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Deepika Padukone's
Blurry Pictures 'Wow'
Husband Ranveer Singh



Ukraine reports
Russians trying to
storm Mariupol plant

Abid Ali cleared to resume
international career four
months after heart attack



FILM

PAGE-8

WORLD

PAGE-7

SPORTS

PAGE-6

3 DELHI

DU asks students
to take prior
permission for
holding protests



5 STATE

Arvind Kejriwal
urges voters to
support AAP to
make New
Himachal



6 SPORTS

World Cup:
India compound
men's team
bag gold



7 BUSINESS

Rescue countries
facing debt
stress in these
uncertain times:
FM to World Bank



WEATHER

Sunrise 5:48 AM
Sunset 6:52 PM
Moonrise 1:57 PM
Moonset 12:36 AM
Today's Prediction
Maximum 40°C Minimum 24°C
Tomorrow's Prediction
41°C 26°C

Reliance calls off ₹24,731 cr deal with Future Retail

■ Reliance said Future Group companies comprising Future Retail Limited (FRL) and other listed companies involved in the scheme have intimated the results of the voting on the scheme of arrangement by their shareholders and creditors at their respective meetings.

■ The Future Group companies had called meetings of their shareholders, secured and unsecured creditors this week to get the approval of the scheme of amalgamation and sale of assets as per the deal announced with Reliance Retail.

New Delhi: Almost 21 months after signing an agreement for a Rs 24,731-crore deal with Kishore Biyani-led Future Group to acquire its retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing assets, Reliance Industries Ltd on Saturday said the transaction cannot go ahead as secured creditors of the latter have voted against it.

In a regulatory filing, Reliance said Future Group companies comprising Future Retail Limited (FRL) and other listed companies involved in the scheme have intimated the results of the voting on the scheme of arrangement by their shareholders and creditors at their respective meetings.

"The secured creditors of FRL have voted against the scheme. In view thereof, the subject scheme of arrangement cannot be implemented," said RIL, while updating on the scheme of arrangement for the



transfer of retail and wholesale business and the logistics and warehousing business of Future Group to its subsidiary Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) and Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Ltd (RRFL).

The Future Group companies had called meetings of their shareholders, secured and unsecured creditors this

week to get the approval of the scheme of amalgamation and sale of assets as per the deal announced with Reliance Retail.

However, secured creditors, which mainly include banks and financial institutions, of listed entities - Future Retail, Future Enterprises, Future Lifestyle Fashion Ltd, Future Market Networks and Future Con-

sumer -- could not get the mandatory 75 per cent approval.

Though, the shareholders of the listed entities had supported the deal with Reliance.

The meetings were opposed by e-commerce giant Amazon, which in 2019, had picked up a 49 per cent stake in Future Coupons Pvt Ltd (FCPL), a promoter firm of FRL. In August 2020, Fu-

ture Group announced the Rs 24,731-crore deal to sell 19 companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing segments to Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL).

RRVL is the holding company of all the retail companies under the RIL Group. The deal was vehemently opposed by global e-commerce major Amazon, on grounds that the deal violated its 2019 agreement through which it acquired a 49 per cent stake in FCPL, the promoter entity of FRL, for about Rs 1,500 crore.

There were no immediate comments, over the development, from Future Group, Reliance Retail and e-commerce major Amazon, which is opposing the deal.

In February, Reliance Retail had taken over the operations of at least 350 stores of FRL and offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore

Defence forces want AFSPA removed from Northeast, J&K: Rajnath

Aditya V Singh
New Delhi:

Government will not hesitate to take bold decisions to protect the unity and integrity of the country, emphasized Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while addressing an ex service men function in Assam on Saturday.

Over 300 war veterans, Veer Naris and their families attended the felicitation ceremony organised by the Government of Assam to honour the valour, dedication and sacrifice of the bravehearts who fought the enemy and ensured victory in the 1971 war. Lt Col Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir (Retd), a Bangladeshi veteran of 1971 war who was awarded with a Padma Shri was among those present. Some of the veterans of the 1965 war were also in attendance.

In his address, Rajnath Singh expressed his happiness at meeting the war heroes and Veer Naris and paid tributes to those who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the Nation.

He described the veterans as important assets of the nation who are an inspiration to every Indian. "An in-service soldier is India's



HIGHLIGHTS

■ Govt will not hesitate to take bold decisions to protect unity & integrity of the country: Rajnath Singh
■ BRO taking all out efforts to bolster hinterland road network from Arunachal Pradesh to Ladakh
■ Removal of AFSPA from parts of NE is result of durable peace & stability, says defence minister

strength and a veteran is an ever-lasting inspiration to stand by that strength," he said.

Appreciating the Assam Government for felicitating the veterans, the defence minister stated that the event reflected the sense of respect not only for the Armed Forces, but also for the country's democratic values. He paid homage to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, General Jagjit Singh Arora, Lt Gen JFR Jacob, Major General

CONTD ON PAGE 2

PM Modi to inaugurate projects worth Rs 20,000 cr during J&K visit



New Delhi:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday inaugurate and lay foundation stone of development projects worth over Rs 20,000 crore in Jammu and Kashmir, including the opening of the Banihal-Qazigund road tunnel to establish all-weather connectivity between the two regions of the union territory.

Modi is travelling there to participate in the celebration for the National Panchayati Raj Day and address 'Gram Sabhas' across the country, the Prime Minister's

HIGHLIGHTS

■ Modi is travelling there to participate in the celebration for the National Panchayati Raj Day and address 'Gram Sabhas' across the country
■ Modi will also inaugurate a 500 KW solar power plant at Pelli, which will make it the country's first panchayat to become carbon neutral, the PMO said.

Office (PMO) said in a statement. He will also visit Pelli Panchayat in Samba district.

Seeking to develop and rejuvenate 75 water bodies in every district of the country, the prime minister will launch a new initiative named 'Amrit Sarovar', it said.

Modi is scheduled to attend the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Awards Ceremony in Mumbai later in the evening where he will

CONTD ON PAGE 2

FM makes India's stand clear with US on Ukraine crisis

Washington:

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said India is taking a "calibrated position" on matters like Russia given the geographical locational realities, emphasizing that if the US wants a friend in India it should understand that the friend should not be weakened.

Sitharaman was here to attend the annual spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Interacting with a group of Indian reporters here, she said the bilateral relationship between India and the US has moved forward and deepened and saw more and more windows of opportunities opening post the Ukrainian war.

During her visit, she also held a host of bilateral meetings and participated in many multilateral meetings. She



interacted with several top officials of the Biden administration.

"There is an understanding that India's relationship with the United States has actually moved forward. It's gotten deeper. There is no one questioning that," she said in response to a question on the bilateral relationship.

"But there is also an understanding, not just

the legacy dependence for defence equipment on Russia...that India has legacy issues as much as relationships over several decades. And if anything, I can say with a bit of confidence there is a positive understanding. It is not a negative understanding," she said.

"I see more and more windows of opportunities opening, rather than

HIGHLIGHTS

■ Sitharaman said the bilateral relationship between India and the US has moved forward and deepened and saw more and more windows of opportunities opening post the Ukrainian war.
■ Sitharaman held a host of bilateral meetings and participated in many multilateral meetings. She interacted with several top officials of the Biden administration.

(US) keeping an arm's distance saying you've calibrated your position on Russia doesn't seem like you are getting closer to us. No," she said.

The remarks came amid growing disquiet in Western capitals over India's refusal to directly condemn the Russian aggression in Ukraine and its decision to procure discounted Russian oil. Agencies

EV battery explodes, killing 1 and injuring 3 in Andhra

Vijayawada:

A 40-year-old man was killed when the battery of his new electric bike exploded causing fire in his bedroom in Vijayawada city in the early hours of Saturday.

His wife suffered burns and was in a critical condition in hospital, police said.

Their two children also suffered from asphyxiation but were stable, the police added.

The incident was similar to the one that happened three days ago in Nizamabad town in neighbouring Telangana where an electric vehicle battery exploded killing an 80-year-old man.

These were the two major incidents involving EV batteries in the two Telugu states, while similar mishaps were reported from other states like Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in recent days.

The victim K Siva Kumar, who was a self-employed DTP worker, purchased the electric bike only on Friday.

The detachable battery of the vehicle was kept on charging in his bedroom on Friday night and it suddenly exploded in the early hours when all were fast asleep. Suryarao, Inspector of Police V Janaki Ramaiah said.

The explosion caused a minor fire in the house gutting the air-conditioning machine and some household articles.

Neighbours who saw smoke billowing out of the house broke the doors open and pulled out the family trapped inside.

Agencies

MUMBAI HUNUMAN CHALISA ROW

Rana couple held for 'creating enmity between groups'

Mumbai: Police on Saturday evening arrested MLA Ravi Rana and his wife, MP Navneet Rana, both independent legislators from eastern Maharashtra, for allegedly "creating enmity between different groups" after escorting them out of their house in suburban Khar amid high drama.

The development came hours after the couple cancelled their plan to recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra Chief Minister



Uddhav Thackeray's private residence 'Matoshree' here. The Ranases were booked under IPC section 153 (A) (Promoting enmity between different groups on

grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), and section 135 of the Mumbai Police Act

HIGHLIGHTS

■ The Ranases were booked under IPC section 153 (A), and section 135 of the Mumbai Police Act (violation of prohibitory orders of police)
■ Ravi Rana had demanded that CM Thackeray, who heads the Shiv Sena, recite the Hanuman Chalisa at his residence on Hanuman Jayanti

(violation of prohibitory orders of police), said an official of the Khar police station in western Mumbai. Agencies

Don't blindly follow rules, conflicts have human face: CJI Ramana to judges

Chennai:

Judges cannot blindly apply rules as conflicts have a human face and before rendering any decision, they have to weigh socio-economic factors and the impact of their decision on the society, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice N V Ramana said here on Saturday.

In this era of 'instant noodles', people expect instant justice. But they do not realise that real justice will be a casualty if we strive for instant justice, he said addressing an event at the Madras High Court.

People looked up to the judiciary in times of distress. And they firmly



believe that their rights would be protected by the courts.

"It is necessary to contemplate how to improve the functioning of the judiciary, how to reach out to the people and fulfil their justice needs." On the language used in courts, Justice

HIGHLIGHTS

■ Parties must understand the ongoing process and development of their case; it should not be like chanting mantras in a wedding, which most of us do not understand
■ People looked up to the judiciary in times of distress. And they firmly believe that their rights would be protected by the courts.

Ramana said a common citizen cannot relate to the practices, procedures and language of courts. Hence, efforts should be on making the general population an active part of the justice delivery process. Agencies

Reliance calls off ₹24,731 cr deal with Future Retail

FROM PAGE-1

Biyani-led group failed to make lease payments to landlords.

Amazon had dragged FRL and promoters to the Singapore International Arbitration Center (SIAC), where an interim award was passed by the EA (the emergency arbitrator) in October 2020, in favour of Amazon. It had barred FRL from taking any step to dispose of or encumber its assets or issuing any securities to secure any funding from a restricted party.

Following this, a string of litigations started before the Delhi High Court, Supreme Court and NCLT.

This had forced RRVL to extend the long-stop date for the Scheme three times. Last month, it extended the date for another six months to September 30, 2022.

As per the scheme between Future Group and Reliance Retail, 19 companies of the former were proposed to be consolidated into one entity -- Future Enterprises Ltd (FEL) -- and then transferred to RRVL under the proposed deal.

However, as per the voting results updated by FEL on Friday, 99.97 per cent of its secured creditors have opposed the scheme.

Though its 99.99 per cent shareholders had supported the deal. Its 62.65 per cent of unsecured creditors had voted in favour of the scheme and the rest 37.34 per cent of the total number of votes cast were against it.

PM Modi to inaugurate projects worth Rs 20,000 cr during J&K visit

FROM PAGE-1

receive the first Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award, the statement said. The award has been instituted in the memory of Lata Mangeshkar and will be given every year to a person for exemplary contribution towards nation building, it noted.

In the statement on Modi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the PMO said the government has been focussed on bringing about wide ranging reforms to substantially improve governance and enhance ease of living for the people of the region at an unprecedented pace following the "constitutional reforms" of August 2019, a reference to the abrogation of Article 370 and making the erstwhile state into a union territory.

The projects being inaugurated or whose foundation stones will be laid in this visit will go a long way in facilitating basic amenities, ensuring ease of mobility and development of infrastructure in the region, it said. Modi will inaugurate the Banihal-Qazigund road tunnel, built at a cost of over Rs 3,100 crore.

Agencies

Aditya V Singh
New Delhi:

Continuing with his ongoing tour to the South West Indian Ocean Region, Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), Indian Navy, visited Seychelles from 21 to 23 April 22.

During the visit, he called on Wavel Ramkalawan, President of the Republic of Seychelles, Sylvestre Rade-gonde, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism and Brigadier Michael Rosette, the Chief of Defence Force (CDF) of the Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF).

The discussions covered a wide range of issues of mutual interest including maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region and avenues to further strengthen

en bilateral defence co-operation.

The CNS presented a Navigation Chart of Port Victoria, prepared by the National Hydrographic Office (NHO) of India, under the MoU on bilateral hydrographic cooperation.

During the visits to various SDF units and interactions with the leadership, the CNS reminisced his own experiences as the then Naval Advisor to the Government of Seychelles in 2001-02 and complimented the SDF on the development of maritime capabilities as well as their progressive outlook. He also highlighted the significance accorded by both countries to collaborative approach towards maritime security in the Indian Ocean.



In this context, CNS deeply appreciated the active participation of Seychelles in the Goa Maritime Conclave, MILAN and Indian Ocean

Naval Symposium (IONS). Earlier, CDF, Seychelles had attended MILAN-22 at Visakhapatnam in February 2022.

While, the CDF hosted the CNS for a luncheon at SDF Headquarters, the SDF leadership attended a reception on-board Indian Naval Ship Sharda, hosted jointly by Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag (Retd), High Commissioner of India to Seychelles and the CNS.

INS Sharda is currently in Seychelles after escorting Coast Guard Ship Zoroaster, a vessel sourced from an Indian Shipyard (GRSE, Kolkata) in 2021, back to Seychelles after her recent deployment to India for participation in MILAN-22 and Guarantee Refit.

The CDF expressed a very high regard for

the professional reft of Zoroaster in India and thanked the CNS for the excellent support extended by Indian Navy.

In addition, he gratefully acknowledged the prompt medical evacuation of a crew member of Zoroaster on 14 Apr 22, from sea by an Indian Navy helicopter.

The interactions of the CNS at Seychelles set in motion a promising trajectory of further growth in the scale and scope of bilateral defence engagements, founded on the principles of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Five S' Vision of Sammaan (Respect), Samvaad (Dialogue), Sahyog (Cooperation), Shanti (Peace) and Samridhi (Prosperity) articulated by the Prime Minister of India.

Admiral R Hari Kumar visits Seychelles to boost ties with south west Indian Ocean region

Govt raps news channels over communally surcharged TV debates

New Delhi:

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Saturday rapped the private news channels for hosting television debates and allowing participants to air communally provocative and derogatory remarks. The Ministry on Saturday issued the advisory to the TV channels, cautioning against inciting communal disharmony and disturbing peace at large.

"It has been observed that some channels broadcast debates with unparliamentary, provocative and socially unacceptable language, communal remarks and derogatory references which may have a negative psychological impact on viewers and may also incite communal disharmony and disturb the peace at large," the Ministry stated in the advisory. The Ministry also took note of the TV coverage around the Russia-Ukraine conflict

and recent incidents in North-West Delhi and flagged up violations of laws and norms.

"It has been found that in the recent past several satellite TV channels have carried out coverage of events and incidents in a manner which appears to be unauthentic, misleading, sensational and using socially unacceptable language and remarks, offending good taste and decency, and obscene and defamatory and having communal overtones, all of which appear to be violative of the programme code," added the advisory. With regards to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Ministry said that it has been observed that Channels have been making false claims and frequently misquoting international agencies/actors.

"Use of 'scandalous headlines/taglines' that are completely unrelated to the news item...

Many of the journalists and news anchors of these channels made fabricated and hyperbolic statements intending to incite the audiences," added the advisory. Whereas with regard to the recent incident in North-West Delhi, the Ministry flagged issues like provocative headlines and videos of violence that may incite communal hatred among the communities and disrupt peace and law and order.

"Disrupting the ongoing investigation process by playing scandalous and unverified CCTV footage, showing footage of a specific community thus aggravating the communal tensions, fabricated headlines sensationalising and giving communal colours to the actions of authority," are among some of the issues raised by the government over the coverage of North-West Delhi incidents.

Pradeep Yadav will be honoured with Nelson Mandela Noble Peace Award in Mumbai

Staff Reporter
New Delhi:

5 World Record Holder and 10 International Awards Winner Mr Pradeep Kumar Yadav will be honoured with the Nelson Mandela Noble Peace Award 2022 and a Honorary Doctorate Degree (Honoris Causa) from St. Mother Theresa University, UK at Vile Parle, Mumbai on 28th April, 2022, according to the official.

Mr Yadav is an official of Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Parliament of India.

He has written a Karate book named 'Shoto-kan Karate: Easiest Way to Get Black Belt' that has won 5 World Records and 10 International awards.

He has been conferred with Black Belt 3rd DAN in Karate from the World Karate Federation, Spain that conducts Karate Olympics.

Mr Yadav has the experience of more than 25 years of learning and teaching Karate.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Vice-President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu and Speaker Lok Sabha Om Birla have been honored him for great success.

Yadav has trained thousands of girls and boys in Karate sports also resulting in the success of Fit India Movement, Khelo India Movement, and Atma-Nirbhar Bharat.

SC judge seeks more action by govt to make India global commercial arbitration hub

Ahmedabad:

The government and all the stakeholders need to do more to make India a hub of international commercial arbitration and it is also essential that the arbitration law is aligned with the contemporary practice, speakers at a seminar, including Supreme Court judges Justice Bela Trivedi and Justice MR Shah said here on Saturday.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a seminar on international commercial arbitration, Justice Trivedi rued that despite an effective dispute resolution process, arbitration is being hampered by "delays, high costs, frequent and sometimes unwarranted judicial interruptions at different stages".

Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta

suggested an "arbitration township" with the country's framework that "need not be specific to any model but acceptable to the world community".

Justice Trivedi also called for the removal of shortcomings and lacuna in implementing and operating the law on arbitration at the earliest to achieve the desired result. Justice MR Shah said that the international market is not yet accepting the Indian institution for commercial arbitration, and underlined the need for a change in the attitude and also introspection by stakeholders as to where they are missing and failing.

Referring to Justice BN Srikrishna (retired) Committee, constituted by the Union Ministry



of Law and Justice to review the institutionalization of arbitration mechanism, Justice Trivedi said while it made several recommendations some of the amendments have not yet come into force.

"The committee made several important recommendations but I was just telling Tusharbhari Mehta (Solicitor General of India) that some of the amendments have still not come into force and the government has not notified, like an arbitration commission," she said. Justice Trivedi said though the government is committed it

needs to do more in this regard. "If we want to make India the hub of international commercial arbitration, all stakeholders will have to put their heads together and walk an extra mile. According to me, any system or any mechanism to succeed needs proper statutory backing and also the commitment and accountability of the people who run the institution," she said.

Justice Trivedi also called for the need to remove "shortcomings and lacuna" in implementing and operating the Arbitration and Conciliation Act effectively. "Sometimes I wonder whether arbitration failed in India or has India failed arbitration. There are many challenges to the implementation of the Act effectively."

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday urged the Supreme Court collegium to ensure that the principle of social justice is followed in appointment of judges to the High Courts and Supreme Court.

Underscoring the 'long pending request' to constitute a Bench of the Supreme Court at Chennai, Stalin said people of southern states now had to visit New Delhi to get justice.

The Chief Minister was addressing an event held at the Madras High Court in which Chief Justice of Supreme Court, N V Ramana presided. "In the appointment of judges to the High Court and Supreme Court, the Honourable Collegium may kindly ensure that the principle of social justice along with other parameters for appointment is followed."

In this way, I consider that the principle of inclusiveness would be ensured in higher judiciary," Stalin said. The Chief Minister also requested that the official language of the state, Tamil be allowed to be used in the High Court of Madras. "This is a long pending and important request of the people and legal community of the State."

Already 4 states--Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh,

Toe social justice in judges' appointment, TN CM appeals to SC Collegium

Bihar and Madhya Pradesh use their official languages in their respective High Courts, he said. The chief minister said these were the requests on behalf of the Tamil Nadu government and the people and expressed confidence that the judges would certainly consider all the requests favourably.

"Today, we have an excellent judicial system headed by our Chief Justice of India. As the guardian of the Constitution, the Indian judicial system has performed very well and is held in high esteem by the people of this country," Stalin said.

Judges of the apex court, Justice V Ramasubramanian and MM Sundresh, Chief Justice, Madras High Court, Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari, Law Minister S Regupathy and Advocate General, R Shunmugasundaram participated. In the event, Justice Ramana laid the foundation stone for construction of a 9-storied administrative block in the High Court campus (at an estimated cost of Rs 20.24 crore). He also inaugurated combined court buildings and judicial officers' quarters in Namakkal and Villupuram districts, built at a cost of Rs 20.70 crore.

Death of sewage workers: NHRC seeks detailed report from Haryana chief secy

New Delhi:

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the chief secretary of Haryana seeking a detailed report on the death of four sanitation workers while cleaning a sewage tank in Hissar district.

The NHRC, in a statement, said the incident indicates that despite avoidable and unwarranted deaths in sewers and the sheer indignity of the work, hazardous cleaning of septic tank without safety equipment continues.

"The commission has been emphasizing upon use of machines for cleaning of septic tanks, sewage plants etc. and to ensure proper safety equipment for the workers but such painful incidents are taking place frequently," it noted.

The NHRC said it has taken suo motu cognizance of a media report that highlighted the death of four sanitation workers had died after inhaling toxic gases while cleaning a sewage tank at Budha Khara village in Hissar.

The commission asked the state's chief secretary to submit his report, including the action taken against the officers concerned and the relief granted to the victims' families, within six weeks.

"Due to negligence and apathy by the authorities concerned, precious human lives have again been lost. Their human rights have been grossly violated," the NHRC said.

Noting that the victims were in the 25 to 28 years age group, it said deaths of such young men in such tragic incidents could have been averted had proper precaution been taken by the authorities. Agencies

Defence forces want AFSPA removed from Northeast, J&K: Rajnath

FROM PAGE-1

Sujan Singh Uban and Air Chief Marshal IH Latif for leading India to a historic triumph in the 1971 war.

"Our forces in the 1971 war comprised soldiers from every religion. But that did not win us the war. It was the strong thread of Indianness that held our soldiers together which ensured our victory," he said.

Rajnath Singh appealed to the citizens to

safeguard the unity and integrity of the country with the same nationalism and patriotism with which the soldiers protect the borders.

The 1971 war provided India with a strategic advantage, Rajnath Singh added, saying that there has never been any tension on the Indo-Bangladesh border as seen on the western front because Bangladesh has always been India's friendly country.

He credited the coordination between the central and states governments of the Northeast which has ensured peace and stability on the Indo-Bangladesh border and helped the region usher into a new era of development.

The defence minister also stated that the removal of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from many areas of the North-East is the result of durable

peace and stability in the region.

"Some people believe that the Indian Army does not want AFSPA to be removed. I want to say from this forum that the Army has a minimal role in internal security. The Army wants that the situation becomes completely normal in Jammu & Kashmir so that AFSPA can be removed from there as well," he added.

Rajnath Singh voiced

the Government's unwavering commitment to strengthen the country's security apparatus to deal with internal and external threats, adding that "We have taken a firm stand to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and have protected our citizens from the menace. We have shown that, if needed, we will eliminate terrorism emanating from across the border."

He assured the Na-

NEWS IN BRIEF

ICC of Maitreyi College held annual fest 'Adamya'

New Delhi

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of Maitreyi College held an inaugural session of its annual fest 'Adamya' under the able guidance and support of Prof. Haritima Chopra here on Saturday.

Adamya is spread over three days wherein several inter-college competitions like self-composed poetry, debate, paper reading, poster and collage making are to be held on online mode this year also.

The program started with virtual lamp lighting and Saraswati Vandana. Dr. Pramod Kumar Singh appraised the house about the compulsion of holding the fest in online mode and gave an overview of the fest.

The presiding officer Dr. Prachi Bagla, in her inaugural speech said our youth is the engine of progress and their contribution can be immense in transforming our society. There is still a lot to be done for which our youth should take the lead.

JNU to institute Ambedkar chair

New Delhi

The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) will soon have a Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Centre and chair that will carry out research on bridging the "socio-political and economic inequalities".

The centre and the academic chair were agreed to be established at the varsity through an agreement between JNU and the Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC) of the Ministry of Social Justice.

JNU Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit on Friday signed the agreement with DAIC director Dr Vikas Trivedi at Banaras Hindu University.

"JNU will now have a Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Centre & Chair. The main focus of the centre will be on research aimed at reducing socio-political & economic inequalities," the university said in a Facebook post.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Uttar Pradesh governor Anandiben Patel, Dr Virender Kumar, Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, and A Narayanaswamy, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, it said.

Man gets bail in Pearls Group's ponzi scam case

New Delhi

Delhi court has granted bail to Chander Bhushan Dhillon, one of the directors of Pearls Group, in connection with a Rs 60,000 crore ponzi scam allegedly run by the group.

Special judge Sanjeev Aggarwal granted the relief on a personal bond of Rs one lakh and one surety of like amount. The court directed Dhillon not to leave the country without its prior permission, and not to temper with the evidence or influence the witnesses.

The CBI recently filed a supplementary charge sheet against 24 people and three companies - Pearls Infrastructure Projects Ltd, ARSS Infrastructure Projects Ltd and Jain InfraProjects Ltd.

It claimed that Pearls Group companies allegedly collected around Rs 60,000 crore (approx) from around 5.5 crore investors all across the country by illegally operating different investment schemes, without any statutory approval and with a motive to dupe the investors.

DU asks students to take prior permission for holding protests

New Delhi

The Delhi University has issued a notice asking students to mandatorily take prior permission from the varsity to hold protests.

Earlier this month, the university had issued an advisory to students to maintain law and order on the campus and focus on preparations for their upcoming exams.

Delhi University proctor Rajni Abbi said the latest notice was issued keeping in view the incidents in the last few days.

"A student told us that he had been sitting on a hunger strike for the last four days. We did not even know it. What do we do if something happens to the student?" she said.

Abbi said they have made it "compulsory" for students to seek permission



from the proctor's office for holding protests.

"We are not going to deny permission to anyone. There is always a possibility that outsiders might come and do something mischievous. This is also for the safety of the students. We do not want students to destroy university property and that is a new point that we have added which was not there in the earlier notification," she said. She said not only has the notice been posted on the university website, but

sent to all the student organisations.

"Prior intimation of gathering/protest/demonstration anywhere in the university is mandatory. Although protests/demonstrations are the legal right of every individual, yet pri-

or permission from the proctor's office is mandatory," read the notice issued on Friday.

"It is also directed that the participants shall refrain from using violence and any destruction to public property, failing which the organiser/s will be held responsible for any damage and strict action will be taken," it added.

The notice stated that the organisers should furnish details about their college or department, contact number, e-mail address and course name at least 24 hours in advance.

The organisers are also supposed to furnish details of programmes, which includes nature of the programme (protest, public speech, dharna, GBM, rally etc), duration, use of logistics, list of speakers and expected number of participants.

African among 4 held in Delhi for duping man

New Delhi

Four men, including an African, were arrested here for allegedly duping people on the pretext of sending them expensive gifts, police said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Ben Ali Diarra, a native of Côte d'Ivoire, Vishal Singh (25) and Kamal Lohar (32), both residents of Shakur Basti, and Saurav (31), a resident of Uttam Nagar, they said.

On February 21, Vijay Kumar, a porter, lodged a complaint alleging that he received a call on January 12 and the caller told him that a parcel had come in his name from the UK.

The caller told Kumar that he would get rich overnight once the gift is released from the airport and asked him to send Rs 1,60,500 for its clearance. The complainant believed the caller and transferred the money in three instalments, they said.

After he transferred the money, it was immediately withdrawn through ATMs

and the number from which Kumar was receiving the calls was switched off, they added.

The accused used to cheat people through the same modus operandi, the police said.

Police conducted raids and arrested Vishal from Shakur Basti. Based on information shared by him, Kamal and Saurav were arrested. At their instance, Diarra was arrested from Burari, a senior police officer said.

Diarra was living in Burari for the last two-three years. He met Saurav at a shop and the two became friends, the police said.

Diarra had asked the other three accused to share details of bank accounts where he could deposit money. In return, he paid them some money, they said.

The money that was deposited in these accounts was handed over to masterminds of the racket, who have been identified as Chino, Achoo and Obina, all residents of Nigeria and currently living in Burari, they said.

4 injured as speeding car hits bike, autorickshaw in Delhi

New Delhi

Four people, including a civil defence volunteer, were injured after a speeding car allegedly hit a motorcycle and an autorickshaw in south Delhi's Saket area, police said on Saturday.

Saket police station received information about the accident near the Saket court traffic signal around 3:55 am on April 17, they said.

Police rushed to the spot where a motorcycle and an autorickshaw were found damaged. The injured persons were shifted to AI-IMS, Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Benita Mary Jaiker said.



During an inspection of the spot, the bumper of a car bearing a Delhi registration number was found, she said.

On the basis of the statement of an eyewitness, a case was registered. As the car driver fled the spot in his car, section 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was also added to the FIR, Jaiker said.

The offending vehicle was

impounded and the driver, Vipul Dhingra (31), a resident of Shalimar Bagh, was arrested on Wednesday, she said. Dhingra, who works at the Azadpur Mandi, was later granted bail by a court, she said.

A senior police officer said it is being ascertained whether Dhingra was drunk at the time of the accident. The injured have been identified as Ram Praveesh (43), an auto driver and a resident of Patparganj; Hemant Kumar, a civil defence volunteer and a resident of Deoli village; Meena (26) and her husband Krishan Kumar (26), residents of Sonapat in Haryana, the police said.

Delhi govt gives approval to repair, maintenance work of 3 flyovers

New Delhi

The Delhi government on Saturday gave its nod for the repair and maintenance work of Nanjoli, Hanuman Setu and Mayapuri flyovers in the city, according to a statement.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who holds the charge of the Public Works Department (PWD), reviewed the maintenance work of Delhi flyovers on Saturday, the statement said.

He also approved the repair and restoration work of three flyovers. Repair work of six flyovers is already being carried out at a cost of Rs 52.35 crore, it said.



Sisodia asked the officials about the measures taken for the regular maintenance of flyovers and directed them to carry out the work promptly so that

commuters do not face any inconvenience, the statement said.

There should not be any delay on the PWD's part in carrying out the maintenance work. Officials

should focus on removing the traffic bottlenecks that cause jams and restrict the smooth movement of commuters, Sisodia said.

The PWD regularly undertakes maintenance work of Delhi flyovers. However, due to excessive traffic pressure, minor drawbacks occur in flyovers which are fixed by the repair unit, the statement said.

The six flyovers that are currently being repaired in Delhi are Pul Mithai, Okhla, Janak Setu, Oberoi-Lodhi Road-Chirag Delhi, ISBT Kashmere Gate and Nehru Nagar.

Jahangirpuri flare-up: Business sees dip due to restricted movement

New Delhi

A week after the communal clashes in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri, most of the shops remained shut on Saturday as shopkeepers cited restricted movement and barricading to be the main hurdle in running their businesses.

The grievance comes despite the Delhi Police clarifying a day earlier that it never stopped people from opening shops in the area.

Shopkeepers in and around violence-hit C-Block said there is no business due to barricades and that is the reason they are not opening shops.

However, some movement was permitted in the region as locals, including school students, were seen using the barricaded roads and passing through Kushal Chowk on foot.

Nevertheless, vehicular movement is still restricted in the area. The situation though remained calm a day after members from both



the communities declared restoration of peace in the area and agreed to live in harmony during a meeting of 'aman' committees.

Security personnel were seen manning the roads, but their numbers have significantly reduced from previous days.

During the aman committee meeting on Friday, DCP (northwest) Usha Ranganani had urged the people to maintain peace and clarified that she never stopped the opening of shops.

"I have never stopped the shops in H and G blocks of Jahangirpuri from opening,

I do not know why these shops are closed. We will facilitate the opening of shops and businesses in these blocks," she underlined.

A majority of shop owners told PTI that they are not opening their establishments as there is no sales due to the barricades.

Akbar, who owns a mobile shop at Kushal Chowk, alleged that he was stopped by police in the morning when he came to open the shop. "I came in the morning to collect something from the shops, but I was stopped. So I returned home," he said.

Saddam, who runs a shop

beside Akbar's, said he was not aware that he can open the store. A senior Delhi Police official reiterated that no one is being stopped from running their business in the region.

Manjeet, who runs a 'dhaba' (food stall) at Kushal Chowk, told PTI over phone that there is no business as roads are barricaded, adding that he is planning to open the shop after Eid.

"The workers have already left for their villages. There is no point in opening the establishment now as nobody will come because the roads are barricaded," he said.

He also expressed hope that the situation will get better in the coming days and all shops will be opened.

Rajesh Mishra, who owns a pet accessory shop in H-Block, said, "A food stall was opened here on Friday, but the owner had no sale for the whole day and the entire food got wasted. So there is no point in opening shops as of now."

Dump sites in Delhi & other cities are like time bombs: NGT

New Delhi

The National Green Tribunal has expressed serious concern over fire incidents at Ghazipur landfill site in the national capital saying dump sites are like "time bombs".

A massive fire erupted at the Ghazipur landfill site on Wednesday, the third such incident since March 28, sending a dense plume of smoke into the sky and exacerbating the already polluted air in nearby areas.

Last year, the authorities reported four fire incidents at the Ghazipur landfill. In 2017, a large part of it broke away, crashing onto a road and killing two people.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice A K Goel said the dump sites in Delhi and in other cities are like "time bombs" because they constantly generate explosive gases like methane which may escape through vertical and lateral ways posing constant threat of explosion.

"It is a matter of concern that such incidents are tak-



ing place elsewhere also and there is potential for the same wherever legacy waste remains unremediated. It is for this reason that there is statutory timeline expected to be followed strictly. "Situation in Delhi may be more serious having regard to the size of the garbage dump and its location in densely populated area. This requires constitution of a multi-department Committee of concerned Departments and responsible prompt action at higher levels of the administration," the bench said.

The NGT constituted a committee headed by Justice SP Garg, former Delhi High

Court judge with members from Central Pollution Control Board, Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPPC), Department of Urban Development, Delhi, EDMC, Delhi Disaster Management Authority and District Magistrate and DCP, East Delhi.

"DPPC will be the nodal agency for coordination and compliance. The Committee may hold its first meeting within one week, undertake visit to the site, interact with the stakeholders, ascertain the factual situation and suggest further course of action after interaction with the concerned stakeholders," the bench said.

Jahangirpuri violence: Delhi court sends 5 accused to 8-day police remand

New Delhi

Delhi's Rohini court on Saturday sent five accused to police remand till May 1 and four accused to judicial custody in connection with the Jahangirpuri violence case. Recently, Delhi Police has invoked National Security Act (NSA) against the five accused who were further remanded today.

After taking note of the submissions, link judge Mayan Judge on Saturday



said, granted eight-day custody of accused Ansar, Sal-

im alias Chikna, Ahir, Dilshad and Sonu alias Imam to the police. Accused Akbar, Mohd. Ali, Gulam Rasool alias Gulli and Sheikh Hamid are sent to judicial custody and be produced on April 30, 2022, through video conferencing.

The Court also issued Non-Bailable Warrants (NBWs) against accused Sanwar Kalia, Saddam Khan, Anwar, Chand and Salman returnable for May

23, 2022. Appearing for Delhi Police, Additional Public Prosecutor Advocate Ashish Kajal submitted that, all five accused-Ansar, Salim, Ahir, Dilshad and Sonu- are required for further interrogation, to confront all the co-accused persons with each other, linking the chain of the incident, to ascertain the role of each and every accused person properly.

April 24 - National Panchayati Raj Day

Timely elections of Panchayats can enhance its dignity



By Priyanka Saurabh

"Sabka Saath, sabka gaon, sabka Vikas" will happen only when the panchayats do their job smoothly. We see that the state governments are complicating the election and tenure of panchayats for their political advantage; this should not happen. Panchayati Raj is not better than bad Panchayati Raj.

The 73rd Constitution Amendment Act 1992 is an important milestone in the development of democratic institutions at the grassroots level in the country. It transformed representative democracy into participatory democracy. Building democracy at the grassroots level in the country is a revolutionary concept. However, even after decades of this historic amendment, Panchayati Raj Institutions are lagging in the development process.

Gandhi's dream of Gram Swaraj was realized through the Panchayati Raj system. These are local self-governing bodies that ensure the opportunity for people participation and participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development programs. The main objective of the Panchayati Raj system in India is to strengthen the base of democracy at the grassroots level. It was presented as a genuinely democratic political system that brought the masses under active political control from below the vast majority of the weaker, poorer sections of rural India. Panchayats play a catalytic role in integrating the development of tribal people in rural areas.

The planning documents of both the Central and State Governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the state system. Special emphasis has also been laid on the role of Panchayats in rural development in the five-year plans.



Rural development includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through Panchayati Raj Institutions. Panchayati Raj Institutions have been used to improve the distribution system related to rural infrastructure, the income of rural households, and education, health, and security systems. These institutions have to be motivated to be effective means of social and economic change at the local level. Reservations for women (33%) have increased their presence in public life.

Given the failure of democratic decentralization, especially in panchayats, its over-reliance on government financing has weakened it; The Panchayat has its resource base for raising funds and financial resources are tied to certain schemes and initiatives. When panchayats do not mobilize resources and instead rely on external

funding, people are less likely to implement social audits and the effectiveness of schemes. In the case of urban local bodies, for example, most municipalities have not raised property taxes for many years and have not benefited from the improvement of the city's infrastructure.

Parallel bodies have occupied the legitimate position of local bodies. For example, the smart city scheme is being implemented in major cities through special purpose vehicles, squeezing the limited space of urban local government in municipalities. The States have not developed functions, funds, and functionaries to enable local bodies to discharge their constitutionally prescribed functions. In many gram panchayats, sarpanches have to spend extra time approaching block officers for funds and technical ap-

proval. This interaction with the Block Staff Office distorts the role of Sarpanches as elected representatives.

It has been found that about 25% of Gram Panchayats do not have basic office buildings. Capacity building of elected representatives is another hurdle in grassroots democracy. In the case of urban local bodies, the position of mayor is only formal. Given all these, measures are needed to strengthen the Panchayats; The Central Government has started the National Gram Swaraj Abhiyan. This campaign is being run under the name of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Gaon, Sabka Vikas". Its purpose is to prepare Gram Panchayat Vikas Yojanas (GPDs) in the country and place them on a website where one can see the status of various major schemes of the government.

Gram Panchayats have been made obligated to pre-

pare GPD for economic development and social justice using the resources available to them. The Government of India has prepared e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project to make the functioning of all Panchayats more efficient and transparent. Transparent, third-party social audits can enable people to hold delegates accountable. In the case of Gram Sabhas, their functions and roles should be clearly defined in PESA Act, so that they can function effectively.

Time demands that overall change in people's lives be brought about by raising the socioeconomic and health status of the people through effective engagement through community, government, and other development agencies. The demands of the people for sustainable decentralization and advocacy should be focused on the agenda of decentralization. The framework needs to be developed to accommodate the demands of decentralization. We see state governments manipulating the election and tenure of panchayats for their political gain; That shouldn't happen. Timely elections of Panchayats can enhance its dignity.

(Priyanka Saurabh, Research Scholar in Political Science)

Breaking Time Sudoku

What to do

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

	3			2		6	8	
	4	2		3	6	7		
			1					
4	8			6				3
2				8			9	7
				8				
		3	9	1		5	2	
	1	4		5			6	

Solution, Sudoku

6	7	5	3	2	8	4	1	9
4	3	1	7	6	9	5	8	2
9	2	8	5	1	4	7	3	6
1	8	9	6	4	7	3	2	5
3	4	2	9	5	1	6	7	8
7	5	6	2	8	3	9	4	1
8	6	7	1	3	5	2	9	4
2	1	3	4	9	6	8	5	7
5	9	4	8	7	2	1	6	3

THE WISDOM TREE

By Suveen Kumar

LEARN YOURSELF

Learn yourself, from yourself, by yourself and for yourself. You are the best library of experience, you are the best institution of life-lessons, you are the best transformation of taken actions. Learn yourself and from yourself, keeping in mind that your learning will keep changing but so will you, keeping in mind that your experience will keep chasing but so will you, keeping in mind your lessons will keep teaching but so will you.

Be "AS ABOVE SO BELOW"

THE WISDOM TREE - BY SUEVEEN KUMAR

your master, be your disciple. Your learning will not be perfect. Your journey will not be perfect, you will not always make the right move, you will not always know the right thing yet learn yourself learn from yourself. Your own learning will contradict, your own learning will confuse you, your own learning will mislead you, your own learning will deceive you but it is not about you it is about learning, this is how it is, so learn yourself learn from yourself.

You are the biggest responsibility of you, you have the biggest authority of you. Hold yourself as everyone else is busy holding themselves, make yourself as everybody else is busy making themselves and race yourself as everybody is busy racing themselves. Be the best version of yours, give the best reason of yours and live the best vision of yours. You are wrong when you are wrong but you are right when you know you are wrong. You have some years to live and it is fine if you have some goals and it is also fine if you don't have any. The purpose of your life is not to achieve but to live. The biggest achievement in life is to live right. Wronging your whole life will not give you the satisfaction of achieving something right.

Moral: Treat yourself as a master until you find your master.

Denial of Justice

As it is, pending litigation has been a pandemic too. Nani Palkhivala once said, "Law may or may not be an ass; but in India it is a snail - it moves at a pace which would be regarded as unduly slow in a community of snails."

In our adversarial system in preference to the inquisitorial system arguments by counsel have a key role to play in discovery of truth. The Bar, the professional instrument of presentation of cases, is indispensable in the forensic process. As Brandeis observed; "For a Judge rarely performs his functions adequately unless the case before him/her is adequately presented." The great Holmes put it neatly; "Shall I ask what a Court would be unaided? The law is made by the Bar, even more than by the Bench."

It is clear that the best judgment is the product of the finest submissions at the Bar. In this sense the lawyer is an officer of the Court and is an integral to the administration of Justice. A good Bar is a great [art in justifying and, therefore, must be given a high place in the fulfillment of the right to Justice which is fundamental to all fundamental rights. The Bench without the Bar is as bankrupt in the delivery of Justice as the Bar without an intelligent, impartial and independent Bench to hear and decide. The right to Justice is inherent in every citizen; even the devil has that right.

When arguments are concluded and the Judgment Reserved is delayed,

the litigant's expectations darken into depression. Then that depression turns into dreaded or frightened feelings, which transform itself into despair and despair evolves into explosive frustration. Judicial discipline requires promptness in delivery of Judgments - an aspect repeatedly emphasized by this Court. If delay in pronouncing Judgments occur on the part of the Judges of the Subordinate Judiciary, the whip of the High Court studded with supervisory and administrative authority could be used and it had been used quite often to chide them and sometimes to take action against the erring Judicial Officers. But what happens when the High Court Judges do not pronounce Judgments after lapse of several months since completion of arguments? The Constitution of India did not provide anything in that area presumably because the architects of the Constitution believed that no High Court Judge would cause such long and distressing delays. Such expectation of the makers of the Constitution of India remained unfulfilled during the early period of the post Constitution years. But unfortunately, the later years have shown slackness on the part of a few Judges of the Superior Courts in India with the result that once arguments in a lis concluded before them, the records remain consigned to hibernation. Judges themselves normally forget the details of the facts and niceties of the legal points advanced. Sometimes the interval is so long that the

Judges forget even the fact that such a case is pending with them expecting Judicial verdict. Though it is an unpleasant fact, it is a stark reality.

In 1961, Hon'ble Judge of the Patna High Court expressed his anguish when a Magistrate took nine months to pronounce a Judgment. The words used by him for expressing his Judicial wrath is the following:

"The Magistrate who cannot find time to write Judgment within reasonable time after hearing arguments ought not to do any Judicial work at all. This Court strongly disapproves the Magistrates making such a tremendous delay in the delivery of his Judgments."

Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ["Anil Rai Vs State of Bihar", 2001 (7) SCC 318] deemed it appropriate to provide some guidelines regarding the pronouncement of Judgments, expecting them to be followed by all concerned under the mandate of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, wherein, two Judges of the Patna High Court took two years for pronouncing a Judgment after concluding arguments when the parties were languishing in jail, the Counsel appearing in Hon'ble Supreme Court in challenge of the said Judgment asked in unison whether the exhortation made by the Patna High Court in 1961 is not intended to apply to the High Court.

Sethi, J., enumerated them succinctly as follows:

"(i) The Chief Justices of the High Courts may issue

appropriate directions to the Registry that in a case where the Judgment is reserved and is pronounced later, a column be added in the Judgment where, on the first page, after the cause-title date of reserving the Judgment and date of pronouncing it be separately mentioned by the court officer concerned.

(ii) That Chief Justices of the High Courts, on their administrative side, should direct the Court Officers/ Readers of the various Benches in the High Courts to furnish every month the list of cases in the matters where the Judgments reserved are not pronounced within the period of that month.

(iii) On noticing that after conclusion of the arguments the Judgment is not pronounced within a period of two months the concerned Chief Justice shall draw the attention of the Bench concerned to the pending matter. The Chief Justice may also see the desirability of circulating the statement of such cases in which the Judgments have not been pronounced within a period of six weeks from the date of conclusion of the arguments amongst the Judges of the High Court for their information. Such communication be conveyed as confidential and in a sealed cover.

(iv) Where a Judgment is not pronounced within three months from the date of reserving Judgment any of the parties in the case is permitted to file an application in the High Court with prayer for early Judgment. Such application, as and when filed,

shall be listed before the Bench concerned within two days excluding the intervening holidays.

(v) If the Judgment, for any reason, is not pronounced within a period of six months any of the parties of the said lis shall be entitled to move an application before the Chief Justice of the High Court with a prayer to withdraw the said case and to make it over to any other Bench for fresh arguments. It is open to the Chief Justice to grant the said prayer or to pass any other order as he deems fit in the circumstances."

Judgments reserved and not delivered get piled up, to the eternal prejudice of the litigant public. Tapping into the portals of the Madras High Court, one is rudely reminded of a Circular of 2014 Vintage, issued at the instance of then Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul (now a Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court). In that Circular, Court Officers before the Principal Bench at Chennai & the Madurai Bench were directed to mention the dates on which orders were reserved and the dates of their pronouncement, immediately after the cause titles of the cases.

Interestingly, the Circular was in the 'wake' of a Judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated August 06, 2001. The Circular was not contemporaneous, affording enough breathing space to the law lords.

It is clear that the best judgment is the product of the finest submissions at the Bar. In this sense the lawyer is an officer of the Court and is an integral to the administration of Justice.

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SHORT STORIES

Gehlot slams BJP's 'dictatorial attitude' after Mevani arrest

Jaipur

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Saturday condemned the arrest of Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani by the Assam Police calling it an abuse of power. "The arrest of Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani by the Assam Police against the Prime Minister is an abuse of power. This dictatorial attitude of the central and BJP governments is like a blemish on democracy and is against the constitution," Gehlot tweeted in Hindi.

He wrote, "If politicians are arrested for making statements against the Prime Minister, chief ministers, then perhaps the number of jails in the country will fall short." Mevani, an Independent MLA backed by the Congress, was arrested from Palampur city of Gujarat on Wednesday night. An FIR was earlier registered against him at Assam's Kokrajhar Police Station for his tweet.

According to the FIR, Mevani in the alleged tweet had said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi "considered Godse as God". Gehlot also criticised the registration of cases against Alka Lamba and Kumar Vishwas in Punjab. "The Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab is also following the steps of BJP. Punjab Police has proved this by registering a case against Alka Lamba and Kumar Vishwas for making political statements," Gehlot wrote in another tweet.

Court cancels MLC's bail, orders his arrest

Pratapgarh

Accout here cancelled the bail of Uttar Pradesh legislator Pratap Singh and ordered his arrest in a case of getting an arms licence on a fake address, a government counsel said on Saturday.

Ordering his arrest, the Pratapgarh district and sessions court issued a non-bailable warrant against the MLC who has been convicted in the arms licence case and sentenced to a seven-year jail term by a special court meant to try lawmakers. District Government Counsel Yogesh Sharma said.

He said the MLC had moved the Pratapgarh district and sessions court for bail in the case and his bail plea was to be heard on Friday.

Singh, however, failed to appear before the court on Friday and merely sent an apology for his absence, following which the court cancelled his bail and ordered his arrest.

MLC Akshay Pratap Singh alias Gopalji is said to be close to Raghuraj Pratap Singh, president of Jansatta Dal Loktantrik and a former minister in the Uttar Pradesh government.

Arvind Kejriwal urges voters to support AAP to make New Himachal

Alleges BJP, Congress of looting Himachal

Vikram/Sushil Kangra/Shimla

AP supremo Arvind Kejriwal has alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress looted Himachal Pradesh for 17 years and 30 years respectively and added that the next alternative before the people of the hilly state is the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). He made strong appeal to people to support AAP to get clean and corruption free government in this hilly state during the Assembly elections, which are slated to be held by the year end.

He got a rousing reception on his arrival as AAP managed to mobilize a large crowd.

Addressing an impressive rally at Chambi ground in Shahpur assembly constituency in Kangra district on Saturday, the Delhi chief minister urged the people one chance for his party to rule.

"Himachal is a 'Dev Bhoomi', when God made the world, he made Himachal Pradesh the most beautiful place on earth. God has given



everything it has given mountains, water, herbs and wonderful people, but BJP and Congress looted Himachal during their rule. The Congress ruled for 30 years while the BJP for 17 years. After having looted, now, both parties are abusing me," said Kejriwal.

"Give us a chance to rule for five years. If we let you down, reject us," quipped the AAP national convenor.

Kejriwal said his detractors say that the situation in Himachal is different. But Himachal needs change and people have to opt for his party to usher in the change. He

noted that he has heard that the BJP would go for early polls in Himachal and Gujarat.

Kejriwal pointed out, "Yesterday Jai Ram Thakur tweeted that the Delhi model will not work in Himachal. The Delhi model means honest and corruption free government, and I ask you whether

you want an honest government in Himachal or not?"

He claimed that Himachal chief minister Jai Ram Thakur copied the part Delhi model and announced 125 units of free power.

"We demand that other BJP governments should also follow suit," he said.

Kejriwal said the government schools in Himachal Pradesh were in a bad shape.

"One can see the government schools in Delhi. This year the government schools in the national capital have got 99.7 percent results. About 4 lakh more students have been admitted to government schools. In Delhi, private schools have not been allowed to increase fees for the past four years while medical treatment is free for all. The Delhi government is taking people to pilgrimage free of cost," he said.

"It is time to make 'Naya Himachal Pradesh'. I urge all the good people in BJP and Congress to leave their parties and join the Aam Aadmi Party. I request the people of this state to give AAP a chance," Kejriwal appealed.

HP CM flags off 29 vehicles of police

Rs. 2.37 cr spent on purchase of security tools



TSN/Shimla

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur flagged off 29 vehicles of State Police Department from Oak Over, Shimla today. He also launched 40 Laser Speed Meter Cameras, 124 Body Worn Cameras and 129 Light Batons.

Chief Minister said that Rs. 2.37 crore have been spent on purchase of Laser Speed Meter Cameras, Body Worn Cameras and Light Batons, whereas 2.52 crore have been spent on vehicles. He said that state government was making all out effort to maintain better Law and Order in the State. In this direction, modern equipment and facilities with

world class technology were being provided to the Police Department. While appreciating Himachal Police, CM said that Police personnel of the state have gained country wide recognition for their talent and abilities.

Director General of Police Sanjay Kundu said that the Laser Speed Meter Cameras would provide better traffic management and reduce accidents. The Body Worn Cameras would bring transparency and efficiency in working of police personnel posted in traffic management. Light Batons will facilitate drivers to understand the signals of police personnel at night.

UP seriously considering UCC implementation: Dy CM Maurya

Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government is thinking seriously in the direction of the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in the state, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said on Saturday.

Maurya made the revelation while favouring the expeditious implementation of the UCC both in the country and the state.

Termining the constitutionally-ensured measure an "important step" for the realisation of the governance 'mantra' of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' (inclusive growth), he said it should be welcomed by everybody.

"One law for all in one country is the need of the hour. It is required that we should get out of the system of one law for one person and another for others. We are in favour of a common civil



code," Maurya said while talking to newsmen here. "The Uttar Pradesh government is thinking in this direction seriously," the deputy CM said.

Just as the Uttar Pradesh government has initiated steps, in UP and other states too where there is the BJP government, the "common civil code" should be implemented, he said.

Even in other states where there is no BJP government, its implementation is necessary for inclusive growth, he said, adding the "common

civil code is such a thing which should not only be demanded but also welcomed by all".

Soon after the formation of the Uttarakhand government after the recent assembly elections, the first Cabinet meeting presided by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami there decided to form a committee of experts on the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code in the state.

After his first cabinet meeting, Dhami had said that Uttarakhand will be the first state to implement UCC, however, quickly adding that "perhaps it is already in force in Goa".

"Common civil code is definitely required at this point of time, it is very much required for the country, for Uttar Pradesh and for the people of the country," the deputy CM said.

DAVs celebrates Mahatma Hansraj Jayanti at Mandi

Rajan Punchhi Mandi

Large number of people paid tributes to Mahatma Hansraj on his Jayanti organized at Paddal Maidan on Saturday. Representatives from 900 DAV Educational Institutions spread all over India including Principals of Colleges, Schools, Headmasters, Teachers, Parents, Students and over five thousand others created a history here for the occasion. The DAV Centenary Public School of Mandi got the privilege of hosting the celebration of the 158th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Hansraj, the great man who dedicated his life to social service, and father of DAV movement for popularising Vedic knowledge and values.



He founded first Vedic school in Lahore as a promoter of Arya Samaj and teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati. Mahatma Hansraj was born on 19th April, 1864 and this year Chhoti Kashi Mandi, which is known as the cultural capital of Himachal, has got the honour of celebrating the 158th birth anniversary at National level

of this great man.

Assistant Regional Officer of the DAVs K.S. Guleria expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the entire DAV College Management Committee. The celebration was presided over by Padmashree Arya Ratna Dr. Poonam Suri, President of Arya Pradeshik Pratindhi Sabha and DAV College Management Committee,

New Delhi. Professor (Dr.) Har Mohinder Singh Bedi of Central University, Dharamsala were also present.

The programme started with Vedic Homa followed by Bhajans.

A play named "Gyan Jyoti" based on the life of Mahatma Hansraj. Dozens of students participated in the play.

Dr. Poonam Suri gave a clarion call to follow the Swadeshi Vedic Education System blended with latest technologies in order to inculcate moral values and competitive spirit among students.

The programme ended with Shanti paath praying peace for the universe. Rishi pangar was organised on the occasion.

HP Guv Arlekar turns 68, Modi, Thakur & others extend greetings

TNS/Shimla

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur visited Raj Bhavan on Saturday and extended warm wishes to Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar on his 68th birthday. He wished the Governor a healthy and long life. Chief Minister's wife Dr. Sadhna Thakur also accompanied him on the occasion. Lady Governor Anagha Arlekar was also present.

President of India Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Members of the State Cabinet, Union Ministers and



other dignitaries telephonically greeted the Governor. Earlier, the Governor

performed a Yajana in the presence of other family members in the Yagashala at Raj Bhavan in the morning and planted sapling a Poplar plant in the premises. He celebrated his birthday by lighting the lamp along with the Raj Bhavan employees.

Director General of Police Sanjay Kundu, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Ajay Srivastava, Vice Chancellors of Shimla and Nauni Universities, other senior officers and other prominent persons were also present on the occasion.

Panel to draft UCC to be set up soon, peace won't be allowed to be disrupted: Dhami

Dehradun

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Saturday said a high-level committee will soon be set up to draft a Uniform Civil Code and communal amity in the state will not be allowed to be disrupted at any cost," Dhami asserted.

The government has planned to conduct a drive to verify the antecedents of people coming to Uttarakhand in large numbers so that dubious elements don't succeed in disrupting the peace, the

chief minister said. Referring to the development works being carried out in the state under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said Uttarakhand is one of the developing states at present. Dhami said that under the leadership of Modi, an effective battle was fought against COVID-19 in Uttarakhand where vaccine doses were being given for free and infections are well in control.

"Apart from being Devbhoomi (land of gods), Uttarakhand is also Sanyabhoomi (land of soldiers). The communal amity and social peace in the state won't be allowed to be disrupted at any cost," Dhami asserted.

The government has planned to conduct a drive to verify the antecedents of people coming to Uttarakhand in large numbers so that dubious elements don't succeed in disrupting the peace, the

5 of family found dead inside Prayagraj house, probe on

Prayagraj

Five members of a family, including a two-year-old, were found dead inside their house in Khevarpur village in the Tharwai area in Uttar Pradesh' Prayagraj district here, police said on Saturday. The bodies of five victims including a man, three women and a minor girl were found in the courtyard of their house and their house was reportedly set on fire after the crime. Police suspect that they were attacked with a sharp-edged weapon.

The deceased have been identified as Raj Kumar (55),



Kusum Devi (50), Manisha Kumari (25), Savita (30) and Meenakshi (2). The incident came to light when the locals saw fumes coming out of

the house and informed the local police.

On receiving the information, the police team reached the incident spot immediately

along with a forensic team. Locals said that the police removed the bodies from the house and sent them for post-mortem, without waiting for the family to arrive.

As soon as the relatives of the family reached, they started demanding the bodies and accused the police of suppressing the matter. Amrit Lal Yadav, the uncle of one deceased woman said, "A person saw the fumes coming out of the house and informed the villagers. People rushed to see and found the bodies in the courtyard of the house. People told that

the mother-in-law of my daughter was alive. Police took her to the hospital. Along with her, they took all the other four bodies without informing us. We could not understand what was happening."

The police, however, said that no such action was taken without the family's permission, they removed the bodies from the house since there was a fire. Earlier, this week another family of five members was reported found stabbed to death inside their house in Khagpur village here.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

T. Notice No. 230-Elect/TRD/PRYJ/ Date: 19.04.2022

E-Tender Notice/2022/475

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Div. Electrical Engineer/TRD/N. C. Rly/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following E-Tender, the details of the tenders are as under:

T. No.	Description of work	Advised value	Earliest Money	Tender Closing date & Time	Completion Period	Tender Opening date & Time	Allocation
230-TRD-WC-854-2022	Comprehensive & Preventive maintenance of equipment Installed at Naini, Phaphund and Dadr 220/132 KV Grid Sub Station in Prayagraj Division of N.C. Railway.	Rs. 8899465.82	Rs. 178000	13.05.2022 & 14.00 Hrs	24 Months	13.05.2022 & 15.00 Hrs	Revenue (07042232)
							Bidding system
							Single Packet

Note:-1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders shall be available on Website www.reps.gov.in in 21 days prior to the date of opening of the tender. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate. 3. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 458/22 (SP)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPNCR

Struggling MI take on LSG, aiming to arrest slide

Mumbai Virtually out of the playoff race and struggling on multiple fronts, a horribly out-of-sorts Mumbai Indians will need a special team effort to arrest their slide when they take on Lucknow Super Giants in a return-leg IPL fixture here on Sunday.

With seven defeats in as many matches, MI are winless this season and are languishing at the bottom with nothing going right for the five-time champions, who have failed to win the crunch moments and will need a miracle to make it to the playoffs.

Lucknow, on the other hand, have looked in good touch with four wins from seven matches but they are coming into the match after suffering a 18-run loss to Royal Challengers Bangalore.

However, the fact that LSG beat MI by 18 runs in their first leg will give them confidence.

MI have done well in patches but never looked as a unit, prompting former Australian batter Chris Lynn to stir speculations of a rift within the camp following their last defeat to Chennai Super Kings on Thursday.

The defeat also handed MI the dubious record of becoming the first team in IPL history to lose its first seven matches in a season.

Skipper Rohit Sharma too seemed clueless as to what is going wrong for the team.

"It's hard to put a finger on anything, but we're not starting well in the match. If you lose quick wickets, you'll always be playing the catching game," Sharma had said after their last match.

Ravi wins hat-trick of Asian Championship gold medals



Ulaanbaatar Indian wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya clinched his third straight Asian Championship gold medal with a dominating performance in the 57kg category, winning the title clash by technical superiority against Kazakhstan's Rakhat Kalzhan, here on Saturday.

Ravi, the Tokyo Olympics silver medalist, conceded early lead in all his bouts, but as is his wont, bounced back in tremendous fashion to outsmart his rivals in the men's freestyle event.

It was his second final of the season, having won a silver at the Dan Kolov event in February.

Ravi, who hails from Nahri village in Sonapat, yet again showed his immense physical prowess and tactical superiority when he outsmarted Japan's Rikuto Arai (VSU) and pulled off a comprehensive 12-5 win over Mongolia's Zanabazar Zandandub on route the final.

In the title clash, Kalzhan moved ahead with a take-down and for considerable time did not let the Indian make any move. However, true to his style, Ravi began to dominate the bout with his unmatched class.

He effected six consecutive two-pointers and in-between saved himself from a left-leg attack to finish the bout early in the second period to secure India's first gold medal of the tournament this year. Ravi had won gold at the 2020 edition in Delhi and in Almaty last year.



One of the reasons for MI's downfall is the poor form of its openers Sharma and Ishant Kishan.

While both were out for a duck against CSK, Kishan has fared slightly better than his skipper, scoring 191 runs against 114 runs by Sharma.

Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav have produced some good knocks, while young Dewald Brevis too shone in a few matches but a collective effort in the middle-order has been missing.

With just 96 runs, all-rounder Kieron Pollard has failed to live up to the expectations of the franchise, which decided to retain him. In bowling, MI has mostly relied on Jasprit Bumrah even as the rest cut a sorry figure.

While Daniel Sams came good against

CSK with four wickets, domestic veteran Jaydev Unadkat's failure to defend 17 runs in the final over sums up their campaign.

The rest of the bowlers, including Tymal Mills, Basil Thampi or lead spinner Murugan Ashwin too have gone for runs aplenty.

Australia's Riley Meredith and debutant Hritik Shokeen had a decent outing but MI will have to produce a much superior effort to tame LSG's formidable batting at Wankhede Stadium.

Lucknow's batting has been led by skipper KL Rahul (265 runs), who had slammed an unbeaten 60-ball 103 the last time the two teams faced off on April 16.

Hardik's thinking cap is on, it has raised his game, says Gavaskar

Mumbai Hardik Pandya has his "thinking cap on" this season, according to the legendary Sunil Gavaskar, who feels the Gujarat Titans skipper is batting with discipline and making good use of field restrictions, which has raised his game.

The star Baroda all-rounder has led the Gujarat Titans from the front, rescuing the team on several occasions with his responsible knocks.

The all-rounder has contributed with the ball as well and is an important cog in the wheel for the Titans.

Pandya had struggled to manage his bowling workload post his back surgery in 2019. His last appearance for India was against Namibia in the T20 World Cup in Dubai on November 8 last year. "He didn't play a lot of cricket before the IPL because he was trying to get fully fit with all the problems he had due to the injury," Gavaskar told 'S' tar Sports'.

"(Now) Look at the discipline he's showing in his batting. He's batting well in the powerplay and making full use of the field restrictions, he's doing exceedingly well in the field. 'So basically, that thinking cap is on; and once that happens your game just goes up,'" added Gavaskar, a former India captain. "Former India batter Aakash Chopra said Pandya has learnt the right lessons from his 'mentor' Ma-



hendra Singh Dhoni.

"I think Hardik obviously treats him (MS Dhoni) as his mentor, he's very close to MS. The number at which he bats and the role that he plays, nobody has played it better than Dhoni in the history of white-ball cricket," Chopra said.

"He's learnt the right lessons from MS. When we are in the company of greatness, we try and take little pieces and it shapes our lives. And that's what we are seeing with Hardik," added Chopra.

Former India pacer Irfan Pathan too lauded Pandya for his responsible knocks.

"This is a new Hardik Pandya. This is a better version of him. It was nice to see the situations in which he has played this season.

"Dinesh Karthik knows what exactly his role is. He's moving early, he's anticipating what the bowler is going to do. What he's doing extremely well this year is the anticipation which is turning out to be dead right on 90 per cent of the time and that makes a difference. He's outsmarting the bowlers, he's one step ahead of them." "The clarity and thought process is very positive and that's making the difference. He has the experience, he's fit like anyone else, but what's great to see is the hunger to score runs. I must say, that at his age, he's picking up the length better than most players even younger than him," —Ravi Shastri



World Cup: India compound men's team bag gold



Antalya Indian men's compound archery team of Abhishek Verma, Rajat Chauhan and Aman Saini downed France by one-point in a thrilling final to win the gold medal at the World Cup Stage 1 here on Saturday.

India, however, lost out on a second medal after compound mixed pair of Verma and Muskan Kirar went down 156-157 to Croatia in the bronze medal playoff.

In the compound men's team final, the Indian trio started off with a one-point deficit, losing the first end 56-57 to their French rivals of Jean Philippe Boulch, Quentin Baraer and Adrien Gontier.

India slowly improved on their first-end score by one-point but

the French team had a near perfect set of 59/60 comprising three four 10s, including arrows closer to the centre (X) to extend their lead (113-116).

Trailing by three points, Indians showed amazing resilience to drill in a perfect end of 60/60 with two Xs to win the third set 60-58, and curtail the deficit by one-point (173-174).

There was no stopping the Indian trio there after as they shot a 59 in the fourth end, with the under-pressure Frenchmen managing 57 to go down by one-point.

On Sunday, India's recurve mixed team pair of Tarundeep Rai and Ridhi Phor will be vying for a second gold after having defeated Spain in the semi-final 5-3.

Abid Ali cleared to resume international career four months after heart attack

Karachi Pakistan opener Abid Ali has been given the green light to resume his international career, four months after suffering a heart attack.

The 34-year-old had undergone an angioplasty a day after he was rushed to a hospital for chest pain while playing a match in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy in Karachi last December.

"I am really excited to be back with the prospect of playing for Pakistan again. Doctors cleared me to go back in the field and I can finally return to live a normal life," Abid told 'ESP'Nericafo'. "I will be on medicines for some time because of the stents implanted but overall, physically, I am feeling great. I am diving, running, jogging, batting and it's really great to be normal again. There were doubts if I could play again with a heart condition but I didn't lose hope. "I stopped thinking about cricket for some time and focused on regaining a healthy life first.

It was tough but the recovery has been great with all the extensive rehabilitation." Abid had to undergo an extensive rehabilitation programme and wait for months to get clearance from doctors to play again.

Cardiac surgeons, after several tests, diagnosed that Abid was suffering from "acute coronary syndrome", which, in simple terms, means there was block-



age of blood flow in his heart.

He was batting on 61 for Central Punjab against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the UBL complex when the team manager rushed him to the hospital after he complained of chest pain and uneasiness in his shoulder.

"I am not sure what is the status of my national selection right now but I am fully set for my comeback," Abid said. "For now, I started with the shorter format by playing three-four games in the Ramzan tournament in Faisalabad and

it went well." Earlier this week, he appeared in a local T20 league match in Faisalabad and scored a half-century.

"These two games have given me confidence to revive my cricketing career. This is just the start and I am working hard on my fitness to stay in contention for selection. "I need to work very hard to catch up on the lost time and I am quite hopeful that I will be able to achieve that. I still have a lot of cricket left in me and I don't want to sit back. Cricket has been my life."

Want to win medals at CWG, crack world's top 10 & qualify for 2024 Olympics: Treesa Jolly

New Delhi Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand's dream run continued with the young duo making it to the Indian team for the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Uber Cup following its stellar display at the recently-concluded selection trials.

And the young pair is now focussing on returning with a medal from the upcoming major events, cracking the world's top 10 and qualifying for the Paris Olympics in two years time.

It has just been a little over 15 months that the two paired up but the duo has been like a house on fire, becoming the first women's pair to reach the All England semifinals, winning the Odisha Open Super 100 and reaching the finals of Syed Modi Super 300.



"Now the target is the CWG, Asian Games and Uber Cup and we also

want to work hard and qualify for the 2024 Olympics," Treesa told PTI.

"Main thing is the Paris Olympics, so our aim is to be in top 10 by next year. That is the target." All of 18, Treesa hails from Cherupuzha, Kerala where the seeds of badminton were first sowed in her by her father Jolly Mathew, who is a physical education teacher.

"My father is a physical education teacher, so he wanted his kids also to play the sport. My elder sister (Maria) was my partner in under-15, under-17 in state events but I was performing better so my father motivated me to continue," Treesa said.

"When I started playing badminton, I realised that it gives me a lot of happiness. I remember watching Saina (Nehwal) at the Olympics, since then she has been my inspiration." Treesa, who started playing the sport as a six

year old, said she joined the Gopichand academy just two months before the COVID-19 lockdowns were announced in 2020.

"I used to play singles and doubles but when I shifted to Gopichand academy in January 2020, Gayatri too had started playing doubles, so something clicked and we started playing together."

"But with lockdown, it was difficult as I had to go back home and we did the online sessions. In fact, Sudirman Cup and Uber Cup trials was the time when we played together and the first international event was at Poland." The duo had reached the finals of Polish International, won the Infosys Foundation International Challenge, before finishing second best at Welsh International.

Lankan PM dismisses calls for forming interim govt

Colombo:

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on Saturday dismissed calls by protesters to form an interim government to tackle the unprecedented economic crisis in the country, saying such political formations have no use "when people with varying policies can't see eye to eye". Thousands of demonstrators have hit the streets since April 9, as the government ran out of money for vital imports; prices of essential commodities have skyrocketed and there are acute shortages in fuel, medicines and electricity supply.

Speaking to Radio station 'Neth FM', the prime minister said: "What use of interim governments when people with varying policies can't see eye to eye? There has to be accord which is not possible. If there is a need for an interim government it should happen only under my leadership." Anti-government protesters in Sri Lanka are demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Mahinda as they blame government policies for the forex crisis.

Commenting on the economic crisis, Rajapaksa, 77, said, "People need to show patience to face it (the economic crisis). They can keep on protesting if they don't want to have talks." Last week, the ruling dispensation reached out to the Opposition parties and protesters for talks, but all efforts were rebuffed as the agitators said they want the government to resign.

Ukraine reports Russians trying to storm Mariupol plant

Kyiv:

Russian forces attacked a steel plant in the shattered Ukrainian port city of Mariupol on Saturday, Ukrainian officials said, apparently seeking to eliminate the last pocket of Ukrainian resistance in the strategic city the Kremlin claims its military has otherwise seized.

The assault was reported by an advisor to Ukraine's presidential office as an estimated 1,000 civilians sheltered in the Azovstal plant alongside the remaining Ukrainian fighters, while Russian forces pressed their offensive elsewhere in the eastern Donbas region amid fierce Ukrainian counterattacks.

The presidential advisor, Oleksiy Arestovich, said during a briefing that Russian forces had resumed air strikes on the massive seaside plant and were trying to storm it, which would represent a reversal from an order Russian President Vladimir Putin gave two days earlier.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu reported to Putin on Thursday that the whole of Mariupol, with the



exception of Azovstal, had been "liberated" by the Russians. At the time, Putin ordered him not to send Russian troops into the plant but instead to block off the facility, an apparent attempt to starve out the Ukrainians and force them to surrender.

Ukrainian officials have estimated that about 2,000 of their troops are inside the plant along with the civilians sheltering in the facility's underground tunnels. Arestovich said the Ukrainian forces were trying to counter the new attacks.

Earlier Saturday, the Azov

Regiment of Ukraine's National Guard, which has members holed up in the plant, released footage of around two dozen women and children, some of whom said they had been in the mill's underground tunnels for two months and longed to see the sun.

"We want to see peaceful skies, we want to breathe in fresh air," one woman in the video said. "You have simply no idea what it means for us to simply eat, drink some sweetened tea. For us, it is already happiness." The regiment's deputy commander,

Sviatoslav Palamar, told The Associated Press the video was shot Thursday, the same day Russia declared victory over the rest of Mariupol. The contents could not be independently verified. Both Ukrainian and Russian authorities have said the Azovstal plant is the last remaining defense stronghold in Mariupol, which has strategic importance to Moscow and has been under siege since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. More than 100,000 people — down from a prewar population of about 430,000 —

Ukrainian officials have estimated that about 2,000 of their troops are inside the plant along with the civilians sheltering in the facility's underground tunnels.

are believed trapped in Mariupol with little food, water or heat, according to Ukrainian authorities.

The footage of Azovstal showed soldiers giving sweets to children who respond with fist-bumps. One young girl says she and her relatives "haven't seen neither the sky, nor the sun" since they left home on Feb. 27. Over 20,000 civilians have been killed in Mariupol during the nearly two-month siege. Satellite images released this week showed what appeared to be mass graves near Mariupol, and local officials accused Russia of burying thousands of civilians to conceal the slaughter taking place there. Ukrainian officials had said they were trying again Saturday to evacuate women, children and older adults from Mariupol after many previous attempts failed.

Agencies

Boris Johnson returns to UK from India amidst more partygate fines



London:

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson returned to the UK on Saturday after a two-day visit to India amidst reports of more fines being issued by Scotland Yard for lockdown-breaching parties at 10 Downing Street here.

The Metropolitan Police have been investigating the partygate scandal, which is a looming threat to Johnson's leadership that followed him all the way to Ahmedabad and Delhi this week as the House of Commons voted in favour of an investigation into whether he knowingly misled Parliament over the issue.

During his final press conference in Delhi on Friday, Johnson, 57, declined to be drawn on the issue of partygate and insisted he was focused on getting on

with the job by strengthening ties with a friendly democracy.

"What we're talking about today, is the ways in which the situation, not just in Ukraine, the situation around the world is obliging the UK and India to do more together," Johnson told UK reporters in response to their flurry of partygate questions.

"I think that what people want in our country is for the government to get on and focus on the issues on which we were elected, and that's what we're going to do," he said.

The British Prime Minister has been issued with one fixed penalty notice of a fine over his birthday party in the Cabinet Room of Downing Street in June 2020, which he paid up immediately.

Biden says Xi Jinping told him Quad was against China

Washington:

US President Joe Biden said that his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping once told him that he was strengthening Quad against China.

China, which has territorial disputes with many countries in the strategic Indo-Pacific region, has been vehemently opposing the Quad alliance since its formation.

Biden, during a Democratic Party fundraiser event at a private residence in Seattle on Friday, said that he had indicated to Xi that "I was going to pull together the Quad: Australia, India, Japan and the United States. He said, 'You're just doing that to affect us.' I said, 'No, it's because we're trying to put together those folks who have an op-



portunity to work together in the Indo-Pacific".

"The point being that one of the things that the autocrats fear the most -- and India has its own problems; all those countries have their own problems -- is the notion that somehow we can work together in concert and contrary to what are essentially dictatorships, which a lot of

countries have become, particularly not only China but Russia and many other countries...the Philippines," he said.

In February, China termed the Quad alliance as a "tool" to contain China's rise and to maintain American hegemony.

"China believes that the so-called Quad group cob-

bled together by the US, Japan, India and Australia is essentially a tool for containing and besieging China to maintain US hegemony.

"It aims to stoke confrontation and undermine international solidarity and cooperation," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhao Lijian had said in Beijing in February.

BUSINESS

Torrent Power to acquire 50 MW solar plant from SkyPower Group



New Delhi:

Torrent Power has inked a share purchase pact to acquire 100 per cent equity in a 50 MW solar plant of SkyPower Group at an enterprise value of Rs 417 crore.

Torrent Power Ltd has entered into a Share Purchase Agreement (SPA) with SkyPower Southeast Asia III Investments Limited and SkyPower South-east Asia Holdings 2 Limited (the Sellers) for the acquisition of 100 per cent securities of Sunshakti Solar Power Projects Private Ltd (the SPV special purpose vehicle).

The SPV operates a 50 MW Solar Power Project in the state of Telangana. Long-term Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the Project is with Northern Power Distribution Com-

pany of Telangana Limited (NPDCL) for a period of 25 years at a fixed tariff of approx Rs 5.35 per kWh, with remaining useful life of about 20 years.

The enterprise value for this acquisition is around Rs 417 crore, subject to closing price adjustments, if any, the company said in a statement.

The acquisition is further subject to customary conditions for transaction closure.

Torrent Power, the integrated power utility of the diversified Torrent Group with group revenues of Rs 20,500 crore (approx. USD 2.7 billion) is one of the largest companies in the country's power sector with presence across the entire power value chain of generation, transmission and distribution.

Rescue countries facing debt stress in these uncertain times: FM to World Bank

Washington:

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has underlined the need to rescue countries facing debt stress due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and the recent geo-political developments.

During a meeting with World Bank Group President David Malpass on Friday, Sitharaman said India remains concerned about the risks to global recovery due to rising uncertainty amidst enhanced geopolitical tensions.

The Finance Minister, who is visiting the US to attend IMF-WB Spring Meetings 2022, suggested that multilateralism has become more critical as the world is undergoing a phase of exceptional uncertainty, a finance ministry statement said.

"On account of the pandemic and the recent geo-political developments, there is a need for the World Bank to come to the rescue of countries facing debt stress. In particular, the World Bank needs to pay special attention to Sri Lanka, which is facing an unprecedented economic situation," she said.



Sri Lanka, a neighbouring nation of India, is grappling with its worst-ever economic crisis compounded by forex shortages and a balance of payments crisis.

The country's economic crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which has meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices.

The island nation is witnessing large-scale protests

against the government's handling of the debt-ridden economy - the worst-ever economic crisis in Sri Lanka's history.

During the meeting, the Finance Minister stated that India's pandemic response has focused on the twin goals of saving lives and livelihoods. India has been successfully running the world's second largest vaccination programme, administering more than 1.85 billion doses of vaccine, she said.

She also discussed the im-

pact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the world economy and India in particular; economy and role of the World Bank Group; Single Borrower Limit and exploring the possibility of Guarantees from other nations and India's G20 Presidency.

Sitharaman highlighted India's roadmap for infrastructure development and said the country looks forward to World Bank's continued support for financing investments for the National Infrastructure Pipeline

India has been successfully running the world's second largest vaccination programme, administering more than 1.85 billion doses of vaccine, she said.

and Gati Shakti programme. Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a Rs 100 lakh crore national master plan for multi-modal connectivity that aims to develop infrastructure to reduce logistic costs and boost the economy.

PM Gati Shakti targets to cut logistic costs, increase cargo handling capacity and reduce the turnaround time. The plan aims to lend more power and speed to projects by connecting all concerned departments on one platform.

Participating in the 105th Meeting of the Development Committee Plenary, the Finance Minister said India's economic growth in the current year is robust and highest among all large economies and reflects India's resilience and strong recovery.

ICICI Bank Q4 net profit surges by 59% to Rs 7,019 cr



New Delhi:

Private sector lender ICICI Bank on Saturday reported a 59 per cent jump in standalone net profit to Rs 7,019 crore for the fourth quarter of FY2021-22.

The bank had earned a profit of Rs 4,403 crore in the corresponding January-March quarter of the last year.

The total income of the bank rose to Rs 27,412 crore in the January-March period from Rs 23,953 crore in the year-ago quarter, ICICI Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Net interest income (NII) increased by 21 per cent to Rs 12,605 crore from Rs 10,431 crore in the same quarter a year ago, it said.

On a consolidated basis, ICICI Bank Group net profit jumped by 58 per cent to Rs 7,719 crore in the March quarter from Rs 4,886 crore in the last quarter of 2020-21.

The bank's asset quality improved as the gross non-performing assets fell to 3.60 per cent of the gross advances as of March 31, 2022, from 4.96 per cent in the corresponding period a year ago.

The net NPAs also declined to 0.76 percent from 1.14 percent at the end of the fourth quarter of the previous financial year.

As a result, provisions other than tax and contingencies for the quarter declined to Rs 1,069 crore, from Rs 2,883 crore a year earlier.

India extends additional USD 500 million credit line to Sri Lanka

Colombo:

India has agreed to extend an additional USD 500 million credit line to help Sri Lanka import fuel, Finance Minister Ali Sabry said, amid delays in chalking out a bailout package with the IMF to mitigate the dire financial crisis facing the island nation.

Sri Lanka has been struggling to pay for imports after its foreign exchange reserves plummeted sharply in recent times, causing a devaluation of its currency and spiralling inflation. "In-

dia has agreed to provide an additional USD 500 million for our fuel imports," Sabry said on Friday, while adding that he was hopeful that New Delhi would consider handing out another USD 1 billion dollars as a credit line.

India has already agreed to defer USD 1.5 billion in import payments that Sri Lanka needs to make to the Asian Clearing Union. On Friday, New Delhi has also extended the tenure of a USD 400 million swap given in January this year, the



Indian High Commission said.

Sabry is currently in Washington to negotiate a programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The finance minister said that talks have begun on an Extended Fund Facility, but the finer details of the programme are yet to be finalised.

Sri Lanka needs at least USD 4 billion to tide over its mounting economic woes, and Sabry has been holding talks with international institutions such as the World Bank as well as countries like China and Japan for fi-

nancial assistance. "It will be a difficult period in the next nine months."

During that time there is a need to bring in more investments in US dollars into the central bank. We are talking with several countries. If these efforts are successful, and if investment of about USD 2 billion comes to the central bank, it will help stop the depreciation and stabilise the rupee," Sabry said. On April 12, Sri Lanka suspended its debt servicing for the first time in its his-

tory. Last week, the Sri Lankan government said it would temporarily default on USD 35.5 billion in foreign debt as the pandemic and the war in Ukraine made it impossible to make payments to overseas creditors.

Sri Lanka has been witnessing mass anti-government protests in recent weeks as it suffers food shortages, soaring fuel prices and major power cuts due to the unprecedented financial crisis.

Agencies.

Tabu unveils her 'petrified' look from 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2'



Mumbai
Actor Tabu's first look from 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2' has been unveiled.

Taking to Instagram, on Friday, Tabu shared a motion poster in which she has a petrified expression on her face. Soon the focus shifts to the mirror in her background which has the reflection of a ghostly figure with open hair.

Reacting to Tabu's look, actor Sikander Kher commented, "As

always looking forward to your work." "Wow!!! What a look," a netizen commented.

A day ago, the makers dropped Kiara Advani's first look from the film, in which she will be seen essaying the role of Reet. Helmed by Anes Buzmee, 'Bhool Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2' is the sequel to Akshay Kumar and Vidya Balan's film Bhool Bhulaiyaa, which was released in 2007. Actor Kartik Aaryan has stepped into the shoes of Akshay Kumar for the new version.

Rakul Preet Singh shares how she prepared for pilot's role in 'Runway 34'



Mumbai
head of the release of 'Runway 34', actor Rakul Preet Singh opened up about the training she underwent for the role of a pilot in the film. "It is one of the best scripts I heard in a long time and I jumped to bag this role. My experience playing a pilot was amazing because I love my job for the reason that you get to play different roles and learn so

many different things," she shared.

"How else would I have known how a cockpit looks? We had cockpit training for about 2-3 days, where there was a captain on the set who told us how the entire panel works because we shot in a real simulator, also during the entire shoot, the captain was there just to make sure that we use the right button, and use right terminology while flying a plane so it looks authentic," she added.

Rakul further said, "And when you step into a uniform there is a certain sense of dignity that automatically steps in - the way you walk, the way you talk, the way your language is, the way you react is very different from what a girl next door would. This is all that went into preparing for this role." 'Runway 34' also stars Amitabh Bachchan, Ajay Devgn and Boman Irani. Ajay has produced and directed the film, which will hit the theatres on April 29.

Kris Jenner claims Blac Chyna 'threatened to kill' Kylie Jenner



Los Angeles
Kris Jenner has claimed that Blac Chyna "threatened to kill" Kylie Jenner.

The 66-year-old matriarch - who is mother to makeup mogul Kylie, 24, from her former marriage to Caitlyn Jenner - is currently embroiled in a defamation case against Chyna along with her family and Kris reportedly took to the stand on Thursday (21.04.22) to testify that the 33-year-old model threatened her youngest daughter when she started dating Chyna's ex-boyfriend Tyga.

Asked whether Chyna had ever threatened to kill Kylie, Kris said: "That basically was what Kylie and Tyga told me.

Kylie was dating Tyga at the time - I believe that's where this aggression was coming from."

"The Kardashians' star - who also has Kendall, 26 with Caitlyn as well as reality stars Kourtney, 42, Kim, 41, Khloe, 37, and Rob, 35, with the late Robert Kardashian - added that the alleged threat was "alarming" but the family made the decision to keep it to themselves.

According to PageSix, Kris added: "Of course it was alarming but we just kept it in the family."

They lived across the street and she [Chyna] had a young child. I think we were more concerned about the Tyga situation."

Deepika Padukone's 'Wow' Husband Ranveer Singh



Mumbai
Bollywood diva Deepika Padukone is in Italy for the 59th Venice Biennale and is looking her stylish best. Deepika shared a couple of blurred pictures from her outing. And her husband, Ranveer Singh was wowed by his wife's beauty.

Deepika is a gorgeous diva and often floors one and all with her looks. Recently, she wore a head-to-toe for a dinner hosted by the luxury designer brand Louis Vuitton. She looked stunning and shared her look along with some blurred black and white pictures.

Ranveer Singh took to the comments section of his wife's post and wrote, "Wow" Apart from Ranveer, fans also

dropped compliments. One of them wrote, "You are so hot and beautiful..." Another commented, "You are just an icon of beauty." A third fan wrote, "Stunning as always."

Coming back to the relationship of Deepika and Ranveer, they worked together for the first time in Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram Leela in 2013. Deepika and Ranveer dated for six years and finally got married in a private ceremony at Lake Como in Italy in 2018.

On the work front, Deepika will be seen next in Shah Rukh Khan's Pathaan. She also has Hrithik Roshan-starrer Fighter and the Indian adaptation of The Intern alongside megastar Amitabh Bachchan in the pipeline. Besides these, she will feature in Nag Ashwin's Project K with Prabhas.

Ranveer on the other hand will be seen next in Jayeshbhai Jordaar which is ready to release on May 13. He also has Rohit Shetty's Circus with Pooja Hegde lined up. Currently, Ranveer is shooting for Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani with Alia Bhatt.

Shanna Moakler supports Kravis' baby plans

Los Angeles
Shanna Moakler says it is "fantastic" that Kourtney Kardashian and Travis Barker are trying for a baby.

The 47-year-old star - who shares son Landon, 18, and daughter Alabama, 16, with her former husband Travis - revealed she is happy for the Blink-182 drummer and his fiancée Kourtney.

She told Us Weekly: "All I know is kind of, like, what everyone knows. I think they were trying with IVF and there were some complications."

"I think if that's a desire between the two of them then that's fantastic. I don't have any issues with that. Their personal relationship is really nothing I get involved in."

Shanna was married to Travis, 46, for four years before their 2008 split, and he is also stepfather to her 23-year-old daughter Atiana.

Shanna insisted she has not been watching 'The Kardashians', which Travis appears in but does not mind if her kids take part.

She said: "I'm kind of focused over here on just, you know, my work and getting myself in a really good positive



place mentally and physically.

"I'm fine with my children doing whatever it is that creatively makes them happy. And if being on that show does that for them then, I mean, it doesn't bother me. All I care about

is my children's happiness. And it's the one thing that Travis and I agree on and that's putting our children first and so as long as they're happy and they're being treated well by that family, then I'm happy."