

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, JULY 29, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



ENTERTAINMENT | 6

Having once dreamt of becoming a cricketer, Abir Chatterjee.....



NATIONAL | 7

BJP rejigs team for Lok Sabha polls: Tariq Mansoor named

INTERNATIONAL | 8

Biden openly acknowledges 7th grandchild, the daughter of son Hunter.....



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BRIEFLY

SIA raids in connection with Narco-Terrorism case underway in Poonch

POONCH/JAMMU, Jul 29 (Agencies): The State Investigation Agency (SIA) on Saturday conducted raids at several places in connection with a narco-terrorism case in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The raids are still going on at four places in Mandi Tehsil of the border district, the officials said.

They said the case relates to notorious drug peddler Rafiq Lala, a resident of Danna Doyiyar area of Sathra who was arrested under the Public Safety Act (PSA) early this year. The SIA had taken his remand on July 1 for questioning over his alleged links across the border.

On March 3, seven kilograms of heroin, more than Rs 2 crore in cash and a pistol along with some ammunition were recovered from the house of Lala.

Landslide closes mughal road

JAMMU, Jul 29 (Agencies): The Mughal road, connecting Kashmir Valley's Shopian district with the twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch, has been closed due to landslide on Saturday, officials said.

The thoroughfare has been blocked near Poshana in this mountainous district due to landslide amid rains, they said. Immediately, they said, men and machinery were pressed into service to clear the road.

A traffic department official confirmed the closure of the road and said that the efforts are underway to reopen it.

SIA files chargesheet against JeI members

SRINAGAR, Jul 29 (Agencies): Special Investigation Agency Kashmir filed a chargesheet against two Jamaat-i-Islami members before a special UAPA court in Srinagar on Friday.

According to a statement, SIA filed the chargesheet before the Special UAPA court, Srinagar against Ab Salam Dagga son of Ghulam Mohammad

Turn to page 9

Lt Governor joins Youm-e-Ashoora's Zuljinah procession at Botakadal, Downtown Srinagar

Pays tributes to Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jul 29: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, on Youm-e-Ashoora, the 10th day of Muharram, joined the Zuljinah procession at Botakadal, Downtown area of Sri-

nagar, today. "I pay my tributes to Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions. Their sacrifice for righteousness and greater good of humankind serves as a beacon light for the world," the Lt Governor said.

The administration has made necessary arrangements for the smooth conduct of the procession from Botakadal to Imambargah Zadibal. The Lt Governor also offered Chaddar to Zuljinah and served refreshments

among mourners on the occasion.

Earlier, on July 27th, the 8th Muharram procession was taken out in the Kashmir Valley on the traditional route, from Guru Bazar to Dalgate, Srinagar after 34 years.

Footbridge swept away in heavy rains, more than 5,000 people across 3 panchayats affected

UDHAMPUR, Jul 29 (Agencies): Residents of Udhampur are risking their lives, wading through a flooded Sloo nullah, after a crucial footbridge connecting more than five thousand people across three panchayats — Danwalt, Blandh, and Rang of Pari Dhar block in Ramnagar tehsil of Udhampur district — collapsed after a flash flood triggered by heavy rains last week.

The bridge, situated in



ward no 8 of Bhiala Jagir in Dalwail panchayat of Ramnagar tehsil, was literally swept away as heavy rains lashed the area last week.

The bridge, which was the only one of its kind for residents to cross the Sloo Nullah, has left them in dire straits. The situation has been deemed especially precarious for children, women, and the elderly. Locals have called for urgent action from the

Turn to page 9

Rains continue in J&K, MeT predicts more

SRINAGAR, Jul 29 (Agencies): More rains lashed Jammu and Kashmir even as weather department here on Saturday forecast "fairly widespread light to moderate" rain and thunderstorm during the next 24 hours.

A meteorological department official said that "isolated to scattered light rain/thunderstorm" was expected during subsequent two days in J&K.

Regarding the rainfall in last 24 hours till 8:30

a.m. today, he said, Srinagar recorded 11.7mm, Qazigund 1.2mm, Pahalgam 8.1mm, Kupwara 8.8mm, Koker-nag 2.4mm, Gulmarg 7.2mm, Jammu 33.8mm, Banihal traces, Batote 1.1mm, Katra 19.6mm, and Baderwah 9.8mm.

As regards temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 16.3°C, Qazigund 16.6°C, Pahalgam 13.2°C, Kupwara town 14.8°C,

Turn to page 9

Bomb threat triggers panic on Delhi-Jammu Tawi Rajdhani Express



NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): A bomb threat call was received in Delhi-Jammu Tawi Rajdhani Express on Friday at around 9 pm after which the train was stopped at 9:35 pm in Haryana's Sonapat for

checking. However, the bomb threat turned out to be a hoax call.

All of the passengers are safe and the train finally departed from the Sonapat station at 2 am. The train is now running five hours late

and is expected to reach Pathankot by 8:15.

Earlier — after receiving the threat call — the Northern Railways said a team of bomb disposal squad, sniffer dogs from Rohtak, and police reached the site and carried out a thorough inspection of the train.

Northern Railways CPRO Deepak Kumar said the first team reached the spot at 11:40 pm, while another is on its way. Besides this, an ambulance, fire brigade, Government Railway Police

Turn to page 9

Landmine exploded near LoC in Poonch



JAMMU, Jul 29 (Agencies): A landmine exploded near the Line

of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district in the early hours of Saturday but there was no report of any damage, officials said.

The landmine exploded around 4 am amid incessant rains near the

Turn to page 9

CEO Gulmarg transferred, Director Tourism to hold charge

SRINAGAR, Jul 29 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday ordered the transfer of Ghulam Jeelani Zargar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Tourism Development Authority, Gulmarg, while assigning the additional charge

of the post to Director Tourism Kashmir in addition to his own duties.

"Ghulam Jeelani Zargar, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Gulmarg, holding additional charge of the post of Managing Director,

Turn to page 9

Several houses, Mosque damaged as cloudburst hits Ganderbal village

KANGAN, Jul 29 (Agencies): A cloudburst in upper reaches of Preng forest area in Kangan tehsil of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Saturday morning triggered flash-floods causing partial damage to some residential houses and a



Turn to page 9

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SCAN ME!

Stop harassing consumers on the name of Smart Meters: Mahajan

Seeks probe over switching from Digital to Smart & now Prepaid meters

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Shri Ram Sena (SRS), Jammu and Kashmir, expressed his deep concern over the government's frequent switch from digital to smart and now prepaid electricity meters. He firmly believed that this relentless alteration of metering systems is causing unnecessary harassment to thousands of honest electricity consumers in the region.

In a statement issued today, Rajiv Mahajan, President of Shri Ram Sena (SRS), Jammu and Kashmir, voiced his skepticism regard-

ing the effectiveness of switching from one type of meter to another, emphasizing that such measures do not address the core issues faced by the Power Development Department. Despite the transition to smart meters, the department continues to grapple with significant losses and is unable to provide regular power supply to the people of Jammu region despite the assurance given by the authorities from time to time.

Highlighting his suspicion of a potential nexus involved in the replacement of old digital meters with smart



meters, Rajiv Mahajan called upon the authorities to thoroughly investigate and put an end to the leakage of illegal power usage. He further urged the government to take stringent action against prominent individuals or entities with high power consumption and pending power bills worth crores. He firmly believed that this pro-

active approach will be more effective in resolving the issue of non-payment and revenue collection, rather than subjecting honest consumers to the burden of frequent changes in metering systems.

Rajiv Mahajan criticized the Jammu Power Development Corporation Ltd (JPDC) for adopting new revenue collection methods, which he deems unacceptable and illogical. He argued that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are already fulfilling their financial obligations by paying income tax, GST, water

bills, power bills, among others. Moreover, consumers have voiced complaints regarding smart meters running significantly faster than the digital meters previously installed, leading to doubts about the accuracy and fairness of the new system, he added.

Mahajan urged the government to refrain from harassing honest consumers under the pretext of implementing smart meters. He called for a more equitable and responsible approach to address the challenges faced by the power sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

DC Ramhal distributes aids, appliances among CWSN at BHSS Villgam

TOP NEWS REPORT

HANDWARA, Jul 29: A distribution cum fitment camp was on Saturday organized by Chief Education Officer Kupwara under inclusive education component of SAMAGRA Shiksha component in collaboration with Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) at Govt Boys Higher Secondary School Villgam, here. The camp was pre-

sided over by the District Development Council Member (DDC) Ramhal, Adv Ulfat Mushtaq as Chief Guest. She distributed aids and appliances among the beneficiaries.

The DDC said that Children with Special Needs (CWSN) might be physically and mentally weak in one faculty, but excel in other faculties and said that we should tap and focus upon their

strengths and maintained that such children must be treated as equal to other children. She also assured all possible support to such children in the district. Besides CWSN their parents, Deputy CEO Kupwara, Zeo Villgam, Principal GHSS Villgam, District Coordinator Javid Ahamd wani along Samgra Team Kupwara were present in the programme.

AJKPC expands Regional Team in Valley, appoints Convener, Co-Conveners for Kashmir

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, Jul 29: To deliberate on the organizational setup and expansion in the Kashmir Division, the All Jammu & Kashmir Panchayat Conference (AJKPC) held a meeting in district Pulwama, presided over by its president, Anil Sharma. During the meeting, a threadbare discussion was held regarding the upcoming Panchayat elections, as recently hinted by BR Sharma, the J & K Election Commissioner.

The Panchayat leaders also deliberated on issues concerning the locals of the Kashmir division, particularly focusing on the Social Welfare Department, PHE, KPDC, PWD, Rural Development, and Revenue Department. The participants unanimously resolved to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions



in J & K, aiming to make the Panchayats a one-stop destination for almost all government services and schemes. The meeting also highlighted the problems faced by people, especially widows and the elderly, regarding Social Welfare Pensions.

Responding to the demand and recommendation of Local PRI members, and after discussions with the senior office bearers of AJKPC, Anil Sharma, the Presi-

dent of the organization, announced an adhoc team for the Kashmir region, to be headed by Nazir Ahmed Raina, who has been designated as the Convener of the AJKPC Kashmir Zone. Ghulam Ahmed Paul was appointed as Co-Convener for Central Kashmir, AK Pandita as Co-Convener for South Kashmir, and Nazir Ahmed Rather as Co-Convener for North Kashmir.

As per another

appointment order issued by the office of AJKPC President, the adhoc team for district Pulwama includes Mohd Shafi Wani, who has been designated as AJKPC District Convener Pulwama, along with Mukhtar Ahmed Lone, Yaar Mohd Poswal, Dazy Raina, Mahesh Dhar, Farooq Ahmed Wani, and Mohd Akbar, all designated as Co-Conveners for district Pulwama, with immediate effect. Dazy

Raina has also been designated as the District Head of AJKPC Women's Wing, Pulwama.

Sharma congratulated the newly appointed team members of Kashmir and urged them to work selflessly for every person in Kashmir, regardless of whether the person voted for them in the elections.

Among others who attended the meeting were Manoj Pandita, Naseer Ahmed Khande, Adil Nabi Mir, Nazir Ahmed Ahanger, M Yaqoob Lone, M. Aqbir Ganie, Nazir Ahmed Mir, Qayoom Mir, Omkar Nath Razdan, Nisar Ahmed, Tara Singh, Naseer Ahmed Rather, GH. Mohiuddin, GH. Haassan, Mohd Ramzan, GH. Hassan Reshi, Dar Muzafar, Basharat Ahmed, Rajni Dembi, Susma Nehru, Riffat Jaan, and Brij Nath Bhat.

BJP miserably failed to develop Jammu region on modern lines: Rattan Lal

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) has expressed great disappointment against the present administration's hollow promises to develop the Jammu region on modern lines.

This was stated by Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President JKNC Jammu, who addressed a meeting of District Jammu Rural A unit at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu. This meeting was convened under the chairmanship of Raghbir Singh Manhas, District President of JKNC Jammu Rural-A

At the outset of the meeting, Raghbir Singh Manhas raised serious concerns regarding the lack of basic amenities in rural areas and difficulties being faced by the farmers, leading to hardships for the local population. He highlighted that the problems faced by the general public have intensified in absence of popular government in J&K.

Rattan Lal emphasized that the people of the Jammu region have been deprived of essential facilities, forcing them to take to the streets repeatedly to bring attention



to their issues. Despite the significant mandate received from the people of Jammu in the 2014 and 2019 elections, the ruling Saffron Party has miserably failed to fulfill the aspirations of unemployed youth and other population, he added.

He said that the recent incessant rains and flash floods have caused extensive losses to the people of Jammu region, particularly farmers in areas like Akhnoor, Khour, Samba, Kathua, and RS Pura border belt. Regrettably, no teams have been constituted to assess these losses and offer support to the affected general public and farmers, he added.

The provincial president urged the Lt Governor to immediately constitute the teams to assess the losses being faced by general public and farmers and compensate them accordingly without any further delay.

Ajay Sadhotra, a former Minister and Central Secretary, asserted that the National Conference remains the only viable option for the people of J&K and is committed to fulfilling the aspirations of the general public.

He said that National Conference continues to work diligently towards addressing the concerns of the people and advocating for their

rights and welfare.

Babu Rampal, former minister and Central Zone President, urged party workers to prepare for the upcoming ULB and Panchayat elections in the state, demonstrating their unwavering dedication to serving the people.

Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, provincial Secretary of JKNC, called for unity among the people and urged their support for the J&K National Conference in the forthcoming polls.

Among others who were present in the meeting include: Jugal Mahajan Treasurer, Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary, Shahmim Begum DDC Dansal,

Ch. Rehmat Ali BDC Chairman Nagrota, Master Baldev Singh Bhu, Chandar Mohan Sharma District President Jammu Urban, Kuldeep Kour District President Jammu Rural A women wing, Ghar Singh Corporator, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Randir Singh Chib, Bishan Dass Block President Mandal, Subash Block President Raipur Domana, Madan Lal Block President Akhnoor, Thoru Ram Block President Nagrota, Siraj Din Block President Dansal, Mohinder Kumar Rana, Rakesh Sharma District President Jammu Rural A Youth, Kuldeep Sharma, Devi Dayal Jogi, Man Mohan, and others.

JALSHAKTIDPARTMENT,JAMMU
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) CITY DIVISION NO-1, JAMMU
0191-2543654(Fax) E-Mail:-xenphcity1@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
E-NIT No. JS/PHECD-1/ 66 of 2023-24
For and on behalf of The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jammu, of J&K Union Territory, E-Tender (Item Rate Based) is invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu, from approved and eligible contractor of appropriate class registered with UT of Jammu and Kashmir/ other UT's or State Govt./CPWD/MES registered firms/contractors under two cover system, Cover 1 comprising of technical bid and cover 2 comprising of financial bid for the following work:-

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of Tender (In Rs)	Cost of Tender document Fees (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion
1	Improvement and upgradation of water supply of ward no.35, 36 and 37 by laying of DI/GI Pipes at Places under UT CAPEX	Rs.75.35 lacs	Rs.7000	Rs.1,50,700/-	A & above	365 days

Position of funds : Partially Approved
Position of Ts: Accorded
Position of AAA: Accorded
1. Date of publishing:-27-07-2023 (1800Hrs)
2. Bid documents can be seen and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 27-07-2023 (1800Hrs) onwards.
3. The bids shall be uploaded on the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 27-07-2023 (1800Hrs) to 18-08-2023 upto (1200Hrs).
4. The complete bidding process shall be online.
5. The technical bids received shall be opened online on 18-08-2023 after (1200Hrs), or any other convenient later date in the office of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu.
6. Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders has been dispensed with as per Govt. order no. OM No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dated 07-06-2018. The same shall be obtained only from the bidder, who is declared as L1 after opening of financial bids.
7. A copy of CDR/FDR duly pledged to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti(PHE) City Division No-1 Jammu, against the earnest money deposit, should be uploaded by the bidders, However before allotting the work, the original CDR shall be obtained from the bidder declared as lowest bidder and shall be kept in record till the allotment process is finalized. The earnest money shall be released on receipt of the performance security or CDR/FDR against the EMD can be retained after accepting the balance amount in the shape of CDR/FDR to meet the requirement of the amount of the Performance security. The CDR / FDR used for one tender shall not be entertained for other tender; which are under the process of tendering and the validity of such CDR / FDR shall remain till the outcome of such tender only. The CDR / FDR used for one tender shall have to be released from the Divisional Office before using for another tender.
8. The Lowest Bidder shall be intimated through e-mail on his registered e-mail ID to deposit the performance Security equivalent to the 5% of the allotted amount.
9. Cost of bidding/tender fees receipt in the shape of e-challan/ single window challan of JMCS shall have to be paid online, through the JMCS link <http://www.jmcsjammu.org/online-payment.html> and no cash shall be entertained at any cost. Further, bidders are requested to mention name of the work upon the particular Challan/e-receipt. Under no avoidable circumstances the work is re-tendered. The contractor need not to deposit the Tender document Cost for rebidding for the same work.
10. Any such Challan deposited on back dates or any irrelevant date shall not be accepted.
11. The Successful bidder shall be liable to deposit the performance security as envisioned in the GFR 2017.
12. The financial bids of the qualifying bidders shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu on same date of opening of technical bid or any other convenient date.
13. The bid for the work shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
14. The opening authority reserves with him the right to accept/reject/cancel, any or all tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.
15. The successful bidder shall be responsible for providing all safety measures at site during execution of work.
16. The quoted rates should be inclusive of all taxes. The department will deduct income tax/labour Cess/GST or any other tax as applicable during payment at prevalent rates.
17. The Contractor shall approach the Department for getting the "Nishandehi" of the work within seven days from the date of allotment
18. If the contractor fails to start the work within 07 days of its allotment, work shall be treated as cancelled without serving any notice to the contractor /firm and the work shall be offered to 2nd lowest bidder at the rate offered by 1st lowest bidder.
19. The delay in completion of the works shall attract penalty aggregating to 10% of the cost of such works and shall be reckoned per month, with recommended percentage of Engineer-in-Charge. If the work remains un-attended in the completion period, the contractor shall be recommended for his black listing.
20. In case the billed amount increases the allotted amount due to increase in the advertised quantity or addition of non-advertised items during execution, the same shall be paid on the allotted rates after revising the cost of the work/Scheme and getting revised AAA accorded and technically sanctioned from the competent authority.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1
Jammu

DIP/J-5962/23

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (HYDRAULIC) DIVISION RAMBAN
E-Mail:-xenhyd.ramban@jk.gov.in Tele/Fax:-01998266287

Corrigendum No. 02

Subject:- Re-tender of work namely "Construction of 12 No. 1000 , 15 No. 2000 , 01 No. 3000 Gallons per hour capacity Slow Sand Filtration Plant for providing house hold water connections to un-covered Habitations for 10 No. Water Supply Schemes Sawani, Sanasar Phase-II, Dharamond, Chakwa, Ludwal Kotli, Rakhjaroje, Champa and new schemes Dalwas, Sana and Karma (Scheme -wise Details Enclosed) of Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division Ramban under JMM

Reference: - (i) E-NIT No. - 77 of 2023-24 dated: - 08-07-2023 issued under endorsement No:- PHE/JJM/7238-49 Dated:- 08-07-2023

To improve the response for the above referred work, the dates is hereby extended which are as under:-

1. Date of Publishing	08-07-2023	Unchanged
2. e-Bid submission start date	08-07-2023	Unchanged
3. e-Bid submission End date	03-08-2023 (up to 4:30 PM)	Changed
4. Bid opening date	04-08-2023 (02: 00PM)	Changed

All other terms and conditions of the e-NIT shall remain same.

DIP/J-5914/23

Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division,
Ramban

NO.-JS/Hyd/D/R/ 2665 -15

EDITORIAL

ROAD SAFETY

Road Safety is one of the biggest health concerns in the world today. "Road Safety" is an issue which can't be ignored because it puts millions of lives at risk every year.

In the development of a nation, this issue affects all types of road users, including motorists, pedestrians, motorcyclists etc., as well as illegal roadside vendors and street Encroachers are also included.

India is a country of colours, movement and contrasts and nowhere else can we find all three of these than on its streets can't see more clearly. On the one hand, you have the vibrant, often aggressive traffic and on the other hand, small towns and villages have long and narrow roads.

Road safety remains a serious issue for all of us. If we talk globally, we will find that about 1.3 deaths occur every year as a result of a road traffic accident. Millions of people lose their lives. Between 20 and 50 million more people suffer from nonfatal injuries, many of whom become disabled as a result of the injury.

Road traffic injuries cause significant economic losses to individuals, their families and the nation as a whole. a report

According to WHO, road accidents cost most countries 3% of their GDP.

The road transport sector accounts for about 4.5 per cent of India's gross domestic product (GDP). A road accident occurs every minute in India, while a fatal accident occurs every three minutes. Analysis of Road Accident Data shows that every day on Indian roads, about There are 1,104 accidents and 426 deaths, which is an average of 46 accidents and 18 deaths every hour in our country.

About 69.6 percent of all persons killed in road accidents were in the age group of 18-45 years. Road accidents are the number one cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29. 1,55,622 people killed and 3,71,884 people injured/disabled in road accidents in India.

The annual property loss due to road accident in India is more than Rs 55,000 crore. India loses about 3% of its GDP as a result of road traffic accidents. Driver's fault is the most important factor responsible for 84 percent of road accidents. The most important thing is to be aware of your surroundings and stay alert.

Make sure you know the safest route to take, and avoid traveling alone at night. If you have a car, make sure you follow traffic rules and use your seat belt Do it. If you're riding a bike, wear a helmet and look both ways before crossing the street. if you walking or running, be aware of your surroundings and stay calm.

Drive carefully in unfamiliar or dangerous areas. If you are not sure about the field, there wait until you are on a well-traveled road before driving. Do not speed or follow too closely behind other drivers. Passing on the left is usually allowed only Given only when the lane ahead is clear, and passing on the right is never permitted. Stay in the lane and be ready to stop at any time. Use your signals correctly. Make sure you signal when changing lanes or turning and use both hands and keep your eyes focused on the road ahead. Pay attention to the weather conditions because different types of weather conditions such as snow, rain and fog are all can make drawing difficult. Slow down and take extra care while driving under these conditions.

UK Labour in fix: Dilute ULEZ or allow London to breathe bad air?

By: Farrukh Dhondy

Electoral predictions are tricky and yet the public bookies of Britain get the results right more often than the opinion polls, which estimate the results before and during the vote. I have no idea how bookies work out the voting odds -- perhaps they hire some very astute astrologers? Opinion polls rely on asking representative samples of voters which way they intend to vote, or in the case of exit polls, which way they voted.

However, on July 20, three byelections were held in the UK and the predictions of the bookies, opinion polls and even of seasoned political analysts were all over the place and in one case, unexpectedly wrong. Gentle reader, I hereby confess that my own prediction (and hope) in the upsetting case was also wide off the mark.

All three byelections were the consequences of three Tory MPs resigning from Parliament. BoJo had resigned his House of Commons seat before being chastised, punished or suspended by Parliament after its Privileges Committee inquiry found him guilty of lying to the House. Two of his supporters in Parliament also resigned their seats in the wake of his resignation. Their motive, almost certainly, was that the byelections would overturn or at least erode the Tory vote in their constituencies of Selby

and Ainstey in the North and of Somerton and Frome in the West Country.

Defeats or erosion of support in these Tory strongholds would reflect badly on Hedgie Sunak, whom they want to be Hedgie Soongone. The Tories are openly divided on the issue -- BoJo versus Hedgie, and the Bojists don't mind the party going up in flames before the next election (due by law, at the latest, in January 2025), calculating that their flying-phoenix can emerge from them. They, and a few others in Parliament, are firmly convinced that despite Hedgie's apparent statistical popularity, only BoJo can restore their electoral fortunes.

It may be whistling in the dark.

But the whistles broke into an unexpected, if feeble, melody when the byelection results were announced. The disaster for the Tories was first, the loss of Somerton and Frome, where at the last election they had a 17,000 majority, to the Liberal Democrats; and then the loss of Selby, where the Labour Party's 25-year-old candidate overturned the former Tory 20,000 majority. But then in Uxbridge, the constituency from which BoJo resigned, leaving an inheritance of a 7,000 majority, which Labour thought they would easily overcome, their candidate, like Napoleon at Waterloo, came second.

Shock, horror for Sir Keir

Starmer, but no solace did that defeat/victory bring to Hedgie and his cronies. The Labour defeat was not attributed to Hedgie's resurgent popularity, but to something called ULEZ.

The defeated Labourite, the Labour Party's leadership and oracles, and indeed the winning Tory candidate himself, all attributed the result to this ULEZ.

Yes, yes, gentle reader, contrary to the persistent convention of some Indian newspapers who throw initials about in their headlines and reports without saying what these are abbreviations for, (LOL -- see, I can do it too... --fd) I shall reveal all.

ULEZ stands for Ultra Low Emission Zone. The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, together with the mayors and governing councils of several other cities, have declared parts or all of their territories to be ULEZs. It means that old cars and heavy vehicles, whose fumes pollute the atmosphere to a greater degree than the acceptable level of, for instance, that of the humble Nissan Note that yours truly drives, will be charged an inhibiting pollution fee for driving in these zones. So, change your vehicle at considerable cost, stay out or pay!

Sadiq Khan has now proposed that the ULEZ be expanded from Inner London boroughs to the Outer ones. To the west, this would mean including the boroughs such as Hounslow, which border Uxbridge,

which will mean steep charges for non-compliant Uxbridgers' vehicles when they drive into London.

Why ULEZ? Because several medical and environmental studies calculate that up to 5,000 Londoners a year die because of the effects of this greater margin of pollution and hence, reducing pollution by restricting the flow of above-the-limit vehicles will save lives. The calculation is contradicted by its critics, who claim that the 5,000 number is based on counting people with already existing conditions, such as cardio-vascular diseases, who would have succumbed to these anyway and that the level of pollution in London is not a significant contributing factor to these deaths.

I confess I am a dedicated sceptic -- by which I mean I am extremely sceptical about the idiots who are sceptical about the heatwaves all around the world being caused by fossil-fuel-generated global warming; and I am sceptical about the head-bangers who are sceptical about the scientifically-proven benefits of vaccination -- and now about ULEZ I am with Sadiq. You are entitled to think that's because my Nissan is within the pollution limit and I don't have to pay for a new car.

The dilemma for the Labour Party now is -- should it tone down its environmental policies and leave the voters gasping for breath?

Why Work-Life Balance is required ?

By: Vinod Chandrashekhar
Dixit

Banking industry is an emerging industry in India, the entry of private sector and foreign banks have brought various essential changes in the banking industry. Work-life balance in Banks has been in the news a lot recently. What does this mean for those in HR or leadership roles? Work-life balance is the state of equilibrium where a person equally prioritizes the demands of one's career and the demands of one's personal life. Some of the common reasons that lead to a poor work-life balance includes increased responsibilities at work, Working longer hours, increased responsibilities at home&having children. Work-life balance is a concept which includes proper prioritizing between "work (career and ambition) and professional life and personal life. "Lifestyle"(health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/ meditation).

Work-life balance is great. Historically, the banking industry has been characterised by long, intense working hours. Bank employees take painful efforts to deliver to the multiple needs of

their customers. As employees are logging in more hours, work-life balance has become an increasingly important factor to overall satisfaction in the workplace.

Now a day's managing work life balance is a challenge for different lives, a good working definition of Work-both employers and employees particularly in service Life Balance is: industry where employees are loaded with work at workplace and at the same time they have to balance their Meaningful daily Achievement and Enjoyment in each personal life. When creating a schedule that works for you, think about the best way to achieve balance at work and in your personal life. Your overall physical, emotional and mental health should be your main concern. Prioritizing your health first and foremost will make you a better employee and person. Work life balance= Time management + Stress management.

The menace of work-life imbalance is noticeable in banking industry. Employees in the banks take painful effort to deliver the various needs of its customers. Work deadlines are getting

compact and the individual's jobs are loaded and added with quality output. Due to work in pressure, it becomes hard to maintain balance between professional and family life.

Work life and personal life are two sides of the of the four life quadrants: same coin. It is important to understand how key balance is to creating engaged and happy workers. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is not only important for health and relationships, but it can also improve your employee's productivity, and ultimately performance. A healthy work-life balance allows everyone to excel at work and take care of their personal wellbeing outside of the office. There are lot of benefits for work life balance as its policies provide the ability to manage work and individual commitments. It leads to improved personal and family satisfaction. It guides to have increased focus, motivation and one of the factors that affect women employees' retention in job satisfaction knowing that the family and work the company. It leads to less distraction. Directs in increased in job security due to flexibility or work

time flexibility.

Perfect work life balance is maintained by having flex working hours. A negative work/life balance can cause burnout, stress, health problems, and pressure on marital and family relationships. Because these issues can significantly affect worker productivity and output, many progressive organizations are prioritizing addressing the topic of work/life balance. There is no doubt that employers expect more from their people, which leads to them feeling more pressure to achieve greater results. These pressures appear to have reached a breaking point, as people realise that they need to achieve better balance in their lives.

Work life balance provides an opportunity to balance work and life - usually a relaxed work culture. What we need is to adopt and encourage flexible working hours to meet employees' needs. Everyone is super friendly and smart.

(Vinod Chandrashekhar
Dixit)

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Corporator Ritu Choudhary donates Tarpauls to needy families in Ward 7

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: With the onset of the rainy season, many families in the area are facing hardships due to inadequate shelter and protection from heavy rains.

Understanding the critical need for assistance during this challenging time, a commendable effort was done to make a positive impact on the lives of the less fortunate, JMC Corporator Ritu Choudhary, took a significant step forward by donating tarpaulins to poor and needy people in ward no. 7, Jammu.

Corporator Ritu Choudhary expressed her deep commitment to supporting the community during difficult times. "Every individual deserves a safe and secure environment, and it is our duty to help those in need. By providing tarpaulins, we hope to alleviate some of the hardships faced by the vulnerable residents of Ward No. 7,"



she stated.

The tarpaulins arranged by Religious tourism and Heritage Cultural Trust Chairman Mahant Rajesh Bittu to provide much-needed relief and protection to vulnerable communities during the challenging rainy season.

Recognizing the hardships faced by those with inadequate shelter, Corporator Ritu Choudhary expressed her heartfelt commitment to supporting those in need during difficult times. "We believe that every individual deserves a safe

and secure environment, especially during inclement weather. By providing tarpaulins, we hope to offer immediate assistance and alleviate some of the burdens faced by the less fortunate in our community," she said.

Mahant Rajesh Bittu, Chairman Religious tourism and Heritage Cultural further reiterated the Trust's dedication to providing tarpaulins during the rainy season, ensuring families stay safe and dry amidst adverse weather conditions. The

Trust's ongoing mission is to empower and uplift marginalized communities, and they welcome continued support from individuals and businesses alike.

The act of generosity and compassion shown by Ritu Choudhary and Mahant Rajesh Bittu has deeply touched the hearts of the recipients. People in the community expressed their heartfelt gratitude towards Ritu Choudhary for the tarpaulins that have made a positive difference in their lives during this challenging period.

DDC Mahore attends Multimedia Exhibition of CBC on Seva, Sushasan & Garib Kalyan

TOP NEWS REPORT

MAHORE, Jul 29: District Development Council Member, Mahore, Sh. Mohammad Israel said, the Multimedia Exhibition organized at Mahore today by Central Bureau of Communication, Udhampur is the best initiative of Government of India as the public in the far-flung areas like Mahore is able to get the first hand information regarding Government of India Schemes and Programs and their implementation. Sh. Israel said this while addressing the concluding day of the Multimedia Exhibition on Seva, Sushasan & Garib Kalyan, G20 and Mission LiFE at Mahore, a far-flung area in district Reasi.

Israel said, these kinds of exhibitions on the schemes and programs of Government of India should be organized on regular intervals so that the general public especially in the far-flung areas like Mahore get to know about the benefits of these schemes.

Principal Degree College Mahore, Sh. Ashok



Kumar said, the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all, and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower.

Khurshheed Yousef, Field Publicity Officer, Central Bureau of Communication, Udhampur in his address said, the government is working towards the upliftment of the poor in the country through its various centrally sponsored schemes and programs and the pro-poor schemes of the govern-

ment have brought a revolution in the country. Sheikh Mudasir Amin, Media & Communications Officer in his address said, the revolutionary step taken by the government has been the DBT (Direct Benefits Transfer) which has helped government to save 2.23 lakh crore rupees going to the middlemen ensuring accountability and transparency in the implementation of Government of India Schemes and Programs.

Bodhraj, Community Health Officer, Mahore informed about various steps taken by the health department to combat drug abuse in the area, various immunization programs conducted in

the area. Sh. Mohamad Ashraf, District ASHA Coordinator informed about implementation of various programs in the area coordinated by ASHA workers.

Besides students, teachers, locals, employees of Jal Shakti & Health Department, ASHA workers, the concluding day of the event was attended by Principal HSS Mahore, Sh. Riyaz Husain. The whole event was coordinated by TA (S) CBC Udhampur, Gurnaam Singh.

During the event, on the spot quiz competition was organised on Seva Sushasan & Garib Kalyan and patriotic songs & cultural programs were performed by the students.

Shiv Sena seeks action against Pakistan' Narco-terrorism, issuance of white paper on missing daughter of J&K

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit today demanded stringent action against Pakistan on narco-terrorism and the issuance of a white paper by the Central Modi government on the number of missing daughters in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing media at Press Club, Manish Sahni, President Shiv Sena (UBT), J&K, stated that after the abrogation of Article 370, nearly ten thousand daughters of Jammu and Kashmir have gone missing, as revealed in a response to a question in Parliament during 2019-21. He expressed concern that this period coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing nationwide lockdown, which might have exacerbated the situation further.

Sahni stressed the need to expose the sinister faces behind this heinous conspiracy and



demanding stern action against Pakistan's sponsored narcoterrorism, which has inflicted misery upon Jammu and Kashmir. He called for crushing Pakistan's venomous agenda forever. He emphasized that the Pakistan has already admitted to using drones to spread narcoterrorism in the region.

Sahni stated that if the Modi government can conduct surgical strikes on Pakistan after the martyrdom of 40 sol-

diers in Pulwama, then after Pakistan's acceptance of narcoterrorism, a direct strike against this poisonous menace is the need of the hour.

Sahni also urged all opposition parties, especially members of the "INDIA" forum, to create pressure in both houses of Parliament to issue a white paper on the missing daughters of Jammu and Kashmir and to identify and apprehend the culprits behind this grave issue.

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Hundreds of prominent personalities having affiliations with various political parties, ex servicemen, and other social personalities representing various communities like Gujjars, Bakkarwals, Jats, Sikhs, SCs, STs, OBCs etc. from Nowshera joined BJP in a programme held at BJP Headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

They belonged to Narian, Sangpur, Dhagani, Rani Badetar, Rajal, Maanpur Dhanaka, Langar, Bhawani, Chowki Handan, Kalal, Bajjan Bain, Kangri, Chingus, Laam, Ladoka, Raipur Patta, Raipur Kamila, Hanjana, Laam Border and other areas of Nowshera Assembly Segment.

They were welcomed into the partyfold by Jammu and Kashmir BJP President Ravinder Raina in presence of Nowshera district Prabhari Sanjay Baru, BJP District President Neena

Hundreds of prominent political, social personalities from Nowshera join BJP



Sharma, District General Secretaries Sukhdev Singh & Pritam Sharma, Mandal Presidents Ajay Choudhary, Shubham Lakhanpal, Harjit Singh, Ravinder Singh Nano & Rakesh Raina.

Prominent among the new entrants included NC Block (Chingus) President Sanjay Bakshi, Honorary Captain (Retd) Tilak Raj (Nowshera), Capt (Retd) Ravinder Raingh (Qila Darhal), Jaswal Singh (Panch), Ex. Naib Sarpanch Mohd. Iqbal, Panch Haq Nawaz, Kuldeep Choudhary, Satvir Choudhary

(Kalal), Ex. Havaladar Vikramjeet Choudhary, Som Lal, Tarsem Lal, Sat Paul Choudhary, Vikas Khokhar, Rakesh Choudhary, Anil Choudhary, Manoj Chouhan, Rakesh umar, Vikram jeet, Naib Sarpanch Kamal Sharma, and others.

Ravinder Raina, in his welcome address to those embracing BJP, praised the Army personnel for their bravery to serve the Nation on the frontiers. He said that the citizens of a great Nation could think of development and worldly plea-

tures, when a Jawan sacrifices own life very far away from near and dear ones. He said that the BJP firmly believes that these personnel will serve the nation with the same zeal and valour while discharging their services in the party.

"With each passing day, more and more people are joining BJP as they have themselves seen the good governance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and want to strengthen BJP so that the wheel of development and welfare continues to benefit every region and

religion", said Ravinder Raina and added that 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' has become reality on the ground during the last 9 years.

Ravinder Raina also spoke on various welfare schemes launched for the benefit of each and every section of the society. He said that an era of social change and political empowerment of discriminated sections has been initiated under PM Narendra Modi, thus ensuring their participation in the decision-making bodies of Indian Democracy.

New entrants shared their pleasure on the occasion and said that today, Modi ji has become the voice of the underprivileged and those who were neglected for decades. They said that they would feel proud while serving the society under the banner of BJP which is an army of dedicated patriots led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Only NC can protect rights of SC/ST & OBC community in J&K: Ajeet Bhagat

TOP NEWS REPORT

KISHTWAR, Jul 29: National Conference (NC) Senior Leader Ajeet Bhagat said that the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has always committed to protect the rights of the SC/ST and OBC community in the past and shall continue to do the same in future too.

Bhagat said that the BJP has all along played with the aspirations and sentiments of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He criticized the BJP for cheating the SC/ST and OBC community by making hollow promises prior to 2014 elections.

He categorically said that the present regime has miserably failed to address the issues of SC/ST and OBC community.

The senior NC Leader said that except lip ser-

vice nothing has been provided to the aforesaid community as implementation of 27 percent reservation in Jammu and Kashmir as per Mandal Commission report is still a distant dream though every time the government is assured to fulfill this demand.

Bhagat also said that the issue of political reservation and OBC certificates is also hanging in balance as no one in the administration is giving priority to the plights of OBCs.

Ajeet said that it was the late Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah who ensured that laws brought for granting land rights to the tiller were implemented in letter and spirit as a result of which the down trodden people including the population of Schedule Caste community got a

huge relief as the members of this community were among the main beneficiaries of this historic decision.

He said that there is no governance on the ground as people are being deprived of basic facilities. The present Jammu and Kashmir Government has miserably failed to stand on the expectations of people of the state.

Bhagat expressed great disappointment against the Jammu and Kashmir Administration for not showing any serious concern for the general public of this region who are facing a mountain of problems and issues pertaining to development, provision of basic facilities besides a lot others.

He said that the prime duty of the Government is to facilitate the living conditions of the people

but it is an irony that the incumbent Jammu and Kashmir Administration is taking every decision that is anti-people and adds further to the load of the miseries thrust upon them due to the wrong policies of the government.

The Senior NC asserted that only National Conference is capable of getting rid of people's miseries if voted to power.

He urged the party cadre to conduct outreach programmes in their respective areas and make them aware about how BJP has cheated them on the promises made by it in 2014 before going to elections. He directed the party cadre to work relentlessly as the party's foot soldiers in their respective areas and strengthen NC at all levels.

Ordinance against SC verdict is a blot on federal values of constitution: AAP

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Sr. AAP leaders Jammu Province, Major General Retd, R.S. Jamwal, Farooq Ahmed Banday, Ram Singh Chauhan, Nirmal Mahna, Kuldeep Kumar Rao, Ravinder Singh, Sarpanch, Amit Langer, S.S. Jamwal, Agya Kour, Ram Pal Khajuria, Sandeep Parihar, Romesh Lal Bhagat, Suresh Bhagat, Ashni Mattoo, Ranjodh Singh and Sukhdev Kumar Sangral, in a joint statement issued here on Saturday, said that the centre promulgated an ordinance to nullify the Supreme Court's order that had given Delhi AAP government control over officers dealing with subjects other than public order, police and land, and assigned the superintending jurisdic-

tion over the entire officer cadre in the National Capital Territory to the Lieutenant Governor.

They said that centre's sole motive to bring this ordinance is to snatch powers from Kejriwal government and the Modi government had made it clear that it did not care for the people's mandate or for the directive of the apex court and it will bypass the elected government of Delhi.

They loudly condemned this cowardly act of the centre, regarding this ordinance against Supreme Court's verdict and term it a blot on the federal values of the constitution and warning to the people of Delhi that "even if the BJP receives an electoral drubbing at their hands, they would still rule through the back-

door."

The AAP leaders further said that the verdict of the Apex court was a big gift for the residents of Delhi.

It was a big blow to the central government headed by Modi which has misused its powers by interfering in the democratically elected government of Delhi and other states where BJP is not in power.

The AAP J&K has described the same as frustration of BJP due to its anti people and policy of vendetta for the opposition Parties.

The majority of the policies advocated by BJP at the centre are confederate and against the laws & the Indian constitution. The laws pertaining to farmers, GST, Agniveer, NEP 2020, Trade and communication, Foreign Policy.

In India 99% people are dying of starvation & 1% is dying of indigestion. This multiple revolution in India is worse than the French Revolution of 1789. The victory of the opposition Parties in recent elections in Karnataka, UP and Punjab speaks volume of the anti-incumbency in India. This corrupt dispensation needs to be ousted from the power.

Giving exclusive powers to a person having no military experience, not a subject expert, over-aged and over stay is not in the interest of the Nation.

Giving favour to Adani and other favorite industrialists and privatization of many sectors is a great blunder in our democracy. The women & the Youths can't be befooled now on communal agenda.

Punjabi-origin Neelam Gill says 'Not dating Leonardo DiCaprio', but in a relationship with his good friend'

Indian-British model Neelam Gill has put romance rumours with Leonardo DiCaprio to rest, People magazine reported.

The model and DiCaprio were photographed boating together in Sardinia on Friday, fuelling the rumours that the two were dating. Gill took to Instagram and made an announcement via a post.

She wrote, "Just to clear up any rumours. I am not Leonardo DiCaprio's new flame. In fact, I am in a committed relationship with his good friend, and have been for many months now."

She added, "The only reason we have been pictured in the same vicinity is because I have been there with my partner. I hope this clears up all the false stories," she concluded.

DiCaprio and Gill were last seen together in the company of 'The Wolf of Wall Street' actor's other rumoured lover, Gigi Hadid.

In June, the models were the first to arrive at an exclusive London restaurant, followed by DiCaprio and his parents shortly after," as per People.



An exclusive source told People earlier this month that DiCaprio and Hadid were "definitely dating." "They were in separate groups, but they partied together for two nights."

"They were flirty, and Gigi looked happy," the insider claimed.

"It's pretty obvious that they are seeing each other. Maybe not exclusively, but they are definitely dating," the source

added.

"It's just always very predictable: Leo shows up to parties first, then Gigi second. It's like a game."

The source said that inside the parties "there is subtle touching and lots of flirting" when "they are able to be more private."

And Hadid typically "stays by his side".

Meanwhile, Gill continues to make headlines for her gorgeous appearances and fashion projects. Back in 2022, she attended the LuisaViaRoma for Unicef Gala in a bright yellow gown, showing skin from all angles.

The British Indian model said in an interview with The Guardian why she "would never complain about what I do". "You fly to all these different places, get off the plane, have to be ready to shoot and look amazing, then you fly back out somewhere else and do it all over again," she explained in 2017. "I spend a lot of time alone in hotel rooms and airports; I don't go out; I can count my pals on one hand...But I will always be thankful."

Bhumi Pednekar glitters in gold at IndiaCouture Week



Actress Bhumi Pednekar on Thursday dazzled in gold as a show-

stopper for ace designer Varun Bahl at India Couture Week 2023.

She made heads turn in a gold dress, carrying the stunning ensemble with utmost sophistication and grace. Bhumi's look was accentuated with statement jewellery and floral patchwork on the outfit.

Varun Bahl's collection 'Inner Bloom' celebrated flora and fauna. It showcases embroidery with beautiful 3D flowers that are synonymous with the brand, focussing on young and playful silhouettes that bring a fresh and contemporary feel to the designs in vivid hues.

His collection also includes bridal couture pieces that cater to the contemporary and modern bride. The designs are dreamy, experimental, fun, and edgy, while maintaining a strong emphasis on fine handwork. India Couture Week 2023 began on July 25 and will run till August 2.

Ajooni and Na Umra Ki Seema Ho complete one year

Star Bharat recently held a double celebration on the sets of Na Umra Ki Seema Ho and Ajooni. Both shows have not only completed 300 episodes but have also completed one year together.

The lead actress of Ajooni, Ayushi Khurana, says, "The entire team of Ajooni has achieved this milestone together. This is all because of the love we receive from our audience. I want to express my gratitude to the viewers for showering so much love on Ajooni. I hope we continue to entertain the audience and they keep appreciating our efforts."

The lead actress of Na Umra Ki Seema Ho, Rachna Mistry, says, "I am delighted that we have completed one year and 300 episodes of the show. I hope that the audience continues to shower their love on our show."



Having once dreamt of becoming a cricketer, Abir Chatterjee is now a seasoned actor. To be seen in Bengali movie Fatafati next, he wants to push for a world where body positivity is a norm

Box-office numbers matter, but they can't be the sole criterion for judging the might of a film, believes actor Abir Chatterjee, a popular name in Bengali cinema. He has many known shows and films, including Byomkesh Pawrbo, Hrid Majhare, Ami Joy Chatterjee and The Royal Bengal Tiger, to his credit.

Born to actors Phalguni Chatterjee and Rumki Chatterjee, Abir was sporty and like many a kids of 80s and 90s dreamt of donning India's cricket jersey. Unfortunately, that was not to be and post an MBA and a career in the stock market he chose his passion, acting, over profession. He shares, "All my family is into performing arts, no one ever thought that I could ever choose the same. But all my life being exposed to the best of cinema world-



wide prepped me for it indirectly."

"As an actor, I want to break stereotypes," says Abir, who plays a supporting spouse to his onscreen wife Phulora Bhaduri (played by

Ritabhari Chakraborty) in Bengali film Fatafati. "The film breaks stereotypes about body-shaming, but many asked me why I took up a secondary role in a film where a heroine is the lead. As

an actor, I want to push for a world where body positivity is a norm and that the hero/heroine divide is obliterated," says Abir.

He plays the character of Bachaspati Bhaduri, who fully supports his wife. "Bachaspati's wife is on the plump side and has grown up being shamed for it all her life. The pressure becomes even more after marriage, as now she has to be a mother and must lose weight. But Bachaspati's loves her for who she is and supports her every dream, not out of duty but love and care."

Abir liked that his character had spunk. "He is a simple man, not cunning but clever; not aggressive but knowing fully well when and where to speak. I had fun being part of this story."

Number game Having been part of television shows and

Bengali cinema since 2009, many hits have come his way, but he insists the numbers don't matter that much. "It's encouraging when films do well, but growing up we didn't care to see if the film was doing brisk business. We based our film selection on favourite stars. Now everybody talks numbers."

Based in Kolkata, Abir debuted in national arena with Avrodh 2. "It was when the world was coming out of the shadows of Covid and it was an incredible experience." Abir has a number of films on hand, including Raktabej and a relationship drama Deep Fridge. As for Hindi projects, he is waiting for the right script. "Avrodh 2 was a fantastic start; I need the next to match it." (Fatafati streams on SonyLiv on August 4.)

Rajveer Deol, Paloma Dhillon-starrer 'Dono' new poster unveiled

The film is helmed by Sooraj Barjatya's son Avinash

Makers of the upcoming romantic film 'Dono' unveiled a new poster featuring debutant actors Rajveer Deol and Paloma Dhillon.

Taking to Instagram, Rajshri Productions shared the poster which they captioned, "When friend of the dulhan met friend of the dulha! #Dono #InCinemasSoon #Dono, TEASER OUT NOW. Directed by @avnish.barjatya, Starring @the_rajveer_deol & @palomadhillon."

In the poster, both the actor could be seen smiling together in casual outfits.

The film is helmed by Sooraj Barjatya's son Avinash. The makers unveiled the film's teaser that has left moviegoers excited.

'Dono' marks the acting debut of Sunny Deol's son Rajveer and Poonam Dhillon's daughter Paloma.

The story seems to take place at a wedding where Dev (Rajveer), friend of the bride meets Meghna (Paloma), friend of the groom.

Avinash will helm Rajshri's 59th film as a director, having previously worked as an Assistant Director on the mega-blockbuster Prem Ratan Dhan Payo (2015) and as an Associate Director on the critically acclaimed Uunchai (2022).

In 2020, Rajveer's grandfather and veteran actor Dharmendra shared the update on social media. "Introducing my grandson #RajveerDeol to the world of



cinema along with #Avinashbarjatya directorial debut," wrote the 'Dharam Veer' actor. "I humbly request you all to shower the same love and affection on both the kids as you have on me. Good luck and Godbless#Rajshrifilms #barjatyas #Deols #RajveerDeol," he added. The film is helmed by Avinash

Barjatya and produced by Kamal Kumar Barjatya, Late Rajkumar Barjatya, Ajit Kumar Barjatya, and Jyoti Deshpande. Creative production is led by Sooraj Barjatya for the film which will be in cinemas soon.

The official release date of the film is still awaited.

Nora Fatehi shares excitement on sharing screen with Varun Tej in 'Matka': It is truly an exceptional moment for me

Actor Nora Fatehi is all set to make her Telugu film debut opposite Varun Tej in Karuna Kumar's directorial 'Matka'. The actor-dancer shared her excitement and expressed gratitude for the opportunity.

As per a statement, Nora will be seen in a vital role in the film. She will also do a special dance number.

Sharing the excitement, Nora said in a statement, "This is truly an exceptional moment for me. Excited to share screen with Varun Tej. Thank you to my director Karuna Kumar, the producers Vyra Entertainment for making me a part of this film. I seek your love and best wishes as I start this exhilarating journey."

Earlier today, makers unveiled the official title, which was tentatively titled as 'VT14'. Titled 'Matka', the film also stars Nora Fatehi and Meenakshi Choudary. On Thursday, the team attended the film's mahurat shot.

Sharing the film's



poster, Varun took to Instagram and wrote, "My next! Need all your love." The movie is set

in the period backdrop of the 1960s in Vizag. Varun Tej will also be seen in the action thriller

movie 'Gandeevadhari Arjuna'. He recently shared the film's teaser. The teaser begins with a suspenseful scene in which someone looking for "File 13", and then comes Varun Tej as Arjuna. As Varun Tej's agent character readies to set out on a crucial mission to save Nassar, who is being targeted at a UN Summit centred on climate change.

It's not disclosed why Sakshi Vaidya's character refused to collaborate with Varun Tej.

Sharing the video, he wrote, "Here is the teaser of #GandeevadhariArjuna. Hope you like it!"

Recently, Varun Tej shared the pre-teaser and captioned it, "Here is the pre-teaser of #GandeevadhariArjuna I bet the teaser will have you in overdrive. Coming soon. The clip showcased some hardcore action sequences of the film. The film, starring Varun Tej in the lead role, is all set to hit theatres on August 25. It is directed by Praveen Sattaru.

On Muharram, PM Modi Pays Tribute To Imam Hussain, Recalls His Sacrifices

Muharram 2023: Muslims across the world, especially Shias, commemorate the death of Imam Hussain on this day in the battle of Karbala. Better known as "Ashura", it is the 10th day of the Islamic month of Muharram.

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Imam Hussain today, saying his courage and commitment to the ideals of justice and human dignity are noteworthy.



day of the Islamic month of Muharram. "We recall the sacrifices made by Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS).

His courage and commitment to the ideals of justice and human dignity are noteworthy," PM Modi said on Twitter.

CBI registers FIR, takes over probe from state police in Manipur viral video case



NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): The Central Bureau of Investigation on Saturday formally registered an FIR in connection with the case relating to the viral video of two women being paraded naked by a mob in Manipur, official sources said. The probe agency has taken over the FIR registered by the Manipur police in the case and launched its own probe, they said,

adding that the action had been taken following the agency receiving a formal notification in this regard. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Thursday had informed the Supreme Court that the CBI would take over the probe in the case. The government had also said that it had a "zero-tolerance policy" towards crimes against women and requested the Supreme Court to

direct the trial to be conducted outside Manipur. In an affidavit presented by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla to the Supreme Court, the Centre has said the decision to hand over the case to the CBI was made after consulting the Manipur government. A two-month-old video of two women of Kuki-Zomi community being paraded naked by a mob in Manipur surfaced on the internet on July 19. The incident happened on May 4 in Kangpokpi district, a day after violence broke out in the north-eastern state. The video has sparked huge outrage. The Manipur police have so far apprehended seven accused in the case.

Those who run 'nafrat ki dukan'...: PM hits out at Opposition over language politics

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam at old Pragati Maidan's Bharat Mandapam in Delhi, to mark the three years of the launch of the new National Education Policy (NEP). During his visit, the prime minister also interacted with students and released the first installment of funds under the PM SHRI Scheme. Delivering the inaugu-

ral address at the event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi slammed regional political parties and said the 'hate shops' of such parties will get shut. "Bhasha ki rajneeti karke nafrat ki dukaan chalane walon ki dukan band ho jayegi" (Those running their hate shops through politics of language will get shut), PM Modi said. Further, PM Modi said, "Judging youngsters on the basis of their language, rather than their talent, is the biggest

injustice." "The world is looking at India as a nursery of new possibilities. Many countries are approaching us to open IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) campuses there. Two IIT campuses -- one in Tanzania and one in Abu Dhabi -- are already about to start operations. Various global universities are also reaching out to us, expressing their interest in setting up campuses in India," PM Modi said. "The NEP aims at

making India a hub of research and innovation. The policy has given equal importance to traditional knowledge systems and futuristic technology," the prime minister said. Modi also asked schools to make students aware of subjects such as disaster management, climate change and clean energy. The schools under the scheme will nurture students in a way that

they become engaged, productive and contributing citizens to build an equitable, inclusive and pluralistic society as envisaged under the NEP. The prime minister also released education and skill curriculum books translated into 12 Indian languages. The two-day Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam is being held at Bharat Mandapam at the old Pragati Maidan in Delhi.

Amit Shah launches book on Abdul Kalam, says nation advancing in space tech under PM Modi

Addressing the launch event of the book, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Memories Never Die, in Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram, Union Home Amit Shah hailed Kalam for his yeoman services to India's space technology.

RAMESWARAM, Jul 29 (Agencies): Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership the nation is making giant strides in space technology, a vision nurtured by iconic scientist and late President APJ Abdul Kalam, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said here on Saturday. Addressing the launch event of the book "Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Memories Never Die," here, Shah hailed Kalam for his yeoman services to India's space technology. Shah said, "Under PM Modi's leadership opportunities in space science for our students, youth and their startups are open. APJ Abdul Kalam's dream of achievements in space science will be accom-



plished by PM Modi's innovations and new initiatives. And I believe that India will lead the entire world in the field of space science." Following the late former President's footsteps, under PM Modi's leadership, the nation launched 55 spacecraft missions, 50 launch vehicle missions and 11

student satellites, Shah noted. A record 104 satellites were launched (PSLV-C37, Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) in a single flight and the re-entry (to earth's atmosphere) experiment of a satellite was also successfully completed, he outlined. Amit Shah addressed

a rally here on Friday and flagged off the state-wide padayatra 'En Mann En Makkal' (My Land, My People) of his party's state unit president K Annamalai. Rameswaram is the home town of the former President Abdul Kalam (1931-2015). Tracing the life and times of the former President, Shah said Kalam, who began his life as a 'paper boy' delivering newspapers later himself made headlines through his work for the nation and eventually assumed the high office of the President of India. Kalam demonstrated probity in public life by his action, and that explains people remembering him as 'people's president'. He recalled that during Kalam's Presidency,

BJP rejigs team for Lok Sabha polls: Tariq Mansoor named vice president in big Pasmanda Muslim push; Sanjay Bandi, Anil Antony also in

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): The BJP on Saturday revamped the national team of office-bearers and appointed Tariq Mansoor, a leading Pasmanda Muslim from Uttar Pradesh and a former vice chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University as national vice president among 13. Mansoor's appointment is the top hallmark of BJP chief JP Nadda's new team which also gives place to MP Sanjay Bandi, who was recently dropped as Telangana BJP chief, and Anil Antony, the son of Congress veteran AK Antony. Anil had joined the BJP recently and will contest the next Lok Sabha election. Nadda has finalised 13 national vice presidents (as against 12 previously); kept the number of general secretaries unchanged by dropping Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra in charge CT Ravi and Dilip Saikia from Assam. Sanjay



Bandi (Telangana) and Radhamohan Agarwal (UP) have replaced Ravi and Saikia in the new team. Among national vice presidents, Nadda has retained former Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh, Rajasthan ex-CM Vasundhara Raje, Jharkhand ex-CM Raghubar Das, Saudan Singh, Baijayant Panda, Rekha Verma, DK Aruna (Telangana), M Chuba Ao (Nagaland) and Abdulla Kutty (Kerala). New entrants in the list are Saroj Pande from poll-bound Chhattisgarh, Laxmikant Bajpai from UP, Lata Usendi from Chhattisgarh and

Tariq Mansoor, currently member, UP Legislative Council. Former minister Radha Mohan Singh, former Bengal BJP chief Dilip Ghosh, and Gujarat Lok Sabha MP Bharatiben Shyal have been dropped as national vice presidents. Arun Singh, Kailash Vijayvargiya, Sudhyant Gautam, Tarun Chugh, Vinod Tawde and Sunil Bansal stay as general secretaries. BL Santosh, BJP general secretary organisation -- a link between the RSS and the party -- also stays, so does his deputy joint general secretary organisation Shiv

Prakash. The number of secretaries remains the same -- 13. Those retained in the list are Vijaya Rahatkar, Maharashtra; Satya Kumar, Andhra Pradesh; Arvind Menon, Delhi; OP Dhruve, Madhya Pradesh; Anupam Hazra, West Bengal; Alka Gurjar, Rajasthan; Asha Lakra, Jharkhand; Rituraj Sinha, Bihar; and Narendra Singh Raina, Punjab. Pankaja Munde, the sulking daughter of late BJP veteran Gopinath Munde, has been brought in as national BJP secretary from Maharashtra along with Kamakhya Prasad from Assam, Surendra Singh Nagar, a Rajya Sabha MP from UP, and Anil Antony from Kerala. Among those dropped as secretaries are Vinod Sonkar, Sunil Deodhar and Harish Dwivedi (Lok Sabha MP from UP's Basti). Deodhar was Naren-

dra Modi's campaign manager in Varanasi in 2014. The revamp is in line with PM Narendra Modi's public stand of empowering Pasmanda Muslims, who are OBCs among the Muslims. Recently, the Yogi Adityanath government in UP had nominated Mansoor to the state legislative council. Earlier, Yogi had named Pasmanda Muslim Danish Ansari in his cabinet. Inclusion of Bandi as general secretary is in recognition of his ground work in Telangana. Several new appointments from Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and UP are meant to boost party prospects in these states ahead of state and Lok Sabha polls. Nadda has retained Rajesh Agarwal as treasurer. The new team has 13 vice presidents, eight general secretaries and 13 secretaries.

6 killed, 20 injured as two buses collide in Maharashtra

MUMBAI, Jul 29 (Agencies): Six people, including three women, were killed and around 20 injured as two private buses collided in Maharashtra's Buldhana district in the early hours of Saturday, officials said. All the victims were returning to Hingoli after completing the Amarnath Yatra, said Buldhana Superintendent of Police Sunil Kadasne. The injured are admitted to a hospital, he

said. The accident occurred around 2.30 am on a fly-over in Malkapur town on NH 53, said another official. One of the buses involved in the accident was carrying a group of people returning to Hingoli after completing the Amarnath Yatra, while the other private bus was going towards Nashik, said officials. The bus going towards Nashik tried to overtake

a truck and ended up coming in front of the second bus, resulting in a collision, they said. Photos from the scene showed extensive damage to one of the two buses. "The injured may be discharged from the hospital today. We are in the process of registering an FIR," the SP said. The accident disrupted vehicular movement on the road for some time.

4 killed due to electrocution during Muharram preparation in Jharkhand

BOKARO, Jul 29 (Agencies): Four people were killed and 10 injured on Saturday morning as they came in contact with a high-tension wire while preparing for a Muharram procession in Jharkhand's Bokaro district, police said. The incident occurred at Khetko village under the Petarwar police station limits, around 80 km from the state capital Ranchi, when the pole of their religious flag came in contact with a live wire, Bokaro Superintendent of Police Priyadarshi Alok said.

"The incident occurred around 6 am on Saturday while they were preparing for a Muharram procession. They were carrying a religious flag and its pole was made of iron. It somehow came in contact with a high-tension electric wire of 11,000 volts," the SP told agency. All the injured people were taken to a nearby hospital, he said. Eight of them were referred to the Bokaro General Hospital where four succumbed to their injuries and the condition of three was said to be critical, the officer added.

The district collector said a hotel building completely collapsed and three-four nearby houses got damaged partially due to the impact of the explosion. Rescue personnel are yet to figure out the total number of people trapped under the rubble. However, police are yet to find out the cause of the explosion.

2 Gujarat teens celebrate Class 10 results with dip in canal, drown

KHEDA, Jul 29 (Agencies): Two teenagers drowned while taking a bath in a canal in Gujarat's Kheda. Three friends, Mohit Kumar Kedar Prasad Bhagat (17), Jaisaval Pranjal Ajaybhai (16) and Sachin Jasangbhai, had gone to the canal to celebrate Mohit's Class 10 results, where two of them drowned.

After Mohit passed his exams, the trio decided to go to the Meshwo canal, flowing near the border of Mahij village, for a swim. Initially, they intended to bathe in the smaller canal, but later changed their minds and ventured into the larger one. However, due to the high water levels, Sachin decided not to join his friends for

a swim. Mohit and Pranjal were enjoying themselves in the canal when, after a while, Sachin realised that both his friends were missing from sight. Locals and police launched a search operation and the bodies of Mohit and Pranjal were recovered after five hours.

8 killed, buildings collapse as explosion rips through Tamil Nadu cracker factory

CHENNAI, Jul 29 (Agencies): Eight people have been killed and several others sustained injuries after an explosion took place at a firecracker factory in Tamil Nadu's Krishnagiri. The impact of the explosion that took place on Saturday morning was so high that a nearby hotel building collapsed and four other buildings

were partially damaged, leaving many people trapped. Police said 12 critically injured people have been admitted to the hospital so far. Fire tenders and rescue teams, who rushed to the spot immediately after the incident, have been trying to douse the fire and rescue people trapped inside.

The district collector said a hotel building completely collapsed and three-four nearby houses got damaged partially due to the impact of the explosion. Rescue personnel are yet to figure out the total number of people trapped under the rubble. However, police are yet to find out the cause of the explosion.

Biden openly acknowledges 7th grandchild, the daughter of son Hunter and an Arkansas woman

Hunter Biden's paternity was established by DNA testing after Roberts sued for child support

WASHINGTON, Jul 29 (Agencies): President Joe Biden for the first time publicly acknowledged his seventh grandchild, a four-year-old girl fathered by his son Hunter with an Arkansas woman, Lunden Roberts.

"Our son Hunter and Navy's mother, Lunden, are working together to foster a relationship that is in the best interests of their daughter, preserving her privacy as much as possible going forward," Biden said in a statement. It was his first acknowledgement of the child.

This is not a political issue, it's a family matter," he said. "Jill and I only want what is best for all of our grandchildren, including Navy."

Hunter Biden's paternity was established by DNA testing after Roberts sued for child support, and the two parties recently resolved outstand-



ing child support issues. The president's son wrote about his encounter with Roberts in his 2021 memoir, saying it came while he was deep in addiction to alcohol and drugs, including crack cocaine.

"I had no recollection of our encounter," he wrote. "That's how little connection I had with

anyone. I was a mess, but a mess I've taken responsibility for." An attorney for Roberts did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The president, who has made a commitment to family central to his public persona, has faced increasing criticism from political rivals and pundits for

failing to acknowledge the granddaughter. According to a person familiar with the matter, he was taking the cue from his son while the legal proceedings played out. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private matters.

Hunter Biden has four other children, including a son, Beau, born by his wife Melissa Cohen in 2020. He was named after the president's late son who died of cancer in 2015, leaving behind two children.

Biden's grandchildren have played a distinctive role in his presidency, often accompanying the president or first lady on trips and making regular visits to the White House. The president has also credited his grandchildren with persuading him to challenge then-President Donald Trump for the White House in 2020.

4 air crew members are missing after Australian army helicopter ditched off Australia's coast

BRISBANE, Jul 29 (Agencies): Four air crew members were missing after an Australian army helicopter ditched into waters off the Queensland state coast during joint military exercises with the United States, officials said on Saturday.

The MRH-90 Taipan helicopter went down near Hamilton Island, a Great Barrier Reef tourist resort, at about 10.30 pm on Friday, Defence Minister Richard Marles said.

A search was under way to find the crew, and their families had been notified, officials said.

A rescue helicopter

reported spotting debris on Saturday morning near Dent Island in the Whitsunday Islands group.

The Taipan was taking part in Talisman Sabre, a biennial joint US-Australian military exercise that is largely based in Queensland. This year's exercise involves 13 nations and more than 30,000 military personnel.

Marles said the helicopter had ditched, which refers to an emergency landing on water. He said it was taking part in a mission that involved a second helicopter, which imme-

diately started a search and rescue operation.

"Defence exercises, which are so necessary for the readiness of our defence force, are serious. They carry risk," Marles told reporters in Brisbane. "As we desperately hope for better news during the course of this day we are reminded about the gravity of the act which comes with wearing our nation's uniform."

Defence Force Chief Gen Angus Campbell said Queensland state authorities, members of the public and US military personnel were taking part in the search.

Sikh Cop In New York Not Allowed To Grow Beard For Wedding: Report

Sikh men are required to not trim their beard, a custom that clashes with the New York state police grooming rules of keeping a shaved look.

NEW YORK, Jul 29 (Agencies): The New York State Police has been accused of barring one of its personnel, a Sikh, to grow a beard despite state law requiring employers to allow workers to follow religious grooming obligations, reported Associated Press.

Charanjot Tiwana, a State Trooper, had sought to grow his beard half an inch for his wedding in 2022, but was denied due to safety reasons regarding the use of a gas mask, according to New York State Troopers Police Benevolent Association.

Sikh men are required to wear a turban and not trim their hair or beard as part of their religious commitment, a custom that clashes with the state police grooming rules of keeping short hair and a shaved look.

Mr Tiwana, a state trooper for six years, had not formally sought permission to wear a turban while on duty in view of the refusal to grow a beard, said the union's president Charlie Murphy.

"All New Yorkers, including law enforcement officers, must be free from employer oppression when practicing their religion," AP quoted him as saying.

A NYS spokesperson has declined to comment on the details though the



cops confirmed Mr Tiwana's request.

Deanna Cohen, police spokesperson, said the department values diversity and inclusion among its ranks and engages in reasonable accommodation process. According to her, NYSP is also working on a turban policy.

Law enforcement agencies in the US have in recent years eased grooming rules implemented in the early 20th century partly to bring a military-like look to the officers, or faced court actions.

In 2022, a federal court ruled that the Marine Corps cannot deny entry to Sikh recruits sporting a beard and a turban.

French President Macron holds discussions with Wickremesinghe during historic Sri Lanka visit

COLOMBO, Jul 29 (Agencies): French President Emmanuel Macron pledged strong support for the island nation's debt restructuring and discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations with his Sri Lankan counterpart Ranil Wickremesinghe during a historic visit to Colombo.

The first-ever visit by a French president to Sri Lanka took place as the two countries celebrate 75 years of diplomatic ties this year.

Macron, who was on his return home from a 5-day visit to the Pacific islands of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, was met by Wickremesinghe at the airport and spent over two hours in Colombo.

His visit marked the first time a French President visited Sri Lanka.

Wickremesinghe and Macron held "friendly and productive" bilateral discussions to enhance and elevate the existing relations between Sri Lanka and France, the President's Media Division said in a statement on Saturday.

The discussions figured on Sri Lanka's ongoing debt restructuring process.

Macron reaffirmed France's willingness and commitment to support Sri Lanka in its economic recovery.



As Colombo's fourth-largest creditor, France pledged its assistance in the debt restructuring process, aiming for a positive outcome for the country, the statement said.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis in 2022, the worst since its independence from Britain in 1948, due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves.

"Sri Lanka and France are two nations in the Indian Ocean sharing the same goal: an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific. In Colombo, we confirmed it: strong as in our 75 years of diplomatic relations, we would open a new era to our partnership," Macron tweeted after the meeting.

The discussions during the over-one-hour meeting between the two presidents focused on

strengthening cooperation in various sectors, including politics, economics, tourism, climate change, sustainable development, and maritime activities.

As part of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations, several specific areas for further collaboration were identified, according to the statement.

"These areas of cooperation included the establishment of a school for maritime safety and security, the opening of a permanent office for the French Agency for Development (AFD) in Sri Lanka, the initiation of high-level diplomatic dialogues, cooperation in the education sector, and the enhancement of efforts to combat human trafficking in the maritime safety and security sector," the statement

reads. Additionally, both leaders exchanged views on regional and multilateral interests in the current global context.

Macron expressed keen interest in collaborating with Sri Lanka during its upcoming chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), of which France is a member.

Wickremesinghe showed interest in the Indian Ocean Commission, where France actively participates, and conveyed Sri Lanka's agreement to join the Paris Agenda for the People and the Planet, emphasising the island nation's commitment to global efforts for a sustainable future.

He also expressed admiration for France's significant role in global affairs, particularly in areas such as climate mitigation, global debt restructuring, and matters related to the Indo-Pacific region.

In June, Wickremesinghe met Macron in Paris during the heads of state sessions of the conference for a New Global Financing Pact.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa also arrived Friday night on a two-day visit and paid a courtesy call on Wickremesinghe on Saturday.

Niger army general declares himself country's new leader

The UN Security Council said in a statement late Friday that it "condemned the efforts to unconstitutionally change the legitimate government" in the country.

NIAMEY (NIGER), Jul 29 (Agencies): General Abdourahmane Tchiani, the Niger general who staged a coup declared himself the new leader of the jihadist-hit African nation and warned that any foreign military intervention would lead to chaos.

Tchiani, head of the Presidential Guard since 2011, appeared on state television, saying he was the "president of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland".

The general, who is in his 50s and had previously kept out of public life, presented the coup as a response to "the degradation of the security situation" linked to jihadist bloodshed.

He questioned "the sense and scope of a security approach to the fight against terrorism which excludes any real collaboration with Burkina Faso and Mali" -- neighbours which face similar threats.

But the putschists, who have faced international condemnation for taking power from a democratically elected president, also warned of "the consequences that will

flow from any foreign military intervention".

On the third day since President Mohamed Bazoum was detained, former colonial master France demanded the restoration of the government, saying it "does not recognise" the putschists, and calling Bazoum the "sole president".

The UN Security Council said in a statement late Friday that it "condemned the efforts to unconstitutionally change the legitimate government" in the country.

And US Secretary of State Antony Blinken offered Bazoum Washington's "unflinching" support and warned those detaining him that "hundreds of millions of dollars of assistance" was at risk, according to the State Department.

"Secretary Blinken underscored that the United States will continue to work to ensure the full restoration of constitutional order and democratic rule in Niger," department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement.

Washington had previously warned it may "cease security and other cooperation", although its approximately



1,000 troops stationed in the country will stay in place for now.

West African leaders will meet Sunday in the Nigerian capital Abuja to discuss the coup, President Bola Tinubu said.

"ECOWAS and the international community would do everything to defend democracy and ensure democratic governance continues to take firm root in the region," Tinubu, who is also the chairman of the Economic Community of West African States regional bloc, said in a statement.

The European Union threatened to cut aid to Niamey after what it said was a "serious attack on stability and democracy".

Meanwhile, two deputy directors of Bazoum's cabinet, Daouda Takoubaokoye and Oumar Moussa, also hit back, calling Tchiani's statement "lies" and accusing the general and the Presidential Guard of having staged the coup for "personal gains".

Sources close to Bazoum said the deposed leader had been considering replacing Tchiani after their relations soured, a decision which had been due to be made at a

cabinet meeting on July 24.

Bazoum and his family have been confined since Wednesday morning to their residence at the presidential palace located within the 700-strong Presidential Guard's military camp.

He is said to be in good health and has been able to talk by telephone to other heads of state.

'Risk' to human rights The Guard chiefs who staged the coup had won broad army support.

Armed forces chief General Abdou Sidikou Issa swung his weight behind the putsch, saying it had occurred "in

order to avoid a deadly confrontation".

The latest target of a coup in Africa's turbulent Sahel, Bazoum has tried to stand his ground.

French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna had seemed to hold out hope that he was not done yet.

"If you hear me talking about an attempted coup, it's because we don't consider things final," she said. "There is still a way out if those responsible listen to the international community."

France, which has 1,500 soldiers in Niger, would support sanctions, she added.

French President Emmanuel Macron will chair a defence meeting on the coup on Saturday, the presidency said.

"This coup is completely illegitimate and profoundly dangerous, for Nigeriens, for Niger and for the whole region," Macron said during a visit to Papua New Guinea on Friday, while also calling for Bazoum's release and "the restoration of constitutional order".

Pro-coup demonstrations Landed Niger is one of the world's poorest nations. Since gaining indepen-

dence in 1960, it has seen four coups as well as numerous other attempts -- including two previously against Bazoum.

The 63-year-old is one of a dwindling group of elected presidents and pro-Western leaders in the Sahel, where a jihadist insurgency has triggered coups in Mali and Burkina Faso.

Their juntas have forced out French troops, and Mali's ruling military has woven a close alliance with Russia.

"What happened in Niger is nothing more than the struggle of the people of Niger against colonisers, who tried to impose their own rules of life," the boss of Russia's Wagner group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, said Thursday in a message shared by a body linked to the mercenary organisation.

Bazoum took office after elections two years ago, in Niger's first peaceful transfer of power since indepen-

dence. The country of 26 million people is two-thirds desert and frequently ranks at the bottom of the UN's Human Development Index.

Impressive 10th Moharram procession taken out in Jammu

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: An impressive procession of 10th Moharram (Ashoora) was taken out in the old city under the banner of Anjuman-e-Imamia, Jammu where thousands of mourners from across the different regions of J&K participated to pay homage to the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS), grandson of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (Path).

A brief Majlis was delivered by Maulana Syed Mohd Abbas Rizvi from Iran. In his address he stressed at the teachings of Imam Hussain (AS) and the lessons learned from the Karbala.

After passing through the traditional route the procession culminated at Karbala complex Wazarat road where Majlis was also delivered by Maulana Syed Mohd Abbas Rizvi.

A procession was also taken out from New Plots by Anjuman-e-Haidery New Plot and merged with the main procession at Imam Bargah Sofi Shah Peer Mitha.

This day Imam Hussain (AS) and his 72 companions sacrificed their lives and saved humanity while sailing against the tyranny of Yazid, the ruler and Caliph of Muslim Ummah at that time.

Addressing media, President of Anjumam-



e-Imamia Jammu Syed Amanat Shah said that it's our duty to make masses aware about the Karbala as it's not just a war.

He further added that Rebar-e-Mouzam Syed Ali Khamaenel quoted that "If we understand the event to be a great event in History, and we place value upon it, this is because the remembrance of this event helps us to progress, to move forward, to follow the pointed path of Imam Hussain"

Suhail Kazmi Senior Journalist and member of advisory committee Anjuman-e-Imamia Jammu said we are highly thanked to Lieutenant Governor and the administration for their role and support during all the days of Moharram and Civil society for their participation in the procession.

Vice President Anjuman-e-Imamia Syed

Afaq Hussain Kazmi said that the battle of Karbala is the only battle in the history in which the blood got success over the sword. He further added that we should propagate the teachings of Imam Hussain (AS), if we want to succeed future endeavours.

While delivering the vote of thanks Prof. Sajat Khan Secretary Anjuman said we are thankful to all organisations for extending their full cooperation and support during the procession by installing different stalls as refreshment for the mourners.

Ashwani, Ajay, Danish listens to public grievances

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Former MLA & senior BJP leader Ashwani Sharma, listened to the grievances of the people at party headquarters on Saturday.

J&K BJP Publicity Secretary Ajay Vaid and BJYM Vice-President Danish Mishra were also present on the occasion.

A large number of people had reached the party office to narrate their problems and seek the resolution of the same. While some of them had problems related to departments like PHE, Flood and Irrigation, PDD, Rural Development.

A deputation from Bishnah, complained that a transformer in ward no. 6 needs to



be upgraded keeping in view that it was installed some 15 years ago and is not in a position to meet the electricity demand these days. People from Ward No. 13 demanded the construction of a lane and drain.

Similarly, people also raised various issues related to the play-

ground, installation, adequate supply of water etc.

Ashwani Sharma, on this occasion, said that the BJP committed for the mitigation of the sufferings of the people and the party leaders are always there at the service of the poor, needy and marginalised sections. He said that

the public darbar at the party office on a daily basis provides a platform to the general public for direct interaction with the BJP leaders and it is receiving massive response.

Ajay Vaid and Danish Mishra coordinated the grievances camp proceedings and dialed the issues presented.

Yudhvir, Nidhi kick-start development works at Ward 17

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, July 29: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) remains steadfast in its commitment towards fostering a holistic and all-round development in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.

This was stated by Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President while kick-starting development works including upgradation of Nallah, lanes, drains and laying of tiles work at Ward No 17 in presence of a local Councillor Nidhi Magorta, Raman Sharma Amphalla Mandal President, Navin Sharma District IT Incharge, Rohit Gupta Mandal Vice-President, Robin Kumar

Booth President, Samarty Booth President, Balwan Singh, Shakti Kendra Pamukh and prominent people of the area. The aforesaid development works will be completed with an estimated cost of Rs 17 lakhs.

Addressing the gathering, Yudhvir Sethi expressed Party's strong commitment to the development of Jammu city on modern and progressive lines. Highlighting the BJP's dedication to the welfare of the people, he mentioned the party's recognition and honour of the historic support received from the people of Jammu city. He stressed the ongoing efforts to transform Jammu city into a smart city, ensuring its growth and

prosperity.

Furthermore, Sethi emphasized the BJP's commitment to the all-round development of the state, asserting that with the active support from the central government, Jammu and Kashmir would soon boast one of the best infrastructures in the country. He expressed confidence in the collaborative efforts of the state and central governments to achieve this vision.

Sethi emphasized that the BJP recognizes the potential of Jammu and Kashmir, and is determined to unleash it by ensuring comprehensive development across all sectors. "BJP firmly believes in the principle of 'Sabka Saath,

Sabka Vikas' which translates to 'Together with all, development for all'. We are committed to providing equal opportunities and growth for all sections of society, be it people residing in urban or rural areas, women, youth, or the marginalized. Our goal is to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a model of inclusive and sustainable development," said Sethi.

The senior BJP leader also extended his appreciation to Corporator Nidhi Sharma for her dedication and concern towards addressing the issues faced by the general public. Her proactive approach and efforts in resolving public grievances have been commendable, he added.

NOTICE

I, Pawan Kumar Bharti, S/o Krishan Lal, R/o Bardhal Kalan, Tehsil, P/o Akhnoor, District Jammu have clarified that my father's name has wrongly been written as Krishan Lal Sharma (wrong name) instead of Krishan Lal (right name) on my passport. I am applying for the correction of the same. Objections if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within 7 days from the publication of this notice.

FROM PAGE 1

Fresh batch of over 2,000 pilgrims leaves Jammu for Amarnath Cave

visiting the cave shrine almost every day to offer their prayers.

Officials said the 27th batch comprising a total of 2,050 pilgrims — 357 women, 12 children, 54 Sadhus and nine Sadhis — left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the valley in a convoy, escorted by security personnel, between 3.30 am and 3.45 am.

While 1,442 pilgrims are heading for the traditional 48-km Pahalgam track, 608 yatis are performing the yatra through the 14-km Baltal route, the officials said.

CS for universal screening of UT population for NCD

Besides the Secretary, Health the meeting was attended by the Principals of GMCs, Director Health Jammu/Kashmir and other concerned officers of the Department.

The Chief Secretary maintained that the NCD are major cause of deaths across the globe so their early diagnosis could lead to better prevention and cure of such diseases. He asked for organizing camps all across J&K for conducting free of cost screening of people here.

Dr Mehta also observed that there is still scope for improvement in institutional births despite it being ahead of national average. He also emphasised on further improving the ranking of the UT in SDG goals related to health.

The Chief Secretary asked the department to digitize all the health records of the patients so that it is accessible to them anywhere by using their ABHA numbers. He also advised them to allow them to add their previous records to it for saving the same for posterity.

Dr Mehta enquired from the officers about the defunct machinery and poorly managed infrastructure in the hospitals of the UT. He made out that the Department should make a plan to repair all of such machines and upgrading the infrastructure to put it to optimal use for the benefit of general public.

He asked for the mechanism of screening the children of J&K by the Department. He directed them to visit the far-off schools and Anganwadi Centres for screening of children enrolled there. He directed the concerned to extend every support to children requiring any kind of medical assistance and popularize the same so that people come forward readily to screen their children at their early age.

Dr Mehta also stressed on assessing all the health facilities of the UT right from the Sub-Centres on a set of parameters. He told them to repeat the exercise periodically and put the results in public domain so that people are able to see for themselves about the status of these health facilities besides giving them opportunity to make improvements.

He also asked for creating awareness among people about the initiatives like e-Sanjeevani, e-sahaj and Tele-MANAS so that people are able to seek assistance, guidance, counseling and support through such IT and telecommunication tools from the comforts of their homes.

While providing the insights into the working of NHM here the Secretary Health, Bhupinder Kumar informed the meeting that all adults aged ≥ 30 years have been enrolled into NCD portal. He added that the risk assessment (CBAC) has been completed for 46 Lakh and 37 Lakh screened for Diabetes, Hypertension and three common cancers namely oral, cervical and breast Cancers.

He further informed that about 67 Projects (810 Beds) under ECRP-II have been completed which includes 25 Maternal ICUs (215 ICU beds), 20 Paediatric Hybrid ICUs (209 HDU/ICU Beds) and 11 Oxygen Supported Paediatric wards (278 oxygen supported beds), 11 Prefab Units (108 Beds) had been completed besides work on 8 Projects (150 Beds) is going on currently under this mission.

It was said that 298 DNB seats (Broad Specialty/Super specialty/ fellowship) have been approved for 20 Public Health facilities (10 GMCs/8 DHs/2 CHCs) out of which 196 candidates have joined as on date.

Regarding the IT tool TeleManas it was given out that a UT level 24x7 Cell and one mentoring Institute at IMHANS, Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, GMC Srinagar has been established. It was added that more than 20000 calls have been received by the Tele-MANAS cell till now.

It was said that under PMNDP, 85199 sessions of dialysis were provided to 1183 patients through 131 machines installed in the Health care facilities. HMIS (JK E-Sahaj) facility is operational in Tertiary care, District Hospitals, Community Health Centres and ranking of healthcare facilities under e-sahaj is released every month, the meeting was informed.

Regarding other interventions it was revealed that Anemia Mukht Bharat programme has been implemented in all the districts of J&K and Test-Treat-Talk (T3) anaemia camps have been launched across the UT. In the initial phase 896 Digital Hemoglobin meters along with testing strips have been procured and distributed under NHM for this purpose.

It was said that During FY 2022-23, 13.96 lakh (97.16 %) school children enrolled in Govt schools and 6.47 lakh children (90.23 %) enrolled in Anganwadi Centers were screened by RBSK teams. During 1st Quarter of 2023-24, 38 % schools and 36.10 % Anganwadi Schools stand covered.

It was given out that since inception, 3194 children have been provided financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 18.79 Cr for treatment including surgical interventions at tertiary care institutions within/outside J&K. It was added that during first quarter of current FY, 191 Children not covered under ABPMJAY/SEHAT have been provided financial assistance to the tune of Rs 32.52 lakh

Pertinent to mention here that the UT of J&K achieved the target of operationalization of 2742 Health and Wellness Centres well within its timeframe and has nearly 4000 health institutions including that of Ayush to take care of the health of its population.

Several houses, Mosque damaged as cloudburst hits Ganderbal village

mosque. An official said that flashfloods hit Gujarpati area of Preng in the wee hours due to which the water entered few residential houses and a mosque causing partial damage to it.

Soon after the information, a police party, locals and civil administration started a rescue and evacuation operation in the area. There are also reports that a government primary school in the area has also been damaged in the flashfloods.

SDM Kangan Javid Ahmad Rather, Tehsildar Kangan Dr Haroon Rashid, SHO Kangan Zahoor Ahmed reached the spot to assess the situation and monitor restoration and rehabilitation work.

Tehsildar Kangan, Dr Haroon Rashid told Greater Kashmir that at least six affected families have been shifted to a nearby safe place, adding that at least four JCB machines are carrying out the restoration work. The official said that fortunately there has been no loss of life in the incident.

Footbridge swept away in heavy rains, more than 5,000 people across 3 panchayats affected

authorities, demanding that they either construct a new footbridge or repair the damaged one. However, no concrete steps

have been taken as yet, they alleged.

Locals said they feared wading through the nallah and were desperate for an intervention by the administration.

The villagers said they had been desperately pleading for a bridge for decades to ease their daily commuting struggles but their pleas fell on deaf ears.

However, that was before a retired Tehsildar, who is also a local, stepped forward to make a difference to the lives of locals. He selflessly contributed a substantial sum, amounting to approximately Rs 10 to 12 lakh, to building a bridge that the villagers so desperately wanted.

Balwan Singh, sarpanch of Halqa Danwalt in Parli Dhar block of Ramnagar tehsil, said over 5,000 people across three panchayats have been affected by the damage to the footbridge.

"Our footbridge was washed away in the flash floods that struck ten days ago. The locals across three panchayats have been sorely affected by this incident. This was the only footbridge to cross the Sloo Nullah. Our children are not being able to go to schools as we don't want them to risk their lives crossing the nullah," Singh said.

"If anybody falls ill, there's no way to get him or her admitted to a hospital," he added.

"Yesterday, a junior engineer from the department concerned took stock of the damaged bridge. We have urged the district administration and the Lieutenant Governor (Manoj Sinha) to repair the old bridge or build a new one as soon as possible," he added.

Deputy Commissioner Udampur, Sachin Kumar Vaishy, said he will personally look into the matter, adding that he has already instructed the departments concerned to assess the extent of the loss.

Rains continue in J&K, MeT predicts more

Kokernag 16.7°C, Gulmarg 14.8°C, Jammu 24.5°C, Banihal 17.3°C, Batote 18.0°C, Katra 21.5°C and Bhadwah 18.2°C, the official added.

Bomb threat triggers panic on Delhi-Jammu Tawi Rajdhani Express

(GRP), Railway Protection Force (RPF), and railway officers reached the site.

As per the preliminary probe, nothing suspicious was found on the train. And all passengers onboard were reported to be safe. Many passengers took to Twitter and complained that the train had been halted at Sonipat station for two hours without any explanation from the railway officials. Sonipat station comes under the Delhi

division. The train started its journey on its usual time at 8:40 pm from New Delhi railway station and the next stoppage was Ludhiana. As per decided schedule, the train is expected to reach Jammu at 5 am.

Landmine exploded near LoC in Poonch

Khokhri post in Terwan village of the Degwar area, the officials said.

They said Army troops immediately conducted a search of the area but nothing was found.

The forward areas along the LoC are dotted with landmines as part of an anti-infiltration obstacle system to prevent terrorists from intruding into the Indian side from across the border. The mines sometimes go off after getting washed away by rains or forest fires.

CEO Gulmarg transferred, Director Tourism to hold charge

J&K Cable Car Corporation, is transferred and posted as Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Lolab-Bungus Drangyari, with immediate effect, relieving Ghulam Nabi Bhat, JKAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara of the additional charge of the post," read an order issued by Commissioner Secretary GAD Sanjeev Verma.

It further states that Raja Yaqoob Farooq, Director, Tourism, Kashmir, shall hold the charge of the posts of Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Gulmarg, and Managing Director, J&K Cable Car Corporation, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

SIA files chargesheet against Jel members

Dagga of Srinagar and a separate chargesheet against another accused namely Mohammad Shafi Dar son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar of Barzulla Baghat Srinagar, who has expired.

The statement reads that during the course of the investigation, the SIA Kashmir has also identified 188 properties which were either in possession or registered in the name of unlawful association Jel, out of which identified 188 properties, out of which 58 properties, spread across the valley, have been notified (under section 8 of UAPA). It reads that this non-investigative action was aimed at disrupting the financial resources and support network of the unlawful association, which has been found involved in various unlawful activities.

Automaker Tesla is opening more showrooms on tribal lands to avoid state laws barring direct sales

Over the years in numerous states, Tesla has sought and been denied dealership licenses, pushed for law changes and challenged decisions in courts.

NEW YORK, Jul 29 (Agencies): Tesla is ramping up efforts to open showrooms on tribal lands where it can sell directly to consumers, circumventing laws in states that bar vehicle manufacturers from also being retailers in favor of the dealership model.

Mohegan Sun, a casino and entertainment complex in Connecticut owned by the federally recognized Mohegan Tribe, announced this week that the California-based electric automaker will open a showroom with a sales and delivery center this fall on its sovereign property where the state's law doesn't apply.

The news comes after another new Tesla showroom was announced in June, set to open in 2025 on lands of the Oneida Indian Nation in upstate New York.

"I think it was a move that made complete sense," said Lori Brown, executive director of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, which has lobbied for years to change Connecticut's law.

"It is just surprising that it took this long because Tesla had really tried, along with Lucid and Rivian," she said, referring to two other electric carmakers. "Anything that puts more electric vehicles on the road is a good thing for the public."

Brown noted that lawmakers



with car dealerships that are active in their districts, no matter their political affiliation, have traditionally opposed bills allowing direct-to-consumer sales.

The Connecticut Automotive Retail Association, which has opposed such bills for years, says there needs to be a balance between respecting tribal sovereignty and "maintaining a level playing field" for all car dealerships in the state.

"We respect the Mohegan Tribe's sovereignty and the unique circumstance in which they operate their businesses on Tribal land but we strongly believe that this does not change the discussion about Tesla and other EV manufacturers with direct-to-consumer sales, and we continue to oppose that model," Hayden Reynolds, the association's chairperson, said in a statement. "Connecticut's dealer franchise laws benefit

consumers and provide a competitive marketplace."

Over the years in numerous states, Tesla has sought and been denied dealership licenses, pushed for law changes and challenged decisions in courts. The company scored a victory earlier this year when Delaware's Supreme Court overturned a ruling upholding a decision by state officials to prohibit Tesla from selling its cars to directly customers.

At least 16 states have effectively changed their laws to allow Tesla and other direct-to-consumer manufacturers to sell there, said Jeff Aiosa, executive director of the Connecticut dealers association. He doesn't foresee Connecticut changing its law, noting that 32 "original equipment manufacturers," a list that includes major car companies like Toyota and Ford, currently abide by it.

"It's not fair to have an uneven playing field when all the other manufacturers abide by the state franchise laws and Tesla wants this exception to go around the law," he said. "I would suggest their pivoting to the sovereign nation is representative of them not wanting to abide by the law."

Tesla opened its first store as well as a repair shop on Native American land in 2021 in New Mexico. The facility, built in Nambé Pueblo, north of Santa Fe, marked the first time the company partnered with a tribe to get around state laws, though the idea had been in the works for years.

Brian Dear, president of the Tesla Owners Club of New Mexico, predicted at the time that states that are home to tribal nations and also have laws banning direct car sales by manufacturers would likely follow New Mexico's lead.

"I don't believe at all that this will be the last," he said.

Tesla's facility at Mohegan Sun, dubbed the Tesla Sales & Delivery Center, will be located at a shopping and dining pavilion within the sprawling casino complex. Customers will be able to test-drive models around the resort, and gamblers will be able to use their loyalty rewards toward Tesla purchases.

Tesla also plans to exhibit its solar and storage products at the location.

Nestlé to invest Rs 4,200 cr in India over two years

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): FMCG major Nestlé India has "strong commitments" for local manufacturing with plans to invest Rs 4,200 crore by 2025, including in its 10th plant in the country at Odisha, its chairman and managing director Suresh Narayanan said.

Nestlé India, the maker of popular Maggi noodles, KitKat chocolate and Nescafe, is investing to create capacity as it sees "fairly robust" demand in coming years in the Indian market. "The investments done are fairly significant... till the first half of 2023, about Rs 2,100 crore already been invested on capital investments," said Narayanan in a media roundtable here. These investments are for augmentation of manufacturing capacity, he said adding a third of that has gone into food space, another one-third on chocolate and confectionary and the rest on nutrition and others. "Another Rs 4,200

crore is being spent between 2023 and 2025. This includes around Rs 900 crore for a new factory in Odisha," he said. Last year in September, Mark Schneider, the CEO of Nestlé SA, global food & beverage conglomerate and its parent firm, announced to invest Rs 5,000 crore by 2025. Since its inception, Nestlé India has invested around Rs 7,000 crore in the last 60 years here, said Narayanan.

Tribunal quashes SEBI's Rs 25-crore fine on Ambanis



NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Friday set aside a SEBI order that imposed a Rs 25 crore penalty on industrialists Mukesh Ambani, Anil Ambani and other enti-

ties for non-compliance with takeover norms in Reliance Industries case. The order came after Ambanis appealed in the appellate tribunal against the capital markets regulator's direc-

tion. "We find that the appellant has not violated... the SAST (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations. The imposition of penalty upon the appellant is without any authority of law. Consequently, the impugned order cannot be sustained and is quashed," the appellate tribunal said.

Noting that the penalty amount following SEBI's order was deposited by the appellants, SAT directed the markets regulator to refund the amount of Rs 25 crore within four weeks.

Tea production drops 3.7 per cent to 137.85 million kg in June

KOLKATA, Jul 29 (Agencies): Tea production during the month of June this year has dropped to 137.85 million kilogrammes as compared to 143.12 million kilogrammes in the same month of 2022.

According to Tea Board provisional data, there is a drop of around 3.7 per cent in the volume of tea production in the month of June 2023.

Region-wise, North India produced 109.70 million kilogrammes during the month, while production volumes in South India was 28.15 million kilogrammes.

In North India, Assam produced 63.51 million kilogrammes in June 2023, while the state's production was 75.16 million kilogrammes in the same month of the previous similar period. The other major pro-

ducer in North India, West Bengal produced marginally higher volumes at 42.64 million kilogrammes in June this year, as against 40.42 million kilogrammes in the similar month of June 2023.

Sources at Indian Tea Association (ITA) said the dip in production volumes has been due to inconducive weather conditions and pest attacks in the gardens.

NCLAT to decide over NCLT order on insolvency against Coffee Day Global

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): An appeal has been filed before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) challenging the NCLT order to initiate insolvency proceedings against Coffee Day Global Ltd (CDGL), which owns and operates the popular chain Cafe Coffee Day.

Malavika Hegde, the suspended Director of CDGL, has approached

the Chennai bench of NCLAT against the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) order to initiate Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against Coffee Day Global.

The application, seeking a stay on the NCLT order, was listed for hearing before a NCLAT bench comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar Jain and Shreeshia Merla. Earlier on July 20, the

Bengaluru bench of the NCLT passed an order over a plea filed by IndusInd Bank, a financial creditor of the company, claiming dues of Rs 94 crore.

The NCLT had also appointed Shailendra Ajmera as the interim resolution professional after suspending the board.

The order has been challenged by Malavika Hegde, a director on

the suspended board of CDGL and wife of late VG Siddhartha. In 2022-23, CDGL's consolidated total income was Rs 920.41 crore.

It had reported a loss of Rs 67.77 crore in the year. As per the annual report of its parent firm Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd for FY22, CDGL owns 495 cafes in 158 cities and 285 CCD Value Express kiosks.

There are 38,810 vending machines that dispense coffee in corporate workplaces and hotels under the brand. Coffee Day Enterprises is in trouble after the death of founder Chairman V G Siddhartha in July 2019.

It is paring its debts through asset resolutions and has significantly scaled it down from the time the trouble started.

Cancer mortality sees increase in women but declines in men, finds study

KOCHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): The cancer mortality trend in India has decreased by 0.19 per cent annually among men but increased by 0.25 per cent among women, which translates to an increase of 0.02 per cent among the combined sexes, a recent study said.

The striking findings were part of an analysis of mortality trends of 23 major cancers in the Indian population, which killed 12.85 million Indians between 2000 and 2019.

The study, published in JCO Global Oncology, a journal affiliated to the American Society of Clinical Oncology, was conducted by Ajil Shaji, Dr Pavithran K, and Dr Vijaykumar DK from the Amrita Hospital here in collaboration with Dr Catherine Sauvaget from the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a division of WHO.

According to the study, increasing mortality trends were seen among cancers of the lung, breast, colorectum, lymphoma, multiple myeloma, gallbladder, pancreas, kidney, and mesothelioma between 2000 and 2019.

The highest annual increase in mortality

was observed in pancreatic cancer among both sexes at 2.7 per cent (2.1 per cent among men and 3.7 per cent among women), it said.

However, the stomach, esophagus, leukemia, larynx, and melanoma cancers showed a declining cancer mortality trend irrespective of sex.

The cancer mortality was high among men than women for all common cancers except thyroid (0.6) and gallbladder (0.6) cancers, the study has found.

Larynx cancer had almost a 6-fold high mortality among men than women, followed by lung (2.9), melanoma (2.5), urinary bladder (2.3), mouth and oropharynx (2.2), and liver (1.9), while stomach and colorectal cancer mortality was relatively similar among both sexes, it noted.

Ajil Shaji, Head of Cancer Registry at Amrita Hospital here said cancer mortality trends have not been documented across the population of India.

"We, therefore, analysed the overall and individual cancer mortality trends for 23 major cancers between 2000 and 2019 on the basis of Global Health Obser-



vatory (GHO) database. This estimation-based study might be a substitute for constructing precise and efficient health care infrastructure to acquire better cancer control programs in India in the absence of a national cancer registry or countrywide cancer mortality data," he said.

Dr Vijaykumar DK, Head of Department, Breast & Gynec Oncology, Amrita Hospital, Kochi, said we wanted to investigate how the number of cancer-related fatalities has changed in India over the past two decades. The study showed that cancer mortality trend among men in India has shown a slight yet statistically significant decrease over time, he said.

"In contrast, the increase in cancer mortality among women and both sexes combined has been minor and not statistically

significant. Among all common malignancies, women had higher rate of gallbladder and thyroid cancer mortality than men. Meanwhile, a yearly significant increase of pancreatic cancer mortality was seen among both sexes, with higher increase in women," the doctor observed.

Pavithran K, Head of Dept. Medical Oncology, Amrita Hospital, Kochi, said the study highlights the need for a multi-pronged approach to address the rising cancer mortality rates in India, including awareness on cancer symptoms, cancer prevention policies, improved health infrastructure, and specifically dedicated human resources. "A multi-faceted strategy is required to tackle India's rising cancer mortality rates. Lack of knowledge about cancer symptoms delays treatment for preventable

cancers. We need better infrastructure, dedicated human resources, and expanded cancer screening programs. The best long-term strategy could be implementing awareness of cancer symptoms among the population and cancer prevention policies with improved health infrastructure and specifically dedicated resources," he said.

Globally, cancer is the second most lethal non-communicable disease after cardiovascular disease, accounting for about 9.9 million deaths in 2020, a hospital statement added. Around 9 per cent of all cancer deaths occurred in the Indian population. The country has a 63.1 per 100,000 age-standardized mortality rate (ASMR) for cancer, with men and women accounting for 65.4 and 61.0, respectively, it said.

Between 2000 and 2019, 12.85 million deaths occurred in India from 23 major cancers. The most common lethal cancers were mouth and oropharyngeal (15.6 per cent), stomach (10.6 per cent), lung (9.6 per cent), breast (9 per cent), and colorectal (8 per cent) cancers.

38% of Indians have non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, says AIIMS study

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): A recent AIIMS study, which analysed published reports on non-alcoholic fatty liver disease in India, states that over one-third (38 per cent) of Indians have fatty liver or non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

The phenomenon is not restricted to adults, but affects nearly 35 per cent of the children as well, says the study published in the Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hepatology in June 2022.

"Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is often unrecognised since it does not cause symptoms in the early stage, but may progress in some patients with severe liver disease.

"The cause of 'fatty liver' or 'steatohepatitis' is the recent westernisation of our diets which involves increased intake of fast food, lack of healthy fruits and vegetables on the plate, and an unhealthy and sedentary lifestyle," Dr Anoop Saraya, Head of Department of Gastroenterology, said.

He said the ailment is considered the "liver counterpart" of metabolic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. Although there is currently no approved drug treatment for fatty liver, the condition is reversible, he added.

"The only way to conquer this new epidemic is to adopt a healthy lifestyle and achieve weight loss in obese individuals through adequate diet, restrict junk and sugary food intake, and exercise regularly," Saraya noted.

Experts say alcohol intake remains a common cause of liver disease in India. Intake of alcohol can lead to "alcoholic hepatitis" and cirrhosis, which can progress to liver cancer and death. "Alcohol accounts for most of the

cases of severe liver damage which are admitted to hospitals with diagnosis such as 'acute chronic liver failure' and these have a high mortality," Dr Saraya stated.

What makes the matters worse is a high recidivism rate in the few patients who survive this disease, and the non-availability of any specific drug to treat alcoholic hepatitis. The only way to avoid this deadly disease is to avoid the alcohol intake as no alcohol is safe for the liver.

Use of common over-the-counter drugs, which are generally considered safe, may also lead to liver damage, according to experts.

Drugs used for the treatment of tuberculosis, antibiotics, antiepileptic drugs, and chemotherapy, are also associated with liver injury, as are those taken as complementary and alternative medications (CAM).

A study by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here reported 67 per cent deaths among patients with antituberculosis drug-related acute liver failure. Of all patients with antituberculosis drug-related acute liver failure, 60 per cent were started on medicines without confirmed tuberculosis. Self-medication must be avoided, Dr Saraya asserted.

Another AIIMS study has shown that hepatitis A and E constitute 30 per cent of cases of acute liver failure, with high mortality of over 50 per cent. This study was conducted by the Department of Gastroenterology and HNU, AIIMS, New Delhi.

"The spread of hepatitis A and E can be largely prevented by ensuring access to clean drinking water," Saraya added.

2nd ODI: India aim to clinch series with better batting effort

Will face below-par West Indies in Barbados on Saturday

BARBADOS, Jul 29 (Agencies): The Indian team will be expected to return to its set batting order as it aims to put up a much-improved show with the willow and take an unassailable lead in the three-match series when it faces a below-par West Indies in the second ODI here on Saturday.

Skipper Rohit Sharma and coach Rahul Dravid did face a minor hiccup while trying out the middle-order batters upfront on a track that became a raging turner during the second session but a meager target of 115 meant that things were smooth for the better part.

However, one can vouch with a degree of certainty that even if India once again chases a small target, Rohit Sharma will indeed come out with Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli will be seen padded to come at one drop.

Ishan Kishan, despite his impressive fifty, will have to bat in the middle order, a place he will have to vacate during Asia Cup in Sri Lanka if KL Rahul happens to make a comeback.

With 11 more matches left before the opening World Cup game against Australia in Chennai on October 8 (as per the current schedule), India would aim at a settled combination and hence too much experimentation might not be what the doctor would order.

The Kensington Oval in Barbados is home turf for the late Malcolm Marshall and the 'Big Bird' Joel Garner where visiting side batters would get mentally psyched out even before the



'Big Four' (Andy Roberts and Michael Holding) had the red cherry in their hands.

But on Thursday, the legend of Kensington track seemed like an oxymoron as Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav made the Caribbean batters look very silly with the turn and bounce that was on offer.

Even Hardik Pandya, with the new ball, looked very skiddy and was able to hurry the batters along with Umran Malik, who bowled a number of pacy deliveries.

Gone are those golden days of West Indies cricket and the popularity of cricket in the islands has hit an all-time nadir after its non-qualification for the ODI World Cup in India.

The propensity to play T20 game in a 50-over contest was very much on show with the kind of indiscreet shot selections that got them into a tangle against Jadeja and Kuldeep.

The track used for the second

ODI might not be the same one but nature could be identical and hence Indian team shouldn't mind the challenge of batting first.

Facing Gudakesh Motie's orthodox left-arm spin and Yannic Cariah's leg breaks won't be the most difficult proposition but not the easiest one either.

The Indian batters haven't exactly set the stage on fire when facing spinners on turners and this won't be a bad test for the team if the conditions of first ODI is replicated.

Places like Chennai and Lucknow—venues for the World Cup games against Australia and England—will aid spinners and it is always good to get some simulation in overseas conditions, which are pretty similar to what one can expect at home.

For Suryakumar Yadav, it will be imperative that he can replicate his T20 form in 50 over cricket. Thursday was a golden

opportunity and he did look good before a sweep shot off Motie brought about his downfall.

Surya knows that his place in the XI could be doubtful if Shreyas Iyer gets fit and if KL Rahul returns, he might find it difficult to make it to the 15-member squad unless, he scores some significant runs against Pakistan in the Asia Cup, which will then seal his spot in the side.

Mukesh Kumar as a reserve (fifth) pacer should make it to the squad behind Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, and Shardul Thakur. His discipline, in terms of line and length, across formats has been exemplary and it will be difficult to drop him unless India picks that extra spinner in the 15-man squad.

Teams

The Teams (From):

West Indies: Shai Hope (captain), Rovman Powell (vice-captain), Alick Athanaze, Yannic Cariah, Keacy Carty, Dominic Drakes, Shimron Hetmyer, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Kyle Mayers, Gudakesh Motie, Jayden Seales, Romario Shepherd, Kevin Sinclair, Oshane Thomas.

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Virat Kohli, Surya Kumar Yadav, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Hardik Pandya (vice-captain), Shardul Thakur, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat, Mohd. Siraj, Umran Malik, Mukesh Kumar.

Ashes Fifth Test: Steel Smith

Keeps cool in face of English onslaught, Oz lead by 12



LONDON, Jul 29 (Agencies): Australia led England by 12 runs at the end of a tense and fluctuating second day to leave the final Ashes Test at The Oval on a knife-edge.

Steve Smith's patient 71 was the backbone of Australia's 295 in reply to England's 283 and a ninth-wicket partnership of 49 between Pat Cummins and Todd Murphy edged the touring side ahead.

Australia, 2-1 up in the series and bidding to win the Ashes in England for the first time since 2001, were bowled out just before the close.

Resuming in the morning on 61/1, Usman Khawaja and Marnus Labuschagne had adopted a no-risk

approach, adding only 21 runs in the first 12 overs before the latter was brilliantly caught by Joe Root at first slip off Mark Wood for nine.

Labuschagne edged Wood between wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow and Root who dived to his left and plucked the ball out of the air one-handed.

England captain Ben Stokes did not have the option of using his main spinner Moeen Ali, who sustained a groin injury while batting, but his quick bowlers produced disciplined spells to keep the hosts in the game as Australia reached 115/2 at lunch.

Stuart Broad struck twice after the interval and England dominated the afternoon session.

Broad trapped Khawaja lbw for 47 and Travis Head, on four, edged the fast bowler to Bairstow as England sensed an opportunity to seize the initiative.

James Anderson claimed his first wicket when Mitchell Marsh, on 16, dragged the ball on to his stumps and Alex Carey lifted Root for six before perishing next ball when he miscued a drive into the hands of Stokes at short extra cover.

Mitchell Starc fell to a short ball from Wood for seven, Ben Duckett taking a simple catch at long leg, and Australia were reeling at 186/7 at tea.

Smith, who narrowly avoided being run out for 42 when the third umpire decided Bairstow had not gathered the ball cleanly before breaking the stumps, reached another Test fifty before trying to sweep Chris Woakes, the ball flying high off the edge of his bat and Bairstow running back to take a good catch.

Brief scores: England: 283; Australia: 295 (Smith 71; Woakes 3/61).

ICC World Cup 2023 tickets likely to go on sale online by August 10

NEW DELHI, Jul 29 (Agencies): The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has sought suggestions for ticket pricing from the all the associations hosting the 2023 World Cup games.

They hope to put up the online ticket sales by August 10, by which the changes in the schedule of the event will also be done. The matter was discussed among the members of the organising committee.

Earlier, Jay Shah, the honourable secretary of the BCCI, said that the scheduling issue would be resolved within the next three to four days. Three full member nations have written to the International Cricket Council (ICC) requesting a modification to the schedule.

"Three members have



written to the ICC for a schedule change. Only the dates and timings will be changed, venues will not be changed. If there is a six-day gap between games, we are trying to reduce it to 4-5 days. The picture will be clear in three-four days. Changes will happen in consultation with the ICC," Shah was quoted as saying.

When asked about whether the marquee clash between India and Pakistan at the Naren-

dra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad would also be rescheduled, Shah said, "As I have said before, few member boards have written to the ICC and a decision will be taken soon."

Shah also said that there is no security concern for the high-profile match. 48 games are scheduled to take place in 10 cities from October 5 to November 19. England and New Zealand will play in the opening game in Ahmedabad.

Record-breaker swimmer Nina Venkatesh is ready for Asiad

CHENNAI, Jul 29 (Agencies): Earlier this month, at the Senior National Aquatic Championship in Hyderabad, Nina Venkatesh medalled in five events. In two of those, she broke the national record. Days after this achievement, she became part of India's squad for the Asian Games in China, the largest contingent ever from India.

"The team is almost double what was participating in 2018," Monal Chokshi, general secretary of the Swimming Federation of India (SFI) said after the squad announcement. Eleven swimmers were there at that time. We have 21 swimmers and out of that also, we have nine girls, which is also our first since 2006. We are delighted that all the



swimmers are progressing and they achieved the qualification benchmark."

Nina is one of the nine female swimmers. "It was something I was looking forward to," Nina said, speaking about breaking the 50m butterfly record at the Nationals. "I got the best Indian performance in that event. It was a goal for the past few years. For the longest time, that record was at 28 seconds. I'm also the first woman in India to ever

them."

With her performance in the Nationals, where she represented Karnataka, Nina booked her tickets for the Asian Games. "Honestly, being part of the Asian Games was just a dream, nothing but a dream. And it would have been an idea in my head before I got to know about my selection. This is the biggest thing that has ever happened in my career. And I cannot wait to represent India," she added.

In Bengaluru, Nina has been coaching under the Dronacharya Award winner coach, Nihar Ameen, since 2011. "He is a great coach. He has been coaching me for 12 years now. I have never practised in any other pool. He has seen me grow up in the Dolphin

Academy and a lot of credit goes to him," Nina paid tribute to her coach.

At just 17, Nina has already made it to the Asian Games as one of the youngest squad members. When asked if she ever misses out on all the fun people her age are having, Nina is not hesitant in her answer. "I'm missing out on so many normal experiences, but my experiences are not normal at all. I'm grateful for the opportunities. I am also aware that one can't have everything in life," she said.

With the biggest-ever swimming contingent at the Asian Games in China, there are more opportunities for India to bring medals back home. And don't be surprised if the 17-year-old is one of them.

Juventus removed from European competition for financial rule-breaking cases, Chelsea fined

GENEVA, Jul 29 (Agencies): Juventus was removed from European competition next season and Chelsea was fined USD 11 million in separate UEFA rulings over financial rules breaches.

The expulsion of Juventus from the third-tier Europa Conference League was expected because of a false accounting case that already saw the two-time European champion deducted 10 points in Serie A. That penalty dropped Juventus out of the Champions League qualification places.

Juventus' spot in the Europa Conference League should go to Fiorentina in the play-offs round starting on August 24.

UEFA said that Juventus also must also pay a fine of 10 million euros (USD 11 million)

for breaking Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules. A further 10 million euros can be deducted if the club fails to comply with UEFA financial monitoring rules in future seasons.

Juventus regretted the ruling but said it wouldn't appeal.

"We regret the decision of the UEFA Club Financial Control Body," Juventus president Gianluca Ferrero said in a statement on the club's website.

"We do not share the interpretation that has been given of our defence and we remain firmly convinced of the legitimacy of our actions and the validity of our arguments. However, we have decided not to appeal this judgment. Despite this painful decision, we can now face the new season

by focusing on the field and not on the courts," he added.

In a separate case, Chelsea will also pay a settlement of 10 million euros to UEFA for incorrect financial information submitted between 2012 and 2019 when the club was owned by Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich.

Chelsea's current American-led ownership group reported "potentially incomplete financial reporting under the club's previous ownership" in May last year, UEFA said.

Chelsea, which won the Champions League in 2012 and 2021, did not qualify for the next editions of European competitions.

"In accordance with the club's ownership group's core principles of full compliance and

transparency with its regulators, we are grateful that this case has been concluded by proactive disclosure of information to UEFA and a settlement that fully resolves the reported matters," Chelsea said in a statement.

"Chelsea greatly values its relationship with UEFA and looks forward to building on that relationship in the years to come," it added.

UEFA had opened an investigation against Juventus in December for probable breaches of FFP rules after prosecutors in Italy unsealed their case against the storied club.

Juventus was ultimately docked 10 points in Serie A by Italian authorities which dropped the club from potentially finishing in the top four and earn-

ing a place in the next Champions League to finish seventh enough only for the third-tier Conference League. AC Milan got into the Champions League instead.

The false accounting allegations pushed UEFA club finance investigators to terminate a settlement agreed with the club last year and impose fresh sanctions, the European soccer body said.

The chaotic 2022-23 season for Juventus also saw it lose long-standing club officials who resigned, including president Andrea Agnelli and vice president Pavel Nedved, a former playing great.

Juventus also lost two years of European football from 2006 to 2008 in the fallout from the Calciopoli corruption scandal.

Russian and Belarusian players not allowed entry into women's tennis tournament in Prague

PRAGUE, Jul 29 (Agencies): Russian and Belarusian players will not be allowed to participate in next week's Prague Open, the organizers of the women's tennis event said.

The announcement came a day after police prevented a Russian player from entering the country, organizers said.

Miroslav Malý, the director of the hard-court tournament, didn't identify the player. Malý said she was the first participant with a Russian passport to arrive in the country.

He said organizers approached other Russian and Belarusian players through the Women's Tennis Association to tell them not to travel to Prague.

Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus was to play singles in Prague while three Russians, Diana Shnaider, Polina Kudermetova and Erika Andreeva, were to play in qualifying.

The WTA Tour allows Russians and Belarusians to play tournaments as neutral athletes.

"Individual WTA players whose nationality is Russian/Belarusian continue to compete on the Tour on a neutral basis. Despite their neutrality, some WTA play-

ers are being denied by Czech government authorities the ability to compete at the WTA 250 event scheduled to be held in Prague next week," the WTA said in a statement.

"WTA rules state that all players must be allowed to compete on the WTA based solely on merit, without discrimination. We will continue to review the situation as we factor important considerations around these complex geopolitical issues," it added.

The Czech government has banned athletes from Russia and Belarus from sports competitions on Czech territory because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Last week, Russian tennis player Vera Zvonareva was banned from entering Poland for a WTA tournament in Warsaw.

The WTA also said it "emphatically condemns the war in Ukraine" and "continues to support the Tour's Ukrainian athletes — as well as all WTA athletes — who face immense challenges as professional athletes while many of their loved ones and their country face attacks from Russia."

R.S Chib inaugurates Langar for Shiva Devotees on Amarnath Yatra



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Former Minister R.S Chib, along with DPAP leaders Jugal Kishore, Garu Ram, Hira Lal and Vishal Chopra today inaugurated the langar organized by Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra Welfare Society, which has been running this langar for 26 years. Mr. Chib specifically appreciated the National Executive President, Rajkumar Goyal ji, and General Secretary, Raju Chandel, for their crucial roles in organizing the

This langar has been running for the 29th consecutive day, providing food and necessary facilities to the devotees of Shiva on the Amarnath Yatra.

During the event, the Chief Guest, Mr. R.S. Chib, praised the dedication and devotion of the langar operators who tirelessly serve day and night. He commended the efforts of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra Welfare Society, which has been running this langar for 26 years. Mr. Chib specifically appreciated the National Executive President, Rajkumar Goyal ji, and General Secretary, Raju Chandel, for their crucial roles in organizing the

Langar. Chib emphasized the significance of Lord Shiva and the strong sense of humanity in Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed his happiness to be part of this holy gathering and applauded the continuous efforts of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra Welfare Society in providing 24x7 langar services to the devotees. He assured his support for such noble initiatives and urged people to wholeheartedly contribute to the

langar organizations that serve the pilgrims of Amarnath Yatra. Jugal Kishore also spoke on the occasion, highlighting the divine essence of Lord Shiva and the blessings received by his devotees. He expressed gratitude for the privilege of attending the langar and serving the devotees during the auspicious Amarnath Yatra. Garu Ram, in his interaction with journalists, acknowledged the selfless service of the local

residents, displaced individuals, and businessmen who come together every year to serve Bhole Baba with their time and resources during the Amarnath Yatra. He praised the ongoing efforts of Shri Rajkumar Goyal ji and Guruji Raju Chandel in serving the devotees of Bhole Shiv Shankar for many years. He urged everyone to cooperate and contribute to the service of Shiva's devotees.

Several dignitaries and volunteers, including Langar Director Sardar Sucha Singh (Councillor) Bhagwati Nagar, Mothershakti Meena Kak, TK Kak, Paramjit Singh Happy Manthan Goyal, youth leader Sardar Charan Singh, District President Jammu G. Shri Akshit Mahajan, State Vice President Vikram Shridhar Society, Pt. Pirtambar Sharma (District Vice President), Chhota Yogi, and Majid Bhai, were present at the event.

Nalwa demands nomination of Sikhs to J&K Assembly



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Welcoming the bill to nominate two members, including a woman, from Kashmiri migrants and one from the displaced persons of PoJK to the J&K Legislative Assembly, J&K BJP Minority Morcha President Ranjodh Singh Nalwa on Friday demanded nomination of Sikhs too to the Assembly.

Nalwa, who called on BJP general secretary Ashok Koul here along with other Minority Morcha office bearers,

said that this was a long pending demand of the Sikh community. "Sikh community has from time to time raised the demand of nomination of a community member to the legislative assembly," he told Koul and urged him to take up this demand of the community with the top BJP brass. He said, while Sikh community was happy on the introduction of the bill to nominate two KP migrants and one PoJK refugee to the assembly, it was

unhappy over the exclusion of its name from the bill. Koul assured the minority morcha members that he would definitely take up their demand with those matter. The bill provides for representation of Kashmiri migrants, displaced persons from PoJK and Scheduled Tribes in the legislative assembly of Jammu and Kashmir so as to preserve their political rights as well as their overall social and economic development.

SKJAVST honours Har Shikhar Tiranga Team

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Shri Kailash Jyotish Avim Vedic Sanathan Trust (SKJAVST) organised a program at Bikram Chowk Jammu. On the occasion, Deepak Gupta, President of the Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market(Regd.) Jammu was the Chief Guest on this occasion. Trust honoured Har Shikhar Tiranga Team.

Deepak Gupta said the team led by Col R.S Jamwal comprising Nb Sub T Chosgail, Hav Rakesh Yadav, Hav Kewal and Amit Chowdhury.

Pertinently, the Har Shikhar Tiranga campaign team has already scaled the highest mountains of seven north eastern



states, highest peaks in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir. Now the team is on the way to climb the highest points of 18 states. Trust President Mahant Rohit Shastri, said Colonel Ranveer Singh Jamwal-an Indian Army officer from Jammu for scal-

ing Mount Everest three times & has also the highest mountain of all seven continents. A feat nobody has achieved in the state except him. He is a veteran of more than 50 mountaineering expeditions and has two Asian records and four Indian records in his name. Colonel Ran-

veer Singh also recently completed six countries cycling expeditions which started from Vietnam and completed at Singapore by passing through the four other countries including Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaysia by covering the distance of around 5,374 kilometers.

"Before this expedition, he along with four cyclists, led by him had completed the 1100 kilometers cycling expedition of 'Seven Sister States' of North East and become the first team who paddled the Seven Sisters States for the first time in December last year," he said. Col. Ranveer said encouraging the young generation during his talk, he said that everyone can achieve the target but the only mantra is, he/she should be focused towards their goal and should stay away from the distraction and bad things. On occasion, Naresh Raina, Vijay, Abhimanyu Gupta, Sahil, Munish Gupta, Vishal Gupta, Amit Gupta, Veenet were also present.

Shameema pays tributes to Imam Hussain RA

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, Jul 29: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Mahila Congress President Shameema Raina on Saturday paid glorious tribute to the Martyrs of Karbala especially Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) – the beloved grandson of the beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW)–for their great and historic sacrifices.

Shameema Raina said that to safeguard the thought (belief), teachings and basic tenets of Islam, Hazrat Imam Aali Muqam (RA), on 10 Muharram-ul-Haram 61 Hijri, along with his brave associates expressed such valour



and sacrifice which will continue to guide the entire humanity till the last day. Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) by refusing to surrender before tyrants (falsehood) set an example which acts as torchbearer for those striving for truth (Haq), till the Day of Judgment, Shameema Raina

said, adding that the exemplary sacrifices of the Martyrs of Karbala will always guide the Muslims as Imam Aali Muqam's (RA) martyrdom in the scorching desert of Karbala is a glorious chapter in the history of Islam and humanity. The best way to pay tribute to Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and the Martyrs of Karbala is to stand firm against all kinds of Baatil – the hegemonic powers whose thought and ideology are in contravention to the principles of humanity and morality – and to always keep the flag of Haq (truth) and justice flying high."

Pahari cultural evening held at Karnah



TOP NEWS REPORT

KUPWARA, Jul 29: Karnah is a graphic vale located in North Kashmir, girdled by Shamsabari mountainous ranges and its offshoots.

This area is full of natural splendor and comprises high mountains, snow clad peaks, timbers, scattered town lets and temporary habitations (Dhoks) in the mountainous ranges with favorable climatic conditions. Technically, Karnah is an amalgamation of three valleys where Pahari speaking community dwell. The area is also known for stalwart, valorous and tough Pahari and Gujjar people and Kashmir speaking ethnic groups. Various melodious folk songs and succulent cookery are characteristics of Karnah.

To uplift and to promote this Pahari culture, Pahari cultural centre and community hall, Karnah was inaugurated by GOC of Chinar Corps on Saturday. In attendance were the GOC of Vajr Division, BDO Karnah & other civil dignitaries. The ceremony witnessed a huge sum of local population. The event started with welcome speech of Abdul Rashid Lone, Chairperson Pahari Cultural Club, Karnah followed by screening of a small documentary showcasing the rich history of Karnah and its origin. At the end of event, GOC of Chinar Corps witnessed the boards displaying ancient history of Karnah and appreciated efforts made by Pahari community for preserving rich heritage of Karnah.

Apni Party holds protest seeking 2 Legislative Assembly seats for Sikhs in Jammu, Kashmir regions

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jul 29: Apni Party today held a peaceful protest demonstration here demanding reservation of two Legislative Assembly seats for Sikh Community in Jammu and Kashmir.

The protest was organized by Provincial President, Jammu, Women Wing, Pavneet Kaur alongwith District President Jammu Rural-B Adv Harpreet Singh, Provincial President, Youth Wing Jammu, Vipul Bali, Provincial President Transport Union, Tirath Singh.

The protesters shouted slogans in favour of their demands i.e., reservation of two Legislative Assembly Seats for the Sikh Community. "The community has remained neglected regarding their political representation in Govts, and Legislative Assem-



bly while priority was given to other communities," said Pavneet Kaur while speaking at the protest site. She said that the Sikhs form a large chunk of population who have contributed to the society as well as J&K and the nation incomparably in defence, police, administration, social works, and education system but the community was not given preference by the

Govts. "The community has a history of contribution and defending the borders of the country, but when it comes to their political representation or reservation of seats for them in both the regions, they face discrimination that needs to be addressed before it is too late," she said. Meanwhile, District President Rural-B Harpreet Singh also expressed concern

over the discriminatory approach towards the Sikh Community and demanded reorganization of the Punjabi language as one of the official languages in Jammu and Kashmir. "Punjabi language is being spoken across Jammu plains, and parts of Kashmir valley with no barrier of caste or community or region. It has rich cultural value and written historical records

with reference to J&K during Maharaja times that needs to be considered by recognizing the language as one of official languages in J&K," he said. The Punjabi speaking people's work, and their heritage must be recognized by the Govt, he said, and added that "We are not against anyone being given anything, but Sikhs should be given political reservation. Thus, two Legislative Assembly seats must be reserved for them," he added. District President Women Wing Jammu, Ritu Pandita, District Vice President Youth Wing, Abinav Gupta, Dalbir Singh, Mohinder Singh, Yash Pal Choudhary, Taranjeet Singh, Rajinder Singh, Shikha Bhardwaj, Sheetal Rajput, Gurcharan Singh, and Darshan Singh were part of the protest.