sarma claimed that a "pattern has emerged with a certain section indulging in these crimes. Police have been directed to take stern against perpetrators of such crimes". We are concerned about the

solution to it", he added. He said his cabinet colleagues have visited the affected areas and stressed the need for analysis into the emergence of these criminal elements.

rise in such incidents. We

will find an appropriate

Sarma had earlier said the Lok Sabha results in Nagaon officer to conduct further and Dhubri, both minority investigation into the case dominated constituencies and submit the report within and won by the Congress, three months.

indicate a weak social fabric and if there is no resistance to this, it will prove to be dangerous for Assamese

Regarding the change of the investigation officer (IO) in the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) cashfor-jobs scam, Sarma said the special court has given the order and we have to abide by it. "I have, however, asked for an examination of the judgment as the court has the right to summon those considered to be accused by them instead of shifting the onus to the IO," he added. The court, in a recent order, had directed the additional director general of CID, who

is heading the Special Investigation Team, to engage a new investigating

Two women Naxalites with cumulative bounty of ₹16 lakh surrender in Gadchiroli his wife Sangeeta Usendi laying

Two women Naxalites a cumulative reward of Rs 16 lakh on their surrendered Gadchiroli Maharashtra's district on Thursday, an official said.

A release from the office of the superintendent of police identified them as Bali alias Rambatti alias Zarina Narote (28) and Shashikala alias Chandrakala alias Manisha Uike (29), both platoon party committee members of the proscribed Communist Party of India (Maoist) company number 10. The surrender of these two

women, with rewards of Rs 8 lakh each on their heads, comes within a week of DKSZCM (Dandkaranya Special Zonal Committee Member) Giridhar, who was the district's top Naxalite, and

down arms. "A total of 21 cases are registered against Narote,

comprising 10 related to encounters, one each of arson and abduction and nine related to other offences. Uike has eight cases against her name, of which six are related to encounters," the official said. As part of the surrender-cumrehabilitation policy of the state government in force since 2005, the two will get Rs 5 lakh each, adding that authorities will take all efforts to help those who will shun violence, ioin the mainstream and embrace democracy, he said. Due to intensified anti-Maoist efforts of the police, 19 hardcore Naxalites have surrendered in Gadchiroli

since 2022, police said. The

action against Left Wing

Extremism is being carried

J'khand Govt blacklists cable car operator, two years after Trikut tragedy

The Jharkhand government has blacklisted Damodar Ropeways and Infra Ltd (DRIL), the cable car operator at Trikut Hills in Deoghar district, for five years and slapped a fine of over Rs 9 crore on it, a senior official said on Thursday. A major cable car accident at

Trikut Hills in April 2022 had claimed three lives, while over 60 people were rescued after being stranded mid-air for about 46 hours in joint operations by NDRF, Army, Air Force and administration. 766-metre ropeway is India's highest vertical ropeway, according to the state's tourism

department. An enquiry committee was set up by the Department of Tourism to probe into the reasons behind the accident. There were allegations of negligence on the part of DRIL leading to the accident. The company, however,

denied the charge. Tourism "The Jharkhand Development Corporation (JTDC) board has taken a decision to blacklist DRIL for five years. It has also imposed a penalty of over Rs 9 crore on it," Tourism Secretary Manoj

Kumar told PTI. JTDC managing director has issued a letter to the company to deposit Rs 9.11 crore, failing which a civil damage suit will be filed against DRIL, he said.

DRIL Managing Director Aditya Chamaria said the action was "unfortunate" and



claimed they were not given a chance of hearing either by the enquiry committee or by

"We are moving the court against that order. The allegations of negligence are totally false. We are running 14 ropeways all over India. ...It (DRIL) holds 30-40 per cent market share of the ropeway industry. Even the enquiry committee mentioned in its report that it

is the rarest of the rare category of defect. On the basis of the rarest category of defect, how can you blacklist a firm? It is a harsh decision," Chamaria told PTI.

He claimed that there is no basis for a Rs 9 crore penalty that includes Rs 5 crore repair and maintenance charges.

A government report mentions that on April 10, 2022 the passenger Ropeway at Trikut Hill, Near Deoghar (Jharkhand) stopped while in operation leaving 59 passengers stranded mid-air on the Ropeway.

Mizoram Govt to buy four agri products to help farmers

PTI AIZAWL

Mizoram's Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) Movement (ZPM) government has decided to purchase four agricultural items produced by local farmers to economically uplift the farming community. Agriculture Minister PC Vanlalruata said that the government will buy ginger, chilli turmeric, broomsticks from the local farmers.

Buying these items from the farmers was a poll promise of the ZPM which came to power in the northeastern state in December last year. Vanlalruata said that the government will fix a support price for each crop besides taking steps to arrange

markets so that they can sell

their products at a rate higher than the support price.

The minister said that focus is being made on market linkage and the process is expected to be completed within three years. After three years, farmers are

expected to have direct contact with buyers, which will reduce the government's involvement in the process. He said that a database will be developed on farmers and the quantity of crops they expect to produce a year. According to an assessment, over 10 lakh quintals of ginger are expected to be produced by farmers across the state next year, Vanlalruata said.He said that the government will float through agricultural societies to find buyers for the purchase of crops especially ginger.

The government will also make agreements with large companies so that they buy ginger from Mizoram farmers since the tender or auction system will not be sufficient to sell all the produce in the state.Processing plants will be set up for sorting, grading and drying ginger, besides making paste of the root and ale, a beverage.Vanlalruata also urged farmers to form Multipurpose Primary Agriculture Credit Societies in their villages.The ZPM leader said that all processes of buying and selling agricultural products will be executed through local

agriculture societies. The ZPM swept the state assembly polls in December last year, dethroning the incumbent Mizo National

Heavy rain lashes Kerala, orange and yellow alerts sounded across multiple districts

PTI THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Heavy rains lashed many parts of Kerala on Wednesday night, prompting authorities to urge people to take utmost care while travelling through hilly and inundated areas.

An orange alert has been Meteorological Department (IMD) in seven districts, and a yellow alert in the remaining districts in the state for Thursday.

An orange alert means very heavy rain of 11 cm to 20 cm and a yellow alert means heavy rainfall between 6 cm and 11 cm.

Heavy rain with maximum surface wind speed up to 40 Kmph (in gusts) is very likely to occur in many places at Kannur, and Kasaragod districts, the Kerala State



Management Authority said on Thursday. Relief camps have been opened in Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha districts to accommodate people affected

Disaster

Authorities have declared holidays for all educational institutions, including colleges, in professional Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam, Wayanad, Kottayam, and Alappuzha districts, and educational institutions in the Iriti taluk of Kannur district on Thursday. In Kasargod, two young men had a miraculous escape this morning when their car was swept away while crossing a river via a bridge inundated by floodwaters.

While heavy rains continue in the state, widespread damage has been reported in the lower areas of Kottayam district due to the wind that accompanied the rain.

In the Kumarakom area, billboards, sheet roofs of houses and institutions, and water tanks fell on the ground.

Civil services aspirant turns burglar; held

 $A^{28 ext{-year-old}}_{aspired} \,\, ext{to} \,\, ext{get} \,\, ext{a}$ Aspired to get a government job but failed to clear any civil services exams despite multiple attempts, tried to extort Rs 10 lakh from a couple after he happened to shoot their intimate video at their place in Durg district of Chhattisgarh, police said.

The accused, Vinay Kumar Sahu, had gone to the couple's house early last month with the intention of burglary, but instead of stealing anything, he recorded the couple's intimate moments using his mobile phone and demanded money from them for not making their video public, they said.



The accused was arrested on June 25 based on the complaint lodged by the couple, residents of Ahiwara village located in the Nandini police station area, Sub Divisional Officer of Police (Dhamdha) Sanjay

Pundhir said. "On June 17, the male victim complained to the police that he received a video clip on their WhatsApp from an unknown number that showed him and his wife in an intimate moment. The man also told the police that some unidentified person called him and demanded Rs 10 lakh for not releasing the clip on social media," he said. A joint team of Nandini police and Anti-Nandini police and Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit (ACCU) was constituted to probe the matter. Police zeroed in on the accused

based on technical evidence and CCTV footage, and arrested him, he said. "During his interrogation, Sahu told the police that he had burgled the couple's house twice earlier and he had sneaked in again on May 5 with the same intention. But instead of stealing something, he recorded the allegedly intimate moments of the couple on his phone.

A few days later, he sent the video to the couple and started blackmailing them by demanding Rs 10 lakh for not making it viral," the official said. Three mobile phones and as many SIM cards were recovered from the possession of the accused, he said. Sahu is a resident of Ahiwara. After completing his bachelors in engineering, he was preparing for civil services. tried to secure a

government job and appeared for various exams, including Public Service Commission, but failed to clear it every time, Pundhir said. To meet his needs, Sahu started stealing mobile phones and other articles in his own locality, he added. The accused was booked under section 384 (punishment for extortion) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). the SDOP said, adding that further probe is underway.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Steady leadership

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

m Birla has been re-elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. This marks a significant chapter in parliamentary history. Birla's leadership has been characterised by impartiality, a deep commitment to democratic principles, and a steady hand in navigating the complexities of parliamentary proceedings. "Parliament is the temple of democracy. It is our duty to ensure that it functions efficiently and reflects the aspirations of the people," Birla stated. "I am committed to working with all members to ensure that the Lok Sabha continues to be a vibrant and effective forum for democratic deliberation." Om Birla, a seasoned politician from Rajasthan and a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), first assumed the role of Lok Sabha Speaker in June 2019. His re-election signifies a continuity of leadership essential for maintaining the stability and decorum of the lower house. It was indeed heartening to observe that his election was met with widespread support, not only from



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

Om Birla's political journey began in the early 1990s, rooted in a commitment to public service and grassroots development. Representing the Kota-Bundi constituency in Rajasthan, Birla has held various significant roles in both state and central politics. As Speaker, Birla has championed initiatives to improve the transparency and efficiency of parliamentary pro-

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



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

Will British Indians back Rishi Sunak?



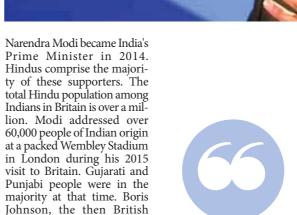
With the July 4 general election approaching, the key question is whether British Indians will rally behind Sunak and the Conservative Party

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

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

in London since the 1970s, believes that Hindu voters in Britain may vote en masse for the Conservative Party in the upcoming elections. This news could be a relief for

Sunak and his Conservative Party.It's important to understand that when we talk about Indians in Britain, we also include those who have settled in the country from East Africa, the Caribbean Islands, and other places. Sunak's family settled in Britain from Kenya in the 1960s, although his ancestors originally named from Punjab. There is also a belief that a large number of Uganda, Kenya, and the Indian residents in Britain Caribbean Islands. These combecame supporters of the munities viewed Labour as Conservative Party after sympathetic to immigrants.



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

CONSERVATIVE

They were particularly attracted to Labour's commitment to immigrants' rights, especially following the introduction of the Race Relations Act in 1965 by Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson. Thousands of Indian immigrants came to Britain from Uganda after Uganda's cannibalistic president Idi Amin ordered the expulsion of all Indians from his country within 90 days in August 1972.

A deeper analysis reveals that British Hindus have been leaning towards the Conservative Party since 2010. This trend includes wealthy and educated second and third-generation Hindus. In the past 20-25 years, a new wave of immigrants from India has arrived in Britain. These are doctors, engineers, IT professionals,

They all identify themselves as

Conservative Party voters. The Indian diaspora's disaffection with the Labour Party did not happen overnight. It was triggered by Labour's 2019 resolution calling for "the right of self-determination" for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This resolution led a large section of the Indian diaspora in Britain to distance themselves from the Labour Party. They saw it as direct interference in India's internal affairs.Meanwhile, Rishi Sunak

became Britain's first Hindu Prime Minister in 2022. This development deepened the bond between Hindus and the Conservative Party. It is still too early to say whether Hindus will vote en masse for the Conservative Party in the upcoming British general election.

However, for the first time, British Hindus have released a manifesto outlining their aspirations and expectations from the next government. They say they will only support those endorse demands. Hindus are the thirdlargest religious group in Britain. 29 Hindu organizations have so far endorsed this manifesto.

According to the manifesto, "Hindus are the backbone of the British economy. Our contribution to the country's economy is disproportionately high. We are one of the most law-abiding communities. Yet, anti-Hindu hate is on the rise in the country." One of their key demands is for their safety. Will the Hindu votes be split or go to the Conservative Party? Will the Labour and Conservative parties consider the manifesto of the Hindu

ex-Information Officer, UAE Embassy, New Delhi; views are personal)

(The writer is Columnist and

ganizationss

India's assertive foreign policy and global aspirations



policy, emphasized during

Modi's third term inaugura-

tion, exemplifies India's com-

mitment to fostering region-

al cooperation. High-profile

visits and agreements, such as

those with Bangladesh,

underscore the policy's suc-

cess in enhancing regional

connectivity and economic

collaboration. Beyond tangi-

ble policy actions, Modi's

government champions India

as a 'Vishwaguru' (World

Teacher), invoking the coun-

try's ancient heritage and cul-

tural legacy. This narrative not

only promotes India's soft

power but also influences

global discourse on geopolitics, art, culture, and values originating from India's

ancient civilization. India's

advocacy of 'Vasudhaiva

Kutumbakam' (the world is

one family) at international

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

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

This heightened defense spending underscores India's unwavering commitment to national development and security. Underpinning Modi's governance is the vision of a 'Vikasit Bharat 2047' (Developed India), with ambitions to elevate India to the rank of the world's thirdlargest economy. Since 2014,

India has advanced from being the 10th largest economy to the 5th largest, showcasing potential for further

The Vikasit Bharat agenda prioritizes boosting manufacturing industries, evidenced by substantial subsidies totaling \$28 billion across 14 sectors and an additional \$10 billion allocated to the semiconductor industry. This economic expansion surpasses historical parallels, outstripping even Britain's colonial economic hegemony.India's aspirations extend to securing a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, a move contested primarily by China. Despite these challenges, India is forging independent diplomatic pathways, exem- The 'Neighbourhood First'

plified by the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) involving India, Japan, the United States, and Australia. While debates on the Quad's efficacy persist, its role in ensuring Indo-Pacific security and countering Chinese influence remains pivotal. Additionally, India is strengthening regional ties through initiatives like BIM-STEC and expanding BRICS to include UAE and Saudi Arabia, key oil suppliers, thereby enhancing its global stature and influence. Modi's foreign policy approach is characterized by a nuanced engagement in global politics, leveraging soft power to augment India's international standing.

forums like the G20 reinforces its role as a leading soft power and positions it closer to superpower status. Modi's third term inauguration signifies a continued assertiveness in foreign policy, aimed at securing India's strategic interests while fostering global partnerships. (The writer is a researcher;

views are personal)

OM BIRLA RE-ELECTED AS LS SPEAKER

Prime Minister, was known to

proudly call himself "India's

son-in-law". He was a unique

son-in-law. His (second

divorced) wife Marina

Wheeler's mother, Deep Singh

Kaur, was previously married

to Sardar Daljit Singh, son of

Sobha Singh from New Delhi.

Now, let's understand anoth-

er subtle point. Not all Indian

immigrants in Britain think

alike politically or support

any specific party. It is believed

that most Indian Muslims and

Sikhs may vote for the Labour

They are not fond of the close

ties between the Conservative

Party and Modi.From the 1960s to the 1980s, a signifi-

cant number of Indian immi-

rants settied in Britain from

Madam - The re-election of NDA nominee Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker, following a voice vote, comes as no surprise. Unlike his first term in 2019, where he was elected unopposed, this time, elections were necessary. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to retain familiar faces in key ministries during his third term underscores his administration's commitment to continuity.

Om Birla's reappointment makes him the first leader of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party to be re-elected as Lok Sabha Speaker twice in over two decades.In a democracy, elections are essential and should be welcomed. The position of Lok Sabha Speaker traditionally requires broad support to ensure the smooth functioning of the House. When a Speaker is elected with bipartisan support, it significantly enhances the role's prestige. Opposition in an election does not necessarily indicate a lack of trust. As Om Birla embarks on his second term, he faces the challenge of surpassing his previous performance, which saw a record number of MP suspensions. While no single party can be blamed, it is evident that all parties will need to exhibit greater maturity and understanding this

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

AFGHANISTAN REACH SEMIFINALS!

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

scientific manner. Today, we witnessed these principles in

THE EDITO

Dynamic Opposition in Parliament



he swearing-in ceremony for Members of Parliament at the 18th Lok Sabha was noteworthy, with the opposition members promi-

nently holding mini copies of the Constitution while taking their oaths. Leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Dimple Yadav, Avadesh Prasand, and Rakibul Hussain were seen holding these mini constitutions as they swore in as elected MPs. This gesture underscores the opposition's commitment to active governance and to reminding the government of its constitutional responsibil-

By swearing with the Constitution in hand, the opposition members are enhancing their personal commitment to the nation. Their duty is now twofold: to fulfill their roles as MPs and to safeguard constitutional values, reminding the government of its duties. Time will tell who upholds these values. Meanwhile, it is encouraging to see a dynamic opposition in the Indian Parliament to provide a robust counterbalance to those in power.Kirti Wadhawan, Kanpur

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

ed cricket team.

Their success is a beacon of hope in a world often characterized by substandard and duplicitous behaviors such as wars, violence, and negative activities.

The world can learn about peaceful coexistence from two sources: Mahatma Gandhi's India and friendly, cooperative sports teams like Afghanistan's. Yes, indeed!

PVS Sreelekha | Secundrabad

SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE

Madam — Almost 50 per cent of adults in India engaged in insufficient levels of physical activity in 2022, according to a study published in the Lancet Global Health journal.

Far more women in India (57 per cent) were found to be insufficiently physically active, compared to men (42 per cent), in line with trends across the South Asian region, the study found. The insufficient levels of physical activity in women in the region were, on average, 14 per cent higher than those in men, it said. The South action by Afghanistan's well-coordinat- Asian region also ranked the second high-

est in terms of adults being insufficiently physically active after high-income Asia Pacific region, an international team of researchers, including those from the World Health Organization (WHO),

This was up by 5 per cent, from 26.4 per cent of adults worldwide insufficiently engaged in physical activity in 2010, In India, a little over 22 per cent of the adults engaged in insufficient physical activity in the year 2000, while in 2010, close to 34 per cent of the adults were insufficiently physically active, the researchers found. They projected that in 2030, 60 per cent of the adults could be insufficiently engaging in physical activity, should current trends continue. This is indeed a cause of concern.

India had 101 million diabetics, 315 million people with hypertension, 254 million with obesity, and 185 million with high levels of LDL cholesterol.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN

TOWARDS BETTER TIES WITH BANGLADESH

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



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

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

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

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



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

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

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

Macron's calls for snap polls to thwart ultra right-



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

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

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

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



side's failures.

In this context, polarized politics in France are teaching a new lesson about the deceptive nature of labelling certain movements as "far right" to deflect attention from the failures of neoliberalism. Unlike the European elections with a 50% turnout, local watchdogs asserted that the national elections could see 70% voter participation, potentially mobilizing moderates and reviving the anti-populist front. Macron's team believes voters will scrutinize RN's policy proposals, particularly as the autumn session promised censure motions likely to collapse Prime Minister Gabriel Attal's government.As per the London

Macron's gamble may yield three outcomes. First, he might recover his majority, although this seems unlikely given his unpopularity and the normalization of the right" across Europe. Second, the National Rally could win a majority, leading to an unprecedented cohabitation with a populist rightwing parliament, which Macron might see as a chance to highlight their governance shortcomings. This scenario poses significant risks as an RN-controlled parliament would handle crucial domestic policies, potentially clashing with Macron on issues like immigration and national security, while creating tensions with Brussels due to RN's nation-first policies. The third scenario, considered most probable by analysts, is that RN increases its seats but fails to gain an absolute majority, resulting in a splintered parliament and potential deadlock. Macron may seek alliances with the mainstream centre-right or centreleft, but success is uncertain. This fragmented parliament could lead to increased political instability.

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

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

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

This regional tension exacerbated France's already unstable domestic political situation, leading to a humiliating defeat for Macron and lets, the political parties in France held emergency talks to explore potential alliances at the beginning election. The unexpected and risky decision to hold elections soon could potentially shift major polit-

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

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

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

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

Pen clan from gaining control. (The writer is a Sri Lankan journalist and author;





MACRON'S

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

to the ongoing conflict. bolstering Le Pen's populist narrative. According to local media outof this week following the announcement of a snap legislative

India-Arab green strategic partnership: Pioneering sustainable development

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

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

innovation Historical and Cultural Context: India's historical ties with Arab countries stretch back centuries, rooted in cultural exchanges, ancient trade routes, and shared values. Today, this relationship goes beyond cultural affinity to encompass strategic economic partnerships and mutual geopolitical interests. The



Objectives and Strategic **Imperatives:** At its core, the partnership seeks to harness the strengths of both India and Arab countries in advancing

green technologies, renewable

energy solutions, water man-

er in renewable energy deployment and innovation, offers practical solutions to the challenges faced: Renewable Energy PADMALOCHAN DASH

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

agement practices, and cli-

mate resilience strategies.

India, as a rising global play-

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

climate change and rapid As urban populations grow, urbanisation. India contributes practical solutions through its expertise in sustainable water management practices. Initiatives like communitydriven water conservation and wastewater treatment can be adapted and shared with Arab countries facing similar chal-**Climate Change Mitigation:**

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

Sustainable Urbanisation and **Biodiversity Conservation:** cal models for collaboration.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

partner countries. Technological and Financial Barriers: Scaling up renewable energy projects and adopting advanced environmental technologies demand substantial investments and technological advancements.

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

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

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



Calm returns in Bolivia after | Police clash with protesters in apparent coup attempt

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

demned the apparent coup attempt, it became clear that the coup had no meaningful political support.

Arce refused to relent and named a new army commander, who immediately ordered troops to stand down, ending the rebellion after just three chaotic and head-snapping hours. Hundreds of Arce's supporters rushed the square outside the palace, waving Bolivian flags, singing the national anthem and cheering.
"Here we are, firm, in the presidential rales to an extract the side of the side

idential palace, to confront any coup attempt," Arce said after facing down Gen. Zúñiga, calling on Bolivians to mobilize in defense of democracy. Authorities swiftly arrested Zúñiga as his soldiers retreated from central La Paz, crushing the apparent coup attempt and defusing the latest crisis in a

political rivalry and economic

Their goal was to overturn the democratically elected authority." Government Minister Eduardo del Castillo told journalists in announcing the arrests of Zuniga along with an alleged co-conspirator, former navy Vice Adm. Juan Arnez Salvador. The short-lived rebellion followed months of mounting tensions between Arce and his one-time ally, former President

Bolivia's first Indigenous president, Morales remains a global leftist icon and towering figure in national politics years after mass protests that prompted him to resign and flee in 2019 an ouster his supporters view as a coup.

Evo Morales

Since returning from exile, Morales has staged a dramatic political comeback. Threatening to challenge Arce in 2025 primaries, Morales has sparked an unprecedented rift in their ruling socialist party.

The feud has paralysed efforts to resolve a spiralling economic crisis, with the country's foreign currency reserves diminishing, its natural gas exports plummeting and its currency peg collapsing. As police in riot gear set up blockades outside the presidential palace, Bolivians though no stranger to polit-

ical conflict in a country that has

witnessed some 190 coups by

one count — thronged ATMs, formed long lines outside gas stations and emptied shelves in grocery stores and pharmacies Flanked by the newly appointed military chiefs late Wednesday, Defence Minister Edmundo Novillo sought to reassure the rattled public and had light are what had been shed light on what had hap-

Kenya as military patrols streets

renyan police on Thursday clashed with Reprotesters in Nairobi before planned protests against a contentious finance bill, despite the president's decision not to sign it after the plans sparked deadly chaos in the capital and saw protesters storming and burning part of the parliament build

Protesters who said last week that they would march to the State House on Thursday say they still don't trust President William Ruto, who has said the tax hikes would be withdrawn and budget cuts would be made.

Police have hurled tear gas canisters at groups of protesters attempting to congregate within the central business district. The military has been patrolling the city despite a Wednesday court order that suspended their deployment to support police during the protests.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua on Wednesday urged the young protesters to call off planned protests and give dialogue a chance. The leaderless movement began online with young people demanding that legislators reject the proposed tax hikes. It later morphed into calls for the president's resignation after the bill was

On Tuesday, thousands of protesters stormed Kenya's parliament, burning parts of the building and sending lawmakers fleeing. Police opened fire and at least 22 people were reportedly killed in the chaos. Activists were divided about the agenda of Thursday's protests. One protester, Boniface Mwangi, urged others to peacefully march to parliament road where protesters were killed to pay their respects. "Invasion of the State House isn't a solu-

tion," he wrote on X.
But Francis Gaitho, one of the many activists mobilizing for the protests online, insisted that young people should march to the State House.

Activists and others warned that the stakes were higher than in past protests, because Ruto vowed on Tuesday to quash unrest "at whatever cost".

Analyst Javas Bigambo told The Associated Press that the discontent is partly because Kenyans don't trust the president to implement the austerity measures he

announced on Wednesday. "Kenyans still have a problem with the economy and wastage in government," he said.

Bigambo said Ruto's U-turn should be a "lesson on humility" as his initial reaction on Tuesday was "not stately and full of emotions" further agitating protesters He said the government should win back the populace by opening dialogue channels and ensuring a consultative budget-

Businesspeople in Nairobi were standing guard outside their shops on Thursday to prevent looting and vandalism, which took place during Tuesday's protests. Major roads leading to key government buildings, including parliament, have been blocked. Outside Nairobi, protests have been reported in Mombasa, Kisumu, Migori and other major towns.US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday spoke with Ruto, thanking him for taking steps to reduce tensions. "The Secretary underscored the importance of security forces demonstrating restraint and refraining from violence and encouraged prompt investigations into allegations of human rights abuses," a state-

Lawyer accuses **Prince Harry** of destroying documents

London (**AP**): An attorney for the publisher of The Sun tabloid Thursday accused Prince Harry of engaging in "shocking" and "extraordinary" obfuscation by destroying evidence it was seeking in his lawsuit claiming that the newspa-per violated his privacy by unlawfully snooping on him.

Attorney Anthony Hudson said at High Court that the Duke of Sussex had deliberate ly destroyed text messages with the ghostwriter who penned his bestselling memoir, "Spare." A lawyer for Harry said News

Group Newspapers was engaging in a "classic fishing expedition" by seeking documents they should have sought much sooner for a trial scheduled in January. "NGN's tactical and sluggish approach to disclosure wholly undermines the deliberately sensational assertion that the claimant (Harry) has not properly carried out the disclosure exercise," his attor ney, David Sherborne, said in court papers. "This is untrue. In fact, the claimant has already made clear that he has conducted extensive searches, going above and beyond his obliga-

Hudson said Harry had created an "obstacle course" to getting documents it was seeking from his former lawyer and ing member of the royal family. "If the claimant wanted his documents from his former solicitors' or from the royal household ... he would have got them," Hudson said. The hearing is the latest in Harry's battles against Britain's biggest tabloids over alleged phone hacking and hiring private investigators to use unlawful measures to dig up dirt on him. Harry is one of dozens of claimants, which had included actor Hugh Grant, alleging that between 1994 and 2016 News Group journalists violated their privacy through widespread unlawful activity that included intercepting voicemails, tapping phones, bugging cars and using deception to access confidential informa-

UK PM Sunak tries to override betting scandal in election campaign

PTI ■ LONDON

 $B^{
m ritish}$ Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he is "furious" about the scandal engulfing some of his Conservative Party candidates betting on the date of the general election, to be held on July 4, as the campaign entered its final week on Thursday. In the last televised debate before

the polls on Wednesday night, Britain's first Prime Minister of Indian heritage went head-tohead with Labour's Keir Starmer and was clearly in attack mode as he challenged the Opposition leader eyeing his job over target issues such as taxes "Mark my words," the 44-year-

old prime minister said, pointing at Starmer, "your taxes are going up if he is in charge." Immigration was also high on the agenda, with both leaders trading blows over a lack of clear policy to tackle soaring illegal migrant figures, with Sunak cautioning voters to not "surrender" the country's borders to



verdict was in his favour as he managed to hold firm during a large share of the fiery contest, the betting scandal continued to dominate the arguments. You have to lead from the

front on issues like this. When one of my team was alleged to have been involved and investigated by the Gambling Commission, they were suspended within minutes, because knew it made it really important to be swift," said Starmer, with reference to the suspension of a Labour candidate who is under investigation by the gambling watchdog for betting against himself winning.
"The Prime Minister delayed

and delayed and delayed until eventually he was bullied into taking action," the 61-year-old Starmer said.

Sunak, who told the audience that he was "furious" and "frustrated" over the allegations, has also had to suspend two of his Tory candidates who are under investigation following an internal inquiry.

"It was important to me that given the seriousness and the sensitivity of the matters at hand that they were dealt with properly, and that's what I've done," he stressed.

It came as four protesters were arrested on suspicion of trespassing on the grounds of Sunak's constituency home in North Yorkshire, while he was away on the campaign trail. North Yorkshire Police said it

had arrested the men "within one minute of them entering the grounds" of Sunak's home near

Northallerton.

'The prime minister thanks the police for their swift response to keep him and his family safe. As this is a live police investigation, further queries should be directed to the relevant police force," a Downing Street spokespersor

The arrests are connected to a protest by campaigners from Youth Demand. It describes itself as a group of young people who want "the Tories and the Labour Party to commit to a two-way arms embargo on Israel, and to stop all new oil and gas licences". In the final week of the election

campaign, both leaders will try and focus on some of the key swing constituencies starting with the Midlands region of England. Labour has held a firm 20-point lead in all pre-poll surveys over the incumbent Tories throughout the campaign, making this a tough election for the governing party which has been in office for 14

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

AP DUBAI

Aship traveling through the Red Sea on Thursday reported being hit in an attack likely carried out by Yemen's Houthi rebels, a private security firm said, the latest in the campaign targeting shipping over the Israel-Hamas war. The ship issued a radio call off the coast of the rebel-held port city of Hodeida, saying it had been struck, the private security firm Ambrey said.

A warship in the area was responding to the attack, Ambrey added. It wasn't clear if anyone was hurt or if the ship was damaged in the assault on the vessel. Neither the British nor US militaries immediately reported the attack.

The Houthis did not immediately claim the attack. However, it can take hours or even days for them to acknowledge their assaults. The rebels have targeted more than 60 vessels by firing missiles and drones in their campaign that has killed

US sanctions Boeing over 737 Max

9 investigation information sharing

a total of four sailors. They Late on Tuesday, Houthi mili-

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

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

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

Washington (PTI): There has been a "concerning increase" in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, and demolitions of members of minority faith communities in India, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said. In his remarks at the release of the annual State Department report on international religious freedom, Blinken said on Wednesday that at the same time, people around the world are also working hard to protect religious freedom. The report stated that senior US

officials continued to raise concerns about religious freedom issues with their Indian counterparts in 2023.

In India, we see a concerning increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities. At the same time, people around the world are also working hard to protect religious



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

bers of religious minority groups and protect their freedom of religion or belief, it stated. India has previously rejected

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

AP ■ NEW YORK

Dby US investigators for sharing information about a federal investigation of a door plug blowout that left a gaping hole in a Boeing 737 Max 9. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said Thursday that Boeing "blatantly violated" the agency's investigative regulations as well as a signed agreement by providing non-public investigative information to the media and speculating about possible causes of the January 5 door plug blowout on a Boeing passenger

iet in Portland, Oregon. During the incident, a panel that plugged a space left for an extra emergency door blew off an Alaska Airlines Max 9. Pilots were able to land safely, and there were no injuries. The NTSB said that on Tuesday

during a media briefing, a duces about the Alaska Department of Justice's Fraud Boeing executive provided Airlines incident, but it will Division, giving them informamation to the media about the Alaska Airlines incident that the agency had not verified or authorized for release.

The NTSB said that Boeing portrayed the NTSB's investigation as a search to find the individual responsible for the door plug work, but the agency said it's focused on the probable cause of the accident, not placing blame on any individual or assessing liability. Boeing did not immediately respond to a request for com-

ment early Thursday. Shares of The Boeing Co, based in Arlington, Virginia, were flat before the opening

The NTSB said that given its recent actions, Boeing won't have access to investigative information the agency proinvestigation. The NTSB is unable to fine

Boeing, as it doesn't have enforcement authority. While the agency could have stripped away Boeing's party status, the NTSB may have considered it more important to keep Boeing as a party to the investigation because of its employees' expertise.

The NTSB said that it may subpoena any relevant records it requires during the course of the investigation. It also will subpoena Boeing to appear at an investigative hearing in Washington DC on August 6

The agency said that, unlike other parties, Boeing won't be able to ask questions of other participants. The NTSB said that it will coordinate with the

unauthorized investigative information releases related to the 737 Max 9 door plug investigation.

In May the Justice Department told a federal judge that Boeing had violated a settlement that allowed the company to avoid criminal prosecution after two deadly crashes involving its 737 Max aircraft.

After Max jets crashed in 2018 in Indonesia and 2019 in Ethiopia, killing 346 people, the FAA and other regulators grounded the aircraft worldwide for more than a year and a half. It is now up to the Justice Department to decide whether to file charges against Boeing. Prosecutors will tell the court no later than July 7 how they plan to proceed, the department said in May.

Stella Assange thanks lawmakers for WikiLeaks founder's freedom

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Stella Assange thanked the spectrum of lawmakers who campaigned for her husband, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, to be freed during her visit Thursday to Australia's Parliament House, where political leaders differed over how welcome the convicted felon was in his homeland. "Julian is overjoyed and so

grateful to the Australian people, to the members of Parliament and to the government and also the opposition who came together to voice the need for his release," Stella Assange said. Assange has made no public comment since he arrived in Australia on Wednesday after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing U.S. military secrets in a deal with U.S. Justice Department prosecutors that ended his 14-year legal battle for freedom.



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

'President (Joe) Biden or any subsequent president absolutely can and, in my mind, should issue a pardon to Julian Assange," lawyer Barry Pollack

But while Australian lawmak-

ers largely agreed that the time had come for Assange to be brought home, they disagreed on whether he deserved the same level of support as Australians recently released from arbitrary detention in China, Iran and Myanmar thanks to government intervention.Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has been credited with the diplomatic coup that enabled Assange to be released from a London prison to travel to Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Western Pacific where he pleaded guilty to a single charge under the

Espionage Act.

Sanjana Thakur's short story wins UK **Commonwealth Prize**

London (PTI): Sanjana Thakur, a 26-year-old writer from Mumbai, beat competition from over 7,359 entrants worldwide to be named the winner of the GBP 5,000 Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2024 in London on Thursday.

Sanjana's story entitled 'Aishwarya Rai' takes its name from the famed Bollywood actress to reimagine and reverse the traditional adoption story. The literary magazine 'Granta' has published all the regional winning stories of the 2024 Commonwealth Short Story Prize. "I cannot express how wholly

honoured I am to be the recipient of this incredible prize. I hope I continue writing stories that people want to read," said Thakur. "For my strange story about mothers and daughters, about bodies, beauty standards, and Bombay street food — to find such a global audience is thrilling. Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you," she said. "I've spent 10 out of 26 years living in countries not my own. India, where I'm from, is simultaneously strange and familiar, accepting and rejecting. Writing stories is a way for me to accept that Mumbai is a city I will long for even when I am in it; it is a way to remake 'place' in my mind," she added. Her story revolves around a young woman, Avni, who chooses between possible mothers housed in a local shelter. The first mother is too clean; the second, who looks like the real-life Aishwarya Rai, is too pretty. In her small Mumbai apartment with toothin walls and a too-small balcony, Avni watches laundry turn round in her machine dreams of stepping into white limousines, and tries out different mothers from the shelter. One of them must be just right, she thinks.

Palestinians surrounded by sewage and garbage Deir Al-Balah (AP): Hepatitis A cases are on the Over a million Palestinians

Children in sandals trudge through water contaminated with sewage and scale growing mounds of garbage in Gaza's crowded tent camps for displaced families.

People relieve themselves in burlap-covered pits, with nowhere nearby to wash their hands.

In the stifling summer heat, Palestinians say the odour and filth surrounding them is just another inescapable reality of war - like pangs of hunger or sounds of bombing. The territory's ability to dispose of garbage, treat sewage and deliver clean water has been virtually decimated by eight brutal months of war between Israel and Hamas.

This has made grim living conditions worse and raised health risks for hundreds of thousands of people deprived of adequate shelter, food and medicine, aid groups say.

rise, and doctors fear that as warmer weather arrives, an outbreak of cholera is increasingly likely without dramatic changes to living conditions. The UN, aid groups and local officials are scrambling to build latrines, repair water lines and bring desalination plants back COGAT, the Israeli military

body coordinating humanitarian aid efforts, said it's engaging in efforts to improve the "hygiene situation." But relief can't come soon enough. "Flies are in our food," said Adel Dalloul, a 21vear-old whose family settled in a beach tent camp near the central Gaza city of Nuseirat. They wound up there after fleeing the southern city of Rafah, where they landed after leaving their northern

Gaza home. "If you try to

sleep, flies, insects and cock-

roaches are all over you."

had been living in hastily assembled tent camps in Rafah before Israel invaded in May. Since fleeing Rafah, many have taken shelter in even more crowded and unsanitary areas across southern and central Gaza that doctors describe as breeding grounds for disease especially as temperatures regularly reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). The stench in Gaza is

enough to make you kind of immediately nauseous," said Sam Rose, a director at the UN agency for Palestinian refugees. Anwar al-Hurkali, who lives with his family in a tent camp in the central Gazan city of Deir al-Balah, said he can't sleep for fear of scorpions and rodents. He doesn't let his children leave their tent, he said, worrying they'll get sick from pollution and mosquitoes.

to fulfill arms commitments

Ukraine's president called on European Union lead-ers on Thursday to make good on their pledges to provide military equipment to his war-ray aged country, just days after the bloc launched membership talks with his government.

"We have to work on next steps," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told reporters in Brussels as he arrived to attend a summit of EU leaders. He said he and the leaders would discuss "the urgent things -- air defense, that is one.

Zelenskyy thanked countries that have promised equipment, weapons and ammunition, but underlined that "we need them urgently on the battlefield."

Russian forces are seeking to press their advantage in troop numbers and weaponry before Ukraine's armed forces are bulked up by promised new Western military aid, some of which is trickling to the front line, analysts say.



The EU launched membership talks with Ukraine on Tuesday, a decade after Russian troops seized the Crimean Peninsula to deter the country from moving closer to the West, part of a chain of events that set the two neighbors on the path to war.

'We waited for this, a long period of time," Zelenskyy said, thanking the EU for its approval.

The leaders are expected to sign a document of security commitments to Ukraine, which in

essence encapsulates what the 27-nation bloc has been doing for the country in terms of financial, military and other assistance since Russian forces invaded in February 2022. Several countries already have

similar agreements with Ukraine, offering a long-term commitment to help Kyiv, including once its war with Russia is over. Zelenskyy and US President Joe Biden signed one such pact earlier this month which will run for the

Zelenskyy urges EU leaders | Court denies Imran's appeal to suspend sentence in illegal marriage case

A Pakistani court on Thursday rejected the appeals of Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi to suspend their sentences in the illegal marriage case, in a major setback to the former prime minister who has been in jail since August last year.

On February 3, Khan, 71, and Bushra, 49, were sentenced to seven years in prison and a fine of Rs 5,00,000 each by a trial court for contracting the marriage during iddat, a mandatory period for a woman in Islam to wait before a second mar-riage after the death of her husband or divorce

The case was filed by Bushra's ex-husband, Khawar Maneka, against the couple in November 2023, alleging that they married without Bushra observing the mandatory waiting period of iddat. He asked the court to declare the marriage null and



Additional District and Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka had reserved the verdict on the conclusion of the process on Tuesday after conducting the

On Thursday, as he announced the verdict to a packed court-room, and rejected the pleas filed by the couple, it dashed hopes of their release from the Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi where they have been imprisoned.

While Khan is slapped with several cases, his wife Bushra is facing a couple of cases.

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

Khan's party termed the development "absolutely ridiculous". In a post on its official X account, the PTI said the case was "unprecedentedly despicable in both our country's as well as Islamic history", and had been "globally condemned and

been globally condemned and brought immense embarrass-ment to Pakistan". "Every single individual responsible for fabricating and carrying this case will go down in the dirtiest, darkest alleys of history," it asserted.

Earlier, the former first couple had challenged the conviction before the district and sessions judge (ADSJ) Shahrukh Arjumand, who recused himself at a time when the hearing had been concluded and the court was supposed announce the verdict.

The case was last week transferred to ADSJ Majoka and the Islamabad High Court ordered the sessions court to decide in

'Foolproof arrangements for Chinese citizens security'

New York/Islamabad (PTI): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said Pakistan is 'proud" of its friendship with all-weather ally China, as he asserted that "foolproof arrangements" have been made for the security of Chinese nationals working on major infrastructure projects in some restive provinces.

Naqvi made the remarks during a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Qi Yanjun at the office of China's mission to the United Nations in New York, Geo News reported. Both ministers are currently here to attend a United Nations conference. "Foolproof arrangements have been made for the security of Chinese citizens," Naqvi said as he briefed Qi about the progress on the investigation of the Dasu terror attack involv ing Chinese nationals in Pakistan. On March 26, a vehicle-borne suicide bomber targeted the convoy of Chinese engineers in the remote Besham area of Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when they were being driven to a construction site of the Dasu Hydroelectric power station in Kohistan district of

Five Chinese nationals and their Pakistani driver were killed in the attack. "We are all proud of our friendship with China," Naqvi was quoted as

the same province.

saying in the report. Following the briefing, the Chinese minister expressed satisfaction over the case's ongoing probe and said that Pakistani institutions handled the case in a "diligent and professional manner", according to the report. "Pakistan and China are all-weather friends. Pak-China friendship is stronger

than steel," he said. The two ministers also discussed bilateral ties and security issues in the region.

During the meeting, the two ministers spoke about cooperation on training and capacity building of Pakistan's law enforcement agencies through modern equipment and technology. Qi appreciated the establishment of the Special Protection Unit (SPU) in Islamabad, particularly aimed at protecting Chinese citizens in the country.He also assured "full cooperation" in SPU training and other matters, the report said.

China's former defence minister expelled from Communist Party

China's ruling Communist Party headed by President Xi Jinping on Thursday expelled the former defence minister Gen. Li Shangfu for alleged corruption and launched prosecution proceedings against him, months after he was dramatically sacked from the post.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership on Thursday decided to expel Li, 66, for serious violation of Party discipline and the law, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Li, who headed the People's

Liberation Army's all-important Rocket (Missile) Force and was personally picked up for the top defence post by Xi himself, went missing last year, sparking speculation that he was being investigated for corruption and indiscipline. Li, who also formerly served as a State Councillor, the top post in the party and as a member of Military Central Commission (CMC), the over-



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

August 31, 2023. According to the investigation results, Li seriously violated political and organisational

discipline. He sought improper benefits in personnel arrangements for himself and others, took advantage of his posts to seek benefits for others, and accepted a huge amount of money and valuables in return, the Xinhua report said. He is suspected of the crime of taking bribes. He was also found to have offered money to others to seek undue benefits, constituting the suspected crime of offering bribes. The investigation also found clues of Li's other violations, it

As a high-ranking official of the CPC and the military, Li betrayed the Party's original aspiration and its principles, the report said, adding that his actions failed the trust of the Party Central Committee and the CMC while severely contaminating the political environment of the equipment sector in the military and the ethics of relevant industries.

His disciplinary and law violations brought enormous damage to the Party's cause, the development of national

defence and the armed forces and the image of senior officials, it said.

Li is a Chinese aerospace engineer and headed China's powerful missile force, officially called Rocket Force as the General of the PLA before he was elevated as minister. His sacking followed a major shakeup in the PLA Rocket (missile) Force in which its commander, Li Yuchao, and political commissar, Xu Zhongbo, were replaced without any official explanation. Both their summary dismissals

sent shockwaves among the Chinese officialdom besides raising questions over the process of selection of officials for key jobs by Xi. Li was appointed as Defence Minister even though he was sanctioned by the US in 2018

for the purchase of Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missiles by China's Equipment Development Department (EDD) in violation of Washington's sanctions on

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

AP NICE

With just three days to go until France's landmark legislative election, the country's far-right leader on Thursday raised the question of who would be in charge of the military if her party takes over the government after the two-round balloting. The early elections are plunging France into uncharted territory, and political scientists are grounding to interpret are scrambling to interpret how exactly President Emmanuel Macron and a prime minister who is hostile to most of his policies will share power if Marine Le Pen's National Rally wins the majority in the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament.

Le Pen has repeatedly said that Jordan Bardella, her protegee and her party's star leader, will lead France's next government if their party wins. She suggested in an interview that Bardella, 28, will also take over at least some decisions on France's defence and its armed forces. Macron has three years to serve out his final term as Serving as a commander-in-

chief of the armed forces "is an honorary title for the president since it's the prime minister who actually pulls the strings," Le Pen said in an interview with Le Télégramme newspaper published Thursday. The French Constitution

states that "the President of the Republic is the head of the armed forces" and that the head of state also "chairs the councils and higher committees of national defence." However, the Constitution also states that "the prime minister is responsible for national defence. Constitutional experts say the

exact role of prime minister in foreign policy and defence appears to be subject to interpretation. France nas nuclear weapons and its troops and military personnel have been deployed in many conflict zones around the world. The last time France had a prime minister and a president from different parties, they broadly agreed on strategic matters of defence and foreign policy. But this time the power sharing con-cept known in France as "cohabitation" could be very different given the animosity between the far-right and the far-left politicians. Both blocs appear to deeply resent the business-friendly, centrist president. On the issue of the country's military command, political

historian Jean Garrigues said that "the president is the head of the armed forces, (but) it's the prime minister who has the armed forces at his dispos-In practice, he said this means

that "if the president decided to send troops on the ground to Ukraine ... the prime minister would be able to block this decision."In March, Macron warned Western powers against showing any signs of weakness to Russia and said Ukraine's allies shouldn't rule out sending Western troops into Ukraine to help the country against Russia's aggres-

China urges global scientists to study | Rajapaksa to meet | 'Women's rights to be discussed lunar samples, cites obstacle with US at meeting attended by Taliban'

AP BANGKOK

Thina's space officials said Thursday they welcomed scientists from around the world to apply to study the lunar rock samples that the Change 6 probe brought back to Earth in a historic mission, but noted there were limits to that cooperation, specifically with the United States. Officials said at a televised news conference in Beijing meant to introduce the mission's achievements that any cooperation with the U.S. would be hinged on removing an American law that bans direct bilateral cooperation with NASA. "The source of the obstacle in US-China aerospace cooperation is still in the Wolf Amendment," said Bian Zhigang, vice chair of the China National Space Administration. "If the U.S. truly wants to hope to began regular aerospace cooperation, I think they should take the appropriate measures to remove the obsta-

The Wolf Amendment was enacted in 2011 and prevents direct U.S.-Chinese bilateral cooperation except in cases where the FBI can certify that there is no national security risk to sharing information with the Chinese side in the course of

work. Still, China could cooperate with scientists of other countries. It worked with the European Space Agency, France, Italy and Pakistan in the Change 6 mission.

"China welcomes scientists from all countries to apply according to the processes and share in the benefits," said Liu Yunfeng, director of the international cooperation office of the China National Space Administration. Meanwhile, little information

about the global first achieved Tuesday was announced. Chinese officials declined to reveal how many samples they actually gathered or any preliminary findings. "I'm afraid this matter will not be

revealed until tomorrow, so I hope everyone can wait patiently for another day," Change 6 chief designer Hu Hao said at the

On Monday, Chinese scientists of material.

news conference.

said that they anticipate the returned samples will include 2.5 million-year-old volcanic rock and other material that scientists hope will answer questions about geographic differences on the moon's two sides. The mission had aimed to gather two kilograms (more than four pounds) The near side of the moon is what is seen from Earth, and the far side faces outer space. The far side is also known to have mountains and impact craters and is much more difficult to reach.

The probe's journey to the far side of the moon was historic in that it was the first time a probe had successfully taken off and brought back samples from the far side directly. Previous samples thought to be from the far side of the moon are from meteorites found on Earth.

The probe had landed in the moon's South Pole-Aitken Basin, an impact crater created more than 4 billion years ago. The samples scientists are expecting will likely come from different layers of the basin, which will bear traces of the different geological events across its long chronology, such as when the moon was younger and had an active inside that could produce volcanic rock.

Officials did announce some future plans, with a planned Change 7 probe to explore resources on the moon's South Pole. Further down the line, they have planned Tianwen-3 for around 2030 to carry out a Mars sample return mission and a Tianwen-4 Jupiter exploration

Chinese Premier Colombo (PTI): Former Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa on Thursday left on an official visit to Beijing where he will meet Premier Li Qiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss the island nation's debt restructuring agreement with China. China is Sri Lanka's largest bilateral lender owning 52 per cent of the USD 40 billion external debt when Sri Lanka announced its sovereign

default in 2022. President Wickremesinghe Wednesday announced that debt restructuring agreements were finalised with bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris, describing the development as a "significant milestone" that will bolster international trust in the cashstrapped island nation. The

debt restructuring deal entails

allowing time till 2043 to repay

USD 4.2 billion of Chinese

loans - the bulk of which was

drawn during the Rajapaksa

presidency 2005-15. On Thursday, Daily Mirror quoted sources to report that 78-year-old patriarch of the Rajapaksa dynasty's visit was on an invitation by Foreign Minister Wang to attend the

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

Rajapaksa had steered a massive infrastructure drive by building a port and an airport and a southern highway with Chinese commercial loans. Sri Lanka was facing criticism of falling under a Chinese debt trap under Rajapaksa's presi-

and human rights. This is the third UN meeting

Other attendees include envoys

The Taliban seized power in

United Nations (AP): The UN political chief who will chair the first meeting between Afghanistan's Taliban rulers and envoys from about 25 countries answered sharp criticism that Afghan women have been excluded, saying Wednesday that women's rights will be raised at every session. Undersecretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo stressed to a small group of reporters that the two-day meeting starting Sunday is an initial engagement aimed at initiating a step-by-step process with the goal of seeing the Taliban "at peace with itself and its neighbours and adhering to interna-tional law," the UN Charter,

with Afghan envoys in Qatar's capital, Doha, but the first that the Taliban are attending. They weren't invited to the first and refused to attend the sec-

from the European Union, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the United States, Russia, China and several of Afghanistan's neighbours, DiCarlo said.

Afghanistan in 2021 as United

States and NATO forces withcially for women and girls, and drew following two decades of

war. No country officially recognises them Afghanistan's government, and the UN has said that recognition is almost impossible while bans on female education and employment remain in place and women can't go out without a male guardian. When DiCarlo met with senior

Taliban officials in Kabul in May, she said she made clear that the international community is concerned about four things: the lack of an inclusive government, the denial of human rights espethe need to combat terrorism and the narcotics trade. 'The issue of inclusive governance, women's rights, human

rights writ large, will be a part of every single session," she said. "This is important, and we will hear it again and again, I'm sure from quite a number

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International criticized the United Nations for not having Afghan women and civil society representatives at the table with the Taliban. DiCarlo described the meeting as a process.



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

Admission Notice

MDS Courses under NEET PG-2024.

Online Registration/applications are invited through University website from ligible candidates on the basis of NEET-MDS-2024 for admission to MDS ourses in Govt./ Private Colleges, Private Universities and Minority Institute n the State of Punjab w.e.f 01-07-2024 to 05-07-2024 upto 12:00 Noon. ast date for deposition of Registration fee through online payment gateway s 05-07-2024. Counseling will be conducted as per schedule published in rospectus/University website.

For Prospectus/Schedule/Fee/ details & updates visit Note: Any notification/amendment by Govt. of Punjab/ Govt. of India/DCI/MCC regarding PG admissions, Session 2024, shall be applicable.

00/12/262/2023/35039 Dated CHD :- 6/27/2024

List of threatened species grows by 1,000 The 2024 update also highlights Abuja (Nigeria) (AP): Over cacti, native to Chile's Atacama as ornamental species. The smugglers and poachers facilitating 45,000 species are now threatened coastal desert, the Bornean ele-

with extinction — 1,000 more than last year — according to an international conservation organization that blames pressures from climate change, invasive species and human activity such as illicit trade and infrastructural expansion.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released its latest Red List of Threatened Species on Thursday Now in its 60th year, the list sounds the alarm about animals and plants at risk of extinction, but it also highlights conservation suc-



cess stories such as the Iberian

The list now includes 1,63,040 species, an increase of about 6,000 from last year. Copiapoa

phant and the Gran Canaria giant lizard are among the threat-ened species, IUCN revealed.

Copiapoa cacti have long been coveted as decorative plants, driving an illegal trade that has been amplified by social media where enthusiasts and traders showcase and sell the cacti.

A staggering 82 per cent of the species is now at risk of extinction, a significant jump from 55 per cent in 2013, the report said. IUCN said that the decline is due to the surge in demand for the

Chilean cacti in Europe and Asia

the trade, the organization said have gained increased accessibility to the plants' habitat due to roads and housing expansion in the Atacama area "It is easy to distinguish if copiapoa

cacti have been poached or grown in a greenhouse," said Pablo Guerrero, a member of the IUCN's group on the plants. "Poached copiapoa have a grey tone and are coated in a dustylooking bloom that protects the plants in one of the driest deserts on Earth, whereas cultivated plants appear greener."

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



Admissions 2024.

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Sensex breaches 79,000 level, Nifty 24,000 peak for 1st time

 $B_{\text{breached}}^{\text{enchmark}} \ \ \, \text{the}$ Sensex historic 79,000 mark while Nifty scaled the 24,000 peak for the first time on Thursday as buying in blue-chip stocks like Infosys, Reliance and TCS helped markets extend gains to the fourth straight day and close at lifetime high levels.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 568.93 points or 0.72 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 79,243.18 amid the expiry of monthly contracts in the derivatives segment. During the day, it zoomed 721.78 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the new lifetime peak of 79,396.03.

The Nifty ended at a fresh record high of 24,044.50, rising 175.70 points or 0.74 per cent. Intra-day, it soared 218.65 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the all-time peak of 24,087.45. Among the 30 Sensex companies, UltraTech Cement jumped over 5 per cent after the country's leading cement maker said it will acquire a 23 per cent stake in its Chennai-based rival India Cements Ltd, in a deal estimated to be around Rs 1,885 crore.

Gains in Infosys, TCS and Reliance Industries drove the benchmark indices to recordhigh levels. "The benchmark indices exhibited bullish momentum, buoyed by



expected revival in the IT sector and consolidation in cement industry. However, the broader market remained sideways due to valuation concerns and FII selling owing to rising US bond yields," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. NTPC, JSW Steel, Tata

Motors, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Tech Mahindra were also among the major gainers. Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, Nestle, HDFC Bank

and Maruti were among the markets

positively for the fourth consecutive session, gaining over half a per cent, continuing the current uptrend. After a flat start, the Nifty edged higher amid volatility and crossed the new milestone of 24,000. Most sectors aligned with this movement, with IT and energy among the top gainers," said Ajit Mishra -

Broking Ltd. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.17 per cent while smallcap index declined 0.57 per cent. Among the indices, power jumped 1.74 per cent, IT

ŠVP, Research, Religare

rallied 1.65 per cent, while teck (1.59 per cent), utilities (1.29 per cent), telecommunication (1.18 per cent), commodities (0.82 per cent) and auto (0.70 per cent) also advanced.

Financial Services, industrials, realty and capital goods were the laggards.

The Nifty hit the 23,000 mark on May 24 this year. The BSE Sensex had breached the 78,000 level on June 25.

Analysts said most sectors recorded gains, with IT and energy among the top gainers. Broader indices showed mixed results as midcap index closed in the green while smallcap index lost over half a per cent. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. European markets were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended in positive territory on Wednesday.

Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 3,535.43 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.84 per cent to USD 85.97 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark climbed 620.73 points or 0.80 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 78,674.25 on Wednesday. The Nifty went up by 147.50 points or 0.62 per cent to settle at a record closing peak

GST suppliers giving post sale discount have to take undertaking from clients: CBIC

circular has a retrospective

effect, impacting all demands

on this issue since 2017.

Taxpayers engaged in litigation

on this point can leverage this

Going forward, this will

industry by clarifying the

process for issuing credit notes.

certifications for smaller

transactions, which increases

the documentation burden and

accounting systems. This

circular demands meticulous

compliance but promises long-

term benefits in terms of

predictable and streamlined

GST operations," Mohan said.

EY Tax Partner Saurabh

Agarwal said these documents,

with a unique ID number,

circular

benefit

or

updates

mandates

CA/CMA

clarification for relief.

significantly

obtaining

certifications

necessitates

PTI NEW DELHI

Suppliers giving post-sale discounts through credit notes under GST will have to ensure that the client gives an undertaking or a CA certificate stating that the ITC availed on the discount value has been reversed, the CBIC has said.

Currently, there is no mechanism to track whether the Input Tax Credit (ITC) on such discounts has been reversed or not.

Till the time a functionality is made available on the common portal to enable the suppliers as well as the tax officers to verify the reversal, the supplier may procure a certificate from the recipient of the supply, issued by the Chartered Accountant (CA) or the Cost Accountant (CMA), certifying that the recipient has made the required proportionate reversal of ITC at his end in respect of such credit note issued by the

In cases, where the amount of tax (CGST+SGST +IGST and including compensation cess, if any) involved in the discount given by the supplier to a recipient through tax credit notes in a financial year does not exceed Rs 5 lakh, then instead of CA/CMA certificate, then the supplier will have to get an undertaking from the said recipient.

Moore Singhi Executive serve as proof for audits and Director Rajat Mohan said the ensure consistent application

of GST rules on post-sale discounts. This would help in resolving the disputes between the tax department and the In a separate circular, Central

Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) clarified that ITC is available to insurance companies in respect of motor vehicle repair expenses incurred by them in case of reimbursement mode of claim settlement. "In cases where the garage

issues two separate invoices in respect of the repair services, one to the insurance company in respect of approved claim cost and second to the customer for the amount of repair service in excess of the approved claim cost, input tax credit may be available to the insurance company on the said invoice issued to the insurance company subject reimbursement of said amount by insurance company to the

customer," it said. However, if the invoice for the full amount for repair services is issued to the insurance company while the insurance

company reimbursement to the insured only for the approved claim cost, then, the input tax credit may be available to the insurance company only to the extent of reimbursement of the approved claim cost to the insured, and not on the full

Rupee rises 13 paise to close at 83.44 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated 13 paise to settle at 83.44 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, supported by a positive Thursday, trend in equity markets and favourable domestic macroeconomic profile. Forex traders said the

strength of the American currency in the overseas market and US dollar demand from oil marketing companies capped sharp gains for the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.56 and hit the intraday high of 83.43 against the greenback during the session.

It finally settled at 83.44 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a gain of 13 paise from its previous

On Wednesday, the rupee depreciated 14 paise against the US dollar and settled at Indian

appreciated on bond-related foreign inflows ahead of their inclusion in the IP Morgan debt index, said Anuj Choudhary – Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Domestic markets touched fresh record highs with the Nifty breaching the 24,000mark for the first time, supporting the domestic

Budget to accelerate pace of reforms, take many historic steps: President

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The first budget of the newly-formed NDA 1 newly-formed government next month will take "many historic steps" as well as accelerate the pace of economic reforms and lay a roadmap for 'far-reaching policies' and 'futuristic vision of the government to make India the world's third largest economy, President Droupadi Murmu said on Thursday.

In her first address to the joint sitting of Parliament since the constitution of the 18th Lok Sabha, she outlined the economic vision of the NDA government as well as highlighted achievements in the past decade under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

clear majority is "a mandate that the work of making India a developed nation continues uninterrupted and India attains its goals", she said.

The new government under Modi is to present a full Budget for the fiscal year

2024-25 (April 2024 to March The President said the resolve 2025) next month which is likely to lay down priorities in matters of taxation and policy as well as reform agenda for the near term.

"This budget will be an effective document of the government's far-reaching policies and futuristic vision, "Along with major economic

and social decisions, many historic steps will also be seen in this budget," she said without elaborating.

"The pace of reforms will be further accelerated in tune with the aspirations of people India for development," she said. National

Democratic Alliance (NDA) consecutive term, analysts are expecting broad policy continuity, with the government continuing to prioritise infrastructure capex, improvements to the business environment, and gradual fiscal consolidation.

to 'reform, perform and transform' has made India the fastest growing economy in the world and the nation has risen to become the 5th largest economy from being the 11th ranked economy.

From 2021 to 2024, India has grown at an average rate of 8 er cent annually. "India has achieved this

growth amidst the global pandemic and despite ongoing conflicts in different parts of the world. This has been made possible due to reforms and major decisions undertaken in the national interest in the last 10 years," she said, adding India alone is contributing 15 per cent of the global growth.

striving to make India the 3rd largest economy in the world, she said. "Achieving this goal will also strengthen the foundation of a developed India.

"During the phase of unstable governments in the country

that lasted several decades many governments, even if willing, were neither able to bring reforms nor take critical decisions. The people of India have now changed this situation by their decisive mandate. "Many such reforms have

taken place in the last 10 years, which are greatly benefiting the nation today. Even when these reforms were being taken up, they were opposed and attempts were made to spread negativity. But all these reforms have stood the test of time," she said. Highlighting the reforms, she

said to save India's banking sector from collapsing, the government brought banking Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code which have made the country's banking sector one of the strongest banking sectors in the world.

"Our public sector banks are robust and profitable today. Profits of public sector banks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

T giant Infosys' MD and CEO Salil Parekh has settled with markets regulator Sebi a case pertaining to alleged violation of insider trading norms after paying Rs 25 lakh. He allegedly failed to put in place "adequate and effective systems" of internal control to

systems" of internal control to

ensure compliance for

preventing insider trading,

according to an order passed

by the Securities and Exchange Board of India

The case emerged from Sebi's

investigation between June 29,



have crossed Rs 1.4 lakh crore than ever, GST collections for in 2023-24, which is 35 per the first time ever crossed Rs cent higher than last year. 2 lakh crore in April. The strength of our banks Giving sneak purview to n to expand their credit base and contribute to the economic development of the nation. The NPAs of public sector banks are also continuously decreasing," she While SBI is earning record

profits and LIC is stronger doing

2020, and September 27, 2021,

in the matter of alleged insider trading in the scrip of Infosys.

The regulator probe found that certain information which was Unpublished Price

Sensitive Information (UPSI)

had not been considered as

The latest ruling came after Parekh proposed to Sebi to settle the alleged violations

"without admitting or denying

the findings of fact" through a

"In view of the acceptance of

the settlement terms and

such by Infosys.

settlement order.

Murmu said the government emerging as a leader in every is giving equal importance to all the three pillars of the economy — manufacturing, services and agriculture. Production-linked incentive opportunities

(PLI) schemes and ease of business

trading case with Sebi; pays ₹25 lakh

proceedings initiated against

the applicant (Parekh) vide Show Cause Notice dated

August 3, 2023, are disposed

said in its order passed on

The case relates to a

based asset manager Vanguard in July 2020. Under

record keeping platform to

Wednesday.

Vanguard.

Infosys

Infosys' CEO Parekh settles insider

investments and employment opportunities on a large scale. "Ålong with the traditional sectors, sunrise sectors are also being promoted in mission mode. Be it semiconductor or solar, be it electric vehicles or electronic goods, be it green hydrogen or batteries, be it aircraft carriers or fighter Jets, India is expanding in all these sectors," she said. The government is also

contributed to increasing

making continuous efforts to reduce the cost of logistics. It is also strengthening the services sector. Simultaneously, investments

in green industries are being increased, leading to an increase in 'green jobs'.

Stating sector from IT to tourism and from health to wellness, she said this this is creating a large number of and employment self-

employment.

10 years, the government has placed great emphasis on every aspect of the rural economy. Agro-based industries, dairy and fisherybased industries are being expanded in villages. Cooperatives have been accorded priority. "A major problem of small

The President said in the last

farmers is related to storage Therefore, my government has commenced work on a scheme to create the world's largest storage capacity in the cooperative sector," she said. Under PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi, more than Rs 3,20,000 crore have been disbursed to Policies, she said, were

focused on making India increasing farmers' income through increased exports. The President said the government believes that there should be healthy competition among the states to attract investors from all over the world.

25% of new hires are married women; nearly **70%** of workforce are women: Foxconn

the government that 25 per cent of its new hires are married women and its safety protocol, requires all employees to avoid wearing metal irrespective of gender or religion, discriminatory, sources said. In an informal note shared with the government after reports suggested it is not hiring married women, Foxconn stated that such stipulations are not part of its policy and these claims may have been made by those individuals who were not hired, sources said.

Apple iPhone maker Foxconn has informed

They added that such media reports malign the fast-Indian growing manufacturing sector.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour and Employment on Wednesday has sought a detailed report from the labour Nadu department on the issue of married women not being allowed to work at the Foxconn India Apple iPhone Plant, as reported by the media.

"Foxconn had clarified that 25 per cent of the latest hires are married women. This would mean nearly one-third of the total women are married. This ratio compares favourably to any factory in

operating in India," one of the sources said. factory Foxconn

currently has about 70 per cent women and 30 per cent men and the Tamil Nadu plant is the largest factory for women employment in the country with the total employment having touched 45,000 workers during peak periods, they said.

The company has also informed that the discussion around Hindu married women being discriminated against for wearing metals (ornaments and jewelry) is "entirely slanted" and wearing metal in such factories is a safety issue, a fact well recognised by both the industry and the

government. "Any person wearing metals ably to any factory in man or woman - regardless sent to the company on the sector currently of their status (single or matter.

married) and their religion (Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh etc.) are required to remove metals working in the factory," the source said quoting the company's informal note. For safety reasons, no one wearing metal is allowed to

work on the shop floor and this is a prevalent practice in several industries. According to sources, the company has stated that the media report is based on anecdotal comments by 5-10

seekers. These comments likely came at Foxconn.

people or potential job

from candidates who did not get the job or no longer work No immediate comments were received from Foxconn

in response to an email query

The project to develop Noida International Film City, led by filmmaker Boney Kapoor's Bayview Projects LLP in collaboration with Bhutani Group, on Thursday advanced significantly.

After winning the bid with a promising 18 per cent revenue share offer to the Uttar Pradesh Government, Kapoor and his team have signed concession agreement with the Yamuna Expressway Industrial



Authority (YEIDÁ).

near Noida. The signing ceremony,

attended by Kapoor, Ashish Bhutani, and senior YEIDA officials including CEO Arun Vir Singh, marks a crucial milestone. The initial phase of development will cover 230 acres, focusing on creating world-class infrastructure for the film and media industry. The project, estimated to cost Rs 1,510 crore, emphasizes a strategic blend of commercial and industrial zones within the Film City to foster cultural development in the

Unpublished Price Sensitive Information (UPSI) requiring of in terms of ... The settlement Regulations," Sebi compliance with insider trading norms. However, the information had not been considered as such by Infosys. partnership announcement between Infosys and US-Under the insider trading rules, the CEO and MD of a listed company is responsible for putting in place an adequate and effective system the deal, Infosys was required to provide a cloud-based of internal control to ensure compliance for preventing insider trading. In its order, Sebi noted that

considered as an expansion

move for the IT firm, fell

ambit

under the

Salil Parekh was the CEO and

MD of Infosys at the time of the announcement of the strategic partnership between Infosys and Vanguard and Sebi's investigation concluded that by not complying with the rule, Parekh allegedly violated insider trading rules. In September 2021, the Sebi passed an interim order in September 2021 against two entities for prima facie violation of the provisions of insider trading rules in the context of alleged insider trading in the scrip of Infosys. Following this, a confirmatory order was passed in December 2021.

The partnership, between Infosys and Vanguard, receipt of settlement amount by Sebi, the specified Project to develop Film City in Noida speeds up

PNS NEW DELHI

Development

This agreement allows them to proceed with the development of the Film City on a sprawling 1,000-acre site

economic growth

Video commerce offerings gain traction, Indians spent over 2 mn hours video shopping: Flipkart PTI ■ NEW DELHI country

Homegrown e-commerce platform Flipkart on Thursday said video as a format is rapidly gaining adoption and Indian customers have spent over 2 million hours on its video commerce offerings in the past one year.

India is one of the top consumers of internet data, and with Indian consumers becoming increasingly techsavvy and digitally inclined, video commerce in the

According to Flipkart Indians have spent over 2 million hours on its video commerce offerings, from June 2023 to

May 2024. Tier 2 and tier 3 regions comprised 65 per cent of overall video commerce engagement, mostly in categories like fashion, beauty, personal care, home decor and furnishing. The maximum viewership clocked on a single live commerce video was 1.4 million, it added.

HIL will help identify talent for national team: VR Raghunath | Chennaiyin FC rope in Lalrinliana

ragflick icon VR Raghunath said the upcoming Hockey India League will play a vital role in unearthing players who have the potential to contribute to the national team in future. Making a return after seven years, the tournament, featuring eight men's and six women's teams. will be held across December 2024 and February 2025.

"The league will play a major role in identifying the talent for the national team. Players like Manpreet Singh

Harmanpreet Singh were picked up from HIL. This is a platform for the domestic players to showcase their skills," Raghunath said in a release from the organisers.

Hockey India has invited players and support staff from top 15 teams in the world for this event, and Raghunath said it will give a chance for domestic players to learn from experienced pros. "Several young players will be brushing their shoulders with top-quality international players from Europe, Australia and South America.

"It will be an opportunity for



players play and how they think about the game and the work that goes into it," he said.

Raghunath also praised HI's move to start an exclusive women's league from this edition of the HIL

"Our women's team has been doing well for the past few years. The Hockey India League will be a great motivation for the players.

Through HIL, young players who don't have much access to hockey, will get a chance to showcase their skills and impress the selectors," he added.

Hnamte for three years

Chennaiyin FC on Thursday drafted in talented central midfielder Lalrinliana Hnamte on a three-year contract ahead of the ISL 2024-25 season.

The 21-year-old has thus become the third midfielder to ioin the Marina Machans after Lukas Brambilla and Jitendra Singh ahead of the upcoming

The Mizoram-born Hnamte is one of the brightest talents of Indian football. He made his

Welcoming Hnamte to the club, head coach Owen Coyle said: "With the ability he possesses we haven't seen as much of Hnamte as we should've in the league. He's a fantastic young boy who will offer something different to our midfield options.'

Before joining Chennaiyin, Hnamte was part of Mohun Bagan Super Giant for three seasons. He won the Durand

Indian Super League (ISL) Cup (2023), the ISL title (2023) debut at the age of 18 for East and the League Shield (2024) Bengal in 2021.

"I'm very excited and grateful to be part of this amazing club and I can't wait to play in front of the fans. I will give absolutely everything I have to help this team win," said Hnamte. Hnamte has made 43 appearances in the ISL, spending more than 1300 minutes on the field. In the last season, he recorded an impressive passing accuracy of 83 percent in 13 matches.

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



AP GELSENKIRCHEN (GERMANY)

Apre-game Cristiano chat with Ronaldo inspired Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Georgia to one of the biggest upsets in European Championship history, beating Portugal 2-0 and advancing to the last 16. Georgia's No. 7 has admired Ronaldo for years and had spoken before the game of hero's shirt. He got it, along with a goal and a slice of soccer history, on

frustrating night for Ronaldo and Portugal. "Before the match there was a meeting and he wished me success and it was so much for me because I would never imagine that he would come to me and say something to me," Kvaratskhelia said in translated comments. "I realized that I could do and we could do so many things today because it gave me inspiration.'

Napoli forward For Kvaratskhelia, the win even surpasses his club's historic Italian title last year.

"This is the best day in my life because it was more difficult

at Euro 2024. He felt he deserved a penalty in the first half and kicked away a water when he was substituted in the 66th

Ronaldo was given a yellow card for his protests after his penalty appeal was turned down. He wanted the decision after his shirt was pulled in the area by Lochoshvili as a cross came in. No foul was

With Portugal already qualified, Ronaldo was one of only three players kept in the lineup from the previous 3-0 win over Turkey, along with Costa and midfielder João Palhinha.

Portugal created little in the second half as Georgia's defense sat deep, but the 2016 champions had chances in added time. Goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili kept Georgia's two-goal lead intact with saves from Nélson Semedo and Diogo Dalot, while Francisco Čonceição narrowly missed the target. Portugal coach Roberto

Martinez criticized "very

inconsistent" video reviews but denied his team had

underestimated Georgia. "This was a game where

Georgia was playing to be part of history and we didn't match their intensity," he said. At the final whistle, Georgia's players sprinted off the bench to embrace Mamardashvili in a huddle and leapt with joy in front of their raucous fans. Turkey beat the Czech Republic 2-1 in the other group match. The Turks also advanced while the Czechs were eliminated.

Georgia's victory eliminated Hungary, which finished third in Group A.

PUBLIC NOTICE PICICI Bank | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Shal Tower Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road Karol Bagh New Delhi- 110005.

Notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 is being issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. (on the underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security concerning a Housing Loan Facility granted pursuant to a Loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the following borrower(s) who has/hove defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest towards the Loan Facility (les) obtained by them from the secured creditor. The Loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them at their last known addresses; however, it has returned un-served and hence, they are hereby notified by way of this Public Notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
	Ganesh Singh/ Shashi Devi Kushwah, Near of Pawan Convent School, Kalpi Bridge Colony, Morar Madhya Pradesh Gwalior- 474006/ Loan No. 12100001761, A/c- OZGWA00005019136	Property No. 3052, Stuated At Aditya Puram, Ward No. 18, Maharajpura Gird, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh- 474000	18/05/2024 RS. 10,12,060/-	09/03/ 2024

of the Loan (as applicable) is/are advised to make the payments of the outstanding within the period of 60 days from the date of the publication of this Notice else, further steps will be taken as per the provisions of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date: June 28, 2024 Place: Raipur

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) Corporate Office at Pk to 9, 98, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana) and Branch Office at "1st Floor, Gwalani Chambers, Beside Gold Gym, Vyapar Vihar, Bilaspu Coff 49501" under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002(hereinafter "Act"). Whereas th vulnorized Officer ("AO") of IIFL-HFL had taken the possession of the following propertying sursuant to the notice issued UIS 13(2) of the Act in the following los ecounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS and WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of IIFL

HFL's dues, The Sal	IFL's dues, The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.iiflonehome.com						
Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) /	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property/ Secured Asset			te of Symbolic Possession	Reserve Price	
Guarantor(s)	09-Feb-2024 Rs. 19,14,884/-		the property Plot No 141 b. 367 And 367/1, 397/3.		13-May-2024	Rs. 15,60,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Sixty	
Kachhvaha	(Rupees Nineteen Lakh		5, 433 Geeta Lake City,	Total	Outstanding as	` Thousand Only)	
2.J K Food	Fourteen Thousand	Mouja Gatouri, Phn. 01/2	1, R.N.M. Bilaspur, Tehsil		ate 05-Jun-2024	Earnest Money Deposit	
Company	Eight Hundred and Eighty Four Only)	And District Bilaspur, Cl	hattisgarh, 495001. Area	R	s. 20,12,173/-	(EMD)	
3.Mrs. Komal Kachhyaha	0 7 77	Admeasuring (In Sq.	Ft.): Property Type:	(Rup	ees Twenty Lakh	Rs. 1,56,000/- (Rupees One	
(Prospect No	Bid Increase Amount Rs. 25,000/-	Land_Area, Saleable_	Area Property Area:	Twel	ve Thousand One	, ,	
IL10535380)	(Rupees Twenty Five	3000.00, 3000.00		Huno	fred And Seventy	Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Only)	
,	Thousand Only)				Three Only)		
Date of Inspection of property 29-Jul-2024 1100 hrs -1400 hrs.		EMD Last Date 31-Jul-2024 till 5 p			ime of E-Auction 4 1100 hrs-1300 hrs.		

and pay through link available for the property! Secured Asset only. To make payments you have to visit https://www.liflonehome.coi only. Note:: Payment link for each property! Secured Asset only. Note:: Payment link for each property! Secured Asset is different. Ensure you are using link of the property! Secured Asset you intend buy vide public auction. lode Of Payment :- EMD payments are to be made vide online mode only. To make payments you have to visit https://www.iiflonehome.com

only vice public auction.

For balance payment, upon successful bid, has to pay through RTGS/NEFT. The accounts details are as follows: a) Name of the Account IIFL Home Finance Ltd., b) Name of the Bank:- Standard Chartered Bank, c) Account No:-9902879xxxxx followed by Prospect Number, IFSC Code:-SCBL0036001, e) Bank Address: Standard Chartered Bank, 90 M.G. Road, Fort, Mumbai-400001

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

For participating in e-auction, Intending bidders required to register their details with the Service Provider https://www.iflonehome.com, well is advance and has to create the login account, login ID and password. Intending bidders have to submit / send their "Tender FORM" along with the pay ment details towards EMD, copy of the KYC and PAN card at the above mentioned Branch Office.

The bidders shall improve their offer in multiple of amount mentioned under the column "Bid Increase Amount". In case bid is placed in the last 5 min utes of the closing time of the auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 5 minutes.

The successful bidder should deposit 25% of the bid amount (after adjusting EMD) within 24 hours of the acceptance of bid price by the AO and the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. All deposit and payment shall be in the prescribed mode of payment. The purchaser has to bear the cess, applicable stamp duty, fees, and any other statutory dues or other dues like municipal tax, electricity charges, land all other incidental costs, charges including all taxes and rates quitoring required into the progradure.

The purchaser has to bear the cess, applicable stamp duty, fees, and any other statutory dues or other dues like municipal tax, electricity charges, land and all other incidental costs, charges including all taxes and rates outgoings relating to the property.

Bidders are advised to go through the website https: // www.iiflonehome.com and https://www.iifl.com/home-loans/properties-for-auction for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their Bids for taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.

For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID:- care@iiflonehome.com, Support Helpline no.1800 2672 499.

For any query related to Property details, Inspection of Property and Online bid etc. call IIFL HFL toll free no.1800 2672 499 from 09:30 hrs to 18:00 hrs between Monday to Friday or write to email:- care@iiflonehome.com.

Notice is hereby given to above said borrowers to collect the household articles, which were lying in the secured asset at the time of taking physical possession within 7 days, otherwise IIFL-HFL shall not be responsible for any loss of property under the circumstances.

In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and

Further the notice is hereby given to the Borroweris, that in case they fall to collect the above said articles same shall be sold in accordance with Law.
 In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid will be forfeited (including EMD) and the property will be again put to sale.
 AO reserves the rights to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of tender/auction without assigning any reason thereof. In case of any dispute in tender/Auction, the decision of AO of IIFL-HFL will be final.
 STATUTARY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

 The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto dated interest and ancillary expenses before the date of Tender/Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost.

Place:- Bilaspur, Date: 28-June-2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IIFL Home Finance Limit

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

friendly.

(Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) | CIN: L65110TN2014PLC097792

to do it with the Georgian

team than with Napoli," he

A banner at the Georgian

fans' end of the stadium said "Believe," and they did.

The Georgians needed a win

to reach the knockout stage at Euro 2024 and got their

opening goal after only 93 seconds. Georges Mikautadze

intercepted a poor pass and set up Kvaratskelia to score

ball before the first goal and

gave away a penalty for the

Lochoshvili inside the penalty

area. Mikautadze hit the spot

kick low and past Portugal

goalkeeper Diogo Costa in

Georgia advanced in its debut

at a major tournament as one of the best third-place teams.

Portugal had already qualified

from Group F after winning

The Georgians will next face

Spain on Sunday in Cologne,

while Portugal plays Slovenia

on Monday in Frankfurt.

Slovenia is another defense-

first team and it upset Portugal 2-0 in a March

Ronaldo is still without a goal

tripping

with a low shot.

the 57th minute.

its first two games.

second,

Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 7th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031. Tel: +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4002



APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6) & 9 (1)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enfor

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) as per column (iii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (ii mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 16-Jul-2024 as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) from Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on IDFC FIRST Bank website i.e. www.idfcfirstbank.com.

S. NO	(i) Demand Notice Date and Amount	(ii) Agreement ID	(iii) Name of Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s)		(v) Reserve Price Amount	(vi) EMD Amount	(vii) Date and Time of Auction	(viii) Date and Time of EMD Auction	(ix) Date and time of Inspection	(x) Authorized Officer Name & Contact Number
1	INR 1455270.79/- Demand Notice dated: 24-Apr-2019	14579602	Bismbhar Chaturvedi &	Plot No. 23 and 24, Khasra No. 20 and 117/2, Situated at Known as Sai City Village Sankra, P.H.No-08, RIC – Bhilai-3, Tehsil - Patan, Dist - Durg, Chhattisgarh-491001	INR 437400.00/-	INR 43740.00/-	16-Jul- 2024 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM	15-Jul-2024 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	10-Jul-2024 10:00 AM To 4:00 PM	Name- Hemant Nag Contact Number- 9922185777 Name- Sandesh Jain Contact Number- 8839140796
2	INR 1237583.55/- Demand Notice dated: 16-May-2019	14964715	Kaushal & Heena	Plot No. 4 & 5, Sai City Kh No. 20 & 117/2, Part, Ph No. 08, Bhilai – 3 Mouja – Sankara, Tehsil – Patan, Dist – Durg, (C.G), Durg, Chhattisgarh – 491001	INR 839808.00/-	INR 83980.80/-	16-Jul- 2024 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM	15-Jul-2024 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	10-Jul-2024 10:00 AM To 4:00 PM	Name- Hemant Nag Contact Number- 9922185777 Name- Sandesh Jain Contact Number- 8839140796
3	INR 2774756.19/- Demand Notice dated: 09-Dec-2019	15011291		Part of Kh no – 179/24, situated at Dagniya, D.C. No. – 104, R' (Raipur-), Tehsil and Dist). Raipur (C.G.)-492001	INR 1180980.00/-	INR 118098.00/-	16-Jul- 2024 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM	15-Jul-2024 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	10-Jul-2024 10:00 AM To 4:00 PM	Name- Hemant Nag Contact Number- 9922185777 Name- Sandesh Jain Contact Number- 8839140796

Disclaimer: Please note that the said notice is issued for sale of immovable property only and IDFC FIRST Bank Limited has no right to sale of the movable assets, if any,

Date: 28.06.2024

Authorized Office IDFC FIRST Bank Limite (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd

KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION CUM SALE
Registered office 27BKC, C 27, G Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai – 400 051
Corporate Office: Kotak Infinity, Zone-II, 4th Floor, Bldg. No.21, Infinity Park, Off. W.E. Highway,
Goregaon, Mumbai – 400 097: Branch/Regional Office: Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, Mukta Prayag Complex (a) kotak

Beside Nirankari Furniture Pandri Raipur 492001 CG. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor that the below described immovable property mortgaged to the Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd and the Physical possession of same has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd and same shall be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis, offers are invited to submit online through the Web Portal of our e-Auction Service Partner, M/s. C1 India Pvt. Ltd i. e. www.c1india.com by the undersigned for sale of the immovable property of which particulars are given below:

Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s)	orrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Demand Notice Date		Reserve Price	Date of Inspection	
oan Account No. HF37609378 and CRN No. 49101262 and Loan No. HF OD 4912581367 and RN No. 249104770 Mrs. Aarti Poddar W/O Mr. Alok Poddar, E 17 apital City, Phase 2 Saddu Baronda Road, Near thawans Sardhoo, Raipur-492007(.C.G) "Borrower / Guarantor/Mortgager "M/S Poddar Steel Through Sole Proprietor Mr.	and Amount Demand Notice dated 14-07-2022, Rs.	All the piece and parcel of the mortgaged property bearing address "Plot No E-17, B-1, Kh No 266/1, P.C. No. 96, RNM- Dharsiwa 1, Vill. Baronda, Raipur (C.G.) Measured Area 1500 Sq Ft. As	Rs. 43,01,100/- (Rupees Forty Three lakhs One Thousand One Hundred only)	of Immovable properties 11/07/2024 11:00 hrs -	
	33,30,456.93/-, (Rupees Thirty Three Lakhs		Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	12:00 hrs Date/ time of Auction	
Nok Poddar, Poddar Steel, Steel, Shop No.60, dishwar Complex, Ram Sagar Para Raipur -492001 .GBorrower Mr. Alok Poddar, E 17 Capital City,Phase 2 Saddu Jaronda Road, Near Bhawans Sardhoo, Raipur- 92007(.C.G)Proprietor/ Guarantor/Mortgager	Thirty Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Six and Ninety Three paisa only) as on	Bounded By North: Rasta (Road) South: Plot No. E- 16 East: Open Land West: Rasta (Road)." with entire construction standing thereon	Rs. 4,30,110/- (Rupees Four Lakhs Thirty Thousand One Hundred Ten Only)	19/07/2024 from 11:00 hrs to 12:00 hrs	

Bid Increase Amount 50,000/- Last Date for Submission of Offers / EMD:- 18/07/2024, till 5.00 pm. Important Terms & Conditions of Sale:

(1) The Auction is conducted as per the further Terms and Conditions of the Bid document and as per the procedure set out therein. ders may go through the website of our E-Auction Service Provider, M/s.C1 India Pvt Ltd i.e. https://www.bankeauctions.com_for bid documents, the details of the secured asset put up for e-Auction and the Bid Form which will be submitted online; (2) All the intending purchasers/bidders are required to register their name in the Web Portal mentioned above as https://www.bankeauctions.com and generate their User ID and Password in free of cost of their own to participate in the e-Auction on the date and time aforesaid; (3) For any enquiry, information, support, procedure and online training on e-Auction, the prospective bidders may contact the M/s C1 India Pvt Itd Department of our e-Auction Service Partner Harjinder, through Mobile No.: 9826804343 & E-mail ID: mpcg@c1india.com & support@bankeauctions.com; (4) To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised officer, there is no encumbrance in the property/ies. However, the intending bidders may inspect the property and its documents as mentioned above or any other date & time with prior appointment and they should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrance, title of property/ies put on e-Auction and claims/right/dues/affecting the property prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute any commitment or any representation of KMBL. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to KMBL. The Authorised officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues; For participating in the e-Auction, intending purchasers/bidders will have to submit/upload in the Web Portal (https://www.bankeauctions.com) the details of payment of interest-free refundable Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the secured asset as mentioned above by way of Demand Draft in favour of 'Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited' payable at Delhi along with self-attested copies of the PAN Card. Aadhaar Card. Residence Address Proof. Board Resolutions in case of company and Address Proof as specified above. (5) The EMD of all other bidders who did not succeed in the e-Auction will be refunded by KMBL

The Borrower (s) / Mortgager(s) / Guarantor(s) are hereby given STATUTORY 15 DAYS NOTICE UNDER RULE 6(2), 8(6) & 9(1) OF THE SARFAESI ACT to discharge the liability in full and pay the dues as mentioned above along with upto date interest and expenses with in thirty days from the date of this notice failing which the Secured Asset will be sold as per the terms and conditions mentioned above. In case there is any discrepancy between the publications of sale notice in English and Vernacular newspaper, then in such case the English newspaper will supersede the vernacular newspaper and it shall be considered as the final copy, thus removing the ambiguity. If the borrower/guarantors/mortgagers pays the amount due to Bank, in full before the date of sale, auction is liable to be

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, contact the Authorized Officer Ravindra Dwivedi@ +919764443818, and Mr. Ashok Motwani @ 9873737351 at above mentioned Regional office of Bank.

Special Instruction: e-Auction shall be conducted by our Service Provider, M/s, C1 India Pvt Ltd. on behalf of Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL), on pre-specified date, while the bidders shall be quoting from their own home/ offices/ place of their Bid as per their choice above the Reserve Price. Internet connectivity and other paraphernalia requirements shall have to be ensured by bidders themselves. Please note that failure of Internet connectivity (due to any reason whatsoever it may be) shall be sole responsibility of bidders and neither KMBL nor C1 India Pvt Ltd shall be responsible for these unforeseen circumstances. In order to ward-off such contingent situation, bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements/ alternatives whatever required so that they are able to circumvent such situation and still be able to participate in the e-Auction successfully. However, it is requested to the Bidder(s) not to wait till the last moment to quote/improve his/ her Bid to avoid any such complex situations.

Place:- Raipur C.G Date: 28/6/2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd

Franch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, Technopolis Building, 4th Floor, Sector V, Kolkata-700091, West Bengal, India M E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET UNDER SARFA

Details of

within 72 working hours of the closure of the e-Auction. The EMD will not carry any interest

[See proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules] Public Notice for Sale of Immovable Property/Secured Asset

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower, Mortgagor and Guarantors that the immovable properties more fully described hereunder ("Secured Asset") mortgaged to ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor"), the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "Without any recourse" basis, as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Reserve Price

Mortgagor & Guarantor(s)	Secured Asset (Refer Schedule-I)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Incremental Bid	Time of E-Auction	Outstanding
Borrower: Jainam Clothing Private Limited, C/o Jainam, Malviya Road, Raipur- 492001, Chhattisgarh Mortgagor: Mahendra Kocher (Jain) Guarantor(s): Motilal Kochar (Jain) Mahendra Kocher (Jain) Abhay Kochar (Jain)	Commercial Property At 22/295, 22/296, P.h. No 106a, Ward No. 41, Malviya Road, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, 492 001	Reserve Price: Rs.6,67,00,000/- EMD: Rs.66,70,000/- Incremental bid: In multiples of Rs.2,00,000/-	July 25, 2024 from 3:00 P.M to 4:00 P.M, with unlimited extension of five minutes each	Rs.26,38,76,901.86p as on October 30, 2019 as per Demand Notice issued u/s. 13(2) of the Act and the current outstanding dues being Rs. 49,53,97,160.46p as on June 02, 2024, with further interest and charges thereon.

1. The Secured Asset shall be sold by Tender cum e-Auction through ICICI Bank's approved service provider M/s. NexXen Solutions Private Limited (DisposalHub) (https://DisposalHub.com) under the

2. The intending bidder shall pay the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") before 3:00 P.M of July 24, 2024 by way of crossed Demand Draft/Pay Order from a Scheduled Bank/Nationalised Bank drawn in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited, A/c Jainam Clothing Private Limited" payable at par in all branches, or through NEFT/RTGS remitted in the designated account of ICICI Bank, i.e A/c No: 0104SL0COLLN, IFSC Code: ICIC0000104,

remitted in the designated account of ICICI Bank, i.e. A/c No: 0.1045L0COLLN, IFSC Code: ICIC0000104, Account Name: ICICI Bank-Inland Collection Liabilities, Loan A/c: Jainam Clothing Private Limited.

3. Bids in the prescribed formats given in the Tender Document shall be submitted to "The Authorised Officer, ICICI Bank Limited, BP – 4, Technopolis Building,4th Floor, Sector - V, Salt Lake City, Kolkata – 700091" either by electronic mode or physical mode, along with documentary evidence, KYC documents (attested copy of PAN card, proof in support of identity and address) as attachment to the bid form along with proof of payment of EMD amount by way of RTGS/ NEFT/Demand Draft/ Pay Order, before 3:00 P.M. (IST) of the New York Paylor of the Paylor of the New York Paylor of the Paylor of the New York Paylor of the Payl (IST) of July 24, 2024. The cover should be super-scribed with "Bid Form and EMD for Jainam Clothing Private Limited".

4. The highest bidder shall deposit 25.0% of the sale price including EMD immediately on the same day of auction or not later than next working day and balance within 15 days of confirmation of sale of the property.

5. To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised Officer/Secured Creditor, there is no

encumbrance on the Secured Asset. SA/100/2021 is pending adjudication before DRT, Jabalpur but no stay/injunction granted on the Bank on sale of the property. The intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of Secured Asset put for auction and claims/ rights/ dues/ affecting the Secured Asset/property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not deem to constitute any commitment or representation of the Secured Creditor/Bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the Secured Creditor/Bank. The Authorised Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in unknown to the Secured Creditor/Bank. The Authorised Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in

any way for any third party claims/rights/dues.

6. The intending purchaser/bidder shall not be entitled to raise any objection as to area, boundary, title, usage, revenue record, registration, or other particulars, as the same are believed to be and shall be taken as correct and if any error or misstatement or omission if discovered in the particulars of the Secured Asset/property, the same shall not annul the sale and purchaser/bidder shall not be entitled to any compensation whatsoever from the Bank or its Officers and no complaint for compensation of any nature

7. The sale shall be subject to terms and conditions as incorporated in this public notice and as

prescribed in Bid/Tender Document. The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any tender/bid or to modify the terms and conditions of the sale or adjourn/postpone the sale, without assigning any reason thereof. 8. For any further clarifications with regards to auction sale, inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact on Phone No: 7004972854/8584826559 between 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on working days of the Bank.

SCHEDULE-I
DESCRIPTION OF SECURED ASSET/IMMOVABLE PROPERTY **Boundaries**

Property Details	Boundo
All that Commercial Property bearing House No. 22/295 and 22/296, comprising area 2,265.00 Sq. Ft. or 210.50 Sq.Mt. comprised in Part of Abadi Khasra No. 666 situated at Raipur Khas, Moulana Abdul Rauf Ward, Ward No.41, P.H. No. 106-A, Malviya Road, R.I.C Raipur-1, Tahsil & District Raipur Chhattisgarh. Together with all fixtures, plant and	On the North: 5ft. Gali On the East:7ft. Gali ar On the South: House of On the West: Malviya F

ne East:7ft. Gali and canal ne South: House of Tarun Stores ne West: Malviya Road Mukhya Marg

Date : June 28, 2024 Place : Kolkata Authorised Officer ICICI Bank Limited

SOUTH AFRICA BANISH AFGHANISTAN, ENTER MAIDEN T20 WC FINAL

outh Africa exorcised their agonising semifinal jinx through an jinx through an exceptional spell of pace bowling as they walloped an drained emotionally Afghanistan by nine wickets to enter their first-ever T20 World Cup final here.

They will face the winners of the second semifinal between India and England in the title clash, but the Afghans will go home with their heads held high after a stirring run in the

tournament. Marco Jansen (3/16) Kagiso Rabada (2/14) and Anrich Nortje (2/7) ripped the soul out of the Afghanistan toporder while bundling them out for a paltry 56 in just 11.5 overs

after being invited to bowl.

Despite the early departure of Quinton de Kock, bowled through the gate by impressive pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi, the Proteas had little trouble in reaching 60 for one in 8.5

Reeza Hendricks (29 not out), who put up his highest score in this event, and skipper Aiden Markram (23 not out) navigated them safely to the shores of victory as they have finally freed themselves from the painful tag of chokers in global events.

Afghanistan have given their

everything to reach the World Cup semifinal, and in the crucial clash they were left with no energy, and produced a nothing effort that belied their

doughtiness until now.
It affected their batting as they looked unusually edgy against the South African pacers, who summoned a spell from hell.

They reduced the Afghans to 28 for five inside the Powerplay and there was no coming back from that depth as they crashed to their lowest total in a T20 International.

Their 56 was also the lowest total in a T20 World Cup semifinal clash.

Once reduced to 28 for six, Afghanistan could not even offer a smidgeon of fight as their dream of reaching a maiden World Cup final was squashed even before it began. While the South Africa pacers were on the money, the Afghan batters too should cope some blame for being edgy on a pitch that hid no evils apart from those deliveries that kicked up from a length.

Opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz was the first to perish, chasing Jansen's delivery outside the off-stump to give Reeza Hendricks an easy catch at slip. The dismissal of in-form Gurbaz seemed to inject doses of panic in the Afghanistan line-up, and Gulbadin Naib was consumed by a lovely in-



But the next two dismissals were a combination of bowler's and

brilliance irrationality. Ibrahim Zadran, on whom a lot was riding for the Afghans, did not move his feet at all against a Rabada delivery that came back a bit. There was enough room for the ball to sneak past the bat and pad to

rattle Zadran's leg-stump.
Three balls later in the fourth over, Mohammad Nabi's dismissal was along similar lines and the only difference was that Rabada disturbed the off-stump this time.

Nortje joined the party with the scalp of Azmatullah Omarzai, whose slash found Tristan Stubbs in the deep. Gurbaz, Zadran and Omarzai

have been the leading run-makers for Afghanistan in this ICC showpiece, but on the crucial day all they could manage was a paltry 12 runs between them.

Skipper Rashid Khan, who could have made some valuable runs, chose to expose all his stumps to Nortje to see the one close to his legs getting cartwheeled across the field. Leg-spinner Tabraiz Shamsi (3/6) applied the coupe de grace on Afghanistan batting line with two wickets in one over, jettisoning Karim Jannat and Noor Ahmad.

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

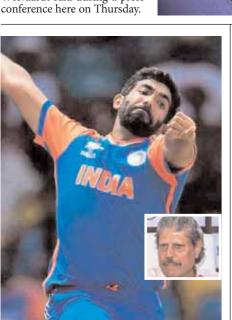
South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt has called for more Tests in women's cricket calendar and inclusion of redball tournaments in the rainbow nation's domestic structure, ahead of their oneoff Test against India starting here on Friday.

India and South Africa will face off here at Chepauk for only their third Test in history and first in nearly 10 years, a contest for which Wolvaardt conceded her side is not fully prepared for. While a multi-day red-ball

women's competition was resumed in India last season. South Africa have no such tournaments.

"Most of us don't have any preparation in the format, since we don't play domestic four-day cricket. It's difficult, since I have to leave the balls that I have been cover-driving my whole life, and I still tend to play it by instinct," Wolvaardt said during a press conference here on Thursday.





Bumrah is 1000 times better than me: Kapil Dev

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 ${f I}$ conic former India all-rounder Kapil Dev feels Jasprit Bumrah is a "1000 times better" bowler than what he was at his prime. Bumrah, who has been doing exceptionally well in the ongoing T20 World Cup, snaring 11 wickets at an outstanding economy of 4.08 in the 23 overs he has bowled so

"Bumrah is 1000 times better than me. These young boys are far better than us. We had more experience. They are better," Kapil told 'PTI Videos'. Bumrah, who is widely regarded as the best pacer in international cricket now, has played 26 Tests for India, picking up 159 wickets and an economy of under three. His 89 ODI appearances have vielded 149 wickets while his T20I wicket count stands at 85 from 68 matches.

Kapil ended his career with a then world record 434 Test wickets and is considered one the best allrounders of all time who also claimed 253 ODI

The 65-year-old, who led India to their maiden World Cup title in 1983, also lauded the overall

fitness levels of the current national team. "They are very good. Outstanding. They are fitter. They are much more hardworking. They are fantastic," he said.





IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

Date: 28.06.2024

Place: Chhattisgarl

IDFC FIRST Bank

BRANCHES

(erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited) | CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792 Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031 Tel: +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13 (2) OF THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 ers and co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from IDFC FIRST Bar Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited) The loans of the below-mentioned borrowers and co-borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loan were classified as NPA as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited) are mentioned as per respective notices issued more particularly described in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be applicable and the same will be charged as per contractual rate with effect from their respective dates

Sr	Loan	Type of	Name of borrowers and co-borrowers	Section 13 (2)	Outstanding amount as per
No.	Account No.	Loan		Notice Date	Section 13 (2) Notice
1	54630785	Property	1. Durgesh Sahu 2. Bharatlal Sahu 3. Anusuiya Bai Sahu 4. Durgesh Sahu	12.06.2024	INR 4,30,368.22/-

Property Address: All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 31, Abadi Land Part Of Khasra No. 984, Plot Area 1080 Sq. Ft., Situated At Gram: Kutela, P.h. No. 45, R.I.C. & Tehsil: Arang, District-Raipur, Chhattisgart 493441and, Bounded As: East: Open Space, West: Gali, North: Gali, South: Jagdish

You are hereby called upon to pay the amounts to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First imited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited) as per the details shown in the above table with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc., within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to initiate proceedings, under Section 13 (4) and section 14 of the SARFAESI Act, against the mortgaged properties mentioned hereinabove to realize the amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited). Further you are prohibited under Section 13 (13) of the said Act from transferring the said secured assets either by way of sale/lease or otherwise

> **Authorized Officer IDFC First Bank Limited** (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited)

Citing the lack of preparation innings and 284 runs in Perth. for red-ball cricket fixtures which are few and far between, the star batter even suggested scrapping the

"We either need to play more Tests and incorporate it into the domestic level, or we can just leave it because playing one or three Tests is very hard to adapt to," she said.

"But I want to have more of it,"

Wolvaardt added. South Africa's last outing in the format was earlier this year in February when they were

After this fixture against India, South Africa's next Test assignment will be against England in December.

"Getting the opportunity to play more red-ball cricket is awesome. Having three scheduled in a calendar year is pretty cool," she added. '
"I personally really enjoy the

format. So, this Test will be a huge challenge for us, and hopefully, we will adapt to the conditions well.'

Women's Tests, in general, is a bit unknown as neither trounced by Australia by an teams have too much

have a good home advantage and winning here will be a tough challenge, but we are up for it," she added. The pitch is expected to be spin-friendly while there is

experience in it. India does

also forecast of rain. "Preparation-wise, we have been facing a lot of spin in the nets lately since it will be the biggest threat here. The balls were staying low at the nets yesterday," Wolvaardt said.

Batting-wise, it's going to be a big challenge. But thankfully, we have a few top spinners in our squad who are licking

their lips and getting ready for the game tomorrow. Hopefully, they are going to put on a great show," she added.

With the South African men's team making it to the final of the T20 World Cup, Wolvaardt said her side would also be keeping an eye on Saturday's final.

"Most of us woke up early to watch the game, but only to watch them chase 57. It was absolutely amazing to watch and felt incredible. We will definitely watch the final and cheer them on," she said.

Flying (NCC Air Wing 'C'

certificate is mandatory)



AFCAT Entry: Registration mandatory and online exam/ NCC Special Entry registration mandatory and

Flying/ Technical/ Weapon Systems/ Administration/

Logistics/ Accounts/ Education/ Meteorology

Registrations open from 30 May 2024 till 28 June 2024 Aadhaar card is mandatory for online registration

For more details, refer to Employment News dated 25 May 2024 and for detailed notification visit our website careerairforce.nic.in and afcat.cdac.in

For updates, follow us on

📢 🧿 in 🕲 DISHA by Indian Air Force @ 0 careeriniaf 🔀 🥚 CareerinIAF DISHA Cell, Air Headquarter, Vayu Bhawan Tel: 011-23013690 | Toll-free No.: 1800-11-2448 | E-mail: career.iaf@nic.in