

CAS issues official statement on Vinesh Phogat's appeal, confirms decision will be issued 'before end of Olympic Games'

ST Correspondent

New Delhi, Aug 09: The CAS has issued a statement on Vinesh Phogat's appeal, confirming that a decision will be issued before the end of Paris Olympics. Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat's hopes for an Olympic silver medal remains alive after the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) accepted her appeal following a disqualification that occurred just before the gold medal bout in the women's 50kg category at the Paris Olympics. Vinesh was ruled out of the final after being found overweight by a mere 100 grams during the weigh-in, a technicality that not only cost her a shot at gold but also meant she would return home without a medal, as disqualified ath-



letes are typically ineligible for a medal. Following her disqualification, Vinesh swiftly filed an appeal with CAS, seeking to overturn the decision. On Friday, CAS issued an official statement acknowledging the appeal and outlining the next steps. While CAS clarified that it could not accommodate Vinesh's request for a second weigh-in or reinstate her in the gold medal match, the organization did agree to hear her case regarding the possibility of awarding her a joint silver medal. This move keeps Vinesh's hopes of an Olympic podium finish alive as the legal process unfolds. "An application was filed at the CAS Ad hoc Division at 16:45 CEST on 7 August 2024 by Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat (the Applicant) in relation to the decision taken by United World Wrestling (UWW) to replace her, because of her failed second weigh-in, before the gold medal match of the Women's Freestyle 50kg competition at the Olympic Games Paris 2024 that was due to commence at 18:15 CEST the same day (the Challenged Decision)," the statement from the CAS, issued on Friday, read.

Modi govt formed committee to monitor current situation along Indo-Bangla border: Amit Shah

Sanjay Kumar

New Delhi, Aug., 9: The Narendra Modi government on Friday constituted a high-level committee, headed by a top Border Security Force

(BSF) official, to monitor the situation along the Indo-Bangladesh border in wake of the ongoing state of affairs in the neighbouring country, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said. Shah said the committee would be in touch with counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus and other minority communities living there. "In the wake of the ongoing situation in

Bangladesh, the Modi government has constituted a committee to monitor the current situation on the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). The committee will maintain communication channels with their counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus, and other minority communities living there. The committee will be headed by the ADG (Additional Director General), Border Security Force, Eastern Command."

Shah said in a post on X. Apart from the BSF ADG, the four other members of the committee are the BSFs Inspector General of Police (IGP) for the South Bengal frontier, the IGP for the Tripura frontier, member (planning and development) of the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), and secretary of the LPAI.

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, Aug 09: The petitioners, represented by senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, argued that they were not seeking a blanket postponement but were instead raising concerns about the allocation of test centres and the normalisation process for the exam. New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to postpone or reschedule the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Postgraduate) or NEET-PG 2024 exam, scheduled for August 11, asserting the importance of maintaining certainty in

the medical education system in the country. Rejecting the plea brought forward by a small group of candidates, a bench, led by Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, underscored the potential adverse impact on the careers of nearly two lakh students if the exam were to be rescheduled. During the proceedings, the bench, also comprising justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, made it clear that the interests of a few petitioners could not outweigh the broader concerns of the vast majority of students and their families.

Let there be some certainty...let there be certainty for the medical students at least now," the bench remarked, referring to the ongoing litigation surrounding the NEET exams. The court highlighted the significant disruption that would result from a last-minute postponement, emphasising that such a decision would affect not just students but also their families. The petitioners, represented by

SC refuses to postpone NEET-PG exam, emphasises certainty in medical education

Naresh Malhotra

Lucknow, Aug, 9: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said India can become the third largest superpower in the next two years if the people of the country prioritise nation over caste or religion. Adityanath was speaking at the 'Veeron Ko Naman' programme to mark the centenary celebration of the Kakori train action, an important historical event of India's freedom movement. "India is going to become the third largest superpower in the next two years, but this can happen only when our priority is not our caste or religion, but the nation," Adityanath said. "We have to think about how we can establish India as a powerful nation. If we perform our duties today, then there is no reason why India should not

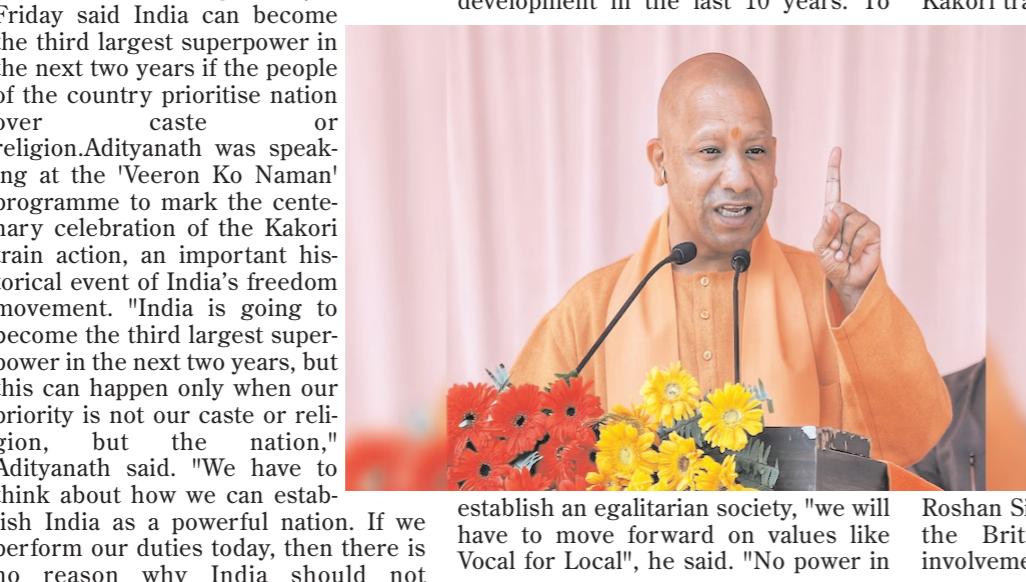
progress," he added. The chief minister hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for taking the country on the path of development in the last 10 years. To

the world can stop India. This is the time, the right time," he added. Saluting the revolutionaries who took part in the Kakori train action, Adityanath said the

country got independence because of the sacrifices made by them and other freedom fighters. Kakori train action was a historical incident in which Indian freedom fighters looted the treasury of the British government to buy arms for revolution against the British Raj which took place on 9 August 1925 in Kakori, Lucknow. In 1927, Ram Prasad 'Bismil', Ashfaque Khan and Thakur Roshan Singh were hanged to death by the British government for their involvement in the incident. Adityanath

establish an egalitarian society, "we will have to move forward on values like Vocal for Local", he said. "No power in

Roshan Singh were hanged to death by the British government for their involvement in the incident. Adityanath



Manish Sisodia walks out of Tihar jail

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 9: Noting that right to speedy trial is a fundamental right of an accused, the Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia in corruption and money laundering cases linked to the Delhi excise policy 'scam' even as it wondered how long it will take to complete the trial in the case. "We find that on account of long incarceration running around 17 months and trial having not been commenced, the appellant has been deprived of the right to speedy trial...A citizen cannot be made to run from pillar to post for personal liberty," said a Bench of Justice BR Gavai and Justice KV Viswanathan – which had reserved its verdict on Sisodia's bail pleas on August 6. Ordering his release on a personal bail bond of Rs 10 lakh and two sureties in the like amount, the Bench asked him not to influence witnesses and tamper with evidence and report to the police every week. The top court rejected the preliminary objection raised by the CBI and the ED which contended that the accused should approach the trial court. Sending the former Delhi deputy chief minister again to the trial

court and then to the high court and then only allowing him to approach the top court will amount to playing "snake and ladder game" with him, Justice Gavai said, pronounc-

ing the verdict. The liberty granted by its June 4 order to Sisodia to revive his bail pleas should be construed as a liberty to file a petition in the Supreme Court itself, the Bench said, rejecting the preliminary objections of the probe agencies. Pointing out that he has been in jail for 17 months and the trial hasn't commenced, the Bench said it amounted to

Violation of his fundamental right to speedy trial guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution which applied to all cases, irrespective of the nature of allegations. The

court said there was "not even remotest possibility of concluding the trial" in near future in view of the fact that around 500 witnesses and thousands of pages of documents were to be examined. The CBI and the ED had opposed senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia's bail pleas before the Supreme Court in corruption and money laundering cases linked to the excise policy 'scam', saying documents showed his neck-deep involvement in the scam. "Sisodia is not an innocent person picked up for political reasons... He is neck deep in the scam," the ASG had said on behalf of the probe agencies. Sisodia's petition for revival of his bail pleas was "not maintainable" and that he should go to the trial court for bail, he had said. On behalf of the former Delhi deputy chief minister, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi had contended

that Sisodia has already undergone half of the minimum sentence and there was no evidence against him. The matter relates to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-22 which now stands scrapped. Sisodia was arrested by the CBI on February 26, 2023 for his alleged role in the 'scam' and he resigned from the Delhi cabinet two days later. The ED arrested him in a money-laundering case related to the 'scam' on March 9, 2023 after questioning him in Tihar Jail. The former Delhi Deputy CM – who has been denied bail by the top court in the past – has sought to revive his petitions in the excise policy 'scam' related corruption and money laundering cases. He has sought bail contending that he has been in custody for 16 months and the trial against him has not made any progress since October 2023. Holding that the possibility of evidence-tampering by him can't be ruled out, the Delhi High Court had on May 21 dismissed Sisodia's bail pleas. Sisodia challenged the high court's order but the Supreme Court on June 4 refused to entertain his bail pleas in corruption and money laundering cases lodged by the CBI and the ED in connection with the excise policy 'scam'.

Was just pushing myself due to Olympics, have to take decision on surgery now: Neeraj Chopra

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Paris, August 9: India javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra opened up about his injury woes after clinching a silver medal in the Olympics, revealing that he might have to undergo a surgery soon after having pushed himself extremely hard to compete here while battling a constant fear of breaking down. Chopra was dealing with a nagging adductor niggle (a problem related to muscles in the thigh) in the run up to the Paris Games. But he managed a season's best effort of 89.45m to secure a silver medal, making him the first track-and-field athlete from India to have two Olympic medals, the first being an unprecedented gold in Tokyo. Chopra finished behind Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who stole the show with an Olympic record-shattering throw of 92.97m to become the first individual Olympic gold-medalist from his country. "I have a lot on my

mind. When I am throwing, my 60-70 per cent focus is on the injury. I don't want to get injured. Whenever I go for a throw, you will see that my speed is low. I am pushing myself," he said. "The doctor told me to go for surgery but I didn't

have that much time to take a decision before the world championship or after the world championship because it takes a lot of time to prepare for the Olympics," he added, referring to the

2023 world championship. The 26-year-old, despite not being at his best here, became only the third Indian to win back-to-back Olympic medals after PV Sindhu and Sushil Kumar. "I am still pushing myself," he said with a hint of frustration. "It's not good in sport, to push and continue. If you want to run a long career, then you have to be fit and healthy but there are competitions where you can't make a decision. Now we will work on this and the technique," he added. Chopra said he will talk to his team and then "take a decision". He also detailed how the last seven years have been tough for him as far as fitness is concerned. "I felt this in 2017. After that, I got a lot of treatments. But I will have to take a big decision for this," he said. Won't find peace till I get a big throw. He didn't mention the 90m mark but Chopra said he has potential to achieve bigger throws. Chopra's career-best remains 89.94m which was achieved back in 2022.

Yasin Malik to Delhi High Court on NIA

plea seeking death penalty for him

New Delhi, August 9: Turning down the court's suggestion to appoint a lawyer on his behalf, separatist leader Yasin Malik on Friday told the Delhi High Court he wished to argue in-person against a National Investigation Agency (NIA) plea seeking death penalty for him in a terror funding case. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief was virtually present for the court proceedings from Tihar jail where he is serving a life term in the case. A bench headed by Justice Suresh Kumar Kait listed the matter for hearing on September 19 and said Malik "may think again" about having legal representation in the case. The court also gave him time to think about either filing a reply or written submission. "He has the right to contest in individual capacity but any litigant must be equipped with legal assistance," the bench, also comprising Justice Girish Kathpalia, said while asserting that there should be fairness in the proceedings. "We would prefer appointing an amicus so that he can keep a watch on his interest also... You may argue in-person. Simultaneously, a good advocate from criminal side can be appointed as amicus to argue from your side," it told Malik. Malik also objected to being produced through virtual mode, saying he was physically produced in the trial court and there was never any law and order problem. "I was produced physically in trial court until conviction. They don't want to give me a fair trial.



News box

Owner Of Dog, That Fell On Girl From 5th Floor And Killed Her, Arrested



Thane. Police have arrested the owner of the pet dog that fell on a four-year-old girl from the fifth floor of a building in Maharashtra's Thane, which resulted in her death, officials have said.

The police arrested the accused on Thursday night and also registered an offence against him and three other persons in connection with the incident that occurred around 4.30 pm on Tuesday in Mumbai area of Thane city. "The police have arrested the owner of the pet dog that fell from the fifth floor on the girl, who was walking on the road below with a woman on August 6. The child suffered grievous injuries and was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared her dead on the same day," an official of the Mumbai police station said.

A case was registered against the owner of the dog and three others under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, death by negligence, negligent conduct with respect to animals and acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention, he said. The police had initially registered a case of accidental death, the official said.

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's Body To Be Donated To Hospital For Research

Kolkata. The mortal remains of former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee will be handed over to state government-run NRS Medical College and Hospital for research work, a CPI(M) official. The body of Bhattacharjee, wrapped with the CPI(M)'s red flag, was taken out of his frugal two-room residence at Palm Avenue in south Kolkata on way to mortuary Peace World on Thursday. Earlier, Governor CV Ananda Bose, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Left Front chairman Biman Bose, CPI(M) state secretary Md Salim visited the Bhattacharjee residence.

Bhattacharjee's wife Mira, in tears, walked along with the hearse carrying the mortal remains along with party leaders and hundreds of admirers cutting across political lines and members of the general public, before boarding a car.

The mortal remains of Bhattacharjee will be taken to the West Bengal Assembly today, from where it will be taken to CPI(M) state headquarters Muzaffar Ahmed Bhawan, where leaders and the public will be able to pay their last respects to the departed leader, the party official said on Thursday.

The body will be thereafter taken to the state headquarters of DYFI, the CPI(M)'s youth wing, following which the last journey of the mortal remains will be undertaken. The body will then be handed over to NRS Medical College and Hospital here for research, he said.

Man Pushes Girl To Death In Front Of Train For Rejecting Proposal, Arrested

Udaipur. The Rajasthan Police have arrested a man for killing a 15-year-old girl by pushing her in front of a train after she rejected his friendship proposal on Friendship Day in Udaipur, officials have said. The accused has been identified as Shourveer Singh, son of Ram Singh.

Udaipur's Superintendent of Police (SP) Yogesh Goyal said that the father of the 15-year-old minor girl lodged a missing report at Pratap Nagar Police Station in Udaipur on the night of August 2. The girl's father claimed that his daughter, who left for computer class, had not yet returned home. Subsequently, an investigation and search were launched.

A police team received information that the body of a girl was lying on a railway track. On receiving the information, the team reached the spot. The girl's family members, who were also called for the identification of the girl, confirmed that she was their daughter. The team started an investigation into the incident with the help of intelligence and technical support. The suspect, Shourveer Singh, was detained and during interrogation, the accused confessed the crime. After which the accused was arrested, police said.

According to police, the accused during interrogation said that "since the girl did not befriend him, he lured the girl and called her to the railway track, Debari, on the pretext of a meeting. When the girl refused to befriend the accused, he killed her by pushing her in front of a train coming on the track".

Cabinet gives nod to lease out prime South Mumbai plot to NGO despite Finance department objection

The plot has been leased to the Jain International Organisation (JIO) for school purposes. According to the cabinet note, the finance department raised its objection and highlighted that a number of government offices are being shifted to suburban areas and other places and are being taken on rent.

Mumbai. The Maharashtra Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to lease a prime land in South Mumbai near Mantralaya that measures 2,995.75 square metres to a non-profit organisation for a period of 30 years to build a primary and secondary school. The approval was given despite the finance department raising strong objections to the decision and had instead recommended using it to construct government offices.

The plot has been leased to the Jain International Organisation (JIO) for school purposes. According to the cabinet note, the finance department raised its objection and highlighted that a number of government offices are being shifted to suburban areas and other places and are being taken on rent.

"It will not be appropriate to give the land to a private organisation at a time when the government itself needs land to build its offices. Hence, the proposal should not be given nod. A number of important government offices from Mantralaya have been transferred to nearby places due to lack of space and the government is spending crores of rupees on rent. In such a scenario, the prime plot cannot be given for any reason," the finance department said and added, "The land should be acquired for government offices at the earliest."

The revenue department accepted the remarks made by finance and stated, "While the circumstances are as mentioned by the finance department, the state has a policy to give land at concessional/lease rates to non-

profit organisations to build education, health and social service related facilities."

The JIO will have to pay a lease amount of 25 per cent of the market rate of the plot as per the MCLR rate and it will be updated every five years.

The plot in Colaba in South Mumbai was with the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited for a temporary construction yard for Mumbai Metro - 3. In 2013, the Mumbai city district collector handed over the plot to Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) in a bid to protect it from encroachment.

In 2015, the collector asked the MMRDA to temporarily hand over the plot to MMRCL for constructing yard of the Mumbai Metro –

3. In July 2023, the MMRCL informed the city collector that the work on the plot was over. However, it was kept with the MMRCL to avoid further encroachment by appointing a security guard. At present, the land was being used as a parking lot. The document presented in front of the state cabinet said that in 2019, the "parking" reservation on the same was changed to "school".

In March 2024, the state cabinet had approved to give 1.02 lakh square feet plot for running Jain Gymkhana on a 30-year lease. It was earlier occupied by Wilson College Gymkhana and the decision was opposed by the student and alumni association. The case is in the Bombay High Court.

Accused received at least Rs 85 L to increase hoarding size: Police on Ghatkopar Hoarding collapse

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) has made the submission before the sessions court, while opposing the anticipatory bail application of Khan, a partner in Mahpara Garments Pvt Ltd.

Mumbai. police has said that at least Rs 85 lakhs was received by accused Arshad Khan from directors of Ego Media Pvt Ltd for permission to increase the size of the hoarding, which collapsed on May 13, killing 17 people and injuring 80 others. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) has made the submission before the sessions court, while opposing the anticipatory bail application of Khan, a partner in Mahpara Garments Pvt Ltd. The court has reserved the plea for orders, which is likely to be pronounced next week on August 12.

The reply states that while the directors of Ego Media were aware that the hoarding required permission of the Brihamumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Khan told them that since the hoarding stood on land belonging to Indian Railways, only the permission of GRP would be required. The reply claims that Khan then helped obtain the permission from the GRP. The police have claimed that their probe had revealed that over Rs 1 crore was received by Khan and hence looked into the bank transactions of the companies. It claimed that between July 2021 to December 2023, Rs 85 lakh from the accounts of Ego Media and Guju Ads Pvt Ltd were transferred to 18 bank accounts. The police said the transactions were on behalf of the then directors of the company and accused Bhavesh Bhinde and Janhavi Marathe.

"When inquired with the account holders in which these transactions were made, they said that they were given cheques by Khan



and they were instructed by him to withdraw and hand it over to him. The account holders had no connection with Ego Media or Guju Ads. These account holders were either acquainted with Khan or were living in the same vicinity as him," the Mumbai police reply said. The police have also claimed that Khan in his statement recorded on June 14 did not give a satisfactory response to these. It was also alleged that money was sent into accounts of Khan's relatives, including his wife, brother and brother-in-law. One of the transactions showed Rs 7 lakh sent to the account of Khan's wife from among the 18 bank accounts. The police, meanwhile, have said that Khan

had given designer shoes and sunglasses to Bhinde. The reply also states that a probe is on into Khan's partnership with the firm, Mahpara Garments, along with Sumanna Quaiser Khalid, the wife of IPS officer Quaiser Khalid, the then Government Railway Police (GRP) commissioner. The police reply said that a probe about his partnership in the firm is ongoing.

Khan has said in his anticipatory bail that he has not been named in the charge sheet nor has the police shown any links of him with the permissions for the hoarding. Khan has also denied the allegations of any transactions linked to getting permission for the hoarding.

Chennai motorists face bumpy ride as speed breaker panel on snooze mode

CHENNAI. The committee to standardise speed breakers in Chennai, headed by the city traffic police and comprising various departments, has only met once since its inception in March and is now inactive. Speed breakers, on the other hand, continue to pop up by the day across the city, posing risk to motorists.

The committee, formed by the traffic police in coordination with the corporation, MTC, highways department, and CMDA, aims to standardise speed breakers as per Indian Road Congress specifications. It was established after the death of a 34-year-old man near Chitlapakkam owing to an illegal speed breaker in February. It held its first review meeting on March 20.

Even officials within the traffic department are unaware of such a committee. "We are not aware of any such committee. Until now, we have been sending requests to the respective departments based on the road location for issues regarding speed breakers. We sometimes paint the speed breakers ourselves, but it often fades within a few

days," said a traffic police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity. During a visit to various locations across the city, observed numerous speed breakers that violate IRC guidelines. The IRC recommends a rounded 11m radius hump of 3m width and 10cm height to achieve the desired speed of 20 km/h. However, many speed breakers, especially arterial roads, do not comply with these specifications.

For instance, the speed breaker on TH Road near Ellaiamman Kovil is in poor shape and lacks any marking. also visited locations including KK Nagar, Ashok Nagar, T Nagar, Koyembedu, Thiruvottiyur, Royapuram, and Saligramam. The speed breakers in these areas vary significantly in their specifications.

On Mannar Mudali Street in Vadapalani, the road is only 20ft wide but has six-speed breakers. "As a long-time resident, I know



where they are and slow down, but others face sudden jumps due to poor visibility and may lose control," said D Murali, a 44-year-old auto driver from Vadapalani.

The speed humps on the roads near KK Nagar roundabout are broken, while on Anna Main Road they are uneven. On interior roads, there are even speed breakers with manholes in the middle of it.

When the committee was formed, it was announced that speed breakers could only be installed after obtaining clearance from the

committee and that any speed breaker deviating from norms would be removed.

However, activists claim it is difficult to identify illegal speed breakers due to the absence of a list of authorised speed breakers in the city. "When I approached the respective official to get the list of sanctioned speed breakers in the city, I was informed that no such list exists. 'Only the non-standardised speed breakers

were noted, and action will be taken' was the reply, which does not seem to be happening anyway," an activist told.

"The committee became inactive due to the parliamentary elections. However, we will ensure that the committee is revitalised. In the meantime, the corporation will conduct an internal audit to address non-standard speed breakers across the city," said Corporation commissioner J Kumaragurubaran.

800 kg rotten meat seized from Shenoy Nagar shop

Samples of the meat were sent to the veterinary college for tests, and the rest of it was handed over to the city corporation for destroying.

CHENNAI. Food Safety Department officials seized a whopping 800 kg of decomposed meat from a beef shop in Shenoy Nagar on Thursday. The shop was sealed citing unhygienic maintenance and suspected unauthorised beef slaughter. Designated Food Safety Officer for Chennai Dr P Satheshkumar said they suspected that the shop staff had been dumping meat waste in the Cooum river that was flowing alongside the shop. Samples of the meat were sent to the veterinary

college for tests, and the rest of it was handed over to the city corporation for destroying. Food safety officials conducted the raid along with corporation officials. The vendor allegedly evaded questions regarding where he received the meat from and who were his frequent customers. He said slaughtering of animals was not carried out at the shop. Officials suspect that the shop catered to roadside eateries. They sealed the shop and seized the owner's mobile phone.



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News box

4 firms to be hired for maintenance, operations of streetlights in Gurgaon

GURGAON: MCG will hire four private agencies for operations and maintenance of streetlights as the current contract with existing agencies is set to expire on Oct 31. The project, which is estimated to cost Rs 13.7 crore, will cover the entire city for a period of two years. MCG has issued tenders to engage one agency for each of the four zones to undertake maintenance work for next two years. According to officials, any complaints on streetlights will be sent to the respective firms, which will be required to tackle the issues. "After termination of the contract with the previous firm, we had hired two companies, one each for two zones. However, their contract will expire on Oct 31. We won't be able to initiate the tender process as the model code of conduct is implemented ahead of assembly elections. We have initiated the process and floated the tender to hire firms so that the residents won't have to suffer any inconvenience. The firms, however, will start working from Nov 1," said Parveen Dalal, MCG executive engineer (electrical).

For zone 1, the project cost is Rs 3.91 crore, Rs 4.23 crore for zone 2, Rs 2.55 crore for zone 3 and Rs 3.01 crore for zone 4. The concessionaire ended its agreement with MCG for streetlights and their upkeep in the city in Sept 2023, citing alleged non-payment of Rs 30 crore dues. In July 2023, MCG had also imposed a penalty of Rs 45 lakh on its concessionaire for failing to repair streetlights despite being instructed to do so. However, residents said the tender documents for operation and maintenance should be well-prepared with detailed specifications. "The previous agencies were substituting non-functional lights with household tubelights of 20 watts, which is ineffective. Therefore, when issuing tenders for new agencies, it is crucial to clearly define specifications of lights and their wattage for operation and maintenance purposes. Furthermore, agencies often decline to perform cable work, claiming it falls outside their scope of work. MCG should carefully prepare the tender proposal, explicitly stating that the agencies will be responsible for executing the cable work as well," said Chaitali Mandhotra, a resident of Ardee city and co-convenor of United Gurugram RWA.

GMDA conducts demolition drive to remove illegal structures in Gurgaon

GURGAON. The enforcement wing of GMDA on Thursday carried out a two-day demolition drive to clear illegal structures and encroachments along green belts and master roads of sectors off Southern Peripheral Road (SPR). During the drive, encroachments, including illegal shops and shanties, were cleared from the 3.7-km stretch. Action was taken against unlicensed street vendors operating along the road and green belts without proper permission from MCG. The demolition drive, which spanned two days, resulted in removal of 48 shanties, 14 vendors, 25 plant nurseries, 3 shops, 42 temporary shops, 7 building material shops, and 5 car workshops. Additionally, 8 illegal accesses made by car showrooms and repair shops on the main road were blocked by the enforcement wing.

Haryana: Man handed 20 year rigorous imprisonment for abducting & raping minor

GURGAON. A youth was awarded 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) by a Panipat court on Tuesday for kidnapping and raping a minor girl two years ago. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 75,000 on the convict.

The accused abducted the girl, who was then 17 years old, from her house in Jan 2022 and kept her in captivity for months at different places in Punjab and Haryana. She managed to escape and reach home after three months. The minor was found to be pregnant as a result of the sexual assault. On the recommendation of doctors, the pregnancy was terminated. During the trial, the court considered the statement given by the survivor and the medical report as key evidence and found the accused guilty. On Jan 8, 2022, the girl's mother filed a missing person's complaint. She said she had left home for some work and when she returned, her daughter was missing. A case was filed. Public prosecutor Kuldeep Dhill said the mother reached the police station along with her daughter on March 12 and recorded their statement. The minor told cops she was kidnapped, kept in captivity, and raped multiple times. Police arrested Praveen Sharma on May 30 and his brother Anil alias Ajay - the main accused - on April 1. The minor, in her statement before the court, said Anil coaxed her to leave home with him on Jan 7 by promising to marry her. He took her to Praveen's accommodation in Panipat, where she was sexually assaulted for the first time. Later, she was taken to Ludhiana in Punjab and the accused confined her at different rented accommodations. She was kept locked inside a room, not allowed to contact anyone, and thrashed whenever she asked him to release her. In March, she managed to escape. The accused, meanwhile, said he was in a relationship with the girl and he was being framed in the case. Additional session judge of Panipat fast-track court (Poco), Sukhpreet Singh, in an order on Tuesday, observed that the honour of the child has been spoiled by the accused. Denying any leniency to the accused, the court observed they cannot take such types of crimes lightly. Meanwhile, Praveen was acquitted as nothing was found on record to establish his involvement in the crime.

Police arrested Praveen Sharma on May 30 and his brother Anil alias Ajay - the main accused - on April 1. The minor, in her statement before the court, said Anil coaxed her to leave home with him on Jan 7 by promising to marry her. He took her to Praveen's accommodation in Panipat, where she was sexually assaulted for the first time. Later, she was taken to Ludhiana in Punjab and the accused confined her at different rented accommodations.

Gurgaon cops turn heat on underage drivers; most fined in July

GURGAON. At a time when underage driving has become a growing concern, traffic cops began an enforcement drive and issued challans to 234 minors found at the wheel on city roads over July. Police said they impounded 18 vehicles, among them two-wheelers as well. "Underage driving is a serious issue," DCP (traffic) Virender Vij said, adding: "Our campaign in July targeted young drivers who were flouting traffic rules, resulting in a significant number of challans and vehicle impoundments." With a penalty of Rs 500, under the Motor Vehicles Act, at least Rs 11 lakh of the total challans worth Rs 20 lakh issued in July stemmed from underage driving, the DCP said. "Most of the minors found at the wheel were students who were using two-wheelers to get to school," Vij said. Other common violations were wrong-side driving, wrong-side parking, driving without helmets and seat belts. Underage driving became a talking point after a 17-year-old boy driving a Porsche ran his father's car over two bike riders in Pune. He was



suspected to be inebriated at the time. In 2020, senior finance executive Alok Gupta died in Gurgaon when an Ecosport being driven by a minor jumped across the road divider and barrelled into Gupta's bike. His family and friends campaigned against underage driving on the streets of the NCR city while calling for a change in law to ensure strict punishment for drunk and underage drivers. Still, the offence has been ignored for long. Before the campaign in July, traffic police did not

issue any challans for underage driving in 2024. Till Wednesday, cops had issued a total of 240 penalties for the offence. Gurgaon police in 2019 decided to follow in the footsteps of cops in Hyderabad to start punishing the parents of minors found driving. Parents were to be called on the spot to pay the fine and a case was to be registered against them under the MV Act, ut, till date, no parent or guardian has been charged in the city for allowing minors to drive. In its campaign, Gurgaon police also held 60 awareness sessions in schools across the city. They said around 6,000 students were told about the dangers and ramifications of underage driving to instil a sense of responsibility. "Parents who allow their underage children to drive are not only breaking the law but also endangering the lives of others. Underage driving is a serious matter that requires immediate attention and responsible action from the community," DCP Vij said.

Streetlights soon on key SPR links in new Gurgaon sectors

GURGAON. Seven key arterial stretches in new sectors along the Southern Peripheral Road (SPR) will soon be illuminated as GMDA plans to install 770 smart streetlights in the second phase of their project. The second phase, covering a length of 11.5 km, will see smart streetlights installed along seven sector roads, including those in sectors 70A, 71 to 74, 75A-76, outer 77, 78-79, outer road 79, and 79B. GMDA officials have said that the estimated cost for the second phase is Rs 6.59 crore, and a tender inviting bids for the project has been floated. "These smart streetlights are equipped with advanced features such as automatic dimming, remote monitoring, and energy-saving capabilities.

They will make the roads safer for both pedestrians and vehicles during the night," an official said. The smart streetlights will be remotely managed through a cloud-based application that will be connected to the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC). Officials will have complete control over the functioning of these lights, including mapping their GPS coordinates,



monitoring their health, and tracking them in real time. "These lights can automatically adjust their brightness based on the presence of pedestrians or vehicles, reducing energy consumption during periods of low activity. In the event of a malfunction or instance of vandalism, an alarm will be raised to support quick detection and redressal of any issues on

the ground," explained a senior official from GMDA's electrical wing. Meanwhile, the first phase of smart streetlight installation is underway. Approximately 835 smart streetlights are being installed in sectors 68 to 80 along the master roads dividing the sectors. Residents have expressed that the installation of streetlights is long overdue.

Gurgaon hits brakes again as key NH8 stretches flooded after 1.5-hour rain

GURGAON. Several areas across the city witnessed light to moderate rainfall on Wednesday, which brought some much-needed respite from the heat. By 5.30pm, the city recorded 10.4mm rainfall, most of it between 6.30am and 8am. The downpour led to waterlogging in some areas in the morning. Commuters faced a tough time as traffic came to a crawl in key areas such as Kapashera, Hero Honda Chowk, Rajiv Chowk, Khanda Chowk, Sector 52, Medanta Road and Narsinghpur along NH-8 for around two hours. While these areas reported snarls till around 10.30am, no significant rainfall was seen later in the day, resulting in smooth commutes in the afternoon. "Waterlogging is a persistent problem in Gurgaon. MCG and GMDA have consistently claimed that water will be drained within 15 minutes, even during heavy rains, but the reality is different," said Gopal Pradhan, a resident of Sector 90 who was stuck in Narsinghpur for around 45 minutes. "Vehicles get damaged during waterlogging. I was stuck in traffic for an hour during the morning rush," said Ankit Sharma, who commutes to his office in Udyog Vihar 5 daily. The local authorities said they have implemented several measures to mitigate the waterlogging and alleviate traffic congestion, due to which the accumulated rainwater was drained out soon after. "While there were jams for some time in the morning, vehicular movement was restored to normal in some time," a traffic police officer said. At 30 degrees Celsius, the city's minimum temperature on Wednesday was 2.5 degrees above Tuesday's 27.5 degrees. The maximum temperature, however, saw a dip at 33.4 degrees Celsius from the previous day's 34.1 degrees Celsius. After the rain ceased and the sun returned, the high humidity level - 97% - made outdoors uncomfortable. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted more showers in the coming days. "More episodes of light to moderate rainfall will bring the mercury down and reduce humidity. The maximum temperature is expected to hover between 33 and 35 degrees Celsius, while the minimum will be around 29 to 30 degrees Celsius. Thunderstorms and lightning are likely at isolated locations in Haryana over the next five days," an IMD official said. Meanwhile, several parts of Delhi got moderate to heavy showers on Wednesday morning. Saffdarjung, the base station, logged 27mm of rainfall till 8.30am. In the same duration, Pusa and Pitampura reported heavy rain - 80mm and 73mm, respectively. This marked the second instance of heavy rainfall in parts of the city since the arrival of the monsoon. The intense rain happened because the monsoon trough was close to Delhi and additional moisture from a western disturbance also came in. Several areas in Delhi

S+4 floor policy rolled out again despite ongoing case: Plea in Haryana high court

GURGAON. Hearing a plea against allowing construction of stilt-plus-four floors on residential plots in the city, the Punjab and Haryana high court was told by govt on Tuesday that it will not give approval till the next date of hearing on Aug 22, the petitioner's counsel said. The bench of justices Arun Palli and Vikram Aggarwal was hearing a petition by Gurgaon Citizens Council, which had sought a stay on govt's policy allowing S+4 construction in the NCR city. The petitioner told HC on Tuesday that it had first filed the plea against permitting S+4 houses in 2021. Two years later, in 2023, the department of town and country planning (DTCP) told the court that it had suspended the policy and appointed an expert committee to recommend if S+4 construction should be allowed. Before Tuesday's hearing, the last time that HC took up the petition was on May 30 this year, when DTCP submitted an affidavit, saying that the expert committee's report was under consideration.

Name Change

I, MARYA DEVA DASON father of NO-16120299W Rank-HAV Name-FRANCIS ARPUTHAM M R/o VILL-AGARAKKUTI, PO-AYIKUDI, TEH-KADAYANALLUR, DIST-TIRUNELVELI, TAMIL NADU-67852 have changed my name from MARYA DEVA DASON to MARYA DEVA DASON for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 09/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, No.1613426W SPR ARUN CR S/o RAVI Presently residing at CHUNDA-PARAMBIL HOUSE, KALIKAVU, VILL-KOTTAYI-1, PO-CHERUKULAM, TAL-ALATHUR, DIST-PALAKKAD, KERALA-67852 have changed my name from ARUN CR to ARUN CR for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 09/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, NEETA MANHAS wife of NO-14834998M Rank-SEP Name-NARDEV SINGH MANHAS R/o VILL-GHO-MANHAS PO-GHO-BRAHMANA, TEH- RAMGARH, DIST-SAMBALPUR, JAMMU AND KASHMIR-184120 have changed my name from NEETA MANHAS to NEETA KUMARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 09/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change

I, MARY mother of NO-16120299W Rank-HAV Name-FRANCIS ARPUTHAM M R/o VILL-AGARAKKUTI, PO-AYIKUDI, TEH-KADAYANALLUR, DIST-TIRUNELVELI, TAMIL NADU-67852 have changed my name from MARY to MARY for all future purposes, in my son's service record. My son's date of birth is 10/08/1965 instead of my correct date of birth as 10/08/1966 vide affidavit dated 09/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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I, MARY mother of NO-16120299W

News box

US, Qatar and Egypt call for talks with Israel and Hamas on August 15

Cairo. Leaders of the United States, Egypt and Qatar on Thursday called on Israel and Hamas to meet for negotiations on Aug. 15 in order to finalize a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal. The three countries, which have been trying to mediate a deal, said in a joint statement the talks could take place in either Doha or Cairo. "A framework agreement is now on the table with only the details of implementation left to conclude," they said. "There is no further time to waste nor excuses from any party for further delay. It is time to release the hostages, begin the ceasefire, and implement this agreement." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israeli negotiators would be there. The aim, he said, was "to finalize the details and implement the framework agreement." He was no immediate comment from Hamas. The war in Gaza was triggered by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel, in which 1,200 people were killed and 250 taken hostage to Gaza, according to Israeli tallies. At least 39,699 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli military campaign in Gaza, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between fighters and civilians.

Britain is on alert for further unrest even after anti-racism campaigners faced down the far right

LONDON. British authorities said Thursday they were preparing for the possibility of further unrest, even as they applauded the efforts of anti-racism campaigners and police officers who largely stifled a threatened wave of far-right demonstrations overnight.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer sounded the note of caution after a week of anti-immigrant violence that has scarred communities from Northern Ireland to the south coast of England. Starmer spoke to reporters at a mosque in Solihull, near Birmingham, where demonstrators shut down a shopping center on Sunday. "It's important that we don't let up here," Starmer said. At an emergency meeting with law enforcement officers at his office, Starmer said on Thursday evening that police need to remain on "high alert," Britain's Press Association reported. He credited strategic police staffing and swift justice for rioters in the courts for creating a deterrent that kept trouble at a minimum the night before.

Police across the United Kingdom had braced for widespread disorder on Wednesday, after far-right activists circulated a list of more than 100 sites they planned to target, including the offices of immigration lawyers and others offering services to migrants.

But those demonstrations failed to materialize as police and counter-protesters filled the streets. Carrying signs saying "Refugees Welcome" and chanting "Whose streets? Our streets," people turned out in force to protect asylum service centers and the offices of immigration attorneys. The government also declared a national critical incident, putting 6,000 specially trained police on standby to respond to any disorder. Police said that protests and counter-protests were largely peaceful, though a small number of arrests were made.

'Victory closer': Ukraine residents welcome offensive on Russia's Kursk region

KYIV. As Ukraine's major assault on the Russian border region of Kursk entered its third day, residents in the capital, Kyiv, praised the offensive as "bringing victory closer." The cross-border incursion appears to be Ukraine's most serious since Russia's invasion began in February 2022 and may involve up to 1,000 troops, according to Moscow's estimates. "To be honest, I feel proud of our guys and happy," said Tetiana Krapivka, a financier in the Ukrainian capital. "I believe that it was a prepared operation and maybe personnel reserves were used, but it was prepared well," she added. Ukraine has not officially taken responsibility for the operation, which began on Tuesday morning, but officials have blamed Moscow for inciting the attack. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said that "Russia brought the war to our land and should feel what it has done." Russian President Vladimir Putin has called it a "large-scale provocation" by Kyiv and Russia's top general vowed on Wednesday to crush the incursion. "With these actions, Ukraine is strengthening its defense capabilities and its ability to defend itself," said Anastasia Volkova, a cultural manager in the Ukrainian capital. "This is a success of our military, including in the most difficult areas of the front line." The independent US-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW) said Ukraine had made significant territorial gains in the first two days of the incursion. The Russian defense ministry said its troops were "continuing to destroy" armed Ukrainian units and were using air strikes, rockets, and artillery fire to try to push them back. Show them "what war is." Many residents praised the attack as payback for Russia's invasion, now in its third year. A local resident in Kyiv, Rita Simon, told AFP that the Kursk region operation was "necessary" to show Russia the consequences of war."

Donald Trump agrees to another debate with Kamala Harris

Palm Beach. Donald Trump gave an hour-long news conference Wednesday in which he recommitted to debating Vice President Kamala Harris and taunted her while also repeating old falsehoods and lashing out at questions about the enthusiasm her campaign is receiving. As Trump addressed reporters at his Palm Beach, Florida, estate, ABC announced that Trump and Harris, the Democratic nominee, have agreed to a September 10 presidential debate, setting up a widely anticipated faceoff in an already unparalleled presidential election. Trump said he had proposed three presidential debates with three television networks in September. Trump again insisted there had been a "peaceful transfer of power" in 2021 and renewed attacks on Republican rivals like Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, whom Trump has harshly criticized since Kemp refused to go along with his false theories of election fraud. In taking more than a dozen questions from reporters, however, Trump tried to draw a contrast with Harris, who has not held a news conference since she became the likely Democratic nominee following President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the race.

ANOTHER KEY MOMENT IN THE ELECTION IS SET

Trump's decision to go on ABC, days after posting on his social media account that he would not appear on the network, sets up a highly anticipated moment in an election where Biden's catastrophic performance in the last debate set in motion his withdrawal. "I think it's very important to have debates," Trump said Thursday. "I look forward to the debates because I think we have to set the record straight."

The Harris campaign had no immediate comment. Thursday's event was Trump's first public appearance since Harris selected Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate. Trump called Walz a "radical left man." "Between her and him, there's never been anything like this," Trump said. "There's certainly never been anybody so liberal like these two." He repeatedly suggested Harris was not intelligent enough to debate him. Harris, for her part, has tried to goad Trump into debating and told an audience in Atlanta recently that if he had anything to say about her, he should "say it to my face." Trump grew visibly perturbed when pressed on Harris' crowds and newfound Democratic enthusiasm,



dismissing a question about his lighter campaign schedule as stupid. Trump says he has not "recalibrated" his campaign despite facing a new opponent, a dynamic some Republican strategists have quietly complained about. When asked what assets Harris possessed, Trump said: "She's a woman. She represents certain groups of people." Trump has repeatedly—and falsely—accused Harris, the daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, of previously downplaying that she is Black.

TRUMP TAKES QUESTIONS ABOUT ABORTION

Trump suggested abortion will not be a major issue in the campaign and the outcome in November. He insisted that the matter "has

become much less of an issue" since the Supreme Court ended the federal constitutional right to abortion services and returned control of the matter to state governments. But the issue is widely seen as a general election liability, and Trump named states such as Ohio and Kansas that have since voted to protect abortion rights.

Trump also said he expected Florida "will go in a little more liberal way than people thought" when it votes to repeal an abortion ban later this year, but he did not respond to questions asking how he would vote.

Trump argued that Democrats, Republicans and "everybody" are pleased with the results of the 2022 ruling that overturned the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. Trump's actions within the GOP, however, suggest he knows that Democrats already have capitalized on Republican opposition to abortion rights and could do so again this fall. Trump single-handedly ensured that the Republican Party platform adopted at the 2024 convention in Milwaukee does not call for a national ban on abortion, and he has said repeatedly that hardliners in the party could cost the GOP in November.

Venezuela blocks access to X for 10 days amid post-election protests, violence

Caracas. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on Thursday said he had signed a decree to block access to social media platform X for 10 days, after earlier saying social media was used to incite violence following the country's presidential election. Maduro has frequently railed against X owner Elon Musk since the July 28 election which the opposition says it won, a claim backed by an increasing number of Western governments. Maduro said he signed a decree presented by regulator Conatel which "has decided to take social network X, formerly known as Twitter, out of circulation for 10 days." He said in a speech which was broadcast on state television. Maduro and Venezuela's electoral authority have said that the president won a third term in the election, though the opposition claims victory and says it has the vote counts to prove it. Neither Maduro nor the electoral body



have released detailed vote tallies. In the days after the vote, protests from Venezuelans across the country and abroad broke out demanding Maduro step down and to honour a win by opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez.

The protests were largely promoted on social media. The leftist President earlier this week had asked his supporters to also abandon messaging application WhatsApp in favour of Telegram or

WeChat, saying the app was being used to threaten the families of soldiers and police officers. Maduro has also clashed publicly with Musk since the election. As well as banning the social network for 10 days, Maduro accused Musk of inciting hate, civil war, and death. The social network did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Earlier, the foreign ministers of Mexico, Colombia and Brazil reiterated calls for Venezuela's electoral authority to publish the vote tallies in a joint statement. The statement followed comments by Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado on Thursday calling on Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to impress upon Maduro that his best option is to negotiate with the country's opposition.

Death toll from 6 weeks of monsoon rains jumps to 154 in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD. The death toll from nearly six weeks of monsoon rains and floods across Pakistan has risen to 154, officials said Thursday, as downpours continued in much of the country, inundating some villages. More than 1,500 homes have been damaged since July 1, when the monsoon rains began, the National Disaster Management Authority said. Orchards in remote areas of the southwestern Baluchistan province were damaged, and rains flooded many streets in the eastern city of Lahore. The Pakistan-administered portion of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir

has also been battered by rains, causing landslides. Many of the 154 deaths occurred in the eastern Punjab and northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, according to the disaster agency and provincial authorities. Currently, more than 2,000 people are in relief camps in rain-affected areas in the southern Sindh province, officials said. On Thursday, the aid group International Rescue Committee said it is preparing to scale up its response in Pakistan with looming rains posing a threat to the lives and livelihoods of millions. "Our priority is to ensure that

affected communities receive timely and adequate support to prevent this humanitarian crisis from deepening," the group's director in Pakistan, Shabnam Baloch, said in a statement. Pakistan is in the middle of the annual monsoon season, which runs from July through September. Scientists and weather forecasters blame climate change for heavy rains in recent years. So far this year, Pakistan has received less rain than in 2022, when climate-induced downpours swelled rivers and inundated at one point one-third of the country, killing 1,739 people and s

Interim leader Muhammad Yunus takes the helm in Bangladesh, to seek peace and prepare elections

The figurehead President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath to Yunus for his role as chief adviser, which is the equivalent to a prime minister.

DHAKA. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus took the oath of office as head of Bangladesh's interim government Thursday after protests forced out former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina this week. The key tasks for Yunus now are restoring peace in Bangladesh and preparing for new elections following the ouster of Hasina, who fled to India after weeks of student protests over job quotas grew into an uprising against her increasingly autocratic 15-year rule. The figurehead President M o h a m m e d S h a h a b u d d i n administered the oath to Yunus for his role as chief adviser, which is the equivalent to a prime minister, in the presence of diplomats, civil society members, top businessmen and members of the former opposition party at the presidential palace in Dhaka. No representatives of Hasina's

party were present. The 16 other members of the interim Cabinet were drawn mainly from civil society and include two of the student protest leaders. The Cabinet members were chosen in discussions this week among student leaders, civil society representatives and the military.

The protests began in July against a quota system for government jobs that critics said favored people with connections to Hasina's party. But she resigned and fled to India on Monday after the protests coalesced into a movement against her government and more than 300 people including students and police officers were killed in the spiraling violence.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent his best wishes to Yunus in a statement on social media platform X, and alluded to reports that Hindus in Muslim-majority Bangladesh had

been targeted during the violence. "We hope for an early return to normalcy, ensuring the safety and protection of Hindus and all other minority communities," Modi said. "India remains committed to working with Bangladesh to fulfill the shared aspirations of both our peoples for peace, security and development."

Yunus, who was awarded the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for his work developing microcredit markets, was in Paris for the Olympics when he was chosen for the interim role. He called for calm and an end to partisan violence before he returned home earlier Thursday. In his first comments after his arrival, he told a news briefing that his priority would be to restore order. "Bangladesh is a family. We have to unite it," Yunus said, flanked by student leaders. "It has immense possibility." Yunus has been a longtime opponent of Hasina, who had called him a "bloodsucker" allegedly for using force to extract loan repayments from rural poor, mainly women. Yunus has denied the allegations. On Wednesday, a tribunal in Dhaka acquitted Yunus in a labor law violation case involving a telecommunication company he founded, in which he was convicted and sentenced to six months in jail.

Iran is accelerating cyber activity that appears meant to influence the US election, Microsoft says

NEW YORK. Iran is ramping up online activity that appears intended to influence the upcoming U.S. election, in one case targeting a presidential campaign with an email phishing attack, Microsoft said Friday. Iranian actors also have spent recent months creating fake news sites and impersonating activists, laying the groundwork to stoke division and potentially sway American voters this fall, especially in swing states, the technology giant found. The findings in Microsoft's newest threat intelligence report show how Iran, which has been active in recent U.S. campaign cycles, is evolving its tactics for another election that's likely to have global implications. The report goes a step beyond anything U.S. intelligence officials have disclosed, giving specific examples of Iranian groups and the actions they have taken so far. Iran's United Nations mission denied it had plans to interfere or

launch cyberattacks in the U.S. presidential election. The report doesn't specify Iran's intentions besides sowing chaos in the United States, though U.S. officials have previously hinted that Iran particularly opposes former President Donald Trump. U.S. officials also have expressed alarm about Tehran's efforts to seek retaliation for a 2020 strike on an Iranian general that was ordered by Trump. This week, the Justice Department unsealed criminal charges against a Pakistani man with ties to Iran who's alleged to have hatched assassination plots targeting multiple officials, potentially including Trump. The report also reveals how Russia and China are exploiting U.S. political polarization to advance their own divisive messaging in a consequential election year. Microsoft's report identified four examples of recent Iranian activity that the company expects to increase as

November's election draws closer. First, a group linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard in June targeted a high-ranking U.S. presidential campaign official with a phishing email, a form of cyberattack often used to gather sensitive information, according to the report, which didn't identify which campaign was targeted. The group concealed the email's origins by sending it from the hacked email account of a former senior adviser, Microsoft said. Days later, the Iranian group tried to log into an account that belonged to a former presidential candidate, but wasn't successful, Microsoft's report said. The company notified those who were targeted. In a separate example, an Iranian group has been creating websites that pose as U.S.-based news sites targeted to voters on opposite sides of the political spectrum, the report said. One fake news site that lends itself to a

left-leaning audience insults Trump by calling him "raving mad" and suggests he uses drugs, the report said. Another site meant to appeal to Republican readers centers on LGBTQ issues and gender-affirming surgery. A third example Microsoft cited found that Iranian groups are impersonating U.S. activists, potentially laying the groundwork for influence operations closer to the election. Finally, another Iranian group in May compromised an account owned by a government employee in a swing state, the report said. It was unclear whether that cyberattack was related to election interference efforts. Iran's UN mission sent The Associated Press an emailed statement: "Iran has been the victim of numerous offensive cyber operations targeting its infrastructure, public service centers, and industries. Iran's cyber capabilities are defensive and

News box

College students create ruckus on MTC bus, held



CHENNAI. Ten college-going students were detained by the Thiruvottiyur police on charges of creating ruckus on an MTC bus on Thursday. Police said the students had boarded the MTC bus (route 101 - Poonamallee to Thiruvottiyur) at the stop near the Chennai beach railway station around 3pm.

After getting in, they started singing vulgar songs, much to the disgust of the passengers and MTC staff on board. Driver Prabhakaran initially restrained from admonishing them, but stepped in when their ruckus began to disturb other passengers. He also sent out information regarding this to the police.

When the driver confronted the students about the vulgar songs near the Thiruvottiyur bus terminus, they took out knives concealed in their clothes and threatened him. The driver quickly shut the automatic doors and alerted the cops who immediately came to the spot. They seized a few knives and also found alcohol mixed in their soft drink bottles. The youngsters, who were from popular colleges in the city, were immediately detained by for questioning.

Celebrating weavers at Rang Mahal

KOCHI. Celebrating its 16th year, Rang Mahal is back in town exhibiting the artistry of over 250 weaving families from Nadia district in West Bengal. The exhibition, ongoing at Bharat Hotel, gives emphasis to traditional craftsmanship and sustainability. From everyday cotton to luxurious silks, Rang Mahal offers a diverse range of sarees and clothing materials, reflecting the deep commitment of artisans to their craft.

The exhibition features quality sarees priced between D800 and D1,500. One of their standout creations is the Malka fabric, which is a combination of unbleached cotton with khadi cotton, producing starch-free sarees that suit all body types.

The expo also offers a variety of unstitched clothing materials, including Jamdani woven full sets, woven top (kurta) materials, colourful kota cotton dupattas, and pure tussar kurta.

According to the organisers, this year's exhibition urges shoppers to steer clear of fast fashion and embrace sustainable clothing made from organic fabrics and colours.

"If you are looking to integrate sustainable as well as stylish designs into the wardrobe, then Rang Mahal has it all. This year's collection also breathes new life into Bengal needlecraft by incorporating modern twists with handcrafted stitches like Aari, Banhi, Tilli, and Kantha on starch-free materials such as linen cotton, Mulmulkota, and lightweight resham," says Shomishta Das Biswas, the exhibition coordinator.

With a dual mission to provide exclusive weaver artwork at affordable prices while enhancing the economic conditions of Bengal weavers, the organisation is committed to promoting sustainable and traditional craftsmanship.

"The inspiration to bring the exhibition to Kerala was the large number of Malayalee visitors during our Hyderabad event, who suggested that such an exhibition would be well-received in their home state," says Shomishta. The exhibition, which is open to the public from 10am to 9.30pm, will conclude on August 18.

Temporary staff of Palluruthy relief centre languish without six-month pay

KOCHI. Nearly 20 contract staff of the Palluruthy Relief Settlement Centre, functioning under the Kochi corporation, have been suffering without salary for the past six months. The Relief Settlement Centre is home to 140 people, mostly elderly citizens found abandoned on the streets and having psychiatric issues.

"Already there is a shortage of staff here. Key posts like the junior health inspector have been lying vacant for over a year. We're struggling to make ends meet and we are forced to take up other jobs to sustain the family," said a staffer on condition of anonymity. While the contract staff are languishing without wages, the three permanent staff, the superintendent, clerk and office assistant, are getting their salaries on time. "The temporary staff are appointed on a one-year contract basis. The wages are paid from the corporation's fund, which has to be approved by the council with the nod of the LSG department. The same got delayed due to the Model Code of Conduct in force," said an official. Meanwhile, corporation additional secretary J Muhammed Shafi said the payment would be made in a week. "The issue was discussed in the council three days ago. The file has been sent for the LSGD approval.

Four STPs to prevent sewage flows into Hyderabad reservoirs

HYDERABAD. To prevent sewage from contaminating the Osmansagar and Himayatsagar reservoirs, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has initiated measures to build four Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) with a capacity of 20 MLD.

The HMWSSB will oversee the construction of two STPs with capacities of four and five MLDs for Osmansagar and two STPs with capacities of five and six MLDs for Himayatsagar. The proposed STPs will include interception weirs, inlet and distribution (I&D) structures and the laying of diversion trunk sewers to reduce sewage pollution in the reservoirs.

A four MLD capacity STP for the Bulkupur and Janwada zones will be built at Janwada, a five MLD STP for the Himayatnagar and Chilkur zones at Himayatnagar for the Osmansagar reservoir, a five MLD capacity STP for Azinagar at Bangaliguda and Nagireddyguda zones at Nagireddyguda, and a six MLD capacity STP for the Kothwalguda, Shamshabad, and Kavaguda zones at the Kamuni nala confluence point.

Last year, the HMWSSB developed a comprehensive plan to eliminate sewage pollution in the reservoirs by managing the sewage generated in the catchment areas of these waterbodies, taking into account the projected population growth for the next 30 years.



To protect these reservoirs, which are over 100 years old, from pollution, the authorities proposed building four STPs and creating diversion channels to transport treated water downstream. The Water Board has requested bids for these projects, which will cost Rs 65.05 crore. For the Osmansagar reservoir, a four MLD STP plant for the Bulkupur and Janwada zones will be built at Janwada at an estimated cost of around Rs 11.42 crore. At an estimated cost of Rs 14.27 crore, five MLD STPs will be constructed in Himayatnagar and Chilkur zones at Himayatnagar. An I&D structure and

collection chamber with pumping arrangements will also be built in Chilkur and Himayatnagar for Rs 1.24 crore.

A six-MLD STP for Kothwalguda, Shamshabad, and Kavaguda zones will be built at the Kamuni nala confluence point at an estimated cost of Rs 15.48 crore. The project includes constructing an I&D structure with pumping arrangements at Kothwalguda, Kavaguda, and Kamuni nala confluence point (Rs 99.89 lakh) and laying a conveying main from Kothwalguda and Kavaguda collection chambers to STP (Rs 85.81 lakh).

the job, we were supposed to pay '1.5 lakh,' he said. The incident came to light after the hotel owner approached RPF personnel saying that the rent for the rooms taken for the interview was not paid.

Thus, the RPF launched a probe into the incident and passed on the information to the police. Based on records collected from the hotel, the police contacted the interview attendees. "I realised I was cheated after the police and RPF officials contacted me. Soon, I spoke to the friend to whom I had paid money to attend the interview. Knowing my financial condition, he paid me the amount out of his own pocket.

Fake RPF recruitment interviews held at hotel near Ernakulam, investigation begins

20 job aspirants attended sham interviews held by 3-member gang posing as RPF officials

KOCHI. As job aspirants eagerly await the recruitment examination of the Indian Railways and Railway Protection Force (RPF), it seems fraudsters are also actively tapping into the opportunity. A three-member gang posing as RPF personnel conducted interviews, and certificate verifications of youngsters after promising the job of RPF constable. The sham interviews were held at a hotel near Ernakulam South railway station last week.

Around 20 job aspirants who have applied for the RPF constable recruitment examination were at the hotel to attend the interviews and certificate verification held on July 27. A youth from

Thiruvananthapuram, who attended the interview, had paid Rs 75,000 to get the job. "I came to know about the interview through one of my close friends," he said. "My financial situation is in an awful state and I borrowed money to give it to my friend. The interview was conducted by a woman and around 20 people from various parts of the state attended it."

He said the scammers directed them to attend the RPF examination that was supposed to be held next month. "They gave us reading materials to prepare for the examination. Then they told us that we just had to attend the examination and the rest of the recruitment procedures would be handled by them. After getting

the job, we were supposed to pay '1.5 lakh,' he said. The incident came to light after the hotel owner approached RPF personnel saying that the rent for the rooms taken for the interview was not paid.

Thus, the RPF launched a probe into the incident and passed on the information to the police. Based on records collected from the hotel, the police contacted the interview attendees. "I realised I was cheated after the police and RPF officials contacted me. Soon, I spoke to the friend to whom I had paid money to attend the interview. Knowing my financial condition, he paid me the amount out of his own pocket.

Odisha launches first grain ATM in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR. Odisha government on Thursday piloted a Grain ATM in the city, the first-of-its-kind in the state, to dispense ration through automated teller machines to beneficiaries covered under the national food security programme.

Minister of Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Krishna Chandra Patra unveiled the Grain ATM at Mancheswar set up under the Annapurni initiative of the central government in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP), in presence of Deputy Country Director, WFP Nozomi Hashimoto.

"This is a significant initiative in partnership with the WFP to achieve nutritional security in the state. The ATMs



will be set up across Odisha to provide foodgrains to beneficiaries with 24/7 access under the National Food Security Act," the minister said.

On the occasion, Hashimoto said, "WFP and Odisha have been partners for six decades.

Odisha presents a success story with global relevance. We are humbled to see the Annapurni solution, a Made-in-India globally-awarded solution operational in many states, evolving to add more functionalities and features based on a year-long pilot and testing."

Grain ATM, Annapurni is an automated multi-commodity dispensing solution that provides fast, clean and precise access to commodities (rice, wheat, grains) to beneficiaries, post biometric authentication.

With universal access, anyone with a ration card valid in India, regardless of the state and Union territory, can access their quota of foodgrains. Annapurni can dispense grains up to 50 kg in five minutes, with an error rate of 0.01 per cent.

Building a warm paradise for bibliophiles

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM : Under the warm golden light, sitting on a comfy chair with a cup of hot tea while turning the pages of the current read like it's the most important thing in the world — nothing short of absolute bliss. That's the magic of spaces like this, like secret portals that whisk you away from reality and drop you straight into another world.

Choosing the right book is just the beginning of a perfect reading experience. Equally important is finding the ideal place to immerse yourself in its pages. However, not everyone has the luxury of a quiet spot at this age. That's where café-bookshops come in. The Café Bookmark is a place like that. Tucked away in the corner of a heritage building within VJT Ayyankali Hall at Palyam lies Café Bookmark. With its vintage charm and quiet ambience, it is an ideal place to retreat to enjoy a favourite book and a delicious cup of coffee.

The cafe is the dream project of Abraham Mathew, a writer and the secretary of Kerala State Bookmark, under the Department of Culture. "Bookmark, until now, had been exclusively engaged in book distribution and sales. However, this traditional approach is no longer viable, leading to losses," he says. To counteract this downturn, Café Bookmark was conceived as a new strategy. "We know that in foreign countries, many discussions and dialogues occur in such coffee shops. In Kerala, similar gatherings used to happen at village tea shops and Indian Coffee Houses, where people would sit together, read newspapers, and engage in conversations about various topics. Nowadays, such public spaces are becoming scarce. Café Bookmark aims to provide a space for free thinkers to gather, read, and discuss ideas inspired by foreign models," he explains. The Café, which opened its doors on June 19, operates daily from 9am to 9pm. As one walks down the steps inside the cafe, a compact space opens up but the interior does not feel cramped or cluttered mainly thanks to the ample lighting. "It is said knowledge is light, or letters are illumination. Because of that, we have designed the lampshades to resemble book covers. VJT Hall has a rich heritage. So, we wanted to bring its aesthetic to the cafe. We felt it was both necessary and our duty to preserve this heritage. So, we brought similar roof tiles as VJT Hall from Thrissur," Abraham says.

Two stabbed to death over parking dispute in Bhubaneswar



BHUBANESWAR. Two young men were allegedly stabbed to death by three to four assailants over a parking dispute in the state capital on Wednesday evening.

As per police, the incident occurred at Kalyan Plaza Apartment in Kuhu village within Airfield police limits. One of the victims, Rashmi Sethi, who owned a meat shop and the accused were at loggerheads with each other, said police.

"A heated exchange broke out between Sethi and the goons over parking of the former's vehicle in the apartment following he and his friend, Sambit Rout of Rajnagar in Kendrapara district, were stabbed to death," said DCP Prateek Singh.

Police said one of the accused owns a flat in the apartment where the crime took place. After the incident, Singh visited the spot for investigation. The accused are absconding and police have launched a manhunt to nab them.

GIS survey to map properties for better services, not to hike taxes: GHMC Commissioner

Property owners were also informed that they need not give personal information like Aadhaar or PAN details during the GIS survey.



GHMC

"We will focus solely on enhancing urban planning and resource management. We will not request personal details such as Aadhaar or PAN. Submission of water and electricity bills is optional. Minimal data is being collected and some personal information in the GIS field survey mobile app has been deleted and simplified further," Amrapali Kata said.

Addressing a press conference here, Kata said the GIS survey would cover details of roads, buildings, water bodies, parks

and other features within GHMC limits. All data will be protected and stored in Railtel, owned by the Union government, the GHMC commissioner said. Currently, there are 19.38 lakh assessments, including 2.78 commercial assessments under GHMC's jurisdiction.

Digital address for garbage collection

A unique digital address will be generated for each property to facilitate efficient delivery of services such as garbage collection and emergency response, Kata said. A drone survey covering 158 sq km within GHMC limits has been conducted, and 1,14,020 plots have been digitised. Areas like Hydemagar, Miyapur, Chandanagar, KPHB Colony, Uppal and Hayathnagar have already been surveyed.

Additional areas, including Madhapur, Allwyn Colony, Serilingampally, Vivekananda Nagar Colony, Gajularamaram, Subhash Nagar, Nagole and RC Puram, are being prepared for the survey, she said. From next month, around 600 teams with two members each will work on the ground to collect information for the GIS survey which is expected to be completed by March 2025. The GIS mapping will contribute to better city planning, improved services, quicker emergency response, enhanced utility services, infrastructure development, efficient garbage collection, and improved safety and security, Kata said.

Centre's overbearing presence bodes ill for J&K

UNLIKE the more constitutionally defined role of a Governor, the responsibilities and powers of the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) are relatively ambiguous, situational and dependent on the Centre. There are union territories (UTs) of various shades when it comes to defining an L-G's role. There are 'half states' like Puducherry, which has a CM and a Cabinet, and Delhi with its unique national capital dynamics. There are strategic 'outposts' like the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. Relatively smaller UTs like Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu warrant a simpler bureaucratic 'administrator'. Then there is Chandigarh, a two-state capital with both Punjab and Haryana making competing claims over it. And five years ago, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was split into two UTs — Ladakh and J&K — with the abrogation of Article 370. UNLIKE the more constitutionally defined role of a Governor, the responsibilities and powers of the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) are relatively ambiguous, situational and dependent on the Centre.

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THE Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has nominated one of its four newly trained astronauts, Shubhanshu Shukla, to fly to the International Space Station (ISS). Shukla is in the first batch of four Indians trained in Bengaluru and Russia for India's maiden human space flight, Gaganyaan. While announcing the decision to send Shukla, the space agency used the word Gaganyaatri for astronaut, suggesting a possible connection with the Gaganyaan mission. However, Shukla's flight to ISS is an altogether different activity, though ISRO says the experience gained from it would help in the Gaganyaan mission. Ever since humans first landed on the Moon in 1969, most of the human space flights have been to orbiting space stations. Humans fly in spacecraft launched by powerful rockets, dock the spacecraft to a space station, remain there for a few days or weeks, and return to the Earth. The space station era began with the Soviet Salyut and American Skylab in the 1970s. Then came the larger Soviet station, Mir, and finally the ISS jointly built by America, Russia and Europe. China's Tiangong Space Station has been in the making for a decade now (it takes a long time to assemble a station in space), and India has announced its intention to build its space station by 2035. To reach a station orbiting around Earth, one needs powerful rockets and robust spacecraft that can transport humans there and bring them back safely. For this, the Soviets developed the Soyuz spacecraft and the Americans the Space Shuttle for almost 30 years. The Shuttle could lift off vertically like a rocket, glide in space like a spacecraft and land horizontally on the earth like an aeroplane. After the Columbia disaster in 2003 — in which Kalpana Chawla perished — the shuttle programme faltered and was ended in 2011. For a few years after this, NASA used the services of the Russian Soyuz for sending supplies to the ISS and rotate the crew there. For the long term, NASA supported American companies with funds and technology to help them build durable space transportation systems so that it could fully delegate the job of sending cargo and crew missions to ISS to certified private companies. This policy resulted in the emergence of private space players like SpaceX and United Launch Alliance (ULA). After several cargo missions using its Falcon 9 rockets to ISS since 2012, SpaceX launched its first crewed mission in 2020. ULA, too, made several cargo trips to the ISS using its Atlas V rocket. It launched its first crewed module, Starliner, which transported Sunita Williams to ISS in June. It has, however, not been found fit for the return journey due to problems with its thrusters and continues to be docked with the ISS.

For Shukla's flight to ISS, ISRO has signed a contract with a private company, Axiom Space, which has been categorised by NASA as a 'full-service mission provider

A catch-up flight in run-up to Gaganyaan

ISRO hopeful that the International Space Station experience will benefit India's grand mission



to carry out end-to-end commercial astronaut missions. Axiom does not have a rocket or spacecraft and depends on SpaceX for transportation to and from the ISS. Since May 2021, Axiom has executed three commercial missions to ISS. The one with Shukla will be its fourth mission. It is unclear till now if Shukla is going to fly under a commercial agreement between ISRO and Axiom or under a bilateral deal (with or without service charges) with NASA. Rakesh Sharma's flight to the Salyut station in 1984 was a gesture of friendship from the Soviet Union; India did not have to pay for the ride or the cosmonaut training. Salyut's successor was the Mir on which Russia hosted 104 cosmonauts and astronauts from 13 countries till it was deorbited in 2001, and many of them were paid rides. India missed the ISS bus and did not participate in its assembly or send an Indian astronaut to the space station while it was taking shape in the 1990s and 2000s with the participation of leading space agencies. In the 1990s, the relations between ISRO and NASA were at a low ebb because of the cryogenic controversy and the restrictions imposed by the American government due to fear of knowledge transfer. Second, ISRO was more focused on stabilising its operational satellite programmes and lacked additional resources to join an international venture.

By the time a human flight popped up on ISRO's agenda, the list of visitors to the ISS had considerably grown. In the past 25 years, 280 astronauts from 23 countries have been

to ISS with some of them visiting the station two to four times. For instance, the ongoing visit of Sunita Williams is her third to ISS. The US and Russia account for 220 astronauts to ISS, while the rest came from Japan, Canada, Italy, France, Germany, Denmark, the UK, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands, Brazil, Israel, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Malaysia, South Africa, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UAE. The list includes 13 'private visitors' or space tourists. Axiom's first mission to ISS included four private visitors.

Even when ISRO formally started working on the Gaganyaan mission in 2018, sending an Indian to the ISS was not on the cards. The four astronaut candidates were sent for training at the Yuri Gagarin Space Centre and agreements were signed with Russian agencies for developing other essentials needed for a human space flight. However, the launch deadline set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi — coinciding with the 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022 — was too short to be achieved. A year later, the ISS plan figured in the India-US joint statement during the Prime Minister's visit to America. It would appear the ISS trip of Shukla is not a necessary building block for Gaganyaan, but more of a catch-up step to gain real-time experience of a space flight in preparation for Gaganyaan. To see an Indian on a space station four decades after Rakesh Sharma's space journey would indeed be a moment of national pride.

Far-right extremism

UK must protect vulnerable communities



Prime Minister Keir Starmer's condemnation of the riots as "organised illegal thuggery" is a necessary step, but more must be done. Even as nearly 400 people have been

arrested in a week of violence, including clashes between rioters and the police, concerted efforts must be made to combat the spread of misinformation online, which has proven to be a powerful tool for radicalising individuals and inciting violence. The government must also address the underlying socio-economic issues that far-right groups exploit, such as unemployment and inadequate social services, which often breed resentment towards immigrants.

In this climate of fear, it is crucial to uphold the values of tolerance and unity. The UK needs to ensure the safety and inclusiveness of all its residents, regardless of their background, to prevent such violence from taking root again. The media and political leaders must act responsibly, avoiding inflammatory rhetoric that can incite hatred.

This is not the Bangladesh we stood for in the line of fire



AT 2 pm on August 5, 2024, Bangladesh was freed from an autocrat. It baffles me that I can finally use the word 'autocrat' to describe the fallen Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina because our law made sure we couldn't since 2018. My brother and I rushed to the streets, unable to contain our excitement. The atmosphere was electric. I had never seen so many people on the streets, waving flags. Families carried their children on their shoulders, chanting slogans of victory. Rickshaw pullers saluted students, who stood on rickshaws giving speeches about refusing to live under tyranny, goons, or chandabaja (extortionists). We could breathe a sigh of relief. Hasina's flight from the country meant the end of enforced disappearances of students, journalists and activists, police raids on student protesters and the brutalities of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL). Bangladesh was, for now, a country free of censorship. But our joy soon turned to horror as we walked from Motijheel to Shahbagh. At Motijheel, crowds gathered in front of Sonali Bank, ripping off posters of Hasina. We cheered until someone suggested tearing down everything built under the Awami League regime. We dismissed it as extreme views surfacing due to newfound freedom. As we walked towards Shahbagh, our smiles faded. People were carrying army officials on their shoulders, believing they had brought this freedom. They climbed onto armoured vehicles, raised flags and danced. Some in the crowd looked uncomfortable but shrugged it off, thinking it was all part of the celebration. When we crossed Suhrawardy Uddyan, we saw a thick cloud of smoke. Inside, vandals had set large stages on fire, which had been set up for commemorating mourning day by the Awami League. A statue replicating Bangabandhu's historic March 7 speech was also ablaze. We tried to stop the fires, but people gave us looks of disgust. We stumbled upon a crowd beating a BCL-affiliated student with rods. The mob claimed he had weapons. Some students tried to protect him, shouting for him to be handed over to the army. But we were called Chhatra League or Razakar, accused of siding with the enemy. We had seen enough people shot, maimed and killed

during protests. It was ironic how we now took hits from a mob to save someone we were supposed to hate. The mob eventually outnumbered us, and the person was beaten to death. We couldn't verify his identity, fearing for our lives. We asked Army officials at the Shahbagh intersection to intervene and clear the crowd, but they refused. We knew the anarchy we were witnessing was just the beginning. We hadn't yet heard of the communal violence on Hindu communities, temples being torched, and attacks on Awami League-affiliated members and their families, alongside policemen and their families. At the TSC, we saw microbuses set on fire. Vandals warned people not to take videos or photos. Chairs were stolen from the halls and looted from Gono Bhaban and imams, along with students, joined watch parties outside temples to protect them. This is the Bangladesh I dreamt of, my grandfather dreamt of during the Liberation War and the countless other freedom fighters who took a bullet. This is the time to call out all injustices that hindered our society under an autocracy—not just politicians, but also business who supported the Awami League and now pretend to support our students. It is time for us to be vigilant on all fronts. It is so much harder to protect freedom than to achieve it. If nothing else, what this protest proved is that students have the power to take down an autocrat that everyone feared. We can again take down anyone who stands in the way of building a free Bangladesh for all.



How about a black & white home?

The two colours symbolise class in two different contexts; but a punch of the two can create such simplistic yet elegant impression. And to add to this, there's also that element of drama that one can't give away when there's a blend of black and white.

- Using black and white to decorate the flooring and to colour of small rooms is the most basic one can do. For instance, you can go for black flooring for your bathroom, and then use the bathroom fittings in white. This gives it a perfect look.
- Walls, if done well, enhance the look of every house. Paint your walls black and white. Either go

for a proportional 3:1 look by painting three walls black and one wall white, or go with diagonal walls painted in the contrast colours. Stripes in black and white or spraying black paint over white walls are others you can opt for.

- You could also paint the walls white and then use black photo frames or wall hangings on the same wall to add charm.
- Tiles and floor paper in the combination of black and white look great. The checkered ones might seem out of style, but are still elegant. Use tiles lined with the contrast colours, this way it looks a little less dramatic than the one before.

Decorate your desk or tables in the black-white combo. Spread a black table cloth and display all-white objects on the table. Other ways are to use furniture with complementing shades against a black and white combination wall. This also adds modishness.

- You could also make your hosiery a part of this experimentation. Use

black and white shaded rugs, carpets, curtains (all of which suit the colour of your wall and does not look a mismatch.)

Another important part of home decor are lights. You could use chandeliers, light shades, lamp shades which have black and white combined in hue. This way, you could keep it simple yet add the required shades

The entrance of the house brings in the main energy. Read on to find out more about the vaastu of the main entrance

The main entrance of the house is one of the most important areas. Dr Snehal S Deshpande, Advanced Feng Shui & Pyravastu Consultant tells us more about it. The main entrance is the mouth of a house which brings in main energy and here are certain rules about the dos and don'ts regarding the door.

Avoid a property which has a door facing South West as it is the entry of the devil energy and brings in struggles and misfortunes. If the wealth energy as per advanced Feng Shui of that house is good, the

occupant may prosper during initial 3-4 years. But then may face a down fall. If your house already has a door facing South West, fix 2 Hanumanji's tiles (with the Gada in his left hand) outside the door & see the difference. Certain gems like Yellow Sapphire, Earth Crystals, Lead with the Expert's advice can also further reduce the severity of this defect. But it is always better to avoid such properties.

The door facing South East is said to be a door which brings in

Vaastu tips for your home's main entrance

illness, anger and court matters. Two stickers of Gayatri Mantra should be fixed on both the sides of the door from outside. Use of gems like Coral, Yellow Sapphire etc. and copper with a proper advice will further reduce the defects of this door.

South facing door brings in sharp energy which disturbs positive energy field of the house. Door here means a highly active social life. Some times it may bring in arguments or disagreements. Again fixing two above mentioned Hanumanji's tiles outside the door will help. It can further be protected by using lead, cat's eye etc. But this door if it is in fourth Pada is very good for an occupant.

Normally doors facing East, North, North East are said to be good doors. But again there are many other things like Cuts, Extensions, Under Ground Water Tanks, Feng Shui (Flying Stars Chart) of the house which decide the wealth and health of the occupant. A few words on these topics some other time.

West facing door is also not bad for the youngsters as it has an active energy &



If sophistication and innovativeness is the extra edge you want to add to your home decor, what better than use a cocktail of the colours black and white to decorate your abode.

to your decor. Not only is the black and white combination elegant and sophisticated but it also adds quite a lot of drama to the decor. Not only does

these techniques allow you to match your home decor with your personality, but it does all this and more in an extremely expensive way. If you're the kinds who

likes trying things that are out of the mundane and wants to give your home a complete makeover, we suggest you go 'Black and White'.



- Follow these simple steps to rid your house of clutter.
- If you're among those who keeps procrastinating tidying up and blaming lack of space for not being organised, here are a few tips that will help you declutter for good...
- Trying to do everything at one go will only make you feel stressed out. Instead, declutter for 20 minutes every day. You'll be able to get through more things without frustrating yourself.
- Avoid allowing new things into your house in the first place. Whether you've just started decluttering or have just completed it — stop bringing in new stuff!
- Instead of throwing away things you don't need, give it to someone who will be happy to use it. That way you won't even feel guilty about discarding things.
- Give yourself a date by which you will get rid of things you don't need. Make a chart or mark dates off on a calendar. The sense of accomplishment you feel will egg you on to do more.
- Listen to some music while you sort out things and give yourself a little treat once you finish.
- While sorting clothes, group them into categories — hang all the skirts together, fold and keep jeans and tops together, keep woollens and beach clothes a little behind in your closet because you won't need them all the time.
- Plastic organisers are a great way to keep clothes sorted and in place.

Get creative with table napkins



With the spicy, oily food that we all love, our table napkins are always left with some reminders of the sumptuous meals served at our tables. Table napkins, especially the whites have a way of stubbornly holding on to stains. And if you don't want to discard the napkins that are otherwise in perfect condition, then this will prove to be the best way to salvage them. Tie and dye napkins are easy to make.

Here is what you will need: Napkins, Fabric dye, Rubber bands, A large bowl or vessel, Plastic wrap, Rubber gloves

Method: Wash napkins and let them dry. Wear rubber gloves and mix the dye according to product

instructions and transfer to your bowl. Now, pinch fabric in and then using rubber bands or thread, tie up fabric together at intervals on the napkin to create a design.

Submerge the tied napkins into the bowl of dye, letting dye seep in. Remove. Let it dry (designs absorb best when left overnight.)

Once it is completely dry, remove the rubber bands and unfold your napkin. The rubber bands would have left designs where the colour

didn't dye. Rinse napkin with cold water until the water runs clear. Wash and dry according to dye instructions. Set the table with your new napkins. Cool, na?



How to clean your kitchen

find, and should be put away after each use.

-Do not mix ammonia and bleach to clean the platform because it will create toxic fumes and leave a black patch on it.

-Identify spots in your kitchen that accumulate clutter and take a few minutes every day to clear those spots and place objects in their correct homes. Try to end each day with a clean, empty kitchen sink.

home.

-Keep a special drawer that can be used just for foil, plastic wrap and your parchment papers. Those items are always easy to

Over 7,200 Indian students have returned home from crisis-hit Bangladesh: Centre

New Delhi. More than 7,200 Indian students have returned to India in the past couple of weeks ending August 1 in view of the situation in Bangladesh, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Thursday. Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh, in a written response, also said that as per available records, there were about 19,000 Indian citizens, including over 9,000 students, living in Bangladesh. He was asked the total number of Indians living in Bangladesh for the purpose of education or business, the number of people of Gujarat living in Bangladesh, and whether any special campaign has been started to evacuate Indian citizens from the violence-hit neighbouring country.

The minister was also asked about the number of citizens brought back to India so far. Indian students in Bangladesh were from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, and the states of Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam, among others. State-

wise list is not maintained by our Mission and Posts in Bangladesh, the Union Minister said. The High Commission of India in Dhaka and the Assistant High Commissions in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Khulna have been assisting in the voluntary return of Indian nationals, he said. They were also coordinating with the authorities concerned in Bangladesh for their safety and security during their stay as well as movement to the airports and to land ports along the India-Bangladesh border. The Ministry of External Affairs has also been coordinating with relevant Indian authorities to ensure a smooth passage for our citizens arriving at land ports and airports. Over 7,200 Indian students have returned to India till August 1, 2024, starting from July 18, 2024," Singh said. State-wise list of Indian nationals who have "voluntarily departed from Bangladesh was not maintained by our mission and posts in Bangladesh", the minister added. In a separate query, he was also asked whether it is a fact that Indian students' intake in



Canadian universities has dipped in recent years due to strained relations with Canada, and if so, the details of students enrolled there during the last three years, year-wise. The Minister of State for External Affairs shared data and said as per information obtained from the website of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Indian student intake at Canadian universities has "increased over the last three years". As per the shared data, the corresponding figures were -- 2,16,360 (in

2021), 3,18,380 (in 2022) and 4,27,085 (in 2023).

In a separate question, he was asked whether the government is aware of the "growing Chinese influence" on India's neighbouring countries. Singh, in his written response, said the "government keeps abreast of all activities in India's neighbourhood that impinge on its interests". "Neighbourhood First Policy continues to guide our approach to our neighbouring countries.

It has resulted in outcome-oriented engagements, strong development partnerships, physical, digital and economic connectivity as well as vibrant people-to-people and cultural exchanges. India is an active partner of its neighbours, with extensive education, culture, trade and investment linkages," he said. "Our relations with neighbours stand on their own footing and are independent of the relations of these countries with third countries. The government keeps a vigilant watch on all

developments which have a bearing on India's national security, and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it," he added.

In response to a separate query, he shared data on the number of pilgrims from India who visited Gurdwara Shri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan in the past three years -- 10,025 (2021); 86,097 (2022); and 96,555 (2023). He was also asked whether India had taken "any diplomatic initiative to stop the ongoing war between Palestine and Israel".

"India has strongly condemned the terror attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, and also the loss of civilian lives in the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict. India has called for a ceasefire and sustained humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza," the Union minister said. "During the ongoing conflict, India has provided 70 tonnes of humanitarian aid including 16.5 tonnes of medicines and medical supplies. We have also called for the release of the remaining hostages.

'A bulldozer on Waqf board properties': Congress leader slams reform bill

New Delhi. Senior Telangana Congress leader and state Waqf Board Chairman Syed Azmatullah Hussaini strongly criticised the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, calling it "a bulldozer on Waqf Board properties". His remarks came after the bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Thursday by Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, sparking strong opposition from various parties. "This bill is nothing but a bulldozer on Waqf Board properties," Hussaini stated. "We believe that BJP is doing vendetta politics as they have not received any minority votes."

Hussaini urged the BJP's alliance members, including the Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP and Nitish Kumar's JD(U), to oppose the bill. "We have called for an emergency Waqf Board meeting, where we will decide on our further course of action," he added.

The bill, which has been referred to a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) for further deliberation, proposes significant changes to the existing Waqf Act, including the inclusion of Muslim women and non-Muslims in Waqf bodies and the removal of Section 40, which gives Waqf boards the authority to determine Waqf properties. The bill has ignited fierce debate, with opposition



Who is Harish Salve, set to fight Vinesh Phogat's Olympic disqualification case

New Delhi. The hopes of grappler Vinesh Phogat and a billion Indians rest upon the shoulders of top lawyer Harish Salve, who is set to fight the wrestler's Paris Olympics disqualification case at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). A former Solicitor General of India and King's Counsel, Salve has a stellar record of handling high-profile cases -- ranging from defending Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav at the International Court of Justice to representing Ratan Tata in his battle against Cyrus Mistry. Vinesh Phogat, who became the first Indian woman wrestler to reach an Olympic final, was disqualified by the

organisers after being found 100 gms overweight ahead of her gold medal match on Wednesday. She later

disqualification and demanded a joint silver be awarded to her.

WHO IS HARISH SALVE?

One of India's prominent lawyers, Harish Salve, was born in Maharashtra and completed his law from Nagpur University. He served as a senior advocate at the Delhi High Court in 1992 before being appointed as the Solicitor General of India in November 1999. Salve was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2015. In January last year, he was appointed as the Queen's Counsel for the courts of Wales and England.

Some of his top clients include the Tata Group and Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries.



announced her retirement from wrestling in a heartbreak post on Thursday.

Phogat moved the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against her

Study Reveals Priorities Of Indian GenZ's, How Hard They're Willing To Work

New Delhi. One in every four GenZ respondents in India is more inclined towards new-age job fields like Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity and content creation while 43 per cent are willing to sacrifice the work-life balance to succeed in their career, a study has found. The study, the Quest Report 2024, which unveils Gen Z traits and trends on dreams, careers, and aspirations, also found that only 9 per cent of respondents want to pursue entrepreneurship as they seek stability and security in work life. Gen Z usually refers to those born between 1997 and 2012. "One out of 4 Indian respondents are more inclined towards new-age job fields like content creation, data analysis, AI, and cybersecurity," the study said. The study of 6,700 Gen Z respondents, aged between 20-24 years, from seven countries including the US, the UK, Malaysia Brazil and India, stated that 19 per cent of Indians surveyed prefer career advancements in big organisations while 84 per cent of

with CyberMedia Research, said. iQOO is a sub-smartphone brand of the vivo group.

"43 per cent of respondents in India and 46 per cent globally are willing to give up work-life balance to succeed in their career," it said, adding that around 62 per cent of the Indian youth are willing to give up their hobbies and other interests to achieve their dreams. "Recent debate on work-life balance due to deliberation on 14-hour work day & 70-hour workweek have stirred conversations amongst the Gen Z," the study noted.

The study of 6,700 Gen Z respondents, aged between 20-24 years, from seven countries including the US, the UK, Malaysia Brazil and India, stated that 19 per cent of Indians surveyed prefer career advancements in big organisations while 84 per cent of

Indian respondents believe their jobs align with their goals, compared to 72 per cent globally. As many as 45 per cent of Questers said that they would take up higher studies to support their quest while 32 per cent believe they should take up relevant jobs to support their dreams.

Around 46 per cent feel financial constraints as a barrier to pursuing their choice of career. However, over 90% are confident in achieving their dream despite the barriers. "2X of women feel gender affects the pursuit of their dreams compared to men," the study said.

The study covered three broad areas -- Gen Z Questers' spirit & motivation to fulfil their dreams, obstacles & barriers that disrupt their quest for passion, and career choices that drive their interests.

parties condemning it as an "attack on the Constitution" and an interference in religious matters. Senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal labelled the bill as "draconian" and politically motivated, especially with upcoming state elections in Maharashtra and Haryana. Defending the bill, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju argued that the amendments were aimed at broadening the existing law and ensuring justice for those previously denied it. He said the bill seeks to implement reforms recommended by committees from the previous Congress government, assuring that no rights were being taken away nor religious freedoms being curtailed. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla stated that the JPC would be constituted after consulting with leaders from all parties, ensuring that the bill undergoes thorough examination before any further legislative action.

NIA files chargesheet against four terrorists, including Pakistani handler in Kashmir

All four accused were involved in the killing of two civilians on the evening of February 7 at Karfali Mohalla in Shala Kadal in Srinagar.

New Delhi. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against four terrorists, including one from Pakistan, for killing two people in Kashmir by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its offshoot, The Resistance Front in February. The



accused, identified as Adil Manzoor Langoo, Ahran Rasool Dar alias Tota, Dawood, and their Pakistan-based handler Jahangeer alias Peer Sahab, have been booked under various sections of IPC and UAPA. The NIA special court in Jammu, has already issued a non-bailable warrant against absconding accused Jahangir, the agency said in a statement.

All four accused were involved in the killing of two civilians on the evening of February 7 at Karfali Mohalla in Shala Kadal in Srinagar. The NIA took over the case in June, and initial investigations revealed that Adil Manzoor Langoo, who had joined the LeT in 2023, was motivated by his Pakistani handlers to carry out the outfit's activities in Srinagar. "The agency said in the statement. Further investigation is on, it said. "LeT/TRF has been luring unemployed youth into terrorist activities by using the social media extensively to propagate its dangerous agenda and promote its activities," the probe agency added.



victim, alleging that the police had refused to file the case. Earlier last month, a 24-year-old son of a Shiv Sena leader ran over an elderly woman with his BMW in Mumbai. During his interrogation, Mihir Shah admitted to the police that he was drunk during the early morning drive.

In another incident, a minor son of a Pune realtor had run over two 24-year-old techies with his Porsche during a late-night drive in May. He, too, was allegedly found drunk.

Case against lawyer for raping 21-year-old in Delhi court chamber

New Delhi. A case has been registered against a Delhi lawyer after a 21-year-old woman alleged that he raped her inside his chamber at Tis Hazari Court on the pretext of giving her a job. The case was registered at Sabji Mandi Police Station after the aunt of the woman lodged a complaint on July 30. Her complaint, the aunt of the woman said her niece was looking for a job, and she gave her the contact of the lawyer. After the woman contacted the lawyer, she was asked to visit his



chamber to show her educational qualifications. The lawyer told the woman that he would look for a job for her in the next 8-10 days. After 10 days, the woman contacted the lawyer again and the two started exchanging texts, as per the complaint. The lawyer also allegedly told the woman that "everyone needs good friends in life".

The woman was again called to the lawyer's chamber on July 27. After speaking for some time, the lawyer forced himself on her and also inserted his finger in her private part, the woman said in the complaint. As the woman started screaming, the lawyer threatened her with dire consequences if she told anyone about the assault. He gave her Rs 1,500 and asked her to leave, the woman's complaint said.

After reaching home, the woman informed her aunt about the incident, who then approached the police. A probe is underway, police said.



Give your home a Festive Makeover

You have a beautiful house — is the best comment anyone get after they have taken a lot of effort to decorate it. Getting people to appreciate your effort is indeed a difficult task, and this Diwali you too can make your home look stunning and earn praises from visitors.

After the cleaning regime, refurbishing your house is the most important part of this festival. Since, we are just little more than a fortnight away from the festival, here are some awesome quick fixes that you can consider when revamping your home for the festival.

• Wall highlights

Of course, you don't have much time to carry out major changes like painting your entire house. However, you can experiment with wall highlighting tricks or wallpapers this season. Getting one wall highlighted with some textured colour or putting up a mural would definitely make your home ready for Diwali. Gold is the

flavour this season — and a hint of gold will give your home that festive glow. You can choose from a variety of paints that offer textured patterns and can colour one or two main walls that will completely change the look. You can also make a simple DIY shelf with colourful boards and papers. You can use this to keep small artistic elements like a vase or showpieces to help brighten up boring walls.

• Fancy curtains

For a quick makeover, brightly coloured curtains do the magic. Opt for some fancy fabrics like tissue, which are available in new patterns like prints, applique and velvet work. These curtains look stylish, as they are transparent and flowy with rich prints like floral, geometric shapes, abstract art, etc. Golden is specifically used in most of the furnishings as it evokes festivity. "Curtains in tissue, brasso and silk will give that festive sheen to your home. While colours like ivory and gold adorned with applique and prints in red, maroon, lilac, blue, etc. will make your house look lively," says Gunja Shah, an interior design expert.

• Bright-coloured cushions

The best part about cushion covers is that they brighten up the entire place without much effort. Moreover, they come in a variety of bright colours which makes

them even more attractive. You can go for some interesting colours like fuchsia pink, turquoise, orange, royal blue, etc. These are mostly in art silk or jute fabric and have interesting brasso work in velvet as well as retro prints that will light up any dull background. "The art of decorating your home with cushion covers is to mix-and-match, but never try to match your cushion covers with each other. More the contrast and variety, better the look," says Poorna Shrinath, a homemaker.

• Interesting elements

Small antique showpieces would make your home look very decorative, sculptures and pieces that have literary work on them give a very ethnic look to your home. Moreover, playing with lights are the best thing to do refurbish your home, using warm colours like yellow or orange at neglected corners would make your home look mysteriously gorgeous. You can also choose from a variety of wooden and earthen artefacts that will render an earthy look to the house along with the lights.

• Add vibrancy to your kitchen

Add a dash of colour to your kitchen — be it by including small corner shelves to store cutlery or interesting coloured crockery. Your kitchen too needs a festive makeover, and adding bright colours is the best way to go about it. You can also opt for rustic

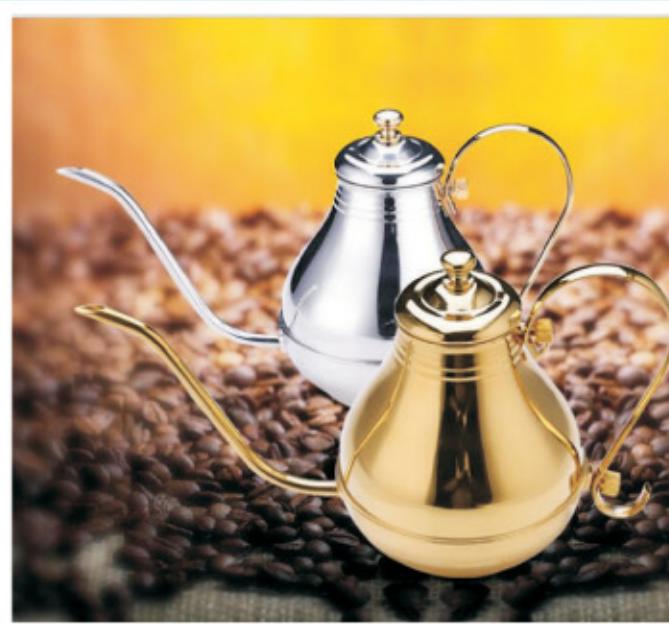
Ways to restore tea kettles

Every object can be used in several ways. And that's one mantra to brighten up your home. Do away with the regular decor items that you get off the internet and restore some of your old things to liven up your home. Tea kettles have their own charm, and if you are wondering what to do with your old stainless steel kettle that you have not been using for a long time, we tell you ways you can use it in several ways, with a little tinkering...

Flower vase

Tea kettle has a vintage charm, so you can use it as a flower vase. All you have to do is pick some fresh flowers every day and fill the vase. Place it on your dining table or in your garden as it is sure to brighten up your decor.

Paint them



You can choose to go with a single, bright-coloured paint (like the one shown in the picture), or choose to paint it entirely using various patterns. Place it on the side table in your rooms or on your centre table in your living room. It will be great focal point for your overall decor, we promise.

Watering cans

If your old tea kettle is in a shape that can't be restored to a great degree, here's an idea. Colour it up in bright hues of yellow or orange and use it as a watering can. The best part is that you need not hide such a watering can inside a cupboard, as keeping this by the side of your pots itself gives your balcony a

unique look.

Piggy bank

Bored of using animal-inspired piggy banks? Convert your old tea kettle into a piggy bank. On the plus side, there's no additional work required... you can use your kettle just the way it was. Cool, no?

Hang them

If you have brass tea kettles that you no longer use, hang them on your walls artistically. Do up the decor in one corner of the room with objects that go well with brass. Then, decide on a place to hang the kettle. You

don't have to do any polishing or colouring, as the worn-out kettle itself would add a rustic touch.

Chimes

Kettle chimes are for people who want to add a bit of quirk to their decor. This requires some work, but you will be happy with the end product. Drill small holes beneath the kettle and put a wire through the opening. Then, take a few old spoons and drill a hole on each of them.

Now, insert the wire into the hole in the spoons and make a simple knot. Hang it in your balcony and your kettle chimes are ready!

Tablescaping for festivities

Come the season of good cheer and it's time for frequent sit-down dinners with loved ones in the comfort of your home.

Impress your guests by setting a convivial mood with DIY tablescapes. Decor expert Jamila Chahwala says it's all about visual appeal and being neat. "You need an uncluttered look without compromising on the surface's usefulness," she says.

Get inspired

Pick a theme. "Inspiration is all around you; it can be anything from your favourite flower to a current fashion trend. If you can't think of a theme, pick a colour. Focusing on one colour can help you streamline your tabletop decor," says stylist Sabah Sheikh. Table top décor is a great way to show off your cherished items. "If you love to collect unique dishes and hand-etched glassware from flea markets, go ahead and flaunt them in the most stylish manner. Wood serving boards and white plates never go out of style. Take these classic items and customise them with pretty elements," says Shaikh.

Remember the basics

It's important to add height — anything like



a tall lamp, vase, candlestick, or branch — to give dimension, but make sure it doesn't block the view.

Easy, DIY tablescapes

Rustic: Get your hands on used, antique glass bottles, vases, mason jars and wooden boxes along with rare plants and pale-coloured roses. Use a single flower or a bunch of fresh blooms as centrepiece, depending on the table size. This budget-friendly minimalist theme embraces the use of jute cloth as well as various shades of brown. Add twine-wrapped soda or wine bottles.

Organic: Lemons and limes, berries and large succulent fruits and vegetables combined with subtle greens constitute main decor elements. Use fish bowls filled with fresh fruits as your centrepiece. This theme is easily doable.

Classic Vintage: Metallic colours of gold and silver, lace and pearls dominate this theme. Create an ethereal look using country flowers (peonies and cabbage roses) on antique lace table runners and old-world crockery. A mishmash of rose, gold or silver with shades of white can help craft a dreamy look.

HDFC Bank UPI services to be down today. Details here

NEW DELHI. HDFC Bank has announced that its UPI services will be unavailable for three hours tomorrow due to scheduled maintenance. This will affect transactions through its mobile banking app, as well as third-party platforms like GPay, Paytm, and WhatsApp Pay.

The maintenance is set to occur on August 10 from 2:30 am to 5:30 am, a total of three hours. During this period, HDFC Bank's UPI services will be temporarily inaccessible. HDFC Bank has announced that its UPI services will be unavailable for three hours tomorrow due to scheduled maintenance. This will affect transactions through its mobile banking app, as well as third-party platforms like GPay, Paytm, and WhatsApp Pay. The maintenance is set to occur on August 10 from 2:30 am to 5:30 am, a total of three hours. During this period, HDFC Bank's UPI services will be temporarily inaccessible.

Trent shares zoom 9% after Q1 net profit jumps to Rs 391 crore

NEW DELHI. Shares of Tata Group's Trent Ltd., the operator of Westside and Zudio outlets, soared 9% today. At around 1 pm, shares of the company were trading 8.66% higher at Rs 6,131.20. The company's market capitalisation has once again crossed the Rs 2 lakh crore mark, a milestone it first achieved in July. The strong jump in share price came on the back of the company's impressive Q1 results, which exceeded market expectations. Middle East Tensions Wayanad Landslides Trent reported a net profit of Rs 391.2 crore for the June quarter, a jump from Rs 166.7 crore in the same period last year.

The company's revenue grew by 56.2% year-on-year to Rs 4,104.4 crore, outperforming analysts' expectations of Rs 3,810 crore. Additionally, Trent's EBITDA for the quarter rose by 66.7% to Rs 612.6 crore, slightly above the expected Rs 588 crore. Despite the strong financial performance, the EBITDA margin expanded to 15%, up from 14% last year, though it was marginally below the anticipated 15.4%. The positive results are largely attributed to the expansion of Zudio stores, with the company planning to add 200 more outlets in the current financial year.

RVNL shares extend losses after Q1 results. Should you buy or sell

For the quarter ending June 2024, RVNL reported a 34.7% drop in consolidated net profit, falling to Rs 223.92 crore from Rs 343.09 crore in the same quarter last year.

NEW DELHI. Shares of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) continued to decline on Friday, falling nearly 3.5% on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). The development comes after shares of the company fell nearly 5% on Thursday after the company reported disappointing earnings for the June 2024 quarter.

In contrast, the broader market saw significant gains, with the BSE Sensex surging almost 1,100 points to 79,980 at the opening bell. For the quarter ending June 2024, RVNL reported a 34.7% drop in consolidated net profit, falling to Rs 223.92 crore from Rs 343.09 crore in the same quarter last year. The company's revenue from operations also took a hit, dropping 26.9% year-on-year to Rs 4,073.80 crore, down from Rs 5,571.57 crore in Q1 FY24. RVNL's stock has had a remarkable run since the start of the financial year 2023-24, soaring to an all-time high of Rs 647 in July 2024, a massive



873% increase from its March 2023 close of Rs 68.60. However, the stock has since experienced some profit-taking and is now trading around 17% lower than its peak. Even then, RVNL shares are still up 341% from their 52-week low of Rs 122.

Buy, hold or sell RVNL?

Despite the recent dip, some market experts believe this could be a buying opportunity for long-term investors. Stock market analysts view RVNL as a company that is likely to benefit from the government's strong focus on infrastructure development. Seema Srivastava, a Research Analyst at SMC Global Securities, who was quoted in a livemint.com report, expects the company to make a strong recovery. She has advised shareholders to buy the stock on the dips, accumulating shares on every 5-7% dip from current levels.

Analysts have also asked retail investors to avoid buying the stock immediately and wait till it stabilises. Retail investors should note that the stock has been on a losing run since the beginning of this week. Therefore, once the stock price stabilises, investors can buy-on-dips for long-term gains. Analysts have also pointed out that while RVNL's recent performance has been underwhelming, the company's long-term prospects remain promising.

Food prices can't be overlooked for inflation targeting, says Das

The Economic Survey, released prior to the Budget, advocated for a revision of the central bank's inflation targeting framework by excluding food inflation.

NEW DELHI. Contrary to the views expressed in the Economic Survey regarding the exclusion of food from retail inflation calculations, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday emphasised that food inflation cannot be overlooked due to its significant contribution to the overall consumption basket. According to Das, at the forefront of RBI's focus is headline

inflation, with food inflation accounting for approximately 46% of the consumer price index (CPI). "...Further, the public at large understands inflation more in terms of food inflation than the other components of headline inflation. Therefore, we cannot and should not become complacent merely because core inflation has fallen considerably," he said.

Das clarified that while the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) might overlook elevated food inflation if it is deemed temporary, the current situation of sustained high food inflation requires the committee to take it seriously. He said that the MPC must stay alert to prevent spillover effects or second-round impacts from ongoing



food inflation to maintain the credibility achieved through the monetary policy efforts. The Economic Survey, released prior to the Budget, advocated for a revision of the central bank's inflation targeting framework by excluding food

inflation. It argued that India's inflation targeting should focus on overall inflation minus food prices, as fluctuations in food prices are frequently driven by supply factors rather than demand. The Survey suggested that it may be beneficial to reconsider whether India's inflation targeting framework should exclude food inflation.

Regarding the weight of food in the CPI, Das said the existing CPI basket and the weight assigned to core, fuel, and food were based on data from 2011. NSO survey is underway

Shaktikanta Das noted that the NSO survey is currently underway, and a decision will be made in due course based on the data collected, in collaboration with the government and the RBI.

Ola Electric IPO lists flat: Should you book profit or hold

NEW DELHI. Ola Electric Mobility made a disappointing debut on the Dalal Street on Friday, with the shares listing flat, despite creating buzz since the EV player filed its IPO papers. The shares started trading at Rs 76 on the NSE, at the issue price, and at Rs 75.99 on the BSE. Shivani Nyati, Head of Wealth, Swastika Investmart Ltd said that the flat performance, coupled with a mere 4.45 times subscription, underscores the challenges the company faces in gaining investor confidence. "While Ola Electric's vision for the EV market is ambitious, the company's current financial performance, marked by consistent losses, and the highly competitive landscape have tempered investor enthusiasm. The negative grey market sentiment prior to listing further reflected these concerns," she added.

Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd said that despite receiving demand well below street expectation, OLA listed well above street expectations can be attributed to market mood.

Should you book profit or hold?

Nyati mentioned that the flat listing highlights the need for Ola Electric to demonstrate a clear path to profitability and navigate the complexities of the EV market effectively. "Investors are suggested to exit and book a minor profit, but those who want to take risks may hold their



Rs 2 crore instead of the current limit of Rs 5 lakh, which was fixed almost six decades ago. As per the revised list of business of Lok Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to introduce the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 later in the day. Besides, sources said there are some changes with respect to cooperative banks. In addition, the Bill also seeks to give greater freedom to banks in deciding the remuneration to

be paid to statutory auditors. The Bill also seeks to redefine the reporting dates for banks for regulatory compliance to the 15th and last day of every month instead of the second and fourth Fridays. The Bill, which was approved by the Union Cabinet last Friday, proposes to amend the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, the State Bank of India Act, 1955, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980.

The announcement about this was made by the Finance Minister in her 2023-24 Budget speech. "To improve bank governance and enhance investors' protection, certain amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, the Banking Companies Act and the Reserve Bank of India Act are proposed," she had said.

Bhavish Aggarwal enters billionaire club as Ola Electric shares surge on market debut

NEW DELHI. Bhavish Aggarwal entered the billionaire club on Friday after shares of Ola Electric Mobility Ltd surged 20%, marking a huge shift in fortunes for its founder. The stock's performance followed a muted debut on the stock market. As a result, Aggarwal, who held 36.94% of the company's shares, saw his net worth reach Rs 12,104 crore (approximately \$1.44 billion), elevating him into India's billionaire ranks. Aggarwal, aged 38, sold 37,915,211 shares of Ola Electric at Rs 76 each, raising Rs 288 crore. Post-IPO, he retained 1,32,39,60,029 shares, which, at the peak intraday price of Rs 89.25 per share, are valued at Rs 11,816 crore. The Indian billionaire list is led by Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, with net worths of \$109 billion

and \$105 billion, respectively. Globally, other notable Indian billionaires in the Bloomberg Billionaire Index include Mahendra Choksi and family, Rakesh Gangwal, Beni Bangur, Samir Mehta, and Sudhir Mehta. Despite the upbeat stock performance, Prashanth Tapse, Senior Vice President (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, cautioned investors. He said that the IPO's initial success did not necessarily reflect long-term prospects. Tapse pointed out potential risks due to the company's weak financials and possible negative cash flows in the future. He advised that only those willing to take risks should hold onto their shares for a minimum of 2-3 years. Earlier in the day, Ola Electric made a flat listing, debuting at Rs 76, the same as the issue price.



position by keeping a stop loss below 70," she added.

Tapse said that post listing the short term view remains the same due to weak financials and the risk of negative cash flows in future and allotted investors should understand the risk before holding which could adversely impact its consolidated financial condition post listing.

"Considering all the factors, we advise only risk taking investors to continue to hold with a minimum holding period of 2-3 years. What if the stock is available well below its issue price, we recommend risk taking investors to accumulate on every dip to be part of 2-3 years of journey. The long term story is intact but we may see a lot of ups and downs in the short term," he added.

Rupee rises 8 paise to 83.89 against US dollar in early trade

Forex traders said post the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy announcement, markets now await for US CPI data, India CPI, WPI and IIP data and India's trade data all scheduled to be released next week.

MUMBAI. Rupee appreciated 8 paise to 83.89 against US dollar in early trade on Friday, supported by a positive trend in domestic equities and a decline in the US dollar index. Forex traders said post the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy announcement, markets now await for US CPI data, India CPI, WPI and IIP data and India's trade data all scheduled to be released next week. The Jackson Hole Symposium to be held after next week will also remain in focus, traders said. At



the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 83.95 against the greenback, then touched 83.89, registering a rise of 8 paise over its previous closing price. On Thursday, the rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 2 paise at 83.97 against US dollar. Rupee was protected by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) at 83.96 for this week and the local unit is likely to trade in a narrow range of 83.90/84.00 for the day after the

RBI kept key benchmark rates on hold, said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.03 per cent lower at 103.17. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.15 per cent to USD 79.28 per barrel. Brent oil prices rose to USD 79.22, a 3 per cent weekly

gain, on rising Middle East tensions and better than expected US jobless claims data giving a better outlook on the US economy," Bhansali added. Market analysts said while the rupee seems to be tilting towards a negative bias, but sharp fluctuations are not anticipated. Meanwhile, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank kept the benchmark repurchase or repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent. Announcing the bi-monthly monetary policy review, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said Indian rupee remained largely range-bound so far this financial year. Das further noted that the country's forex reserves touched a record high of USD 675 billion as on August 2. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex surged 958.63 points, or 1.22 per cent, to 79,844.85 points. The Nifty advanced 280.70 points, or 1.16 per cent, to 24,397.70 points. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,626.73 crore, according to exchange data.

NEWS BOX

Yuvraj Singh to 'unbreakable'
Neeraj Chopra: Golden moment for
every Indian heart

New Delhi: Former Indian all-rounder Yuvraj Singh heaped praise on Neeraj Chopra for winning the silver medal in Paris Olympics 2024. On Thursday, Neeraj finished second in the final of the men's javelin event at Stade de France with a best throw of 89.45 metres. Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem and Grenada's Anderson Peters won the gold and bronze medals respectively. The 26-year-old Neeraj, who won gold in the Tokyo Olympics, could not defend his crown, but Yuvraj said that even with the silver medal, he was able to bring smiles to the entire nation. Neeraj started with a foul throw but then he pulled off a stunning effort in his second attempt. Yuvraj, who won the Player of the Tournament award in the 2011 Cricket World Cup, praised Neeraj for his "perseverance and pride".

'Golden journey'

"Proving yet again that his spirit to win is as unbreakable as his javelin's flight. You have not only won a historic silver medal but



have also brought a golden moment for every Indian heart. Here's to the champion who reminds us all that even in silver, there lies a golden journey of perseverance and pride," Yuvraj wrote. Yuvraj also had words of praise for Nadeem, who threw 92.97 metres and finished on top. "Heartiest congratulations to @arshadnadeem29 as well - for scripting history with an incredible 92.97m throw and breaking the Olympic record!" Yuvraj added. Nadeem also broke the Olympic record earlier held by Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen, who threw 90.57 metres in the Beijing Games in 2008. Arshad had butterflies in his stomach as he made a foul throw to begin his campaign. But the second throw shattered all records. He did not stop there and finished with another colossal throw of 91.79 metres in his sixth and final attempt. Having crossed the 90-metre mark, Arshad now intends to get better and go past 95 metres.

India to play day-night practice match to prepare for Adelaide Test vs Australia

New Delhi: India are set to play a two-day warm-up match against the Prime Minister's XI at the Manuka Oval in Canberra from November 30 to December 1 during the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy. The contest has been scheduled to help India prepare for the Day-Night Test against Australia to be held from December 6 at the Adelaide Oval.

India have played three pink-ball Tests until now, against Bangladesh (2019), England (2021) and Sri Lanka (2022) and have won each of them. However, they are yet to play in an overseas Day-Night Test and the upcoming Adelaide Test would be their first on foreign soil. India will also be facing the Prime Minister's XI for the fourth time and the first in 20 years. Steve Waugh captained the PM XI which included current national coach Andrew McDonald against an Indian team led by Rahul Dravid. "We're delighted



to confirm India's involvement in this year's Prime Minister's XI match that emphasises the significance of the fixture on the cricketing calendar." Nick Hockley, the Cricket Australia CEO, was quoted as saying. "The upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy Series will captivate the cricketing world. Today's confirmation of the Prime Minister's XI match is a terrific result for cricket fans, particularly in the ACT and surrounding regions, and adds to an incredible summer of cricket."

George Bailey, the CA Chair of Selectors, said, "Representing the PMs XI is a tremendous honour for any player given its rich history spanning across eight decades. This year's match also presents an opportunity for players to impress against arguably the strongest side in world cricket. India are scheduled to face Australia in the opening Test, starting November 22 at the Perth Stadium. Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney will host the third, fourth and fifth Tests respectively. India have won back-to-back Test series in Australia."

Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match in Paris Olympics: When and where to watch

Hall reeled in three runners down the stretch of the 400-meter final Wednesday to deliver another heart-stopping win for his country at the Stade de France.

New Delhi: Indian wrestler Aman Sehrawat is just one step away from bringing India another medal at the Paris Olympics. He will take on Puerto Rico's Darian Cruz in the bronze medal match of the men's 57kg category in the wrestling competition on August 9, Friday. Aman Sehrawat featured in the bronze medal match after he lost the semifinal match 10-0 against the top-seeded Japanese wrestler Rei Higuchi, who is also a former world champion and fourth seed, 12-0. He is set for an intense round of bout against Darian Cruz. He was a bronze medallist in the Pan American Games last year. He has also won three medals at the



champion, 10-0 with technical superiority. In the quarter-final round, he got the better of Zelimkhan Abakarov from Albania, who is also a former world champion and fourth seed, 12-0. He is set for an intense round of bout against Darian Cruz. He was a bronze medallist in the Pan American Games last year. He has also won three medals at the

Pan American Championships, including a silver in Buenos Aires last year. The 21-year-old Aman is the only male Indian wrestler to compete at the Paris Olympics 2024. Aman bested Ravi Dahiya, the Tokyo Olympics 2020 silver medalist in the Indian wrestling trials to make a cut into the 6-member Indian wrestling contingent. Here's

all you need to know about catching Aman Sehrawat live in action: When will Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 take place? Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 will take place on August 9, Friday. Where will Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 take place? Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 will take place at Champ-de-Mars Arena in Paris. What time will Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 start? Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 will start at 9:45 PM (IST). Where will Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 be broadcast?

Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 will be telecast on the Sports18 1 SD and Sports18 1 HD TV channels. Where to watch the live-streaming Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics? Aman Sehrawat's bronze medal match at the Paris Olympics 2024 will be streamed live on the JioCinema app and website.

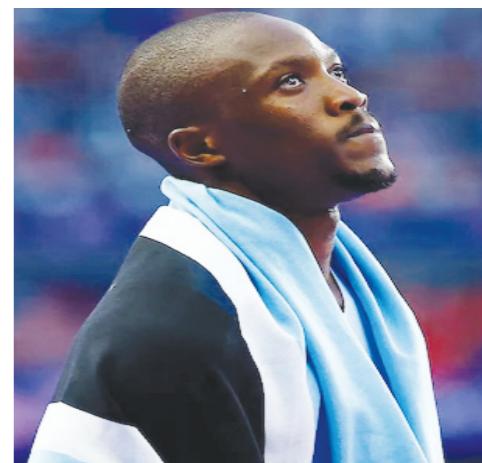
Can't be face of athletics, not loud or arrogant like Noah Lyles: Letsile Tebogo

New Delhi: Botswana's Letsile Tebogo was quick to dismiss suggestions that he will be the face of athletics as he claimed that he isn't some as 'loud and arrogant' as Noah Lyles. Tebogo would put in a stunning performance to claim the gold medal at the Paris Olympics 2024 on August 8, Thursday when upstaged the favourite Lyles. The US sprinter would end up in the third spot as he was hit by COVID before the race.

Tebogo became the first African to win the event as he ran and finished it in 19.46 seconds, ahead of Kenny Bednarek and Lyles. When asked if this performance would catapult him into stardom like Usain Bolt, the Botswana sprinter shook his head quietly and brushed aside the suggestions. "I can't be the face of athletics as I'm not a loud or arrogant person like Noah," he said as quoted by Reuters.

My mom believed in me

It was an emotional day for Tebogo as he would dedicate the win to his late mother. The sprinter's mother had passed away in May and he would wear spikes that was bearing her



- **Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem wins gold medal at Paris Olympics 2024**
- **He breaks the Olympic record with a monstrous throw of 92.7m in the javelin final**
- **Neeraj Chopra finished 2nd and bagged first silver medal for India in Paris Games**

New Delhi: A new chapter has unfolded in the sporting rivalry between India and Pakistan and, this time in an Olympic contest. However, what stood out the most was the mutual love and respect shared between Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem and India's Neeraj Chopra. The celebrations of Arshad Nadeem's gold medal win transcended the borders as the Indians cheered for him alongside Neeraj from the stands at the Stade



de France. Yet again, a sport like javelin managed to reunite the Indians and Pakistanis as they together celebrated Arshad and Neeraj Chopra's podium finish at the Paris Olympics 2024 on August 8. A social media user shared a video where Arshad was running across the stands with Pakistan's flag in his hands. He obliged to stop and click pictures with the Indian fans as they congratulated the Pakistani athlete for his win. Arshad celebrated his win with the Indians, who were also clapping and

cheering for him, and he looked ecstatic. Arshad was in tears as he met and greeted his countrymen who had turned out in huge numbers to cheer for him.

Arshad wins historic gold medal

Arshad Nadeem ended Pakistan's 32-year-long wait for an Olympic medal and became the first athlete from the country to win an Olympic gold. He also dethroned his good friend and India's star Neeraj Chopra as the Olympic champion in the men's javelin throw event. Meanwhile, Neeraj Chopra won the silver medal with his season best throw of 88.94m. Arshad Nadeem broke the Olympic record with his monstrous throw of 92.7m in his second attempt and ended his sixth and last one with 91.79m throw. Arshad and Neeraj both appreciated each other for winning medals. They both ensured India-Pakistan finished 1-2 for the first time on the Olympic podium in men's javelin, a sport that is traditionally dominated by the Europeans.

PR Sreejesh retires: An ode to a legend who signed off at the top of his game



campaign. Nimble on his feet, with reactions showing no sign of any tardiness, Sreejesh lived up to his name of being the wall of Indian hockey. This was perfectly shown in the game against Australia, India's biggest bogey team. Sreejesh was ever present to thwart any attack that was inside the Indian D. The last save he pulled off with just 7 seconds on the clock and close to 7 Australian players in the D, makes you just say he is Indian hockey's 'Thala for a reason.' And just when you thought, he couldn't top things off, in came the Great Britain quarterfinal.

In hockey, when you have a red card shown, it's almost like that team is bound to lose. No

one is expected to hold on and not see the opponents score. When Amit Rohidas was given his marching orders, everyone felt India were going out of the competition. But the team scored and eventually the game was 1-1, when Sreejesh decided that it was time for him to be that extra defender for his side. A barrage of close to 11 penalty corners were stopped by Sreejesh and Co as he never stopped being telling his players what to do. He didn't have the captain's armband at that moment, but he was certainly 'Sreejesh bhai' for the entire team. Then came the penalty shootout, where there's almost a sense that when Sreejesh is on the line, the attacker is under pressure. And it was certainly there for everyone to see. Great Britain crumbled under pressure, as they missed two shots and India won 4-2. And in the bronze medal match, the pressure remained on India in the final quarter. Spain had 15 shots and 9 PCs but Sreejesh was up to the task, when it was needed. So then, Sreejesh why retire now?

Going out on top

"To retire at the top of the game, that's always been my aim."

Noah Lyles reveals being Covid positive after 200m bronze win, withdraws from Olympics

- **Noah Lyles revealed that he was Covid positive after winning the bronze medal in the 200m race at Paris Olympics 2024 and the sprinter withdrew from the tournament.**

New Delhi: USA's Noah Lyles revealed that he tested positive for Covid after a shock third finish in the 200m race at the Paris Olympics 2024. The American said that his Paris Games were over, hours after he needed medical attention and was taken off the track with a wheel-chair on August 8, Thursday. Lyles leaves as an Olympic champion, but an abrupt end to his campaign would be a bitter pill to swallow, as he had set the ambitious goal of winning four golds in Paris, in the

100m, 200m, 4x100m relay and the 4x400m relay. It was also the first time in three years when the triple 200m world champion could not win gold in this category. "I do have Covid," Lyles told the reporters on Thursday. "I tested positive around 5am on Tuesday. I woke up feeling chills, aching, sore throat. Those were a lot of the symptoms I have had before getting Covid. I was like: 'I need to test this one.' It came back positive so we quickly quarantined in a hotel near the village and they got me on as much medication as they legally could to make sure my body was able to keep the momentum going. It means Lyles, the 100m world champion, will play no part when the US quartet attempt to win 4x100m relay gold on Friday. "I still wanted to run, they said it was still possible so we stayed away from everybody and took it round by round. I have definitely had better days but I am walking around again. I was quite light headed after that race and the chest pain was definitely active. After a while I was able to catch my breath and get my wits about me. I am feeling a lot better now."

Noah Lyles withdraws from Paris Olympics. Noah participates in 200m race despite Covid. Botswana's Letsile Tebogo won gold (19.46) and USA's Kenneth Bednarek bagged silver (19.62) and Lyles reached the finishing line in 19.70 seconds to bag bronze. In a statement, USA Track & Field said: "Our primary commitment is to ensure the safety of Team USA athletes while

upholding their right to compete. After a thorough medical evaluation, Noah chose to compete tonight. We respect his decision and continue to monitor his condition closely."

Despite missing out on gold medal, Noah was content with finishing third while being Covid-stricken. "It definitely affected my performance," Lyles said. "I had to take a lot of breaks [to receive] fluid. To be honest, I'm more proud of myself than anything. Coming out, getting the bronze medal with covid three days ago, it's been a wild Olympics." The Paris Olympics has no mandatory rules relating to Covid and participation, which meant Lyles was within his rights to take to the start line. "We didn't want everybody to go into a panic. We wanted them to be able to compete," Lyles said. "And then two, we wanted to be able to make this as discreet as possible. You never want to tell your competitors you're sick. Why would you give them an edge over you?"



Pragya Jaiswal's Green Mini Dress Is All About Shimmer And Glamour

South actress Pragya Jaiswal has gained incredible recognition for her talent in a number of Telugu super hits. She is not only an acting sensation, but is also an active user of social media, through which she updates her fans on her enchanting looks and projects. Her latest photoshoot in a green dress is a sight to behold. Pragya took to Instagram to share the photos, which captures her fit body. She has chosen to don a strapless, dark green shimmer mini dress, a luminous attire in the dim light of the atmosphere. It is tailored with a deep neckline, folds along the length of the cloth and a flowing attachment at the front. She has opted to keep herself adorned with minimal accessories, only wearing huge golden earrings and matching finger rings and golden thin strapped heels. For her hair, she styled it open with big curls, resting on her shoulders. According to the caption, the look was for the trailer launch event of her new release, *Khel Khel Mein*. It stated, "Let the games begin. For the Trailer Launch of our film #KhelKhelMein."

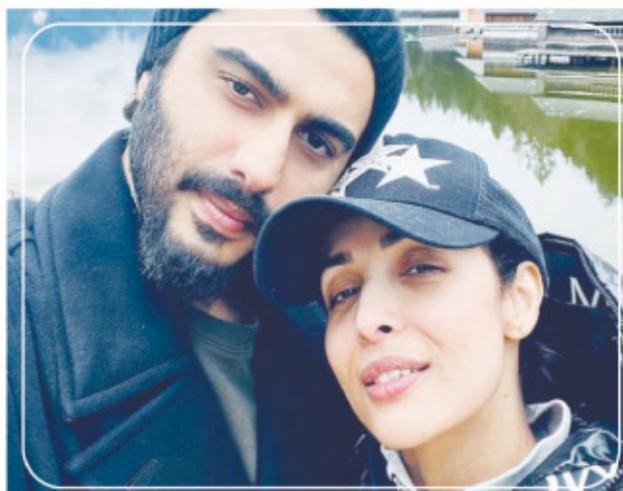
Fans share their reactions to the dazzling photoshoot in the comment section below. The first user wrote, "Stunning as always ma'am." A second fan shared, "The dress is lovely." A third fan stated, "Very Very beautiful." And a fourth fan wrote, "Truly mesmerizing." Several users left heart emoticons in the replies to express their love. The post has garnered thousands of likes on the platform so far.

Pragya Jaiswal is set to appear in the film *Khel Mein*, which is expected to release on August 15. It is made under the direction of Mudassar Aziz, who has also penned its story. The ensemble cast includes names like Akshay Kumar, Taapsee Pannu, Vaani Kapoor, Fardeen Khan and Ammy Virk. It is produced under the banners of T-Series Films, Wakao Films and White World Productions. The music is done by Tanishk Bagchi, Rochak Kohli and many others.



Malaika Arora Says 'Makes Your Own Rules' Days After Seemingly Confirming Breakup With Arjun Kapoor

Malaika Arora took to her Instagram stories on Thursday morning and shared a cryptic note which talked about maintaining a balance in life. It also urged everyone to live their respective lives by their own rules and stated that others must not control your way of living at all. "Balance is the key, in everything you do. Dance all night long and practice yoga the next day. Drink wine but don't forget your green juice. Eat chocolate when your heart wants it and kale salad when your body needs it. Wear high heels on Saturday and walk barefoot on Sunday. Live high and low. Move and stay still. Embrace all sides of who you are," it read. Be brave, bold, spontaneous and loud and let that complement your abilities and find silence, patience, modesty and peace. Aim for balance. Make your own rules and follow your own path. Don't let anyone tell you how to live according to theirs," the note added. While Malaika did not mention anything in the caption while sharing the note, the timing of her post must be considered. Interesting, this comes at a time when the Bollywood diva has been making headlines for her rumoured breakup with Arjun Kapoor. Last month, Malaika left fans concerned after she skipped Arjun's midnight birthday celebration at his Juhu residence. She didn't wish him on social media either, which led to speculation about their possible breakup. Later, Malaika crossed Arjun at an event when they ignored each other and seemingly confirmed their breakup. Amid the ongoing rumours surrounding her "on-off relationship" with Arjun, Malaika recently spoke about how the internet can be a very toxic space. "I have somehow built a mechanism — or shield, I would say — around me where I don't let the negativity through anymore," Malaika told Hello magazine. "I've insulated myself from it. Whether it's people, a work environment, social media or trolls. The minute I feel that energy, I recoil instantly. It's something I've learned to do over time. It would get to me earlier and I would lose sleep over it. I'd be lying if I said things don't affect me at all — I'm human too and so I will cry, break down and have all the emotions associated with being trolled. But you'll never see that in public," she added.



Amid Breakup Rumours With Arjun Kapoor, A Look At Malaika Arora's Love Life



Malaika Arora is one of the leading figures in Bollywood, popular for her dance and fitness. The actress has been the face of some of the biggest chartbusters in the country as well as worked as a judge for superhit reality shows. The actress-model's love life has been a tumultuous journey, for which she frequently made headlines in the media. Going by the reports, Malaika Arora met Arbaaz Khan during a coffee advertisement shoot and the pair ended up falling in love. In 1998, the two tied the knot and stayed together for almost two decades and welcomed their son, Arhaan Khan. The two decided to part ways in 2016 and ended their relationship with a divorce by 2017, shocking the film industry.

After her separation, the media started to link her with actor Arjun Kapoor and the actor finally confirmed their relationship with a heartwarming post on Malaika's 45th birthday. After that, they became a popular social media couple, which loved to share affectionate posts with and about each other.

As per the latest reports on the couple, they have broken up with each other, after dating for nearly seven years. The rumours about the separation started to swirl when Malaika Arora was reported to be absent from Arjun's 39th birthday bash. It was followed by several cryptic posts shared by the two on their respective social media platforms, believed to hint at a big change in their personal lives. An official announcement is yet to be made by them. Throughout her career, Malaika Arora has appeared in cameos and singles in films like Housefull, Dabangg, Happy New Year, Dabangg 2. She was last seen in a cameo in the Netflix release Kho Gaye Hum Kahan, released in December, last year. It was directed by Arjun Varain Singh and starred Siddhant Chaturvedi, Ananya Panday and Adarsh Gourav as the leads. She has worked as a judge in shows like India's Got Talent and Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa.

Aparshakti Khurana Gives Hilarious Reaction As A kid Calls Him 'Oo Stree'



Aparshakti Khurana, eagerly anticipating the release of his much-awaited horror-comedy 'Stree 2,' recently found himself in a comical exchange with a young fan on the streets of Mumbai. In a viral video on social media, the child amusingly addresses Aparshakti as the actor from 'Stree,' calling him 'Oo Stree.' Aparshakti's humorous response, saying "O Stree Kal Aana" in a playful manner, has delighted fans.

This lighthearted moment underscores the growing excitement for 'Stree 2,' poised to be one of 2024's biggest blockbusters. The film stars Rajkummar Rao, Shraddha Kapoor, Aparshakti Khurana, Pankaj Tripathi, and Abhishek Banerjee, and is directed by Amar Kaushik. As a sequel to the 2018 hit 'Stree,' the anticipation surrounding 'Stree 2' suggests it will replicate the original's success. In addition to 'Stree 2,' which hits theaters on August 15, Aparshakti Khurana has several other projects lined up. He recently completed filming 'Badtameez Gill,' a comedy-drama co-starring Vaani Kapoor and Paresh Rawal, set for release on November 29. Aparshakti will also appear in 'Berlin,' a film that has garnered significant acclaim at international festivals, and he has a documentary titled 'Finding Ram' in the works. Speaking about 'Stree 2,' the Amar Kaushik directorial is the highly anticipated sequel to the 2018 blockbuster 'Stree,' which grossed nearly Rs 200 crore worldwide. Since the success of the first film, Maddock Films has expanded the universe with several interconnected movies, the latest being the surprise hit 'Munjya,' which earned Rs 130 crore globally. The trailer for 'Stree 2' opens with a chilling voiceover introducing a new supernatural threat: 'Sarkate,' a headless horseman reminiscent of the legendary Sleepy Hollow figure. To combat this eerie new foe, the beloved trio from the first film—Vicky, Jana, and Bittu—reunite and seek the help of Shraddha Kapoor's enigmatic character.