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'Abuse me as much as you want, but please don't abuse state': Mamata Banerjee

Kolkata, August 14: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday welcomed the Calcutta High Court order granting a CBI probe into the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. She also slammed the opposition CPI(M) and the BJP for allegedly trying to politicise the incident and fuel protests in the state, taking a cue from the student agitation in Bangladesh. The chief minister also appealed to the protesting doctors to lift the cease work and join duties as health care services are badly impacted. "We would abide by the Calcutta High Court's order and extend all support to the CBI. We have no problem with the CBI being handed over the case as we want it solved at the earliest," she said. The high court on Tuesday transferred the rape and murder case of the doctor to the CBI from the Kolkata Police.

Acting chief Rahul Navin appointed full-time director of Enforcement Directorate

New Delhi, August 14: Acting Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief Rahul Navin was on Wednesday appointed full-time director of the federal anti-money laundering agency. An order issued by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) said the appointment of Navin, a 1993-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer of the Income Tax cadre, has been made "for a period of two years from the date of assumption of charge of the post, or until further orders, whichever is earlier". The ED director is an Additional Secretary (AS) rank post in the Union government and Navin was empanelled as an AS in December last year. Navin, 57, joined the ED in November, 2019 as a Special Director (OSD) to spearhead the agency's work with regard to India's mutual evaluation by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global body that leads action against money laundering. A B Tech and an M Tech from IIT Kanpur and an MBA from the Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Navin was appointed the acting director of the ED after the tenure of his predecessor Sanjay Kumar Mishra came to an end on September 15 last year. Considered close to Mishra, Navin's tenure as the ED head saw the high profile arrests of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in separate money laundering cases. An expert in international taxation matters, Navin belongs to Bihar and has worked in the I-T Department for 30 years. During his stint in the international taxation wing during 2004-08, the I-T department raised demands on several offshore transactions including in the Vodafone case. Navin had rushed to West Bengal after an ED team was attacked in Sandeshkhali and had asked his investigators to "work without fear" and prepare a watertight case. A senior ED officer told PTI that Navin ensured that the agency teams get "complete" protection of armed personnel and that its offices also got security from paramilitary forces.

5-member expert team to inspect landslides-hit areas in Wayanad

Wayanad (Kerala), August 14: A five-member expert team will visit the landslides-hit areas of the district to assess what caused the disaster that claimed hundreds of lives. The team will be led by senior scientist John Matthai of the National Center for Geosciences which has been assigned by the State Disaster Management Authority to inspect the landslide-hit areas in Wayanad Meppadi panchayat, a statement issued by the district administration said. The team will assess the possible dangers in different parts of the disaster area and nearby sites. It will also assess how the disaster happened and what phenomena occurred in the landslide, the statement added. After the inspection, the expert team will submit its report to the government and will also recommend suitable land use for the area. The team will function under the Disaster Management Authority Act of 2005. Center of Excellence in Water Related Disaster Management (CWRM) Principal Scientist and Head Dr TK Drishya, Surathkal NIT Associate Professor Dr Srivatsa Kolathayar, District Soil Conservation Officer Tara Manoharan and Kerala Disaster Management Authority Hazard and Risk Analyst P Pradeep are the other members of the expert team.

11th

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unfurl the national flag for the 11th time in a row on Thursday (15th August, 2024) on Independence Day—the centrepiece annual event where he lays out his government's agenda, presents its report card, makes important policy, and programme announcements and speaks about burning issues. PM Modi's first Independence Day address of his third term will take him past Manmohan Singh, who unfurled the tricolour 10 times from the ramparts of Red Fort during 2004-2014, and place him behind Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, who did the honours 17 and 16 times respectively. While the theme of 'Viksit Bharat' is expected to animate his address, there is a view that the crisis in Bangladesh, especially the targeting of minority Hindus, may find a mention in his speech, more so as Hindutva groups

have strongly taken up the issue and hit reduced majority, and dwell at length on

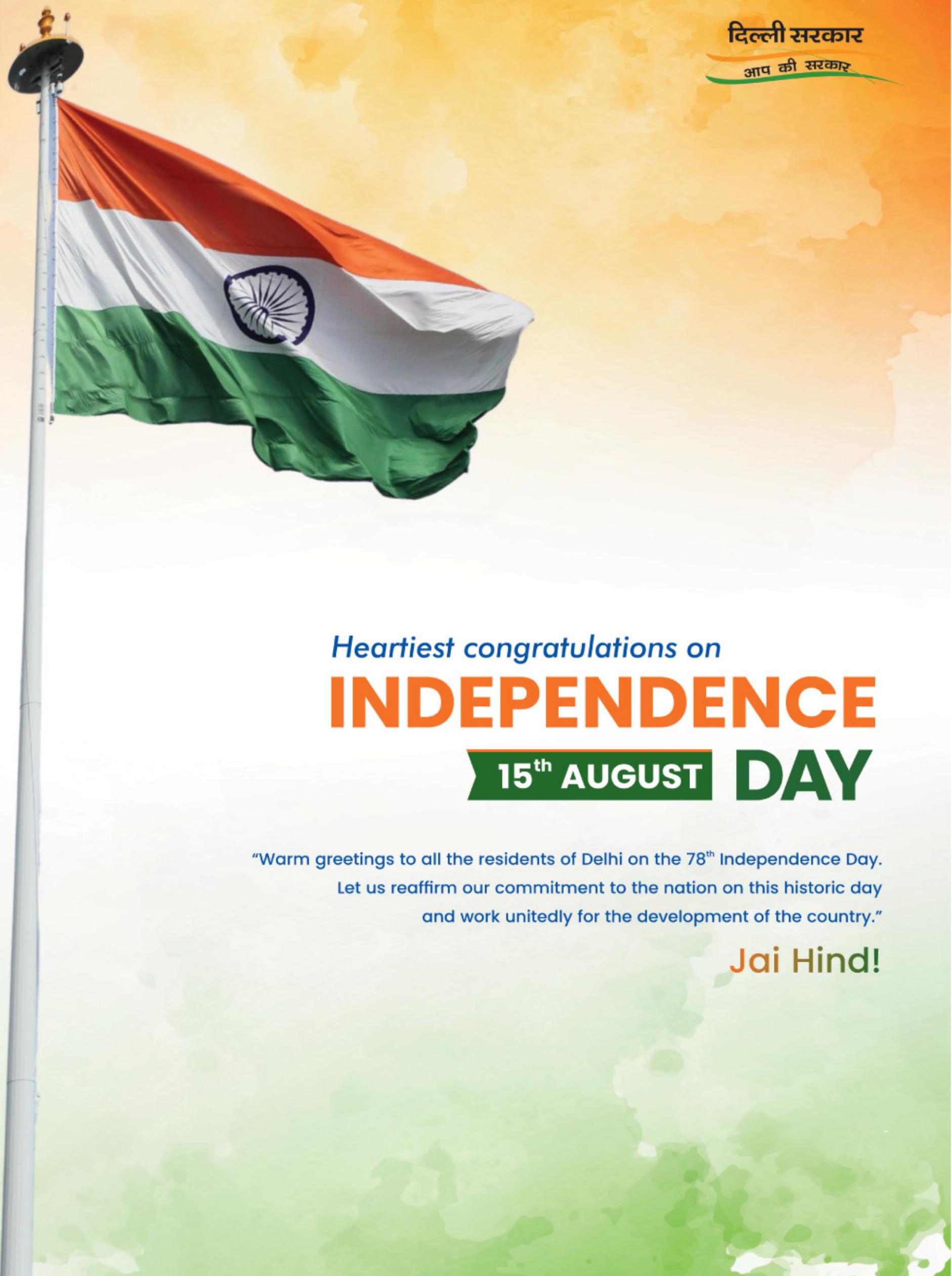


the streets. Mr. Modi may also speak about the mandate for his government for a third straight term, though with a

how reforms, development programmes, and welfare measures rolled out in the last 10 years have impacted the lives of the people. It will be eagerly seen if the Prime Minister announces any new initiative or expands the ambit of some ongoing welfare programmes at a time when a combined Opposition, at its strongest in the last 10 years, has pivoted to populist welfare promises to draw support. Jammu and Kashmir has often figured in his August 15 speeches as the government has worked overtime to reconfigure the security and development paradigms in the erstwhile state, now a Union territory, since scrapping Article 370 in 2019. There is also an anticipation that some of the key decisions taken by the government since he assumed the office in June for a third term may be highlighted by him. Such decisions include an expansion of the housing scheme for the poor, a major boost to road and rail infra, and a proposed change in the law regulating Waqf boards and properties, which have drawn vehement criticism from opposition parties.

दिल्ली सरकार

आप की सरकार



"Warm greetings to all the residents of Delhi on the 78th Independence Day.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to the nation on this historic day and work unitedly for the development of the country."

Jai Hind!

News box

Check for soft drink brands, officials told after five-year-old girl's death in TN

CHENNAI. Following the death of a 5-year-old girl R Kavyasri allegedly after consuming a soft drink, the food safety department has ordered its officials across the state to inspect shops to check for unfamiliar soft drink brands. The officials drew samples of the drink the girl drank and sent them for testing.

An official said the child had consumed a soft drink bearing the brand name 'Dailee' on Saturday. "We have drawn samples from the batch and sent it for testing. The soft drink company has production units in Krishnagiri and Namakkal. The drink was supplied to the shop from the Krishnagiri unit. We have not received any complaints so far. They are licensed production units," the official added.

The parents of the deceased girl said Kavyasri had consumed a packet of mango pulp juice that costs Rs 10. After drinking it, she had developed breathing difficulties. She was referred to Chengalpet Government Hospital from Kancheepuram Government Hospital. She died on the way to Chengalpet.

Karnataka govt's five ambitious guarantee schemes make it to Independence Day show

BENGALURU. Field Marshal Manekshaw Parade Ground is prepared for the grand Independence Day celebration in Bengaluru on Thursday. This time, a cultural programme on the state government's five ambitious guarantee schemes will be presented by 400 schoolchildren.

Addressing a joint press conference with Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner Dayananda KA and Police Commissioner B Dayananda, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath said all preparations were completed for the grand celebrations, in which around 8,000 people will participate.

He said rehearsals have been going on for the parade, and 35 teams conducted cultural programmes for the past three days besides a full dress rehearsal. Girinath said the Independence Day programme is being organized by BBMP and Bengaluru Urban district administration, and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will hoist the national flag at 9am on Thursday. After receiving the guard of honour and reviewing the parade, the CM will address the gathering.

A total of 8,000 seats have been arranged, including 3,000 seats for the public, 2,000 seats for VVIPs, 750 seats for freedom fighters and defence officials, and 2,000 seats for officials of various departments and ex-servicemen.

Commissioner Dayananda said security checks have been conducted at Manekshaw Parade Ground and surrounding areas. High-rise buildings and work sites near the ground have been inspected. In addition, the 108 police stations have carried out inspections everywhere, including railway stations and hotels in their respective jurisdictions.

Four coloured passes have been issued for parking of vehicles, specifying the entry gate on the passes. No vehicles can be parked around the ground, and vehicular traffic will be prohibited from BRV Junction on Cubbon Road to Kamaraj Road Junction from 8am to 11am, Dayananda said.

No eggs, milk served to government hostel students says Telangana ACB



HYDERABAD. Sleuths of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) conducted surprise inspections in as many as 10 government-run hostels of residential ST, SC, and BC educational institutions across several districts on Tuesday, including one in Hyderabad, in the wake of the death of two students at the Peddapur Gurukul Residential School in Jagtial district on July 26 and August 9.

Officials said several irregularities were found, including misappropriation of funds.

The checks were conducted to examine the food quality and quantity, sanitation conditions, strength of students, and maintenance of records by the management. The ACB teams were assisted by officials from the legal metrology, sanitation, food and audit departments.

Several irregularities in providing basic amenities to the students were found in the hostels, particularly the presence of an excessive number of students and the absence of wardens, who are supposed to stay in the hostels. The ACB officials found out that the wardens turn up only a few times in the entire month.

Commuters seek underpass near Tiruchy-Chennai NH intersection as a solution to traffic woes

Frequent accidents have been occurring at the intersection of the Tiruchy-Chennai National Highway and local people reiterate the immediate need for a solution.

TIRUCHY. Alarmed by the accidents taking place "every day" at the intersection on the Tiruchy-Chennai National Highway at Sanjeevi Nagar despite a traffic signal installed at the spot, vehicle users and locals reiterate the "immediate" need for a vehicular underpass on the stretch.

Mentioning several protests having been staged over the demand, they stress that constructing the underpass at an elevated portion of the highway a few hundred metres away from the accident hotspot is the lone viable solution. Hundreds of residents from localities like ARK Nagar, Panayakurichy, Sarkarpalayam and Mullukurichi heading to the city for work and other reasons cross the national highway at the intersection in



Sanjeevi Nagar. They also return home through the same intersection.

Considering the vehicular flow on the highway adding to the traffic pile-up at the intersection, vehicle users have been demanding an underpass on the stretch for

the past several years.

Heading to their demand, the police designated the Sanjeevi Nagar intersection a hotspot and installed an automated traffic signal at the spot in May 2023. Despite this, the stretch witnessed at least three fatal accidents between 2023 and 2024, locals said.

While locals claimed a protest by the kin of a youth from Sarkarpalayam, who was killed in an accident in January 2024, led to the authorities assuring of the construction of an underpass in the stretch, they said no visible action has been taken yet. S Muruganandham of Sarkarpalayam said, "Officials assure of action on the issue whenever we meet them or stage protests. No progress is, however,

made on the matter. Delay in its construction causes accidents and deaths. While there is a traffic signal, all vehicles pass by without stopping. As a result, minor accidents occur every day. Most involve motorists. The authorities should construct the underpass without further delay."

J Udhayanan of ARK Nagar, who said he submitted a petition on the matter with the chief minister's special cell in 2022, added, "Commuters from six directions use the intersection." The construction of a vehicular underpass is hence the lone solution, he said. When contacted, a NHAI official in Tiruchy told, "The stretch is uneven. We will based on a road safety expert's recommendations study whether the underpass can be constructed there. Efforts are under way for this."

Temporary resettlement initiated for Wayanad landslide victims

KALPETTA. In the wake of the landslides that have displaced numerous families in various parts of Meppadi panchayat, the government has announced comprehensive measures for temporary resettlement, including the provision of essential household goods.

The government has announced a significant relief measure for those currently residing in relief camps. An amount of up to Rs 6,000 will be provided to those willing to move into rental homes. The initiative is aimed at easing the transition for camp residents as they seek more stable living conditions.

In addition to that, families opting to move in with their relatives will also be eligible for up to Rs 6,000. This amount is intended to cover the house rent, providing some financial support to both displaced families and their hosts. The government has clarified that no rental assistance will be provided to families shifting to government-run buildings or to homes offered free of charge by others. The focus of this phase is to ensure that survivors have access to free temporary homes. The government has identified several accommodations for temporary resettlement, including quarters under the public works department (PWD), local self-government institutions, and other government departments. Privately-owned rented houses have also been secured for the purpose. So far, approximately 100 government-owned buildings have been made available, and 253 private properties across various local government areas have been identified for potential use. Moreover, around 100 homeowners have expressed willingness to rent out their houses to those in need.



collector as the nodal officer responsible for inspecting the available buildings, assessing their habitability, and determining any required repairs or basic facilities. The local self-government department's executive engineer will lead the inspection of government buildings, while a team headed by the PWD executive engineer will evaluate private properties.

The temporary resettlement will include the provision of essential household items, such as furniture, utensils and electrical appliances. A detailed list of necessary items has been compiled by a committee formed to coordinate the resettlement efforts, ensuring that all basic needs are met as people transition into their new homes.

To further streamline the resettlement, a coordination committee has been established, consisting of Vythiri Tahsildar, LSGD joint director, deputy collector, and PWD and LSGD executive engineers. This committee will oversee the allotment of government quarters and rented houses, taking into account the specific needs and preferences of each family. In the initial phase, rental houses will be arranged in Meppadi, Moopainad, Vythiri, Kalpetta, Ambalavayal and Muttill panchayats.

Experts inspect Mundakkai & Chooralmala

Kalpetta: An expert team appointed by the state government has commenced a thorough inspection of the disaster zones in Mundakkai and Chooralmala to understand the underlying causes of the massive landslide that shook Wayanad. The team consists of five members and is led by senior scientist John Mathai from the National Centre for Geosciences. The inspection which began on Tuesday is expected to continue until August 15. The team carried out an assessment of the landslide's epicentre and the surrounding areas. The team collected soil and rock samples from the affected sites.

The findings will be compiled into a comprehensive report that will be submitted to the state government. The team comprises - T K Drishya, principal scientist and head of the Centre of Excellence in Water Related Disaster Management; Srivalsa Kolathayar, associate professor with NIT Suratkal; Tara Manoharan, district soil conservation officer; and G S Pradeep, hazard and risk analyst from the Kerala Disaster Management Authority.

People lost faith in CB-CID; CBI probe must in Kallakurichi hooch case: Plea



CHENNAI. With spurious liquor snuffing out lives of poor people because of the state police's inability to plug the illegal supply of methanol, the public have lost their faith in the CB-CID and, therefore, a CBI probe is must, argued the counsel of petitioners seeking CBI probe into the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy.

The submissions were made before the first bench of Acting Chief Justice D Krishnakumar and Justice PB Balaji on Tuesday when a batch of public interest litigation petitions regarding the tragedy came up for hearing.

Senior counsel V Raghavachari, appearing for AIADMK legal wing secretary IS Inbadurai, submitted that loss of lives due to spurious liquor is happening every year but the police are not able to nab the real culprits. Recalling the deaths that occurred in Villupuram district last year, he said if the police had conducted proper investigations and stopped smuggling of methanol into the state, the lives of 68 people in Kallakurichi could have been saved.

Raghavachari expressed anguish over the alleged failure of the police to find out the source of methanol supply. Responding to him, Advocate General PS Raman informed the court that the investigating agency has found the source of supply of methanol and arrested further supply.

In his submissions, senior advocate NL Rajah pressed for a CBI investigation since an inter-state network is involved in supply of methanol.

He questioned the rationale behind reinstating suspended Kallakurichi SP Samay Singh Meena. The court adjourned the hearing to August 21.

Telangana government pledges full support for waste recycling industry

He said that in Telangana, the total waste generation is 11,522 TPD (GHMC-7,206 TPD, ULBs-4,316 TPD and 2,049 TPD from 12,770 gram panchayats.



Principal Secretary, Environment, Ahmed Nadeem, said that the incentives offered include the

Telangana State Industrial Development and Entrepreneur Advancement (T-IDEA) scheme

which encourages new industries along with Waste to Wealth projects

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Gurcharan Singh Babbar
Mob : 9654072232, 9971359517
Website : www.thesikhtimes.in
Email : sikhstimesindia@gmail.com
RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

Legal Advisors:
Advocate Mohd. Sajid
Advocate Dr. A.P.Singh
Advocate Manish Sharma
Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

In a first, Tamil Nadu approves three major green policies in energy sector

The state government is aiming to boost the green energy sector with a target of setting up renewable energy power plants with a combined capacity of 20,000 MW by 2030.

CHENNAI. The Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday approved three major power policies on pumped storage projects, small hydel projects, and wind repowering and life extension. This marks the first time such policies are being introduced in the state's energy sector. The approval for wind repowering and life extension of wind mills has come eight months after the release of the draft policy on January 2. The state government is aiming to boost the green energy sector with a target of setting up renewable energy power plants with a combined capacity of 20,000 MW by 2030. These policies were introduced to help achieve this goal, said Electricity Minister Thangam Thennarasu. Though the policy details are yet to be made public, some key highlights were shared after a cabinet meeting.

The government intends to encourage public and private sectors to establish pumped storage projects. Small hydel projects will support the development of power plants with capacities ranging from 100 kilowatts to 10 megawatts. The policy

aims to encourage private companies to produce electricity for their own use while minimising environmental impact. The government highlighted that small hydropower projects could reduce carbon emissions and create a renewable and clean source of electricity.

By avoiding reliance on dwindling conventional fuel reserves, these projects ensure sustainable energy availability. Additionally, the policy promotes research, development, and the introduction of new technologies. Under this policy, 10% of the

electricity generated will be given to the Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation free of cost. The Wind Repowering, Refurbishment and Life Extension Policy is expected to boost the state's wind power generation by 25%. However, K Venkatachalam, chief advisor of Tamil Nadu Spinning Mills Association, expressed concern about achieving this target by repowering, due to technical challenges such as wind availability, machinery, and grid connectivity.

News box

Man thrashed over suspected affair, dies; one arrested in Gurgaon

GURGAON. Police arrested a man for allegedly beating a 26-year-old man on Sunday in Jatauli Mandi of Pataudi, leading to his death. The accused suspected an affair between his wife and the victim, cops said.

Pawan Kumar's family rushed to Faridpur road after receiving information from some locals on Sunday morning that he was found in a pool of blood. Kumar was taken to a local hospital and then referred to another hospital. Kumar's brother Rahul said, "While being transferred to the other hospital, Pawan told me that some individuals had beaten him and thrown him into a drain near Jatauli College." Rahul alleged that Rajesh alias Lambu, Ankit, Sangam, Mohan Halwai, and two unknown persons had assaulted Kumar. SI Manoj Kumar, in charge of the Crime Branch Farrukhnagar, and the team from Pataudi police station conducted a joint operation and arrested Jatauli village resident Rajesh alias Lambu on Monday.

Police found that Rajesh suspected of an affair between his wife and Pawan, due to which he beat him up with an accomplice who is absconding.

Gurgaon infrastructure projects: Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini inaugurates Rs 144 crore developments

GURGAON. Chief minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday inaugurated and laid foundation stones for infrastructure projects worth Rs 144 crore in the city. Among them, MCG projects, which include laying of water supply lines and road construction, will be carried out at a cost of Rs 130 crore. The CM also launched projects of the irrigation department and health department, which have been allotted Rs 12.7 crore and Rs 1.8 crore respectively, an official said.

MCG commissioner Narhari Singh Bangar shared the details about the project. "The chief minister laid the foundation stones for 10 MCG development projects worth over Rs 130 crores, including Rs 1 crore for a water supply line and interlocking tiles in Pir Baba Colony in Zone-4, Rs 3.1 crore for water supply and interlocking tiles in NKV Farm Colony, Rs 1.7 crore for water supply and interlocking tiles in Ryan Enclave, Rs 1.5 crore for water supply and interlocking tiles in Vatika Kunj, Rs 1 crore for a water supply line and interlocking tiles in Saraswati Enclave, Rs 99 lakh for water supply and interlocking tiles in Bhupnagar, Rs 23.6 crore for a sewerage network in Bhondsi village, Rs 6.5 crore for road construction in Malibu Town, and Rs 2.1 crore for water works in Sector 57. Additionally, the CM laid the foundation stone for an advanced sports complex in Wazirabad village for Rs 88 crore." Two projects for the irrigation department were also inaugurated, including a micro-irrigation project in Helimandi for Rs 7.1 crore and another in Pataudi for Rs 5.6 crore. The CM also inaugurated three health department projects which include the construction of public health blocks for Rs 50 lakh each in Farrukhnagar, Helimandi, and Sohna.

National Green Tribunal orders response from Haryana govt and factory in Gurgaon's sector 10 environmental violation case

GURGAON. The National Green Tribunal (NGT), hearing a petition over alleged environmental violations by a factory in Sector 10, told the district administration and the state pollution control board to submit a reply on the accusations within a month.

NGT said last week that this was the final opportunity for the respondents to submit the reply, which will only be accepted if the Haryana govt and factory (both are also



respondents in the case) pay Rs 25,000 each. According to the petition filed by Gurgaon resident Navee, the factory is located close to a residential area and the Civil Hospital in Sector 10. It allegedly releases chemicals that can cause respiratory ailments and irritation in the eyes. Additionally, the petitioner alleged, the factory was extracting groundwater illegally and discharging wastewater into the sewer system without treating it. NGT, in Nov last year, had constituted a joint committee of the district administration and HSPCB to investigate the allegations made against the factory in the petition.

"Respondents were issued notices and given two months' time to file replies. Thereafter, the matter has been listed before the Tribunal on 07.02.2024 and 08.05.2024 when again time was granted to respondents to file their response. But no response has been filed till date. Today, respondents 1 and 3 further need time to file a response. Subject to payment of cost of Rs. 25,000 by each respondent 1 and 3, the last opportunity is granted to file its reply within one month," the order judicial magistrate Sudhir Agarwal and expert member Dr Afroz Ahmad said.

The order was uploaded on Tuesday. The next hearing is scheduled for Sept 19. Asked about the plea, an official of Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) said they had submitted a reply to the tribunal in April. "We have already submitted our reply to NGT. There was no requirement of submitting a joint reply earlier," the official said.

Hon'ble Governor of Punjab and Administrator, UT Chandigarh, Shri Gulab Chand Kataria On the occasion of Independence day - 2024

On the historic completion of 77 years of our country's Independence, I extend my heartiest felicitations to the people of India, particularly of Punjab and Chandigarh. Today, we pay our respectful reverence to all those self-sacrificing, devoted leaders and patriots who struggled for freedom throughout their lives. Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and millions of Indians made significant contributions to India's independence. We also pay tribute to the brave soldiers of our armed forces who sacrificed their lives while protecting our country's integrity, sovereignty, and borders. The unprecedented contribution of Punjab to the cause of Freedom of our country is unmatched anywhere in the history of the world. The great martyrs Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Shaheed Udhamp Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Dewan Singh Kalepani and many more who shed every drop of their blood and languished in jails, have left a rich legacy for all of us which demands unbounded love and respect for our motherland besides firm commitment to preserve India's glory and independence. It is a matter of great pride to recall the laudable contribution of the people of Punjab who have always displayed courage and commitment to the cause of freedom. Punjab has always been on the forefront and known as a Progressive State of India. Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji introduced the concept of Amrit Kaal to the nation on India's 75th Independence Day. Amrit Kaal is the Prime Minister's vision 2047 for 'New India', a new dawn for the country that will bring the chance to fulfill its aspirations. This Amrit Kaal is the time of duty for all of us. This Amrit Kaal is the period for all of

us to do something for Maa Bharati. During the war of independence, the generation that was born before 1947 got the opportunity to sacrifice their lives for the country. They did not leave any opportunity to die for the country. But we do not have the opportunity to die for the country. But there cannot be a greater opportunity than this for us to live for the country! We must live every moment for the country and with this resolution, we need to frame a new resolve for fulfilling the dreams of 140 crore countrymen in this 'Amrit Kaal'. The resolution of 140 crore countrymen needs to be accomplished and when the tricolor will be hoisted in 2047, then the world will be praising a developed India. The year 2024 has witnessed a major event of our democratic history in the form of the 18th Lok Sabha Elections. It is a matter of great joy and satisfaction that the elections were conducted peacefully. Electing a popular democratic government has truly demonstrated to the world that India is a mature democracy, with confident and forward-looking people as visualized by our founding fathers. We are given a golden opportunity to take the country to new heights. Contribution from every citizen will be crucial to achieve our goals. For this, I will appeal to all my fellow citizens to abide by our Fundamental Duties enshrined in the Constitution. These duties are essential obligations of every citizen towards making Bharat a developed nation when it completes 100 years of Independence. We witnessed the historic consecration ceremony of the idol of Prabhu Sri Ram in the glorious new temple constructed at His birthplace in Ayodhya. When this event will be seen in the wider perspective, the future historians will consider it a landmark in India's contin-

ued re-discovery of its civilization heritage.

The successful organizing of the G20 Summit in the capital, under India's presidency, was an unprecedented achievement. What was all the more noteworthy was the way

committed to evolve India that is inclusive and vibrant in growth opportunities. Today, we have some challenges before us and we have to pay special attention to check social evil of drug addiction especially amongst the youth. Punjab being a border state has always been facing challenges from our neighboring enemy country Pakistan which has 245 km long land border with the state. Now as Pakistan does not have the courage to fight the direct battle with India, it's fighting a proxy war by the way of sending drugs and weapons by various means to create disturbance in the country. We need to be aware from such acts of the enemy and fight collectively against such

the people were involved in the G20 events. The magnificent event provided lessons for all in making citizens participants in strategic and diplomatic matters that are, in the final analysis, going to shape their own future. We also progressed further towards the ideal of gender equality, when the Parliament passed the historic Women's Reservation Bill. I believe that Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam will prove to be a revolutionary tool of women's empowerment. Another significant reform is the creation of Digital India which has made life and business much easier in India. Today, the whole world acknowledges this as a great achievement of India. Even developed countries do not have a digital system like India has. Inspired by the dynamic leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Nation is asserting itself vigorously in the presence. Considering the huge wealth of talent that the Nation is endowed with, future historians will be even rosier. Let us stay

plans of the enemy. The Government of India in the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and Punjab Government has started joint operations to counter anti-national activities from across the border. The Central and State security forces have conducted joint operations in the six border districts of Punjab which have been very successful in countering supply of drugs through drones. About 3000 AI-enabled cameras are being installed to keep an eye on the anti-national activities in the border area. The GOI is now equipping the whole border with the Anti-Drone technology to counter the supply of drugs and weapons through drones in the border areas. Now, Village Level Defence Committees have been formed in all the border districts which are collectively working in informing the Police and Defence forces about the anti-social and anti-national activities in the border districts.

The Punjab Governor has

Name Change

I, INGRAM PARVEEN W/O AHMED MUSTAFA R/O C-124 WELCOME SEEAMPUR, DELHI-110053 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME REHANA PARVEEN FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

Name Change

I, Neeraj Sharma wife of Sidhartha Chakraborty, Resident of H.No. 86/202, Block - B, Vishwanath colony, Lal Kuan, Badarpur, South East Delhi, Pin - 110044, Delhi, India, have changed my name to Nitika Chakraborty for all future purposes.

Name Change

I, ISLAM MALIK S/O AHMED ZAHOOR MALIK/R/O 1207 THIRD FLOOR GALI NO 2-39/4 NEAR KHAJOUR WANI MASJID JAIFRABAD DELHI-110053 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME MOHAMMAD ISLAM MALIK FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

Name Change

I, SMT SHYNI BINOVY Wife of No. No-15419979 Rank-NK Name-BINOVY V Presently residing at VPO-UDAYA GIRI TEH-THALIPARAMBAM DIST-KANNUR, KERALA-670571 have changed my name from SMT SHYNI BINOVY to SHYNI P M for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, SMT SHYNI BINOVY Wife of No. No-15419979 Rank-NK Name-BINOVY V Presently residing at VPO-UDAYA GIRI TEH-THALIPARAMBAM DIST-KANNUR, KERALA-670571 have changed my name from SMT SHYNI BINOVY to SHYNI P M for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, P PADMA W/o JC-313487V Rank-SUB NAME-SIMHACHALAM KATTIRI Presently residing at VILL-GUMMAMAPUDU, PO-BHADRI, TALUK-SARAVAKOTA, DIST-SRIKAKULAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-532427 have changed my name from P PADMA to KATTIRI PADMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, Koushalya Devi mother of No-15178519 Rank-HAV NAME-KRISHAN SINGH R/O VILL-ROPA SERI, PO-PIPLAGE, TEH-BHUNTHAR, DIST-KULLU, HIMACHAL PRADESH-175125 have changed my name to Koushalya Devi to KAUSHALYA Devi for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, JC-472307P, Rank-SUB Name-TEHSIL-ATELI, DIST-MAHENDRA-GARH, HARYANA-123021 have changed my father's name from RAMESH KUMAR to RAMESH SINGH for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, Rakesh Kumar S/O Suraj Bhan R/O C-11, Main Budh Bazar Chowk, Near Zero Chowk, Mundka Village, West Delhi, Delhi-110041 have changed the name of my minor son druv aged 16 years and he shall hereafter be known as Dhruv.

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News box

Over 1,000 arrested in UK over violent rioting, targeted attacks against Muslims

London British authorities have now arrested more than 1,000 people following days of rioting involving violence, arson and looting as well as racist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants, a national policing body said on Tuesday. The riots, which followed the killings of three young girls in the northern English town of Southport, began after the July 29 attack was wrongly blamed on an Islamist migrant based on online misinformation. Violence broke out in cities across England and also in Northern Ireland, but there have been fewer instances of unrest since last week after efforts to identify those involved were ramped up. Many have been swiftly jailed, with some receiving long sentences. The National Police Chiefs' Council said in its latest update that 1,024 had been arrested and 575 charged across the UK. Those arrested include a 69-year-old accused of vandalism in Liverpool and a 11-year-old boy in Belfast. A 13-year-old girl pleaded guilty to violent disorder at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court, prosecutors said, having been seen on July 31 punching and kicking the entrance to a hotel for asylum seekers. "This alarming incident will have caused genuine fear amongst people who were being targeted by these thugs – and it is particularly distressing to learn that such a young girl participated in this violent disorder," prosecutor Thomas Power said.

High doses of narcotic drug found in sweets handed out by New Zealand charity

Pineapple sweets dished out by a New Zealand charity have tested positive for potentially lethal amounts of methamphetamine, police said Wednesday, sparking an urgent race to remove them from the streets. Anti-poverty charity the Auckland City Mission raised the alarm after discovering a batch of the sweets was contaminated with the highly addictive and illegal narcotic, police said. "An investigation is under way and police are treating the matter as a priority given the risk to the public." The New Zealand Drug Foundation said a test sample of an innocuous-looking piece of white candy in a bright yellow wrapper indicated it contained methamphetamine. Foundation spokeswoman Sarah Helm said the tested sweet contained approximately three grams of meth -- hundreds of times greater than the common dose taken by users. "Swallowing that much methamphetamine is extremely dangerous and could result in death."

Helm urged people who had received confectionaries from the Auckland charity not to consume them. "We don't know how widespread it is." The candy was donated anonymously by a member of the public, the charity said, in a sealed branded package. The sweets were then distributed into food parcels. "There is a potential for New Zealand that there is a lethal substance dressed up as a lolly (sweet)," Helen Robinson from Auckland City Mission told reporters. "We have to work on the assumption that this was a kind of batch." The charity believes up to 400 people could have received the affected sweets in a food package. Robinson said so far eight separate families had been affected, but no one had yet been hospitalised.

Girls in Gaza cut off their hair due to a lack of combs, soaps amid war: Report

Gaza. When girls complain to Gaza paediatrician Lobna al-Azaiza that they have no comb, she tells them to cut off their hair. It's not just combs. Israel's blockade of the territory, ravaged by 10 months of war, means there is little or no shampoo, soap, period products or household cleaning materials. Waste collection and sewage treatment have also collapsed, and it's easy to see why contagious diseases that thrive on overcrowding and lack of cleanliness - such as scabies or fungal infections - are on the rise. "In the past period, the most common disease we have seen was skin rashes, skin diseases, which have many causes, including the overcrowding in the camps, the increased heat inside the tents, the sweating among children, and the lack of sufficient water for bathing," the doctor said.

Azaiza used to work at Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia until Israeli tanks separated the north of the besieged enclave from the south. Like most of Gaza's medics, she has adapted and continues to treat patients, walking to work past her own ruined house, demolished by an Israeli strike. The tent clinic she set up with a small team began by treating children, but has by necessity become a practice for whole families, most of whom have also been ordered or bombed out of their homes, like the vast majority of Gaza's 2.3 million people. Even the medication that is available is often unaffordable; a tube of simple burn ointment can now cost 200 shekels (\$53). International aid deliveries have been dramatically reduced since Israel seized control of the Rafah border crossing from Egypt, exacerbating a humanitarian crisis. Israel denies responsibility for delays in getting urgent humanitarian aid in, saying that the U.N.

Israel critic Ilhan Omar secures US primary victory, defends seat amid backlash

Minneapolis. Democratic US Rep. Ilhan Omar has won her primary race in Minnesota. Omar is one of the progressive House members known as the "Squad". She successfully defended her Minneapolis-area 5th District seat against a repeat challenge from former City Council member Don Samuels in Tuesday's primary. She only narrowly defeated the more centrist liberal in the 2022 primary. Omar is a sharp critic of the Israeli government's handling of the Israel-Hamas war. She avoided the fate of two fellow Squad members who lost their primaries against candidates backed by groups that support Israel. Omar's fellow Squad member Rep. Cori Bush lost the Democratic nomination in Missouri last week. Rep. Jamaal Bowman of New York lost his primary in June. The only charter member not facing a primary challenge is Rep. Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts. Both Bush and Bowman faced well-funded challengers and millions of dollars in spending by the United Democracy Project, a super political action committee affiliated

with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which appears to be sitting out the Minnesota race. But Omar isn't taking victory for granted. Omar reported spending \$2.3 million before the 2022 primary. In the same period this year, she reported raising about \$6.2 million. Samuels has raised about \$1.4 million. Omar — a Somali American and Muslim — came under fire from the Jamaican-born Samuels and others in her first term for comments that were widely criticised for invoking antisemitic tropes and suggesting Jewish Americans have divided loyalties. This time, Samuels has criticised her condemnation of the Israeli government's handling of the Israel-Hamas war. While Omar has also criticised Hamas for attacking Israel and taking hostages, Samuels says she's one-sided and divisive. He's also been stressing the public safety issues he focused on in 2022. The big issue at the time was policing in Minneapolis, where a former police officer murdered George Floyd in 2020. The winner in the overwhelmingly Democratic district will



face Republican Dalia Al-Aqidi, an Iraqi American journalist and self-described secular Muslim who calls Omar pro-Hamas and a terrorist sympathiser. In the US Senate race, White — an ally of imprisoned former Trump aide Steve Bannon and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones — shocked many political observers when he defeated Fraser at the party convention for the GOP endorsement. White's social media comments have been denounced as misogynistic, homophobic, antisemitic and profane. His legal and financial problems include unpaid child support and

questionable campaign spending, including \$1,200 spent at a Florida strip club after he lost his primary challenge to Omar in 2022. He argues that, as a Black man, he can broaden the party's base by appealing to voters of colour in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and others disillusoFraser has said White's confrontational style and message won't attract the moderates and independents needed for a competitive challenge against Klobuchar, who's seeking a fourth term. He said he offers a more mainstream approach, stressing fiscal conservatism, a strong defence, world leadership and small government. Fraser has also highlighted his 26 years in the Navy, where he was an intelligence officer and served a combat tour in Iraq.ned with establishment politics. Neither has anywhere near the resources that Klobuchar has. White last reported raising \$133,000, while Fraser has taken in \$68,000. Klobuchar, meanwhile, has collected about \$19 million this cycle and has more than \$6 million available to spend on the general election campaign.

Ex-ISI chief Faiz Hameed's arrest 'internal issue' of Pak army, says Imran Khan

Islamabad. Pakistan's jailed former premier on Tuesday termed the arrest of former ISI chief Faiz Hameed as an "internal issue" of the military and said that the army's action against the former general has nothing to do with his party. Hameed served as the director general of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) from 2019 to 2021, when Khan was prime minister and was accused of meddling in political affairs at his behest. Khan said just this that 'it is the army's internal matter' and that whatever action the army has taken has nothing to do with the PTI or Khan sahib," Khan's legal representative Intezar Panjutha said. Panjutha made these remarks following a meeting of Khan with his senior lawyers at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi. Panjutha quoted Khan as saying it was purely a military matter, with no links to PTI. He further clarified that there had been no political connection between Khan and General Faiz. Khan also claimed that former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa had replaced General Faiz after making a deal with Nawaz Sharif, according to the lawyer. Khan also suggested that if General Faiz's arrest was related to the events of May 9, it would be an opportune moment to form a judicial commission and bring the CCTV footage of the day to light, Panjutha noted. He also stated that the former premier urged his followers to peacefully protest tonight for the sake of freedom, stressing the importance of taking to the streets for the country. Panjutha also highlighted Khan's concerns over the mounting pressure on the Supreme Court, the disillusionment among the youth, and the deteriorating conditions in Pakistan, comparing them with those in Bangladesh. He stated that Khan believed it was time for Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa to step back, highlighting that PTI's three seats were allegedly taken away the previous day. Earlier, in an unprecedented move, Hameed was detained by military authorities and court-martial proceedings were initiated against him on charges of corruption, misuse of authority and violating the Pakistan Army Act.

Over 140 cyberattacks linked to Olympics reported in France

Paris French authorities said on Tuesday that more than 140 cyberattacks were reported during the Paris Olympics, but none of them disrupted the competitions. In the runup and throughout the Olympic Games, France's cyber security agency had been on high alert for attacks that had the potential to disrupt the organising committee, ticketing or transport. Between July 26 and August 11, government cyber security agency Anssi recorded 119 reports corresponding to low-impact "security events" and 22 incidents in which "a malicious actor" successfully targeted a victim's information system. The attacks mainly targeted government entities as well as sports, transport and telecoms infrastructure, the agency said.

According to Anssi, a third of those were



downtime incidents, half of which were due to denial-of-service attacks designed to overwhelm servers. The other cyber incidents were related to attempted or actual compromises and data disclosure, among others. "All the cyber events that occurred during this period were generally characterised by their low impact", said Anssi. The Grand Palais,

which hosted Olympic events in Paris, and around 40 other museums in France were victims of a ransomware attack in early August, but this did not affect any of the information systems involved in the games, according to Anssi. Ransomware exploits security flaws to encrypt and block computer systems, demanding a ransom from a user or an organisation to unlock them. During the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Olympics held in 2021, organisers reported 450 million such operations, twice as many as during the 2012 London Olympics. Ahead of the Paris Olympics, Marie-Rose Bruno, director of technology and information systems for the Paris Games, had said he expected "eight to 10 times more" cyber attacks than those seen at the Games in Tokyo.

Japan PM Kishida to step down in September, won't seek re-election: Report

Tokyo Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will step down as ruling party leader in September, media reported on Wednesday, ending a three-year term marked by rising prices and marred by political scandals. Kishida, who saw his public support erode, will not seek re-election in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leader, Japanese media including public broadcaster NHK reported citing senior administration staff. An LDP spokesperson declined to comment. Kishida's decision to quit will trigger a contest to replace him as party boss, and by extension, as the leader of

the world's fourth-biggest economy. The successor the LDP chooses could face increases in living costs, escalating geopolitical tensions, and the potential return of Donald Trump as US President next year. As the country's eighth-longest serving post-war leader, Kishida led Japan out of the Covid pandemic with massive stimulus spending, but later appointed Kazuo Ueda, an academic tasked with ending his predecessor's radical monetary stimulus, to head the Bank of Japan (BOJ). The BOJ in July unexpectedly raised interest rates, contributing to

stock market instability and sending the yen sharply lower. If the "reporting is accurate, we should expect tighter policy or neutral but slightly tighter fiscal and monetary conditions depending on the candidate", said Shoki Omori, chief Japan desk strategist, Mizuho Securities, Tokyo. "In short, risk-assets, particularly equities, will likely be hit the most," he added. In another break from the past, Kishida also eschewed corporate profit-driven trickle-down economics in favour of policies aimed at boosting household incomes.

Taliban marks three years since return to power in Afghanistan

Taliban authorities will celebrate the third anniversary of their takeover of Afghanistan on Wednesday with a military parade at a former US military base and festivities in key cities.

Kabul Taliban authorities were set to celebrate the third anniversary of their takeover of Afghanistan on Wednesday, with a military parade at a former US military base and festivities in key cities. Extra security was deployed in the capital Kabul and the Taliban's spiritual home of Kandahar ahead of the "day of victory", with Islamic State group attacks a continued threat in the country. Taliban forces seized Kabul on August 15, 2021, after the US-backed government collapsed and its leaders fled into exile. The anniversary is marked a day earlier on the Afghan calendar. The Day of Victory is historically a significant and proud day for the Islamic Ummah (nation), and particularly for the Afghan people," said Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund in a statement on Tuesday. "On this date, Allah granted the Mujahid nation of Afghanistan a decisive victory over an international arrogant and occupying force." In the three years since they ended their 20-year insurgency, the Taliban government has consolidated its grip on the country, implementing laws based on its strict interpretation of Islam, even though it is still unrecognised by any other state. Their restrictions



on women, who bear the brunt of policies the United Nations has called "gender apartheid", remain a key sticking point. Banners, flags and poetry. The days before the celebrations, workers were busy putting up banners and billboards reading "Congratulations" with the anniversary date around Kabul. Vendors selling flags of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan -- the Taliban government's formal name for the country -- dotted the city, the white and black standard also fluttering over streets. A military parade and speeches were to be held at the Bagram airbase, the US military's former centre of

operations in Afghanistan, around 40 kilometres (25 miles) outside of Kabul. Celebrations featuring athletes and poetry readings were due to be held in the capital. Heavy security and decorations also went up in the southern city of Kandahar -- the birthplace of the Taliban movement and home to the reclusive leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, who rules through religious edict. Security has been a key priority for Taliban authorities, and while many Afghans express relief at the end of 40 years of successive conflicts, the economy remains in crisis and the population mired in a worsening humanitarian crisis. A joint statement from international non-governmental groups warned of the growing aid funding gap to the country, with 23.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reiterated calls for pressure on the Taliban government to lift restrictions on women, who have been squeezed from public life and banned from secondary and higher education. "The third anniversary of the Taliban's takeover is a grim reminder of Afghanistan's human rights crisis, but it should also be a call for action," said Fereshta Abbasi, Afghanistan researcher for HRW.

Canada Minister urges reforms in temporary worker programme amid UN 'slavery' jab

Canada's immigration minister stated that there is a need for reform in the Temporary Foreign Worker Program following a UN report labelling it a breeding ground for modern slavery.

Ottawa Canada's temporary foreign worker program is not fatally flawed but is "in need of reform," the country's immigration minister told Reuters on Tuesday, following a damning UN report that dubbed the program a breeding ground for modern slavery. The program brings non-Canadians

to the country to work on a temporary basis. Ostensibly meant to fill labour shortages, it has grown dramatically and has come under fire for suppressing wages and leaving workers vulnerable to abuse. The low-wage temporary foreign worker stream, especially, "is one that we need to take a more careful look at," Immigration Minister Marc Miller said. Its ranks have grown dramatically - from 15,817 in 2016 to 83,654 in 2023, thanks in large part to expansions in 2022. Among other things, these expansions increased the share of employers' workforces that could be low-wage temporary foreign workers, and the change waived a rule

precluding the hiring of temporary foreign workers in certain low-wage occupations in regions with unemployment rates of 6 per cent or higher. Labour Minister Randy Boissonnault is considering "a refusal to process in the low wage stream if the abuse and misuse does not improve," said labour ministry spokesperson Mathis Denis. But "even when the program is working as intended and there's no abuse, the low-wage stream absolutely suppresses wages. It's kind of designed to," said economist Mike Moffatt, senior director at the Smart Prosperity Institute. If it were up to him, he said, he would end the low-wage stream

entirely. "I don't think employers have some constitutional right to low-wage workers." The United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery said in a report last week that Canada's "Temporary Foreign Worker Program serves as a breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery." Problems cited included underpayment and wage theft and physical, emotional and verbal abuse. The report also noted that workers struggle to access healthcare. Reducing the number of temporary residents, as Canada plans to do, will not address problems making these migrants vulnerable.

News box

Encounter underway in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda, 1 terrorist injured, rifle found



Srinagar. At least one terrorist was injured in a gunfight that broke out in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Wednesday. According to sources, the gunfight broke out in Assar, located about 91km from Doda district. The security personnel also recovered an M4 rifle and three rucksack bags from the area during a search operation in the area. The terrorists have been held up in a riverine area in Assar, the sources added.

Infoemng about the gunfight, the Indian Army's White Knight Corps said, in a post on X, "#Op ASSAR* Based on specific intelligence inputs, a joint operation by #IndianArmy and #JKP was launched in Akar Forest near Patnitop. Contact has been established with the terrorists and operations are in progress."

2 arrested in Pune for failing to report friend's death, secretly burying him



Pune. Two men have been arrested in Pune district for allegedly burying their friend, who died last month after falling from a 100-foot electricity tower, without reporting the death to his family or police, an official said here on Tuesday. The trio were trying to steal a metal cable from a defunct high-tension electricity tower located near Ranjane village in Velhe tehsil on July 13, he said.

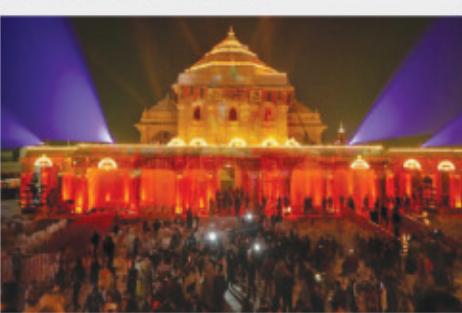
Deceased Basavraj Mangrul (22) was a resident of Sinhgad Road area of Pune. The accused were identified as Saurabh Renuse and Rupesh Yenpure.

The incident came to light when Mangrul's family filed a complaint that he had been missing since he left for Pabe village with Renuse on July 11. As per the police, Mangrul, Renuse and Yenpure headed to Ranjane village to steal metal cables, but Mangrul died after falling off the tower.

Instead of taking him to hospital, the accused allegedly buried him in the Pabe forest, said an official of Sinhgad Road police station.

During questioning, the accused showed police the spot where he had been buried, the official added. Further investigation is underway.

Over 4,000 lights installed in Ayodhya's Bhakti Path, Ram Path stolen: Police



Ayodhya. As many as 3,800 bamboo and 36 projector lights worth over Rs 50 lakh installed on Bhakti Path and Ram Path, located in a high-security area in Ayodhya, were allegedly stolen, police said on Tuesday. An FIR was lodged at Ram Janmabhoomi police station following a complaint on August 9 from a representative of the firm - Yash Enterprises and Krishna Automobiles - which set up the lights under a contract awarded by the Ayodhya Development Authority, they said.

"As many as 6,400 bamboo lights were installed on Rampath and 96 projector lights were installed on Bhakti Path. Till 19 March all the lights were there but after an inspection on May 9, it was found that some lights were missing."

"Till now around 3,800 bamboo lights and 36 projector lights have been stolen by some unknown thieves," Shekhar Sharma, a representative of the firm, said in the complaint. According to the FIR, the firm became aware of the theft in May but filed the complaint on August 9.

The police said that an FIR has been registered in the matter and a probe is on. Ayodhya was refurbished under a major project ahead of January 22 Ram temple consecration ceremony in the holy city.

Andhra Pradesh plans 100 industrial parks to promote aqua, food processing sector

Chief Minister told the officials to conduct a detailed study on how many industrial development parks exist now and the opportunities to develop more such units.

Amravati. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday directed the officials to formulate an action plan for the setting up of food processing, aqua and horticulture besides mineral-based industrial development parks, saying the state has the "most favourable atmosphere for establishing such units".

Chairing a meeting to review the functioning of the Departments of Industries and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the Chief Minister told the officials to conduct a detailed study on how many industrial development parks exist now and the opportunities to develop more such units.

Naidu also directed the officers to formulate plans for setting up area-based industrial parks keeping in view the backward areas in the state. The officials explained to the Chief Minister about the existing industrial parks and ports to be established soon in the state. He directed the officers to initiate all kinds of measures to encourage the industrialists who come forward for setting up such units in the state. Naidu wanted the officials to take steps to set up at least 100 industrial parks in the state in an extent of 100 acres each. Pointing out that Maharashtra stands on top in the country in having the largest number of industrial parks, he said the state has now only 53 such parks and wanted measures to



be taken in the coming days for establishing more parks. The Chief Minister directed officials to take steps to revive the Malavalli Industrial Park in Vijayawada which was subjected to total neglect by the previous government.

He also wanted an action plan to be prepared for the development of integrated ports under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) system and conduct a detailed study on the best ports being maintained with private partnership.

Watch: Marine mammal trapped in net released into sea by fishermen in Tamil Nadu

Dugong, a rare marine mammal, got ensnared in the nets of a local fisherman in Tamil Nadu's Pudukkottai area. The giant mammal was later released into the sea.

Some local fishermen in Tamil Nadu's Pudukkottai released a young dugong, an endangered marine mammal, after it got caught in the fishing net in the Palk Bay area, officials said on Tuesday.

On Monday night, Karuppaiah, a fisherman from Manalmelkudi who operates a traditional country boat, encountered an unexpected challenge while fishing. As he pulled in his nets, he was astonished to discover that a large, unfamiliar creature had become ensnared.

Upon closer inspection, Karuppaiah realised that the animal was not a fish, but rather a Dugong, a rare marine mammal.

Surprised over the incident, Karuppaiah took the help of his crew, who carefully disentangled the Dugong from the net and released it back into the



sea. The successful rescue attempt was a result of recent sensitivity training programs conducted for

Hyderabad police arrest 5 women from Madhya Pradesh for thefts



Hyderabad. Hyderabad Police on Tuesday arrested an interstate gang of five women from Raigarh in Madhya Pradesh for their involvement in a series of thefts across the city. The gang was arrested at the Sitar Hotel in Secunderabad.

The modus operandi involved posing as shoppers and distracting store owners to steal valuables. Their recent target was a shopping mall in Sultan Bazar, where they snatched a bag from an NRI woman. During the investigation, police recovered Rs 14,000 worth of clothes and fake jewellery from the gang. The arrests were made after reviewing 100 hours of CCTV footage. Authorities are now investigating the gang's involvement in other thefts across Hyderabad and are searching for another group suspected of similar crimes.

In a similar incident, a 36-year-old notorious burglar who was responsible for over 50 housebreaks across Tamil Nadu was arrested by the Coimbatore Police on July 11. The man, identified as Moorthy alias 'Rodman', along with his aides stole around 1,500 sovereigns of gold jewelry and crores in cash by targeting houses near railway tracks. With the illicit proceeds, 'Rodman' purchased two cars and a cotton mill worth Rs 4.5 crore.

Former Andhra minister Jogi Ramesh's son arrested in land grab case

The Andhra Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has arrested Jogi Rajeev in connection to an alleged land case. The arrest took place over a complaint filed by landowners.

Vijaywada. The Andhra Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has arrested Jogi Rajeev, the son of former minister and YSR Congress Party leader Jogi Ramesh.

The arrest came during an ongoing investigation in connection with an alleged land grab case linked to the controversial Agrigold Finance company. The arrest took place after the landowners lodged a complaint, claiming that the disputed property, located in Ambapuram village, was wrongfully taken over.

According to ACB officials, the Jogi family allegedly encroached upon half an acre of



land that had previously been seized by the Crime Investigation Department (CID) from Agrigold. The company had

defaulted on deposits, leading to the confiscation of its assets. The complainants allege that Rajeev, with the help of his uncle, forged documents and altered land records to secure ownership of the property. Responding to his son's arrest, Jogi Ramesh accused the state government, led by Chandrababu Naidu, of using the case for a political vendetta. He insisted on his son's innocence, stating, "My son is being falsely implicated. The ACB has acted illegally, and this is nothing but an attempt to intimidate our family."

Mumbai-bound Air India flight aborts take-off from Goa after bird hit



Panaji. An Air India flight, which was about to depart from the Dabolim airport in Goa for Mumbai, had to abort its take-off due to a bird-hit on Wednesday morning, an official said.

The incident took place at 6.45 am, he said. The flight, which was scheduled from the Dabolim airport (in South Goa) to Mumbai, had to abort its take-off at the runway due to a bird-hit, a senior official at the airport told . "The take-off was aborted immediately and the aircraft is parked in the bay for further investigation," he said.

3 children injured as school bus overturns in Andhra Pradesh



Pamuru, Andhra Pradesh. Three children were injured on Tuesday after a private school bus they were travelling in lost control and overturned in Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district. The bus carrying 40 students veered off the road and crashed into agricultural fields in Pamuru mandal.

The onlookers promptly informed the authorities, and they removed the children from the school bus. The authorities, children and their parents were gathered at the site. In a similar incident that occurred on August 7, a school bus in Telangana's Ranga Reddy overturned after it ran backwards due to a handbrake failure. At least 10 children aboard the bus were injured, and the bus also hit several vehicles.

The driver halted the bus from the Pioneer Concept School on a sloped road and tried to apply the handbrake when he stepped out. However, the brakes failed, and the vehicle rolled backwards, hitting other vehicles and eventually tipping over.



miners' responsibility. There's been no safety audit or involvement of geological experts to assess the damage."

1000-YEAR-OLD TEMPLE AT RISK A 1,000-year-old Kalika temple is at risk due to nearby mining activities. Cracks have appeared in the temple premises, with locals attributing the damage to a chalk mine just 50 meters away.

Raghuvir Singh Majila, president of the temple committee and an army veteran, emphasised the temple's historical and religious significance. He recounted that the temple has been a central place of worship and local economy for centuries. "Mining continues despite numerous complaints, putting the entire area at risk," Nagarkoti said. "We lack the funds to build a retaining wall, which is the

"This temple has been a key religious site for the entire locality, with the economy revolving around it and its visitors," Majila said.

Locals have set up small eateries and shops catering to devotees, and the temple's condition directly impacts their livelihoods.

"In this sparsely populated area, the main sources of income are farming and religious tourism. Both are now jeopardised due to the rampant mining," said Suresh Singh Majila, a veteran and local activist. "We have received no assurance from the government regarding the construction of a retaining wall to secure the houses and temple uphill."

RESIDENTS DEMAND RELOCATION Many locals are now demanding relocation. The family of Hemchandra Kandpal is among the worst affected by rampant talc mining, which has caused catastrophic cracks in their home.

Kandpal blames the mining beneath the hill for the life-threatening damage.

"These cracks cannot be fixed; the only option left is to dismantle and rebuild the house. The government must provide us land to relocate," Kandpal said.

Tech-driven initiatives are redefining judiciary

Brother Justice Suryakant, my brother Justice Rajesh Bindal, Chief Justice Sheel Nagu, the distinguished judges of the Punjab and Haryana High Court who are here on the dais with us, Brother Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia, Brother Justice Arun Palli, Justice Lisa Gill, all the Chief Justices who have come here from near and far, judges, members of the computer committees, former judges of the High Court who have really honored us by their presence this morning and of course all the members of the registry and the other staff associated with the ICT committees. I just thought when I heard that little introduction by the compare for me that such an unabashedly uncritical appreciation of the lead speaker of the day is made only by two people in life, a daughter or a sister. I'm sure my wife may not necessarily accept of all that is so warmly said, but in a lighter vein when I was visiting my sister in the United States a few years ago, her young daughters told me that there are only two people in the life of your sister, that is their mother, who can never make a mistake. One is the pet dog and the other is the brother. But thank you very much for that very warm introduction. Well, I'm delighted to deliver the inaugural address at the national conference which aims to explore the transformative impact of technology on India's courts and map our future trajectory. The very convening of this conference this morning underscores the significant progress we have made in harnessing technology to enhance justice delivery. Even before I assumed office of the Chief Justice of India, I have had the privilege of serving as a chairperson of the e-committee of the Supreme Court. I have closely watched the remarkable evolution in our discourse on the subject over the last four years. We have progressed from discussions about recognizing the need for technology to delving into its intricacies and best practices. Today, technology is acknowledged as an indispensable catalyst for accessible justice.

This paradigm shift is indeed heartening. There is no better evidence of the depth and nuance of our discourse about technology than the very agenda of this conference which has been so carefully curated up by our colleagues from the High Court of Punjab and Haryana. The carefully curated discussions over the next two days on a range of themes, from technical strategies to critical issues like artificial intelligence and data security, reflect the maturity of our discussions on the role of technology in justice delivery in our country. We are no longer now discussing whether we should adopt technology, but rather how best we can harness it. I still remember the time when I was a young judge of the Bombay High Court and Chief Justice V N Khare had convened a conference on technology. So we had about 20 judges and all the Chief Justices lined up in what is now the largest judges' lunchroom.

Everyone had a desktop in front of them. You were told to operate your own desktop and they were trying to tell us everything from how to open your desktop. Most of the Chief Justice and most of the judges in the lounge that conference I remember had their desktops completely blank.

Nobody knew how even to open a desktop. So that was where we began. This was probably around 2004 or so, how much we have now transformed as an institution and as individuals. People often see me approach the desk and say, or at the very least think to themselves, oh Chief, are you going to talk about technology once again? Many a time these people are indeed right. But something that many of them may not realize is that technology, being a tool to access to justice, is not just a modern convenience or a trendy topic. We are no longer now discussing whether we should adopt technology, but rather how best we can harness it. I still remember the time when I was a young judge of the Bombay High Court and Chief Justice V N Khare had convened a conference on technology. So we had about 20 judges and all the Chief Justices lined up in what is now the largest judges' lunchroom. Everyone had a desktop in front of them.

THE best option for India in dealing with Bangladesh after the exit of Sheikh Hasina into exile is not to do anything now. With a torrent of advice, suggestions, tips and hypothetical expertise flowing from the humble teashops of Siliguri in West Bengal to think tanks in New Delhi brimming with erudition, it is not easy for policymakers in the national capital to sit tight while an important neighbouring country is in turmoil.

The government was particularly vulnerable to criticism by the political class because Parliament was in session when Hasina left her country and arrived in India. Ministers and senior officials had to be seen as being responsive to the situation across the eastern border or face flak. Besides, the evolving national mood in India in the last decade has been one of assertion, be it in foreign policy or sports, to mention two spheres of activity that are currently dominating the 24-hour news cycle.

Beyond urging restraint and perhaps making an issue of Hinduphobia at the UN, can India do anything to stop the attacks on minorities in Bangladesh? To borrow from the memorable phraseology of then US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq two decades ago, there is little point in discussing the 'known knowns' about Bangladesh. That has been the essence of public discourse in this country since student protests erupted in Bangladesh. What is important are the 'unknown unknowns' about Bangladesh. Rumsfeld had said in

2002 that these are "the ones we don't know that we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tends to be the difficult ones." That being the case, India must pause until the unknown unknowns about Bangladesh — the domestic evolution there, its external dimensions, the fallout on India, etc — translate into the first category, that is, the known knowns. As a rule, governments and their image-makers are loath to accept inaction as policy. Former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao was an exception to this. He once famously remarked that "even not taking a decision is a decision." Rao practised this dictum in many spheres when he was the head of government in a fluid political environment, often with remarkable success. India's best recourse now is to follow this truism in dealing with the uncertain situation that has unfolded in Bangladesh. In any case, the stark reality is that India is currently in no position to influence the events there. Beyond urging restraint and perhaps

making an issue of Hinduphobia at the United Nations, can India do anything to stop the attacks on minorities and prevent further destruction of Hindu temples in Bangladesh? Surely, the Indian Army is not going to march across the border to provide security to temples and preserve them! At television studios across this country, panellists who seek their 15 minutes of fame are not going to accept that India is helpless in this matter. Even if it were feasible, the Indian government is not foolhardy enough to resort to any such course. If there is a

emulation by other similarly placed nations. After all, how many other countries in our time have pulled themselves up by their bootstraps and graduated out of the Least Developed Country rankings by global parameters? Dhaka would have done just that in two more years, but that outcome is now in doubt — unless its new, interim leader, Muhammad Yunus, can perform a miracle of creating national cohesion and sustaining human development alongside.

Even those who have only dabbled in foreign policy — though for decades — know that India has gone through this before. When the Shah of Iran had to flee his country in 1979, much like Hasina now, Indians were similarly sorry because he had tried to be friends with India in his later years as a monarch. He had downgraded relations with Pakistan in a zero-sum game. Most Indians failed to grasp the meaning of Iran's historic Islamic revolution. New Delhi had a tough time building bridges with Qom, and relations did not stabilise until Rao visited Tehran in 1993. A serious mistake that Indians are making in forming their opinions about Hasina's troubles and Yunus' challenge is to conclude that Bangladesh was a peaceful country during the now-exiled Prime Minister's rule. Bangladesh was created because the blood of East Bengalis was being shed before Partition and after it became East

Pakistan. Its bloodletting has continued throughout. If Hasina had not fled, she would have likely met the same tragic fate as her father.

ouning mutinies, revolts and coups d'état — all with fatalities — Bangladesh has encountered 15 attempts to change its governments by force. Two of its Presidents have been assassinated. In addition, the army has intervened to change governments peacefully. No other country in South Asia has experienced such violent transfers of power. By comparison, Pakistan has had only five successful coups. 'Wait and watch' is one of the more popular clichés in diplomacy, although in reality it has no meaning. It is to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's credit that he did not use this worn-out cliché when he briefed Parliament on August 6 about developments in India's eastern neighbourhood. With formidable resources, both overt and covert, India will hopefully be in a position to act if the situation demands in a few months. Now is not the time to act.



fundamental threat to India's national security, the Cabinet Committee on Security will surely act, as it has done many times before. But we are not there yet. Incendiary rhetoric, a sadly familiar feature of Indian society now, must stop.

If India is to have a realistic Bangladesh policy once things settle down in Dhaka, it must not fall for fanciful depictions of how good things were in the neighbouring country during Hasina's rule. It is a safe assumption based on extended conversations and the fallout of public opinion from Kolkata to Kochi and from Gurugram to Gandhinagar that most Indians have come to believe that the best is behind for Bangladesh. And that it is now staring into an abyss of regressive forces and Islamic nationalists whose agenda is to destroy the friendship that Hasina struggled to create with successive Indian leaders. There is, of course, no polling or any scientific evidence to support this assertion. No one will dispute that Bangladesh's performance in many sectors was worthy of

A nuanced approach

SC ruling on hijab balances faith, education



THE Supreme Court's decision to partially stay the Mumbai college circular banning the hijab, while upholding restrictions on the niqab and burqa, strikes a commendable balance between respecting religious sentiments and addressing the pragmatic needs of modern education. It is a nuanced attempt to reconcile cultural traditions with the demands of contemporary academic environment. This decision underscores the importance of fostering an inclusive atmosphere while maintaining discipline and uniformity within institutions. By allowing the hijab but restricting face-covering attire like the niqab and burqa, the SC has set a precedent that other institutions with similar issues would do well to follow.

The court's approach recognises that education is not just about imparting knowledge but also about ensuring that students can participate fully in the

academic experience. Face coverings can inhibit interaction, an essential component of the learning

process. The order supports the idea that while religious freedom is fundamental, it should not come at the expense of the educational milieu. This decision offers a template for resolving similar disputes across the country. The Karnataka hijab case, for example, could benefit from this balanced perspective, avoiding the polarising outcomes seen in other states. Countries like Turkey, which have historically grappled with the role of religious symbols in secular institutions, might find the Indian approach instructive. This ruling emphasises that educational institutions should focus on empowering students rather than on imposing restrictive dress codes. By navigating the fine line between tradition and modernity, the SC has taken a significant step towards ensuring that educational institutions remain inclusive, respectful and progressive spaces for all students.

SEBI-Hindenburg-Adani row shows mishandling of credibility crisis

It is imperative that SEBI remains credible and is seen to adhere to the rules & compliance standards it imposes on all stakeholders.

THE manner in which India's market regulator, the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has gone about investigating the astounding rise in share prices of the Adani Group has been troubling for independent observers, even before Hindenburg Research released its explosive report in January 2023. This harks back to the tenure of another chairperson who is now associated with the industry group, but it was always assumed that SEBI's reluctance was primarily due to political compulsions.

Having ignored the inexplicable price run-up, SEBI, under the present chief, framed its post-Hindenburg investigation primarily on short-selling activities. Even a novice investor understands that short-selling opportunities emerge only when stock prices soar far beyond a company's fundamentals or future prospects. The explosive new 'whistleblower' documents released by Hindenburg Research on August 10 give a new twist to the issue and have led to a full-blown credibility crisis at the market regulator. They question chairperson Madhab Puri Buch's (MPB) integrity and disclosure with a set of facts and documents.

As one of the top five capital markets in the world and a key resource mobiliser for the Indian economy, restoring confidence in the independence of our regulatory mechanism is of paramount importance today. What we are witnessing instead is a textbook example of how not to handle such a situation. In the 36 hours since Hindenburg released its sensational allegations, there has been silence from the government and the finance ministry, which oversees SEBI. Instead, we have seen a series of statements from those involved, which raise more questions than they answer. Late on Sunday night, SEBI decided that Hindenburg's allegations "warrant an appropriate

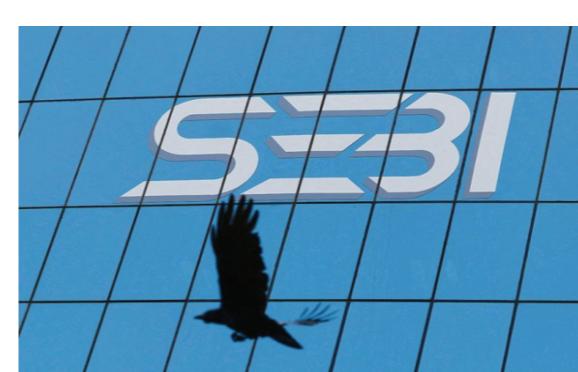
response". When serious allegations are made against the chairperson and the regulator, an appropriate response cannot be anonymous. It is unclear who is taking responsibility for the press release or whether the issue was even discussed by the board or with the ministry. Exhibiting a complete lack of understanding of the situation, SEBI issued an unsigned press release listing its actions in the Adani matter and defending the chairperson without any semblance of inquiry. It claims that MPB had "recused herself in matters of potential conflicts of interest"; whether she did so in the Adani investigation is not answered.

Meanwhile, there seems to be a concerted attempt to question Hindenburg's credibility and silence or discredit anyone attempting a serious analysis. Unless the government comes up with a nuanced response, these actions will only harm India's credibility.

Despite the clarifications offered by various parties, many issues require further scrutiny. It is now an indisputable fact that MPB and her husband had investments in an offshore entity (Global Dynamic Opportunities Fund Ltd), which was part of the same nested entities used by Vinod Adani (Gautam Adani's brother) that were under SEBI's investigation. This warranted a clear disclosure. SEBI has a precedent of the chairperson (CB Bhate) being ring-fenced from issues, even when they did not involve personal investments. Even if the investment was redeemed, MPB ought to have recused herself and created a board-monitored committee, perhaps comprising the three whole-time members, to handle the Adani investigation, in consultation with the government. Since this did not happen, it raises questions about MPB's two meetings with Gautam Adani while the investigations were ongoing. No disclosure or recusal

Pvt Ltd. While the couple says the two entities "became immediately dormant on her appointment with SEBI" in 2017, Hindenburg has released documents showing that the Indian entity is active and generating revenue. The clarificatory statement by MPB and Dhaval itself seems contradictory. It says that Dhaval started his own consultancy practice through these companies after retiring from Unilever. This confirms that the company is not dormant, so it is unclear if 'prominent clients in the Indian industry' that it does business with are SEBI-regulated entities, since the SEBI chairperson remains a 99 per cent owner of the firm. Another disclosure by 360 One Wam Ltd (formerly IIFL Wealth Management) revealed investment details of MPB and her husband, raising a crucial question posed by MP Mahua Moitra: if foreign portfolio investment records down to the last natural person were made available so quickly by one entity, why did SEBI "hit a wall" in its investigation, as noted by the Supreme Court? An independent, time-bound investigation leading to credible action, one way or another, alone will restore SEBI's credibility.

Rather than a politically motivated joint parliamentary committee, a suggestion by former Revenue Secretary EAS Sarma seems a better option. Since the apex court has not yet closed the Adani cases, Sarma suggests that the Chief Justice could nominate a senior member of the judiciary to head an inquiry commission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952. India's national interest is not served by defending one business group. With a market capitalisation of several lakh crores of rupees and the savings of countless ordinary people riding on the market, it is imperative that SEBI remains credible and is seen to adhere to the rules and compliance standards it imposes on all stakeholders.



happened even when the matter reached the Supreme Court and an expert committee was appointed, specifically to examine if there were regulatory lapses in investigating the Adani Group. MPB's dealings with Trident Trust Company are perplexing. On the one hand, a letter from her husband Dhaval Buch states that their "accounts be registered solely in his name", yet the email registered to the account remains that of MPB, who continues to receive investment details. Why did she send a redemption request from her email in 2018 when the funds were solely held by Dhaval? In India, this would have fallen foul of compliance requirements and attracted penal action by SEBI. It now raises red flags about the real ownership of funds. MPB and her husband have confirmed their holdings in two separate consultancy companies. MPB says she transferred her entire holding in the Singapore entity, Agora Partners, to her husband, who became a 100 per cent shareholder in March 2022. This was two weeks after being appointed chairperson in her second stint at SEBI. She continues to hold a 99 per cent stake in the India-registered Agora Advisory



Going to school alone can improve kids' Safety perception



If children are allowed to go to school on their own either by walking or cycling, they are more likely to possess greater decision-making abilities as well as better safety perception, finds a new study.

Children who travel to school without the assistance of elders are more likely to possess greater self-confidence, self-governing skills, decision-making abilities and improved perception about the safety of the route.

In addition, active commuting such as walking or cycling can foster a healthy lifestyle in these kids.

"This increases physical activity and cardiovascular health in children that commute actively, especially in those that go cycling," said Manuel Herrador, researcher at the University of Granada in Spain.

Previous studies have also derived a link between active commuting and an enhancement in the cognitive skills and



academic performances.

For the new study, published in the journal *Acta Paediatrica*, the team studied over 745 school children, aged between six to 12 years.

The children were questioned regarding who accompanied them to school and the safety measures undertaken while travelling alone.

The findings showed that children above 10-12 years are more likely to commute to school unaccompanied by anyone.

The findings showed that children above 10-12 years are more likely to commute to school unaccompanied by anyone.

Teen online friendships as valid as actual ones

Online contact enhances companionship between friends via conversations that can continue throughout the day and night without disrupting others and it also allows more time to control emotions.



core qualities as face-to-face relationships.

"Many contacts between adolescents are mediated through technology and can provide additional opportunities for friends to spend time together, share thoughts and display affection than in offline spaces alone," said Stephanie Reich, associate professor at the University of California, Irvine (UCI).

Reich, along with the lead author Joanna Yau,



identified six core characteristics of offline friendships — self-disclosure, validation, companionship, instrumental support, conflict and conflict resolution—and their digital parallels.

For each quality, they noted ways in which online interfaces corresponded with or differed from in-person communication.

They found digital exchanges offer more benefits in some areas and carry increased risks in others.

On the plus side, online contact enhances companionship between friends via conversations that can continue throughout the day and night without disrupting others and it also allows more time to control emotions and calm down before crafting and sending a response to something upsetting.

Conversely, friendships can be damaged by gossip and rumours, which spread much faster and farther through cyberspace.

"Digital communication may increase the ramifications of conduct due to the permanence of information and the speed at which it travels, but at the core, friendships seem to have the same key characteristics.

"The majority of adolescents interact electronically most often with individuals they consider friends offline. So rather than reducing intimacy in these relationships, technology-mediated communication may provide additional benefits to teens as connections occur both face-to-face and online," Reich added.



which are all innate strengths.

The researcher studied over 1,204 youth between 12-17 years by a validated biopsychosocial 10-item resilience scale including various questions of tackling bullying and related stress.

The results demonstrated that students with higher levels of resilience were bullied at school or online less often.

Their experience with various forms of interpersonal peer harm also varied inversely with the students' self-reported level of resilience.

Developing resilience may help kids combat bullying

Resilient kids are those, who for a variety of reasons, are better able to withstand external pressures and setbacks and are less negatively impacted in their attitudes and actions than their less-equipped peers when facing this type of victimisation.

Ever wondered why bullying has a serious effect on some kids, while others recover easily from the trauma? Researchers, led by one of Indian origin, found that the capacity to recover quickly depends on the characteristic trait of "resilience".

The study says that resilience buffers and protects the children against internalising the harm intended through situations of adversities like bullying both at home or school as well as online.

"Resilience is a potent protective factor, both in preventing experience with bullying and mitigating its effect," said Sameer Hinduja, Professor at the Florida Atlantic University in Florida.

"Resilient kids are those, who for a variety of reasons, are better able to withstand external pressures and setbacks and are less negatively impacted in their attitudes and actions than their less-equipped peers when facing this type of victimisation," Hinduja added.

Although, the ability to be resilient comes naturally, it needs to be nurtured through social and environmental factors, as it enables kids to "bounce back" and successfully adapt to stressful

Supreme Court To Hear CBI's Plea Against Nithari Killer Surendra Koli's Acquittal



On July 19, the top court had agreed to hear separate pleas filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Uttar Pradesh government against the high court verdict. It had also issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court today agreed to hear a fresh plea filed by the CBI challenging the Allahabad High Court's verdict that acquitted Surendra Koli in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings case. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan tagged the CBI's plea with some other petitions pending in the top court against the high court order of October 16, 2024. On July 19, the top court had agreed to hear separate pleas filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Uttar Pradesh government against the high court verdict. It had also issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions.

The top court had in May agreed to hear a plea filed by the father of one of the victims challenging the high court's verdict acquitting Koli in one of the cases. In this case, Moninder Singh Pandher was acquitted by the sessions court while Koli was awarded the death penalty on September 28, 2010.

The high court had acquitted domestic help Pandher and his employer Koli in the case in which they were facing a death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was "botched up". Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the high court had noted that the prosecution had failed to prove the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence" and the probe was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies".

Pandher and Koli were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to death in the killings that horrified the nation with their details of sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism.

The high court had allowed multiple appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who had

challenged the death sentence awarded by a Central Bureau of Investigation court in Ghaziabad.

In all, 19 cases had been lodged against Pandher and Koli in 2007. The CBI had filed closure reports in three cases due to lack of evidence. In the remaining 16 cases, Koli was earlier acquitted in three and his death sentence in one was commuted to life.

The sensational killings came to light with the discovery of the skeletal remains of eight children from a drain behind Pandher's house at Nithari in Noida, bordering the national capital, on December 29, 2006. Further digging and searches of drains in the area around the house led to the recovery of more skeletal remains. Most of these remains were those of poor children and young women who had gone missing from the area. Within 10 days, the CBI had taken over the case and its search resulted in the recovery of more remains.



Rajnath Singh Chairs Key Security Meet Over Rising Terror Attacks In J&K

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh convened a high-level meeting today focusing on the rising number of terror-related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting, held at the South Block in New Delhi, was attended by top officials National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi.

The meeting was called in response to a series of terror-related incidents that have plagued Jammu and Kashmir in recent months. The security forces across the Union Territory have been placed on high alert ahead of Independence Day. An Army captain was killed and four terrorists were gunned down in an ongoing operation in the higher reaches of Jammu's Doda district today. The situation in Jammu has become increasingly volatile, with a noticeable uptick in terror attacks. On August 10, two soldiers and a civilian were killed during a gunfight between terrorists and security forces in Anantnag. The region has witnessed attacks on an army convoy in Kathua, skirmishes in Doda and Udhampur, and a failed attack by the Pakistan Border Action Team (BAT) along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara district's Machhal sector. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), 28 people, including civilians and security personnel, were killed in 11 terror-related incidents and 24 counter-terror operations up to July 21 this year. In the past two months, the frequency of attacks and ambushes has increased, particularly in the southern reaches of Pir Panjal, an area that had been relatively quiet in terms of terrorist activity for some time. Notable among recent incidents was an operation in which two Army officers were killed, and two Pakistani terrorists, including a Lashkar-e-Taiba sniper and explosives expert, were eliminated.

Big Win For Mineral Rich States In Court, Can Collect Past Dues On Royalty

New Delhi: The Supreme Court today allowed mining-rich states to collect past dues on royalties from mining companies. The court ordered that states can impose levies with effect from April 1, 2005 and the payments will be staggered in 12 years. The bench, however, directed the states to not impose a penalty of any kind on payment of dues. The Centre has opposed the demand of states for refund of royalty levied on mines and minerals since 1989, saying it will impact the citizens and the PSUs will have to empty their coffers by ₹ 70,000 crore according to initial estimates.

CJI Chandrachud said this verdict will be signed by eight-



judges of the bench who by majority decided the July 25 judgement giving the state's power to levy taxes on mineral rights. He said that Justice Nagarathna will not sign Wednesday's verdict as she had given a dissenting view in the July 25 verdict.

Last month, the Supreme Court upheld state governments' right to levy royalty on mineral-bearing land, reasoning they had the competence and power to do so. The landmark 8:1 verdict was delivered by a bench led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, which ruled 'royalty' is not the same as 'tax'; Justice BV Nagarathna delivered the dissenting verdict.

The verdict will benefit mineral-rich states like Odisha, Jharkhand, Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, as their governments can now charge additional levies on mining companies operating in their territories.

Wayanad landslides: Authorities complete DNA tests of 401 body parts

Recovery and identification of bodies continue in Wayanad two weeks after three deadly landslides hit the Chooralmala and Mundakai areas.

New Delhi: Health authorities in Kerala have completed DNA tests on 401 bodies and body parts recovered from the landslide-hit areas in Wayanad to identify the remains, officials said.

The exhaustive search operation, involving the Army, Special Operations Group, Fire and Rescue Services, Forest Department, and hundreds of volunteers, recovered 349 body parts belonging to 248 individuals, including 121 men and 127 women.

According to State Revenue Minister K Rajan, 52 of these bodies or body parts were too decomposed for immediate identification and require further testing, as many people are still awaiting information about their families.

Meanwhile, the search in the Nilambur area and Chaliyar River continued on Tuesday, with three more body parts discovered.

Kerala Forest Minister AK Saseendran



said, "As of now, 231 bodies and around 206 body parts have been recovered. At present, there are a total of 1,505 people staying in 12 camps, and 415 samples have been sent for DNA testing".

Currently, blood samples from 115 individuals have been collected, including those of relatives of three Bihar natives. State authorities have intensified efforts to shift survivors from relief camps to temporary settlements. The process to identify vacant houses and residential facilities

in Wayanad is underway. The Harrison Malayalam labour unions have been asked to assess the safety and management of 53 ready-to-occupy houses and report on additional housing options. A fully equipped temporary settlement is planned for Meppadi, Mupainad, Vaithiri, Kalpatta, Muttill, and Ambalavayal, news agency reported.

A five-member committee consisting of panchayat members, revenue officers, and social workers inspected rental housing options within local self-government limits on Wednesday. Additionally, the cabinet subcommittee has issued 1,368 certificates through a special campaign for disaster victims.

Three devastating back-to-back landslides hit Chooralmala and Mundakai areas in Wayanad in the early hours of July 30, destroying houses and buildings over a vast area and burying residents under mud.

The incident, caught on CCTV installed at the gates, took place late Sunday night.

The video shows the two big cats approaching the cowshed when they suddenly encounter the two dogs on the other side of the gate. They faced off at a cowshed in Savarkundla in Gujarat's Amreli, some 70 kilometres from the famous Gir National Park, known for Asiatic lions.

The incident, caught on CCTV installed at the gates, took place late Sunday night.

The video shows the two big cats approaching the cowshed when they suddenly encounter the two dogs on the other side of the gate. They then started slamming the gate. They, however, were unable to harm each other due to an iron gate that separated them. The lions then ran into nearby bushes, seconds before a man came out of the gate, apparently trying to figure out what happened.

He then tried to look into the bushes using a torch and finally returned to the cowshed and locked the gates. The lions had apparently strayed out of a reserve forest area. There, however, was no official statement on the incident. The incident emerged a day after Gujarat marked World Lion Day with programmes to spread awareness about the conservation and protection of big cats.

The state forest department marked the day by spreading awareness through SMSes and emails to citizens, and school students participated in rallies, drawing competitions, etc., in 11 districts with a lion population.

Why Kolkata Doctor's Rape-Murder Case Went To CBI: Court's Tough Remarks

Five days before Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's deadline to police, the Calcutta High Court intervened and ordered that the case be transferred to CBI at once.

New Delhi: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had given Kolkata Police six days to complete the investigation into the chilling rape and

murder of a 31-year-old doctor at a state-run hospital. If the city police cannot finish their probe by Sunday, she said Monday, the state government would recommend a CBI investigation into the incident that has shaken the state and the country.

But five days before the Chief Minister's deadline to police, the Calcutta High Court intervened and ordered that the case be transferred to the central agency at once. This was a rare occasion when a court ordered transfer of the case during the first hearing in the matter.

The bench led by Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam noted that there has been "no significant progress in the investigation" so far and flagged the possibility of destruction of evidence. The court also noted serious lapses on the part of the hospital administration and slammed the former Principal, whose resignation and swift reinstatement in a key role has sparked a row.



The Petitions

Multiple public interest litigations were filed in the high court with the common prayer that state police hand over the investigation to CBI or any other independent agency. Among the petitioners were the victim's parents and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. The court's order noted that the petitioners had said there were injuries on the victim's body and that Chief Minister Banerjee had said the state government has no objection if the probe was transferred to CBI. The parents, sought a probe monitored by the high court to ensure that no evidence is tampered with or destroyed. The parents also sought protection for themselves, witnesses and any other individual who may have information related to the case.

The Court's Basis
The court said it is guided by various decisions of the Supreme Court. "At this juncture, we referred to the decision in K. V. Rajendran Vs. Superintendent of Police reported in (2013) 12 SCC 480, where the law has been summarized that the Court would exercise its Constitutional powers for transferring an investigation from the State Investigating Agency to any other independent investigating agency like C.B.I. only in rare and exceptional cases, where the Court finds it necessary in order to do justice between the parties and to instill confidence in the public mind," the order said.

Nestled in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal's capital has long been a favourite with backpackers and a base camp for adventurers heading to the Himalayas. Part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Kathmandu also abounds in artistic and cultural wealth. Whether it's the peaceful Buddhist stupas, the bustling temples or the historic monuments, Kathmandu offers a multitude of experiences.

Mountain flights

The world's highest peak Mount Everest is also Nepal's central attraction. Don't be disheartened if you can't make the arduous trek—there are several convenient flights that offer close-up views of Everest and surrounding peaks such as Shisha Pangma, Gauri Shankar and Melungtse. Most local airlines offer daily hour-long flights from Kathmandu in small aircrafts, with all passengers getting window seats. Clearer weather guarantees better views, and the best season for flying is between February and March, and October to November.

Everest Skydive

The Everest Skydive in Nepal is guaranteed to give you an adventurous high. Divers are taken aboard an aircraft, and then allowed to jump from 29,500 feet (higher than Everest) for a free-fall past the world's tallest peak. An attached parachute ensures a smooth descent and soft landing. Both solo and guided skydives can be arranged.

Boudhnath Stupa

Situated on the north-eastern edge of Kathmandu, this large white stupa is a major centre of Tibetan Buddhism. It lies on an ancient trade route between Lhasa and Kathmandu, and was an important stop for Tibetan traders travelling to the higher reaches of the Himalayas. Believed to house



The top attractions in Kathmandu



Buddha's relics, it is also among the largest stupas in Asia. The best times to visit are early morning and dusk, when you can observe

monks chanting their prayers and butter lamps being lit.

Patan Durbar Square

The former capital of an independent kingdom, Kathmandu's neighbouring town Patan lies across the Bagmati River. Situated in the heart of Patan, this

Durbar Square is worth visiting for its beautiful Newari architecture. It is dominated by the medieval Royal Palace, as well as numerous old religious structures such as the Krishna Temple, Bhimsen Temple and the Golden Temple of Hiranya Varma. Constructed in the second half of the 17th century, the Royal Palace consists of three beautifully-decorated wings. It also houses the well-maintained Patan Museum, which has a good collection of wood carvings, old photographs, bronze and stone sculptures, and other artefacts.

Durbar Square

Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this medieval square constitutes the core of Kathmandu's old town. Built between the 12th and the 18th centuries, this is the best place to admire traditional Nepalese architecture. It comprises of three squares, with Hanuman Dhoka or the Old Royal Palace being the major landmark. Dating to the 17th century, the palace encloses a series of residential quarters, temples and a museum built around chowks or courtyards. The Durbar Square is also dotted with a series of temples,



statues and other historic buildings; such as Kumari Chowk, the home of Kathmandu's living goddess; and Kasthamandap, believed to be the oldest building in Kathmandu.

Swayambhunath Temple

Perched on top of a hill, this Buddhist stupa lies on the outskirts of the city. Thanks to the presence of a large number of monkeys, it also known as the monkey temple. The central white stupa is topped by a golden spire that depicts Buddha's eyes in all the four directions. It is surrounded by beautifully-carved temples, statues of deities, fluttering prayer flags and Buddhist prayer wheels.

Pashupatinath Temple

Situated on the banks of the Bagmati River, the massive Pashupatinath complex is one of the holiest pilgrimage spots in Nepal. It's best-known for housing a major temple of the Hindu god Shiva, also known as Pashupati. While the present temple was constructed in the 17th century, its history dates back to 400 AD. It has been built in the pagoda style of architecture, with a two-tiered roof rising above the central shrine. Only Hindus are allowed to enter the temple premises. The central point of interest is the black four-headed idol of Pashupati, and a golden statue of his bull, Nandi.

The largest hot desert in the world, the Sahara Desert, surprised the world early today as pictures of snowfall emerged on the internet. The captivating images were taken by amateur photographer Karim Bouchetata on December 19, from near the desert town of Ain Sefra in Algeria. This extraordinary occurrence supposedly last took place in Ain Sefra in 1979, when a snowstorm for half an hour halted traffic in the town.

The second time in living memory, this year's Sahara snow happened almost after 40 years. The

incredible pictures are alluring to say the least. Bouchetata in a statement has mentioned, "Everyone was stunned to see snow falling in the desert, it is such a rare occurrence. It looked amazing as the snow settled on the sand and made a great set of photos. The snow stayed for about a day and has now melted away."

Ain Sefra, which is also known as the "Gateway to the Desert," was founded in the year 1881 as a French garrison town. The place has recorded an average of 37 degree Celsius in summer, while during winter months the temperature can go as low

as -10.2 degree Celsius. But such an occurrence is never expected in this region. The pictures evoke a peculiar sense of

satisfaction, to see the cold winter snow rest on the sands of the mighty Sahara, mixing up in each other, creating a surreal imagery of deep orange and white. One can only

imagine the unexpected luck of people who happen to be passing by the desert during such a time. We can only hope that your travel luck is as blessed as the amateur photographer Karim Bouchetata's.



When snow rested on the mighty Saharan sands

DoT to discuss Starlink issue in ministerial meet

NEW DELHI: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is set to convene an inter-ministerial meeting this week to address security concerns related to granting a licence to Elon Musk's Starlink for satellite broadband services in India. While Jio Satellite Communications and Bharti-backed OneWeb have secured licences, Starlink's application remains pending on security-related issues. A senior DoT official confirmed that the meeting aims to discuss the potential security implications of Starlink's operations in the country. The company has not withdrawn its bid for the Indian market. "We are meeting this week to discuss the security implications of Starlink services in the country. The company has not withdrawn its bid to start its services in the country," said the official. Starlink, along with Jio Satellite Communications and OneWeb, had applied for the global mobile personal communication by satellite services (GMPCS) licence, which offers satellite communication services in licensed service areas in the country. Jio Satellite Communications and OneWeb have received a licence to provide satellite broadband services in the country. Jeff Bezos-led Amazon, too, applied for a licence for its Project Kuiper satellite broadband venture. Elon-Musk-led- Starlink's licence application is still pending. As per licensing guidelines for Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite Services (GMPCS), all traffic originating or terminating within India must pass through a GMPCS Gateway Switch located domestically. Additionally, the licence is contingent upon security clearance from an inter-ministerial committee.

Awaits security clearance

According to the licensing guidelines, all traffic originating or terminating in India must pass through a GMPCS Gateway Switch located domestically

India's Wholesale Inflation Dips To 2.04% In July

NEW DELHI: Wholesale inflation in the country declined to 2.04 per cent in July, according to government data released on Wednesday. The wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation was 3.36 per cent in June. The Department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) in a post on X said "the annual rate of inflation based on WPI stood at 2.04 % in July 2024 as compared to 3.36 % in June, 2024." The annual rate of inflation for Primary Articles of WPI stood at 3.08 per cent in July 2024, as compared to 8.80 per cent in June 2024. The annual rate of inflation for Fuel & Power of WPI increased to 1.72 per cent in July 2024, from 1.03 per cent in June 2024. The annual rate of inflation of the Manufactured Products group of WPI increased to 1.58 per cent in July 2024, from 1.43 per cent in June 2024, the DPIIT posted on X. The decline in July WPI was in line with the retail inflation data for the month. Retail inflation fell to a 5-year low of 3.54 per cent in July, data released earlier this week showed. The Reserve Bank of



India (RBI), which mainly takes into account retail inflation while framing the monetary policy, kept the benchmark interest rate or repo rate unchanged for the ninth consecutive time in its August monetary policy review at 6.5 percent.

SC Allows States to Seek Refund of Royalty on Minerals from Centre, Mining Firms from 2005 Onwards

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected the Centre's plea for prospective effect of its July 25 verdict, which upheld the power of states to levy tax on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land, and allowed them to seek refund of royalty from April 1, 2005 onwards.

A nine-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the argument for prospective effect of the July 25 ruling is rejected. The bench also comprising justices Hrishikesh Roy, Abhay S Oka, BV Nagarathna, JB Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih, however, said there will be conditionalities on payment of past dues. It said payment of dues by the Centre and mining companies can be made to mineral-rich states in a staggered manner over the next 12 years. The bench, however, directed the states to not impose a penalty of any kind on payment of dues. The Centre has opposed the demand of states for refund of royalty levied on mines and minerals since 1989, saying it will impact the citizens and the PSUs will have to empty their coffers by Rs 70,000 crore according to initial estimates. CJI Chandrachud said this verdict will be signed by eight-judges of the bench who by majority decided the July 25 judgement giving the state's power to levy taxes on mineral rights. He said that Justice Nagarathna will not sign Wednesday's verdict as she had given a dissenting view in the July 25 verdict. In a majority 8:1 verdict on July 25, the bench had held that legislative power to tax mineral rights vests with states. The verdict had overruled a 1989 judgement, which held that only the Centre has power to impose royalty on minerals and mineral-bearing land. Some opposition-ruled mineral rich states then sought refund of royalty levied by the Centre and taxes from the mining companies since the 1989 verdict.

Sensex, Nifty trade flat amid profit booking; Hero MotoCorp falls 4%

As of 10.13 am, the NSE Nifty 50 was nearly flat, rising just 7.30 points to 24,146.30, while the S&P BSE Sensex saw a modest increase of 66.37 points to 79,022.40

New Delhi. Benchmark stock market indices opened flat on Wednesday, as gains in information technology (IT) stocks were balanced out by profit booking across other sectors. As of 10.13 am, the NSE Nifty 50 was nearly flat, rising just 7.30 points to 24,146.30, while the S&P BSE Sensex saw a modest increase of 66.37 points to 79,022.40. The IT sector showed some strength, gaining 0.6%, following data that indicated US producer prices rose less than expected in July, hinting at cooling inflation. However, financial stocks



struggled, with the Nifty Financials and private banking indices each falling 0.2%. ICICI Bank saw a drop of 1%, contributing to the sector's weakness. Analysts pointed to ongoing concerns about the rising cost of deposits, which could lead to further profit-taking in Indian markets given the high valuations. Among other sectors, Hero

MotoCorp fell over 4% after missing profit expectations for the June quarter, largely due to weaker average prices. Similarly, Piramal Enterprises dropped 6% following a decline in its net profit for the same period. Overall, eight of the 13 major sectors saw gains, but the broader market, particularly small and mid-cap stocks, experienced a decline of about

0.2% each. Investors are now looking ahead to the US consumer price data for July, which will be released after Indian market hours and could provide further direction for the markets. Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said, "The PPI inflation numbers from the US indicate softening of inflation, and a confirmation of this declining trend is likely from the CPI numbers coming today." "The US market moved up yesterday in anticipation of this and a rate cut by the Fed in September. If the rate cut is by 50bp, the US market will remain resilient, lending support to global markets. This is the likely scenario. On the other hand, if the Fed disappoints with no rate cut, the market will sell off and this will have repercussions globally," he said. "In India, the pattern of FII selling on valuation concerns and DII buying supported by money flows continues. Some segments like defence related stocks which have run far ahead of fundamentals are witnessing corrections," Vijayakumar noted.

Ex Starbucks CEO's viral post on why he doesn't work post 6 PM

New Delhi Starbucks recently announced a change in leadership, with Brian Niccol set to replace Laxman Narasimhan as chairman and CEO. Niccol, the current head of Chipotle Mexican Grill, will officially take on his new role on September 9. Until then, Starbucks' CFO, Rachel Ruggieri, will serve as the interim CEO.

This leadership change has stirred quite a buzz on social media. Among the many discussions, a month-old interview with Narasimhan has gained viral attention. In the interview, Narasimhan shared his approach to maintaining work-life balance, revealing that he does not work beyond 6 pm. In the video, Narasimhan explains his work boundaries, saying, "If anyone at Starbucks gets a minute of my time after 6 pm, they better be sure that it's important." His statement has



sparked widespread discussion online, especially in light of his recent departure from Starbucks. Users also shared a video of the former CEO, giving an interview and said, This will

importance of personal time, noting that his workday ends by 6 pm unless an issue is of significant importance.

Who is Brian Niccol, replacing Laxman Narasimhan?

Brian Niccol has been at the helm of Chipotle Mexican Grill since March 2018, initially as CEO and director, and later as Chairman of the Board from March 2020. Before his tenure at Chipotle, Niccol was the CEO of Taco Bell, where he also held roles such as Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer, and President. His career began in brand management at Procter & Gamble. Niccol has also held leadership positions at Pizza Hut and has served on several boards, including Walmart Inc. and previously KB Home and Harley-Davidson. He earned his undergraduate degree from Miami University and an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

OYO reports first-ever profit with Rs 229 crore PAT for Fy24

NEW DELHI: Travel tech firm OYO has reported its first-ever profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 229 crores for FY24, according to the company's annual report. This milestone follows eight consecutive quarters of positive adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA). OYO's adjusted EBITDA grew by 215% to reach Rs 877 crores in FY24, up from Rs 277 crores in FY23. OYO's earnings per share (EPS) stood at approximately Rs 0.36 in FY24, a significant turnaround from the loss per share of Rs 1.93 reported in FY23. "One big learning for me over the years is under promise and over deliver. Our audited results are published post adoption by the board. The effort of OYOpreneurs has delivered INR 229 cr net profit, exceeding my earlier estimate of INR 100 cr. Now with Rs 0.36 EPS done, now to Rs 1 EPS and beyond at FY25. Lots of improvements still left to do. Proud of what we are building together," said Ritesh Agarwal, the founder of OYO. On X, Agarwal recently invested Rs 830 crores in the company through his wholly-owned entity, Patient Capital. This investment brings the total funding for the latest round to Rs 1,457 crores. Capitalizing on its improved financials, the company is issuing 7,92,84,312 "Series G Fully and Compulsory Convertible Cumulative Preference Shares" for the acquisition of K&J Consulting, which operates the premium rental homes company Checkmyguest group from Paris, France.

An OYO spokesperson said, "Checkmyguest has a dense presence in Paris, which is one of the most visited cities in the world. OYO gets to acquire premium homes inventory primarily through a share swap over a period of time, in addition to some cash outgo for the acquisition, which gets quickly offset since it's a cash-generating business. In addition, its two affiliated companies, Studio Prestige, a Paris-based luxury apartments rental service, and Helpmyguest, a property design and renovation company, which are part of the deal, provide them with the ability to upgrade or transform the home interiors for a more premium appeal."

According to the annual report, OYO's inventory grew from 12,938 at the end of FY23 to 18,103 at the end of FY24, driven by sound business performance, increased demand, and improved market sentiment. However, the company's consolidated revenue from operations remained stable at approximately Rs 5,388 crores, compared to Rs 5,463 crores in the previous financial year. This stability reflects the time needed for new hotel additions to achieve full revenue potential. The company's total costs decreased by about 13% to Rs 4,500 crores in FY24 from Rs 5,207 crores in the previous year, attributed to a leaner cost structure through reductions in general and administrative spend and optimized marketing expenses while maintaining topline growth.

Starbucks CEO replaced by Brian Niccol, a fixer who revived Chipotle when the chain was in distress

New Delhi In 2018, when Chipotle was reeling from multiple food poisoning outbreaks that had sickened 1,100 people, the company called Taco Bell CEO Brian Niccol to turn things around. As Chipotle's chairman and CEO, Niccol beefed up marketing and product innovation, added a loyalty program and improved store operations. He also instituted employee benefits, like a program that pays employees' college tuition costs at certain schools. Chipotle's revenue since then has nearly doubled. On Tuesday, Niccol answered another call, this time from Starbucks. The Seattle coffee giant named Niccol as its new chairman and CEO, hoping he can revive fading sales and re-establish Starbucks as a destination where customers are willing to pay premium prices. "I am excited to join Starbucks and grateful for the opportunity to help steward this incredible company,"

alongside hundreds of thousands of devoted partners," Niccol said. Starbucks shares jumped 24.5% Tuesday on the news, recapturing all of their losses for the year. However, Niccol faces far larger and deeper challenges at Starbucks, which has 38,000 stores worldwide compared to Chipotle's largely U.S.-based chain of 3,500 restaurants. Niccol has to figure out how to get inflation-weary U.S. customers back into stores for its pricey

meal. "I will pay \$9 for a burrito. I'm not sure I'm going to pay \$9 for a cup of Venti shaken espresso," said Nancy Tengler, CEO of Laffer Tengler Investments, which owns shares in Starbucks and Chipotle. In the U.S., Starbucks has struggled to balance demand for mobile orders and faster service with its more traditional role as an upscale cafe where customers can gather and relax. Tengler said long wait times and

a deluge of mobile orders have damaged the in-store experience at Starbucks, and Niccol will have to develop a plan to flip that around. Starbucks — along with other big brands like McDonald's — is also confronting U.S. consumers who are increasingly looking for value and deals. Niccol will have to convince drinkers that a medium Starbucks iced coffee — now more than \$5 in Manhattan — is worth paying for. In China, Starbucks' second-largest market with 6,500 stores, customers are increasingly opting for coffee from lower-priced rivals. And in the Middle East and some countries in Europe, Starbucks is seeing boycotts related to the Israel-Hamas war. Niccol replaces Laxman Narasimhan, who is stepping down immediately after spending a little more than a year in Starbucks' top job. Niccol will become Starbucks' chairman and CEO on Sept.

Vodafone Idea shares surge after Q1 results. Should you buy or sell

Vodafone Idea shares were trading 3% higher following the release of its Q1FY25 results, which showed a narrowing of losses. Read on to see how brokerages have assessed the telco's performance.

NEW DELHI: Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) shares surged following the company's first-quarter results, where it reported a narrowing of losses. The improvement was largely driven by a rise in average revenue per user (ARPU), thanks to a shift towards 4G, better data monetisation, and an increase in minimum recharge vouchers. Despite a slight dip in revenue and continued high subscriber churn, several brokerages have maintained a 'Neutral' or 'Hold' rating on the stock, with price targets in the range of Rs 15 to Rs 16.50. On Tuesday, Vodafone Idea's shares closed at Rs 15.48. Around 10:40 am, shares of the telecom firm were trading over 3% higher at Rs 15.97 on the Bombay Stock



Exchange. Should you buy, hold or sell? Check brokerage views. Nuvama Institutional Equities noted that Vodafone Idea is in a stronger position than it was six months ago, now on a clearer path to survival — a clarity that was previously lacking. However, Nuvama cautioned that significant progress is still needed before the stock becomes a strong investment candidate. "We are closely monitoring key factors such as the pace of subscriber loss, the impact of tariff hikes, capital expenditure (capex) developments, and updates on AGR/spectrum dues," Nuvama stated, maintaining its 'Hold' recommendation. Motilal Oswal

Financial Services (MOFSL) highlighted that limited investments in the network have weakened customer experience, contributing to subscriber churn. The firm believes that meaningful improvements in network investment could take another 2-3 years. Vodafone Idea plans to invest Rs 50,000-55,000 crore over the next three years to expand 4G coverage, launch 5G, and boost capacity — crucial steps given the company's current debt load of Rs 2 lakh crore and annual debt servicing requirements of Rs 43,000 crore starting FY26. MOFSL expressed concern over these financial pressures, noting that with an annualized EBITDA of Rs 80,000 crore in

Q1FY25 under IND-AS 116, the large cash outflows needed to service debt could limit upside potential for equity holders. MOFSL has projected revenue and EBITDA compound annual growth rates (CAGR) of 11% and 31%, respectively, from FY24 to FY26, and set a target price of Rs 15, reiterating a 'Neutral' stance on the stock. Meanwhile, Nuvama remains focused on how recent tariff hikes might revitalise the sector, recognizing that while Vodafone Idea is on the path to becoming a sustainable entity, it still faces significant challenges. The brokerage has made minor adjustments to its FY25 and FY26 EBITDA estimates (less than 2% change) and has maintained its target price at Rs 16.50, based on an 11 times Sep-26 EV/EBITDA valuation. JM Financial provided a more cautious outlook, stating that Vodafone Idea's long-term viability depends heavily on substantial government support. In a more optimistic scenario, JM Financial suggested that the stock's fair value could rise to Rs 20 per share if there are significant tariff hikes, pushing ARPU to Rs 200 by FY26 and Rs 300 by FY30. However, JM Financial's current recommendation is a 'Sell' with a target price of Rs 10, citing the many hurdles that still lie ahead for the telecom operator.

NEWS BOX

TT star Sreeja Akula reaches historic career-best ranking after Paris Olympics



New Delhi Sreeja Akula reached her career-best ranking of No.21 in the world after her campaign in the Paris Olympics 2024. She also attained the highest ranking by an Indian table tennis player. From being ranked No.89 at the start of the year, the 26-year-old has climbed the ladder briskly. She recently became only the second Indian paddler after Manika Batra to reach the Round of 16 of a table tennis event at the Olympics. In the quarterfinal on her 26th birthday, Sreeja made World No.1 Sun Yingsha of China work hard. But after fetching nine game points in the first two sets, Sreeja failed to hold her nerves. The youngster started with a dominating 4-0 win over Christina Kallberg of Sweden, after which she beat Singapore's Zeng Jing 4-2.

But Sreeja failed to show the same dominance against Sun, losing 0-4. She was also a part of the Indian women's team that advanced to the quarterfinal where they lost to Germany. She partnered Manika and Archana Kamath.

Sreeja Akula to miss Ultimate Table Tennis
Sreeja, in the meantime, has been ruled out of the Ultimate Table Tennis 2024. In a statement, she said that he decided to pull out after suffering a stress fracture. Sreeja said that she needs around six weeks to attain full fitness. "I'm sorry to share that I've been diagnosed with a stress fracture and on my doctor's advice, I'll need to rest for six weeks, which unfortunately means I won't be able to participate in UTT 2024," Sreeja said. Apart from doing well in the Olympics, Sreeja also made a mark in the 2022 Commonwealth Games after winning gold in mixed doubles with Aanchal Sharath Kamal. Back in June, Sreeja also became the first Indian table tennis player to win a WTT (World Table Tennis) Contender single title.

'Flying' Mitchell Santner's come-from-behind catch in The Hundred viral

New Delhi There is a saying, 'Catches win matches'. This phrase has stood the test of time across the formats in cricket history. New Zealand star Mitchell Santner pulled off a brilliant catch to dismiss Michael Pepper during the Hundred match between London Spirit and Northern Superchargers at Headingley, Leeds. In an all-important match, Northern Superchargers put the London Spirit team into bat first with Michael Pepper and Keaton Jennings opening for them. During the 11th ball of the game, Pepper lofted Reece Topley's delivery over mid-on.

Santner gave the ball a chase and kept his eyes on the ball that was going swirling in the air. He charged back from mid-on and completed a brilliant catch with a full-stretch dive at deep mid-on to dismiss Pepper for three runs.



The official social media handle of The Hundred took to X to share the blinder being taken by the Kiwi star player.

Northern Superchargers beat London Spirit

The Northern Superchargers kept their hopes alive in The Hundred with a crucial rain-affected victory over London Spirit at Headingley. The win places them second in the table with 11 points, but their fate now hangs in the balance. To secure a place in the knockout stages, they must rely on either Welsh Fire or Manchester Originals to win their upcoming matches. Adil Rashid was the star performer for the Superchargers, taking 3 for 16 in a brilliant bowling display that restricted London Spirit to just 111 runs from their 100 balls. Rashid, the England leg-spinner, has been in fine form throughout the competition. On Tuesday night, he removed key batters Matt Critchley, Shimron Hetmyer, and Andre Russell within just 15 balls, effectively dismantling Spirit's batting lineup. For London Spirit, Liam Dawson continued to lead with both bat and ball. He scored 27 from 19 balls, and alongside veteran Ravi Bopara's 31, they managed to push the total into triple figures. However, the target seemed modest.

Matthijs de Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui

Matthijs de Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui will play for the Manchester United after making a move from Bayern Munich. The Bayern Munich duo were reportedly roped in for over 50 million pounds.

New Delhi Manchester United have made significant additions to their squad, signing Dutch centre-back Matthijs de Ligt and Moroccan full-back Noussair Mazraoui from Bayern Munich. The strategic acquisitions were finalised on contracts that will keep De Ligt at the club until June 2029 and Mazraoui until June 2028, the Premier League club officially announced on Tuesday.

While the specific financial terms were not publicly released, reports suggest that Manchester United shelled out over 50 million pounds (64.32 million dollars) for



the pair. Both contracts feature an option to extend for an additional year, providing United with long-term stability in their defensive lineup. Both De Ligt and Mazraoui have deep roots in Dutch football, having started their careers at Ajax Amsterdam. Their paths crossed earlier

under the stewardship of current Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag, during a period in which both players established themselves as exceptional talents. 25-five-year-old De Ligt brings a wealth of experience, having won the Eredivisie with Ajax in the 2018-19 season,

the Serie A title with Juventus in 2019-20, and the Bundesliga with Bayern Munich in the 2022-23 season. His defensive prowess and leadership qualities are highly regarded in European football circles.

"Erik ten Hag shaped the early stages of my career, so he knows how to get the best out of me and I cannot wait to work with him again," De Ligt said in a statement. "I know what it takes to succeed at the highest level, and I'm determined to continue that record at this special club."

'I know what ten Hag expects'

Mazraoui, now 26, also boasts an impressive resume. He joined Bayern from Ajax in 2022 and accumulated 55 appearances in all competitions. Despite being temporarily sidelined by injury last season, Mazraoui helped Bayern secure the Bundesliga title and the DFL-Supercup in his debut campaign. "Erik ten Hag played an important part in my development as a player, so it is exciting to be reuniting with him as I enter the prime years of my career," Mazraoui said.

"I know what he expects from his players, and I will give everything to help the group be successful."

English surfaces haven't been great across The Hundred: Lewis Gregory

New Delhi Trent Rockets captain Lewis Gregory opened up about the low-scoring totals in the ongoing men's Hundred. Gregory felt that the 'tired' pitches have been the main reason behind the drop in totals this season. The average-first innings total slumped from 155 last time to 133 this season. Previously, there were 14 scores of 170-plus and this time it has only been one so far in 2023. Many players like Liam Livingstone blamed the ball, which deviates more than the standard-issue white Kookaburra, because of the extra lacquer required for branding of The Hundred. "I don't think the surfaces have been particularly great across the board," he told the media. "These balls do seem to swing a fraction more than the normal white Kookaburras that we use in the Blast. I just think the combination of that and some tired pitches at the back end of an English season has made it quite difficult for free-flowing striking."



Low scores in The Hundred. However, the balls are known to be exactly of the same specifications as last year and Gregory felt that the "tired" pitches are to be blamed. "You're seeing the ball get off straight a lot, which obviously makes it difficult to whack out of the park when the ball is moving around," Gregory said. "There's a lot of cricket throughout the English summer and [we are] coming towards the back end. There are a few tired wickets that bring spinners into the game, and then there's a few wickets that have done a lot for the seamers." The Hundred is being held at the same eight venues as in previous seasons, but the UK has experienced an unusually high level of rainfall this year, which contributed to groundstaff's challenges.

Olympics: Sanjay Singh blames wrestlers' protests for India's poor medal tally

Paris Olympics: WFI president Sanjay Singh said that India could not win enough medals in wrestling as the wrestlers did not get enough time to prepare for the quadrennial event.

New Delhi. Sanjay Singh, the WFI chief, said that the wrestlers' protest was the major reason why India could not win enough medals in Paris Olympics 2024. India had sent a six-member contingent, but it was only Aman Sehrawat, who finished on the podium after he won the bronze medal in the men's 57kg category. The 21-year-old Sehrawat beat Puerto Rico's Darian Cruz in the third-place playoff. Singh, who had taken over from Brij Bhushan Singh as the WFI chief last December, said that the wrestlers could not get enough time to prepare for the showpiece event due to the tensions created by the

protests that carried on for around a year. "If you look at it from the other angle, the protests that took place for 14-15 months, the entire wrestling fraternity was disturbed. Let alone one category, the wrestlers in other categories struggled as they could not practice without national and international tournaments. Hence, the wrestlers could not



perform well," Sanjay Singh told India Today. Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik were a part of the protests against Brij Bhushan that started back in

January 2023. Last year, Sakshi, India's only woman with an Olympic medal in wrestling, retired after Sanjay Singh replaced Brij Bhushan at the top.

Vinesh Phogat's fate hangs in balance

Vinesh took part in the Olympics in the women's 50kg category, but her fate hangs in the balance as it is still not known if she will win a medal. The 29-year-old had become the first Indian woman to qualify for an Olympic final in wrestling, but she was disqualified after being found 100 grams more than the permissible limit at the weigh-ins. Vinesh, in the meantime, also retired from wrestling amidst the controversy. The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) is yet to deliver a verdict after Vinesh appealed for her silver medal to be retained. Apart from Vinesh and Aman, the other wrestlers, Anshu Malik (57kg), Reetika Hooda (76kg), Nisha Dahiya (68kg) and Antim Panghal (53kg) failed to make an impact.

OTD: 17-year-old Sachin Tendulkar announces arrival with maiden India century

On This Day: Sachin Tendulkar scored his maiden century for India back in August 1990 in a Test match against England at the Old Trafford in Manchester.

New Delhi Back in August 1990, Sachin Tendulkar announced his arrival to international cricket after scoring his maiden hundred for India. The Master Blaster, who was only 17 years old back then, played a spectacular knock against England in the second Test of the three-match series at Old Trafford in Manchester. Facing the likes of Devon Malcolm, Angus Fraser and Eddie Hemmings did not bother him.

After losing the opening Test by 247 runs at the Lord's, India found themselves under immense pressure. Tendulkar did not have



the best of outings at the Home of Cricket after getting scores of 10 and 27. In the Manchester Test, India again got into trouble as England scored 519 in their first innings after opting to bat first. Tendulkar came to their rescue this time around. He scored 68 in the first innings, although India ended up conceding a lead of 87 runs. Chasing a mammoth target of 408, India had to put in a special effort to avoid

going 0-2 down. Sachin put his hands up in crisis and got to his hundred. Batting at No.6, the then youngster scored 119 runs from 189 balls with the help of 17 fours. India were staring down the barrel with their score at 183 for six following Kapil Dev's dismissal. From there on, Sachin and Manoj Prabhakar put on a partnership of 160 runs for the seventh wicket to save the day for the Indian team. He got support from Prabhakar, who made 67 runs off 128 balls with the help of eight fours. India went on to lose the series 0-1 after the third Test at the Kennington Oval in London also ended in a draw. Tendulkar had a memorable series after he scored 245 runs from five innings at an average of 61.25 and a strike-rate of 55.80. 23 years later in 2013, Sachin became the first cricketer to play 200 Test matches. Even after 11 years following his retirement, he remains the leading run-scorer in Tests.

PR Sreejesh wants to follow Rahul Dravid's footsteps as coach after retirement

Paris Olympics: PR Sreejesh said that he wanted to take inspiration from Rahul Dravid's coaching career. He also talked about his aspirations to coach the Indian senior team in the 2036 Olympics.

New Delhi. PR Sreejesh said that he wants to take cues from Rahul Dravid regarding shaping his career as a coach. The Indian goalkeeper recently retired from international hockey after India won the bronze medal in the Paris Olympics 2024.

Sreejesh ended his career with back-to-back Olympic medals after he also clinched bronze three years ago in Tokyo. After retiring, Sreejesh is also set to start his coaching career after taking charge of the Indian junior team. But the veteran said that instead of rushing, he wants to develop a bunch of players for the future before moving on to coach the national team.

Sreejesh, who has been a hero for India over the years, has given himself eight years before he thinks about coaching the national team. He also talked about his aspirations to coach India in the 2036 edition of the Olympics.

PR Sreejesh sets his goals as coach

"I want to become a coach. That was always my plan but now there is a question of when. After retirement, family comes first. I need to talk with them if they are OK with this.



"Now you have to listen to your wife a little bit," Sreejesh told PTI. "The way I wanted to

start with the juniors, and Rahul Dravid is an example. It's like you develop a bunch of players, get them into the senior team and let them follow you," he said. "I start this year, next in 2025, we have the junior World Cup and in another two years, the senior team will be playing the World Cup. So may be, by 2028, I can produce 20 or 40 players and by 2029, I can have 15-20 players into the senior team and by 2030 almost like 30-35 players in the senior side." And 2032, I will be ready for the chief coach's position. If India gets to host the 2036 Olympic Games, I want to be the India coach," Sreejesh added. As far as Dravid is concerned, he recently bowed out as India men's head coach after the T20 World Cup in the West Indies and USA. He had taken over from Ravi Shastri back in November 2021 and helped India gain success across all three formats.

Supreme Court agrees to hear CBI's plea against Allahabad High Court verdict acquitting Surendra Koli

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, August 14: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to hear a fresh plea filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) challenging the Allahabad High Court's verdict that acquitted Surendra Koli in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings case. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan tagged the CBI's plea with some other petitions pending in the apex court against the high court order of October 16, 2024. On July 19, the top court had agreed to hear separate pleas filed by the CBI and the Uttar Pradesh government against the high court verdict. It had also issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions. The apex court had in May agreed to hear a plea filed by the father of one of the victims challenging the high court's verdict acquitting Koli in one of the cases. In this case, Moninder Singh Pandher was acquitted by the sessions court while Koli was awarded the death

penalty on September 28, 2010. The high court had acquitted domestic help Koli and his employer Pandher in the case in which they were facing a death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was "botched up". Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the high court had noted that the prosecution had failed to prove the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence" and the probe was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies". Pandher and Koli were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to death in the killings that horri-

fied the nation with their details of sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism. The high court had allowed multiple appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who had challenged the death sentence awarded by a CBI court in Ghaziabad. In all, 19 cases had been lodged against Pandher and Koli in 2007. The CBI had filed closure reports in three cases due to lack of evidence. In the remaining 16 cases, Koli was earlier acquitted in three and his death sentence in one was commuted to life. The sensational killings came to light with the discovery of the skeletal remains of eight children from a drain behind Pandher's house at Nithari in Noida, bordering the national capital, on December 29, 2006. Further digging and searches of drains in the area around the house led to the recovery of more skeletal remains. Most of these remains were those of poor children and young women who had gone missing from the area. Within 10 days, the CBI had taken over the case and its search resulted in the recovery of more remains.

Congress nominates Abhishek Singhvi as its candidate from Telangana

New Delhi, August 14: The Congress on Wednesday named Abhishek Manu Singhvi as its candidate for the ensuing Rajya Sabha bypoll in Telangana. The Election Commission had announced last week that elections to 12 Rajya Sabha seats in nine states will be held on September 3. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has approved the candidature of Singhvi for the by-election to the Council of States from Telangana, the party said in a statement. The Rajya Sabha bypolls are being held for 12 seats which include the two seats – one in Telangana with K Keshava Rao resigning recently from the House after quitting the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to join the Congress and the other in Odisha after Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Mamata Mohanta resigned from her Rajya Sabha seat and primary membership of the party. She later joined the BJP. Earlier this year, Singhvi had lost the Rajya Sabha election from Congress-ruled Himachal Pradesh. BJP nominee Harsh Mahajan had won the February 27 election through draw of lots after both candidates secured 34 votes each. The Congress had a strength of 40 members and the support of three Independents in the 68-member Himachal Assembly, but both the candidates polled 34 votes each as nine legislators – six Congress rebels and three Independents – voted in favour of BJP nominee Mahajan. The winner was announced by a draw of lots and under the procedure followed by the election officer, the person whose name was drawn in the draw of lots was declared the loser. However, Singhvi is likely to win the bypoll this time and enter the Upper House with the Congress having a majority in Telangana.



Kolkata medic murder: Rahul Gandhi says attempt to save accused raises questions on hospital, local administration

Sanjay Kumar

New Delhi, August 14: Amid the uproar over the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration. The entire country is shocked by the gruesome incident of rape and murder of the junior doctor in Kolkata, said the former Congress president, adding there is an atmosphere of insecurity among the doctors' community and women with the revelations about the manner of the cruel and inhuman act against her. "The attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration," Gandhi said in a post on X in Hindi. "This incident has forced us to think that if doctors are not safe in a place like a medical college, then how can the parents send their daughters outside for studies? Why are even

the strict laws made after the Nirbhaya case unsuccessful in preventing such crimes?" he said. Centre cuts short NSG DG Nalin Prabhat's tenure, deputes



him to AGMUT cadre! Every party, every section of the society will have to hold serious discussions and take concrete steps on the continuously increasing incidents against women from Hathras to Unnao,

and from Kathua to Kolkata, he said. "I stand with the victim's family in their unbearable pain. They should get justice at all costs and the culprits should be given such a punishment that it serves as an example in the society," Gandhi said. The body of the woman post-graduate trainee was found inside a seminar hall of the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on the morning of August 9. A civic volunteer was arrested on Saturday in connection with the crime. Junior doctors across West Bengal continued to cease work on Wednesday, the sixth day on the trot, protesting against the alleged rape and murder of the woman doctor at the state-run medical college and hospital and demanding justice for her. The ongoing protest affected the healthcare services and long queues of patients were seen at the outpatient departments (OPDs) of all government hospitals. The agitating junior doctors have been pressing for a magisterial probe into the killing of the woman doctor and the removal of senior officials from RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday ordered the transfer of the probe into the alleged rape and murder of the trainee doctor from the Kolkata Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

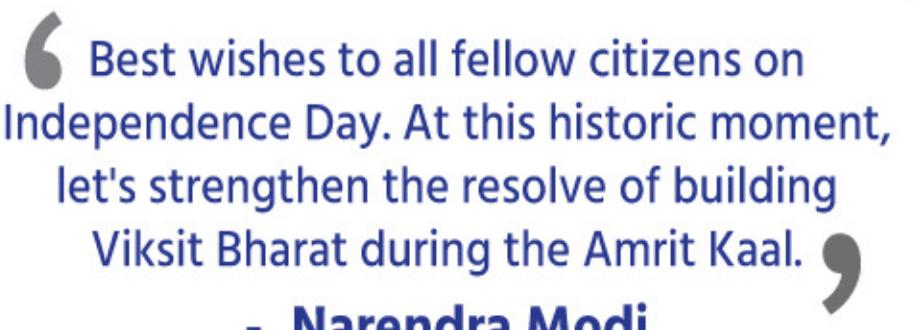
UGC introduces new enrolment procedure for students' admission in distance learning and online programmes

New Delhi, August 14: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced a new enrolment procedure for students seeking admission to open and distance learning (ODL) and online programmes. Under the new plan the students have to register on the UGC-Distance Education Bureau (DEB) web portal and create a unique DEB-ID using their Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)-ID. This DEB-ID will be mandatory for all students enrolling in recognised ODL/online programmes, except for foreign learners, and will remain valid for their lifetime. Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) have been directed to implement the new procedure. "This change, effective from September 2024, is aimed at ensuring that students enrol only in approved HEIs to offer ODL and online programmes and enhancing transparency in the admissions process. Recent issues with unrecognised institutions admitting students highlighted the need for this standardised procedure. To safeguard student interests, UGC has developed a mechanism requiring students to register on the UGC-DEB web portal and create a unique DEB-ID using their ABC-ID. This DEB-ID will be mandatory for all students enrolling in recognised ODL/online programmes, except for foreign learners, and will remain valid for their lifetime. HEIs are urged to implement this new admission process efficiently and promote it to new learners to ensure successful adoption and operation," UGC chairman Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar said.


 Government of India

**Greetings
to all fellow citizens on
78th Independence Day**

Jai Hind



‘ Best wishes to all fellow citizens on Independence Day. At this historic moment, let's strengthen the resolve of building Viksit Bharat during the Amrit Kaal. ’
- Narendra Modi

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