OPINION 6

HAVE GROWN AT 6.1-6.7 PER CENT

Late City Vol.13 Issue 143 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH



RAIPUR, MONDAY MAY 27, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3 the plant 1864 the property of Established 1864

WORLD 8

AIR RAID SIRENS IN TEL AVIV

HAMAS ROCKET ATTACK TRIGGERS

www.dailypioneer.com



Fires claim 7 kids, 3 others in Delhi sho and Ato Vivek Vihar HC takes suo motu notice of fire

win tragedies struck national Capital on Sunday in which ten people, including seven newborns, charred to deaths. In a tragic incident, a massive fire broke out at a private children's hospital in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar, leaving seven newborns dead in the facility functioning at 25 sqft

Police arrested the owner of the children's hospital on Sunday. The owner Dr Naveen Kichi was on the run since the fire outbreak late on Saturday night. The blaze broke out at the

Baby Care New Born Hospital Delhi's Vivek Vihar at around 11:30 pm on Saturday and soon spread to two other

adjacent buildings. According to Delhi Fire Service (DFS), 16 fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the blaze. DFS chief Atul Garg said 12 newborns were rescued from the medical facility but seven of them died.

Two boutiques, a portion of IndusInd Bank operating from an adjacent building and a shop on the ground floor were also damaged besides an ambulance and a scooty parked outside the building. The Prime Minister's Office has announced Rs 2 lakh as compensation to the families

of each of the seven victims,

and Rs 50,000 for the families

of the injured babies. Delhi



Commuters pass by a children's hospital where a fire broke out on Saturday night at Vivek Vihar area, in New Delhi, on Sunday Ranian Dimri/Pioneer

Health Minister Saurabh old Keshav Sharma and 39-Bharadwaj has ordered an enquiry into the matter.

In the second tragic incident, three people died after a fire broke out in a four-storey residential building in Krishna Nagar area of east Delhi. The charred body of a 66-year-old woman identified Promila Shad was recovered from the first floor of the building, while two others identified as 18-yearyear-old Anju Sharma were declared brought dead by the doctors.

President Droupdi Murmu, Prime Minister Modi, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, Union Health Minister Manshukh Mandaviya, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Health Minister Delhi Bharadwaj condoled the Chief Minister Kejriwal said responsible for negligence will not be spared. DCP Shahdara Surendra

Choudhary said, "On Saturday at about 11.30 pm a PCR call regarding fire was received at Police Station Vivek Vihar. At the spot, fire was found in Baby Care New Born Hospital at C-54, Vivek Vihar and its adjacent building. On receipt the call

ACP Vivek Vihar reached the spot."

He further said, "In the hospital there were 12 newborns admitted. They were all rescued and shifted to the East Delhi Advance NICU Hospital, Vivek Vihar for treatment. Out of these babies, six were declared brought dead and one died earlier. The seven bodies have been further shifted to GTB Hospital for postmortem." He added that there were no reports of casualties or injuries from the building adjacent to the hospital, which was also

engulfed in flames. Speaking about the fire, the father of a deceased nine-day-old baby Ritik, said, "I came from Bulandshahr and our child was referred to this hospital. He had problems with oxygen. I came to know about the incident through news. The baby was 9 days old. I have spent around Rs 70,000-80,000. The hospital is responsible. They saved themselves and left the

According to eyewitnesses, locals and members of an NGO, Shaheed Seva Dal, were the first to rush to help. Some residents climbed the building from the back side and rescued some of the newborns. Members of Shaheed Seva Dal, an NGO operating in the area, were also involved in the rescue efforts, an eyewitness said.

children."

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/ AHEMDABAD/RAJKOT

Members of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) held a meeting with local administration in Gujarat's Rajkot city in the wee hours of Sunday in con-nection with the fire at a game zone fire here that left 27 persons dead and three injured. The bodies were charred beyond recognition. The DNA samples of the bodies and the victim's relatives have been collected for identification of the deceased, they said. Four children under the age of 12 were among the 27 persons killed in the massive fire that swept through a game zone teeming with people enjoying a summer vacation outing on Saturday evening, as per the officials. The owner and manager of the game zone have been arrested, officials said.

A special bench of the Gujarat High Court on Sunday took suo motu cognizance of the Rajkot fire incident and said it was prima facie a "man-made disaster". Such gaming zones and recreational facilities have come up without the necessary approvals from competent authorities, the bench of Justices Biren Vaishnav and Devan Desai



Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel with officials and others at the game zone site where a major fire on Saturday evening killed at least 27 people and injured three, in Rajkot, on Sunday

observed. A stock of highly inflammable materials such as petrol, fibres and fibre glass sheets were stored at the Rajkot game zone where the fire occurred, the court noted. While President Draupadi

Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several leaders including Chief Ministers expressed grief over the tragedy, Gujarat Bhupendra Patel visited the incident site at Nana-Mava road on Sunday morning and a hospital where the injured persons were admitted. The Prime Minister has sought the information of the incident from the Chief Minister and has expressed grief. The PM has directed that strong action be taken against the

The five-member SIT formed by the State Government, to conduct a probe into the incident and submit a report within 72 hours, reached Rajkot late Saturday night and held a meeting with the local administration. Additional Director General

of Police Subhash Trivedi, who heads the SIT said the inquiry will begin immediately to find out those responsible for it and ensure no such incident is repeated in the future. "We will go through all the aspects of the incident and investigate thoroughly—We will work with commitment and complete honesty and integrity to provide justice to the children who have lost their lives," Trivedi said.



mini vehicle and a UP roadways bus on the Nakaha-Shankarpur highway

Dumper hits bus in UP; 12 pilgrims die, 10 badly hurt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Ashocking accident in Shahjahanpur has claimed the lives of at least a dozen pilgrims who were on their way to the Purnagiri temple in Uttarakhand.

The incident occurred at Hajiyapur village on Saturday night as the privately-owned bus stopped at a roadside eatery. While some eatery. While some pilgrims had alighted for dinner, others remained inside the bus.

Suddenly, an out-of-control dumper truck crashed into the bus, unloading its heavy cargo onto the waiting pilgrims. Eleven people, ranging in age from 7 to 50, were killed on the spot. One more succumbed to the injuries during treatment, bringing the total death toll to 12. Ten other pilgrims were seriously injured and rushed to the Government Medical College for treatment. The driver of the dumper truck fled the

Minister Yogi Chief Adityanath expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased and directed the district administration to ensure proper medical care for the injured.

Kumar Meena

disclosed that the incident occurred at Hajiyapur village under the Khutar police station area when the privately-owned bus had halted at a roadside eatery. People living in Badajeth village of Sidhauli area of Sitapur district were going to visit Maa Purnagiri in Uttrakhand. According to Meena, Sudhanshu (7), Aditya (8), Ajit (15), Rohini (20), Pramod (30), Seema (30), Suman Devi (36), Ramgopal (48), Shiv Shankar (48), Chutki (50) died on the spot, while Sonavati (45) succumbed

DM Umesh Pratap Singh said that the rescue operation lasted for about 3 hours. "The driver of the dumper fled from the spot and the police are looking for him," he said.

during treatment.

After the accident, Rupesh, who was travelling in the bus, was searching for his son in a panic. After a long time, his son Ajit was found buried under the wheels of the dumper. Rupesh broke down on seeing his dead son. Rupesh, who reached the

post-mortem house on Sunday, told that like every year, this time also he was going to visit Purnagiri with his wife and children. The bus had stopped at the dhaba. His S h a h j a h a n p u r wife and daughter were Superintendent of Police eating food. He was also there with his son

'City Perpetual' adds artefactual tag to spiritual

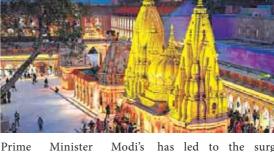
BISWAJEET BANERJEE

When one thinks of Varanasi, the image of Kashi Vishwanath Dham often comes to mind. However, the city is now emerging as a beacon of heritage and craftsman-ship, evidenced by the rise of Association, highlights the Geographical Indications (GI) remarkable journey from just

In 2014, during his visit to impressive 32 designations Varanasi after assuming today. "These encompass a office as Prime Minister, Narendra Modi was presented with an angvastram crafted by weaver Bachche Lal Maurya, featuring a "doha" (couplet) by Sant Kabir intricately

seemingly simple exchange laid the foundation for a transformative journey in the realm of GI in Varanasi. Rajnikant, a GI expert and

Padma Shri awardee, serving as the General Secretary of Welfare two GI tags in 2014 diverse array of crafts including Meenakari, wooden carving, stone craft, and the celebrated Chunar sandstone and hand-blocking technique," Rajnikant told this reporter.



Prime Gulabi presentation Meenakari to US President Joe Biden at the G7 meeting in 2022 propelled this GI-tagged art form onto the Meenakari, and has transitioned these arts from niche markets to mainstream global stage. This small act popularity,"

has led to the surge in demand for Varanasi's famed This crafts, such as Gulabi Himangshu tapestry.

official said. Rajnikant stressed the transformative impact of GI designations on Varanasi's cultural and economic landscape. "The GI designation has propelled Varanasi's traditional industries particularly handloom and handicrafts, unprecedented growth, witnessing a staggering 32 to 40 percent surge," he said. resurgence revitalized the livelihoods of artisans and weavers, who form the backbone of Varanasi's rich cultural

ARCHANA JYOTI NEW DELHI n a heartening turn of Levents sure to warm the hearts of wildlife enthusiasts, a pod of nearly a dozen dolphins, with their tender lves in tow has cued and returned to the

Pod of stranded dolphins rescued,

back in Ghagara

waters of the Ghaghara river in Uttar Pradesh. The dolphins were stranded due to low water levels caused by pre-monsoon maintenance work at the Sharda barrage in Lakhimpuri Kheri district in

the State.
This uplifting saga of saving the dolphins which were declared national aquatic animals in 2009 unfolded after a relentless 24-hour operation under scorching sun. Spearheaded by a dedicated team of wildlife officials which involved the South Kheri forest officials, WWF-India, WTI and Turtle Services Alliance (TSA) and State irrigation department, the rescue operation was completed late Saturday

evening.
Gangetic dolphins are considered to be reliable indicators of the health of the river ecosystem and have been categorized as schedule 1 aquatic animals Wild the (Protection) Amendment

can only live in freshwater and is essentially blind.

In poll season, Bengal parties joust with cyclone relief plans

SAUGAR SENGUPTA DIAMOND HARBOUR/KOLKATA

 $E^{\text{ven as cyclone Remal hur-}}_{\text{tled towards the Bengal}}$ coast at great speed matching cyclone Amphan — that wrecked havoc in coastal Bengal a few years ago — the entire political fraternity of the State cutting across party lines geared up with relief plans, more so in view of the crucial last phase of elec-tions that will take place on June 1.

In an apparent view to wash the black blemish of corruption with relief work and materials post cyclone Amphan, top functionaries Government on Sunday set sources said.



up a 24x7 control room at Nabanna, the State secretariat, to monitor the situation in the coastal districts from Digha Odisha adjoining and Bakkhali-Mousami sea lines of the Mamata Banerjee at the mouth of Sunderbans,

The cyclone which was fast degenerating into a severe cyclonic storm is likely to make a landfall on Sunday midnight somewhere between Ganga Sagar Islands and Khepupara in Bangladesh, weather office

Rare extension in office for Army chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

It is the second time perhaps in independent India that an Army chief has got an extension. General Manoj Pande was to retire this month end and will now serve till June end. There is only such instance in the past when in 1975 then Army Chief General G G Bewoor was given a onevear extension.

Announcing the decision, the Defence Ministry said here Sunday Appointments Committee of Cabinet, on May 26, 2024, approved the extension in service of Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Manoj C Pande, PVSM, AVSM,



VSM, ADC for a period of one month, beyond his normal superannuation (May 31, 2024), i.e. up to June 30, 2024, under Rule 16 A (4) of the Army Rules 1954.

He was appointed as the COAS on April 30, 2022. He was commissioned December 1982 in the Corps of Engineers (The Bombay

Act, 2022. They find place under protected wildlife species. The Ganges river dolphin

Errant vets shoot to kill Kerala big cats, jumbos

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

🖊 erala has become a graveyard for Kelephants, tigers, leopards, and cheetahs if the incidents that happened during 2023 and 2024 are any indication. The year 2024 saw four elephants losing their lives to the veterinarians' tranquilisers which raised questions on the capability of the vet-erinary doctors who gave the shots and quality of the drugs used in bringing the wild tuskers under control. On Wednesday, a leopard that got trapped in the steel fence around a farmhouse in Palakkd district and fired and these shots have been

got injured in the melee to escape from the fence, died following the

tranquiliser shots fired at him by the veterinary specialist. "There was no need for the doctor to fire at the big cat which was being carried to the nearest forest station," said Rameshan, an avid wild life lover based in Walayar, Palakkad At least six big cats fell to the tranquilising shots of the specialists "deployed" by the forest officials to tame them. There is a

pattern in these animals losing

their lives. It is after they are

captured by men that the shots are



found to be fatal," said John Peruvanthanam wild life conservationist.

The charge against these animals is that they "trespassed" into human settlements in search of water and food. But a probe into the charge of encroachment shows that it is the other way round. The human settlements are former reserve forests which have been usurped by the encroachers.

The Western Ghats Ecology expert panel under the chairmanship of Gadgil, noted environmental scientist which was constituted by the Union

Government found that the forests in Kerala that fell under the jurisdiction of the Western Ghat were getting fast depleted because of encroachment and massive illegal quarrying. "These are the prime reasons for

the wild animals losing their dwelling places. Encroachments and quarrying have led to the destruction of water bodies and greeneries resulting in animals getting starved. The "trespassing" animals are

designated either as man eaters or rogue by the real trespassers to get public sympathy, said John.

Every corrupt will be behind bars, this is Modi's guarantee

STAFF REPORTER . BHOPAL

haratiya Janata Party State Bresident and MP Vishnudutt Sharma, while addressing the meeting of booth level workers of Ranishwar Mandal of Dumka Lok Sabha constituency of Iharkhand on Sunday, said that today there is an atmosphere in the entire country to make Prime Minister Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for the third time.

It has been done, but have you ever thought why Modi ji should be made the Prime Minister again? Because the public has seen the work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government since 2014.

On the basis of those works, the public has understood that it is necessary to make Modi ji the Prime Minister once again for the country's security, development,

organized

the role of Yoga in reducing the

mental stress of the students

due to the upcoming exami-

nations. Swami Parmarth Dev

Ji, the main center in-charge of

Patanjali Yogpeeth Haridwar,

was present as the chief guest

At the beginning of the pro-gram, Head of the Yoga Department, Dr. Ratnesh

Pandey welcomed all the guests

and also gave information

about all the programs of the

Yoga Department in the uni-

versity.On this occasion,

Swami Parmarth Dev told and

taught the students the quali-

ties to avoid mental illnesses

through various yoga activities

in the program.

poor welfare, facilities like roads, cities like Dumka and Deoghar electricity, water and to make the country corruption free. BJP State President Sharma is on a visit to Dumka Lok Sabha constituency of Jharkhand, bordering West Bengal, Sharma is working west bengal, sharma is work-ing to strengthen the booth man-agement of the party here. Former Chief Minister of Jharkhand, Madhu Koda met Sharma and discussed the election preparations in detail.

Sharma also addressed the management meeting regarding Dumka, Gowda and Rajmal Lok Sabha seats.BJP State President Vishnudatt Sharma said that while working in Vidyarthi Parishad, I have been continuously visiting the Santhal area of Iharkhand.

Worked here also during the 2014 elections. Have also traveled here on motorcycles. We all have seen what was the condition of

at that time? But today beautiful roads are visible everywhere. AIIMS has opened in Deoghar and now no one here needs to wander to Delhi or other cities for treatment of serious diseases.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi ii has brought development in every part of the country and provided facilities like roads, electricity, water. Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to make India a developed country by 2047, for which it is necessary for him to become the Prime

State President Vishnudatt Sharma said that everyone knows what was the condition of the country before 2014. There were explosions in Mumbai, in Banaras, at the railway stations and markets of the country, terrorists kept on carrying out blasts. Naxalite activities were at

Naxalites used to commit murders openly in Balaghat, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand of Madhya Pradesh. Soldiers and terrorists of enemy countries used to play football by cutting off the heads of our soldiers. After becoming the Prime Minister in 2014, Narendra Modi took a pledge that he would empower and empower the armies.

He told the soldiers that if anyone looks towards the country's borders, you do not need to wait for orders from Delhi to answer him, you can answer him at the same time. Now when our soldiers are attacked, our forces enter the terrorists' homes and kill them. The Naxalites have started feeling that there is now a capable leadership in the country and now they are not in trou-

Naxalites are being killed every

day. Along with external security, Modi ji's government has also strengthened the internal security of the country. Organizations synonymous with Muslim terror, first SIMI and now PFI, have been uprooted.State President Vishnudutt Sharma said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken many steps to make India corruption free after 2014. Congress Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi used to say that if one rupee is sent from Delhi, only 15 paise reaches the poor, 85 paise is eaten up by brokers and middlemen. Prime Minister Modi ji first opened Jan Dhan accounts. Congress people used to make fun of it. But today, whether it is Kisan Samman Nidhi or money from other schemes, if one rupee is sent, then the entire 100 paise comes into the account under the Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme.



Daylong yoga workshop organised at RNTU Doctors' leave cancelled in Bhopal distt

Swami ji was happy and satisfied the STAFF REPORTER # BHOPAL curiosity of all the daylong workshop was students answering their questions one by ▲ Rabindranath Tagore University by the Yoga Department of the university. While introducing the university, Pro The topic of the workshop was

detail on many topics like

Yama, utility of rules in life,

importance of celibacy, half and disease. He also explained the importance of life man-

agement in an interesting man-

ner through Shrimad Bhagwat

Geeta. After Swamiji's address,

the students also asked ques-

tions to Swamiji. Seeing this

enthusiasm of the students,

Vice Chancellor Dr. Sangeeta Johri highlighted the benefits of yoga. during the examination. In Dr. Manisha Gupta, Dean of which he explained the benethe Faculty of Medicine, while fits of Pranayama like welcoming all the guests, high-Bhastrika, Kapalbhati, Anulom lighted the role of Yoga in con-Vilom, and also threw light in

trolling the diseases prevalent in the present times. At the end of the program certificates were distributed to all the stu-A large number of students

and faculty participated in this program. In the end, Dr. Avinash Singh, Head of Department, Paramedical Department thanked everyone.

Bhopal: In view of the intense been issued to provide relief

heat and hotness in the city, CMHO Bhopal has issued guidelines for all government hospitals. In these guidelines, instructions have been given to protect the patients from the scorching sun and to provide adequate facilities for them. Also, in view of the number of patients suffering from viral, heat waves and other seasonal diseases these days, doctors and officers would not be allowed to take leaves. Now the

doctor will not be able to take leave without prior notice. It is known that these days the temperature in the city is hovering around 44 degrees.
Due to the scorching heat,
people are becoming victims
of water shortage i.e. dehydration. Not only the number of patients suffering from heat stroke and other seasonal diseases has also increased these days. In such

situation, guidelines have

to the patients.

Among the guidelines to hospitals it has been instructed to provide a shady place for patients to sit. Drinking water facility with cooler, fan, AC. Patients should not have to stand for prescriptions or other work, token system should be used.

The wards should also have adequate means to remove heat, such coolers along with other necessary arrangements. Better arrangements should be made for cooling of the machines used in hospitals. In view of the heat, special care should be taken about the quality of food served to the patients. There should be a better system for the treatment of hyperpyrexia patients and a systematic referral system.No officer-doctoremployee will be able to leave the headquarters without

Crime branch arrested 133 drug smugglers in 3 yrs path of smuggling in order to get

STAFF REPORTER # 8HOPAL

¶he cases of drug smuggling are continuously increasing in the state capital. Smugglers are changing the trend and smuggling drugs. However, the Crime Branch continuously takes action against smugglers. Despite this, the cases of drug smuggling have increased by one and a half times in the last three and a half

Apart from Cannabis, charas and opium, MD smugglers have also been arrested in the city. Within these three and a half years, the Crime Branch alone has sent 133 big drug dealers to Additional DCP Crime Branch

Shailendra Singh Chauhan said that the Crime Branch conducts campaigns from time to time and takes action against drug smugglers. However, smugglers also do

Since January 2021, the Crime **Branch has sent** about 133 smugglers to jail. These smugglers include smgglers who bring ganja from different states

smuggling work by constantly changing the trend. Since January 2021, the Crime Branch has sent about 133 smugglers to jail. These smugglers include smgglers who bring ganja from different states via train, road and bus and then consume it in Bhopal.

Drug smugglers bring drugs from Nepal, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Visakhapatnam and Bihar and sell them in Bhopal. Most of the smugglers adopt the

Mechanical Engineer Prakhar Singh, resident of Rewa, was snigh, resident of Rewa, was arrested by Bhopal's Piplani Police. Prakhar Singh used to supply intoxicants in colleges, hostels and parties of Bhopal. Being a qualified engineer, and used new methods for crime, and hence he escaped from the police for a long time. He used to deliver the drugs after taking online orders. After taking the order, the customer was told a location. Drug parcels were kept there. After receiving the money online, the customers were told the place from where the drugs were to be picked up. The accused used to order drugs online only, Prakhar's arrest was the first time that Bhopal Police had caught a supplier with chemical drugs like LSD, XTC/MDMA. Police had arrest-

ed three boys including mechan-

ical engineer Prakhar Singh.

rich through shortcuts.

On 25 February 2021.



More than 200 people arrive at the daylong health camp Maheshwari (Sabha) Local

PNS KHANDWA

Beneficiary patients and their families started arriving from this morning to take advantage of the daylong medical camp organized by the social organizations of the city at Agrasen Bhawan of Ghantaghar, the heart of the city.

More than 200 people participated in this camp which last-ed from morning to afternoon. Got himself examined by senior doctors of Indore, social work-Commerce spokesperson Kamal Nagpal told that the reg istration process was already going on.

It is noteworthy that patients suffering from bone and joint disease, kidney disease, brain disease, chest disease etc reached the camp. Renowned doctors from Shelby Hospital, Indore had reached Khandwa to provide their services. Well-



er Sunil Jain and Chamber of known orthopedic, joint 9 am and continued till noon. replacement and sports injury More than 200 patients were surgeon Dr. Vikas Jain, kidney specialist Dr Anita Chouksey, neurological specialist Dr Amit Maheshwari and chest specialists a team of various doctors including Vishal Malviya provided free services in the camp. According to Chamber of Commerce President Sunil Bansal and Secretary Santosh Gupta, the camp started from

examined and consulted free of cost, while patients who were unable to go to Indore were given this facility in Khandwa, so they took advantage of the opportunity and got free medical consultation.

Agrasen Bhavan Committee Committee, Vaishva Mahasammelan Khandwa Unit, All India Dhakad

Committee Khandwa, East Nimar Chamber of Commerce and Industries, KDMThis free medical and counseling camp was organized under the joint aegis of Foundation, Maheshwari Seva Sahayata Sansthan and Shelby Hospital Indore, the welcome address in the organized camp was presented by Sunil Bansal Om Prakash Aggarwal Ashwin Baheti, the program was con-ducted by Govind Sharma. Went and gratitude was accepted by project coordinator Lokesh Jhanwar, in the camp Sunil Bansal, Omprakash Agarwal, Subhash Mehta Ashwin Baheti, Lokesh Jhanwar, Ritesh Gupta, Atul Atriwal, Sunil Jain, Manish Agarwal, Govind Sharma, Akhilesh Dahad, Anil Mittal, Rajendra.

Aggarwal, Rajendra Garg, Sanjay Aggarwal, Santosh Gupta, Ram Verma etc. provided their services since morning.

AIIMS' AYUSH deptt witnesses enthusiastic participation in yoga

STAFF REPORTER BHOPAL

IIMS Bhopal's Executive Director, Professor (Dr) Ajai Singh, has been a strong advocate for holistic health and well-being. He emphasizes the importance

of maintaining an organized and balanced daily routine to ward off diseases and promote overall health. In line with this vision, AIIMS Bhopal's AYUSH department has become a hub for yoga enthusiasts of all ages, thanks to his dedicated efforts. Every week, more than 300 individuals, ranging in age from 9 to 70 years, gather at the AYUSH department to practice

Remarkably, 90% of these participants are managing chronic health issues such as spondylitis, cervical problems, diabetes, arthritis, and high blood pres-

Through consistent yoga practice, they have experienced significant improvements in their conditions. The daily yoga sessions, held from 7 AM to 8 AM, see over 50 regular participants who have embraced yoga to maintain their health. The Senior Medical Officer of the AYUSH department attributes this growing interest to the

high-quality facilities and comprehensive treatments available. Yoga instructor Chanchal Suryavanshi noted the increasing number of attendees from across Madhya Pradesh, driven by the tangible health benefits they experience and their enthu-siasm to spread the word.

AIIMS Bhopal aims to ensure that everyone can benefit from the ancient practice of yoga, integral to Indian tradition, and apply its principles for lifelong health. Plans are underway to establish a dedicated yoga therapy clinic within the hospital premises. This clinic will offer personalized yoga prescriptions tailored to individual health needs, enhancing patient care. Furthermore, AIIMS Bhopal is conducting research on the therapeutic potential of yoga in various medical conditions. This research aims to provide strong scientific evidence for the integration of yoga into evidencebased medical practice, reinforcing its role in modern healthcare. Prof Singh believes that adopting yoga can lead to a healthy and fulfilling life, AHMS Bhopal remains committed to promoting this vision and encourages everyone to integrate yoga into their daily routines for optimal health and well-being.

NRHM organises study visit

Bhopal: Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhopal organized 'Study Visit of Wetland Ecosystem' near Bhoj Wetland for the participants of 'Summer Nature Study Programme-

Green Teen' on Sunday. Vipin Vyas, Professor, Barkatullah University, Bhopal was the subject expert during this study visit. Dr. Vyas informed the participants that wetlands are treasure of bioproducts and many people are dependent on wetland for their livelihood since they catches fishes, crabs, prawns etc. from the wetlands.

Vipin Vyas informed them that the aquatic plants mini-mizes the siltation in that wetland and absorbs pollutant which comes from catchment of the wetland. Vyas detailed the ecological importance of various aquatic plants in wetland ecosystem by showing them like different species of Potamogeton, Hydrilla, Cerratophyllum, Najas, Polygonum, Cyperus, Trapa, pomoea carnea, Hyacinth etc. After the programme, all participants collected nonbiodegradable waste, lying on the flank of upper lake and handed over to Municipal Corporation Van for proper

disposal.

Three youths nabbed from near coach factory with Cannabis

STAFF REPORTER # BHOPAL

≺he Crime Branch team has arrested three vouths from the forests of the coach factory located at Station Bajaria in Bhopal. During the search of three bags present with the accused, about 7 kgs of Cannabis was found worth Rs 1.4 lakh.

During interrogation, the accused admitted to have brought Cannabis from Orissa and supplying it to the retailers of Bhopal. The value of the seized drugs is Rs 1,40 lakh. Action has been taken against everyone under the NDPS

Additional DCP Shailendra Singh Chauhan said that on Friday night, information was received from the informer that three youths were roaming in suspicious condition in Coach Factory Station Bajaria area. All three have three bags and plastic bags in their hands. These bags smell like marijuana,

After the information the team was immediately dispatched. The three miscreants were surrounded and arrested. During the search of the bags and satchels of the accused, 14 packets were

The accused admitted to have brought Cannabis from Orissa and supplying it to the retailers of Bhopal

recovered. Which was filled with ganja. This ganja is about seven kilos. Whose price is said to be Rs 1.40 lakh.

Accused Narayan Malvi (50), Chhola Road, lives behind Vishal Wedding Hall. He is not educated and does smuggling to fulfill his expensive hobbies. To avoid suspicious, he works as a daily wage

labourer. Surendra Raikwar (27) is a resident of Ibrahimganj. He has studied till class nine and works as a labourer. To travel on an expensive bike and to satisfy his alcohol addiction, he used to smuggle ganja. Taran Singh Rajput (32) is a resident of Balpur Sukhasevnia and works as a labourer. All three told the police that they bring Cannabis to Bhopal by train

and sell it to retailers.



Midday meals not distributed during summer vacation

STAFF REPORTER BHOPAL

ummer vacations are Sgoing on in government schools of the state from May 1 to June 15. There is a provision to provide mid-day meals to the students in schools under the PM Nutrition Scheme on academic days till class 8. State Coordinator of PM Poshan Shakti Yojana, Manoj Pushp has said that mid-day meals are not being distributed in government schools during summer vacation.

Show cause notices have been issued by the Chief Executive Officer of the respective districts to the teachers in charge for erroneously reporting mid-day meal distribution on the Automated Monitoring System (AMS) of the Government of India.

Pushp has said that schools are closed due to summer

vacation from May 1, 2024, to June 15, 2024. Food grain allocation and financial amount have not been released during this period through the PM Nutrition Scheme. He said that the AMS portal of the Government of India is only a medium of monitoring and reporting. The amount of food grains and cooking costs is not released based on reporting on the AMS portal.

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 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

Eight missing after explosives factory blast

STAFF REPORTER

At least eight workers were reported missing on Sunday after a blast at an explosives manu-facturing factory in Bemetara district of Chhattisgarh.

A tense situation prevailed on Sunday near the blast site in Pirda as villagers, particularly the relatives of the missing, staged a protest.

At least one person was killed

and seven others were injured in the explosion at Special Blasts Ltd near Pirda village on Saturday, where rescuers also found body parts.

The intensity of the blast was such that it left a 30-foot deep crater. Family members of the eight missing workers have complained to the police, Bemetara Superintendent of Police Ramkrishna Sahu said.

Some persons were blow to bit and DNA examination will be done to identify the victims, Sahu added. Bemetara Collector Ranbir Sharma said the factory has been told to provide a compensation of

Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of the

missing workers. Experts from the Jabalpur-based ordnance factory of the Army were contacted on Sunday to assist in the rescue operation, he added.

A magisterial inquiry has been ordered into the incident and further action will be taken against those found guilty after the probe,

At least 100 people were working in the factory when the blast

Saturday announced financial assis-

occurred. The state government on

At least one person was killed and seven others were injured in the explosion at Special **Blasts Ltd near** Pirda village on Saturday

tance of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of each of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each

Home Minister seeks PCC chief suggestion to end Naxalism



STAFF REPORTER

Chhattisgarh Home Minister Vijay Sharma on Sunday invited state Congress Chief Deepak Baij to give suggestions on how to end Naxalism.

Addressing the media here, he said everyone should be on the same page regarding this despite political differences.

The slain Naxalites whom

the Congress is calling innocent had serious criminal cases reg-

"People are calling for a complete end to Naxalism"

istered against them under

Congress rule, he said. People are calling for a complete end to Naxalism, he

The Congress didn't develop Bastar during their rule.
Now they can't digest that the BJP is doing it.
"Peace should be estab-

lished in Bastar by any means and for this, Deepak Baij should also come forward and contribute."

Two women Maoists with Rs 10L bounty killed in Bijapur



STAFF REPORTER ■

Two women Maoists carrying a collective reward of Rs 10 lakhs on their heads were killed in a gunfight with the police in Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh.

The battle took place in the jun-

gles of Jappemarka and Kamkanar villages on Saturday in the Mirtoor-Gangaloor area, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Bijapur Kumar Yadav said.

Tati and Farsa, who carried a bounty of Rs 5 lakhs each, members of the **Gangaloor Area Committee of the Maoist group.**

The dead were identified as Vijje Tati and Neela Farsa.

Tati and Farsa, who carried a bounty of Rs 5 lakhs each, members

of the Gangaloor Area Committee of the Maoist group.

A .9 mm pistol, a .12 bore single shot gun, a wireless set, 10 gelatin sticks, Rs 20,000 in cash, medicines and Maoist pamphlets were recovered from the site.

Shooter among 4 members of Jharkhand gang arrested

STAFF REPORTER

Chhattisgarh Police on Sunday arrest-ed four members of a Jharkhandbased gang from Raipur and Rajasthan who planned to target a coal businessman

Pappu Singh alias Papsa, Mukesh Kumar, Devendra Singh and shooter Rohit Swarnakar have been taken into custody, Raipur (Range) Inspector

General of Police Amresh Mishra said. The first three hailed from Rajasthan and the shooter lived in Jharkhand, he

Papsa was nabbed from Rajasthan and thr others were held in the Chhattisgarh capital. A 72-hour operation was launched

following intelligence inputs about the plan to kill a Chhattisgarh coal businessmen who operates in Jharkhand. The police nabbed Swarnakar and

seized from him. The others were caught

They told the police that Mayank



Singh, who operates the Aman Sahu gang from Kuala Lumpur, had made the entire

The shooters of Mayank Singh carry out attacks on targets identified by Aman Sahu and Lawrence Bishnoi gangs.

Two women injured in IED blast in Sukma



STAFF REPORTER

Two women were injured on Sunday when an improvised explosive device (IED) planted by Maoists went off in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh.

The incident took

place in Bheemapuram village, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan

The IED belonging to Naxalites was kept in a house in the

One of the injured is said to be in a serious

Chhattisgarh para-athlete Shrimant Jha won gold at the Asia Para-Arm Wrestling Championship in Uzbekistan. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai congratulated him on Sunday.

Asif Memon arrested on cheating charges



STAFF REPORTER

Chhattisgarh Police on Sunday arrested Congress leader Asif Memon from Madhya Pradesh and brought him here for cheating a woman in a land deal.

The complainant, Noor Begam, had agreed to sell her land measuring .704 hectares to Memon for Rs 3.09 crore. Memon took possession of

The complainant, Noor Begam, had agreed to sell her land measuring .704 hectares to **Memon for Rs** 3.09 crore.

the land but never paid Begam the agreed amount. He had been eluding the police for four

The police finally tracked him in Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh. A court sent him to

About 42K postal ballots received



STAFF REPORTER **RAIPUR**

 $A_{
m lots}$ for all of 41,877 postal ballots have been received for the Lok Sabha elections in Chhattisgarh as of May 25, the Election Commission said on

Of these, 26,936 are from polling staff, 2,761 from elderly aged over 85, 1,453 from disabled, 779 from essential services employees and 9,948 have been received through electronically transmitted

postal ballot system. Chief Electoral Officer Reena Babasaheb Kangale said the postal ballots will be counted only at the district headquarters of constituen-

Elections were held on April 19 and 26 and May 7 in the state. The votes will be counted on June 4 across the

Maternal Covid infection may raise social and breathing troubles in babies

AGENCIES

 $B_{\mbox{\scriptsize Covid-19}}^{\mbox{\scriptsize abies}}$ exposed to the the womb may be at higher risk of lacking social skills and having breathing problems, according to a study.

However, researchers from the University of Bristol, UK noted that the "long-term outcomes" remain unclear.

The team enrolled children (96) with and without (243) antenatal or neonatal exposure to SARS-CoV-2 infection.

They defined antenatal and neonatal SARS-CoV-2 exposure as infants born to mothers hospitalised with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection between 14 and 36 weeks gestation and infants admitted to the hospital with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection within the first 28

days after birth. Babies exposed to Covid infection "were at greater risk of delayed social-emotional



development, had a greater prevalence of respiratory symptoms and increased health care usage" compared to those who were not exposed, revealed the study published in the journal eClinical Medicine.

The researchers speculate that this may "create difficulties later in childhood".

"Children's ability to develop positive peer relationships and academic success" may be impacted due to the social-emotional delay in infancy, said Dr Ela Chakkarapani, Associate Professor of Neonatal Neuroscience at the University of Bristol.

The researchers called for larger studies and longerterm follow-ups to confirm and understand this risk.

Meanwhile, Dr Ela advised concerned parents to check with the doctor on the "lung function" of their kids, if exposed to Covid.

LCHF diets are not good for heart: Experts IANS. "The latest study also demonstrates the risk associated with eating a higher amount of fat with derange-

While popular fad diets such as keto-like low carbohydrate and high fat (LCHF) diets may help you lose weight, these are not good for the heart, said health

experts on Sunday.

AGENCIES

A recent study led by University of British Columbia researchers found that following a Low Carb High Fat (LCHF) diet was associated with increased LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cho-lesterol or the "bad" cholesterol and apolipoprotein B levels, and an increased risk of incident Major adverse car-

diovascular events (MACE). Apolipoprotein B is a blood test to gauge the risk of heart disease. In the study of 305 LCHF and 1,220 standard diet participants, 11.1 per cent of LCHF had severe hypercholesterolemia -- high levels of cholesterol in the blood, com-

pared to 6.2 per cent of standard diet individuals.



After 11.8 years, 9.8 per cent of LCHF participants experienced a MACE, compared to 4.3 per cent of those on a standard diet, revealed the study, published in JACC: Advances.

"There is a popular belief these days that carbohydrates should be reduced in the diet. Some people are also advocating consuming a low-carbo-

hydrate and high-fat diet. It may lead to weight loss but is associated with increased bad cholesterol (LDL) and also increased cardiovascular MACE events which means that the risk of heart attack, stroke, and deaths from heart attacks increase," Ashwani Mehta, Senior Consultant, Department of Cardiology, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, told ment of the lipid parameters which can be life-threatening," he added.

A previous study by the same varsity presented at the American College of Cardiology's annual scientific session, in 2023, showed that a "keto-like" diet may raise "bad" cholesterol levels and a two-fold heightened risk of cardiovascular events such as chest pain (angina), blocked arteries requiring stenting, heart attacks and strokes.

Doctors recommended that one should not follow the fad diets, and instead go for healthier ways to reduce

"The low carbohydrate and high-fat diet is more harmful to the heart because it leads to more ketones generation and higher incidence of bad cholesterol which we

which increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and increases the progression of heart disease," Udgeath Dhir, Cardiothoracic Vascular Surgery, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, told IANS. Director.

call LDL and EPO protein

Udgeath said that the best diet is a balanced diet which comprises more vegetables and fruits. And if you have to have animal proteins or animal fat, then it should be in moderation. There we follow the Mediterranean diet -comprising carbohydrates, proteins, and fats.

"Fats should not be more than 10 to 15 per cent of your diet. Try to have more plant-based products," Udgeath said

The doctor suggested, "have a mixture of all the colours of the rainbow in your platter -- an ideal diet, and you would not require any supplements. That would be a healthy diet for your heart and your whole body".

UCC, One Nation, One Election to be implemented in next term: Shah

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said a Uniform Civil Code for the entire country will be implemented within the next five years after extensive consultations with all stakeholders if the BJP returns to power.

In a wide-ranging interview with PTI, Shah said the Modi government in its next term will also implement 'One Nation, One Élection' as the time has come for the elections to be held simultaneously in the country.

The senior BJP leader further said the simultaneous elections will also bring down

Asked about the possibility of moving elections to winter or some other time of the year as against the current one being held in scorching heat, Shah said, "We can think over it. If we prepone one election, it can be done. It should be

done. This is also the time of students' vacation. It creates lots of problems too. Over time, the election (Lok Sabha) gradually moved to this period (during summer)."

Talking about the Uniform Civil Code, Shah said, "The UCC is a responsibility left to us, our Parliament and the state legislatures of our country since independence by the makers of our Constitution."

"The guiding principles decided for us by the Constituent Assembly include the Uniform Civil Code. And even at that time, legal scholars like K M Munshi, Rajendra Babu, Ambedkar Ji had said that there should not be laws based on religion in a secular country. There should be a Uniform Civil Code," he said. The Union Home Minister said the BJP has done an experiment in Uttarakhand where it has a majority government as it is a subject of



The UCC has been on the

BJP's agenda since the 1950s and recently it was enacted in BJP-ruled Úttarakhand.

"I believe that the Uniform Civil Code is a huge social, legal, and religious reform. The law made by the Uttarakhand government should undergo social and legal scrutiny. Religious leaders should also be consulted," he said."What I mean is that there should be an extensive debate on this. And if there is anything to change in the model law made by the Uttarakhand government after this extensive debate. Because someone will definitely go to court. The judiciary's opinion will also come.

"After that, the state legislatures and Parliament of the country should think seriously over this and a law must be enacted. That is why we have written in our 'sankalp patra' that the BJP

Code for the entire country," he said.

Asked if it can be done within the next five years, Shah said it will be done in this period only. "Five years are a sufficient period," he said. Asked about simultaneous polls, Shah said, "We will also

make every effort to achieve 'One Nation, One Election'. This should also be discussed."

"The Prime Minister had formed the Ram Nath Kovind committee. I was also a member of it. Its report has been submitted. The time has come that elections should be held simultaneously in the country," he added.

Asked whether a bill on this can be introduced in the next session if the BJP returns to power, Shah said, "Our resolution is for five years. We will bring it during this period." In its manifesto for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls, the BJP

Constitution lists Uniform Civil Code as one of the Directive Principles of State

"BJP believes that there cannot be gender equality till such time Bharat adopts a Uniform Civil Code, which protects the rights of all women, and the BIP reiterates its stand to draw a Uniform Civil Code, drawing upon the best tradi-tions and harmonising them with the modern times," the

manifesto has said.

On 'One Nation, One Election', the BJP manifesto mentioned that the Modi government had set up a highpowered Committee to examine the issues of conducting simultaneous elections and it will work towards the implementation of the recommendations of the committee. It has also promised to make provisions for a common elec-

toral roll for all levels of elec-

SC to hear BJP's plea against Calcutta HC order on advertisements during LS polls

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea filed by the BJP challenging a Calcutta High Court order that had refused to interfere with a single-judge verdict restraining the party from issuing advertisements that are allegedly "violative" of the Model Code of Conduct during the Lok Sabha polls.

According to the cause list of May 27 uploaded on the apex court website, a vacation bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and K V Viswanathan is scheduled to hear the plea.

On May 22, a division bench of the high court had said it was not inclined to entertain the appeal against the interim order passed by the singlejudge bench.

The single-judge bench on May 20 had restrained the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from publishing advertise-ments that violated the MCC until June 4, the day the Lok Sabha poll results are scheduled to be declared.

The court had also restrained the saffron party from publishing the advertisements mentioned by the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC)



in West Bengal, in its petition claiming unverified allegations The high court's division bench

had said that the BJP can approach the single judge for a review or for modifications or a recall of the order.

The BJP had moved the intracourt appeal before the division bench, claiming that the singlejudge bench had passed the order without giving it any hearing. In its petition filed in the apex court, the BJP has said the division bench of the high court ought to have considered that the party was not heard and an ex-parte mandatory injunction was granted at an ad-interim stage by the single judge. "It is pertinent to highlight that such interim relief granted by the high court was ed by the publication of certain

the All India Trinamool Congress (AITMC/respondent no.1) which was limited only to the grant of interim order directing the ECI (Election Commission of India) to take steps in accordance with law,"

it has said. The plea has claimed that the single judge "erred by granting an interim injunction" based on the purported violation of the MCC, without taking into consideration that the issue is pending before the EC, which, by virtue of Article 324 read with Article 329 of the Constitution, has the authority to take appropriate action against any political party that violates the MCC.

It has pointed out that aggriev-

advertisements that were allegedly against the spirit of the MCC, the TMC had approached the EC.

The plea has said on the basis of the TMC's complaint, the EC issued a show-cause notice on May 18, directing the BJP to file a reply by May 21. "On May 20, 2024, the writ

petition was listed before the

high court. The single judge, despite observing that the ECI is seized of the issue and a show-cause notice has been issued, proceeded to pass a blanket interim order, which is in the nature of a final order, thereby restraining the petitioner (BJP) from further continuing with the publication of the allegedly offending advertisements till June 4, 2024 or until further orders," it has said. It has added that the division bench ought to have considered that the matter was heard and the order passed by the single judge in the absence of the BJP, which has a "significant impact on its ability to canvas during the election".

As an interim relief, the plea has sought an ex-parte stay on the operations of the May 20 interim order as well as the

IAF Chief Chaudhari reviews Passing Out Parade at Indian Naval Academy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

TAF chief V R Chaudhari on Saturday reviewed the Passing out Parade (POP) of 106 Indian Naval Academy Course, 36 and 37 Naval Orientation Courses (Extended), 38 Naval Orientation Course (Regular) and 39 Naval Orientation Course (Coast Guard and Foreign) at Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala, navy said here.

Chaudhari congratulated the passing out trainees, medal winners and the Champion Squadron for their hard work and outstanding performances. He also complimented the trainees on parade for their impeccable turnout, good military bearing and smart drill.

The Reviewing Officer acknowledged the parents' decision for having encouraged and supported the trainees in choosing the noble profession of arms and committing them to the service of the nation.

Officials said 216 trainees including 34 women trainees and 10 from friendly foreign countries passed out with flying colours, marking the culmination of their ab-initio



Midshipman Pinintla Pradeep Kumar Reddy won the 'President's Gold Medal' for standing first in the overall order of merit.

The integration of international trainees at INA not only strengthens India's foreign cooperation but also highlights its world-class training facilities.

The 38 NOC is the first NOC course to undergo an enhanced training duration of 44 weeks and includes 05 Women Officers in Executive branch, marking a milestone in the gender-neutral Indian The successful trainees

marched past the Academy's Quarterdeck in slow march; with their gleaming swords and rifles held in salute, to the traditional notes and poignant farewell tune for their 'Antim Pag' or final step at INA.
On completion of the parade,

CAS, FOCINC (South) and Commandant, INA along with other dignitaries and proud parents shipped the stripes of passing out trainees, signifying their commissioning in the Navy.

The dignitaries interacted with the passing out trainees

and their parents and congratulated them for their successful completion of rigorous training.

These officers will now proceed to various Naval ships and establishments to further consolidate their training in specialised fields. The nation has reposed

tremendous responsibility on the newly commissioned officers who will play a vital role in upholding and reinforcing the Combat Ready, Credible, Cohesive and Future Ready Indian Navy, imbued with the core values of Duty, Honour and Courage.

WHO fails to come up with plan to deal with next pandemic

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Despite nearly a decade's worth of progress in enhancing life expectancy being erased by the Covid-19 pandemic, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Saturday, attempts to finalise a global treaty even after more than two years of negotiations have failed to come up with a plan for how the world might respond to the next global outbreak.

After Covid-19 triggered once-unthinkable lockdowns, upended economies and killed millions, leaders at the WHO and worldwide had decided to oversee negotiations to figure out how the world might better share scarce resources and stop future viruses from spreading

Roland Driece, co-chair of WHO's negotiating board for the agreement, acknowledged that countries were unable to had hoped a final draft treaty could be agreed on at its yearly meeting of health min-isters starting Monday in Geneva.

"We are not where we hoped we are not where we noped we would be when we started this process," he said, adding that finalizing an international agreement on how to respond to a pandemic was critical "for the sake of humanity." humanity.

Driece said the World Health Assembly next week would take up lessons from its work and plot the way forward, urging participants to make "the right decisions to take this process forward" to one day reach a pandemic agreement "because we need it." The draft treaty had attempt-



ed to address the gap that occurred between COVID-19 vaccines in rich and poorer countries, which WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said amounted to "a catastrophic moral failure."

"We will try everything — believing that anything is possible — and make this happen because the world still needs a pandemic treaty," he said. "Because many of the challenges that caused a serious impact during COVID-19

The latest draft had proposed that WHO should get 20% of the production of pandemic-related products like tests, treatments and vaccines and treatments and vaccines and urged countries to disclose their deals with private companies. Meanwhile, many developing countries said it's unfair that they might be expected to provide virus samples to help develop vaccines and treatments, but then be unable to afford them. On impact on the life On impact on the life expectancy, the WHO in an official statement said, "From 2019 to 2021, the global life

years to reach 71.4 years, returning to the level seen in 2012. Similarly, the global healthy life expectancy decreased by 1.5 years to 61.9 years in 2021, also reverting to the level observed in 2012." The report further highlighted the significant health challenges faced by persons with disabilities, refugees and migrants. In 2021, about 1.3 billion people, or 16% of the global population, had a disability.
On Universal Health

Coverage, the WHO said that it has expanded to encompass 585 million more people, although falling short of the target of one billion. "While we have made progress towards the Triple Billion targets since 2018, a lot still needs to be done.

Data is WHO's superpower. We need to use it better to deliver more impact in countries," said Dr Samira Asma, WHO Assistant Director-General for Data, Analytics and Delivery for Impact. "Without accelerating progress, it is unlikely that any 2019 to 2021, the global life expectancy declined by 1.8 met by 2030."

Insurers slow in giving coverage for AYUSH in health insurance policies

May 22 order passed by the

high court.

Despite the directive from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) for general insurance companies to frame guidelines for the inclusion of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH) treatments in health insurance policies by April 1, 2024, many insurers are moving slow in this direction.

This delay in implementing the guidelines is being attributed to various factors, including the complexity of integrating AYUSH treat-ments into existing health insurance frameworks, the need for thorough consideration of quality standards and procedures, and the challenges associated with ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

Now to bring clarity and guide the stakeholders to how to go about in framing guidelines, the Ayush Ministry will conduct a sensitization program on Monday for executive officials of insurance companies and owners of Ayush hospitals that aims to ensure the effective integration of AYUSH treatments into health insurance coverage.An official from the age. An official from the Ministry said, "Sensitization needs has been felt given that many general insurers expressed that they were clueless in implementing the policies related with the AYUSH exerter." system."

The programme will majorly discuss the regulatory framework and policy support needed to mainstream Ayush treatments in health insurance schemes and facilitate a dialogue between key stake-



holders to address both challenges and opportunities. Coverage in the Ayush sector, standard treatment guidelines (STG) and ICD codes for the insurance sector, and penetration of Ayush in the insurance sector are the other key issues of discussion. The programme will also discuss Ayush Hospital's achievements, and success stories of AIIA, the onboarding of Ayush hospitals on the ROHI-NI platform, and the empanelment of Ayush Hospitals for insurance coverage, the ministry said.

Empanelment of Ayush hospitals is the important aspect in ensuring Ayush insurance coverage. This will increase the visibility of Ayush hospitals in the health insurance sector," said a senior official from the Ministry.
The IRDAI had asked gener-

al insurance companies to have board-approved policy guidelines for AYUSH coverage and give policyholders an option to choose a treatment of their choice. The guidelines were to be effective from

April 1, 2024.

The guidelines must include quality standards and procedure for enrolling AYUSH hospitals or day care centres as network providers for cashless treatment. "In recent times, AYUSH treatments have garnered increased popularity and have become an established branch of medicine. Considering the growing demand for AYUSH treatments, there is a need to consider these treatments at par with other treatments," the IRDAI had said.

Heads of general insurance companies and Ayush hospi-tal owners, officials of IRDAI, General Insurance Council, Insurance Information Bureau of India, National Health Authority, national institutes of Ministry of Ayush, national commissions of Ministry of Ayush are expected to be part of this

programme. In December, the Madras High Court asked the IRDAI to treat AYUSH treatments at par with allopathy in reimbursing medical expenses.

Researchers identify autoantibodies as biomarker in tracking kidney disease

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Using a hybrid technique, a team of researchers has identified anti-nephrin autoantibodies as a reliable biomarker for tracking kidney disease progression associat-ed with nephrotic syndrome. Nephrotic syndrome, characterised by elevated protein levels in the urine, is linked to kidney diseases such as min-imal change disease (MCD), primary focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), and membranous penkronaand membranous nephropathy (MN). The primary cause behind nephrotic syndrome is damage to podocytes, the cells responsible for filtering the kidneys, which allows protein

to leak into the urine. Children diagnosed with MCD or FSGS often receive a diagnosis of idiopathic nephrotic syndrome (INS), where the cause of the nephrotic syndrome is unknown. This is frequently because children with high protein levels in their urine rarely undergo a kidney biopsy, which is how the cause is typically determined.

Traditionally, diagnosing these conditions has posed chal-lenges due to overlapping histological features and hesitancy to conduct invasive kidney biopsies, particularly in children. While anti-nephrin autoantibodies have been observed in certain patients with MCD and FSGS, their precise role in the advance-ment of these diseases is not fully understood.

The study, conducted across Europe and the USA, introduced a novel approach combining immunoprecipitation enzyme-linked immunosorbent

anti-nephrin autoantibodies. The study is being published in the New England Journal of

Medicine. The findings revealed that anti-nephrin autoantibodies were prevalent in 69% of adults with MCD and 90% of children with INS who had not been treated with immunosuppressive drugs. Importantly, the levels of these autoantibodies correlated with disease activity, suggesting their potential as a biomarker for monitoring disease progression. The antibodies were also rarely seen in the other diseases under examination. To further investigate the impact of nephrin immunisation on kidney function and disease, researchers administered laboratory-made nephrin protein to mice, creating a condition akin to MCD in the mice. Immunisation led to the phosphorylation of nephrin and notable alterations in cell structure, indicating the involvement of antibodies targeting nephrin in podocyte malfunction and nephrotic syndrome.

models necessitating multiple immunisations,6 this model induced swift disease manifestation with a single immunisation, even at low antibody concentrations.

Remarkably, unlike other

Dr. Nicola M. Tomas, co-lead author of the study, commented, "The identification of anti-nephrin autoantibodies as a reliable biomarker, cou-pled with our hybrid immunoprecipitation technique, enhances our diagnostic capabilities and opens new avenues for closely monitoring disease progression in kidney disorders with nephrotic syn-



Modi's mazboot Government replaced majboor UPA: Nadda

JP president JP Nadda on Sunday credited his party with providing a providing "mazboot"

"mazboot" (strong) government, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which was capable of penetrating Pakistan's borders to destroy terrorist hideouts

In contrast, the former Union minister charged, the Congressled UPA government that got voted out in 2014 was "majboor, kamzor aur apang" (helpless, weak and crippled).

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in Bihar's Arrah and Jehanabad constituencies, Nadda mocked the UPA for having sent "dossiers to Pakistan when the nation was rattled by terrorist attacks sponsored from across the border".

"When Modi took over, and Uri and Pulwama happened, our troops penetrated Pakistan's borders to conduct surgical strikes and Balakot air strikes and beat the terrorists inside their homes," he said

praised the also government for scrapping 370, claiming



'liberated people of Jammu and Kashmir, who had been held hostage by a handful of political families for years".

"In the ongoing elections, Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a record turnout. The enthusiasm of voters is a testimony to the liberating effect of abrogation of Article 370," he claimed.

Training his guns at the RJD, a Congress ally that is also the BJP's principal challenger in Bihar, Nadda said the party stood for "rishwatkhori" was "rashtra (corruption), (anti-national), virodhi' promoted ʻjungle raj whenever (lawlessness) power, and was comparable to 'dal dal" (marshland).

Underscoring improvements in the living standards of people with Modi at the helm, Nadda said "today almost every household has electricity. A giant leap from the situation 10 years ago when 2.5 crore had no access to power and only 18,000 villages were electrified".

"Ten years ago, almost every and JD(U) president.

to be made in China, Taiwan, Japan or Korea. Today, most of your mobile phones are made in India. We are manufacturing 97 per cent of the mobile phones we use. This is an example of the positive changes," he said. Nadda said PM Modi has not simply ruled but has brought a fundamental change in the country's political culture.

The common people, who had become used to a state of indifference, are now resolutely with Modi to take forward the pledge of 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India)," he said. Nadda claimed that in the six phases of general elections that have passed, the NDA was ahead in enough number of seats to be

in enough number of seats to be well past the majority mark and "we are on course to achieving the target of 400-plus".

The BJP president was on a whirlwind tour of the state, where eight seats were going to polls on June 1 in the final phase. He was scheduled to wind up his tour with a rally in Nalanda Lok Sabha Nalanda constituency, named after the eponymous home district of ally Nitish Kumar, the Bihar CM



Record breaking voting reflective of new JK under Modi's leadership: Raina

campaigns, he said that it was heartening to see the parties and their leaders who

used to call for boycott of the elections in the past were the ones who came forward and

voted with fervour in this

"In a democracy, vote is the most powerful weapon in the

hands of the people to

representatives...The new

picture of J&K will have a

bearing on the overall

politics in the coming years,

Raina said though the two

seats of Jammu region have

always recorded high voter

turnout, the change in the polling pattern in Kashmir is

highly appreciable.
"We hope that the new trend

of high voter turnout will

continue during the upcoming assembly, District

Development Council, Block

Panchayat and Urban Local

Bodies elections," he added. Asserting the "BJP is fully prepared for the assembly

elections", Raina said, "In

fact, we wanted to have both

parliamentary and assembly

elections together but the

Election Commission took a

decision taking into account

the security considerations."

They have made it clear to

hold the assembly elections

after the completion of the

Lok Sabha polls in the country," he added.

The BJP leader expressed his

gratitude to the Election

Commission, Jammu and

Kashmir Chief Electoral

administration and all

ensuring incident free

culmination of the elections

in the Union Territory. He hoped that both successful and unsuccessful candidates would make their

positive contribution to

democracy, brotherhood and

peaceful atmosphere in the

strengthen

the

agencies

Officer,

security

further

Council,

Development

election.

choose

he said.

The record-breaking turnout in the just concluded Lok Sabha elections in all five constituencies is reflective of the new Jammu and Kashmir under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, senior BJP leader Ravinder Raina said

on Sunday. Raina, the president of Jammu and Kashmir BJP, said his party is fully prepared for the much awaited assembly elections and expressed hope that the latest trend of voter turnout, especially in Kashmir Valley, would continue in the upcoming elections which will also cover local bodies.

With the conclusion of voting in the Anantnag-Rajouri seat on Saturday, Jammu and Kashmir has registered an unprecedented 58.11 per cent polling in its five parliamentary constituencies, which was highest in the past 35 years. Udhampur Lok Sabha seat was the first to go to polls on April 19, recording 68 per cent turnout followed by Jammu which recorded 69.1

In Kashmir, Srinagar witnessed 38 per cent polling on May 13 which was the second highest in three decades, while the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency registered an all time high voter turnout of 58.17 per cent on May 20. Anantnag-Rajouri recorded around 53 per cent

percent on April 26.

polling.
"The bumper voting by enthusiastic people is the proof of new Jammu and Kashmir which is treading on the path of peace, prosperity, brotherhood and development under the leadership of Modi whose government was able to create a sense of security in the hearts and minds of the local population," Raina told

reporters here.

PM Modi mujra remark insult to Bihar: Kharge

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his 'mujra' remark against opposition leaders and said that he 'insulted Bihar" by making such a

Addressing an election rally in favour of Manoj Kumar, Congress leader and Mahagathbandhan nominee for Sasaram Lok Sabha seat, Kharge said, "Modi ji insulted Bihar by using this word... It means mujra happens here. This is an insult to Bihar and its people. This is not how a PM should talk. He should be talking in a statesman-like manner." The Congress president's attack came after Modi vowed to thwart alleged attempts to rob Dalits and backward classes of reservation by INDIA bloc, which he accused of being "enslaved" and performing "mujra" for its Muslim vote bank. "Bihar is the land that has given a

new direction to the fight for social



soil that I will foil the plans of the INDIA bloc to rob the SCs, STs and OBC of their rights and divert those to Muslims. They may remain enslaved and perform 'mujra' to please their vote bank," the PM had said while addressing a poll rally in the state on Saturday.

Kharge further said, "PM Modi considers himself as a 'Tees Maar Khan' (a person who glorifies himself). He is under the wrong

impression. It is the people who are real 'Tees Maar Khan'. He (Modi) is like a dictator. If he returns to power for a third term, people will not be allowed to speak freely."

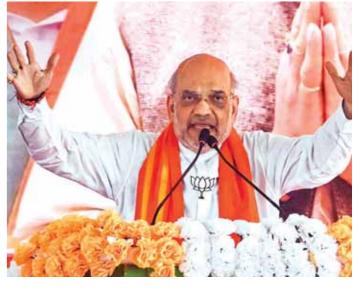
He alleged that the BJP was spreading communal hatred to divert the attention of the people

from issues that matter.

Neither the PM nor other BJP leaders will talk about issues such as growing unemployment or price rise. They are spreading communal hatred. The forces that are attacking the Constitution and spreading the politics of hate... Must be defeated. They are dividing this country on the lines of religion and caste," he alleged.

Kharge claimed that the PM was lying that the Congress would impose an inheritance tax if voted to

This election is very crucial... It's an election to save the democracy and the Constitution. We have to fight unitedly. This election is basically 'people vs Modi' and not 'Rahul vs he claimed



Shah: It is Rahul who enjoys vacations abroad vs Modi who celebrates Diwali with jawans

PTI SASARAM/KARAKAT

 $U^{nion\ Home\ Minister\ Amit}_{Shah\ on\ Sunday\ asserted\ that}$ the ongoing Lok Sabha polls were a choice between Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who celebrates Diwali among Armymen, and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who "rushes abroad for vacations whenever the weather becomes uncomfortable".

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in Karakat and Sasaram Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar, Shah dubbed the INDIA bloc as the one comprising "scamsters guilty of financial wrongdoings worth Rs 12 lakh crore" which was taking on Modi, "with an unblemished record during the 23 years he was CM (of Gujarat) and the PM".

He said that unlike Gandhi, who was "born with a silver spoon", Modi has worked hard to reach the top, coming from an "ati pichhda (extremely backward class) family" and selling tea at one point of time to make ends

The former BJP president claimed that the INDIA bloc lacked a cohesive leadership and "its prominent figures are looking at one year of prime ministership each. Such an arrangement can never provide strong government capable of defeating Pakistan-sponsored terrorism". The home minister slammed the

Congress for being "scared of Pakistan's atomic bombs" and asserted that his government, which has scrapped Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, was resolved to claim Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir "which was ours, is ours and shall remain

Shah lambasted parties opposed

reservations, in states ruled by them, "to Muslims, cutting into the share of SCs, STs and OBCs" and asserted that PM Modi has resolved to put an end to this. He charged the opposition parties

with having been opposed to the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya which finally took place with Modi at the helm. In Sasaram, which is a reserved

constituency, Shah spoke of budgetary allocation for Dalits' welfare rising to Rs 1.65 lakh crore under the Modi government, compared to Rs 41,000 crore during the previous UPA regime.

He also underscored that the PM gave due respect to Babasaheb Ambedkar by organising celebrations in his memory and organising turning into 'teerth sthal' (pilgrimage spots) all the places linked to him. He criticised the RJD, the BJP's

principal opponent in Bihar, for "tying up with anti-OBC Congress, which sat on Kaka Kalelkar report and opposed implementation of Mandal Commission recommendations". In Karakat, where NDA partner Upendra Kushwaha has CPI(ML) Liberation as one of the main challengers, Shah reminded the people of the Naxal violence, which used to keep Bihar in the headlines a few decades back, and warned that a victory for the Left party could lead to a fresh spurt in similar incidents.

Widely regarded as the BJP's principal strategist, he claimed that the NDA had "notched up 310 seats in the first five phases of the elections, and in the last two legs, it was on course to achieve the target of 400-plus. "In the third term, we will make

India the third largest economy of

In battle for Jadavpur LS seat, sore point Bhangore holds key

PTI ■ BARUIPUR (WB)

 $F_{\text{hurry at a roadside eatery}}^{\text{inishing his lunch in a}}$ in Bhangore's Kathalia, Moinuddin Mondal was about to rush with his 'magic-gari' to ferry school students when police stopped him for a security

As the police rummaged through his micro-van, Mondal said, "This time, the security cover is more than in the previous elections. It is a good thing that they are trying to contain violence, considering what has been happening in this area over

the last few years.
Tucked away in the outskirts of Kolkata in the South 24 Parganas district, Bhangore has often grabbed media headlines for the frequent political skirmishes that have rocked the area. Notwithstanding

people's familiarity with violence here, the fresh bout coincided with the rise of a new political entity -- the Indian Secular Force (ISF) which, backed by the CPI(M), snatched the Muslim-majority Bhangore assembly seat from the TMC in 2021.

As the TMC sought to reclaim its lost ground after the shock defeat and ISF fought for its territory, skirmishes became regular. At least three people were killed during last year's panchayat polls, and several others in the run-up to it and thereafter.

The situation prompted Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to bring the area under Kolkata Police's

jurisdiction earlier this year from the state police for better management, and doubled the number of police stations, from two to four, with plans to add four

With around 2.5 lakh votes in its kitty, Bhangore, seems to have emerged as the segment holding the key to the battle for Jadavpur Lok Sabha constituency in the ensuing elections.

The seat is headed for a four-cornered fight since ISF failed to stitch an alliance with the Left, with BJP and TMC forming the other two corners of the quadrant.

The TMC has been winning Jadavpur since 2009, but it has not given any of its MPs a second term, fielding a new face every time. In 2019, its candidate Mimi

Chakraborty bagged the seat by a margin of 2.95 lakh votes, around 48 per cent of the total votes polled, over a third of which came from Bhangore.

Two years later, the TMC won six of the seven assembly segments under Jadavpur but lost Bhangore where it polled the most number of votes in 2019. It is also a prestige battle for the TMC since a young

Mamata Banerjee stepped into public life as a giant killer from Jadavpur after defeating CPI(M) veteran Somnath Chatterjee in 1984. In 2019, the BJP secured 27 per cent vote share in Jadavpur, and the CPI(M) bagged 21 per cent. While BJP finished second in

the mostly rural regions of

Baruipur and Sonarpur, the CPI(M) was the runners-up

in Bhangore, and urban Jadavpur and Tollygunge

assembly seats.
"TMC has the strongest organisation in South 24 Parganas. So, there is no question about who will win. The election is about who will come second - the BJP or CPI(M). In Bhangore, we may benefit from the crossvoting there," TMC's Jadavpur-Diamond Harbour organisational district Subhasishpresident

Chakraborty told PTI. "From singer Kabir Suman and historian Sugata Bose to actor Mimi Chakraborty, TMC has fielded apolitical candidates in the last three elections in Jadavpur. But our candidate this time, Saayoni Ghosh, is not new to politics, despite being an

She is the president of TMC's youth wing," he said.

Among the main issues that the opposition candidates are raising are drinking water woes in the area, extension of metro tracks to Baruipur, lack of a state-run multi-specialty hospital and low frequency of trains on Sealdah-Lakshmikantapur suburban

route. CPI(M) candidate Srijan Bhattacharyya said, "My campaign's top focus is on livelihood issues like price rise and unemployment. For Jadavpur, I have an 18-point programme, which includes setting up the Sonarpur IT Park, the foundation stone of which was laid by former Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee but has

remained a non-starter for

over a decade.

for the previous two terms. "Abhisĥek the

Chakraborty said.

Abhishek faces crucial test in Diamond Harbour LS seat

PTI ■ DIAMOND HARBOUR (WB)

The Diamond Harbour poll battleground encapsulates an intense dynamic in West Bengal's political landscape where the TMC, led by its de facto number two Abhishek Banerjee, touts the seat as a 'model constituency' while the opposition paints it as a 'laboratory of violence'.

A victory with an enhanced margin compared to 2019 will surely bolster Banerjee's leadership credentials and consolidate his influence in the party at a time when sharp intra-party fractures have cost the TMC influential leaders like Tapas Roy and Arjun Singh ahead of the ensuing polls and ace organisers like Suvendu Adhikari three years ago, all to the BJP.

Nestled between Kolkata and the South 24 Parganas district, Diamond Harbour stands as a strategic stronghold for the Trinamool Congress. The stakes are high, with outcomes poised to influence both TMC's inner dynamics and West Bengal's politics at large in the days ahead.

Nephew to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Abhishek at a poll rally gave a call for a victory surpassing his margins Banerjee's

continued success in Diamond Harbour will not only reinforce the TMC's dominance in the region but also enhance his stature within the party. A bigger victory margin would be a clear endorsement of his leadership and developmental vision, political analyst Biswanath



Abhishek's rise within the violence and malpractice TMC has been marked by his "Diamond Harbour has seen acumen for drawing political strategies and ability to unprecedented growth and development under Abhishek mobilize support, party insiders say. However, his elevation to the rank of party's Banerjee's leadership. From improved roads and healthcare facilities to enhanced educational opportunities, our general secretary in 2021 and his undeniably increasing influence in decision-making work speaks for itself. Our leader has vowed to make it a have aggravated friction with a model constituency," Maheshtala TMC MLA Dulal section of senior leaders, they Das told PTI. The electoral battle in Banerjee marked the start of

Diamond Harbour this time is underscored by competing narratives. The TMC, under Banerjee's

leadership, is trying to promote Diamond Harbour as "model constituency", a parliamentary segment that mirrors development and has made significant strides in infrastructure, healthcare, and education.

Trinamool highlights the effective implementation of various welfare schemes and development projects as evidence of good governance. That narrative notwithstanding, TMC's development claims face TMC's

the opposition's allegations of

scepticism from a significant section of voters influenced by segments

section of leaders, Abhishek seems to have cemented his position ever since as a key determinant of the party's future. In the 2019 Lok Sabha Banerjee elections, strengthened his hold on Diamond Harbour, defeating BJP by a staggering margin of 3.2 lakh votes. The 2021 assembly elections further solidified TMC's dominance,

his political ascendancy in

2014 when he won the

Diamond Harbour seat with

a vote share of over 40 per

cent. And despite the

murmurs of dissent within a

with all seven assembly under constituency falling under TMC's control.

www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

-PAPER WITH PASSION-

A sorry state

Poor voter turnout in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections continued in Phase 6

t may be due to the heat, perhaps their frustration with politicians, or even a sense of resignation as voters perceive the mess political parties have made of our nation's democratic system — they simply aren't turning out. Barring a few exceptions such as West Bengal, where the voters put up a decent show, most others have stayed away from polling booths. The story in Phase 6 of voting was no different; the recent trends in voter participation across India reveal a concerning decline. This pattern, however, does not hold for all regions; Bengal and J&K stand as notable exceptions with relatively stable or even increased voter turnouts. Understanding the reasons behind this declining voter engagement is crucial to address the challenges facing India's democratic process. Several factors could be contributing to this trend: Adverse weather conditions, pre-decided loyalties or a growing sense of disillusionment with the democratic exercise itself. One of the most likely explanations for the poor turnout



is weather. Phase 6 coincides with the onset of extreme weather conditions, including an intense heatwave. It can discourage voters, particularly the elderly and those with health issues, from making the trip to polling stations. Another plausible reason is the phenomenon of voters already committed to a particular side; sensing that their candidate is losing, they abstain from voting.

Indeed, supporters of candidates trailing may feel disheartened, believing their vote will not alter the outcome and thus choosing not to participate. On the other hand, the winning party's supporters could get complacent. The most troubling reason behind

the low turnout, perhaps, is a growing sense of disillusionment with the democratic process itself. If one were to scan social media and heed vox populi, one would get this sense loud and clear. Most people can typically fit into two categories: Those who are committed and overzealous and the disillusioned ones who see no point in the whole exercise. They feel the Government they choose works only for itself. This no-trust vote against the democratic exercise can stem from various factors. Many voters feel that their participation does not lead to tangible changes or improvements in governance. This perception of inefficacy can dissuade individuals from voting as they see little benefit in engaging with a system they believe to be fundamentally unresponsive. Additionally, in regions with frequent elections, voters can experience electoral fatigue. The constant cycle of voting wears off the novelty and sense of civic duty. The lack of appealing candidates can also contribute to a lower turnout. When voters perceive all options as equally unqualified or corrupt, they may choose to abstain from voting altogether. In areas with political violence, safety concerns can deter voters. However, the resilient turnout in J&K suggests a complex interplay of factors, including a strong desire for political change despite the risks.



A myna feeds its chicks, in Moradabad district

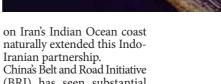
India-Iran revitalise Chabahar Port



Despite the US pressure, India and Iran sign \$370 million deal, reviving Chabahar Port's strategic importance, which would be beneficial for both countries

he Indian Ocean-facing Iranian port of Chabahar is back in the spotlight thanks to a new 10-year, \$370 million agreement between India and Iran, signed on May 13. This deal marks an important step in the long-standing partnership between the two countries, aimed at enhancing regional connectivity and economic growth. India's Chabahar Port project in Iran is more than just a commercial endeavour-it's a strategic masterstroke aimed at reshaping regional trade dynamics and strengthening geopolitical ties. Located on Iran's southeastern coast in the Sistan-Baluchestan province, Chabahar Port offers India a golden gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia, circumventing Pakistan and providing a counterbalance to China's influence in the region. Chabahar is the only Iranian port outside the Straits of Hormuz.

The Chabahar Port stands out for several reasons. Firstly, it is the only Iranian port with direct access to the Indian Ocean, providing a critical transit hub for goods travelling between India, Iran and beyond. The project includes the development of port infrastructure and the construction of a railway linking Chabahar to the Iranian city of Zahedan, close to the Afghan border, effectively creating a new trade corridor. This port is pivotal for India as it seeks to bolster its economic and strategic presence in Central Asia. Traditionally, India's trade routes to Afghanistan and Central Asia have been blocked by Pakistan, which does not allow Indian goods to pass through its territory. Chabahar provides a much-needed alternative route, facilitating access to these markets without relying on Pakistani cooperation. The idea for jointly developing Chabahar began during the 2003 State visit to India by Iranian President Muhammad Khatami. At that time, India and Iran shared strategic interests, viewing Pakistan's political interference in Aignanistan as narmiul. Both supported the Northern Alliance, led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, against Pakistan-backed Pashtun



(BRI) has seen substantial investments in ports and infrastructure across Asia, often referred to as the "String of Pearls." Gwadar Port in Pakistan, just 72 kilometres east of Chabahar, is a cornerstone of this strategy. By developing Chabahar, India not only counters China's influence but also positions itself as a key player in the regional logistics network.

Chabahar is also vital for Afghanistan. The landlocked nation has been heavily reliant on Pakistan's Karachi Port for its imports and exports. Chabahar provides a viable alternative, potentially reducing Afghanistan's economic dependence on Pakistan. In 2016, India, Iran and Afghanistan signed a trilateral agreement to develop Chabahar, demonstrating a shared commitment to regional stability and economic cooperation. The port is expected to significantly increase trade volumes and create jobs in Afghanistan, fostering economic resilience.

For India, the Chabahar Port project is a testament to its adi ity to manoeuvre through complex diplomatic landscapes. Iran, often isolated due to international sanctions, groups. Developing Chabahar



CHABAHAR IS MUCH MORE THAN A PORT: IT'S A PIVOTAL PIECE IN INDIA'S **GEOPOLITICAL** CHESSBOARD. WHILE CHALLENGES PERSIST, THE SUCCESSFUL **DEVELOPMENT OF** CHABAHAR COULD REDEFINE TRADE AND ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS IN THE REGION

sees India as a crucial partner in its economic development. India's investment in Chabahar signals its intent to strengthen bilateral ties with Iran, enhancing energy security by facilitating greater access to Iranian oil and gas. The port also serves as a symbol of India's growing assertiveness on the global stage. By investing in Chabahar, India underscores its readiness to take on infrastructure projects that have farreaching geopolitical impli-cations. This move aligns with India's broader "Act East" and "Connect Central Asia" policies, aimed at deepening trade and cultural linkages with East and Central Asian countries. Despite its potential, the Chabahar project faces significant challenges. The re-imposition of US sanctions on Iran has cast a shadow over the port's future, creating uncertainty for investors and complicating financial transactions. However, India has received some exemptions from these sanctions, allowing the project to progress, albeit

Moreover, regional instability poses risks. Iran's internal political dynamics and its relations with global powers and layers of complexity to the project's execution. Chabahar, the only Iranian port outside the Straits of Hormuz, is back in the news.

The US-envisioned India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is now stalled due to Gaza hostilities. The Suez Canal is also risky due to the Houthi threat. Thus, an alternative route through the Caspian Sea and Russia seems likely. The Chabahar Port project is a cornerstone of India's strategy to enhance its regional influence and economic reach. By providing an alternative trade route to Afghanistan and Central Asia, countering Chinese influence and strengthening ties with Iran, Chabahar is much more than a port-it's a pivotal piece in India's geopolitical chessboard. While challenges persist, the successful development of Chabahar could redefine trade and economic partnerships in the region, heralding a new era of connectivity and cooperation. This situation presents a win-win for both India and Iran. For India, Chabahar offers a strategic alternative to bypass regional instability, ensuring uninterrupted trade routes to Europe and Central Asia. For Iran, the development of Chabahar boosts its economy and strengthens its regional influence b ing a vital link in global trade

networks. (The writer is an associate professor, views are personal)

credit category has expanded rapidly, fueled by easy access to credit cards and short-term per-

While digitisation has facilitated this growth, it

has also brought challenges in assessing borrowers' repayment capacities. The Reserve Bank of

India (RBI) has intervened to mitigate risks by

tightening credit controls, making it harder for

first-time users to access credit. However, spe-

cially designed credit products for NTC users help

build credit histories. For these new consumers,

smart debt management is crucial. Understanding

credit card terms, starting with a low credit limit,

THE EDITOR

Embracing silence in the age of social media



As we reminisce about a time when joy was safeguarded within the confines of our homes, we ponder the evolution of modern communication

recently came across this famous quote by ▲ Khalil Gibran, "Travel and tell no one, Live a true love story and tell no one, Live happily and tell no one, People ruin beautiful

In older times when we were children, we were told by our elders not to display our good fortune, lest we catch the evil eye. That meant we had to keep the happiness, the good fortune, or anything good in our life, within the four walls of our house. It was not a successful pearl passed on to us by our forefathers. There were avenues where we could still boast, like in school or during the mandatory evenings out to play with other children in the locality.

Those were different times. A visit to our grandparents' during the holidays, or the new toy that we had received from our parents for our birthday, or any other such possession, was valuable - to be cherished and talked about. Even laughter and happiness were something to value and to pass on to our near This was not baseless — the times have changed. I

and dear ones. Things started changing.

My letter-writing stopped. Emails were the new order. However, Government departments and corporations have yet to discover the paperless office. A hard copy of the communication, with a physical signature, was still required to be sent through post for it to

be accepted. People said that any document without a physical signature was not legally enforceable; however, I believed that the reason was far simpler — the postal mindset doubted the receipt of email communication by the recipient.

mail still finds ways to reach the spam box. But more likely, it had more to do with the sender's capability, or lack of it, in oper-

ating the computer. I started writing after my relative withdrawal a few years back from professional life. In the olden days, the only recourse that I had for an outreach, was to send my manuscript with a self-addressed stamped envelope to the limited number of magazines and journals available at the time - to eventually receive a rejection. But I had the satisfaction of waiting in anticipation for a few weeks if not months. Now

recently sent my article to the editor of a reputed daily by email and within hours received a cryptic reply, "Regret."

There is a popular serial currently airing on the TV. Two celebrities have a conversation over coffee - with a k, with another celebrity and talk about mundane subjects. A recent episode captured the changing times perfectly. A star from the 90s was asked about the one thing that she missed not having during her heydays. Her reply was spontaneous, without missing a beat, emphatic and crisp -"Social Media." I cannot even imagine the plight of the corporates who continue to prosper because we are obsessed with social media if people start following Mr Gibran's advice! Not to talk of the withdrawal symptoms for a generation brought up posting all their happiness and even sorrow, on social media!

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

RBI DIVIDEND TRANSFER

Madam - Apropos the news story "India to get rating support if it uses RBI dividend to reduce fiscal deficit: S&P analyst," published on May 24, this is my response. The windfall gain for the Government through the RBI's Rs 2.1 lakh crore unpredicted dividend is big positive news. It is a consequence of an increase in interest income from RBI's foreign assets and forex transactions. This has created a considerable fiscal space for the next Government.

Next Government can use it in two ways. First, if the Government uses this money to reduce borrowing, then it is going to positively impact our credit rating, which in turn will attract foreign investors to India. This would be a positive sign for the capital market as well. And if GoI uses this money to stimulate the economy then it will lead to a boost in consumption. So either way it is going to be a win-win situation for our country's economy. The next Government should continue what the last Government nace quality of spending.

Bal Govind | Noida Government has been doing in terms of

SUNAK FACES THE HEAT Madam — Apropos, "UK PM Sunak, opposition labour hit the campaign trail for July 4 polls," The Pioneer, May 24. The UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced the national polls to be held on July 4, six months ahead of the due time in January 2025. Many observers wondered: why now? More specifically, why has the PM called an election that is almost certain to lose? For months, polls have placed Sunak's Conservative Party way behind the opposition Labour Party. Sunak's decision has been driven by the possibility that it's very unlikely there will be a better time for him and his Conservative party. Almost everything Sunak tries seems to backfire and it's not implausible that his favorability with the public will get even worse

before the end of the year.

NTC brings financial inclusion

sonal loans



propos the news story "New-to-credit users drive financial inclusion," published on May 25, this is my response. New-tocredit (NTC) users have been driving significant growth in India's lending sector, contributing to financial inclusion and economic progress. With approximately 200 million active credit users and 800,000 new NTC consumers annually, the retail

timely payments and monitoring spending are key practices. Keeping credit utilisation low, avoiding cash advances and regularly checking credshops and wholesale shops. As author-

The past couple of days have been relatively good for Sunak. The economy does seem to be recovering, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) updating the UK's growth forecast and inflation finally returning to something resembling a normal level. Nothing went catastrophically wrong in the last week or so ahead of calling the election. Sunak inherited a mess, no one can deny that. It currently seems unlikely that he has cleaned up that mess enough to earn the Conservatives another term in office. But given the size of the task ahead of him, it makes sense that he seize on this rare period of good news and hope for the best.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

PLASTIC USE MUST BE CONTROLLED

Madam — Although the central and State Governments have imposed a complete ban on polythene covers of thicknesses less than 125 microns in the State, it is not seen in practice. The viscosity of polythene bags is too high. 75micron-thick bags, which were once

it reports are essential steps. Building an emergency fund adds a safety net, promoting financial stability for a healthy financial future. Neha Gupta | Delhi banned are still being used today. A large number of polythene covers are used in vegetable, tiffin, grocery, big

ities have failed to ban polythene covers, they are seen everywhere on roads and canals. Cattle are falling sick by eating the wastes dumped in these covers in front of the houses and on the road. Criticisms are being heard that even though so many mishaps are happening, the concerned authorities are not paying attention. The authorities should clamp down on the sale of banned polythene bags which harm the environment and take strict action against those selling them. The authorities should make an effort to inform the people about the disadvantages caused by the use of banned poly-

thene bags and to organise awareness

programmes to encourage people to use

eco-friendly clothing as an alternative..

Appanna Gonapa | Visakhapatnam Send your feedback to:

letterstopioneér@gmail.com

www.dailypioneer.com facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

FIRST COLUMN

STRATEGIES FOR INNER PEACE AND EMPOWERMENT

We seek solace and direction, grappling with negative influences and internal strife



Are we running after a chimaera? Or like Rama and Lakshman are we running after a non-existent golden deer? Or like the Pandavas, (barring the righteous Yudhisthira) do we partake in water from a poisonous lake? In all such situations, our mind is fully aware that what we are attempting is incorrect and inchoate, yet we undertake that activity like a Kamikaze pilot. There are a couple of reasons for this hara-kiri or running after the

A) We are not wakeful (not sleepy in a literal sense) as we are not focused or centred. We cannot differentiate and distinguish between choices. B) Our mind and thoughts (a human mind on average receives 70k thoughts a day) cannonade us endlessly. Now the company we keep and the food we partake in has a significant impact on the human mind and body.

Negative company drains a person and toxic food and drink enervates and debilitates our system. I was a victim of alcoholism and realised the suffering one goes through. By adopting the techniques of Sudarshan Kriya and Pranayama, overcame the disease. It was a weak mind which fell prey to Bacchus.

C) Tools for Effective Time Management-

Try the POSEC METHOD - That is to prioritise by organising, streamlining and economising time to be effective.

"Undertake a SWOT analysis to emerge triumphant.

"We should learn to work in teams and practice the art of delegation. "As a routine, attempt all arduous tasks first.

"Build flexibility in one's schedule or else one would suffer from psychosomatic disorders.



"Develop hobbies and read inspirational and self-help books."

"Every morning and night while being grateful make an inventory of dos and don'ts and must-do lists. Let us learn to say 'NO' and to utter 'YES' when an oxymoron kind of situation arises. A 'Yes mind' makes an individual take up responsibility. And taking up responsibility can only empower a person.

Live life king-size and learn to celebrate. We can celebrate only if we can quieten our minds. These are some ways to quieten our mind and develop a relaxation room or space in our mind. For that we can do the following:

Go for long walks, talk out our problems, hug a person (perhaps someone whom we do not like), write down all our botherations, be in sync with our breath and movement, pursue a passion, be a daredevil, get out of our comfort zone, exercise vigorously (positive endorphins get released which have a soothing effect on the mind and body), have cold water baths to conquer passion and carnal instincts.

Despite practising all techniques, we may not be able to find our place in the Sun.

So, what does one do?

Just surrender to the immense power within ourselves and learn to accept. Realise that "ham Brahmasmi"- "I am the infinite reality", as written in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Our mind has that immense power. It needs

to be harnessed and realised. We just need to declutter our minds. There are several ways to channel this energy. There may be some who may practice meditation, breathing techniques and observing silence to quieten and silence the mind. There may be others who remain focused by playing a game of tennis and sweating it out.

We should feel blessed and feel abundance. Let your mind not be judgemental and complain and cling to negativities. Willy-nilly we provide the hook to hang the coat of negativity.

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

Punjab voters' dilemma: Choosing the lesser evil -



As Punjab gears up to vote in the last phase of the Lok Sabha elections, the State's electorate faces a plethora of options but finds few truly meritorious candidates



n the Lok Sabha election 2024, over twenty million voters in the State of Punjab have plenty more options than ever before for choosing their representatives from among Indian National Congress (INC), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Communist Party of India- Communist Party of India, Marxist (CPI-CPIM) and others, yet they are faced with a lack of enthusiasm and disinterest more than ever before in who to vote and who hot to vote'. On the other hand, every political party is grandstanding to be the best candidate for the voters' choice, yet very unsure, fearful and worried about the voters' response.

Among the voters, there is a 'stony silence' while the candidates and political parties are clamouring for their candidature and claim on all the thirteen

Lok Sabha constituencies. During the last couple of months, the leaders and the parties have been trying their fresh 'makeover' by switching positions: the individuals by hopping parties as the perceptibly stronger boats for them to sail through the election and the political parties by adopting the leaders of their opponents as perceptibly stronger 'horses' to pull their horse carts. The situation is caused by the politicians' 'faulty' understanding of democracy as a game of 'taking turns' to enjoy as 'rulers' and render the 'citizens' as 'subjects' while following the policies 'not so pro-people' that redefine democracy as



NO POLITICAL PARTY HAS CONVENTIONAL ISSUES LIKE THE TRANSFER OF CHANDIGARH AND **PUNJABI-**SPEAKING AREAS,

WATER DISTRIBUTION AND MORE RIGHTS TO THE STATES ETC IN

THEIR MANIFESTOS, SPEECHES AND SLOGANS a Government of the people, by the people but nor 'for the peo-The political parties have been

promising at the time of elections but not performing to fulfil the promises after their victory. After the elections, pursuing policies that help the political class, corporations and their associates, the political parties and individuals in power have been dodging the real issues by projecting the emotive but peripheral issues, leaving the people begin with nothing in essence and end with nothing in essence; the politics of 'nothingness' has been going on leading the voters to the current situation of 'the agony of choice' caught in an existential crisis of deciding 'to vote or not to vote'/ 'who to vote or who not to vote'.

The available choices of candidates and political parties in 'matter' are plenty but all alike in 'essence': distinguishable in appearance but indistinguishable in actions, leaving the voters confused but 'condemned to

Significantly, no political party has included conventional issues like the transfer of Chandigarh and Punjabi-speaking areas, water distribution and more rights to the States etc. in their manifestos, speeches and slogans. Furthermore, no major political party is firmly raising issues that glare in the face of the people as well as the State: unemployment, poor education, health and civic amenities, migration abroad, drugs, mining, corruption, law & order and urban development.

Instead, the game of party switch or candidate hunting, as a 'war' before the election 'war' has been in practice as a principle rather than an exception in this election in Punjao.

Facing the 'trust-deficit' of the people and 'self-confidence-deficit', the political class has remained engaged in a dance of party-switch and candidate-hunt-

Analysing their profiles can help to see the political parties' faces more clearly. For example, the BJP may be credited with governance and a brisk economy, but it is discredited for pro-rich and anti-small businesses, farmers, shopkeepers, urban and rural poor and religious polarisation. It is a 'crisis of plenty' where the economy of the country is being touted as the 'fifth largest in the world' yet its people have become poorer and the unemployment and prices are on the rise.

The Congress may be credited for the all-inclusive politics and the pro-farmer promise of MSP but discredited for a divided house

and ambiguous performance in the past. The AAP is credited for some concessions like free power and free bus travel for women in the State but discredited for nonperformance, inexperience and overdependence on Delhi.

The SAD is credited for its historical pro-State positions and fights but discredited for family control of the party and a pro-corporate tilt in its position.

The communists are credited for nonesty, commitment, secularism and pro-poor ideology but discredited for resource crunch to contest elections, inability to win and have much role in the Government.

The voters are confused because they are not sure whether their vote shall be for Congress, BJP, SAD or AAP after the candidate wins; they are not sure if the candidate they vote for will remain in the same party or switch to the party more beneficial to him; they are confused because they are not sure if the parties and leaders will

do what are saying. Yet they will have to choose someone. But that will happen on the day of voting. The situation is as hazy and ambiguous as the manifestos of the political parties. (The writer is a retired professor

from Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar; views are personal)

Key takeaways from ICMR's new dietary guidelines

It emphasises prioritising whole grains, adequate protein intake, limited fat consumption and daily physical activity

ndian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) jointly released a New Dietary Guideline for Indians on 7 May 2024. The comprehensive set of 17 dietary guidelines is aimed at reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as obesity, diabetes, stroke and coronary heart disease (CHD) in the Indian population. According to NIN, under the apex health research body, about 56.4% of the total diseases in India are due to unhealthy dietary habits. They also Stated that having a healthy diet and physical activity can lower the risk of CHD, hypertension (high blood pressure) and type 2 diabetes mellitus



by up to 80%. The burden of NCDs and resultant mortality is expected to increase unless massive efforts are made to prevent and control NCDs and their risk factors. The dietary guidelines for Indians (DGIs), developed by a team led by the director of NIN, Dr. Hemlata R, are evidence-based food and lifestyle-related recommendations. They are logical,

Indians and provide longterm solutions for fighting against malnutrition and having a healthy life. These guidelines are practical approaches for ensuring diet diversity to meet the requirements of essential nutrients among people of all age groups across the country. Following are some of the important and key takeaways from the DGIs: General lifestyle

To ensure a balanced diet, it is crucial to include foods from all food groups, selecting a variety that is appropriate for age, gender, physiological status and physical activity level. At least 50% of cereals consumed should be whole grains and millets, which are minimally pol-

nutrients. However, cereals should account for no more than 45% of the total caloric intake. Pulses, eggs and meat should contribute 14-15% of the calories, supplying good quality proteins and essential amino acids through natural food combinations. Avoid protein supplements for muscle mass building, as they are unnecessary if a balanced diet is maintained. Fat intake should be limited to 30% of total calories, with essential fatty acids obtained from nuts, oilseeds, milk products and seafood, which should collectively provide 10% of daily caloric intake. Include non-starchy fresh vegetables, green leafy vegetables and at least 30 grams of fruits in every meal.

flax and chia seeds to meet their B12 and n-3 PUFA needs. High-fat, high-sugar and high-salt (HFSS) foods should be avoided. Adults should engage in a minimum of 30-45 minutes of physical activity daily, while children should aim for 60 minutes. During pregnancy and lactation, maintaining healthy dietary habits and an active lifestyle is essential. Infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months, with no additional feeds, not even water. Lactating mothers should continue breastfeeding even if they have any disease unless advised otherwise by a medical profession-

For cooking and food stor-

n-3 PUFA-rich foods like coated utensils (without to address the unhealthy Teflon) are preferable. Earthen pots are the safest cookware as they are ecofriendly, require less oil and preserve nutrition. Avoid using non-stick pans at temperatures above 170 degrees and discard any damaged or broken non-stick cookware. Acidic foods should not be stored in aluminium, iron, or unlined brass/copper containers to avoid chemical reactions that could contaminate the food.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) unveiled new dietary guidelines on May 7, 2024, to combat the rising tide of non-communi-cable diseases (NCDs) in sustainable, easy to follow by ished to provide adequate Vegetarians should consume age, air-fryers and granite- India. These guidelines aim limiting fats to 30% of daily

dietary habits contributing to 56.4% of the country's disease burden. Evidence suggests that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can significantly reduce the risk of conditions like coronary heart disease, hypertension and type 2 diabetes by up to

The guidelines, crafted under the leadership of Dr Hemlata R, provide practical, sustainable and culturally appropriate recommendations to ensure a diverse diet that meets the nutritional needs of Indians of all ages. Key recommendations include balancing food groups, prioritising whole grains and millets, ensuring adequate protein intake through natural foods,

calories and including a variety of vegetables and fruits in each meal. The guidelines also emphasise avoiding high-fat, high-sugar and high-salt foods and promoting daily physical activity-30-45 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children.

Special considerations are given to pregnant and lactating women, advocating for exclusive breastfeeding for infants during the first six months. Additionally, safe cooking and food storage practices are recommended, such as using air-fryers, granite-coated utensils and earthen pots to preserve nutrition and avoid chemical contamination.

(The writer is a Consultant Celiac Dietician at AIIMS Delhi; views are personal)

Hamas rocket attack triggers air raid sirens in Tel Aviv

AP DEIR-AL-BALAH

Hamas fired a barrage of rockets from Gaza that set off air raid sirens as far away as Tel Aviv for the first time in months on Sunday in a show of resilience more than seven months into Israel's massive air, sea and ground offensive. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage in what appeared to be the first long-range rocket attack from Gaza since January. Palestinian militants have continued to sporadically fire rockets and mortar rounds at communities along the Gaza border since

Hamas' military wing claimed the attack, and rocket launches could be heard in central Gaza. The Israeli military said eight projectiles crossed into Israel after being launched from the area of the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where Israeli forces

recently launched an incursion. allowed hundreds of trucks to It said "a number" of the projec-

tiles were intercepted. Earlier, aid trucks had entered Gaza from southern Israel through a new agreement to bypass the Rafah crossing with Egypt after Israeli forces seized the Palestinian side of it earlier this month. But it was unclear if humanitarian groups would be able to access the aid because of ongoing fighting in the area. Egypt refuses to reopen its side of the Rafah crossing until control of the Gaza side is handed back to Palestinians. It agreed to temporarily divert traffic through Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing, Gaza's main cargo terminal, after a call between US President Joe Biden and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi. But that crossing has been largely inaccessible because of fighting linked to Israel's offensive in the nearby city of Rafah. Israel says it has

enter, but United Nations agencies say it is usually too dangerous to retrieve the aid on the other side

The war between Israel and Hamas, now in its eighth month, has killed nearly 36,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and fighters in its count. Around 80% of the population's 2.3 million people have fled their homes, severe hunger is wide-spread and UN officials say parts of the territory are experiencing famine

Hamas triggered the war with its Oct 7 attack into Israel, in which Palestinian militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and seized some 250 hostages. Hamas is still holding some 100 hostages and the remains of around 30 others after most of the rest were released during a cease-fire last

SOUTHERN GAZA LARGE-LY CUT OFF FROM AID Egypt's state-run Al-Qahera TV aired footage of what it said were trucks entering Gaza through

Kerem Shalom.

Khaled Zayed, head of the Egyptian Red Crescent in the Sinai Peninsula, which handles the delivery of aid from the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing, said 200 aid trucks and four fuel trucks are scheduled to be sent to Kerem Shalom on Sunday. It was not immediately clear if

the UN was able to retrieve the

aid from the Gaza side. Southern Gaza has been largely cut off from aid since Israel launched what it says is a limited incursion into Rafah on May 6. Since then, over 1 million Palestinians have fled the city, with most having already been displaced from other parts of the besieged territory.

Sunak plans mandatory National Service for youth in poll pledge

In one of his first major elec-Ition pledge announcements on Sunday, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he will introduce a "bold new" form of mandatory National Service for young people if the Conservatives win another five-year term in the July 4 polls.The British Indian leader said his plan would see 18-yearolds given the choice of a fulltime military placement for 12 months or a scheme to volunteer for one weekend a month for a year. The military placement would be selective, with tests used to decide eligibility, and involve working with the armed forces or in cyber

"We have so much to be proud of in Britain but one of the problems in our society is that we have generations of young people who don't have the opportunities they deserve,"



said Sunak in a campaign video to announce this new Tory proposal. "Britain today faces a future that is more dangerous and more divided. There's no doubt how democratic values are under threat; that is why we will introduce a bold new model of National Service for 18 year olds to be spent either in a competitive full-time military commission over 12

per month volunteering in roles within the community, like delivering prescriptions and food to infirm people or in

search and rescue," he said. The Tory leader said this would enable young people to gain valuable skills, make the UK more secure and build a stronger national culture.

'This ambition benefits our country and our young people alike," he said, pointing to Sweden where 80 per cent of young people completing National Service say they recommend it to their friends. 'Uncertain times call for a clear plan and bold action to charter course to a better future.

Our plan will ensure new generations and our country meet the challenges of an uncertain world," he added. While he took aim at the

Opposition to say they lack such a "clear plan", the Keir

back against the proposal. "This is another desperate GBP

2.5 billion unfunded commitment from a Tory party which already crashed the economy, sending mortgages rocketing, and now they're spoiling for

This is not a plan – it's a review which could cost billions and is only needed because the Tories hollowed out the Armed Forces to their smallest size since Napoleon," the Labour Party said in a statement. Questioned on how the Tory plan would be enforced, UK Home Secretary James Cleverly told 'Sky News' that the military option would be selective.

There's going to be no criminal sanctions, nobody's going to jail over this," he clarified, adding that nobody will be compelled to do the military element but those who do will be paid and those who choose to volunteer will not be paid.

Norway grants diplomatic recognition to Palestinian prime minister

Brussels (AP): Norway on Sunday handed over diplomatic papers to the Palestinian prime minister in the latest step toward recognising a Palestinian state, a largely symbolic move that has infuriated Israel. Ireland and Spain made a concerted pledge with Norway to recognise a Palestinian state, a historic move that increases Israel's isolation more than seven months into its grinding war against Hamas in Gaza.

The handover of papers by Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide to the prime minister was made in Brussels, where Mohammad Mustafa is also meeting with foreign ministers of European Union nations and high-level EU officials on Monday to drum up support for the Palestinians. Norway itself is not part of the

The diplomatic move by the three nations was a welcome boost of support for Palestinian officials who have sought for decades to establish a statehood in east Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — territories Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war and still controls. The formal recognition by which all have a record of friendly ties with both the Israelis and the Palestinians, while long advocating for a Palestinian state — is planned for Tuesday. Some 140 countries - more than two-thirds of the United Nations — recognise a

Palestinian state but a majority of the 27 EU nations still do not. Several have said they would recognise it when the conditions are right.
The EU, the United States and Britain, among others, back the

idea of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel but say it should come as part of a negotiated settlement. Belgium, which holds the EU presidency, has said that first the Israeli hostages held by Hamas need to be freed and the fighting in Gaza must end.

Over 670 dead in PNG landslide: Reports

AP MELBOURNE

International $T_{\text{Organisation for Migration}}^{\text{he}}$ on Sunday increased its estimate of the death toll from a massive landslide in Papua New Guinea to more than 670 as emergency responders and traumatized relatives gave up hope that any survivors will now be found. Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the UN migration agency's mission in the South Pacific island nation, said the revised death toll was based on calculations by Yambali village and Enga provincial officials that more than 150 homes had been buried by Friday's landslide. The previous estimate had been 60 homes. "They are estimating that more than 670 people (are) under the soil at the moment," Aktoprak told The Associated Press.Local officials had initially put the death toll on Friday at 100 or more. Only five bodies and a leg of a sixth victim had been



recovered by Sunday, when an excavator donated by a local builder became the first piece of mechanical earth-moving equipment to join the recovery effort.Relief crews were moving survivors to safer ground on Sunday as tons of unstable

earth and tribal warfare, which is rife in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, threatened the rescue effort.Around 250 additional houses have been condemned since the landslide because of still-shifting ground, leaving an estimated 1,250 peo-

ple homeless, officials said. The national government meanwhile is considering whether it needs to officially request more international support.Crews have given up hope of finding survivors under earth and rubble 6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet)

People are coming to terms with this so there is a serious level of grieving and mourning," Aktoprak said.He said the new estimated death toll was "not solid" because it was based on the average size of the region's families per house-hold. He would not speculate on the possibility that the actual toll could be higher. "It is difficult to say. We want to be quite realistic," Aktoprak said. "We do not want to come

We do not want to come up with any figures that would inflate the reality.

Government authorities were establishing evacuation centers on safer ground on either side of the massive swath of debris that covers an area the size of three to four football

fields and has cut the main highway through the province. Beside the blocked highway, convoys that have transported food, water and other essential supplies since Saturday to the devastated village 60 kilometers (35 miles) from the provincial capital, Wabag, have faced risks related to tribal fighting in Tambitanis village, about halfway along the route. Papua New Guinea soldiers were providing security for the convoys. Eight locals were killed in a clash between two rival clans on Saturday in a longstanding dispute unrelated to the landslide. Around 30 homes and five retail businesses were burned down in the fighting, local officials said.

Aktoprak said he did not expect tribal combatants would target the convoys but noted that opportunistic criminals might take advantage of the mayhem to do so.

"This could basically end up in carjacking or robbery," Aktoprak said.

Macron begins first state visit to Germany

Emmanuel Macron arrived in Germany on Sunday for the first state visit by a French head of state in 24 years, a three-day trip meant to underline the strong ties between the European Union's traditional leading powers.

The visit was originally meant to take place last July but was postponed at the last minute due to rioting in France following the killing of a 17-year-old by police. While Macron is a frequent vis-

itor to Germany as Paris and Berlin try to coordinate their positions on EU and foreign policy, this is the first state visit with full pomp since Jacques Chirac came in 2000. Macron and his wife, Brigitte, are being hosted by Germany's largely ceremonial president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The visit comes as Germany celebrates the 75th anniversary of its post-World War II constitution.



Steinmeier is holding a state banquet for Macron at his Bellevue palace in Berlin on Sunday evening before the two presidents travel on Monday to the eastern city of Dresden, where Macron will make a speech, and on Tuesday to Muenster in western Germany. The state visit will be followed later Tuesday by a meeting between Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and ministers from both countries at a government guest house outside Berlin.

'Yemen's Houthis freed over 100 war prisoners' Cairo (AP): The Iranian-backed One of the released detainees

Houthis rebels in Yemen on with health issues was trans-Sunday released more than 100 ferred in an ambulance to his war prisoners linked to the hometown inside Yemen, the the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

The unilateral release came more than a year after Yemen's warring sides freed more than 800 prisoners in a major exchange in the country in April last year.

The release of 113 prisoners took place Sunday morning in the Houthi-held capital of Sanaa, the Red Cross said in a statement, adding that the released detainees were among those the ICRC visited and assisted regularly in their detention in the Yemeni capital.

"We hope this paves the way for further releases, bringing comfort to families eagerly anticipating reunification with their loved ones," said Daphnee Maret, the ICRC's head of delegation in Yemen.

The release was delayed by a day because of apparent logistical reasons, said Abdul-Qader al-Murtaza, a Houthi official in charge of prisoner exchange

Thousands of people are still believed to be held as prisoners of war since the conflict erupted in 2014, with others missing. The Red Cross viewed Sunday's releases as a "positive step" to revive prisoner exchange negotiations. "We are ready to play our role as a neutral intermediary in facilitating the release, transfer, and repatriation of detainees," it said. Yemen was plunged into a devastating conflict when the Houthis descend ed from their northern stronghold and seized Sanaa and much of northern Yemen, forcing the government into exile.

'At least 5 die after severe weather sweeps across Texas, Oklahoma'

AP ■ OKALHAMA CITY

A Texas sheriff says at least powerful storms tore through a rural community, obliterating homes and leaving thousands of people without power on Sunday.

Cooke County Sheriff Ray Sappington told The Associated Press that the victims included three family members who were found in one home near Valley View, a rural community near the border with Öklahoma.

The destructive storms began Saturday night. Officials said a tornado north of Dallas overturned heavy recreational vehicles, shut down an interstate and caused extensive damage to a highway travel center where drivers had rushed to take shelter.

"It took some time to get back in there because of all the



damage with the power lines, and trees were down. It was kind of a monumental task just to get back to where they were," Sappington told Dallas television station WFAA.

Forecasters had issued tornado and severe thunder storm warnings for parts of both

states, as some heat records were broken during the day in South Texas and residents received triple-digit temperature warnings over the long holiday weekend.

A tornado crossed into northern Denton County in Texas late Saturday and overturned traffic on Interstate 35, Denton County Community Relations statement.

The tornado was confirmed near Valley View, moving east at 40 mph (64 kph), prompting the National Weather Service to issue a tornado warning for northern Denton County, Cobb said.

The storm damaged homes, overturned motorhomes and knocked down power lines and trees throughout the area including points in Sanger, Pilot Point, Ray Roberts Lake and Isle du Bois State Park, Cobb said.

People who suffered injuries in the storm were transported to area hospitals by ground and air ambulances, but the number of injuries in the county was not immediately known. Cobb said, while a shelter was opened in Sanger.

'Two weeks of fighting in Sudan killed over 100'

Cairo(AP): More than two weeks of fighting between Sudan's military and a notorious paramilitary group over a Darfur region killed at least 123 people, an international aid group said Sunday. The fighting in el-Fasher, the provincial capital of North Darfur province, also wounded more than 930 people in the same period, Doctors without Borders said.

This is a sign of the violent intensity of the fighting," the group said. "We urge the warring parties to do more to protect civilians."

Clashes between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces escalated earlier this month in the city, forcing thousands of people to flee their homes, according to

the United Nations. El-Fasher has become the center of the conflict between the military and the RSF, which is

Key witness revelations: Inside testimonies of Trump's Hush money trial lawyer, Michael Cohen, as well

AP NEW YORK

fter 22 witnesses, including Aa porn actor, tabloid publisher and White House insiders, testimony is over at Donald Trump's criminal trial in New York. Prosecutors called 20 witnesses. The defence called just two. Trump decided not to testify on his own behalf. The trial now shifts to closing arguments, scheduled for

Tuesday. After that, it will be up to 12 jurors to decide whether prosecutors have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Trump falsified his company's business records as part of a broader effort to keep stories about marital infidelity from becoming public during his 2016 presidential campaign. He has pleaded not guilty and denies

any wrongdoing. A conviction could come down to how the jurors interpret the testimony and which witnesses they find credible. The jury must be unanimous. The records involved include 11 checks sent to Trump's former

as invoices and company ledger entries related to those pay-

Here's a look at key trial witnesses and what they had to

say: STORMY DANIELS

As Trump sat feet away, the porn actor, writer and director, gave a detailed and at times graphic account of a sexual encounter she says she had with Trump in Nevada in 2006. After they met at a celebrity golf tournament, she said, Trump invited her to dinner but then engaged her in conversation in his hotel room and startled her by stripping to his underwear while she was in the bathroom.

"I felt the room spin in slow motion. I felt the blood basicalleave my hands and my feet," Daniels testified. "I just thought, Oh, my God, what did I misread to get here?' Because the intention was pretty clear, somebody stripped down in their underwear and posing on the bed, like waiting for you." Daniels said Trump did not

physically threaten her, but president.

"my own insecurities in that moment kept me from saying no". Daniels said she kept in touch with Trump for about a year in hopes of appearing on his TV show "The Apprentice",

but it never happened.

Daniels spoke about accepting USD 15,000 for a magazine interview in 2011. The story was not printed at the time but ended up on a gossip website without her consent. Her lawyer, in consultation with Cohen, complained and had the story taken down. In 2016, Daniels authorised her

manager to shop her story again but found little interest until the release of the infamous "Access Hollywood' recording of Trump boasting about grabbing women's genitals without their permission. Daniels told the jury she accepted USD 130,000 from Cohen in the final weeks of the election in exchange for a legal agreement to keep the claim to herself. Trump's lawyers grilled Daniels about her motivation, eliciting testimony that she hates the former Republican

DAVID PECKER

A longtime Trump friend, Pecker was the publisher of the National Enquirer and chief executive of its parent company, American Media Inc, during the 2016 presidential campaign. Pecker told the jury he agreed to be the "eyes and ears" of Trump's campaign, looking out for damaging stories so they could be suppressed. He said he agreed to the role and to a plan to publish positive stories about Trump and negative stories about his opponents — at an August 2015 meeting with Trump and

"If there were any rumours in the marketplace about Mr Trump or his family or any negative stories that were coming out or anything that I heard overall," Pecker said, "I would call Michael Cohen KEITH DAVIDSON

A lawyer known for repre-

senting people trying to sell

celebrity sex tapes or other embarrassing information,

Davidson negotiated the hush

money deals for McDougal and Daniels. He gave jurors an inside look at the negotiations and helped corroborate Pecker's testimony. At first, Davidson said, the National Enquirer was not interested in acquiring McDougal's story, saying she "lacked documentary evidence"

But the tabloid eventually bought it at Pecker's behest. Davidson said he understood it would never be published because of "an unspoken understanding that there was an affiliation" between Pecker and Trump and that the National Enquirer would not run the story "because it would hurt Donald Trump".

MICHAEL COHEN

Cohen, a flawed but vital prosecution witness, testified about working with the National Enquirer to suppress negative stories about Trump. Cohen insisted he was working at Trump's direction when the lawyer helped orchestrate the payments to McDougal and Daniels. Cohen testified that he kept the detail-oriented Trump

updated on the payoffs. Regarding the decision to pay Daniels, Cohen said Trump felt it was best to buy her silence. 'He stated to me that he had spoken to some friends, some individuals, very smart people, and that it's \$130,000. You're like a billionaire. Just pay it. There is no reason to keep this thing out there. So do it," Cohen said. "And he expressed to me: Just do it. Go meet up with Allen Weisselberg and figure this whole thing out," Cohen said, referring to the Trump Organisation's chief financial officer at the time. Testifying over the course of four days, Cohen told the jury he sought Trump's approval for the Daniels payment because 'everything required Mr

Trump's sign-off. On top of that, I wanted the money back". When it briefly looked like the deal with Daniels might fall apart, Cohen said Trump got really angry with me," saying, "I thought you took care of

HOPE HICKS

Trump's former campaign and White House communications

director, Hicks testified about the frenetic days after the "Access Hollywood" leak as she and Trump's political advisers tried to contain the fallout. Hicks said she was "very concerned" about the impact of the tape and she subsequently asked Cohen to chase down a rumour about another potentially damaging recording, which turned out not to exist. Hicks said after The Wall Street Journal published its article detailing McDougal's hush money deal, Trump was concerned about how his wife Melania, would take it. ROBERT COSTELLO Trump's lawyers called Costello,

an attorney and ex-federal prosecutor, as their primary witness in a terse defense case aimed at undermining Cohen's credibility.

After the FBI raided Cohen's home and office in 2018, Costello offered to become his lawyer. He told the jury that during their first meeting, Cohen paced anxiously, saying his life, and his family's life, had

been "shattered". "He said: I

really want you to explain to me what my options are. What's my escape route?" Costello said. Costello said Cohen also insisted that he had made the Daniels deal on his own, that Trump "knew nothing" about it, and that Cohen had no incriminating information about Trump he could offer to federal prosecutors.

JEFFREY MCCONNEY The Trump Organisation's former controller testified about

working with Weisselberg to set up payments to Cohen, including reimbursement for the UŠD 130,000 payment to Daniels, a bonus and money for

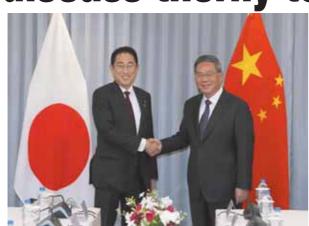
DEBORAH TARASOFF

The Trump Organisation's accounts payable supervisor testified about processing the payments to Cohen, including receiving checks that Trump had signed at the White House. Under defense questioning, she acknowledged permission to cut Cohen's checks came not from Trump himself, but from Weisselberg and McConney.

S Korean, Chinese and Japanese leaders discuss thorny topics

The Japanese and South Korean leaders raised sensitive topics like Taiwan, North Korea and the South China Sea as well as ways to boost cooperation when they individually met China's premier Sunday on the eve of a fuller trilateral

It was unclear how serious discussions the three leaders had on those thorny issues, which are not among the official agenda items for Monday's three-way gathering in Seoul, the first of its kind in more than four years. No major announcement is expected from the meeting, but observers say that just resuming the highest-level talks among the three Northeast Asian neighbors is a good sign and suggests they are intent on improving relations. Their trilateral meeting was supposed to happen annually but it had stalled since the last one in December 2019 because of the



COVID-19 pandemic and complex ties among the three

After meeting Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters that he expressed serious concerns about the situations in the South China Sea, Hong Kong and China's northwestern Xinjiang region. He said Japan is closely monitoring developments on self-governed Taiwan. He referred to China's military assertiveness in the South China Sea, clampdowns of pro-democracy movements in Hong Kong and human rights abuses against minorities in Xinjiang. Last week, China also launched a large military exercise around Taiwan to show its anger over the inauguration of the island's new president who refuses to

accept its insistence that Taiwan

is part of China. During a sep-arate meeting with Li, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, on his part, asked China, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, to contribute to promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula, while speaking about North Korea's nuclear program and its deepening military ties with Russia, according to Yoon's office. Yoon's office said Yoon and Kishida in their separate meeting expressed worries about North Korea's nuclear program and agreed to strengthen their cooperation with the United

South Korea, Japan and the U.S. have long urged China -North Korea's major ally and economic pipeline — to use its leverage to persuade the North to abandon its nuclear ambitions. But China is suspected of avoiding fully enforcing U.N. sanctions on North Korea and sending clandestine aid shipments to help its impoverished neighbor stay afloat.

Bangladesh evacuates over 8 lakh as cyclone Remal approaches

Over 800,000 people from vulnerable areas have been evacuated to shelters on Sunday as Bangladesh prepares for severe cyclonic storm 'Remal' forecast to make landfall by midnight with a potential high tidal surge and heavy rainfall in the country's coastal districts of Satkhira and Cox's Bazar. Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) said Remal would make landfall between 6:00 pm and midnight. The Met Office issued "great danger signal" no 10 on a scale of 10 for southwestern greater Barisal and its shoals and great danger signal no nine for the southeastern coastlines including the port city of Chattogram

'Under the peripheral effect of the severe cyclone and steep pressure gradient, the low-lying areas of the coastal districts...and their offshore islands and chars are likely to be inundated by a wind-driven surge of 08-12 feet height above normal astronomical tide," the BSS news agency reported, citing the latest met office bulletin.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Md Mohibur Rahman told a press briefing that over eight lakh people were evacuated to cyclone centres and other safer places. "We have taken all necessary measures on an urgent basis to tackle the severe cyclonic storm...all relevant organisations have been asked to work in a coordinated manner to face the cyclone," he said. The minister said that the authorities have launched an intensified evacuation campaign to take all vulnerable people to safety as the met office asked Payra and Mongla ports to hoist great danger sig-nal number 10, while it issued nine for Cox's Bazar and Chattogram ports this morning. We are hoping that we will be able to bring all vulnerable people living in 19 districts to the cyclone centres before the landfall of the cyclone," he said. Leaves of officials of all ministries, divisions and subordinate

tackle the possible aftermath of Cyclone Remal, the Daily Star newspaper reported.

The Chattogram Port Authority has suspended all operations in the port as cyclone Remal heads towards the coast, it said.

According to the Dhaka Tribune newspaper, flight operations at the Chittagong airport have been suspended for eight hours. National carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines announced the suspension of its flights to Cox's Bazar for Sunday due to Cyclonic storm Remal. Besides, flights of BG395 and BG391 to Kolkata will remain suspended today and tomorrow, respectively, said Bosra Islam, general manager of the Public Relations Wing of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, local media reported.

According to a BMD special news bulletin issued at noon on Sunday, Remal was located 335 km southwest of the Chattogram maritime port, 315 km southwest of the Cox's Bazar port, 220 km south of the Mongla port and 200 km south

of the Payra port.
"Wind speed is 90-120kmph within 62km of the cyclone centre, as a result of which there is a risk tidal surge of up to 12 feet along the coast," an official

meteorologist said. "A large-scale evacuation started after the Met Office issued danger signal number 10 and nine. All vulnerable people are presumed to be moved to safer places at the shortest possible time," Disaster Management Director General Mizanur Rahman was quoted as saying

Alongside evacuation of the people, domestic animals have been taken to designated cyclone shelters, he said, adding that a total of 8,464 cyclone shelters, including Mujib Kella, have been kept ready to provide refuge to the people living in 19 coastal districts, which might be affected by the cyclone Remal Sufficient food has been stocked for the people living in the cyclone centres alongside the people of 19 coastal districts,

Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Some have been attacked in

recent years by militants who

accuse them of exploiting

Pakistan has repeatedly urged

the Afghan Taliban to take action against the TTP fight-

ers who are using Afghan soil

to attack Pakistan. However,

Afghanistan has shown reluc-

tance to take action against

the rebels, who in the past fought shoulder-to-shoulder

with them against the NATO

Pakistan had provided support to the Afghan Taliban

with the hope that after com-

mineral resources.

12 hurt after **Qatar Airways** plane hits turbulence

London (AP): Twelve people were injured when a Oatar Airways plane flying from Doha to Dublin on Sunday hit turbulence, airport authorities said Dublin Airport said in a statement that flight QR017, a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, landed safely as scheduled before 1 pm (1200 GMT). It said that upon landing the aircraft was met by emergency services, including airport police and the fire and rescue department, "due to six passengers and six crew... reporting injuries after the aircraft experi enced turbulence while airborne over Turkey." Qatar Airways said in a statement that "a small number of passengers and crew sustained minor injuries in flight and are now receiving medical attention". The incident comes five days after a British man died of a suspected heart attack and dozens of people were injured when a Singapore Airlines flight from London hit severe turbulence. While turbulence-related fatalities are rare, injuries have piled up over the years.

Passengers of turbulence-hit SIA flight | Pak asks Af to hand over TTP terrorists inflicted psychological scars: Experts

The extreme turbulence on Singapore Airlines (SIA) flight SQ321, which left one person dead from a suspected heart attack and dozens injured, has inflicted psychological scars on the passengers, according to experts. One passenger, describing the ordeal as "quite scary", declared that he may not fly again for a while. Another said he threw up after waking up on the plane floor, following the turbulence, to the sound of people crying and the sight of blood, The Straits Times newspaper reported on Sunday

The aircraft, which left London's Heathrow Airport for Singapore on May 21, experienced extreme turbulence for 62 seconds over the Irrawaddy Basin around 10 hours after departure. It was then diverted to Thailand's Suvarnabhumi Airport for an

emergency landing.
The pilot diverted the plane carrying 211 passengers and 18 crew members to Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport after before making an emergency

Mental health professional Amanda Oh, founder of Budding Space, said a traumatic experience can make it difficult for a person to understand or process a situation, much like "an indigestion in the mind".

"For such a unique experience as what the passengers had to go through, it would be an extremely overwhelming experience for anybody," Dr Oh said, adding, this could cause psychological pain and physiological distress. Γhose who were on board the flight could experience mental health issues, including acute stress disorder (ASD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anxiety disorders.

The passengers on SQ321 included 41 Singaporeans, with the remaining 170 from countries such as Australia, India, Malaysia, New Zealand and

The dead passenger has been identified as a 73-year-old Briton, Geoff Kitchen. He was a retired insurance professional and musical theatre director at the time of his death, according to British media reports.

A total of 41 passengers remain hospitalised across three hospi-tals in Bangkok, according to the latest update from Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital on Sunday. Dr Annabelle Chow - the principal clinical psychologist at Annabelle Psychology - said that up to a month after the incident, those affected may experience ASD, which includes symptoms such as recurrent and involuntary flashbacks, appetite and sleep changes, as well as memory gaps.

However, they may be diagnosed with PTSD instead if symptoms persist past the one-month mark. PTSD has been known to affect a person's social functioning and physical well-being, said

One may also develop an anxiety disorder, and experience panic attacks and physiological responses like a rapid heartbeat, sweating and nausea. Dr Oh pointed out that the incident

ly traumatic" for the loved ones of those on board SO321, who could develop similar reactions despite not having been on the plane. She gave reassurance, however, that with adequate support, "trauma's impact on the brain is reversible'

To increase their feelings of perceived safety, passengers should maintain a healthy lifestyle and take part in activities involving bilateral stimulation like walking and swimming, which would help the mind process the traumatic experience better, said Dr Oh. Family members can also play their part by being accommodating during this period of time. "For example, if (the traumatised individuals) want to cry or talk about it, let them do that. Let them choose their way to grieve and process the experience in a way that they are comfortable with rather than hurrying them along that journey," said Dr Oh, stressing that a sense of autonomy and control would improve their sense of perceived safety

involved in attack on Chinese workers

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Sunday asked Afghanistan's Taliban government to hand over banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) terrorists involved in a deadly attack on Chinese workers to Islamabad, according to a media report.

Five Chinese were among six persons killed when an explosives-packed vehicle rammed into their bus in the troubled province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in March, in the second suicide attack on the personnel working on the China-backed hydropower project since 2021.

The Chinese were working on the Dasu hydropower project, which is about 300 km to the north of Islamabad. The 4,320 MW project is being constructed by China Gezhouba with funding from the World

"Whether Afghanistan try the terrorists (in the court of law) or not, it should hand over the

militants to Pakistan," Interior Minister Mohsin Nagyi said while addressing a joint press conference flanked by officials of the National Counter-Terrorism Authority.

In view of the investigation report, the minister said that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) operated the terror attack on Chinese citizens from inside Afghanistan, Geo TV reported.

The Economic Coordi-nation Committee (ECC) Pakistan's Cabinet Thursday decided to pay USD 2.58 million to the families of Chinese workers killed in the The approval of compensation

for five Chinese workers of China Gezhouba Group (contractor) was approved at the rate of USD 5,16,000 per head, as a goodwill gesture. Thousands of Chinese person-

out under the aegis of the USD 60 billion China-

with the TTP. The talks failed nel are working in Pakistan on several projects being carried and the TTP launched a ruth-

ing to power, they would take action against elements using the Afghan territory to launch attacks on Pakistan. But its hopes floundered when the Afghan Taliban refused to take any action and instead asked Pakistan to hold talks

less campaign of terror against

Kharkiv attack death toll rises **Zelenskyy warns of Russian troop movements**

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned Sunday that Russia is preparing to intensify its offensive along Ukraine's northern border, as the death toll rose to 14 in an aerial bomb attack on a large construction supplies store in the city of Kharkiv. The bombing of Kharkiv on Saturday afternoon also left 43 injured and 16 missing, Kharkiv Governor Oleh Syniehubov said. In a video statement from Kharkiv, Zelenskyy said that Russia is preparing offensive actions 90 km (55 miles) northwest of Ukraine's second largest city. He said that Russians "gather another group of troops near our border'

He did not specify where the troops are being assembled, but Ukrainian officials have expressed strong concern about the Sumy region. Both Kharkiv city and Sumy with about 250,000 people are within about 25 km (15 miles) of the Russian border. Moscow's troops have in recent weeks captured villages in the Kharkiv area as part of a broad push, and analysts say they may be trying to get within artillery range of the city. Ukrainian authorities have evacuated more than 11,000 people from the region since the start of the offensive on May

Russian forces are carrying out offensive attacks across the 1,000-km (620-mile) front line, with pitched bat-tles in the Chasiv Yar direction of the Donetsk region, where "the intensity of the hostilities is quite high" according to a statement from Ukraine's General Staff. 'The defence forces are taking measures to prevent the advance of the enemy," the

Russia launched wide missile and drone attacks on much of

statement said.

Ukraine during the night. Ukrainian officials said air defence units intercepted 31 Shahed drones and 12 cruise missiles launched by Russia in the Mykolaiv, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, Zaporizhzhia, Khmelnytskyi, Kirovohrad, Vinnytsia and Chernihiv regions. In total Russia launched 14 missiles and more than three dozen drones, according to a statement from Ukraine's air force. It was not clear what damage may have been caused by missiles and drones that were not shot down. The governor of Russia's Belgorod region, which lies across the border from Ukraine, said four people were injured in Ukrainian attacks during the night. The Russian Defence Ministry said seven drones were shot down over the Kursk region and three over Oryol, both of which are to the north of

'B'desh will seek Interpol's help to bring back lawmaker's murder mastermind'

Dhaka (PTI): Bangladesh will seek help from Interpol to bring back the fugitive "mastermind" of the brutal killing of the ruling party lawmaker Anwarul Azim Anar, who was found murdered in Kolkata last week, a top official said here on Sunday

Dhaka Metropolitan Police's (DMP) Detective Branch (DB) chief Mohammad Harun-or-Rashid made the remarks while talking to reporters at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Sunday just before leaving for Kolkata to investigate the murder case.

Anar, a three-time parliamentarian from the Jhenaidah-4 segment in Bangladesh and also the president of Awami League's Kaliganj sub-district unit left Dhaka on May 12 to undergo medical treatment at Kolkata, from where he went missing the very next day. Search for him began after

Gopal Biswas, a resident of Baranagar in north Kolkata and an acquaintance of the Bangladeshi politician, filed a complaint with the local police on May 18.

According to the Kolkata police, circumstantial evidence indicated that the MP was first strangled and killed after which his body was chopped into pieces and dumped in different areas. Traces of his body or body parts are yet to be found.

"We will seek help from Interpol to bring back Akhtaruzzaman Shaheen, the fugitive "master mind" of Jhenaidah-4 MP Anwarul Azim Anar murder, said Harun, who is also additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Harun also said that an application will be submitted through the inspector general of police for the repatriation of Shaheen, a childhood friend of the slain lawmaker.

Chile accuses ex-official, firefighter of causing fire that killed 137

AP SANTIAGO

A Chilean judge on Saturday ordered a volunteer firefighter and a former forestry official detained for allegedly planning and causing a mammoth forest fire in the Valparaiso region that caused 137 deaths and made 16,000 people homeless in February. The court in Valparaiso ruled the two men, who were arrested Friday, could be held for 180 days while they are investigat-

The chief prosecutor in the case, Osvaldo Ossandon, told journalists that the main suspect is Francisco Mondaca, a 22-year-old volunteer firefighter in Valparaiso who is accused of physically starting the fire. He said flares and fireworks were found in Mondaça's vehi-

The other suspect was identified as Franco Pinto, a former employee of the National Forest Corporation. He is accused of planning the crime.



The regional prosecutor for Valparaiso, Claudia Perivancich, said investigators have evidence the two men agreed "in advance to carry out conduct of this type when the weather conditions were adequate." Prosecutors said that according to Mondaca's testimony, there was an economic motive behind the plot — providing more work in fighting fires. They said they had not ruled out the possibility of more people being involved.

The commander of the Valparaiso Fire Department, Vicente Maggiolo, said, "We are very dismayed by the situation." Maggiolo called it an isolated incident and said it should not tarnish the work of the fire department. "We have been saving lives for more than 170 years," he told TVN.

Christian Little, executive director of the forestry department, described the detention of a former official as "a pain" for the agency.

Renewed flash floods due to rains kill at least 15 in Afghanistan

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

 $R^{
m enewed}$ heavy rains have triggered more flash floods in Afghanistan, killing at least 15 people, including 10 mem-bers of the same family in the northeast, officials said Sunday.

The unusually heavy seasonal rains have been wreaking havoc on multiple parts of the country, killing hundreds of people and destroying property and crops. The UN food agency warned that survivors were unable to make a living. The floods Saturday night hit northeastern Badakhshan and northern Baghlan provinces, with the latter already having suffered the brunt of the rains earlier this month. The family — a set of parents and their



eight children — was reported cue teams were only able to dead in Faizabad, the capital of recover the mother's body. Badakhshan, said Mohammad Akram Akbari, director of the provincial natural disaster management department in the province, adding that res-

In Baghlan province, Edayatullah Hamdard, provincial director of Natural Disaster

Management, said at least 40

houses were destroyed in Doshi

district, and several people have died but was unable to provide further details.

However, a local official speaking on condition of anonymity as he wasn't authorised to talk to the press reported that five bodies have so far been found in the province and rescue teams ere looking for more.

Earlier, the World Food Program said the exceptionally heavy rains in Afghanistan had killed more than 300 people and destroyed thousands of houses, mostly in the northern province of Baghlan on May 10 and May 11. Survivors have been left with no home, no land, and no source of livelihood, WFP said.



Bikers attend a motorcycle rally marking a traditional spring's motorcycle festival riding along the center of Moscow, with the famous building of Russian Foreign Ministry

India's Q4 GDP likely to have grown at 6.1-6.7 per cent: Economists

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's GDP in the fourth quarter of financial year 2023-24 is expected to have grown within the range of 6.1-6.7 per cent, lower than over 8 per cent rate recorded in the previous three quarters, according to projections by various economists.

The GDP numbers for the fourth quarter (January-March 2024) and the provisional estimates for the 2023-24 fiscal year are scheduled to be released by the government on May 31.

According to economists, the expected growth in 2023-24 fiscal is estimated to be in the range of 7.6-7.8 per cent.

The Indian economy grew 8.2 per cent in the June quarter, 8.1 per cent in the September quarter and 8.4 per cent in the December quarter of 2023-24.

Economist Upasna Bhardwaj said high frequency data suggests robust growth across the board. Also, trade and hotels have held up in the fourth quarter.

"Manufacturing activities have also been good, and construction linked and investment segments should be doing better, but agriculture sector growth could be a laggard and see contraction during the quarter. We are expecting 6.1 per cent GDP growth for the fourth quarter and as a result, the full-year number for GDP growth should be close to 7.6 per cent," Bhardwaj said.

India's GDP expanded 6.1 per cent in the March quarter of 2022-23 fiscal, as per May 31, 2023 estimates. The growth for full fiscal 2022-23 was 7 per cent.

"We are looking at some moderation in economic activity in the services segment and also on the industrial side across the



board. That is the reason why Gross Value Added (GVA) numbers are expected at 5.7 per cent for the fourth quarter, while

6.1 per cent is GDP number," she added. GDP is the total value of goods and services produced in a given period, while GVA is GDP

minus net taxes (gross tax collection minus subsidy). As far as the current fiscal (2024-

25) is concerned, Kotak Mahindra Bank expects growth to be 6.6 per cent but with an upward bias. Bhardwaj said rural consumption is likely to pick up pace, but exports growth could be impacted in the second half of the current

"At the moment, exports have held up pretty well. We haven't seen too much of an impact of any global disruptions of demand on exports. But we do expect there will be some impact of that going ahead. That is one place where we expect growth to take a hit," she said.

The rural consumption demand is going to pick up pace, while we might see some saturation in the urban demand side. Hence, there could be some positive impact on consumption in the current fiscal, Bhardwai said.

EY India Chief Policy Advisor DK Srivastava said both domestic and international institutions are forecasting a robust growth of around 7 per cent for India in the fiscal year 2025.

"It is anticipated that the GDP growth in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2024 might surpass 6.5 per cent, leading to an annual growth close to 7.8 per cent as projected by the IMF," Srivastava

Another rating agency, India Ratings & Research expects the country's GDP growth rate for the March quarter at 6.2 per cent for

Domestic rating agency ICRA on Tuesday projected India's GDP growth to moderate to a fourquarter low of 6.7 per cent in March quarter of 2023-24 fiscal. For the full 2023-24 fiscal, ICRA estimates GDP growth to come in at 7.8 per cent.



India in trade deficit with nine trading partners in 2023-24

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has recorded a trade deficit, the difference between imports and exports, with nine of its top 10 trading partners, including China, Russia, Singapore, and Korea, in 2023-24, according to official data.

The data also showed that the deficit with China, Russia, Korea, and Hong Kong increased in the last fiscal compared to 2022-23, while the trade gap with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Russia,

Indonesia, and Iraq narrowed. The trade deficit with China rose to USD 85 billion, Russia to USD 57.2 billion, Korea to USD 14.71 billion and Hong Kong to USD 12.2 billion in 2023-24 against USD 83.2 billion, USD 43 billion, USD 14.57 billion and USD

8.38 billion, respectively, in 2022-23. China has emerged as India's largest trading partner with USD 118.4 billion of two-way commerce in 2023-24, edging past the US.

The bilateral trade between India and the US stood at USD 118.28 billion in 2023-24. Washington was the top trading partner of New Delhi during 2021-22 and 2022-23.

India has a free trade agreement with four of its top trading partners - Singapore, the UAE, Korea and Indonesia (as part of the Asian bloc). India has a trade surplus of USD 36.74 billion with the US in 2023-24. America is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus. The surplus is also there with the UK, Belgium, Italy, France and Bangladesh.



Telcos directed to block incoming international spoofed calls

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{he government has directed}}_{\text{telecom operators to block all}}$ incoming international spoofed calls that display Indian mobile numbers, an official statement said on Sunday. The Department of Telecom (DoT) said that it has been reported that fraudsters are making international spoofed calls displaying Indian mobile numbers to Indian citizens and committing cyber-crime and financial frauds.

Such calls appear to be originating within India but are being made by cyber-criminals from abroad by manipulating the calling line identity (CLI) and have been misused in recent cases of fake digital arrests, FedEx scams, drugs or narcotics in impersonation

government and police officials, disconnections of mobile numbers by DoT or TRAI officials, etc.

(TSPs) have devised a system to identify and block such international spoofed calls from reaching any Indian telecom subscriber. Now directions have been issued to the TSPs for blocking such incoming international spoofed calls," the statement said.

The incoming international spoofed calls with Indian landline numbers are being already blocked by the TSPs as per the directions issued by DoT. "Despite best efforts, there may still be some fraudsters who succeed through other means. For such calls, you can help everybody by reporting suspected communications at the Chakshu facility on Sanchar Saathi," the statement said.

Last week, the DoT issued directives to the telecom operators to carry out immediate re-verification of 6.8 lakh mobile numbers within 60 days that are suspected to have been obtained using invalid, non-existent, or fake documents.

The department has flagged around 6.80 lakh mobile connections as potentially fraudulent after advanced AI-driven analysis.

Most SFBs would not clamour to become universal banks if RBI eases some curbs: Former Secretary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

inclusion, former Financial Services Secretary D K Mittal said most of them would not clamour to become universal banks if some restrictions are banks eased by the Reserve Bank.

To promote financial inclusion in the country, RBI, in 2014, (SFBs) in the private sector. Following this, RBI granted licences to a dozen entities. "While issuing guidelines for Small Finance Banks to become universal banks. it would be a constant or the section of the sectio licences to a dozen entities.
As per the RBI guidelines, SFBs the larger national interest of financial inclusion if RBI lifts

per cent of their branches in Highlighting the importance unbanked rural centres and are mandated to provide 75 per cent of loans to the priority sector compared to 40 per cent for the commercial banks.

Last month, the RBI invited applications from small finance meeting specified criteria, including a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore, for becoming regular or universal

are required to open at least 25 some of the restrictions imposed on such SFBs including tag of SFBs," he told PTI.

Talking about restrictions, he said, the RBI should consider allowing co-lending, pass through certificate (PTC) and securitisation, and setting up of subsidiaries.

Idea should be to make them at par with commercial banks except for three basic principles of priority sector, below 25 lakh and Basel II for capital, he said, adding that these should work as universal banks with a differentiated focus on financial

"After all they comply with all not clamour to become guidelines applicable to universal banks except a few guidelines related to capital but with additional responsibility of 75 per cent priority sector and 50 per cent below Rs 25 lakh lending. This will ensure that look at all customers commercial banks as equal which is so," he said.

"If it is done, they would be as good as a universal bank with strata of society. This will also respectively, in the last two ensure that most SFBs would financial years.

to universal banks," he added. As per the April guidelines of the RBI, an SFB aiming to become a universal bank should have a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore at the end of the previous quarter (audited) and the shares of the bank should have been listed on a recognised stock

exchange.
It should also have a net profit the added responsibility of in the last two financial years furthering the objective of and Gross NPA and Net NPA financial inclusion and serving of less than or equal to 3 per the population of the lowest cent and 1 per cent,

Domestic airfares on northward trajectory; still among lowest globally, say experts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $D_{northwards,\ surging\ up\ to\ 40}^{omestic\ airfares\ are\ sailing}$ per cent in key routes on higher traffic and capacity constraints in the last six quarters. Still, ticket prices are among the lowest in the world, according to experts. India is one of the world's fastest

growing civil aviation markets and on average, 4.5 lakh passengers travel on domestic flights daily. While only a small percentage of the trave capacity constraints are a key challenge as many aircraft are grounded mainly due to supply chain issues. Aviation consultancy firm CAPA

India said that average fares on the top 20 domestic routes had not moved significantly in nominal terms for the last two decades, until the last six quarters during which they have been up by close to 40 per

The routes include Mumbai-Delhi, Bengaluru-Delhi, Bengaluru-Mumbai and Delhi-Hyderabad.

The trend has been driven by serious capacity shortages with an average of 150 aircraft on the ground due to supply chain and other issues, CAPA India said during a webinar this week and added that structurally, high pricing should continue into FY2026.

"In the last three years, especially after the coronavirus pandemic, fares have gone up. Still, the average fares are among the lowest in the

"For instance, the average fare for a flight between Delhi and Mumbai will be around Rs 5,000 to 6,000. It



might seem like a big rise in terms of percentage but the quantum of rise is not significant when the overall inflationary pressure is taken into account," Sanjay Kumar, President & CEO of InterGlobe Technology Quotient Ltd, told PTI.

Part of the InterGlobe group, the company is into the travel technology segment.

Kumar, who had also served as the Chief Commercial Officer at IndiGo, also pointed out that while Indians are supposed to be priceconscious, airfares in the country have actually come down in comparison with the inflationary pressures over the years. The low fare regime also resulted in quite a few airlines having gone out of business due to the mismatch in their costs and revenues, he added. CAPA India noted that adjusted to inflation, the average fare of Rs 4,989 in FY2004 rose to around Rs 11,000 in FY2020.

In the early 2000s, despite far less efficient operations with respect to seat and aircraft utilisation, airlines were largely able to break even because in real terms, fares were significantly higher, it added.

Air ticket prices in the country are deregulated, and fares are mostly a function of supply and demand.

Data shared by aviation analytics firm Cirium with PTI showed that India had the lowest average domestic airfare among the key markets in 2023.

As per the analysis, the one-way average economy class fare was USD 80 for a distance of 622 miles while it was USD 167 for 768 miles in Australia and USD 114 for 709 miles in Brazil.

In the case of the US, the fare was USD 180 for 1,108 miles, USD 126 for 860 miles in China, USD 106 for 813 miles in Europe and USD 173 for 928 miles in Canada.

An aviation industry expert said that compared to various developed markets, airfares are very affordable in India, which is also a very pricesensitive market.

The affordability and paying capacity of people in the Western countries are high compared to India and also there is the element of overall costs being relatively low for Indian carriers compared to other markets, the expert said.

"Airlines have resumed a more effective pricing strategy for revenue maximisation, with fares increasing steadily in the last month prior to departure, and especially during the last three days," CAPA India said. Kumar emphasised that airlines le to strike a between their cost which is primarily a reflection of efficiency and revenues which are a reflection of fares.

"While we have also seen airlines can be profitable with lower load factors with reasonable fares and at the same time, can be financially weak despite operating with over 90 per cent loads with low fares. If an airline is able to remain profitable with around 60 to 65 per cent load factor, then that is also good commercially," he said.

Airline CEOs on airfares

There is healthy and tough competition in the Indian market, which is also price-sensitive. The overall price levels in India are very very competitive, IndiGo CEÓ Pieter Elbers told PTI in March.

When you compare them to parts of Europe, East Asia, North America or any decent-sized aviation economy in the world, India has some of the most affordable airfares by a long margin. Indian airfares are incredibly affordable, Akasa Air Founder and CEO Vinay Dube told PTI in March.

BharatPe, PhonePe settle trademark dispute on Pe suffix

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

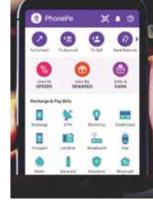
Fintech unicorns BharatPe Group and PhonePe Group have amicably settled all long-standing legal disputes pertaining to the use of the trademark with the suffix 'Pe', both companies said in a joint statement.

SharatPe and been involved in long-drawn legal disputes across multiple courts, over the course of the last five years. The settlement will put an end to open proceedings, the statement

"BharatPe and PhonePe amicably settled all longstanding trademark disputes," the statement said. As a next step, parties have already taken steps to withdraw all opposition against each other in the trademark registry, which will help them to proceed with the registration of their respective trademarks, the statement said.

"This is a positive development for the industry. I appreciate the maturity and

professionalism shown by the Management of both sides, working closely to resolve all outstanding legal issues and moving ahead to focus their energy and



resources in building robust digital payment ecosystems," BharatPe, Chairman of the Board, Rajnish Kumar said. Both organizations will undertake to take other necessary steps to comply with the obligations under the settlement agreement in respect of all cases before Delhi High Court and Bombay High Court.

"I am glad that we have reached an amicable resolution in this matter. This outcome will benefit both companies to move forward and focus our collective energy on growing the Indian fintech industry as a whole," PhonePe, Founder and CEO, Sameer Nigam said.

FPIs take out ₹22,000 crore from equities in May amid poll jitters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign investors have pulled out a massive Rs 22,000 crore from Indian equities so far this month, due to uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections and outperformance of Chinese markets.

This came following a net outflow of over Rs 8,700 crore in the entire April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields. Before that, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 35,098 crore in March and Rs 1,539 crore in February.

Going forward, as clarity

buy in India, since they cannot afford to miss the post-election results rally. Actually, the rally may begin even before the election results, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services,

According to data with depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) witnessed a net outflow of Rs 22,047 crore from equities this month (till May 24).

"This heavy selling was triggered by the massive outperformance of Chinese stocks. The Hang Seng index, dominated by Chinese stocks (FPIs invest through the

Investors (FPIs) are likely to investing through the Shanghai market) surged 7.66 per cent during the last month," Vijayakumar, said. The election-related jitters, too, might have influenced FPI selling.

With the on-going general election in the country and the uncertainty surrounding its outcome, foreign investors at this point are wary to enter the Indian equity markets before the announcement of election results, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Morningstar Research, Investment Research India, said.

"In recent times, the US Fed has indicated that it would not go ahead with rate cuts emerges on the election Hong Kong market since until inflation cools and front, Foreign Portfolio there are restrictions on consistently moves towards



the target range. This has raised scepticism over the possibility of an early rate

the US Dollar leading to a surge in US Treasury yields. This doesn't augur well for India, as under such scenario investments also tend to shift from riskier assets like

emerging market equities to more safer asset classes such as US Dollar and US Treasuries," he added.

On the other hand, FPIs invested Rs 2,009 crore in the debt market during the period under review.

Before this outflow, foreign investors put in Rs 13,602 crore in March, Rs 22,419 crore in February, Rs 19,836 crore in January. This inflow was driven by the upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index.

"The long-term outlook for FPI flows into Indian debt is positive due to India's inclusion in global bond indices. However, near-term flows are being impacted by macroeconomic

The trend will reverse once the interest rate outlook becomes clearer," Vipul Bhowar, Director, Listed Investments at Waterfield Advisors, said. JP Morgan Chase & Co. In September last year September last year announced it will add Indian

uncertainty and volatility.

government bonds to its benchmark emerging market index from June 2024. This landmark inclusion is anticipated to benefit India by attracting around USD 20-40 billion in the subsequent 18 to 24 months. Overall, FPIs have withdrawn a net amount of Rs 19,824 crore in equities in 2024 so far, however, invested Rs 46,917 crore in

debt market.



Early signs of fatal Pre-eclampsia, like abnormal growth patterns, changes in placental structure, and reduced amniotic fluid levels in a pregnant woman are often identifiable through ultrasound. Doctors emphasize to ARCHANA JYOTI the importance of radiologists taking Pre-eclampsia seriously, as timely and precise imaging can profoundly impact outcomes

Samrakshan: A beacon of hope in

the war against Pre-eclampsia

n the occasion of World Pre-eclampsia Day last week, Delhi-based Dr Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital's Department of Radiodiagnosis, held a seminar to highlight the importance of properly planned and performed antenatal ultrasound by radiologist in preventing adverse outcomes in pregnancy such as Pre-eclampsia

The issue is significant as Preeclampsia, well-known disorder hypertensive pregnancy, with a greater associated with incidence maternal advanced age contributes to 2 per cent to 8 per pregnancy-related complications, more than 50,000 and over 500,000 maternal and respectively fetal deaths, worldwide.

This can be prevented, say doctors, calling for collective responsibilities of stakeholders including obstetricians, radiologists, fetal medicine specialists, neonatologists.

"Peri-natal mortality rates in India can be reduced substantially if in first tri-mester of pregnancy maternal doppler Ultrasound is done with simultaneously measuring mean arterial pressure and urine protein levels, to detect risk of Pre-eclampsia," said Dr Shibani Mehra, Professor, Dept of Radiodiagnosis, RML Hospital. No doubt, since "Radiologists are the first point of contact with the fetus and the first to visualise the details of anatomy of the foetus. Fetal well being can be gauged by assessment of maternal uterine artery and umbilical artery by Doppler," she added.

The doctors say that Preeclampsia is a dangerous pregnancy-related complication, defined by high blood pressure and the protein present in the urine. This condition can affect various organs leading to serious complications which can turn



DR SHIBANI MEHRA

fatal sometimes for both mother and baby if not managed properly. Dr Mehra further explained, "Antenatal Doppler performed between 11 and 14 weeks of pregnancy(third month of pregnancy) can detect risk of Preeclampsia and its prevention can be possible if treatment by a single drug is initiated immediately. The medicine used to prevent Pre-eclampsia in pregnancy is inexpensive and easily available."

Dr Sonam Kaur Walia, Assistant Professor, Dept of Radiodiagnosis at the RML Hospital, concurs as she said, early detection and management are crucial for minimising complications. Management strategies depend on the severity of the condition and the stage of pregnancy.

Dr Walia spoke in detail about the severe outcomes due to untreated Pre-eclampsia. "If not properly managed, Pre-eclampsia can lead to serious complications for both the mother and the baby. Cerebrovascular disease is the leading cause of maternal mortality in women with Preeclampsia, with the majority of deaths caused by intracerebral. Hypertension or a blood pressure

reading 140/90 mm or higher and urinary protein (proteinuria) level of 300 ml or more found in urine sample are the two major factors of determining Pre-eclampsia. However, in some cases Preeclampsia may occur with other signs such as severe headaches



DR VAISHALI SHARMA

WHAT IS SAMRAKSHAN?

Samrakshan is a national

program of the Indian

Radiological & Imaging Association of India (IRIA) to

address the high rates of

perinatal mortality, low birth

weight and preterm babies in

India. The project was

conceived and founded by Dr

Rijo Mathew Choorakuttil

who was the first national

coordinator for this project that was initiated by IRIA.

The program aims to reduce

perinatal mortality in India

through an approach that

Integrating fetal Doppler

studies with routine trimester

specific antenatal scans in

Determining a customized

risk assessment for preterm

pre-eclampsia and fetal growth

restriction for each pregnant

blurred vision, seeing spots or

flashing lights, and in severe cases,

temporary blindness. Upper

abdominal pain, nausea, swelling

and shortness of breath are other

possible symptoms. Preeclampsia

focuses on

pregnancy



DR SONAM KAUR WALIA

Protocol based management

for Preterm Pre-eclampsia and

Samrakshan is now scaling up

to cover all districts of India.

The scale up, that aims to have

at least one Samrakshan Fetal

Radiologist in every district of

India is based on the

encouraging results after two

years of Samrakshan and the

significant reduction in

perinatal mortality achieved in

the program. These Fetal

radiologists or Samrakshan

Yodhas will form synergistic

teams with childbirth care

stakeholders and lead the

integration of Fetal Dopplers

and Ultrasound assessment

with antenatal care in each

The Samrakshan 757 project

aims to reduce preeclampsia to

less than 3% and Fetal growth

restriction to less than 10% in

complications such as eclampsia

(seizures), stroke, organ failure,

and HELLP syndrome (a

combination of hemolysis,

elevated liver enzymes, and low

platelet count), all of which can be

India over an 8 year period.

district.

and vision problems including can also lead to severe

Fetal Growth Restriction

SAMRAKSHAN 757



DR KAVITA ANEJA

life-threatening for both the mother and the baby, said Dr Walia. Due to extremely high blood pressure, mother can suffer stroke.

For the Baby, preterm Birth (Leading potential developmental issues and complications), Intrauterine Growth Restriction (IUGR) (Poor foetal growth due to reduced blood flow to the placenta) and Placental Abruption wherein the placenta gets detached from the uterine wall prematurely, which can be life-threatening for both mother and baby, said Dr Walia. **Dr. Vaishali Sharma**, Senior Consultant Gynecologist, Laparoscopic Suegeon

Infertility Specialist agreed with Dr Mehra on the important role of radiologists in prevention of complications like Pre-eclampsia. As a gynaecologist, I cannot stress enough the critical role that radiologists play in the early detection and management of preeclampsia. Their expertise in interpreting ultrasound results is invaluable in monitoring the health of both the mother and the

"Radiologists should take preeclampsia seriously because timely and accurate imaging can significantly affect outcomes. High blood pressure can lead to complications such as reduced blood flow to the placenta, limiting the baby's oxygen and nutrient supply, which can cause

intrauterine growth restriction and other severe issues. Early signs of preeclampsia can often be detected through ultrasound, including abnormal growth patterns, changes in placental structure, and decreased amniotic fluid levels.

"By being vigilant and thorough, radiologists can identify these early signs and alert the healthcare team, enabling prompt intervention.

This collaborative approach is crucial for implementing timely treatments, such as medication to lower blood pressure and strategies to ensure the baby receives adequate nutrients. In severe cases, early delivery may be necessary to protect the health of both the mother and the baby," reiterated Dr Vaishali.

Dr Kavita Aneja, Director and Senior Consultant, Radiologist, Images Ultrasound Centre pinned hopes on 'Samrakshan' launched by IRIA with a mission to extend the reach of safe motherhood initiatives across all districts of India.

"With a pledge to reduce preeclamp- sia from 8%-10% to 3%, and fetal growth restriction from 25%-30% to 10% by the turn of the decade, IRIA Samrakshan exemplites the dedication needed to address and mitigate the risks faced by pregnant women and new-borns," she added.

Dr Vaishali batted for active communication radiologists and expecting mothers about the importance of regular imaging scans and what they entail. Awareness can empower pregnant women to understand the potential risks of preeclampsia, encouraging them adhere to appointments and follow medical advice rigorously. Clear communication can also alleviate anxiety in the would-be-

Ability to See the **World Differently!**

DR ASHWINI ANIL KUMAR SIRAPANASETTY (Obstetrics/ Gynaecologist Surgeon and Senior Counsellor of the Army wives welfare association questions why to fit Autism in a box when those born with the conditions are born to stand out



t is said that the famous Artists, Pablo Picasso and Michelangelo both had Autism. They created amazing works of art with the way they saw the, world. This reflects their uniqueness for what and who they are. We must understand that Autism is not a processing error, it's a different operating system.

So when you meet someone a little bit different from you, that might scare you or make you feel uncomfortable and that's okay. Because anything new is a little difficult at first but once you learn more about it, you get used to it. Because then you know. Knowledge helps you to understand and understanding makes it easy to accept. All of us are different. No one is the same. We all have our talents, characteristics, strengths, and challenges hence don't address them as "Autistic kids" They are just born with Autism which is just one part of their amazing personality. Autism can mean a lot of different things.

Some kids who have autism seem like typical kids and it only impacts the way they act and communicate in certain situations. Sometimes in some kids Autism impacts the way they act and communicate all the time. Sometimes autism impacts kids so much that they might not be able to control their bodies or communicate by speaking. No one knows for sure why kids have Autism. Scientists and doctors are working hard to figure it out. But what we do know is that autism affects the way the brain and bodywork. For kids who have Autism their senses, thought processes, communication and body movements happen differently. It causes them to experience the world in a very unique way. Autism isn't a birth defect. It's not a disease. It's not contagious. Autism is just something that they are born with. It's something they live with and they will have it for their whole life.

- A-Acceptance (Accept People for who they are)
- Understand (understand through knowledge)
- T- Time (give them time to do things at their own space)
- I- Include & Invite
- S- Special interests (kids with Autism enjoy talking about certain subjects, welcome conversations
- M- Memories (allow them to make memories with you in their own

Thyroid Health: Symptoms, Awareness, Prevention

Located in the neck, Thyroid gland, a butterfly-shaped gland affects many bodily functions through the hormones it produces. Managing thyroid disorders requires recognizing symptoms, raising awareness, and implementing preventive measures, doctors tell THE HEALTH PIONEER

espite its significance, overactive thyroid, presents thyroid disorders are common and often go undiagnosed, impacting approximately 200 million people worldwide, including 42 million in India.
RECOGNIZING THYROID

Thyroid disorders can

manifest in various ways, affecting multiple bodily Common functions symptoms to watch for include unexplained weight changes, fatigue or excessive energy, changes in heart rate, neck swelling, and hair loss or changes in skin texture. These symptoms often arise because the thyroid gland's hormones are integral to regulating metabolism and energy.

Two primary types of thyroid disorders are hypothyroidism hyperthyroidism. Hypothyroidism, underactive thyroid, characterized by symptoms such as fatigue, weight gain, dry skin, and cold intolerance. Hyperthyroidism, or an thyroid diseases. "Without

with symptoms like weight heat intolerance, increased appetite, and Early nervousness. of recognition these symptoms is crucial for effective management and treatment.

DOCTORS INSIGHTS ON THYROID HEALTH

Experts emphasize importance of awareness and early detection in managing health. thyroid Chandrakant Sambhaji Pandav, a member of the Council POSHAN Abhiyan and former head of the Centre for Community Medicine at AIIMS, Delhi, underscored the necessity of awareness in tackling the rise in thyroid diseases. He highlighted that iodine deficiency, historically a major cause of thyroid disorders, still exists in some regions. Adequately iodized salt is essential in preventing



DR CHANDRAKANT SAMBHAJI PANDAV

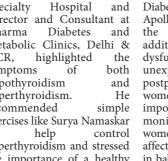
awareness, you cannot move forward. Awareness is necessary to ensure early detection of thyroid diseases and can prevent major ailments," he asserted. Dr Pandav was sharing his

views at the ASSOCHAM CSR Council's panel discussion on the eve of World Thyroid Day, titled 'Thyroid Matters: In Health & Disease.' Experts from various fields had gathered to discuss the importance of thyroid awareness. Dr. Mudit Sabharwal, Consultant Diabetes and Endocrinology at Fortis La Femme Multi



DR SUBHASH K WANGNOO

Specialty Director and Consultant at Diabetes Dharma Metabolic Clinics, Delhi & NCR, highlighted symptoms hypothyroidism hyperthyroidism. recommended exercises like Surya Namaskar help hyperthyroidism and stressed the importance of a healthy lifestyle to prevent related health issues like high cholesterol and diabetes.



Dr. Subhash K Wangnoo, Consultant Endocrinologist



Diabetologist at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Delhi, on the other hand enlisted additional signs of thyroid such dysfunction unexpected weakness and postpartum depression in women. He emphasized the importance of careful monitoring in pregnant women, as late detection can affect the intelligence quotient in babies. "Thyroid does a lot of work to help metabolize and maintain blood pressure, body temperature, and heart rate. Pregnant women also need to be very careful," he explained.



PREVENTIVE MEASURES Taking preventive measures is crucial in safeguarding thyroid health. Dr. Dinesh Kumar **Tyagi,** Additional Director of Internal Medicine at Fortis Hospital, Greater Noida, talked about the wide-ranging impact of thyroid disorders, which can cause cretinism in children, obesity, infertility, and even cancer if a malignant tumor

develops. He too batted for maintaining a balanced diet, managing stress levels, reducing exposure to environmental toxins, monitoring iodine intake, undergoing regular thyroid screenings,



abstaining from smoking, and incorporating regular exercise into one's routine. A balanced diet rich in iodine, selenium, and zinc is particularly important, as these nutrients support thyroid function.

"Foods such as fish, dairy products, and iodized salt can help maintain adequate iodine levels. Additionally, managing stress through mindfulness practices and regular physical activity can positively impact thyroid health.

screenings, "Regular especially for individuals with a family history of thyroid disorders, are essential for early detection and effective management," he said.

RAISING PUBLIC

Anil Rajput, Chairperson of the ASSOCHAM National CSR Council which has been providing platform to raise awareness on various public health issues, emphasized the for heightened awareness and proactive measures to address the increasing prevalence of thyroid disorders.

He called for gender-sensitive approaches. "The increase in the prevalence of thyroidrelated health issues warrants heightened awareness and pro-active measures to be put in place with a greater sense of urgency to effectively address this challenge of significant proportions. Thyroid ailments affect both men and women with the latter reporting a higher incidence necessitating the need for gender-sensitive approaches to be looked at in greater detail," he stated.

ENGLAND HAVE MISSED TRICK BY CALLING BACK PLAYERS FROM IPL AHEAD OF T20 WC: VAUGHAN



PTI CHENNAI

Pormer skipper Michael Vaughan feels England "missed the trick" by recalling its cricketers from the IPI to play a Table strike. the IPL to play a T20 series against Pakistan, saying it denied them experiencing pressure-

cooker situations of the playoffs, which could have helped them prepare better for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas.

Top England players, including skipper Jos Buttler (Rajasthan Royals), Phil Salt (Kolkata Knight Riders) and Will Jacks (Royal Challengers Bengaluru) were among the players called back home by the England and Wales Cricket Board for a fourmatch T20I series against Pakistan, leading to severe criticism from several former Indian cricketers including legendary

Gavaskar. In fact, it was skipper Buttler who had pushed for players to get back in the English camp from the IPL to prepare for the T20 World Cup with the series against Pakistan, director of cricket Rob Key had earlier revealed.

"I'm all for international cricket, but now and again this tournament (IPL) in particular is so exposed to pressure, and these players under a huge amount of pressure from fans, owners (and) social media, it's massive," said Vaughan on a Club Prairie Fire podcast. "They (ECB) have missed the

in the Eliminations pressure, crowd expectation, I would argue that playing here (IPL) is better preparation than playing a T20 game against Pakistan," Vaughan opined. The first match of the bilateral white-ball series in Headingley was washed out on May 22, while England won the second match against Babar Azam's side by 23 runs on Saturday.

particular, playing in the IPL

Vaughan felt that Salt and Jack, in particular, could have got valuable lessons in handling pressure, which would have served them better in the T20 World Cup beginning on June 2 in the West Indies and USA.

"I just felt particularly those trick by sending all their players home. Will Jacks, Phil Buttler probably not as Salt, (and) Jos Buttler in much, but I still think he could have stayed here. But Will Jacks and Phil Salt, they would have been better prepared (for T20 WC) staying here playing in the IPL than going back to Headingley to play a game. Vaughan said he was not "disrespecting" either Pakistan or England with his

views but just stating that the standard of IPL is probably

"better". This tournament (IPL) is so pressurised and the skill levels are so high, you could argue and I'm not disrespecting Pakistan or the England side... They haven't been playing lot of T20 together. But I would say the standard here (IPL) would possibly be better than the game that we're gonna at

Headingley (May 22).

Gilchrist too felt England players had missed a big opportunity to play in the business end of the IPL.

"I'm sure there's a number of players that could have fulfilled those obligations in the international setup (vs Pakistan) there, but the guys that were actively involved in the IPL in the finals period (Buttler, Salt and Jacks), yeah, I think that's a missed opportunity, too. Spot on (Vaughan)," said Gilchrist.

"What you're walking out into, what you're learning from, all the various aspects that the glare and the focus and the microscope on you because that's going to prepare you for what they would hope (in T20 World Cup). Every nation hopes to be playing in a World Cup final eventually," he added.

T20 World Cup in US going be landmark event: Pradhan

Huge excitement among diaspora, says India's US envoy

PTI NEW YORK

 $T^{he\ T20\ World\ Cup\ in\ the}_{US\ is\ a\ "landmark\ event"}$ and there is huge excitement among the diaspora as well as across America, India's envoy here said emphasising that the tournament is playing a "very significant role" in bringing cricket to the country's mainstream and will further contribute towards the bilateral people-to-people relationship. "This is the first time we are

having a (cricket) World Cup being played on US soil. There is huge excitement, not only among the Indian diaspora members but even in the United States," Consul General of India in New York Binava Srikanta Pradhan told PTI here in an exclusive conversation ahead of the much-anticipated tournament.

said American congressmen, senators, elected representatives are talking about the T20 Cricket World Cup being held in the US. The T20 World Cup is being

jointly hosted by the USA and the West Indies from June 2 to June 29. The Indian cricket team, which has departed India for New York, will begin its campaign against Ireland on June 5 at the newly-constructed Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. India will face arch-rivals Pakistan on June 9, followed by matches against co-hosts USA (June 12) and Canada (June 15) in their Group A matches. India had won the inaugural

edition way back in 2007 in South Africa.

"I am sure this is going to be a landmark event," Pradhan said. Team India represents India in more than one way. There is huge excitement, not only in the community, but even in the Indian Consulate," Pradhan said, adding that "we are looking forward to welcome them and will be there to cheer



for them, and they will have fun here.

India will play three matches in New York -- versus Ireland, Pakistan and the United States. "This is the first time India will be playing with the American team. So it's a truly momentous occasion," he said. On the fever-pitch anticipation for the match between India and Pakistan, Pradhan said tickets for the game were sold out months before the tournament, with a lot of visitors from India expected to travel to New York especially for the match.

"There is huge excitement," he said, adding that several very distinguished people from the Indian diaspora, American public would be watching this match. "So we're also looking forward to that," he said.

Cricket is not a mainstream sport in the US, which has traditionally been a baseball, American football, basketball, ice hockey, and soccer-playing nation.

Members of the diaspora from the Indian sub-continent as well as those belonging to other cricket-playing nations such as the West Indies and Australia play the sport in the US but usually on temporary, make-do pitches on baseball fields, in parks and on school sports fields during the summer months.

Pradhan said that the T20 World Cup is playing a "very significant role in promoting cricket in mainstream United States.

In the run-up to the World Cup, the Consulate General of India in New York released a special video highlighting the comparison and similarities between cricket and baseball to "inform the American audience that they should look forward to this game and this sport is very much similar in some ways to baseball."

Pradhan said the response the Consulate has received has been tremendous.

Noting that cricket at the moment is very popular among the Indian diaspora, Pradhan referred to the professional Twenty20 cricket league in the United States Major Premier League and the Minor Premier League.

"It's already catching up in the diaspora. But I'll not be surprised if in a few years' time, you will find the American not the Indian-origin Americans, but the Americans will be playing cricket as a mainstream game," he said. Pradhan noted that cricket infrastructure, including proper stadiums are now coming up in the US, as he cited the Nassau County stadium where India will play

three matches.

SPORTS

NEERAJ CHOPRA CLARIFIES

Not injured, withdrawal from Golden Spike precautionary move

PTI NEW DELHI

Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra on champion javelin Sunday clarified that he is not injured but has pulled out of the Ostrava Golden Spike meet in Czech Republic on May 28 as a precautionary measure after he felt "something" on his adductor muscles during a recent training session.

Chopra said he would not want to risk injury in an Olympic year and hence decided to skip the prestigious

"Following a recent throwing session, I decided not to compete in Ostrava as I felt something in my adductor. I have had problems with it in the past and pushing it at this stage can lead to injury," Chopra wrote on his Instagram.

"Just to clarify, I am not injured but I don't want to take any risk during the Olympic year so had to take this

decision. Once I feel it's fully recovered, I will get back to competitions," he added.

Chopra's clarification came just hours after the organisers of the prestigious meet said he has decided to skip the event due to an injury he sustained while training two weeks ago. "Due to an injury that he sustained

in training two weeks ago (adductor muscle) he will not be able to throw in Ostrava, but he will arrive at the event as a guest," the organisers of Golden Spike said earlier in the day. The 26-year-old world champion will, however, attend the meet as a according guest, the organisers.

This was to be Chopra's first foray in Golden Spike meet, a World Athletics Continental Tour Gold level event, which is a going to see a star-studded field, with Tokyo Olympics silver medallist and 2023 world championships bronze winner Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic



and former world champion He commenced his 2024 season on a Anderson Peters of Grenada set to be in action.

Chopra has competed in two competitions this season -- the Doha Diamond League and the Federation strong note, clinching silver with an impressive throw of 88.36 metres at the Doha Diamond League on May

He then made a return to domestic competition after almost three years,

winning gold in the Federation Cup on May 15 with a throw of 82.27m, pushing DP Manu to second spot in Bhubaneswar.

The Golden Spike was not initially announced to be Chopra's third competition of the season. But during Doha Diamond League on May 10, he said he would be competing in the Golden Spike.

Before that, Chopra had announced that he would be taking part in the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland on June 18.

Chopra is one of India's best medal hopes in the Paris Olympic Games where he would be keen to retain the gold medal he won at the Tokyo

Olympics.
The Golden Spike organisers said they had received a note from Chopra informing them about his

The organisers did note a message from the Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra.

pull out from the competition.

Sindhu signs off with runner up finish at **Malaysia Masters**

PTI KUALA LUMPUR

Ctar Indian shuttler PV Sindhu's wait for a much-needed title extended further as she faltered in the finishing line, going down in three games to world no. 7 Wang Zhi Yi of China in the summit clash here on Sunday.

Fifth seed Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, last won the Singapore Open and Commonwealth Games in 2022 and finished runner-up at the Madrid Spain Masters in 2023.

The title here looked within her reach when world no. 15 Sindhu held a massive 11-3 lead in the decider after winning the opening game but the former world champion imploded after the final change of sides to go down 21-16 5-21 16-21 in a 79-minute women's singles final.

The title would have been an icing on the cake but her impressive run to the final will still give her a lot of confidence as Sindhu looks to put the finishing touches ahead of the Paris Olympics. It was her first final on BWF world tour after

more than a year. Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, used a combination of poise and power to dominate the proceedings against the reigning Asian champion Wang for most part of the match but everything fell apart after the break in the decider as the USD 420,000 crown slipped out of her hands.

A silver and bronze medallist in the last two editions of the Olympics, Sindhu had lost to Wang at the Arctic Open last year but has defeated the Chinese twice in three meetings.

UEFA celebrates growth of women's soccer as Barcelona lifts another Women's Champions League trophy

AP ■ BILBAO (SPAIN)

It was a night of celebration for Barcelona after another Women's Champions League title, and for the women's game in general after another season with significant growth in the sport.

Barcelona defeated Lyon 2-0 to win its third European trophy and to add to its recent dominance in the sport on Saturday, capping a year that saw increased attendance, additional revenue and more participation by women across all levels of the sport. A record crowd of 50,827 for a final was on hand to see Barcelona lift the trophy after beating record eighttime champion Lyon with goals by stalwart players Aitana Bonmatí and Alexia Putellas at the packed San Mames Stadium in Bilbao. The Barcelona victory came as soccer officials celebrated the success of a five-year plan to boost the women's game, a plan that was renewed ahead of the final to keep the sport growing. The "Time for Action" project was put in place by UEFA in 2019 to try



to improve women's soccer. The European soccer body aimed to double the number of women and girls playing the game, and said it more than doubled that target with nearly three million women and girls currently playing soccer thanks to "investment in key initiatives" such as "UEFA Football in Schools."

UEFA said there are now 47 associations with a strategy in place for woman's soccer, and noted that almost 20% of its committee members are now female. Centralised media and commercial

helped increase competition's value more than fourfold, UEFA said, "funding a financial distribution model which extends the benefits across the entire women's club landscape."

"The investments and changes to the UEFA Women's Champions League and UEFA Women's EURO, plus a highly successful commercial programme, have meant that we have exceeded our expectations in terms of doubling the reach and value of these flagship competitions," said Anne Rei, chair of UEFA's Women's Football Committee. "This has also gone a long way to changing perceptions.'

What also helped revitalize the Women's Champions League was the introduction of a new group stage ahead of the 2021-22 season, with four groups of four teams playing each other home and away to add strength in depth." And beginning in 2025-26, UEFA will introduce a single-league stage featuring 18 teams, and a second club competition in women' soccer.

IDFC First Bank Limited

(Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) | CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 7th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031. Tel : +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022



<u> APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6) & 9 (1)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES</u> E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act. 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) & 9 (1) of the

Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as per column (iii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (iv) 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" as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due from Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as per column (i), due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd). or detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in IDFC FIRST Bank website i.e. www.idfcfirstbank.com

S. NO		(ii) Agreement ID	(iii) Name of Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s)	(iv) MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS	(v) Reserve Price Amount	(vi) EMD Amount	(vii) Date and Time of Auction	(viii) Date and Time of EMD Auction		(x) Authorized Officer Name & Contact Number
1	INR 1276451.53/- Demand Notice Date : 12-Aug-2023	14308923	& Mrs. Saroj Prasad	All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 307 Admeasuring 750 Sq. Ft. I.E. 69.70 Sq. Mtr. & Plot No. 308 Admeasuring 750 Sq. Ft. I.E. 69.70 Sq. Mtr., Kh. No567 Part, P. H. No. 90, New No. 20, R.N.M. Dharsiva-I, Situated At Geekay Township Raipur, Bilaspur Road, Siltara, Tehsil & Dist. Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001, And Bounded As On: North: Plot No. 306, South: Plot No. 309, East: Road & West: Seller Property		INR 75000.00/-	05-Jul- 2024 11.00 AM TO 1.00 PM	04~Jul- 2024 10.00 AM TO 5.00 PM	28-Jun- 2024 10.00 AM TO 4.00 PM	Name Hemant Nag Mob Number- 9922185777 Name - Sandesh Jain Mob Number- 8839140796
2	INR 1546080.95/- Demand Notice Date : 12-Jul-2023	10679273		All That Piece And Parcel Of Land Area 5000 Sq. Ft., Part of Khasra No. 48/4, Situated At Village-Mahakalala, P.H.No. 25, Bhilai-3, Tehsil: Patan, District: Durg (C.G.), Chhattisgarh - 492001, And Bounded As East: 145- 148, West: Road-North: Plot 139 South: Kutcha Rasta	INR 600000.00/-	INR 60000.00/-				

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, present at the immovable

Authorised Officer IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd)

Date: 27-May-2024