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UP Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya's cryptic post on X

Sanjay Kumar Lucknow, July 17: Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya on Wednesday said the party is bigger than the government, a cryptic remark on X that has fuelled speculation over a "rift" in the BJP state unit.

but first I am a worker," Maurya said in the meeting. He also urged all the ministers, MLAs, and public representatives to respect party workers.

'I am not a terrorist', Kejriwal tells Delhi High Court

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, July 17: Asserting that he was "not a terrorist", but the Chief Minister of Delhi, AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday assailed his arrest by the CBI in a corruption case linked to excise policy 'scam' and sought his release on bail, saying his arrest was not as per the mandate of the law.

bail even as she listed his regular bail plea for further arguments on July 29. Arrested on March 21 by the ED, the AAP national convener was released on a 21-day interim bail by the top court on May 10 to enable him to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls.

referred certain legal issues arising out of his petition against arrest under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act to a larger Bench or a Constitution Bench.

Dipankar Datta had said, adding "Application for regular bail, if pending consideration or required to be decided, shall be decided on its own merits."



Puja Khedkar's disability certificate has factory address

Chandigarh, July 17: The Pune Police said they would probe the veracity of medical certificates of probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar. Khedkar—the 2023-batch officer currently posted in Washim district—had submitted to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) multiple medical certificates, one of them indicating visual impairment, under the Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) provision.

12 Naxals killed in encounter with police on Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border

Gadchiroli, July 17: At least 12 Naxalites were killed and two security personnel injured in an encounter with police and commandos in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra near the Chhattisgarh border on Wednesday, officials said.

Jamia professor suspended over 'sexual harassment' charge by 4 PhD scholars

New Delhi, July 17: The Jamia Milia Islamia has suspended a professor and ordered inquiry into complaints of sexual harassment against him by four PhD scholars, one of whom had to cancel her admission. Officiating Vice Chancellor Mohammad Shakeel ordered the suspension of the professor using his emergency powers and placed the inquiry before the Internal Complaints Committee, an order said.

Grading of employee cannot be reduced only because he is wheelchair-bound: Delhi High Court

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Chandigarh, July 17: Observing that superior officers should write annual confidential reports (ACR) in a fair, objective and dispassionate manner, the Delhi High Court has held that the performance of a disabled employee who has been working diligently cannot be downgraded only because he was wheelchair bound.

to only 'good'. This, according to his petition, affected his chance to get promotion under the modified assured career progression scheme. He represented against the ACRs, but to no avail. In 2021, he was discharged from service on medical grounds. He averred that the grading of 'good' was wholly unsustainable as his reporting officer, despite noticing the fact that irrespective of his disability, he was working diligently, had downgraded him as 'good' only because he was a paraplegic and wheelchair bound.

The remarks in his last three ACRs mentioned that he is a paraplegic and needs assistance. He contended that he had been downgraded only because he was suffering from 100 per cent disability and not because of any shortcoming in his performance which was evident from the fact that there is no comment/ or observation in any of the three ACRs that his performance had dipped in any manner.



Supreme Court to hear today pleas seeking cancellation of NEET-UG exam

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, July 17: The Supreme Court is slated to hear today a batch of pleas alleging irregularities in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2024 examination and seeking its cancellation. As per the cause list published on the website of the apex court, a bench presided over by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud will resume hearing the matter on July 18.

set of candidates being benefitted, leading to abnormal scores in NEET-UG examination held on May 5 this year. "There is an overall increase in the marks



obtained by students, specifically in the range of 550 to 720. This increase is seen across the cities and centres. This is

attributed to a 25 per cent reduction in the syllabus," said the Centre, adding that candidates obtaining such high marks were spread across multiple cities and multiple centres, indicating very "less likelihood of malpractice". After a comprehensive data analysis using parameters like marks distribution, city-wise and centre-wise rank distribution and candidates spread over a range, experts of IIT-Madras opined "no abnormality", the affidavit said.

Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Justice R Mahadevan to take oath as Supreme Court judges today

New Delhi, July 17: Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Justice R Mahadevan will take oath as Supreme Court judges on Thursday. Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud will administer the oath of office to the two newly-appointed judges of the top court at 10.30 AM, sources said, adding the Supreme Court will regain its full strength of 34 judges, including the CJI. The Centre had on Tuesday notified their appointments, five days after the Supreme Court Collegium recommended the elevation to the top court.

RSS-linked weekly blames tie-up with Ajit Pawar-led NCP for BJP's poor show in Lok Sabha election 2024

Naresh Malhotra

Mumbai, July 17: A Marathi weekly linked to the RSS has sought to blame the NCP for the BJP's poor performance in the recent Lok Sabha elections, stating that public sentiments completely went against the saffron party after it joined hands with the Ajit Pawar-led outfit. According to it, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members and others it interacted with said they did not approve of the party's move of joining hands with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). It added that the unrest among the party cadre was just the "tip of the iceberg".

Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP) and Congress, article based on an informal survey of over



performed better by together winning 30 out of the 48 seats. The weekly, Vivek, linked to the BJP's ideological fountainhead Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has published an

or affiliated to organisations (Sangh Parivar) cited that he does not approve of BJP allying with the NCP (led by Ajit Pawar). Before writing this piece, we interacted with more than 200 industrialists, traders, doctors, professors and teachers. The unrest among the party cadre because the BJP allied with the NCP is the tip of the iceberg," it said. The BJP's alliance with Shiv Sena was always perceived as natural because of the common thread of Hindutva, irrespective of some minor complaints against each other. People accepted the then MVA minister Eknath Shinde's rebellion against Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, which brought down the government. The BJP later supported Shinde, and the MLAs backed him in forming the government, making him the state chief minister, the article said. A year later, the then leader of the opposition Ajit Pawar claimed the support of his party MLAs and workers and joined the state government as the deputy chief minister. The Election Commission of India (ECI) and legislative assembly speaker later upheld his claims. "However, the sentiments went

totally against the party (BJP) after it joined hands with NCP. The question also arises about the future plans of the party when political arithmetic went against it because of NCP," it added. The BJP got the image of inducting leaders from other parties, completely ignoring the organisational process of grooming leaders, which in the past existed and benefited in the form of Atal Bihari Vajpayee or at the state level with Gopinath Munde, Pramod Mahajan, Nitin Gadkari and Devendra Fadnis. All of them were humble party workers and later became leaders, and they always knew this fact, the article said. It made an indirect reference to state BJP functionary Shweta Shalini's legal notice to YouTuber Bhau Torsekar, who propagates Hindutva ideology through his channel. In one of the recent posts, he made a critical remark against Shalini, following which she issued a legal notice to him. However, she later withdrew it. "The opposition created a perception that original party workers will always remain humble while turncoats will get plum postings.

NEWS BOX

Wait to end, piped water supply to Gwalpahari by '26

Gurgaon. The long wait for piped water supply for residential societies in Gwalpahari is likely to end soon, with GMDA allotting work for construction of a boosting station in the area. The Rs 4.3-crore project includes an underground tank with a capacity of 4,000 kilolitres, along with a sump and pump house and is expected to be completed in 18 months. At present, residents of highrise societies and villages in the area rely on borewells or water tankers to meet their daily needs. This project has been in the pipeline since 2019, and the work was allotted to an agency in 2020. But execution was delayed due to pending litigation over land acquisition, which was resolved last year, officials said. With the resolution, the metropolitan authority re-initiated the tendering process in Nov 2023.

GMDA officials said they floated tenders four times before the project work was finally awarded to a contractor recently. Water from the Chandu Budhera water treatment plant (WTP) will be supplied to the boosting station in Sector 72, from where it will be further sent to the Gwalpahari boosting station for distribution in residential areas there.

"The authority is making efforts to ensure canal water supply in Gwalpahari. We have awarded the project for the construction of a boosting station to an agency, and work will start soon. We are hoping to complete the work within the stipulated timeline of 18 months," said Rajesh Bansal, GMDA chief engineer. GMDA is also planning to take up completion of 2.1km of water pipelines in the area from HSNP, which will be connected to the proposed boosting station in Gwalpahari. This development will provide much-needed relief to the residents who have been struggling with inadequate water supply for years. According to GMDA's infrastructure development plan, the projected population of Gwalpahari will touch 43,516 by 2031 and 51,707 by 2041.

10cm gap: Rapid & new metro lines can't be merged, so interchange stn proposed

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The official added that the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) will submit a feasibility report. Though no decision has been made, the interchange station could be built at Cyber City. Public transportation in Gurgaon has barely seen any change even though the city's population and reputation as a hub of corporates and IT firms has rapidly grown over the years. Currently, the city has just 17km of metro line — 5.3km of the Delhi Metro's yellow line, and 11.7km of Rapid Metro. The last expansion was in 2017, when the Rapid Metro, which connects Cyber City and almost the entire length of Golf Course Road, was thrown open to commuters in its entirety. In June 2023, the Union Cabinet approved the 28.5km corridor between Millennium City Centre and Cyber City with 27 elevated stations that will cross Old Gurgaon as well. Its estimated cost is Rs 5,452 crore. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the corridor in Feb this year.

On Tuesday, GMRL decided to open the bid of the lone firm that applied for the position of a detailed design consultant (DDC) for the project.

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Subsequently, a disagreement over money arose between Rajkumar and Mogli. Later, the situation escalated and the accused fired around 5-6 rounds — out of which a few rounds were fired in the air — and one bullet hit Rajkumar in the leg. Meanwhile, Sachin was physically assaulted by Mogli's associates.

"A preliminary probe revealed that Rajkumar owed around Rs 5-6 lakh to another property dealer and had not paid the amount on time," said an official.

According to the official, the accused and his associates left the crime scene immediately. The passersby informed the police and took the duo to Civil Hospital in Sector 10. "A case has been registered under relevant BNS sections against Mogli and 5-6 unknown persons. Police are working to trace the accused," said an officer. We also published the following articles recently: Extortion demand case: Three held for firing at property dealers house in Kurukshetra. Learn about the recent arrest of three individuals in Kurukshetra for their involvement in a shooting incident at a property dealer's house. Stay updated on the ongoing investigation and legal proceedings.

From Goldy Brar to Arshdeep Dalla to Rohit Godara: Haryana Police's global pursuit of gang leaders

GURGAON. The special task force (STF) of Haryana Police on Tuesday handed over a list of 20 gangsters, who are operating their networks to carry out criminal activities in the state and Delhi-NCR while staying abroad, to the Union home ministry and Interpol seeking their deportation.

The list includes some known names — the likes of Goldy Brar, Lipin Nehra, and Rohit Godara of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. All three are believed to be in Canada, and Brar is a key accused in the 2022 murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala. Others on the list are Himanshu Bhau, the gang leader who claimed on social media that he had orchestrated the shooting of a man at a Burger King outlet in Delhi's Rajouri Garden this June. Bhau is believed to be in Portugal. Last week, Kala Khairampur, who allegedly had a hand in the Burger King shooting, was brought back to India from Thailand

through a similar deportation process. Khairampur absconded after he was released on parole in 2020. His network operates in Haryana, Delhi and Rajasthan, and charges against the gang include murder and extortion. In the last five years, three more gangsters were repatriated to India from their hideouts in foreign countries and arrested by Haryana Police. Gangster Kaushal, who fled to Dubai in 2017, was extradited in 2019 and arrested on his return to NCR. He is lodged in Bhondsi jail. Gangster Raju Bishodi was brought from Thailand in 2020 and is imprisoned in Bhondsi jail too. Vikas Lagarpuria, one of the most wanted gangsters in Delhi and Haryana with at least 30 criminal cases against him, was repatriated in 2022 from Dubai. Langarpuria, lodged in Bhondsi jail, was allegedly behind the multi-crore heist from an apartment in Gurgaon's Sector 84 in 2021. A senior police officer said on Tuesday that



wanted gangsters end up going abroad on fake passports and documents, and still manage to pull the strings while in hiding. "Even after issuing a Red Corner notice, gangsters leave India after getting passports on fake documents. They make calls from abroad and orchestrate crimes like extortion, murder and supply of arms and drugs," the officer said. This trend of evading prosecution in India, another senior police officer said, began with Surendra Gyong, of Kaithal in Haryana, who fled to South Africa in the early 2000s and died in an encounter with

Haryana Police in 2017. Other gangsters started following in his footsteps, initially taking cover in countries that offer visa-on-arrival to Indians — Thailand, Dubai, Malaysia, etc. After that, the network spread to Canada and US, and in recent years, wanted criminals opted for countries like Azerbaijan, Portugal and even Spain.

"Twenty gangsters operating criminal activities in India from abroad are on our radar. The process to deport them back to India has started. It is ongoing in different phases as the deportation process is separate for each. They will be brought back once it is complete," said Simardeep Singh, DIG STF. Some other prominent names on Haryana Police's list are Arshdeep Singh alias Arsh Dalla, who was allegedly behind the beheading of a man in northwest Delhi last year and is also wanted by police in Sonapat.

3 illegal colonies razed in Sohna, 10-acre land cleared

Gurgaon. Three unauthorised colonies were razed in the revenue estates of Lakhawas and Sohna in a drive conducted on Tuesday. Several illegal buildings were demolished in an attempt to curb unauthorised land development in the area. In Lakhawas, five structures, one boundary wall, and a 400-metre road network built on a 4-acre colony were demolished.

In Sohna, two unauthorised colonies, each spread over approximately 3 acres, were demolished. The colonies were located along the Sohna-Palwal and Sohna-Nuh roads, where illegal construction is frequently observed. As many as 15 structures and a 200-metre internal road network were demolished. Officials have appealed to the public to avoid investing in unauthorised colonies. They have emphasised the importance of verifying the legal status of land and properties before purchasing.

Potential buyers are urged to contact the office of the District Town Planner (DTP) for any inquiries and to ensure that they are investing in legally sanctioned projects.

"The success of this demolition drive underscores the govt's commitment to enforcing land use regulations and deterring illegal construction activities. More such actions are likely as authorities continue to crack down on unauthorised colonies and ensure orderly urban development," said district town planner (enforcement) Manish Yadav. Another official said that this action not only protects the interests of genuine buyers but also promotes planned and sustainable growth in the region. The authorities' proactive stance serves as a warning to those engaging in or contemplating illegal land developments, reinforcing the importance of adhering to legal processes and regulations, he said.

We also published the following articles recently: Kamptee's civil calling in Army's colonial grip. Learn about the ongoing process to free civilian areas from military control at Kamptee Cantonment. Residents hope to unlock economic value while addressing security concerns. Find out more about this significant development. After cave-ins, revamp soon for sewer line below Sohna highway. Learn about GMDA's plan to reinforce sewer line under Sohna highway using CIPP technology to prevent road cave-ins. Project covers 315m of sewer line and costs Rs 4.85 crore. Tender to be released shortly for contractor selection. Illegal resort owned by Azam Khans family in Rampur demolished. Learn about the partial demolition of Azam Khan's resort in Rampur due to encroachment on gram panchayat land. Action was taken after a complaint by BJP MLA.

Finally, facelift for Malibu Towne roads

Gurgaon. Two years after taking over Malibu Towne, MCG is all set to recarpet 18km internal road network of the residential colony. The corporation has prepared an estimate of Rs 6.5 crore for the project, an official said, adding that the work on all colony roads will take 11 months to complete after the tenders are issued. "We have floated a tender at an estimated cost of Rs 6.5 crore and will soon hire a contractor to construct roads in Malibu Towne. The work will be completed in 11 months. All the roads of the colony will be recarpeted and fixed," Sanjeev Kumar, MCG executive engineer, said. The civic body took over Malibu Towne two years ago. It is now spread across 204 acres and houses over 10,000 residents. The development came after residents were raising several complaints including the deteriorating roads in the colony. "The colony's roads have deteriorated, with numerous potholes, making it challenging for residents to commute. The problem intensifies during monsoons when these potholes fill with water, leading to accidents. There have been instances where senior citizens have fallen in these potholes. The last road repair in the colony was carried out approximately 15 years ago and no maintenance work has been done since



then. We have been actively pursuing the issue of road recarpeting for the past two years, following the takeover. We have persistently approached the officials to commence the work," Vijay Shiv Nath, president of Malibu Towne RWA, said. Further, residents have also requested the construction of a stormwater drain to mitigate the problem of waterlogging in the area. They have suggested connecting the drain to a dry pond located behind their colony, which would help channel water run-off during monsoons and contribute to groundwater recharge. They have also pointed out that the electrical infrastructure in the colony is two decades old and requires upgrades

and the streetlights are also in a dire need of repair. Additionally, residents have requested the civic body to provide a connection from the sewage treatment plant (STP) to supply water for their parks. We also published the following articles recently: Potholed roads of Ribandar keep residents on the edge. Discover the challenges faced by Ribandar residents in Panaji due to pothole-ridden roads. Recent heavy rains have worsened the situation, posing risks to motorists. Local authorities are working to address the issue and ensure road safety for commuters. Kamptee's civil calling in Army's colonial grip. Learn about the upcoming meeting on July 18 to decide the fate of 1,300 acres at Kamptee Cantonment. Residents are hopeful to prove ownership of century-old bungalows for inclusion in the excision plan, potentially unlocking economic value and easing property sale. Contractors to repair roads at own cost. Discover the new policy in Thane where contractors will be accountable for fresh repairs on pothole-filled roads. Guardian minister Shambhuraj Desai aims to improve road quality by

Alert for heavy showers & thunderstorm for next 2 days

Gurgaon: While the daytime temperature increased significantly on Tuesday, India Meteorological department (IMD) has issued a warning for heavy rain, thunderstorms, and lightning at isolated places in Haryana on Wednesday and Thursday. "The region is likely to get heavy rains, thunderstorms and lightning accompanied by gusty wind on July 17 and 18. People should plan their outings accordingly," an IMD official said. The maximum temperature was recorded at 37.4 degrees Celsius, a 3.4 notches rise from 34 degrees on Monday and 2.7 notches up from the season's average.

The nighttime temperature was recorded at 28.1 degrees Celsius, a slight drop from Monday's 28.8 degrees but 1.5 notches above the season's average. The humidity level in the area reached 97% on Tuesday, creating a muggy atmosphere.

High humidity levels can cause health issues such as dehydration, heat exhaustion and respiratory problems. It is recommended to stay hydrated and avoid prolonged exposure to the sun during this period. The IMD predicted that the minimum and maximum temperatures on Wednesday are projected to hover around 28 and 35 degrees Celsius, respectively.

In addition to the heavy rain and high temperatures, IMD has also warned of the possibility of thunderstorms and



lightning in isolated places. Thunderstorms can bring strong winds, heavy rain, and hail, which can cause damage to property and pose risk to public safety. Lightning strikes can be particularly dangerous, and it is essential to seek shelter immediately if you hear thunder or see lightning. A yellow alert has been issued in Delhi too. The

maximum and minimum temperatures in Delhi on Wednesday are likely to hover around 36 and 29 degrees Celsius, respectively. Tuesday's maximum temperature at Safdarjung was 38.4 degrees Celsius and minimum was 29.1 degrees Celsius. The relative humidity was between 56% and 88%. The weather department has issued a yellow

alert for Wednesday and Thursday, and then again for Sunday and Monday for light to moderate showers.

We also published the following articles recently: Heavy rain lashes Delhi-NCR, IMD issues yellow alert. Delhi receives rainfall, bringing relief from humid weather. IMD forecasts light showers and overcast skies for the weekend. AQI at 'moderate' level. Patchy rain expected in the coming days with temperatures around 34-26 degrees Celsius. 111702621

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wanted gangsters end up going abroad on fake passports and documents, and still manage to pull the strings while in hiding. "Even after issuing a Red Corner notice, gangsters leave India after getting passports on fake documents. They make calls from abroad and orchestrate crimes like extortion, murder and supply of arms and drugs," the officer said. This trend of evading prosecution in India, another senior police officer said, began with Surendra Gyong, of Kaithal in Haryana, who fled to South Africa in the early 2000s and died in an encounter with

Haryana Police in 2017. Other gangsters started following in his footsteps, initially taking cover in countries that offer visa-on-arrival to Indians -- Thailand, Dubai, Malaysia, etc. After that, the network spread to Canada and US, and in recent years, wanted criminals opted for countries like Azerbaijan, Portugal and even Spain.

"Twenty gangsters operating criminal activities in India from abroad are on our radar. The process to deport them back to India has started. It is ongoing in different phases as the deportation process is separate for each. They will be brought back once it is complete," said Simardeep Singh, DIG STF. Some other prominent names on Haryana Police's list are Arshdeep Singh alias Arsh Dalla, who was allegedly behind the beheading of a man in northwest Delhi last year and is also wanted by police in Sonapat.

3 illegal colonies razed in Sohna, 10-acre land cleared

Gurgaon. Three unauthorised colonies were razed in the revenue estates of Lakhwas and Sohna in a drive conducted on Tuesday. Several illegal buildings were demolished in an attempt to curb unauthorised land development in the area. In Lakhwas, five structures, one boundary wall, and a 400-metre road network built on a 4-acre colony were demolished.

In Sohna, two unauthorised colonies, each spread over approximately 3 acres, were demolished. The colonies were located along the Sohna-Palwal and Sohna-Nuh roads, where illegal construction is frequently observed. As many as 15 structures and a 200-metre internal road network were demolished. Officials have appealed to the public to avoid investing in unauthorised colonies. They have emphasised the importance of verifying the legal status of land and properties before purchasing.

Potential buyers are urged to contact the office of the District Town Planner (DTP) for any inquiries and to ensure that they are investing in legally sanctioned projects.

"The success of this demolition drive underscores the govt's commitment to enforcing land use regulations and deterring illegal construction activities. More such actions are likely as authorities continue to crack down on unauthorised colonies and ensure orderly urban development," said district town planner (enforcement) Manish Yadav. Another official said that this action not only protects the interests of genuine buyers but also promotes planned and sustainable growth in the region. The authorities' proactive stance serves as a warning to those engaging in or contemplating illegal land developments, reinforcing the importance of adhering to legal processes and regulations, he said.

We also published the following articles recently: Kamptee's civil calling in Army's colonial grip. Learn about the ongoing process to free civilian areas from military control at Kamptee Cantonment. Residents hope to unlock economic value while addressing security concerns. Find out more about this significant development. After cave-ins, revamp soon for sewer line below Sohna highway. Learn about GMDA's plan to reinforce sewer line under Sohna highway using CIPP technology to prevent road cave-ins. Project covers 315m of sewer line and costs Rs 4.85 crore. Tender to be released shortly for contractor selection. Illegal resort owned by Azam Khans family in Rampur demolished. Learn about the partial demolition of Azam Khan's resort in Rampur due to encroachment on gram panchayat land. Action was taken after a complaint by BJP MLA.

Industry status to single-window clearance: Realtors' Budget wishlist

Gurgaon. As the Union Budget is approaching, realtors are hoping for growth-oriented reforms and measures. Industry leaders are optimistic about potential initiatives that can stimulate demand, increase supply, and foster a conducive environment for real estate projects.

Pradeep Aggarwal, founder and chairman of Signature Global (India), spoke about what the industry is expecting from the budget, including granting industry status to real estate, simplifying the approval process through a single-window clearance system, revising GST input tax credit rules, increasing home loan interest rebate under Section 24, and allocating more funds for urban infrastructure development. G Hari Babu, president of NAREDCO, emphasised the need for flexibility in GST payment options for builders. He said, "We have urged the govt to allow builders the option to pay GST at a concessional rate without input tax credit (ITC) or at a higher tax rate after availing of ITC. At present, GST on affordable housing units is levied at 1% without ITC and at 5% without ITC on other residential units. The option to choose between concessional rates without ITC or higher rates with ITC would result in tax cost savings and better cash flows for developers, ultimately benefiting end customers." Badal Yagnik, CEO of Colliers India, discussed the potential impact of granting 'infrastructure' status to the real estate sector, which is expected to contribute 13 to 15% of India's GDP by 2030. Sanjeev Bhandari, founder and CEO of AirBrick Infra, expressed optimism about the budget's focus on infrastructure development and urbanisation, particularly the continuation of Urban Infrastructure Development Fund with an annual allocation of Rs 10,000 crore. We also published the following articles recently: EV Industry Requests Incentives, Infrastructure Funds, and Tax Rationalization in Upcoming Budget. Learn about the expectations of the electric vehicle sector for the Union Budget 2024-25. Industry leaders are advocating for incentives and support to drive growth and achieve targets. Find out more about the key measures being pushed for in the upcoming budget. 111744199

Finally, facelift for Malibu Towne roads

Gurgaon. Two years after taking over Malibu Towne, MCG is all set to recarpet 18km internal road network of the residential colony. The corporation has prepared an estimate of Rs 6.5 crore for the project, an official said, adding that the work on all colony roads will take 11 months to complete after the tenders are issued. "We have floated a tender at an estimated cost of Rs 6.5 crore and will soon hire a contractor to construct roads in Malibu Towne. The work will be completed in 11 months. All the roads of the colony will be recarpeted and fixed," Sanjeev Kumar, MCG executive engineer, said. The civic body took over Malibu Towne two years ago. It is now spread across 204 acres and houses over 10,000 residents. The development came after residents were raising several complaints including the deteriorating roads in the colony. "The colony's roads have



then. We have been actively pursuing the issue of road recarpeting for the past two years, following the takeover. We have persistently approached the officials to commence the work." Vijay Shiv Nath, president of Malibu Towne RWA, said. Further, residents have also requested the construction of a stormwater drain to mitigate the

and the streetlights are also in a dire need of repair. Additionally, residents have requested the civic body to provide a connection from the sewage treatment plant (STP) to supply water for their parks. We also published the following articles recently: Potholed roads of Ribandar keep residents on the edge. Discover the challenges faced by Ribandar residents in Panaji due to pothole-ridden roads. Recent heavy rains have worsened the situation, posing risks to motorists. Local authorities are working to address the issue and ensure road safety for commuters. Kamptee's civil calling in Army's colonial grip. Learn about the upcoming meeting on July 18 to decide the fate of 1,300 acres at Kamptee Cantonment. Residents are hopeful to prove ownership of

Minor held for murder in Gurgaon's first BNS case, strangled 9-year-old girl

GURGAON: A 16-year-old boy allegedly strangled to death a nine-year-old girl, his neighbour in a housing society, on Monday morning when she walked in on him trying to steal from the flat. He set her body on fire by lighting pieces of camphor and cloth he found lying around after he killed her, apparently to destroy evidence. The boy, who was apprehended under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) - the first case to be registered in the city under the new law that has replaced the Indian Penal Code - had allegedly gone to the neighbour's house to steal jewellery when her mother and brother were visiting his flat. The two families live in adjacent towers of the Sector 107 society, which was built under the affordable housing scheme. The case was registered at Rajendra Park police station. The boy told investigators he entered the neighbour's flat thinking everyone was away and panicked when the girl suddenly walked out of the wash-room.

Name Change
I, hitherto known as Sonu Kumar S/O Santosh Kumar, R/O Parmanet address-Gali No-1, Professor Colony, Rambagh, Purnea, Purnia, Bihar-854301 Present address-AD 58C, S/F Pitampura, South-West Delhi-110029 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VIRAJ KUSHWAHA.

Name Change
I, RITA DEVI Wife of No. JC-342602N Rank-SUB Name-TRILOK SINGH Presently residing at VILL-KHOLI, PO-KAULI, DIST-PITHORAGARH, UTTARAKHAND-262544 have changed my name from RITA DEVI to RITA DHAM for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, Sunita kharoti W/o-Rajesh Kumar kharoti R/o 68-top floor, Gali no-3, Krishna Nagar, saldarjung Enclave, South West Delhi-110029 have changed my name from Sunita kharoti to Mona kharoti for all future purposes.

Name Change
I, KHUSHNUMA BANO wife of NO-15571051M Rank-HAV Name - RAJ MOHAMMAD ALI R/O PO-KANKER, DISTT. KANKER, KANKER, CHATTISGARH-494334 have changed my name from KHUSHNUMA BANO to KHUSHNUMA BEGAM for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, kamal Acharya S/O Chandra Acharya R/O PT-62/25, Kalkaji, PO: Kalkaji, DIST: South Delhi, Delhi-110019 have changed the name of my minor daughter BHAVANA K C and she shall hereafter be known as BHAVANA ACHARYA.

Name Change
I, Shiv Sharma S/O R. P. Sharma, R/O A1B/15, Janakpuri B-1, Janakpuri, west delhi, DELHI - 110058 have changed the name of my minor daughter Shreya Sharma aged 11 years and she shall hereafter be known as Bhavya Sharma.

Name Change
I, NO-17013773X Rank-CFN Name-DESAI VASUDEVBHAI GANESHBHAI R/O VILL-GULABANI MUMBAI, PO-HARPOL, TEH-TALOD, DIST-SABARKANTHA, GUJARAT-383305 have changed my Minor son's name from JEYANS to DESAI JEYANSH VASUDEVBHAI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, JC-332496M Rank-NB SUB Name- P. ELUMALAI R/O VILL-KELAPPARAI, PO-KEERAPATTY, TEH-HARUR, DIST-DHARMAPURI, TAMIL NADU-636903 have changed my Minor daughter's name from SUDEEPTHI PRIYANGA to SUDEEPTHI PRIYANGA E for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, BRU BALA BHADOURIA mother of NO-16011698K Rank-HAV Name-SUNIL SINGH BHADOURIA R/O VILL-KHADRI KA CHOTA PURA, PO-GHAT KI AHOROLI, TEH-ATER, DIST-BHIND, MADHYA PRADESH-477111 have changed my name from BRU BALA BHADOURIA to BRABALA BHADOURIA for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, RITU DEVI wife of NO-16011698K Rank-HAV Name-SUNIL SINGH BHADOURIA R/O VILL-KHADRI KA CHOTA PURA, PO-GHAT KI AHOROLI, TEH-ATER, DIST-BHIND, MADHYA PRADESH-477111 have changed my name from RITU DEVI to REETU DEVI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, R S PATEL father of JC-339094X rank- SUB Name- PUSHPENDRA SINGH PATEL R/O H.NO-3810/9, VILL-KHAIJANCHI NAGAR, PO-ADHARJAL, TEH-JABALPUR, DIST-JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH-482004 have changed my name from R S PATEL to RAM SEWAK PATEL for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/03/1957 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1956 vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, PARVEEN SHARMA S/O SATPAL SHARMA R/O V-587, Gali No.15, Vijay Park, Maujpur, Delhi-110053, declare that name of mine & my wife has been wrongly written as PRAVEEN KUMAR SHARMA & NUTAN SHARMA, in my minor daughter KANISHKA SHARMA aged about 17 years in her 10th class educational documents. And name of mine has been wrongly written as PRAVEEN SHARMA in her 12th class educational documents. The actual name of mine is Amrik kaur which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, Amrik Kaur w/o Manjeet Singh R/O H.no. 67 sabbari colony chattarpur Road behind union bank New Delhi-110074. Declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Amreek kaur in my minor son Simer Preet Singh aged 17 years in his 10th, 12th class educational documents. The actual name of mine is Amrik kaur which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Sh. Surinder Kumar Badhwar s/o Late Bhagat Singh Badhwar r/o A-48 A Rajouri Garden New Delhi-110027 has severed his all relations with his son Kamaldeep Badhwar and his wife Smt. Suman Badhwar and their sons Arshdeep Badhwar and Khushdeep Badhwar all are resident of PATRAN Distt. Patiala Punjab hereby disown and/or debars them due to their dishonest and bad behavior, disloyal from all his movable and immovable properties. Any one dealing with my client's son, his wife and their children shall do so at his/her own risk, cost and responsibility and my client shall not be liable for any act of his son, his wife and their children in future.
NIDHI GUPTA Advocate
Ch. No. T-34 Teshil Road District Courts Tis Hazari Delhi-110054

Name Change
I, hitherto known as ABUSHAMA S/O ABUL IRFAN R/O 04, Karauli, PO - Karauli, Singhwara, Dist - Dharbhanga, Bihar-847104 and Presently residing at K-97 Third floor, Base Side, Gali No.-5, Abul Fazzal Enclave, Park Lane Nagar, New Delhi -110025 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ABUSHAMA IRFAN.

Name Change
I, R S PATEL father of JC-339094X rank- SUB Name- PUSHPENDRA SINGH PATEL R/O H.NO-3810/9, VILL-KHAIJANCHI NAGAR, PO-ADHARJAL, TEH-JABALPUR, DIST-JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH-482004 have changed my name from R S PATEL to RAM SEWAK PATEL for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/03/1957 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1956 vide affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, KALPANA GANPATI SURIYA WANSHI Mother of JC-342180N Rank-SUB Name-SURYAWANSHI ATUL GANPATI R/O VILL-SAMBARWADI, PO-KANCHANPUR, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416306 have changed my name from KALPANA GANPATI SURIYA WANSHI to KALPANA GANPATI SURYAWANSHI for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 22/01/1960 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1967 vide Affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change
I, KALPANA GANPATI SURIYA WANSHI Mother of JC-342180N Rank-SUB Name-SURYAWANSHI ATUL GANPATI R/O VILL-SAMBARWADI, PO-KANCHANPUR, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416306 have changed my name from KALPANA GANPATI SURIYA WANSHI to KALPANA GANPATI SURYAWANSHI for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 22/01/1960 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1967 vide Affidavit dated 17/07/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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NEWS BOX

Actor Jack Black's band cancels Australia tour amid outrage over Trump joke

Sydney. Tenacious D frontman Jack Black has cancelled the comedy-rock group's tour of Australia and New Zealand, after his bandmate stoked outrage with a quip about the attempted assassination of Donald Trump. Guitarist Kyle Gass said "don't miss Trump next time" when asked to make a birthday wish while playing a packed gig in Sydney over the weekend, part of the band's "Spicy Meatball" tour. While the jibe drew laughter and applause from the crowd, it swiftly sparked controversy when posted online. "I was blindsided by what was said at the show on Sunday," said Black, the Hollywood funnyman who starred in films such as "School of Rock", "High Fidelity" and "Kung Fu Panda". "After much reflection, I no longer feel it is appropriate to continue the Tenacious D tour, and all future creative plans are on hold," he said on Instagram late Tuesday night. Australia's ambassador to the United States, former prime minister Kevin Rudd, said the comment made him "feel sick". "People might think it's a bit of 'funny haha' at a concert. But it's not. These people should just grow up and find a decent job." Four remaining shows in Australia have been cancelled along with two dates in New Zealand, management company Frontier Touring said Wednesday in a statement. The band's biggest hit came in 2002 with the track "Tribute", which fans commonly refer to as the "greatest song in the world", a reference to its tongue-in-cheek lyrics. Gunman Thomas Matthew Crooks opened fire at a rally in Pennsylvania on Saturday -- a near-miss assassination attempt that left Trump bleeding from his right ear.

Islamic State claims responsibility for Oman mosque attack that left 9 dead

Cairo. Islamic State claimed responsibility for an attack at a Shi'ite Muslim mosque in Oman, the group said on Tuesday, which left at least nine people dead, including three attackers, a rare security breach in the oil-producing Gulf state. The attack on Monday, which is unusual in the wealthy, Sunni Muslim-dominated Gulf states, raises fears that the Islamic State group may be trying to gain a foothold in new territory.

"Three suicide attackers from the Islamic State attacked last night a gathering of Shi'ite (Muslims) while they were practicing their annual rituals at a temple in the Wadi al-Kabir district in the (Omani) capital," according to group's statement, which cited three security sources. The Islamic State fighters fired on Shi'ite worshippers and exchanged gunfire with Omani security forces until morning, the statement added.

Islamic State late on Tuesday published what it said was a video of the attack on its Telegram site. The group also said that the attack left more than 30 Shi'ite Muslims and five Omani forces, including a police officer, killed or wounded.

Joe Biden pledges 'I am all in,' criticises Trump on economic policy

Addressing people in his address at a convention, US President Joe Biden said that he was "all in" to seek reelection and criticised his Republican rival Donald Trump on various fronts including his handling of the economy during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Washington DC President Joe Biden promised Black voters on Tuesday that he was "all in" to seek re-election on November 5 and assailed Donald Trump's record as president, in his first political speech since his Republican rival's attempted assassination. Biden was greeted by chants of "four more years" as he spoke to the NAACP's annual convention in Las Vegas, a major gathering of Black voters. Biden said he was grateful that Trump was not seriously hurt at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on Saturday but roundly criticised him on a variety of fronts, including his handling of the economy during the coronavirus pandemic. Let me say it again because Trump is lying like hell about it - Black unemployment hit a record low under the Biden-Harris administration," Biden said. He scolded Trump for



initially contending that former President Barack Obama was not an American citizen and for his reference to "Black jobs" at the Trump-Biden debate on June 27. "I am all in," said Biden.

The attempt on Trump's life on Saturday prompted the Biden campaign to pull its television ads, call off verbal attacks on the former president and focus instead on a message of unity. "Our politics got too heated," said Biden. The campaign's strategy previously was to focus on tough criticism of Trump as a threat to U.S. democracy and to highlight his failure to admit his 2020 election loss and his felony convictions.

Now, it is trying to calibrate a less pugilistic message that still strikes a stark comparison between the two candidates. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the oldest and largest US civil rights organisation, represents a key constituency for the Democratic Party. While Black voters turned out heavily for Biden in 2020, polls have shown waning support for him from the constituency in this election.

Torrential rain triggers flash flooding, power outage in Canada's Toronto

Heavy rain led to flash flooding in Toronto, causing significant disruptions in the city. Power outages, travel delays, and flooded streets were reported as emergency services responded.

Toronto. Torrential rain on Tuesday triggered flash flooding in parts of Toronto, Canada's financial center, causing power outages, disrupting traffic and forcing airlines to curtail service. Toronto Hydro, the local power distribution company, said it was responding to scattered outages that it suspected were caused by flooding at a transmission station. At 3 p.m., about 123,000 customers were without power, it said. Billy Bishop Airport, situated on an island off downtown Toronto, said the underwater pedestrian tunnel leading to



the passenger terminal, was flooded and temporarily closed. At least some flights were delayed or canceled. At lunchtime, many of downtown Toronto's normally bustling restaurants were darkened, with kitchen workers and waiters gathered outside, chatting and waiting for the lights to come back. With traffic lights out, cars

and delivery trucks backed on city streets, snarling some intersections. Across the world, intense rain storms are becoming more common because of climate change, weather experts say, putting a heavy strain on infrastructure that in many cities is not designed to handle heavy, sustained downpours.

The Toronto Transit Commission, which operates subway, bus and trolley service, said trains were bypassing Union Station, the city's main rail terminal. Go Transit, which operates train service to and from Toronto's suburbs, said the flooding had caused some disruptions. Parts of the Don Valley Parkway, a major highway running east of downtown, resembled a river soon after the rains began, with images showing cars stalled out in the brownish waters several feet (dozens of cm) deep.

Brandon Rolle, 24 said he was stuck inside his car on the Don Valley Parkway for two hours before the fire service came to rescue him. But his car was still stuck on the flooded highway until it could be towed off, he said. "They're saying they have to wait until the water recedes," he said. The rains stopped around midday, and Environment Canada forecast partly cloudy skies for the rest of Tuesday.

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow in a televised briefing said emergency services were not affected by the flooding, but there was some water in parts of the City Hall.

Hot air from Africa bakes southern Europe, severe heat warning in Italy

Rome. The Italian health ministry placed 12 cities under the most severe heat warning Tuesday as a wave of hot air from Africa baked southern Europe and the Balkans and sent temperatures over 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), with the worst still to come. Croatia reported the highest-ever temperatures of the Adriatic Sea, with the thermometer reaching nearly 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) at the southern walled city of Dubrovnik, the country's most popular tourism spot. In Serbia, the state power company reported record consumption Tuesday due to the use of air conditioning. Municipal authorities in several southern European and Balkan cities took measures to look after elderly people in particular as civil protection crews fielded calls for water-dropping aircraft such as Canadairs to douse wildfires that raged in southern Italy and North Macedonia. "It's hellishly hot," said Carmen D-az, a tourist from Madrid who was trying to keep cool with a fan at lunchtime in Rome. "These fans help a little too, but it's really hot." In Greece, municipalities made air-conditioned spaces available to the public. Certain forms of outdoor work were banned,

such as manual labor, deliveries and construction, during the hottest time of the day when temperatures reached 40 C. Temperatures were expected to hit 42 C on Wednesday and Thursday in several countries. Spain's national weather service said thermometers



could reach 44 C in the southern Guadalquivir river basin in the coming days. To beat the heat, Rome's zoo made plans to offer popsicle respite for the animals later this week when temperatures were expected to top 38 C. For those flocking to the Eternal City's Coldplay concerts this week, there were no such icy treats. "It really feels like we are in an oven with a hair dryer pointed at us," said Patrizia Valerio, who had just arrived in Rome from Varese for the band's final performance

Tuesday night. Fellow concert-goer Mattia Rossi was more philosophical, noting that the freak storms that hit Italy earlier this summer as evidence of climate change wreaking havoc on the southern Mediterranean weather systems. "These are all symptoms of a planet that is suffering in my opinion," Rossi said. In Albania, where temperatures were expected to hit 42 C, a 72-year-old man was found dead at his farm in Memaliaj, 200 kilometers (125 miles) south of the capital Tirana and the cause of the death is believed to be the heat, the local Panorama portal reported. There was no immediate confirmation by health authorities. In Tirana itself, streets and cafes seemed almost empty,

with the few people out and about using umbrellas to shade themselves. High temperatures and winds were fanning wildfires from the south to the north in recent weeks. Even with temperatures a comparatively cool 34 C, the Istanbul municipality issued a heat warning on Tuesday advising residents — especially the elderly, pregnant women, children, and those with health issues — to avoid going out between 10 am and 4 pm.

Putin didn't start wars, invasions when Trump was President: Nikki Haley

World Endorsing Republican nominee Donald Trump for the November 2024 US presidential election, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley said that Russian President Vladimir Putin refrained from "invasions" and "wars" when Trump was the US president. Haley was a former leading rival of Trump for the Republican presidential nomination. She stated that when Barack Obama was president, Vladimir Putin invaded Crimea, and under Joe Biden's presidency, he invaded all of Ukraine. However, Putin knew "Donald Trump was tough", she said at the Republican National Convention. "When Donald Trump was president, Putin did nothing. No invasions, no wars. Putin didn't attack Ukraine because he knew Donald Trump was tough. A strong president doesn't start wars, a strong president prevents wars," Haley asserted. Haley, who is also a former UN ambassador, also praised Donald Trump's foreign policy during his previous presidency.

"In this moment, we have a chance to set aside our differences, and focus on what unites us and strengthens our country," she said in her address at the Republican convention days after the assassination attempt on Donald Trump during an election rally.



She further stressed unity in her speech, and said, "Our foreign enemies win when they see Americans hate each other. They see that today, whether it's on college campuses or in a field in Butler, Pennsylvania. But we can conquer those fears with strength and unity." Haley, who had described Trump as unelectable and unfit for office during her campaign, urged her supporters to vote for him over Democratic President Joe Biden "for the sake of our nation", adding that "You don't have to agree with Trump 100 per cent of the time to vote for him." During her campaign, Haley had been highly critical of Donald Trump, alleging that the former President was siding with Vladimir Putin.

6 foreigners found dead in Bangkok hotel, Thai PM orders probe

Bangkok. Thai police are investigating the deaths of six foreign nationals whose bodies were found in a room at an upmarket hotel in Bangkok on Tuesday, including looking for a seventh person in connection with the incident. All six, who were of Vietnamese descent, with two carrying US passports, checked into Bangkok's Grand Hyatt Erawan hotel at two separate times after arriving on Saturday and Sunday, police official Thiti Saengsawang told reporters. The group — three men and three women — checked into different rooms but their bodies were found in one room, which did not show any signs of struggle, he said. "This was not self harm, but someone caused the deaths," said Thiti, adding that police were looking for a seventh person connected with the group. "We are tracing every step since they got off the plane." Police officers found the bodies after a call from the



hotel staff at around 5.30 p.m. (1030 GMT) reporting that there had been deaths, the Thai police said in a statement. Thai prime minister Srettha Thavisin, who visited the hotel late on Tuesday with senior police officials, ordered a swift investigation on the matter, the government said in a statement. "The prime minister has ordered all agencies to urgently take action to avoid impact on tourism," it said. The US State Department was "closely monitoring the situation and (we) stand ready to provide consular

assistance," a spokesperson said, referring questions on the circumstances of the deaths to local authorities. The Vietnamese embassy in Bangkok did not respond to calls from Reuters. The Grand Hyatt Erawan, which has over 350 rooms and is located in a popular tourist district in the Thai capital known for luxury shopping and restaurants, also did not immediately respond to calls or an email seeking comment. Tourism serves as a key driver for Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, with the government expecting 35 million foreign arrivals this year after 28 million visited the country in 2023, spending 1.2 trillion baht (\$33.71 billion). The tourism sector was shaken in October by a shooting spree at a luxury shopping mall close to the Hyatt in which two foreigners were killed, prompting government measures to improve confidence.

6 dead in Bangladesh as job quota protest turns violent, schools, colleges shut

Dhaka. At least six people, including three students, were killed and more than 100 others injured on Tuesday as protesters demanding reforms of the quota system in government jobs clashed with police in major cities across Bangladesh, forcing the closure of schools and colleges.

Police and major news outlets reported two new deaths in the capital Dhaka and the northeastern port city of Chattogram while earlier today, four deaths were reported from the capital, Chattogram and northwestern Rangpur. According to the reports, at least three of the deceased were students while the violence injured some 400 others on Tuesday as protests demanding quota system reforms spread across major Bangladesh cities a day after it took a violent turn after a week of street demonstrations. Authorities today called out the paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) troops in four major cities after hundreds of policemen in riot gear overnight fanned out in public university campuses across the country. The government, meanwhile, ordered closure of schools, and colleges until further order amid escalated violence.

"All high schools, colleges, madrasahs (Islamic seminaries) and polytechnic institutes under the purview of the Department of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education will be shut down until further order, considering the security of the students," an education ministry spokesman said. The violence

nearly emptied the usually crowded capital where unidentified people set on fire two buses after exploding dozens of Molotov cocktails while several parts of the city witnessed sporadic clashes causing roadblocks leaving thousands of people stranded in the streets and their workplaces.

The clashes, however, erupted on Monday as activists of ruling Awami League's student front confronted the protesters who insist the existing quota system was largely debarring the enrolment of meritorious students in government services. Demonstrators accused the ruling party's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League of attacking their "peaceful protests" with backing from police. The protesters blockaded highways and railway routes in four major cities of central Dhaka, northwestern Rajshahi, southwestern Khulna and the major port city Chattogram. Police fired tear gas canisters and rubber bullets as university students battled with counter-protesters armed with sticks and brickbats.

Rival student groups marched in several key locations around the capital Dhaka, some throwing bricks at each other, with traffic in the city of 20 million almost ground to a halt. Students of the premier Dhaka University took the lead in the latest one-week protests for recruitment



in first- and second-class government jobs, demanding seats to be filled based on talent, reforming the existing quota system. The protesters said they were staging peaceful demonstrations on Monday at two public universities in Dhaka and its outskirts when they were attacked by student activists from the ruling party activists armed with sticks, rocks, machetes and Molotov cocktails.

Under the existing system, 30 per cent jobs are reserved for descendants of 1971 Liberation War veterans, 10 per cent for administrative districts, 10 per cent for women, five per cent for ethnic minority groups and one per cent for physically handicapped people.

Every year some 3,000 government jobs open up to nearly 400,000 graduates.

The student protest appears to be the first major demonstration against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government

since she won a fourth straight term in January. Hasina said on Tuesday that "war veterans should receive the highest respect for their sacrifice in 1971 as they joined the war with whatever they had, abandoning the dream of their own life, leaving behind their families, parents and everything". She also criticised the protesters saying the war veterans must get the benefit instead of those who opposed the creation of Bangladesh siding with Pakistani troops in 1971, known as "razakars". The quotas were stopped under a government circular in 2018 after mass student protests but last month, the high court ordered the quotas for veterans' families to be reinstated, angering students and triggering new demonstrations. The Appellate Division of the unitary Bangladesh's Supreme Court last week, however, temporarily halted the high court's order for four weeks while the chief justice asked protesting students to return to classes, saying the apex court would issue a decision in four weeks.

The protests, however, continued halting traffic in Dhaka. Amnesty International urged Bangladesh authorities to "immediately guarantee the safety of all peaceful protesters" while the US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller also denounced the "violence against peaceful protesters", prompting a rebuke from Bangladesh's foreign ministry.

250 candidates raise objections over errors in DSC hall ticket

HYDERABAD: Around 250 candidates for the District Selection Committee (DSC) 2024 examination approached the Directorate of School Education in the city on Tuesday to rectify errors in their hall tickets. Additional Director K. Lingaiah told TNIE that the errors would be corrected by Wednesday morning. "We will make sure that we do not miss any candidates," he added. The DSC, the recruitment test for Secondary Grade Teachers, School Assistants and Language Pandits, will be held between July 18 and August 5 in two shifts. Lingaiah maintained that the errors



were not caused by the department. He said the mistakes were made by the candidates while entering their details. "While some entered the wrong medium, some entered the post they are applying to incorrectly," he added. In June, the Office of the Commissioner of School Education issued an amendment reducing the percentage of marks to the post of School Assistant in all subjects, School Assistant (Physical Education), Language Pandits and Physical Education Teachers in the DSC examination as per the National Council of Teacher Education Regulations.

845 wild jumbo deaths in Kerala in nine years

The latest inter-state census showed a significant increase in the jumbo death rate in less than a decade



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM : Calling for urgent measures to conserve the wild elephant population in Kerala, the latest inter-state census showed a significant increase in jumbo death rate in less than a decade. Between 2015 and 2023, 845 elephant deaths were recorded in Kerala's forests. The highest mortality rate — around 40% — was among elephants aged under 10, according to the study. In an effort to prevent a rise in mortality, the study called for a protocol similar to the one developed by Tamil Nadu — TN EDAF (elephant death audit framework). Measures to address human-animal

conflicts have also been highlighted by the study. According to the census brought out on Tuesday, the current wild elephant population in the state is 1,793, as against 1,920 in May 2023 (a 7% reduction), with a density of 0.19/km². While there was no significant change in the population in Periyar reserve, (811 in 2023 and 813 in 2024), an increase of 16% was recorded in Nilambur. The census showed substantial decrease in elephant population in the other two elephant reserves — Wayanad (29%) and Anamudi (12%). The difference in numbers compared to last year is natural and insignificant, since

elephants migrate across reserves, based on water and fodder availability. The stable numbers in Periyar and Nilambur could be attributed to the undulating topography along the state border. Periyar offers more potential elephant habitats, compared to neighbouring reserves. The noticeable reduction in Wayanad could be due to climatic conditions like extreme dry seasons and late summer rain, it said. Wayanad is surrounded by prime elephant habitats like Mudumalai, Bandipur and Nagarhole Tiger Reserves, and these flat terrains facilitate elephant movements. Such factors too have contributed in the difference, the study said. One of the noticeable findings in the census pertains to the significant elephant death rate over the years, with higher mortality in 2023. The study observed that the mortality rate could also be associated with EEHV (Elephant Endothelotropic Herpesviruses). To ensure better immunity, it's critical to protect and restore natural habitats and avoid future fragmentation of herds, it suggested. While a slew of reasons might have contributed to differences in elephant population, climatic conditions play the key role. "The reduction in numbers is negligible since migration of elephants contribute to the same. The deaths could be primarily due to the herpes virus, with other minor reasons like electrocution. However, there's definitely a need to conserve natural habitats and prevent age-specific mortality through proven measures," said sources.

GCC plans to centralise evaluation of class 10 & 12 term examination papers

CHENNAI: To increase the pass rate in schools run by Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), the civic body's education department has decided to evaluate the mid-year term exam answer sheets of class 10 and 12 students in a centralised manner. The test papers are currently being evaluated at the respective schools. The initiative is aimed at assessing the students' performance more accurately during the course of the academic year and improve the overall result in public exams, a circular issued by the corporation's education department said. According to officials, the new system has been introduced as there is a concern about teachers being liberal in evaluating the term papers of students in their own schools, which results in misleading assessment of performance. The circular states that assistant education officers will monitor the evaluation of answer sheets, which will take place at the higher secondary schools located in Nungambakkam, from July 22 to August 2. Headmasters have been instructed to send the answer sheets to the respective evaluation centre, and teachers have been asked to participate. Evaluation for each subject will take two days for class 10 and up to four days for class 12.

Headmasters and teachers, however, have expressed concern as the exercise may affect their academic schedule. The headmaster of a higher secondary school said teachers were already struggling to complete the syllabus within the stipulated time. With centralised evaluation being implemented for only GCC-run schools, students of these schools will miss out on two to four days of teaching every term since the teachers will have to report at the evaluation centre. At present, teachers evaluate the papers making use of the time during their leisure periods, he said. Moreover, the deployment of more teachers at the evaluation centres would leave the headmasters without enough teachers to even monitor the classes, he added. Teachers further suggested that if officials are concerned about improper evaluation in schools, they could consider exchange of answer sheets between schools in a randomised manner for evaluation instead of opting for a centralised evaluation, which, according to them, will create more problems.

Enumeration begins to relocate 100 families from George Town area, Chennai

CHENNAI: The city corporation, along with the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board, began enumeration of over a 100 homeless families, many of whom are third generation residents, residing in Jaffar Sarang and Narayanappa Streets in George Town. They are likely to be evicted and resettled soon. Sources said the customs office along one of these streets has planned further constructions in the area and had requested corporation to offer alternative housing arrangements for these families. A corporation official said discussions are on for resettlement options. "Once the enumeration is done, TNUHDB will take a call based on the availability of tenements. Generally, we ensure the new dwellings are in close proximity," the official said. Families that TNIE spoke to said they are unwilling to shift to the tenements in Eravamoor which was suggested during the first round of discussions.

"We would prefer houses in and around Mint and anything beyond is unacceptable. Our families have been living here for decades. Our parents



were also born and raised here. This is also where our livelihoods are," said one of the residents who did not want to be named. On Tuesday, some families which had young girls and had taken small houses nearby on rent considering their safety, had an altercation with authorities. They wanted their names also to be included in the enumeration for alternative site. "Some families with young girls felt it was unsafe to live on the streets. So, they had left some of their belongings here and taken small spaces on rent nearby. Officials initially wanted to see the house to include their names, but the issues were sorted out," another resident said.

When asked if notices were issued, a corporation official said, "We have informed the families of their evictions." Ward 60 councillor Azad Z who was on the spot said, "The families had no objections to moving as long as they are satisfied with the houses being offered. The enumeration is almost over and everyone cooperated."

Sathyamangalam Road, L&T Bypass Road to be widened, Coimbatore MP discusses project work

COIMBATORE: Coimbatore MP Ganapathy P Rajkumar, along with the district collector, Coimbatore Corporation Commissioner, police and highways department officials inspected the Sathyamangalam Road near Ganapathy junction on Tuesday following complaints about frequent traffic congestion. Later, he held a meeting with highways department officials over the projects that are underway in the city. Road development works at the



Ganapathy More Market area, widening of the Sathyamangalam road from Kurumbapalayam to Tamil Nadu-Karnataka state border into four-lane and six-lane, and widening of Coimbatore L&T bypass road into a four-lane highway among other project works were discussed in detail during the meeting. According to sources, development work

The BBMP administrator SR Umashankar said that a waste-to-energy plant is being set up in the city and it will be put into operation soon.

approval for the removal of the accident area at Ganapathy More Market Junction on National Highway 948 has been sanctioned under Annual Plan 2024-25. Under this project, the road from Ganapathy Textool Bridge to Prozone Mall will be widened into four lanes and six lanes. fund of Rs 639.18 crore has been allocated by the Ministry of Road Transport for preparation of detailed project report and land acquisition for the widening of the Sathyamangalam Road (NH 648) from Kurumbapalayam to Tamil Nadu-Karnataka border into four-lane and six-lane road. For this work, 291.41 hectares of land will be acquired in 31 villages in Coimbatore, Tirupur and Erode districts including 14 villages.

The length of the Coimbatore L&T Bypass is 28 km. The road is currently 10 meters wide. The work of preparing a Detailed Project Report (DPR) to widen this highway into a four-lane road is currently underway. A review meeting was held in this regard, sources added.

TN shops in malls were raided in connection with airport smuggling case

Special squad to probe gold case, which is also being monitored by CBIC.

CHENNAI: Customs officials on Tuesday conducted searches at multiple shops in prominent malls near Egmore and Anna Salai in connection with the 267kg gold smuggling case at the Chennai airport. Sources said that important documents were seized during the searches. However, customs officials were tight-lipped about any further information. According to sources, the shops that were searched on Tuesday are linked to a few retail outlets operating in the international terminal of the airport whose employees were found to be hand in glove with gold smugglers including Sri Lankan transit passengers. One of the shops at a mall is also connected to GA Prithvi, a member of the Tamil Nadu BJP unit and former director of Vidvedaa PRG, the master concessionaire for retail at the airport. Prithvi is under the scanner of customs for his alleged role in facilitating Sabir Ali, the YouTuber turned owner of the gift shop 'Airhub', in getting a contract at the airport.

Despite multiple attempts by TNIE, Prithvi was not available for comment. Apart from probing the smuggling nexus of eight employees of Airhub, customs has expanded the scope of investigation to several other shops at the airport which were supposedly set up just to aid gold smuggling, sources said, adding that a special squad has been formed to investigate the case which is also being monitored by top officials in the Central Board of Indirect Taxes (CBIC) in New Delhi. Two shops operating in the international terminal at the airport, selling Kashmiri apparel and silk clothes, were found to be involved in gold smuggling and their contracts had been terminated. The staff of another shop specialising in selling accessories at the airport is also under customs scanner after some of its employees.

Dengue cases in Karnataka cross 10,000 mark

BENGALURU: Total dengue cases in Karnataka have breached the 10,000 mark touching 10,449 cases. On Tuesday, the state recorded 487 fresh cases. The total number of active cases in the state has reached 358. 128 of them are hospitalised. The total cases of hospitalised patients are highest in BBMP limits with 141, followed by 23 each from Mandya and Tumakuru, and 19 in Dharwad. On



Monday, Rajesh, a resident of Madalu village in Arasikere taluk, was admitted to Arasikere taluk hospital and later shifted to HIMS as his condition deteriorated. There has been a rise in dengue cases in Hassan.

Tuesday, 4,572 tests were conducted, taking the total tests to 78,489. BBMP topped the list with 2,724 tests, followed by Hassan with 244 tests, Chikkamagaluru with 208 tests and Udipi with 199 tests. To date, the state has recorded eight dengue deaths, and the fatality rate is at 0.07%.

Suspected dengue kills 9-yr-old in Hassan district
A nine-year-old boy died of suspected dengue at HIMS hospital in Hassan on

Debunking popular notion, Malayalis spend peanuts on booze and fags

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM : Would you believe it? The spend on liquor and tobacco in an average Keralaite's home budget is peanuts! And not just that. The Household Consumption Expenditure Survey for 2022-23 has more surprises in store. People's spending on liquor and tobacco in the state has come down over the years! As per the survey, residents in rural Kerala spent 1.88% of their total household expenditure on liquor and tobacco and those in urban areas 1.37%. The national average for rural and urban areas is 3.70% and 2.41% respectively. Kerala has the second-lowest spending on intoxicants in the country.

Among all states and UTs, the highest spending for rural areas is in Andaman and Nicobar (9.08%) and for urban areas Arunachal Pradesh (6.51%). The lowest spending for rural areas is in Goa

(1.52%) and for urban areas Maharashtra (1.14%). In the previous edition of the survey held in 2011-12, Kerala's spending on liquor and tobacco was 2.68% for



rural areas and 1.87% for urban areas. A comparison of the two survey reports reveal certain changes in people's consumption pattern. The share of food items in total expenditure saw a decline from 42.99% in 2012 to 39.10% now for rural areas and 36.97% to

36.01% for urban areas. Expenditure on 'conveyance' almost doubled for rural areas

Among food items, share of cereals dipped from 5.38% to 2.96% in rural areas, and 4.57% to 2.52% in urban areas. While the share of milk increased, that of vegetable and fruits came down. The category "egg, fish and meat" had the biggest share among food items in both surveys. Among non-food expenditure, the share of 'conveyance' has almost doubled for rural areas — from 6.09% in 2012 to 11.52% in 2023. For urban areas, the figure rose from 7.11% to 10.61%. The share of hospitalisation expense rose from 3.48% to 4.33% for rural areas and 3.03% to 3.41% for urban areas. Medical (non-hospitalisation) expense rose from 5.68% to 6.57% for rural areas and 5.03% pc to 5.80% for urban areas.

Terminal work at Tambaram: Trains to run from Chengalpattu till July 31 in Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI: Southern Railway has announced major changes in train operations due to signalling upgradation and yard remodelling works at Tambaram. From July 23 to 31, the Vaigai and Rockfort express trains to Madurai and Tiruchy respectively will be operated from Chengalpattu instead of Egmore. The Egmore-bound Pallavan Express from Karaikudi will also be short-terminated at Chengalpattu during this period. An official note issued on Monday said nearly 20 trains operating from Tambaram will be redirected to either Chennai Beach or Chennai Egmore or Villupuram. The Tambaram-Nagercoil

Antyodaya Express, a fully unreserved train, will be cancelled in both directions from July 23 to 31. The Tambaram-Hyderabad Charminar Express will be terminated at Chennai Beach, with return journeys from July 23 to 31. The Sengottai-Tambaram Express journeys on July 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, and 31 will be short-terminated at Villupuram, and the Tambaram-Sengottai Express will operate from Villupuram on July 24, 25, 28, and 30. The Jasidih-Tambaram weekly express will be operated from Egmore in both directions until July 31. Similarly, the Mangaluru Central-Chennai Egmore Express

journeys from July 22 to 31 will be short-terminated at Tiruchy, with partial cancellations between Tiruchy and Chennai Egmore. The return journey to Mangaluru Central will operate from Tiruchy from July 23 to 31.

The Santragachi-Tambaram Antyodaya weekly express will be terminated at Egmore in both directions until July 31. The statement added that due to yard remodelling work, some trains passing through Tambaram during the maintenance period (from July 23 until the completion of the remodelling work) are likely to experience delays.



Violence has become a part of US polity

THE political consequences of the assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump will be huge and they will benefit him immensely. Of great import is Trump's instinctive and combative response to the attack. As he was encircled by Secret Service agents, with blood streaking down his face, he raised his right fist, shouting "Fight. Fight. Fight". Images of a bloodied and angry Trump with a fist clenched, and an American flag fluttering behind him, have gone viral and will become iconic in the campaign. The presidential contest had already been plunged into turmoil just two weeks ago when Joe Biden's performance in the presidential debate raised questions about his ability to run an effective campaign. It has been Trump's signature approach to put himself across as a martyr and victim of persecution on account of the legal cases against him. Now, his close shave with death will add to the notion of martyrdom.

By seizing the news cycle, the Trump assassination attempt could have the inadvertent effect of stilling the campaign for the removal of Biden as the Democratic nominee following the debate debacle. The Trump campaign would like nothing better than that. The shooting will complicate the Biden campaign. In the past week, the President said he would now focus directly on Trump and his view was that he remained the best candidate to beat him. Indeed, his rhetoric that "it's time to put Trump in a bullseye" is now being retailed by some Republicans as a call to violence against their candidate. JD Vance, a potential vice-presidential candidate for the Republicans, posted that this was not an isolated incident but the inevitable consequence of the Democratic rhetoric that Trump was "an authoritarian fascist who must be stopped at all costs". The reality is that violence has become a part of American political life. The courts have not helped by loosening controls on the availability and ownership of guns. An attempt to ban assault weapons like the Colt AR-15 that was used to target Trump lasted just 10 years and faced repeated challenges in court. Currently, certain states ban such weapons through their own legislation; Pennsylvania, where the incident occurred, is not among them. It is largely with such weapons that mass shootings are carried out; in July, there has already been one other shooting, leading to five deaths. In 2023, there were 604 shootings, leaving 754 people dead and nearly 2,500 injured. To say that the US Supreme Court has been unhelpful here would be an understatement. In recent years, violence has dogged the US election process since the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot, when Trump's supporters sought to overturn the result of the election that was won by Biden. Nine people died in the mayhem before the insurrection was suppressed and for which Trump faces charges.

The current American polity is deeply divided. A Pew Research Centre poll has found that nearly two-thirds in each party believe that those in the other are immoral, dishonest and close-minded.

That Trump's rhetoric is incendiary is no secret. In an interview in March, he declared that there would be a "bloodbath" if he lost in November; later at a rally, he repeated: "Now if I don't get elected... it's going to be a bloodbath for the country." In March 2023, he had warned of "potential death and destruction" if he was charged by the Manhattan district attorney for the case in which he was later convicted. There are numerous instances of his threats that "there will be riots in the streets", "bedlam in the country" if he was wronged. His followers have spoken of violence against migrants, foreigners and people of non-White races. Indeed, after his May conviction on 34 felony counts, pro-Trump websites were flooded with calls for riots, revolution and violent retribution. There has been a political pattern in the violence of recent years. In 2017, Steve Scalise, Republican House Majority Whip, was shot at during a baseball game by an anti-Republican gunman, who was shot dead. In 2018, a Florida man mailed pipe bombs to critics of then President Trump.

Subtle seizure of Russian assets by West limits diplomatic solution

The seizure of Russian assets will make the global financial transaction system subservient to international political currents.

THE Western bloc, including more than two dozen countries, is fighting a proxy war against Russia by providing weaponry and strategic, financial and logistical support to Ukraine. It has also attempted to destabilise Russia's financial situation through economic, financial and trade sanctions. In March 2022, the European Union (EU), Japan and the Group of Seven (G7) froze some 300 billion euros (\$323 billion) of Russian central bank assets to retaliate against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Now, they have initiated a new battle by subtly seizing frozen Russian assets. The US and other G7 countries have agreed to provide Ukraine with a \$50-billion loan to help it acquire weapons and begin rebuilding damaged infrastructure. The loan will be repaid in about 30 years, using the interest earned on frozen Russian assets.

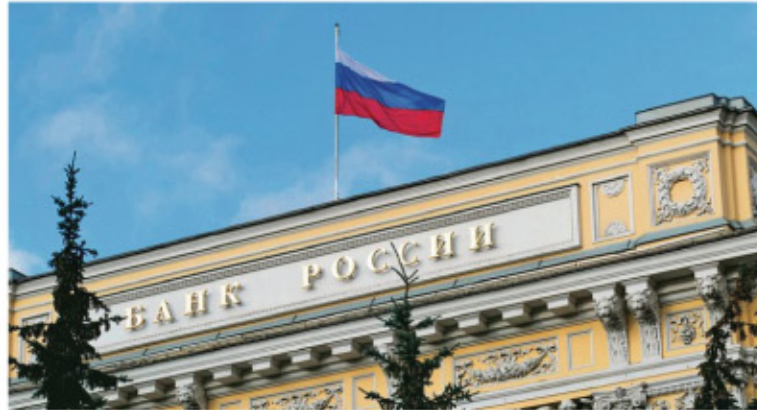
The rationale for utilising the interest income earned from Russian assets is based on the international legal doctrine of reprisals. However, this doctrine is truly applicable when a state inflicts harm on another, and the injured and specially affected party can undertake proportional counter-measures against the offender. Ukraine, being directly involved in the war, rightly exercised this right and seized about \$880 million in Russian-owned property and businesses within its borders in May 2022. Surprisingly, this doctrine is also being applied by the parties that are not directly affected by the Russian invasion in Ukraine. It weakens the rules-based order that Western governments claim to be defending all the time. This measure had been taken under duress as Western leaders are fearing difficulties in future funding to Ukraine and seeking alternative solutions. The G7 nations and their allies are convinced that the Western aid to Ukraine is morally, legally and strategically urgent. But the foreign aid to fund the Ukraine war has remained politically entangled for a long time in both the EU and American politics. The EU leaders met a few times in 2023 to secure additional funding for Ukraine. In December 2023, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban vetoed the proposal of 50-billion euro (\$54 billion) aid to Ukraine. Since then, the EU has been attempting to bring Hungary in line with this issue. In February this year, Hungary finally agreed to the proposal after a coordinated, behind-the-scenes pressure created by other

member countries. Hungary holds the rotating presidency of the Council of EU this year and Viktor Orban may create hurdles in future funding to Ukraine. The US also faced a political challenge for further funding as House Republicans insisted on new border security policies that President Biden was unwilling to support, creating a political stalemate. Biden's proposal to provide \$61.5 billion to Ukraine was passed in April after months of hard-right resistance. Ukraine faces significant threats to its ability to continue its fight and is now losing ground. The US has vehemently proposed the one-time seizure of the total Russian assets parked in the EU and the US to finance the war. But most of the frozen Russian assets are in the Brussels-based depository Euroclear and other European financial

gone now. Even if the frozen assets are used as a bargaining chip, Russia will demand back the interest earned from the frozen assets, and who will pay that? Even if Russia gets \$300 billion after 30 years, its present value is just \$50 billion (as calculated by using the economics tool 'time value of money' assuming 6 per cent discount rate and annual compounding). In 2023, Ukrainian Ambassador to Canada Yuliya Kovaliv, while hailing the proposed legislation for seizing foreign assets, in a message to the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice's annual conference in Ottawa, wrote, "You need to remember, most of these assets are corrupt assets, are assets of Russian oligarchs that got their huge fortune by being close to the Putin regime, by using the taxpayers' money for their personal interests or the interests of their companies."

The US and its allies agreed with this narrative and acted in a veiled manner to acquire Russian companies' assets (along with state assets), holding them responsible for Putin's actions. Similarly, Russia can acquire public and private property belonging to its opponent states and their citizens as a countermeasure. The US and its allies are trying to end the war by exerting economic pressure on Russia. The policy is to destabilise Russia through economic and financial sanctions along with the continuous arming of Ukraine, virtually giving a go-away to diplomacy to contain the war. Economist Jeffrey Sachs puts it like this: "There has been a complete collapse of the diplomacy between US and Russia — instead of focusing on the policy, Biden focuses on personal vis-à-vis President Vladimir Putin. Recently, he referred to President Putin as 'a crazy SOB'." In the press conference following the NATO summit in Washington, Biden described Putin "a murderous madman on the march".

The seizure of the Russian assets will make the international financial transaction system untrustworthy and subservient to global political currents. Russia is already holding Western countries responsible for initiating and prolonging the war. Adding another dimension to the war will expand it to a new level, limiting the possibility of a diplomatic solution.



institutions. However, the European allies did not agree to this and chose an alternative approach that they suppose is milder. But it is essentially an indirect seizure. Undoubtedly, this measure will lock Russian assets for 30 years. But it will not affect Russia economically in a significant way. Russia has had a substantial current account as well as trade surplus in the last three years that has helped it to replenish a substantial portion of the frozen assets. Sacrificing the interest on the assets parked outside will have insignificant additional effects. But it will have a profound impact on the global financial system and diplomacy. Biden did release the frozen Iranian assets in exchange for five US hostages in September last year. Likewise, the unlocked Russia's frozen assets could have been potentially utilised as a bargaining tool during negotiations to end the war. But that negotiating leverage is almost

J&K L-G's powers

Leave no scope for doubts, discord

THE Union Home Ministry's decision to give more powers to the J&K Lieutenant Governor (L-G) by amending the transaction rules framed under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, has drawn criticism from the Opposition. The L-G has been empowered to take a call on matters concerning the police, public order and all-India services officers, besides grant of sanction for prosecution in various cases. The Centre has claimed that the rules have been amended to clearly define and delineate the powers of the legislative Assembly and the functions of the L-G so as to enable smooth administration of the Union Territory. But the Opposition is seeing the move as an attempt to undermine the powers of an elected government. The state-turned-UT has been without an elected dispensation since 2018, when the BJP-PDP alliance fell apart. The timing of the decision has triggered doubts and apprehensions in the backdrop of the Supreme Court's September 30



deadline for holding the Assembly elections. Questions are also being raised about the restoration of J&K's statehood, for which the Centre is yet to spell out a timeline despite the court's order to expedite the process. With the security situation deteriorating in the wake of a spate of terror attacks, the government may find it tough to conduct free, fair and peaceful elections. The onus will be on the L-G to take all stakeholders along during the entire electoral process.

Repeated confrontations between the Delhi L-G and the Chief Minister have severely impacted governance in the Capital in recent years. The Centre would do well to avoid implementing such a disruptive model in J&K, whose residents affirmed their faith in democracy with an encouraging turnout in the recent Lok Sabha polls. It's time for a new beginning for the people of the trouble-torn region. The potentially new dawn should not be marred by discord and disharmony.

Operational doctrine needed to defeat proxy war

A national strategy must be formulated so as to make it cost-prohibitive for Islamabad to continue with the misadventure.

SINCE April this year, there has been a spike in terror attacks in the Jammu region. In reference to these encounters, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) DGP RR Swain said, "A war has been imposed upon us but every terrorist in J&K will be killed." However, this war has now gone on unabated for over three decades, orchestrated by Pakistan as part of its national doctrine. India has been dealing with this menace as state-sponsored terrorism from across the border. It was in the early 1980s that Pakistan began to fuel militancy in Punjab to bleed India, having successively failed in conventional wars. The Pakistan army arranged a safe haven for the militants, providing training, arms and financial support. The decade-long militancy was ultimately defeated due to extensive coordinated operations by the security forces, coupled with a favourable groundswell. Victory came at a heavy price, both by way of bloodshed and in financial terms. Punjab was devastated and is yet to fully recover.

Given the success in Punjab, the Pakistan military top brass was convinced that its sacred mission to wrest Kashmir could be achieved through 'non-state actors'. The success of jihadis in defeating a superpower in Afghanistan reinforced the belief. Accordingly, Pakistan's 'Deep State' launched the proxy war in J&K in 1989-90, contemplating a local uprising, an exodus of minorities, rendering the civil apparatus defunct and defeating the security forces through irregular warfare. Though terrorists initially gained the upper hand, by the mid-1990s, the Indian Army was able to stabilise the situation. While normalcy was a far cry, the danger of the Kashmir valley slipping away had been averted. In the initial stages, the foreign outfits — mainly Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) — were the mainstay of the proxy war, the Valley being the main

focus. Even around early 2000, when I was commanding a formation in the Valley, foreign terrorists had a viable presence in Baramulla and south Kashmir. In September 1998, although India and Pakistan agreed to hold a composite dialogue which included issues such as terrorism and narcotics, Gen Pervez Musharraf, the then Chief of Army Staff, had different plans. Pakistan continued to use the jihadi groups to undertake calibrated operations, often changing the modus operandi. India's response remained largely defensive, with no concrete measures to target terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan. A nexus between local politicians, terrorists and Pakistan's ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) remained intact.

Following the 'Ceasefire Agreement' (CFA) on the Line of Control (LoC) in 2003, it became easier for Pakistani handlers to infiltrate terrorists into J&K. There was also a shift in Pakistan's strategy to lend a local touch to the proxy war by involving groups like the Hizbul Mujahideen. Given its nuclear capability, Pakistan has succeeded in significantly constraining India's conventional options. The Pakistan perception was reinforced during the 1999 Kargil conflict as India's response was rather measured.

India's approach to cross-border terrorism remained reactive, marked by restraint, although public opinion was often for strong military action against Pakistan, especially after the terror attacks at Parliament in 2001 and Mumbai in 2008. The Pakistan army has been able to regulate the proxy war and keep the Indian security forces engaged while imposing substantial costs, knowing that India lacks effective deterrence. The Pakistan assumption did get

challenged when India undertook surgical strikes across the LoC in 2016 and the air strike at Balakot in 2019. Thereon, Pakistan's approach has been to avoid major actions so as to obviate retaliation.

With the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 and reorganising of J&K into two union territories, the situation in the Valley has shown a marked

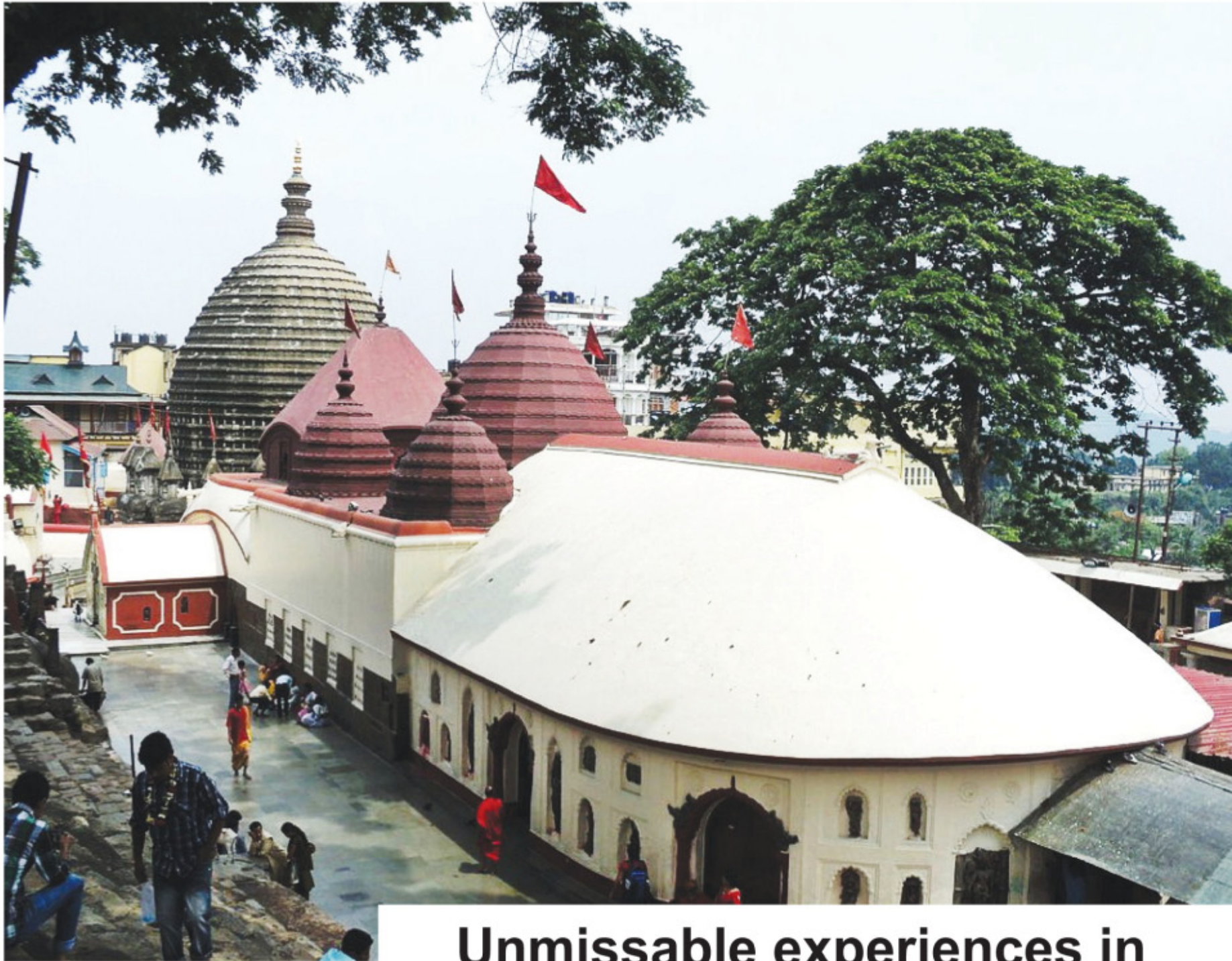


improvement. Consequently, Pakistan changed its strategy by shifting the operations from the Kashmir valley to the south of the Pir Panjal — after almost two decades. Over the last three years, the Rajouri-Poonch region has witnessed a series of terror strikes, with the security forces suffering significant losses. The recent incidents in Reasi, Doda, Kulgam and Kathua are the handiwork of the LeT and JeM, with the Resistance Force and Kashmir Tigers being the respective front faces of these outfits. The continued proxy war underscores the fragility of the situation in the region.

For Pakistan, the proxy war against India is a lucrative option. It offers high returns at a minimal cost. Rawalpindi has shown flexibility to exploit vulnerabilities across the Indian borders and the hinterland. Hence, India must accept this reality and shed the notion of perceiving it to be just cross-border terrorism. Further, it must stop dealing with the situation in piecemeal binaries — North-South of the Pir Panjal and LoC-IB sectors — as also the notion that the Pakistani designs can be defeated by reactive tactical operations. It is imperative for India's security planners to formulate a national strategy encompassing politico-diplomatic-economic measures to make it cost-prohibitive for Islamabad to continue with the misadventure. The collusion between Pakistan and China needs to be factored in as the latter is now a stakeholder in the game. Alongside, there is an immediate requirement to formulate an integrated 'counter-proxy war doctrine', which should be multi-dimensional, encompassing operations across the LoC to destroy terrorists' launch pads and target Pakistani posts assisting infiltration at the LoC, to create a conducive environment and favourable ecosystem. The CFA needs to be

abrogated as it provides immunity to the Pakistan army against punitive actions by the Indian security forces.

In J&K, since 1990, around 6,480 security personnel have lost their lives and about 38,720 civilians have been killed (including an unspecified number of terrorists). Evidently, India has paid a heavy price. It is time to replace the existing format with a prudent strategy and operational doctrine to defeat the Pakistan-sponsored proxy war. Else, we are destined to continue to suffer the fait accompli.



Unmissable experiences in Guwahati

Apart from the stipulated tourist destinations, Guwahati is a place where you can indulge in several outdoor activities. The presence of one of India's biggest and mightiest rivers and the hills that surround the city offer a perfect opportunity for travelers who do not like to confine their travel diaries only to sightseeing and guided tours. The moment an aircraft approaches the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (also known as the Borjhar airport locally in Guwahati), one notices the green hills and paddy fields that lie below with almost no human inhabitation. Not to mention the curvaceous outlines of the ever flowing Brahmaputra that tickles the

imagination of restless travelers.

The moderate weather during October to February is the ideal time to embark on an activity-packed Guwahati vacation. Go for a leisurely walk along the pavements of old Guwahati; take a river cruise on the Brahmaputra or trek up the nearby hills? It's your pick! Assam witnesses immense and regular rainfall from late April to late July, so if you are a rain lover, this is the time you should mark in your calendar but make sure there is no flood condition at that time.

River cruise on the Brahmaputra

The river runs through the entire length of Assam but the stretch that touches Guwahati is the most highlighted one, courtesy the city's commercial and political status and the famous Saraighat Bridge. The Brahmaputra divides the city into two parts while on its imposing journey from the

Himalayan glaciers to the Bay of Bengal. After the completion of Saraighat Bridge, these waters were traversed just for fishing and coastline trading but the scene has changed drastically in the past decade or so. Now several ferry service providers offer laid-back river cruises for the travelers.

The Bharalu ghat and the Kachari ghat in the city are the main places from where you can book a cruise. Usually operated in the afternoon, these cruises last for two to three hours and take you along the majestic waters of the Brahmaputra. These ferries have sitting area for the guests and one can avail the food and beverage services onboard. Imagine yourself on one of these ferries with a cup of tea standing witness to the sunset on the crimson western sky!

Heritage walks in old Guwahati

There is a reason why the phrase - old is gold - exists in our vocabulary and the old Guwahati area further cements that saying. Though there is no specific new Guwahati on either maps or local lingo, we can recommend certain localities that will bring back the old world

charm once you set foot in them. And we are referring to the literal meaning of the word

'foot' here as these vintage parts are best explored if you walk down its alleys and corridors. The major areas that fall under this bracket are the academic hub of Panbazar, the colonial remnant Uzanbazar, the roads of Kharghuli, the entire area of Digholipukhuri and some parts of Aambari area. We suggest you start with Panbazar amid its old bookshops and historic publishing houses. Home to Assam's premier educational institute, Cotton College, Panbazar is a place which is always alive with young student crowd. Then head towards the Digholipukhuri (a massive pond with boating facilities), one of the most happening landmarks of the city before rerouting to Uzanbazar where you will come face to face with some of the oldest residential colonies in Guwahati. From here you can head to the Kharghuli area where a beautiful stretch of road goes parallel with the Brahmaputra amid lush greenery.

Trekking in Nilachal Hills

If you are in North East and you don't climb a hill, your stay is incomplete so this is one thing you must do! The entire city is surrounded by hills and the best parts to go trekking are Nilachal hill and the hills of Nizorapaar. For easy accessibility and identification of Nilachal hill, just ask your cabbie or auto rickshaw driver to go to Kamakhya Temple. You will be dropped at the entry gate of the temple which is adjacent to the main road. From there, you can start your hike amid rich flora and fauna and even if you don't intend to visit the temple, be assured that your trekking experience will be one to cherish.

The next hiking destination you can hit is the hills of Nizorapaar. Located in the famous Chanmari area of Guwahati, this hill is somewhat more populated than Nilachal but scores in terms of scenic beauty and mindboggling views. The roads are serpentine and some parts offer steep climb that you normally don't expect in an inhabited hilly region. You may come across the odd vehicle but as you go up, the number will come down drastically.

Go for a ride in Accoland

Who does not like a fun outing in an amusement park located in the backdrop of a hillock? So even if you are not accompanied by a kid, you can anyway head towards Accoland, the best amusement park in Guwahati. Located on Rani Road in Patgaon area, this place is just over 5 kms from the Guwahati airport. Accoland is loaded with over 12 different rides and 16 other fun activities which give you the opportunity to get some adrenaline highs.

As common with amusement parks, the atmosphere here is of joy and fun so this is the best place to unwind a bit. Traveling, no matter how exciting it could be, always runs the risk of being tad tiresome and sometimes takes a toll on the traveler. But take a dip in the massive swimming pool in Accoland and get rejuvenated for the rest of the journey. The food joints in the park offer delicious snacks and beverage options and nothing completes fun like food, right?



Himachal's pot secret - it's not what you think

A 20-minute drive from Palampur in the Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh brings you to Andretta, a quaint artist village, said to be established by an Irish theatre artiste and environmentalist called Norah Richards, who lived there during the Partition. Flanked by the Shivalik hills and the mighty Dhauladhar range, this Italian-sounding village is literally off the beaten path.

Andretta first figured on my radar because of a pottery and craft centre run by the renowned potter Mansimran Singh (fondly known as Mini) and his British wife Mary Singh. The son of the famous potter Sardar Gurcharan Singh (who set up Delhi Blue Art Pottery in 1952, inspired by blue Persian glaze), Mini set up Andretta Pottery and Craft Society in Himachal Pradesh in 1983. Equipped with a production studio, the facility provides three-month long courses. Feeling terribly burnt out by the manic city life, I longed for a break. Delighted at the prospect of trying my hand at pottery, I set about exploring how to make this happen.

According to Google Maps, Andretta didn't exist. There was nothing but basic information available online. This would be the perfect break I was seeking. Like most travel nuts, I'd have liked to read up and familiarise myself with what to expect, but that seemed unlikely in this case. My sense of thrill was fuelled further. Andretta was remote. It was in the midst of nature. And, it offered culture along the way.

After some R&D, I managed to contact Jugal Kishore, the manager of Andretta Pottery. The course was inclusive of boarding, lodging and instruction. The boarding was a home stay which provided homecooked meals, but they could accommodate only four students that time of the year (I went last September). Much to my disappointment, I was told that they were

booked for the next two months. Clearly, I had underestimated the remoteness of Andretta. Jugalji's affable voice on the line offered to inform me in case of any cancellations. Much to my delight, he did call. How long did I wish to stay, he asked. Two weeks. That's not enough time to learn pottery, I was told, but it was up to me to take a call. I confirmed. We finalised the dates; I inquired the best route to get to Andretta and it was done.

It merits mentioning that Andretta is not the most convenient place to get to. One look at the HPTDC deluxe bus made me rethink the overnight journey I had booked my ticket for. Nevertheless, the decrepit vehicle (which made my bones ache) arrived at Palampur the next morning. My black bag, an unrecognisable gray from dust now, was handed to me. Refreshing dew-laden green greeted my eyes. There was a row of private cabs parked as Jugalji had predicted, to take me on the last leg of the journey - down the road to Andretta.

In 20 minutes, I was dropped off at Jugalji's home, which housed the centre's students. The homestay was a five-minute walk from the Pottery. Though fatigued, I was delighted to meet Jugalji and his lovely wife, Lata. As the introductions proceeded, I was distracted by the view from where I stood. My gaze met the majestic Dhauladhars. They were breathtaking. Over a cup of very welcome tea, I was told it had rained the past few days, but that morning had brought clear skies. Behind the house stood the forests of the Sivalik Hills; lush green and reverberating with early morning bird chatter. I took in the fragrance of the flora drenched in the wetness of the rain. Used to the uniformly ugly Mumbai urban landscape, my eyes greedily took in



the view. It was perfect.

Having arrived on a Sunday, I had the day to myself. Andretta is a hub for art lovers. Richards arrived in Andretta in the 1920s and built a traditional Kangra-style mud house with a small outdoor theatre, which in no time became a centre for creative arts. Her home is a 10-minute walk from the Pottery Society. It is said that a young Prithvi Raj Kapoor also spent time learning theatre here. B C Sanyal, who played a key role in setting up the Lalit Kala Akademi in New Delhi was a frequent visitor. Freda Bedi, actor Kabir Bedi's mother also lived in Andretta and is said to have been friends with Richards. Portrait painter Sardar Soba Singh and Sardar Gurcharan Singh were few of those Richards invited in her quest to establish Andretta as an Artist Village.

The next day was class. My city-bred perception of class involves a group of students and an instruction routine. Instead, classes at Andretta Pottery offered direction through tips on the technique of pottery. The structure was

devoid of the pressure of a fixed number of hours. It ensured that the basics were put in place before rushing a student towards throwing a pot. Both, Mini and Jugalji offered attentive supervision, but it was up to the student to make best use of time at hand; ease of access to the studio was granted. Learning at Andretta, it became clear to me, would involve self-discipline and perseverance.

Andretta Pottery uses clay from the property. After a quick walk through by Jugalji, I was asked to pull clay out from storage bins and knead it, like dough. Then I fetched water from the stream that ran behind the studio to soften the clay. The wheels at the studio were manual and I learnt the technique to kick the wheel to get it moving. I would have never fathomed that pottery could be this labour intensive. Agnieszka, a Polish student, who became a dear friend by the time I left, was visiting from London for three months. She worked as a ceramic technician back home. She said the techniques helped her progress faster. She was already handling a kilo of clay on the wheel while I gloriously struggled to centre a small lump.

I spent up to six hours every day on the wheel, breaking only for lunch and tea. By the evening, I would be physically exhausted with only enough energy to drag myself back to the house. Sunday was a day off and that's when we would explore the village and its neighbouring areas on foot.

We would walk to Panchrukhi, the closest village market. No eateries or coffee shops dotted the market, but grocery, booze, fruit

and vegetables were available aplenty. For anything a level above basic, including Internet, we visited Palampur. (Data card speed was excruciatingly slow. Mobile connectivity, however was good.)

The two weeks flew by in a blink. It was too little time to even get all the pottery basics right, but I managed to make quite a few things in a technique called Slabbing. Mini teased me on the first day, saying, "You think you can learn pottery in two weeks!" He was right, I'm going back.

Ahead's up

Getting there: Take an overnight Deluxe bus from ISBT Delhi to Palampur (13 km from Andretta), or an overnight Volvo to Dharamsala (48 km from Andretta). Book on www.hptdc.nic.in. You could take an overnight train to Pathankot (120 km away), or a flight to Dharamsala or Amritsar (235 km away) and drive down.

Accommodation: The Andretta Pottery centre offers homestays. E-mail Jugal Sankhyan on sankhyan.j@gmail.com. The Mirage: Run by New Zealander Denis Haarap and his French wife, this property is a traditional mud house restored by the couple. Visit www.mirageandretta.com

Cost: Andretta Pottery is Rs 1,000/day all inclusive. Cab hires to travel to Bir/ Dharamsala cost Rs 800-1,500 for a return drive. This trip won't burn any holes in your pocket. Walking trails: Visit Norah Richards' mud home and Norah Centre for Arts and Soba Singh Art Gallery. There are several temples and monasteries not too far from Andretta. Dharamsala, the home of the Dalai Lama is 48 km away. Bir, a Tibetan colony approximately 28 km from Andretta, is fast emerging as a paragliding destination.

Kanchanjunga express accident was 'waiting to happen', probe points to lapses

The probe report by the Commissioner of Railway Safety on the accident involving the Kanchanjunga express and a goods train found lapses at multiple levels in managing train operations.

New Delhi: The Commissioner of Railway Safety has said the Kanchanjunga express accident involving a goods train was "waiting to happen" due to lapses at multiple levels in managing train operations in automatic signal zones, and "inadequate counselling" of loco pilots and station masters. In its probe report into the June 17 accident that left 10 persons dead, including the loco pilot of the goods train, the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) also recommended implementation of the Automatic Train-protection system (KAVACH) on top priority. The CRS said wrong paper authority or T/A 912 to cross defective signals was issued to the loco pilot of the goods train involved by authorities concerned. Further, the paper authority didn't mention the speed that the goods train driver was supposed to follow while crossing the defective signal.

Considering various lapses on part of the rail administration, the CRS said, "Due to

improper authority and that too without adequate information, such an incident was an "accident-in-waiting". The CRS, in its probe, found that besides the Kanchanjunga Express and the goods train, five other trains



entered the section from when the signals turned defective until the accident happened on that day. "In spite of issuing the same authority, different speed pattern was followed by loco pilots," it said.

The CRS noted that only the Kanchanjunga Express followed the norm of moving at a

maximum speed of 15 kmph and stopping for one minute at each defective signal while the rest of the six trains, including the goods train involved in the accident, didn't follow this norm. This shows that "action to be taken when T/A 912 is issued to them is not clear. Some of the loco pilots have followed the 15 kmph rule while most of the loco pilots did not follow this rule. The absence of proper authority and that too without adequate information created misinterpretation and misunderstanding about the speed to be followed." PTI had first reported that the T/A 912 didn't mention speed restriction which the CRS has also flagged in its report as a major reason for the accident. Classifying the accident under the "Error in Train Working" category, the CRS said there was "inadequate counselling of loco pilots and station masters about train operation in automatic signalling territory creating misinterpretation and misunderstanding of rules." It said the large number of signalling failures in automatic signalling territory is a

cause of concern and should be taken up with those concerned to improve the reliability of the system.

"The occurrence of as many as 208 cases of Signal Passing at Danger (red signal overshooting) from 1.4.2019 to 31.03.2024, out of which 12 cases resulted in collision, highlights the limitations of preventive measures taken by zonal railways (counselling of loco pilot/assistant loco pilot, safety drives, etc.)," the CRS said.

"This underscores the need for implementation of the Automatic Train-protection system (KAVACH) on top priority. Use of non-signalling-based systems such as Artificial intelligence-based detection of the RED aspect of the signal and providing an early warning to the loco pilot/GPS-based anti-collision systems shall be explored for provision in locomotive cabs across Indian Railways in non-ATP (automatic train protection) territory," it said. The CRS said in case of multiple signal failures, there were three options left with the rail administration but they followed none of them in total.

Government Reconstitutes NITI Aayog, 15 Union Ministers From NDA Allies Included

New Delhi: NITI Aayog has been reconstituted with some new ministers in the Modi 3.0 government from the BJP and its allies in the National Democratic Alliance made as ex-officio members or Special Invitees.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will continue to be the chairperson of the NITI Aayog and there are no changes in the post of Vice Chairman and full-time members.

Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the new ex-officio member, while Minister of Health and Family Welfare Jagat Prakash

Nadda and Minister of Heavy Industries HD Kumaraswamy are Special Invitees. he Special Invitees also include Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Jitan Ram Manjhi, Fishries, Animal

Husbandry and Dairying Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Civil Aviation Minister KR Naidu and Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan.

Kumaraswamy (JD-S), Manjhi (Hindustan Awam Morcha-S), Rajiv Ranjan Singh (JD-U) and Paswan (LJP-Ram Vilas) are BJP's allies in the NDA government. PM Modi approved the revised composition of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog).

The ex-officio members include Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Why IAS Officer Puja Khedkar's Training Has Been Put On Hold

New Delhi: The training of probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar has been put on hold amid allegations of misuse of power and privileges. Ms Khedkar has been recalled to the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie for "further necessary action". Ms Khedkar was earlier transferred to Washim from Pune following accusations of manipulating disability and OBC certificates to gain entry into the civil services.

The General Administration Department of the Maharashtra government issued a directive stating, "You are hereby relieved from the District Training Programme of the State Government of Maharashtra." The directive instructs Ms Khedkar to "join the academy at the earliest" but not later than July 23. Ms Khedkar, a 2023-batch officer from Ahmednagar, claims to be the victim of a "media trial" alleging that a misinformation campaign has been waged against her.

The authenticity of various certificates submitted by Ms Khedkar to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is currently under investigation. These include certificates indicating visual impairment, which Ms Khedkar submitted under the Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) category. Despite being referred by the UPSC for a medical examination at Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Ms Khedkar reportedly missed six appointments between April and August 2022. In August 2022, she applied for another disability certificate from the Aundh government hospital in Pune, but her application was rejected following medical tests. Ms Khedkar's troubles began when she was accused of demanding unauthorised perks and facilities while serving as an assistant collector in Pune. Allegations include using a red beacon and a "Government of Maharashtra" sticker on her private Audi car, occupying the office of Pune Additional Collector Ajay More during his absence, and demanding office furniture, letterheads, a VIP number plate, a separate house, and a car. These perks are typically unavailable to probationary officers who are still in their 24-month probationary period. Following these allegations, Ms Khedkar was transferred from Pune to Washim as a supernumerary assistant collector. This move was seen as a temporary measure pending further investigation.

SC to Hear on Thursday Pleas Seeking Cancellation of NEET-UG Exam

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Thursday a batch of pleas alleging irregularities in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2024 examination and seeking its cancellation. As per the cause list published on the website of the apex court, a bench presided over by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud will resume hearing the matter on July 18. In the previous hearing, the Bench, also comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, decided to adjourn the hearing on the joint request of the parties, noting that the CBI has put on record the status report concerning paper leak allegations. In its affidavit, the Centre told the top court that the data analysis conducted by IIT-Madras shows that there was neither any indication of mass malpractice nor a localised set of candidates being

benefitted, leading to abnormal scores in NEET-UG examination held on May 5 this year. "There is an overall increase



in the marks obtained by students, specifically in the range of 550 to 720. This increase is seen across the cities and centres. This is attributed to a 25 per cent reduction in the syllabus," said the Centre, adding that candidates

obtaining such high marks were spread across multiple cities and multiple centres, indicating very "less likelihood of malpractice". After a comprehensive data analysis using parameters like marks distribution, city-wise and centre-wise rank distribution and candidates spread over a range, experts of IIT-Madras opined "no abnormality", the affidavit said.

Earlier, the SC had directed the NTA to make full disclosure regarding the nature of the paper leak, the places where leaks took place, and the lag of time between the occurrence of the leak and the conduct of the examination. It also asked the CBI to file a status report indicating the status of the investigation and the material collected during the probe.

Zero-dose Children Comparison Flawed, India's Population Not Considered: Sources on WHO-UNICEF Data

New Delhi: India's population, which is many times more than several nations, has not been taken into account while comparing children's vaccination data with 19 other countries in the latest WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunisation coverage (WUENIC), official sources have said.

They asserted that India is steadfast in its commitment to reduce the number of zero-dose children. "Even though India has the second highest (number of) zero-dose children in the world, it accounts for 0.11 per cent of the country's total population," Union health ministry sources said on Tuesday. The sources were reacting to the WUENIC data released on Monday which stated that India had the second-highest number of children, nearly 16 lakh, who did not receive any vaccine in 2023, just after Nigeria with 21 lakh zero-dose children. "The comparison is flawed as the base

country had recorded the highest number of zero-dose children globally at 27.3 lakh.



The sources said India's antigen-wise coverage is better than that of the world average for all antigens for 2023.

They said India's DPT 1 (Diphtheria-

Tetanus-Pertussis Vaccine) — proxy for zero-dose — is 93 per cent whereas the global average is 89 per cent. "Thus, India is 4 per cent better than the world," the source said. India's DPT3 — proxy for under-vaccinated — is 91 per cent whereas the global average is 84 per cent. Thus, India is 7 per cent better than the world. Besides, India's MCV1 (Measles zero dose) is 92 per cent whereas the global average is 83 per cent.

"Thus, India is 10 per cent better than the world," the source said. All efforts are being made to reach these zero-dose children. A special zero-dose plan has been made and it is under implementation, the health ministry sources stated. In the WUENIC data, India is followed by Ethiopia, Congo, Sudan, Indonesia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Angola, Pakistan, Somalia, Vietnam, Madagascar, Mexico, South Africa, Mali, DPRK, China, Guinea and Myanmar.

1.98 Crore Compensation In Mercedes Hit-And-Run, Car Was Driven By Minor

Sidharth Sharma died after being hit by a Mercedes - driven by a minor - in the Civil Lines area of Delhi on April 4, 2016. The fatal crash was recorded by a security camera installed in the area.

New Delhi: An insurance company has been directed by the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal (MACT) to pay about ? 1.98 crore compensation to the parents of a 32-year-old man who was killed in a hit-and-run involving a minor in 2016.



The Tribunal has directed the insurance company to pay ? 1.98 crore - ? 1.21 crore as compensation and around ? 77.61 lakh as interest - to the parents of Sidharth Sharma within 30 days. Sidharth Sharma died after being hit by a Mercedes - driven by a minor - in

the Civil Lines area of Delhi on April 4, 2016. The fatal crash was recorded by a security camera installed in the area. The Tribunal also held the minor's father responsible for failing to stop his minor son from driving, especially a Mercedes car, despite prior warnings. "Instead of

preventing his minor son from driving a Mercedes, he chose to ignore the same, which implies tacit consent on his part. The very fact that at the time of the accident he was at home was all the more reason to stop his son from taking the car from the home for a joy ride," the Tribunal said in its order. In the CCTV footage, Mr Sharma was seen trying to cross the road while looking both ways. He had just bought takeout from a noodle stand and was heading home. The 32-year-old, realising that the car was not slowing down, tried to get out of the way but didn't stand a chance. After hitting Sidharth Sharma, the Mercedes went over a pavement and came to a stop as its front tyres burst. The teenager abandoned the car and ran away with his friends. The court granted the insurance company the liberty to recover the compensation amount from the father's company.

Delhi Doctors Report Rise In Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease In Children

New Delhi: Monsoon is driving cases of a highly contagious hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) -- a common viral illness -- in young children in the national capital, said doctors here on Wednesday.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) predominantly affects infants and young children, and is characterised by a combination of symptoms including fever, sore throat, mouth sores, and a rash on the hands and feet. The disease is caused by various enteroviruses, most commonly Coxsackievirus A16 and Enterovirus 71.

We are seeing 4-5 cases every day, which is much higher than the average cases we used to see," Dr Krishan Chugh, Principal Director and HOD, Paediatrics, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, told IANS. He said, "Cases are particularly seen among children aged 1-7."

The highly contagious disease typically begins with a fever, often accompanied by a sore throat and a general feeling of malaise. It is followed by painful sores or blisters appearing in the mouth, on the palms of the hands, and soles of the feet. These sores can be quite uncomfortable, making eating and drinking difficult for affected children. The rash on the hands and feet may appear as small red spots or blisters. In some cases, particularly with Enterovirus 71, the disease can lead to more severe complications such as viral meningitis or encephalitis. The virus spreads easily through close personal contact, respiratory droplets (coughing, sneezing), and contact with contaminated surfaces or faeces. This high level of contagiousness makes outbreaks common in settings where young children gather, such as daycares and schools.

"It is usually self-limiting and settles in two weeks or so. It is spread by close contact, respiratory droplets and skin contact. Treatment is most symptomatic and prevention is to avoid close contact and respiratory isolation," Dr Atul Gogia, senior consultant and head of Infectious Diseases at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, told IANS.

"The hot and humid weather creates an ideal environment for the virus to thrive, leading to this increase. It tends to peak in the rainy season," added Dr Poonam Sidana, Director-Neonatology & Paediatrics at the CK Birla Hospital, Delhi. In the last several days, there have been reports from Kerala of an epidemic sickness known as tomato fever. However, doctors note that it is a misleading term and is actually a hand, foot and mouth disease.

Soak in the regalia of the fairytale-like princely state of Jodhpur in Rajasthan's second largest city.

As little kids, we would pester our grandparents to tell and retell the stories of beautiful queens, handsome maharajas, fierce battles and bejewelled royal palaces. I managed to behold and soak in the regalia of one such fairytale-like princely state on my recent trip to Rajasthan's second largest city and home to the Maharajas since 1459, Jodhpur.

Colourful cityscape

The silky sand dunes of the Thar Desert dotted with camels basking in the sun, towering forts and palaces glistening in red sandstone and the narrow lanes leading to shops that open into an alluring world of handicrafts are some of the welcoming sights here. We were fortunate to have a host-cum-tour guide to walk us into different eras every time we stepped inside historical monuments, temples and gardens. Madan Lal Jangid, a 69-year-old French professor, entrepreneur, researcher and an avid traveller could not be dismissed as one of those guides who takes tourism to be a revenue-making business. "I cannot wrap up the history of a place in 45 minutes, make money and let you go feeling satisfied. I remember when a diplomat from Canada had been here, we spent at least 4-5 hours in Mehrangarh Fort discussing the many stories behind every pillar and rock. That is how you connect; summarising a history in stock-and-trade terms is a fruitless exercise," asserts he. Our car moved through the nooks and crannies of the city in a way that the seat's window became a frame to the colourful images outside running past one after the other. From veiled women keeping up with their husbands' pace, the paan wala sprinkling water on the cascading betel leaves, little boys encircling foreign tourists to that old woman under the shade of the Clock Tower with a heap of coloured shoelaces awaiting buyers; the transition seemed like we turn pages in a photo album.

The Royal quarters of Mehrangarh Fort

The mighty walls of the Mehrangarh Fort have many secrets buried inside. Maintained by the present generation of Marwar Kings, Maharaja Gaj Singh II, the expansive courtyards, exquisite palatial spaces like the Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace), Phool Mahal (Flower Palace), Sheesha Mahal (Mirror Palace), and hidden balconies for women to listen to court proceedings, chambers and galleries enrich the fort's heritage. Our host informs us that this is the only fort where you will find the provision of an elevator allowing people to not worry about any physical barriers during their tour. There is yet another purpose of the elevator; it leads you to the Mehran Terrace, a roof-top restaurant where people take delight in indulging in the traditional Rajasthani thali. And what better way to admire the beauty of a world-class historical monument than sitting on the terrace beneath the twinkling stars and dim-lit candles on the dining table? On reaching the top floor, the view of the entire cityscape is breathtaking. All the gates of the fort are visible and the panoramic view seems sketched on a blue canvas. Blue, because the cluster of buildings are bathed in that colour and there is a reason too. The colour was earlier identified with a certain privileged section of society, a marker of a higher caste but slowly as civilization

Jodhpur

A royal retreat

grew, such social indicators ceased to have any significance. Subsequently, blue emerged as the universal colour of all communities irrespective of distinctions. Jodhpur is not only known as the 'sun' city, it is also referred to as the 'blue' city, like Jaipur is the Pink City. Note: The rooftop restaurant opens during the evenings after the fort closes. Tourists who do not intend to move around the fort and would rather revel in the maharaja-style dining on the terrace can do so. The Chokhelao garden (200-



year-old and recently refurbished) is often mistaken to be the Mehran Terrace but both are different, though within the premises of the fort area. The Chokhelao Garden leads to the Mehran Terrace

Jaswant Thada

Located half way up the road that climbs onwards to the Mehrangarh fort is Jaswant Thada. Immaculate in white marble, this mausoleum was built in the year 1899 in the memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II. A tomb with an array of domes is the crematorium for Jodhpur rulers. As the sun rays kiss the milky surface of the monument, the memorial comes alive in a glaze and its intricate carved jalis (screens) emit a glow.

The grandeur of Umaid Bhavan

This palace was born out of a crisis. When consecutive seasons went without rain, a famine-like situation arose that threatened the economic lives of people. Maharaja Umaid Singh decided to construct a palace that would not only relieve employment worries but also remain a monument of symbolic value for years. A visionary and benevolent king succeeded in his famine-relief policy that provided employment to thousands for a period of

almost two decades from 1929-44. Anecdotes are many when it comes to discussing the Umaid Bhavan (initially called Chittar Palace for it stood on the Chittar Hills). The Art Deco furniture and impeccable interiors were originally crafted by Maples of London but unfortunately all furnishings could not reach the Palace. In the wake of World War II, the furniture-laden ship succumbed to a tragedy and was sunk by the Germans en route to India. Nothing could deter the Maharaja's plans and in came a Polish artist and refugee from war-torn Europe, Stephen Norblin, who mended what was wrecked. Familiar with the work of Art Deco connoisseurs, Norblin did not fail the King. As you look through the paintings (essentially inspired by the episodes of Ramayana), gaze at the artefacts ranging from antique clocks (some in the shape of railway locomotives and others in windmills) to ornate ceilings; you would be quick to notice a harmonious "blend of occidental symmetry and oriental texture," in the words of our host.

Umaid Bhavan has been divided into three sections- one portion is dedicated to the museum and exhibition area, the other is converted into a hotel and the third segment is owned by the current family of the royals headed by Maharaja Gaj Singh II.

Clock Tower and marketplace

Rajasthan is a land that celebrates colour and what better way to explore it than doing the rounds of the market area on the Nayi Sadak with the huge Clock Tower in the backdrop. Once you take a left from the Nayi Sadak, you reach the inviting world o f lac bangles

sparkling in embedded mirror work and bold colours almost blinding you at first sight. A walk through the Lakhara Bazaar reminds you of Delhi's Chandni Chowk where everybody is scuttling around but with a sense of purpose. With bandhej designs, tie-dye prints, ethnic footwear and all things jodhpuri, you are bound to go neck-deep in shopping. Amid all the chatter of the localites, bickering of buyers and sellers, frying of 'mirchi' vadas and mawa kachoris (chilli-infused snacks) Jodhpur brightens up in the evenings. Biting into one of the spicy vadas, our host shared a trivia, "Rajiv Gandhi loved the mirchi vadas here and would never leave the city after every visit without his share of the popular snack".

Trivia: Most clothing items on sale are second-hand; yes, it is believed that these articles were once worn by the queens and now re-designed and modified to allure shoppers. Slip into that Rajasthani attire and feel like a real queen if you will

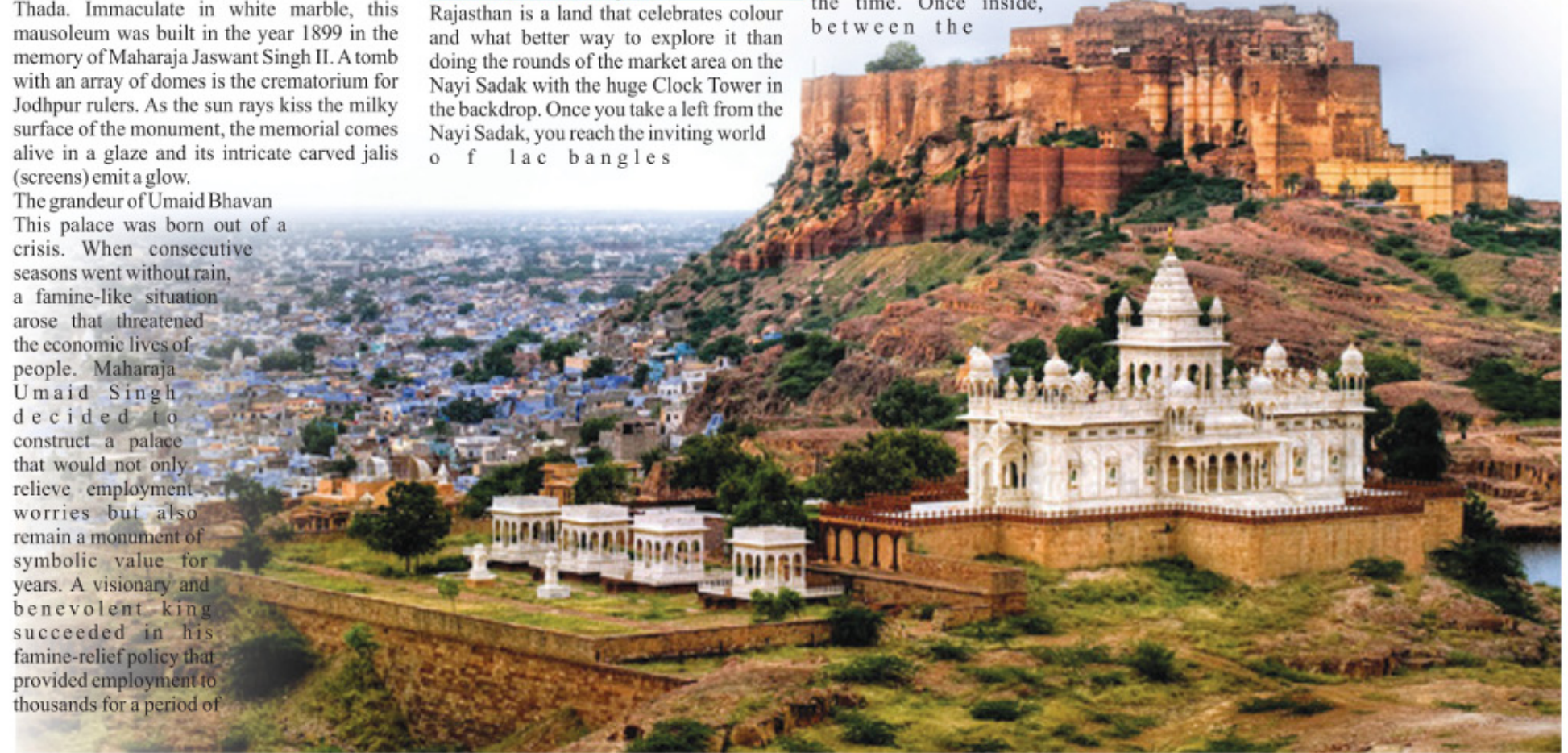
Jodhpur: A royal retreat Credit: Reuters

Mandore Garden is more than flower-beds Gardens are supposed to make you feel happy but I entered into the gates of the Mandore Garden with a heavy heart. It was once a prominent entry point to the Mehrangarh Fort but today stands like an ordinary gateway. Its walls embossed in palm prints continue to speak of the cruel ritual of sati (burning of wives in the funeral pyre of their dead husbands) rampant during the time. Once inside, between the

crevices of lush green trees you can catch a glimpse of the Mandore temple that is believed to be named after Ravana's wife, Mandodari. On one hand, while a woman is a symbol of divinity, she is also subjected to atrocities like sati and dowry deaths; a conundrum unresolved.

Osian Village and the Great Indian Desert If Jaisalmer prides in its Golden Fort (fondly known as 'Sonar Kella' after Satyajit Ray's film by the same name), Jodhpur too flaunts the 'Khajuraho of Rajasthan', i.e. Osian Village. It is one of the ancient villages and pilgrimage centres of the Oswal Jain community that is home to ruins of Brahmanical and Jain temples dating back to the 8th Century. Almost a two-hour drive from the main city, Osian is an oasis in The Thar Desert. Once in our lifetime, some of us wish to see snow, some want to feel the sea from up-close and others long to be on the mountains. But when you find yourself standing in the middle of a desert, surrounded with nothing but golden-yellow sand dunes, the openness engulfs you. Footprints on the desert that begin to form a trail but suddenly dissolve after a distance seem like a reminder of how fragile permanence can be. Tents and resort camps situated on the picturesque Osian sand dunes can make for a peaceful stay for tourists hoping to escape their busy lives.

Bishnoi Villages The Chipko Movement can be traced back to the origin of the Bishnois (a community of nature and wildlife lovers) that revolted against the Maharaja's decision to fell trees in order to build the Mehrangarh Fort. Since the feudal power dismissed the protests by the bishnois who hugged the trees as an act of resistance, many of them were hacked with the trees. Since then, there is a day that commemorates the sacrifice of the bishnois in Khejerli Village. A glimpse into the cultural life of the bishnois in Khejerli Village, (south-east of Jodhpur is considered a place of pilgrimage) can definitely be a value addition to your trip. Village tours and safaris are conducted in Khejerli and Guda Bishnoi Villages; they are home to chinkaras and blackbucks that roam the countryside throughout the day but return to their native villages at the sunset.



Things to do in Shillong—the abode of clouds

The city of Shillong is often considered to be a place where nature is in its primal beauty; where clouds and the sun express their own camaraderie through a vivid interlay of sunshine and shadow; where the colonial remnants meet the upsurge of modern day influence and where music runs through the veins of everyone you come across. So naturally, there is a

lot to see in Shillong, which is, by the way, true to the core; but to tag the city as merely a 'places to visit paradise' would be sheer injustice to the lesser known opportunities for action and adventure. Things to do in Shillong can be turned into a full-fledged vacation idea rather than just a part of the itinerary. Embark on a musical journey in the city



often referred to as India's Rock Capital and a watchful stroll along the narrow alleys is a good start to have. Extend your sojourn and see names like Lou Majaw, Afflatus and Soulmate in their own territory. For the ones who like things ready-on-a-platter, we suggest you visit Shillong during any music concert. Once your thirst for melody is quenched, time for some water rappelling at the Elephant Falls; golfer or non golfer, Shillong Golf Course is one place you would not want to miss out on; take a leisurely stroll along the Wards Lake and indulge in water activities like boating, skiing and rowing at the Umiam Lake.

Take a stroll around Wards Lake

Located in the midst of the colonial era Shillong, Wards Lake is a popular hangout place for the tourists and locals alike. Unlike the Umiam Lake, this one is more planned and all the facilities have been provided keeping in mind requirements of the leisure traveller. The entire area is adorned with flower beds, beautiful trees, lovely high lands and a bridge. Seekers of tranquility will have their share of personal space amid a growing city; nature lovers can admire the man-made corner for the greens and photography enthusiasts will not mind spending some

time in Wards Lake. Extend your walk towards the northeast direction of the lake and after about 15 minutes you will arrive at the Shillong Golf Course which with all its greenery and pine trees!

Boating at Umiam Lake

Located about 15 kms north of Shillong, this lake is basically a water reservoir that was formed due to the damming of the Umiam river. Historically this lake holds a special place in North East India, courtesy the fact that the dam that gave birth to Umiam Lake is the first Hydel power project in the region. A massive water body, the total catchment area of the lake and dam is spread over 220 square kms. This beautiful lake is a paradise for the nature lovers and ones who crave for a hide out from the daily hustle of city life. The water of Umiam Lake is very clean and hence offers a never-to-be missed opportunity of boating and other water activities. Hire a boat and sail into its crystal clear water to enjoy the surrounding beauty of the entire landscape. The water sports complex at Umiam Lake offers adventure sports options like water skiing, sailing and rowing to the visitors.

Golfing in Shillong Golf Course

Courtesy its past as the British capital of the then undivided Assam, Shillong has the imprints of the days bygone; Shillong Golf Course is one of them. But it will be sheer

injustice to the magnanimous entity if we box it up only as a colonial remnant and a place for the professional players to test their skills. The 18-hole course is a green paradise with grass spread across like carpet with trees standing like watchful protectors. The lush green hills that form the backdrop of beautiful pine and rhododendron trees add to the splendor of the landscape. Be a part of the golf tournaments that are held on this venue to be one with the surroundings and its legacy.

Waterfall rappelling at Elephant Falls

Elephant Falls is the combination of three small torrents that form a strong stream that adorns the fern-covered rocks. The place got its name in the colonial era when the Englishmen spotted a giant rock resembling an elephant near the fall. The rock got destroyed during an earth quake and the Englishmen left the country but the name stayed. Due to its origin in three streams, the water force of Elephant Falls is one to reckon with which offers ample opportunities for adventure sports like waterfall rappelling. For starters, you can try rappelling from the height of 40 ft and don't worry; you will be well harnessed under expert surveillance. Climb down from your starting point and feel the immense water pressure on you while you struggle to find your footing in the slippery rocks.

NITI Aayog reconstituted; 15 ministers, BJP allies part of it

NEW DELHI: The Narendra Modi-led NDA government on Tuesday reconstituted NITI Aayog, which has four full-time members and 15 Union ministers, including from BJP allies, as either ex-officio members or special invitees. Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains the chairperson and economist Suman K Bery will continue to be the vice-chairperson of NITI Aayog, as per the official notification. Scientist V K Saraswat, agricultural economist Ramesh Chand, paediatrician V K Paul and macro-economist Arvind Virmani will continue to be full-time members of the government think-tank.

Four ex-officio members will be Rajnath Singh (Defence), Amit Shah (Home), Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Agriculture) and Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance). The Prime Minister has approved revised composition of the NITI Aayog, the notification said. The special invitees in the reconstituted NITI Aayog will be Union ministers Nitin Gadkari (Road Transport and Highways), Jagat Prakash Nadda (Health), among others.

Bajaj Auto net profit rises 18% to Rs 1,942 crore in June quarter of FY25



NEW DELHI: Bajaj Auto on Tuesday said its consolidated profit after tax increased 18% to Rs 1,942 crore for the first quarter ending June 30, 2024, aided by robust sales across domestic and export markets.

The automaker had reported a profit after tax of Rs 1,644 crore in the same quarter of last fiscal. Total revenue from operations rose to Rs 11,932 crore for the first quarter as against Rs 10,312 crore in the year-ago period, Bajaj Auto said in a regulatory filing. On a standalone basis, the company reported a PAT of Rs 1,988 crore, an increase of 19% compared with Rs 1,665 crore in the same period of last fiscal. Revenue from operations rose to Rs 11,928 crore as against Rs 10,310 crore in the June quarter of FY24.

The company said its total sales stood 11,02,056 units in the first quarter as against 10,27,407 units, an increase of 7%. It sold 6,90,621 units in the domestic market in the first quarter, an increase of 8% over 6,41,556 units in the year-ago period. Exports increased 7% year-on-year at 4,11,435 units in the June quarter as against 3,85,851 units in the April-June quarter of last fiscal. Bajaj Auto said profit was driven by better realisation and cost reduction which more than offset the drag from the growing electric two-wheeler business.

NCLT admits insolvency proceedings against Byju's

BENGALURU. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Bengaluru bench, on Tuesday admitted an insolvency petition filed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) against edtech firm Byju's over a Rs 158 crore debt. Byju's, reached its peak valuation of \$22 billion in 2022, has to face insolvency proceedings.

The bench has appointed Pankaj Srivastava as an interim resolution professional to oversee the functions of the company. According to sources, Byju's is planning to challenge the order at National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT). "As we have always maintained, we wish to reach an



amicable settlement with the BCCI and we are confident that, despite this order, a settlement can be reached. In the meantime, our lawyers are reviewing the order and will take necessary steps to protect the Company's interests," a spokesperson from Byju's said. Both BCCI and Byju's entered into a team sponsor agreement in 2019, and in 2022, Byju's made payment in full only against one invoice for the year 2022-2023. The edtech firm failed to make payments against the remaining invoices raised by the BCCI for the financial year 2022-23. The NCLT dismissed an application by the edtech firm to refer the matter to arbitration. "It is abundantly clear as laid down by the Apex Court that the Adjudicating Authority has to either reject or admit the application and cannot postulate a third option. In this matter, the application U/s 9 of the IBC has been admitted by the Order passed today, therefore, the application for referring the matter for Arbitration is not maintainable," the order said. Apart from BCCI, Oppo has also filed an insolvency plea against the firm. The edtech company has settled an insolvency case with Surfer Technologies and Teleperformance recently. Previously the NCLT had issued notices to Byju's parent Think and Learn in three cases due to claims of unpaid dues.

ITR Filing 2024: What happens if you fail to verify income tax return

Income tax return filing: ITR verification can be done through various methods such as Aadhaar OTP, net banking, or by submitting a physical ITR-V form.

New Delhi. Filing your Income Tax Return (ITR) is just a part of the entire tax filing process. To complete it, you must verify your ITR within a specified timeframe, typically 30 days, for it to be considered valid. Verification can be done through various methods such as Aadhaar OTP, net banking, or by submitting a physical ITR-V form. Once you verify your ITR, the Income Tax Department will review it, and you may receive an intimation notice under Section 143(1) via email. This notice will confirm the

processing status and detail any tax liabilities or refund amounts.

The government offers multiple options for ITR verification and a significant number of taxpayers opt for online verification (e-verification) soon after filing their returns. The primary reason for this preference is that online verification serves as the final step in completing the ITR filing process.

Consequences of not verifying ITR

Without verification, your ITR is deemed invalid and will not be processed by the Income Tax Department, leading to delays, penalties, or even notices from the department. Online verification is the most convenient method, offering several benefits: it occurs instantly, eliminating the wait associated with postal mail and ensuring prompt processing of your return. Additionally, there's no need to print, sign, and mail the ITR-V form.

This not only reduces paper usage but also ensures that your return is successfully



How to e-verify ITR?

There are multiple methods available for online verification, allowing you to choose based on your preference.

The common online verification methods include Aadhaar OTP, which requires your PAN, acknowledgment number (received post-filing), and a registered Aadhaar linked to a mobile number, and the e-filing portal will send an OTP for verification. Another method is the Electronic Verification Code (EVC), which can be generated via a pre-

validated bank account method or a pre-validated demat account. Some banks also offer the option to generate EVCs through ATMs, though this is less common.

Deadline for ITR verification

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has revised the time limit for ITR verification to 30 days from the previous 120-day period, beginning from the date of return submission. Not verifying your ITR within 30 days may invalidate your return, potentially causing processing delays, late filing penalties, or even tax liabilities if tax is owed. To avoid these issues, taxpayers should prioritize online verification immediately after submitting their ITR. Avoid waiting until the last minute to minimise the risk of missing the deadline. Choose the online verification method that suits you best, whether it's Aadhaar OTP, EVC, or net banking.

Having your details prepared will streamline the process and ensure your ITR is valid and processed promptly.

Budget 2024: Insurance sector's wishlist for FM Nirmala Sitharaman

New Delhi. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman took part in the 'Halwa' ceremony, marking the final stage of the Budget preparation process for Union Budget 2024-25 on Tuesday. The Monsoon Session of Parliament begins on July 22, with Budget 2024 to be presented on July 23. The insurance sector, like many others, has high hopes and specific expectations from Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Industry experts have voiced their opinions, highlighting key areas they believe should be addressed in this budget to ensure the sector's growth and enhance its contributions to the economy.

Tarun Chugh, MD & CEO of Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance, shared his insights on the economic landscape and the insurance sector's potential.

He pointed out, "Over the past decade, India has achieved remarkable economic growth, with GDP consistently exceeding 6% and surpassing many global economies. As we approach this budget, we anticipate measures that will sustain and simultaneously accelerate this long-



term growth, benefiting individuals and businesses alike, with a strong emphasis on job creation."

Chugh highlighted the importance of addressing inflation to secure a robust financial future for individuals. Lower inflation would increase disposable income, allowing citizens to save and invest more towards their long-term goals and financial security. A significant part of these investments could be in life insurance products. Despite the sector's potential, life insurance remains under-penetrated in India. Chugh suggests that lower GST on life insurance products could make them more attractive. He also

recommends aligning life insurance annuities or pension products with the National Pension Scheme (NPS), allowing an additional deduction of Rs 50,000 or more under Income Tax for these products. This alignment would encourage more people to secure their post-retirement financial needs through life insurance annuities or pension products. Furthermore, Chugh proposes the introduction of Long Term Capital Gain taxability for all high-value traditional life insurance plans (with an annual premium of more than Rs 5 lakhs). This move would bring uniformity and tax efficiency for insurance customers, making life insurance products competitive with other financial products in the market.

Rakesh Goyal, Managing Director of Probusinsurance.com, echoed similar sentiments. He highlighted the industry's long-standing demands, stating, "The Union Finance Budget is around the corner, and like every time, the insurance industry has certain expectations from the government and the finance minister.

Stampede-like chaos at Mumbai Airport loader recruitment drive with 25,000 applicants for 2,200 vacancies

MUMBAI. A few days after a RBI report painted a rosy picture about jobs in India, a recruitment drive for airport loaders led to a stampede-like situation at Mumbai airport on Tuesday. According to a report, over 25,000 applicants turned up for a shot at the 2,216 vacancies, and the staff of Air India Airport Services Limited struggled to manage the massive crowd. Air India Airport Services Limited provides ground handling services at major airports in India.

Visuals showed the applicants jostling with each other to reach the form counters. Reports said the applicants had to wait for hours without food and water, and many of them started feeling unwell, according to NDTV.

Airport loaders are tasked with loading and unloading luggage on aircraft and



operating baggage belts and ramp tractors. Each aircraft needs at least five loaders to handle luggage, cargo and food supplies. The salary of airport loaders ranges between ₹ 20,000 to ₹ 25,000 a month, but most make over ₹ 30,000 after overtime allowances. Educational criteria for the job are basic, but the candidate must be physically strong, NDTV said. It may be recalled that recently a stampede-like situation was witnessed after about 800 persons turned up for walk-in

interviews held by a firm for 40 vacancies in Ankleshwar in Gujarat's Bharuch district. Videos of a massive queue, marked by pushing and shoving as aspirants tried to get a toehold on a ramp leading to the entrance of a hotel where the interview was being held, went viral on Thursday on social media. The railing of the ramp finally collapsed, leading to several job-seekers falling off, though no one was injured, a PTI report said. According to a recent RBI data, the country added 4.67 crore jobs in FY24. Presently, there are 64.33 crore provisional jobs, up from 59.67 crore in FY23. The RBI report suggested that India's employment grew by 6% in FY24 from 3.2% in FY23. When the Modi 3.0's budget is presented on July 23.

Govt should rationalise customs duty in budget to boost domestic manufacturing: Industry body

Chamber suggested reviewing the Income Tax Act 1961 in its entirety and simplify the provisions, underlining its complexity over the years due to amendments and resulting rise in legal cases. And directed the government not to impose tax on dividends.

New Delhi. The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has suggested the government to rationalise customs duties in various sectors including steel, solar battery, aluminum, and lithium cells in a bid to boost domestic manufacturing.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget for financial year 2024-25 on July 23.



ICC President Ameya Prabhu said protective measures are needed for the growth of domestic industry in sectors including steel, solar battery, aluminum, and lithium cells. "There is a need for rationalization of customs duty in these

specific sectors in a holistic manner. Huge potential is there to boost domestic manufacturing and make India a global hub for manufacturing," Prabhu said. While adding that taxes on raw materials impact domestic players particularly the

downstream firms. Talking about the importance of the aluminium foil sector, the President said the domestic industry has been facing severe losses as there is anti-dumping duty on raw materials whereas the finished goods are not subject to any duties on imports from China. He also asked for correction in inverted duty structure by cutting down duty on mixed petroleum gas from 5% to 2%. He emphasized that, there is a need to increase duty on polymers - polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene terephthalate, polypropylene and polyesters to 10 per cent for improve domestic manufacturing. This will help in reducing import dependency and will drive India towards self-sufficiency in the petrochemical manufacturing segment. On the taxation side, the chamber has suggested setting up a commission to review the Income Tax Act 1961 in its entirety and simplify the provisions, stressing that over the years amendments have made the act complex to understand and the resulting anomalies have given rise to a large number of legal cases. And directed the government not to impose tax on dividends.

NEWS BOX

Chelsea star Wesley Fofana slams teammate Enzo for 'uninhibited racist' chants

New Delhi. Chelsea defender Wesley Fofana took to his social media handle to slam teammate Enzo Fernandes for singing racist chants regarding French players and their African heritage during Argentina's Copa America 2024 celebrations. Fernandes in his Instagram Live was seen singing racist chants along with the rest of the Argentina squad, who took an unprecedented dig towards the French Football team. The video has since gone viral on social media, and has also resulted in a legal case and a lot of backlash for the Chelsea number 8. Fofana in his social media post, shared a screenshot from Enzo Fernandes's video and labelled it "uninhibited racism". According to multiple reports, several other players in Chelsea have since shown disgust and anger at Enzo's actions. Enzo's Chelsea teammates like Fofana, Malo Gusto and Axel Dias have blocked the Argentine midfielder on social media since the video came up. "They play for France, but their parents are from Angola. Their mother is from Cameroon, while their father is from Nigeria. But their passport says French." The chants from Argentina's squad and Enzo. Moreover, The Governing Body of French Football, FFF, has also lodged a legal complaint on the Argentine squad and Enzo for the same. The president of the French Football Federation, Philippe Diallo, condemns in the strongest terms the unacceptable racist and discriminatory remarks which were made against the players of the French team in the context of a song sung by players and supporters of the Argentina team after its victory in the Copa America and broadcast in a video on social media. The president of the FFF decided to directly challenge his Argentinian counterpart and Fifa, and to file a legal complaint for insulting remarks of a racist and discriminatory nature. A statement from FFF said. Enzo has since issued an apology for the chants, through a special message via his social media accounts.

England cricketer James Vince reveals his family was attacked twice

New Delhi. England cricketer and Hampshire captain James Vince has revealed chilling details about attacks on his home that forced his family to leave their hometown in Southampton. Vince and his family had enjoyed the tranquility of their home in a village east of Southampton for nearly eight years. However, in a report to The Telegraph on Tuesday, July 16, Vince revealed that there had been two attacks on his family home in Hampshire within the last three months. Vince lives there with his wife and two children, aged seven and three.

Three months ago, the Vince family woke up in the middle of the night to the sound of glass shattering and alarms blaring. Their house and cars had been attacked. Just over a month later, after completing the repairs, the family was once again awakened by trespassers throwing bricks at their house and cars. The second attack was captured by newly installed security cameras. The footage shows two men, one wearing a hoodie with the logo of the brand Gym King on the back. This man is seen receiving bricks from another person holding a torch and possibly filming the act. Neither person's face is visible in the video. Following the attacks, support poured in from Hampshire, the ECB, and the Professional Cricketers' Association. Intelligence firms were hired to investigate the matter, but their inquiries have yielded little information so far. The pattern of attacks suggests a financial motive, such as unpaid debts. However, neither Vince nor his wife Amy found anything in their financial or phone records indicating trouble with anyone. The most plausible explanation currently is mistaken identity. Vince, typically a private individual off the field, decided to go public with a plea for information in hopes of resolving the situation.

French football body files complaint over 'racist' song by Argentina players

New Delhi. The French Football Federation (FFF) vowed to file a complaint to the global governing body of the sport (FIFA) over a 'racist' song sung by a section of Argentine players during their post-match celebration after winning the Copa America 2024 final on Sunday. A controversy erupted when a video surfaced showing Argentine players, including Enzo Fernández, singing a racist song targeting French national team players of African descent. The song, which was posted on social media by Fernández, included offensive language and slurs that sparked widespread outrage. The FFF strongly condemned the "racist and discriminatory remarks" made by the Argentine players, stating that they would file a legal complaint over the incident. The FFF president, Philippe Diallo, expressed shock and disappointment at the "unacceptable" behavior, which he believed was contrary to the values of sport and human rights.

"Given the seriousness of these shocking remarks, which are contrary to the values of sport and human rights, the FFF president has decided to contact its Argentinian counterpart and Fifa directly to file a legal complaint for racist and discriminatory remarks," the FFF said on Tuesday. The president of the French Football Federation, Philippe Diallo, condemns in the strongest terms the unacceptable racist and discriminatory remarks made against the players of the France team as part of a song sung by players and.

Mexico coach Jaime Lozano sacked after Copa America disappointment

Jaime Lozano has been sacked as Mexico's head coach following their Copa America group-stage exit, the country's football federation (FMF) said on Tuesday.

New Delhi. Jaime Lozano has been dismissed as head coach of Mexico's national football team two weeks after their first-round exit from the Copa America. The Mexican Football Federation (FMF) announced on Tuesday that Lozano had declined an offer to remain with the team as an assistant coach for two years, with a potential return to the head coach position after the 2026 World Cup. "This was one of the toughest decisions I have had to make," Lozano shared on his official social media accounts. "It is a matter



of principles and due to the change of direction from the original project." Javier Aguirre, a close friend of FMF commissioner Juan Carlos Rodríguez, is considered the leading candidate for the head coach position. Aguirre previously coached Mexico during the 2002 and 2010

World Cups and had earlier declined a role to assist Lozano from a distance. The FMF indicated that a new coach could be confirmed as early as the first week of August. Lozano, who guided Mexico's Under-23 team to a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics, was appointed interim

head coach of the national team in May last year, replacing Diego Cocca. After winning the Gold Cup, Lozano's position became permanent in August 2023. During his tenure, Lozano managed just 10 wins out of 21 matches. In the Copa America, Mexico narrowly defeated Jamaica, lost to Venezuela, and drew with Ecuador, resulting in their elimination from Group B. Controversially, Lozano left out five experienced players from the Copa America squad, including goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa and forwards Hirving Lozano and Raul Jimenez. He explained that he wanted to give other players leadership opportunities. The president of the FMF, Ivar Sisiniega, had assured him that his job was secure regardless of the tournament's outcome. Following the Copa America exit, the FMF has begun an analysis to identify mistakes, successes, and areas for improvement. Lozano, who spent only one year in the role, led Mexico to the 2023 Gold Cup title and reached the CONCACAF Nations League final earlier this year, where they lost to the United States. His overall record as head coach includes 10 wins, four draws, and seven losses.

IOA releases list of 117 athletes and 140 support staff for Paris Olympics 2024

New Delhi. India's final contingent for the Paris Olympics 2024 has been approved by the sports ministry. A total of 117 athletes will be travelling to Paris and will be accompanied by 140 support staff and officials. Among the support staff, 72 personnel have been granted government funding in order to cater to the needs of the participating sportspersons. However, a notable absentee from the list of 117 athletes was shot putter Abha Kathua. She had secured her qualification for the Paris Olympics through the world ranking quota. There was no explanation as to why Kathua's name was omitted. This happened after her name was found missing from World Athletics' list of Olympic participants a few days ago. The Indian contingent for the Paris Olympics will be led by the athletics team, which comprises 29 athletes, including 11 women and 18 men. The shooting team will have the second-largest Indian representation with 21 members, followed by the hockey team with 19 players.

India gears up for Paris Olympics 2024



"The permissible limit for the stay of support personnel in the Games Village against accreditation as per norms of the Paris Organising Committee for the 2024 Olympic Games is 67, including 11 IOA Contingent Officials, which includes five Medical Team Members," stated a letter from the ministry to the Indian Olympic Association President P.T. Usha.

"For catering to the requirements of the

athletes, additional coaches and other support staff numbering 72 have been approved at cost to the Government and arrangements for their stay have been made in Hotels/in locations outside the Games Village," it added.

Indian contingent for Paris Olympics Table tennis will be represented by eight players, while badminton will feature seven competitors, including two-time Olympic medalist P.V. Sindhu. Wrestling, archery and boxing will have six representatives each. This is followed by golf with four participants and tennis with three. Sailing and swimming will witness two Indian competitors, followed by equestrian, judo, rowing and weightlifting with one participant each. During the last Tokyo Olympics in 2020, India was represented by a 119-member contingent. The country returned with the best-ever haul of seven medals, including a historic gold by javelin star Neeraj Chopra.

New Zealand yet to confirm ODI captain, Tom Latham one of the options: Gary Stead

New Delhi. New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said the Blackcaps are yet to take any decision on Kane Williamson's replacement as ODI captain with senior opener Tom Latham in the reckoning. With Williamson stepping down from the role, Latham has emerged as a strong candidate to succeed him. Williamson's decision to relinquish the captaincy follows his choice to turn down a central contract for the 2024/25 season, although he still aims to continue playing international cricket. Latham, who has frequently stood in as captain, has led New Zealand in 44 ODIs, including during last year's World Cup when Williamson was sidelined with a broken thumb. His experience and leadership qualities make him a natural contender for the permanent role. Coach Gary Stead highlighted the importance of stable



leadership heading into future competitions. "We're not at the stage of confirming it yet, so I don't want to speculate whether Tom will be or not," Stead said. "But he's certainly one guy that will be in discussions around that role. The important thing is whoever is in place, we want in place for two to three years or so, leading to that next [ODI] World Cup.

That will be one of the important decision-making factors that we discuss," Latham himself expressed enthusiasm about the possibility of leading the team. "It would obviously be a real honour," he said. "For me, it's always been about trying to put the team first as best as possible, and I'm sure they'll have those discussions around what they want from a team point of view. Certainly, if I get the opportunity to do that, it would be really special."

New Zealand's upcoming schedule includes six ODIs during their home summer, with three matches each against Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Following this, they will participate in a tri-series in Pakistan ahead of the Champions Trophy, making the selection of a new captain a crucial decision in the lead-up to these significant fixtures.



pressure mounting. Rohit achieves unique feat

However, a fighting partnership between Rishabh Pant and Hardik Pandya turned the tide in India's favour. Pant, known for his aggressive stroke play, displayed remarkable maturity and played a sheet-anchor role. He stitched together a match-winning 133-run stand with Pandya (71), rescuing India from the brink of defeat. Pant's unbeaten knock of 125, laced with 16 fours and 2 sixes, was a masterclass in controlled aggression, ensuring India crossed the finish line with 47 balls to spare. Rohit Sharma's leadership throughout the series was impeccable. He displayed tactical acumen, making crucial bowling changes and backing his players at critical moments. His historic double series win in England will be a feather in his captaincy cap.

Greatest Indian Olympians: Sushil Kumar

Wrestler Sushil Kumar is one of the most successful athletes to represent India at the Olympic Games. Sushil won back to back medals in 2008 and 2012 edition of Olympic Games.

New Delhi. India are about to embark on scripting another glorious chapter in their Olympic history in the upcoming 30th edition of the mega event in Paris. A 118-athlete strong contingent will carry the hopes of 1.4 billion who will be rooting for a podium finish for most of them. In India's 124-year-long history at the grand

event, several players have risen the tricolour high giving their sweat and blood in their respective sports. One such person who made valuable contributions to India's medal tally in back-to-back editions in 2008 and 2012 is wrestler Sushil Kumar. Born in Delhi on May 26, 1983, Sushil showed signs of greatness quite early in his career as he won his first gold medal at the World Cadet Games in 1998 at the age of 15. The youngster added another gold to his tally at the Asian Junior Wrestling Championship in 2000.

Sushil's first stint at senior competitions Having proven himself in junior competitions, Sushil made smooth transitions at the senior level as well by winning the bronze medal at the Asian Wrestling Championships in 2003. He further followed it up with a gold the same year at the Commonwealth Wrestling Championships. Sushil made his Olympic debut at the 2004 edition held in Athens but didn't have a memorable outing as he finished in 14th place in the 60 kg weight class. However, the wrestler made amends

for his poor show by winning consecutive Gold medals in the Commonwealth Wrestling Championships in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

Back-to-Back Olympic Successes



Having failed to leave a mark on his Olympic debut, Sushil once again returned at the grand event in the 2008 edition held in Beijing. However, he again didn't have a good beginning losing to Andriy Stadnik in the first round of the 66 kg freestyle wrestling event. After his loss, Sushil got his shot at the bronze medal through repechage and defeated Leonid Spiridonov in the third

round by 3:1 to win India's second Wrestling medal at the grand event. The first was won by Khashaba Dadasaheb Jadhav who won Bronze medal at the 1952 Summer Olympics.

In the 2012 London Olympics, Sushil turned the Bronze to Silver losing to Japan's Tatsuhiro Yonemitsu in the final. As a result, he etched his name in history by becoming the first Indian athlete to win two medals at an individual event in Olympics.

A tragic end to a glittering career

Medals continued to flow in for India's wrestling hero who grabbed gold at the three consecutive editions of the Commonwealth games in 2010, 2014 and 2018. For his outstanding achievement in his sport, Sushil was also bestowed with India's highest honour for sports persons the Major Dhyani Chand Khel Ratna in 2009. The subsequent year, he became the first and only Indian to win a gold medal at World Wrestling Championship defeating Russia's Alan Gogaev by 3-1. However, Sushil ended up destroying his storied legacy.



Malaika Arora

Flaunts Her Curves In A Bikini, Hot Photo Goes Viral

Malaika Arora is turning up the heat on social media with her latest bikini photos from her vacation in Marbella, Spain. The Bollywood diva shared another sexy photo of herself in a printed bikini, showcasing her toned physique. Her sizzling photo has gone viral, leaving fans in awe. In the photo, Malaika can be seen on a beach in a printed bikini, looking at the pristine blue water. She put a "Surf's up" sticker on her photo. Malaika's latest hot photo has left fans gasping for breath. Check it out here:

Amidst her vacation updates, Malaika took a moment to extend her heartfelt wishes to Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant on their wedding. Sharing a beautiful photo of the newlyweds on her Instagram story, she wrote, "Celebrating the beautiful union of Anant and Radhika. Wishing you both all the happiness in the world as you step into this new chapter hand in hand."

While Malaika enjoys her time in Spain, her personal life continues to make headlines. Recently, she has been in the news for her rumoured breakup with actor Arjun Kapoor. The buzz intensified when she skipped his birthday celebration, fuelling speculation about their relationship status. Adding to the intrigue, Malaika has been sharing cryptic posts on Instagram, leaving fans and followers guessing about her current state of mind. Amid the ongoing rumours surrounding her "on-off relationship" with Arjun, Malaika recently spoke about how the internet can be a very toxic space. "I have somehow built a mechanism — or shield, I would say — around me where I don't let the negativity through anymore," Malaika told Hello magazine. "I've insulated myself from it. Whether it's people, a work environment, social media or trolls. The minute I feel that energy, I recoil instantly. It's something I've learned to do over time. It would get to me earlier and I would lose sleep over it. I'd be lying if I said things don't affect me at all — I'm human too and so I will cry, break down and have all the emotions associated with being trolled. But you'll never see that in public."



Bad Newz Advance Ticket Booking Opens: The Stage Is Set For Vicky Kaushal, Triptii Dimri And Ammy Virk's Film



Vicky Kaushal, Triptii Dimri and Ammy Virk starrer romantic-comedy film *Bad Newz* is all set to hit the theatres this Friday, July 19. The trailer and songs of the film, especially *Tauba Tauba*, have garnered a lot of buzz on social media. Fans, now, can't wait to watch the madness the trio creates on the big screen. Much to their delight, the makers of *Bad Newz* have now opened the ticket booking window for the film. To share the update, actor Vicky Kaushal dropped a video on Instagram and captioned, "Best news! Best news! #BadNewz... ki ADVANCE BOOKING OPEN ho chuki hai!!! #BadNewz in cinemas this Friday!" Helmed by Anand Tiwari and backed by Karan Johar's Dharma Production, the film is about the complexities of heteropaternal superfecundation, set against a backdrop of comedy and chaos. The film's offbeat storyline in which Triptii Dimri's character discovers that she is pregnant with children from two separate fathers, played by Vicky and Ammy, has piqued audiences' interest in its concept. *Bad Newz* is said to be a successor of the 2019 comedy-drama film *Good Newz* which featured Akshay Kumar, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Kiara Advani and Diljit Dosanjh. Meanwhile, Vicky Kaushal has gained much appreciation for his dance moves in the song *Tauba Tauba*. The actor recently shared his experience of working in the film and said, "For me, shooting this film was like home because Anand Tiwari and Karan Johar, the people I worked with, exuded that feel-good vibe and the script was very good. I found the concept of the film new and the kind of humour it has, even though I haven't explored the comedy genre that much as an actor."

Triptii, on the other hand, while talking to IANS opened up about the challenges she faced while working in a comedy genre film. She said, "I have done a lot of films in the drama genre, but I feel that as an actor, it is really important to keep doing different things and keep challenging yourself. I have found comedy a little difficult in the beginning. But in a way, it was really good for me."

Ibrahim Ali Khan Is Left Heartbroken As Rema REFUSES To Give Him His Jacket During Ambani Wedding



Mukesh Ambani and Nita Ambani's son Anant Ambani recently married his childhood sweetheart Radhika Merchant in a grand four-day celebration. The wedding featured performances by international stars like Justin Bieber and Rema, with guests including Kim Kardashian and Bollywood stars like Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, and Priyanka Chopra. A video surfaced showing Saif Ali Khan's son Ibrahim Ali Khan having a fan moment at Anant's wedding baarat. During Rema's performance, Ibrahim was seen in the front row, trying to get Rema's attention to hand him his jacket as he took it off.

One user commented, "He isn't begging... he is nawab .. its a fan moment." Another wrote, "Those who are saying it's so embarrassing. Bhai wo bhi to kissi ka fan ho sakta hai na." "Such innocence. Even they have their own fan moments," read a third one.

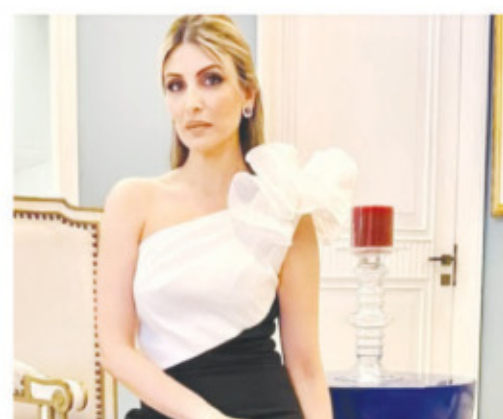
Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim were recently seen at Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's wedding. Taking to her Instagram stories, Sara shared photos in which she is seen posing with Ibrahim. The actress wrote, "Since you were in a nappy, you've made your sister happy, even if my shayari make you snappy, I guess my love language is cheesy and snappy, so just laugh my giraffe even if it's only on my behalf. And if you are ashamed of me I'll come say maaf maaf." The photos are from Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's wedding.

Recently, the soon-to-be actor has fans drooling over him every time he steps out. Yet to make his debut, the star kid has been ruling the internet and how. The 23-year-old keeps grabbing the headlines with his paparazzi appearances, rumoured dating life, and charming persona. Last week, fans were treated to another glimpse of

Riddhima Kapoor

Drops Video Of Husband Bharat Sahni Dancing With Daughter Samara

Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, sister of Ranbir Kapoor, jetted off to Switzerland a few days ago to ring in mother Neetu Kapoor's birthday. Riddhima's husband Bharat Sahni and daughter Samara Sahni also joined the duo on the vacation. As the family indulged in some precious moments together, we got a glimpse of Samara enjoying a lively dance with her dad. The heartwarming video shared by Riddhima on her Instagram stories radiates pure father-daughter love. Giggling and twirling, Samara Sahni looked oh-so-pretty in her monochrome co-ord set as her dad playfully danced along with her. Visibly captured by Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, she added the song *A Thousand Years* to the clip, perfectly capturing the joy and innocence of the moment.



Previously, Riddhima Kapoor Sahni posted a video offering a sneak peek into the celebrations of Neetu Kapoor's birthday. In a video shared on Instagram stories, the veteran actress could be seen joining in as her family sang the birthday song for her. With a special dessert and a sparkler, the family celebrated the special day. Riddhima also shared a mother-daughter photo and wrote, "Just us girls enjoying our bubbly. Love and only love. Happy birthday my mommykins." Earlier, in an interview with *Galatta Plus*, Riddhima Kapoor Sahni and her husband Bharat Sahni shared that the negative comments on

their daughter's pictures affect them. She said, "There will be people who will love you or like you. Either you develop a thick skin, and I don't think it's fair to tell a 13-year-old to develop a thick skin. But this is the choice that she is making. She wants to be on social media, I don't want her to be on social media. I want her off." Riddhima Kapoor Sahni has been in the news ever since the beginning of the year. A jewellery designer by profession, Ranbir Kapoor's sister is now set to make her acting debut in the third season of *Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives*. Besides Riddhima, Kalyani Saha Chawla and Shalini Passi will also be joining the show for added excitement. In February, Riddhima shared the poster of the series and wrote, "More drama, more spice, and the most FABULOUS you've ever seen them be! *Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives S3* coming soon only on Netflix!"

