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Hyderabad Police clarify: No free night transportation service for women

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad City Police have issued a public advisory, urging residents to be cautious about circulating misleading information on social media. This comes after a false claim about a "free ride service" for women during late-night hours was widely shared online.

The viral post, which claimed that women who are alone between 10 pm and 6 am could request a free police vehicle ride home by contacting helpline numbers, has been labeled as "misleading" by the authorities. The Hyderabad City Police clarified that no such service exists.

'No conflict can be resolved on battlefield': In Poland, PM Modi vows cooperation to ensure peace in Ukraine



GNS News Agency, August 22

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said no conflict can be resolved on the battlefield, while also assuring all possible cooperation from India for restoration of peace and stability, as the Russia-Ukraine war crosses the 900-day mark. During a statement issued during his visit to Poland and a day ahead of his visit to Ukraine, the Prime Minister voiced "deep concern" over the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia. "The conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia are matters of deep concern for all of us. It is India's firm belief that a solution to any problem cannot be found on the battlefield," Modi said after talks with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk. "The loss of lives of innocent people in any crisis has become the biggest challenge for the entire humanity. We support dialogue and diplomacy for the early restoration of peace and stability. For this, India, along with its friendly countries, is ready to provide all possible support," Modi said. Modi arrived in Warsaw on Wednesday, in the first visit by an Indian prime minister to Poland in 45 years. Talks between the leaders saw the elevation of India-Poland ties to the level of strategic partnership. "This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. On this occasion, we have decided to transform the relationship into a strategic partnership," Modi said. Modi thanked Tusk for Poland's assistance in facilitating the evacuation of Indian students from war-torn Ukraine in 2022. He also reiterated the need for a reform in the United Nations and other international institutions in the face of global challenges. The next leg of Modi's journey will see him travelling to Kyiv on boarding a train that will take 10 hours. He will spend around seven hours in the Ukrainian capital at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Full emergency at Thiruvananthapuram airport over bomb threat on AI flight

GNS News Agency, August 22

Thiruvananthapuram: A full emergency was declared at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Thursday following a bomb threat on an Air India flight from Mumbai, airport sources said. The aircraft is currently being inspected by security agencies, including a bomb detection squad, they said, adding the passengers who travelled on the flight are presently waiting for their luggage to be delivered. Meanwhile, Air India, in a statement, said that a specific security alert was detected on flight AI 657 during cruise from Mumbai to Thiruvananthapuram and "the crew carried out all the laid down security drills keeping passenger safety as top priority. All passengers and crew disembarked safely. Air India accords top priority to the safety of its passengers and crew," an airline spokesperson said. The flight with 135 passengers landed safely at the airport around 8 am and was moved to an isolation bay, airport sources said earlier. Passengers were safely evacuated from the flight by 8.44 am, they said. The bomb threat was communicated by the pilot at 7.30 am as the aircraft approached the Thiruvananthapuram airport, the sources said. Subsequently, a full emergency was declared at the airport at 7.36 am, they said. "There has been no impact on life. Airport operations are currently uninterrupted," the sources said. Details on the origin of the threat and other information are awaited, they added.

CBI seeks court nod for polygraph test on ex-principal, 4 others in Kolkata rape-murder probe

GNS News Agency, August 22

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sought permission from a Kolkata court to conduct a lie-detection test on Sandip Ghosh, the former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, and four others in connection with the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor earlier this month, officials said. Former RG Kar Hospital principal Sandip Ghosh reaches CBI office for questioning in connection with the rape and murder case. Former RG Kar Hospital principal Sandip Ghosh reaches CBI office for questioning in connection with the rape and murder case.

After handshake at Davos, Revanth Reddy protests against Adani in Hyd

GNS News Agency, August 22

Hyderabad: After signing investment deals at Davos and entrusting collection of power bills in Old City to the Adani Group, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy joined a protest by the Congress party against the Adani Group in front of the Enforcement Directorate office here on Thursday. The protest was in the wake of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) directing all Congress units across the country to stage protests against the BJP government alleging that it was supporting the Adani group in looting the nation's wealth. Following the Hindenburg report over irregularities committed by SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi had demanded that the BJP government dismiss her from the post and initiate action



against her. This apart, the INDIA bloc had also insisted on a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe against these allegations but the Parliament was adjourned four days in advance, the Chief Minister said at the protest. Apart from Cabinet Ministers, AICC Telangana incharge Deepadas Munshi and senior leader Salman Khurshid participated in the protest.

All the four Gujarat persons, including Adani, Ambani, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union

TSPSC releases tentative date for Group-II services recruitment exam

Hyderabad: The Telangana Public Service Commission (TSPSC) on Thursday informed that it will conduct the written examination for Group-II Services Recruitment between December 15 and 16, 2024.

The objective type Paper-I General Studies and General Abilities will be conducted between 10 am and 12.30 pm on December 15, 2024 while Paper-II, History, Polity and Society will be conducted from 3 pm to 5.30 pm on the same day i.e. December 15, 2024. The Paper-III comprising of Economy and Development will be held between 10 am and 12.30 pm on December 1, 2024 while Paper-IV consisting of Telangana Movement and State Formation will be held between 3 pm and 5.30 pm on the same day i.e. December 16, 2024.

they were staging protests on the roads, he said they should instead approach Collectors or agriculture officers if they had any issues.

Stating that his government had already paid Rs.18,000 crore to the agriculture department to the crop loan waiver, he said farmers with excess loans than the ceiling limit should clear the additional amount payable to the banks.

The balance amount would be waived by the government, he said. "Why should one stage dharnas? People should stage dharnas or rasta roko when the government does not listen to them," Revanth Reddy said, once again challenging BRS leaders to touch the Rajiv Gandhi statue to be installed in front of the Secretariat and threatening them that they would be thrashed by Congress workers if they tried to do so.

Not an era for war: Modi addresses Indian diaspora in Poland



GNS News Agency, August 22

Warsaw: Ahead of his maiden visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said India was an advocate of permanent peace in the region, as he reaffirmed his view that "this is not an era of war" and any conflict should be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue. Addressing an enthusiastic Indian diaspora in the Polish capital on Wednesday evening, Modi also said for decades, India had a policy to maintain distance from all the countries. However, the policy of today's India is to remain close to all countries, he added, amid chants of Modi-Modi. "India is an advocate of permanent peace in this region. Our stand is very clear - this isn't an era of war. This is the time to come together against those challenges which threaten humanity. Therefore, India believes in diplomacy and dialogues..." Modi told the gathering.

His remarks come ahead of his trip to Kyiv - the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991. Modi, who is visiting Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has said he will share with the Ukrainian leader perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict. His visit to Kyiv comes nearly six weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow and meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin which triggered criticism from

the US and some of its Western allies. At the meeting with the diaspora in Warsaw, Modi lauded their contribution to strengthening bilateral relations and commended their role in the success of Operation Ganga, an evacuation mission carried out by the Indian government to rescue its citizens stranded in neighbouring countries of Ukraine after Russia attacked it in 2022. "Today's India wants to connect with all. Today's India talks about the development of all. Today's India is with all and thinks about the interests of all," Modi said. Modi said that if any country faces a crisis, India is the first country to extend a helping hand. "Wherever in the world there is an earthquake or any disaster, India has only one mantra - Humanity first," he added. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Poland is the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in the past 45 years. In his address, Modi said he was eagerly looking forward to meeting President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Donald Tusk to strengthen India-Poland ties. He stated that India as the Mother of Democracy and its shared values with Poland bring the two countries closer. He called upon the community to become a brand ambassador of tourism to India and be part of its growth story. To further strengthen the special bond with Poland, the Prime Minister announced a new initiative called Jamsaheb Memorial Youth Exchange Program under which 20 Polish youth would be invited to India each year. He also recalled the help provided by Poland during the massive earthquake in Gujarat in 2001. The Prime Minister spoke about the transformative progress India has achieved in the last 10 years. He expressed confidence that India will become the third-largest economy in the next few years. He also spoke about his vision for the country to become a developed nation - Viksit Bharat - by 2047. He stated that Poland and India were enhancing their partnership in areas of new technology and clean energy and driving green growth. Prime Minister dwelt on India's belief in "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - the world is one family - which inspires it to contribute to global well-being and to be the First Responder in humanitarian crises.

Mamata Banerjee Urges PM Modi For Stricter Rape Laws Amid Kolkata Hospital Tragedy



GNS News Agency, August 22

In the wake of a devastating rape and murder case at a Kolkata government hospital, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has reached out to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, advocating for more stringent laws concerning rape cases. This move comes as public outrage intensifies over the tragic incident involving a trainee doctor. The Trinamool Congress-led state government has

come under fire for its handling of the case and the subsequent vandalism at RG Kar Hospital, where the crime occurred. The Supreme Court expressed dismay at the state's inability to control the vandalism, stating they were "unable to comprehend" the situation. Banerjee has pointed fingers at the BJP and Left parties, accusing them of instigating the hospital vandalism and potentially tampering with evidence. She had initially promised to seek capital punishment for the perpetrator and issued an ultimatum to the police to solve the case by August 18, failing which it would be transferred to the CBI. However, on August 13, the Calcutta High Court intervened, handing the investigation over to the CBI. The court's decision highlighted "serious lapses" in the hospital administration and noted the lack of progress in the investigation five days after the incident. In a show of solidarity with the victim, Banerjee led a large rally in Kolkata on August 17, calling for justice and the hanging of the accused, who was identified as a civic volunteer associated with the police. This case has become a focal point in West Bengal, intersecting with broader discussions on women's safety, law enforcement effectiveness, and political accountability.

Manda Krishna Meets CM Revanth Reddy over SC Classification Verdict



GNS News Agency, August 22

Manda Krishna Madiga, the founder and president of MRPS (Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi), met with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his residence in Jubilee Hills. During the meeting, Madiga requested the Chief Minister to implement the Supreme Court's verdict on SC classification. The meeting was attended by several key political figures, including Minister Damodara Rajanarasimha, Government Whip Adhuri Laxman, MLAs Vemula Veeresham, Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, Kale Yadayya, Lakshmi Kant Rao, former Minister Motkupalli Narsimhulu, and former MP Pasunoori Dayakar, among others.

PM Modi in Warsaw for talks, will leave today for war-torn Kyiv

GNS News Agency, August 22

As the conflict in Ukraine entered a new phase following Kyiv's deep inroads into Russia's Kursk region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached neighbouring Poland's capital Warsaw Wednesday for talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Andrzej Sebastian Duda Thursday.

Modi will head to Kyiv later Thursday where he will meet President Volodymyr Zelenskyy - this is the first visit to Poland by an Indian Prime Minister after 45 years, and the first to Ukraine since it gained independence in 1991. After reaching Warsaw, Modi, in a post on X, said, "Landed in Poland. Looking forward to the various programmes here. This visit will add momentum to the India-Poland friendship and benefit the people of our nations." Earlier in the day, he said, "My visit to Poland comes as we mark 70 years of our diplomatic relations. Poland is a key economic partner in Central Europe. Our mutual commitment to democracy and pluralism further reinforces our relationship. I look forward to meeting my friend Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Andrzej Duda to further advance our partnership." "From Poland, I will be visiting Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. This is the first-ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine," he said. "I look forward to the opportunity to build upon earlier conversations with President Zelenskyy on strengthening bilateral cooperation and share perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing Ukraine conflict," he said.

Don't politicise RG Kar rape-murder, law will take its course: SC

GNS News Agency, August 22

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked political parties not to politicise the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, and said "law will take its course".

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI, and senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing West Bengal government, that across the political spectrum, parties have to realise that law will take its course. Submitting that statements should not be made, Mehta said, "A sitting minister of the State of West Bengal has made a statement that if anybody talks anything against our leader (Mamata Banerjee), his fingers will be chopped off." Retorting to his submission, Sibal said that "leader of opposition Suwendu Adhikari has said bullets will be fired".

The bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said, "Do not politicise the situation. Across the political spectrum, parties have to realise that law will take its course. We are ensuring that law does take its course after quick investigation." The top court said it is concerned with safety and welfare of doctors and will pass enforceable directions on the issue. TMC minister Udayan Guha has sparked controversy by claiming that fingers of those blaming West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and demanding her resignation over the RG Kar hospital incident would be broken. While talking to a news channel, Adhikari had allegedly said, "Resign by Monday or you (Mamata Banerjee) will be held responsible or bullets are fired on Tuesday." The rape and murder of the junior doctor in a seminar hall of the state-run hospital has sparked nationwide protests.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Righting a wrong

THERE was an air of inevitability about the Supreme Court setting aside an order of the Calcutta High Court in which the latter had not only acquitted an accused in a sexual assault case but also advised adolescent girls to control their sexual urges. Having taken suo motu cognisance of the contentious verdict, the apex court had said in December last year that while writing a judgment, the judges were not expected to preach or express their personal views. The bottom line is that any ruling should be based on the merits of the case, not the prejudices and perceptions of the judges. After all, the Bench is not a pulpit and should not be treated as one. It is appalling that a Division Bench of the high court chose to sermonise and went to the extent of saying that 'in the eyes of the society, she (every female adolescent) is the loser when she gives in to enjoy the sexual pleasure of hardly two minutes'. Reeking of insensitivity, this observation was no doubt objectionable as well as unwarranted. It seems that these judges were blissfully unaware of the Supreme Court's Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes, which was released in August last year. It offers much-needed guidance on how to avoid harmful gender stereotypes, particularly those about women, in judicial decision-making and writing. A bigger push by the SC is needed to ensure that this document is widely circulated and read by various stakeholders in courts across the country. What's worrisome is that high courts continue to come up with outrageous statements despite being rapped by the top-most judiciary. In 2017, for instance, the Delhi High Court had shockingly observed that a woman's feeble 'no' may mean 'yes'. Judges who stoop so low are a disgrace to the judiciary. Amid its welcome intervention in the Kolkata rape-murder case, the SC would do well to lay greater emphasis on gender sensitisation.

After red flags raised over MP tiger deaths, wildlife dept admits officials were negligent, 'lacked interest'

GNS News Agency, August 22

After the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) sought a response from the Madhya Pradesh Wildlife Department regarding the red flags raised by an SIT regarding tiger deaths in the state – highlighted by a report in The Indian Express earlier this month – the department has acknowledged that some officials were "negligent in their duties and show a lack of interest in tiger conservation". It had published a report on August 6 highlighting the red flags raised by the Special Investigation Team regarding the deaths of 43 tigers between 2021 and 2023 in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) and Shahdol Forest Circle. Shoddy investigations by wildlife officials into possible poaching cases, lapses during the postmortem process, and medical negligence that led to tiger deaths were some of the issues flagged by the SIT. After the publication of the news report, the NTCA sought a clarification from the Wildlife Department.

Subharanjan Sen, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), wrote to the NTCA on August 9, acknowledging that in "some cases, it was found that the NTCA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the guidelines issued by the Wildlife Headquarters were not fully adhered to following the death incidents of the tigers." He said the SIT found that a total of 34 tiger deaths occurred in BTR. Shahdol Forest Circle saw nine tiger deaths during the same period.

In a separate report dated August 9 and addressing the alleged negligence of former field directors of the tiger reserve, Sen wrote, "As per the investigation report, 30 of these deaths occurred during the tenure of the then-posted regional directors, and it was found that the officers did not follow the SOP set by the NTCA." The three field directors mentioned in the letter are Vincent Rahim, who served from August 5, 2019 to October 8, 2021, and under whose tenure nine tigers died; B S Anigeri, who served from October 8, 2021 to September 9, 2022, whose tenure also saw the deaths of nine tigers; and Rajiv Kumar Mishra, who served from September 9, 2022 to August 31, 2023, during which period 12 tigers died. "This suggests that the officers concerned did not show interest in fulfilling their responsibilities. This act demonstrates negligence towards official duties... In this regard, it would be appropriate to obtain an explanation at the government level regarding the negligence of the officers mentioned in the above list during their tenure at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve," Sen wrote.

Rajiv Kumar Mishra denied there were any lapses during his tenure. "I have not received any letter and have been retired for some time now. During my tenure, there were demands that were raised for better staff and equipment for the postmortem of dead tigers. Tigers were our No 1 priority, and there was no question of any lapse during my tenure," he told The Indian Express. B S Anigeri also flagged the issue of staff shortage and denied any lapses. "There were many issues of staff shortage and budget that were raised during my tenure. I did not see any case of lapses in procedures surrounding tiger deaths during my tenure." Vincent Rahim did not respond to calls and messages seeking his comment.

On the "unprecedented increase in the number of tigers in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve", the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) said "a natural explanation" could be the "internal fights". He also said the lack of a regular field director was also a major reason "for the shortcomings in the smooth operation and management" of BTR. "Based on the committee's report, necessary action is being taken against the concerned government servants, and the implementation of the committee's suggestions has been initiated... Incompetent officers/employees for tiger conservation and management are being transferred elsewhere. The field staff is also being trained for tiger conservation and management," Sen said. Wildlife activist Ajay Dubey, who has filed a petition in court on tiger poaching incidents in the state, told The Indian Express: "We are now going to approach the High Court for a CBI investigation. The tigers' deaths report was kept under wraps for months and action has now been taken on August 9 after media reports. The whole purpose of justice is defeated if action is not taken swiftly and errors rectified."

SC seeks Odisha's reply on remission plea of convict Dara Singh



GNS News Agency, August 22

The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response of the Odisha government on the remission plea of Ravindra Pal alias Dara Singh, who is serving life sentence for the ghastly killings of Australian missionary Graham Stuart Staines and his two minor sons in Keonjhar district in the state in 1999. Singh has sought application of a more liberal remission policy to ensure his premature release from a prison in the state where he is lodged for more than 24 years. While seeking a response from the state government within two weeks, a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices JB

Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said the offence was very serious in nature.

The bench took note of the submissions of lawyer Vishnu Shanker Jain, appearing for the convict, that a more liberal policy on remission has to be applied in his case. Singh, he said, has already served 24 years and six months. "We have issued the notice and sought response in two weeks," the bench said. A mob led by Dara Singh had attacked Staines and his two sons – 11-year-old Philip and 8-year-old Timothy – while they were sleeping in their station wagon. It set the vehicle on fire in Manoharpur village of Keonjhar district on the intervening night of January 22-23, 1999.

Dara Singh, the main accused in the triple murder, was convicted and sentenced to death by a CBI court in 2003. The Orissa High Court had commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005 and it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2011. Mehendra Hembram, an accomplice of Dara Singh, is also serving life imprisonment in the case, while 11 other accused were acquitted by the high court due to lack of evidence. Staines and his wife Gladys worked with Mayurbhanj Evangelical Missionary organisation and cared for leprosy patients. Gladys Staines, who was awarded the Padmashree in 2005, had said she had forgiven the killers of her husband and sons and that she holds no bitterness against them. Another bench of the top court is also seized of Singh's another petition seeking similar relief.

West Bengal govt seeks SC stay on HC verdict striking down OBC status of several castes



GNS News Agency, August 22

The high court had on May 22 struck down the OBC status of several castes in West Bengal granted since 2010, holding as illegal the reservation for them in public sector jobs and state-run educational institutions. The high court had on May 22 struck down the OBC status of several castes in West Bengal granted since 2010, holding as illegal the reservation for them in public sector jobs and state-run educational institutions. (File Photo) The West Bengal government on Tuesday sought an urgent hearing by the Supreme Court of its appeal against the Calcutta High Court verdict striking down the OBC status of several castes, mostly Muslim groups, in the state for granting them reservation in public sector jobs and admissions in state-run educational institutions. The top court said it will hear the pleas on the issue on August 27.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the state government, told a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra that the high court verdict needed to be stayed as it was affecting the admission of candidates who have cleared the NEET-UG, 2024. "We need a stay of the high court's verdict... the issue of scholarships is pending and the NEET admissions will be effected," Sibal said, adding that the plea be heard during the day. A counsel, representing the state's Other Backward Classes (OBC) panel, said students are lining up for authentication of their OBC status for securing admissions to medical colleges and other institutions.

"We will hear it on Tuesday (August 27)," the CJ said. The top court had on August 5 asked the state gov-

Kolkata doctor rape-murder: SC pulls up Bengal government, police; sets up panel to look into medical professionals' issues

GNS News Agency, August 22

Saying that it was "deeply concerned" about the "virtual absence of safe conditions of work for young doctors across the country", the Supreme Court on Tuesday pulled up the West Bengal government over the August 9 rape and murder of a woman doctor at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, questioned the role of the state police and the former principal of the institution, and put in place a nine-member panel to recommend solutions to issues related to the safety and well-being of medical professionals. Terming the rape and murder "horrific given the nature of the crime", a three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud asked the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to furnish a status report on the investigation by August 22.

"We would want CBI to file a state report before this court on Thursday. We want CBI to appraise us on the status of the investigation. Investigation obviously will be at sensitive stage, therefore report should be submitted to court," the bench also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said. The court also directed the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to provide security to the hospital, wondering "what was the police doing?" when a mob gathered at the hospital on the night of August 14, attacked protesters, and vandalised the premises. "It's a matter of very serious concern. The doctors... they were all working with her... doctors are on protest... a mob assembles at the hospital. The hospital is invaded and critical facilities are damaged... What was the police doing?" asked the CJI. It recorded in the order, "We are unable to comprehend how the authorities were not able to deal with the vandalism...". The bench also posed questions on the role of Sandip Kumar Ghosh, the former principal of R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, and said it seems there was an attempt to pass off the murder as a suicide. "After the crime was detected in the early hours of the morning, the principal of the hospital tries to pass this off as a suicide. Parents are not allowed to see the body for almost three hours," the CJI observed. Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appearing for the state sought to deny this and said he would place the true

ernment to provide quantifiable data on social and economic backwardness of fresh castes it has included in the OBC list and on their inadequate representation in public sector jobs. While issuing notices to the private litigants on the plea of the state government against the high court verdict, it had asked West Bengal to file an affidavit giving details of the consultations, if any, made by it and the state's backward classes panel before including 37 castes, mostly Muslim groups, in the OBC list. The high court had on May 22 struck down the OBC status of several castes in West Bengal granted since 2010, holding as illegal the reservation for them in public sector jobs and state-run educational institutions. While striking down the OBC status of these castes, the high court had said, "Religion indeed appears to have been the sole criterion" for declaring these communities as OBCs.

The high court had said that it is of the view that the selection of 77 classes of Muslims as backwards is an "affront to the Muslim community as a whole." Maintaining that this court's mind is not free from doubt that "the said community (Muslims) has been treated as a commodity for political ends," the bench had said, "This is clear from the chain of events that led to the classification of the 77 classes as OBCs and their inclusion to be treated as a vote bank." Passing the judgment on petitions challenging the provisions of the state's reservation Act of 2012 and reservations granted in 2010, the high court had clarified that the services of citizens of the struck-down classes, who are already in service or have availed the benefit of reservation or have succeeded in any selection process of the state, will not be affected by the order. The high court also struck down 37 classes chosen for grant of reservation as OBC under The West Bengal Backward Classes (Other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) (Reservation of Vacancies in Services and Posts) Act, 2012. While the court had scrapped the 77 classes over "illegality" of reports recommending such classification, other 37 classes were removed from the OBC list for non-consultation by the West Bengal Backward Classes Commission. The bench had also struck down an executive order of May 11, 2012 creating several sub-classes. The high court ruled that the directions will take effect prospectively.

facts before the court. The court asked why the First Information Report (FIR) was registered only at 11.45 pm even though it was evident from the autopsy conducted much earlier in the day that it was a case of rape and murder. It also sought to know why Ghosh was appointed to another college when he was under cloud. "After the principal resigns, he is appointed as principal of another college!... his conduct is under scrutiny and he is appointed as a principal somewhere else!" Chandrachud exclaimed. The court also asked the state to ensure that the power of the state of West Bengal is not unleashed on peaceful protesters. "Let not the power of the State of West Bengal be unleashed upon peaceful protesters. Let us deal with them with great sensitivity. This is a moment for national catharsis," the CJI said.

Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta said that a mob of 7,000 people would not assemble without the knowledge and the connivance of the police. "Even in a well organised function if we want the presence of 500 people in an auditorium, we all know we need to make efforts. Seven thousand people in the middle of the night, armed with lathis and hockey sticks can never be without the knowledge or consent of the police force. It's complete failure of law and order in the entire state," said Mehta. The court also expressed its concern over the name and details of the victim being published in the media. "We are deeply concerned of the fact that the name of the deceased who was assaulted and murdered has been published all over the media. Photographs, published all over the media, video clips either, obviously before or after the postmortem have been published showing her body after she was subjected to the assault," the CJI said. Terming it "extremely concerning", the CJI added, "We are the first to recognise the right to free speech, but there are well settled parameters which have been laid down in the new criminal procedure code and in the judgments of our court... that you will not publish the names of the survivors of the sexual assault." He further asked, "Is this the way we provide dignity and respect the privacy of an individual, young doctor, who has lost her life?" Sibal said the state police had filed 50 FIRs in this connection and added, "

We will protect Constitution, reservation at all costs: Rahul after govt's lateral entry U-turn



GNS News Agency, August 22

Centre withdraws lateral entry advertisement, Rahul Gandhi, Congress, Constitution protection His remarks came after Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh wrote to Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Chairman Preeti Sudan and asked her to cancel the advertisement so that marginalised communities get their rightful representation in government services.

With the Centre withdrawing the latest advertisement for lateral entry in bureaucracy, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said the Congress will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs and foil "conspiracies" of the BJP.

His remarks came after Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh wrote to Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Chairman Preeti Sudan and asked her to cancel the advertisement so that marginalised communities get their rightful representation in government services. "We will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs. We will foil the BJP's conspiracies like that of 'lateral entry' at any cost," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X. "I am saying it again – by removing the 50 per cent reservation cap, we will ensure social justice based on caste census," the former Congress chief said.

On August 17, the UPSC issued a notification for recruiting 45 joint secretaries, directors, and deputy secretaries through lateral entry, referred to as the appointment of specialists (including those from the private sector) in government departments. The decision had ignited criticism from opposition parties, which claimed it undermined the reservation rights of OBCs, SCs, and STs. In his letter, Singh said that for the prime minister, reservation in public employment is "a cornerstone of our social justice framework aimed at addressing historical injustices and promoting inclusivity".

Doctor held in UP's Moradabad for raping nurse at his residence

GNS News Agency, August 22

Amethi rape, rape case father doctor rape, daughter, 13-year-old girl rape, rape case, father accused of rape, Uttar Pradesh rape news, child sexual abuse, crime against minors, Pocco, UP crime, crime against women, crime against girls, The victim, a Dalit woman, was employed by the hospital 10 months ago.

A doctor in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad district was arrested for allegedly raping a 20-year-old Dalit nurse who worked at his hospital on Saturday night. Two other hospital employees were also arrested for allegedly forcibly taking the woman to the doctor's residence, the police said. The police identified the accused as a Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) doctor and said that he had been running a private hospital in Moradabad for the last five years along with his wife who also holds a similar degree.

The victim, a Dalit woman, was employed by the hospital 10 months ago. According to her father, who lodged the First Information Report (FIR) at the jurisdictional police station, she was on night duty and had reached the hospital at 7 pm on Saturday. "Around midnight, a nurse and ward boy told her that the doctor had called her at his residence inside the hospital campus. She refused but they dragged her to the room and bolted the door from outside," the father told the police. "After lodging the FIR on Sunday morning, we raided the hospital and arrested the doctor for rape and threatening to kill the victim if she dared to tell anyone about the incident. The ward boy and the nurse have also been arrested for forcibly taking her to the doctor's room," Sandeep Kumar Meena, Superintendent of Police (Rural), Moradabad, said. The doctor was booked under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, and under Section 63 (rape) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and the nurse and the ward boy were booked under Section 61 (criminal conspiracy) of the BNS, Meena added. "Heavy deployment has been made in the victim's native village in Moradabad district as a precautionary measure," Meena further said. All three accused were produced before a local court and sent to judicial custody. "We are checking the veracity of the degree which the accused holds and then we will approach the authority concerned for cancellation of the degree and registration of the doctor. The hospital has already been sealed," Anuj Singh, District Magistrate, said.

Doctor held in UP's Moradabad for raping nurse at his residence

GNS News Agency, August 22

Amethi rape, rape case father doctor rape, daughter, 13-year-old girl rape, rape case, father accused of rape, Uttar Pradesh rape news, child sexual abuse, crime against minors, Pocco, UP crime, crime against women, crime against girls, The victim, a Dalit woman, was employed by the hospital 10 months ago.

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Chirag Paswan says took up lateral entry issue with PM Modi, raised concerns of SCs, STs, OBCs



GNS News Agency, August 22

Expressing his concerns regarding lateral entry into the bureaucracy, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief and Union minister Chirag Paswan said Tuesday that he has been continuously taking up the matter with the au-

thorities concerned, and that he had also taken it up with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Ever since the matter came to my notice, I have been continuously taking up the issue at various places with the authorities concerned. I have brought it to the notice of the PM and strongly put forward the concerns of SCs, STs and OBCs regarding the issue," he told reporters in Patna.

He said he has been in touch with the PM's Office for the last two days regarding the issue, and that he hoped the PM would "understand the seriousness of the matter, and appreciate that since the private sector has no provision of quota, any government appointment should follow quota rules. This has always been the demand of LJP(R)". Amidst protests from the Opposition and also from some NDA allies, including LJP(R), the Centre on Tuesday asked the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to withdraw its advertisements for 45 posts of joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries, advertised three days ago.

Kerala govt seriously considering recommendations of Justice Hema Committee: CM Vijayan

GNS News Agency, August 22

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Tuesday said the state government was seriously considering the various recommendations, including setting up of a tribunal and framing a comprehensive Cinema Law, given by the Justice Hema Committee. Vijayan also said that the action recommended by the committee against the various crimes against women in the film industry was already being looked into by the agencies responsible for ensuring law and order in the state. The CM made the announcement while speaking at a press conference here.



His remarks come in the wake of severe criticism of the Left government by opposition parties for its silence and inaction over the past four years, despite receiving the report. The Congress-led UDF alleged that the Pinarayi Vijayan government was siding with the 'hunters' rather than the hapless victims. The BJP charged the government had failed to take any legal action against the accused despite receiving information about the crimes committed by them. Refuting the allegations, Vijayan affirmed the government's support for the victims and said it was not with the alleged offenders against whom action

in accordance with the law will be taken. The much-awaited report, released on Monday, has recorded explosive accounts of harassment, exploitation and ill-treatment of female professionals in the film industry and alleged that a "criminal gang" was controlling the industry where unyielding women are squeezed out. The Kerala government constituted the panel after the 2017 actress assault case involving actor Dileep to study issues of sexual harassment and gender inequality in Malayalam cinema.

Ahead of winter, Delhi urges Centre to facilitate interstate coordination to contain air pollution

GNS News Agency, August 22

Delhi air pollution, winter air quality, Environment Minister Gopal Rai, collaboration with neighboring states, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, cross-border pollution, crop residue burning, thermal plants, brick kilns, diesel generators, non-electric vehicles, industrial emissions, coordinated response, Delhi demographic location, long-term solution, common strategy meeting, Delhi government initiatives, odd-even vehicle scheme, electric vehicles, public transport, air quality improvement, Save Environment Round Table Conference, winter action plan. Among these factors, Rai highlighted crop residue burning in neighbouring states, thermal plants, brick kilns, use of diesel generators because of disrupted power supply, and influx of private and commercial non-electric vehicles along with industrial emissions from neighbouring states. Months ahead of winter, when Delhi's air quality notoriously plummets, Environment Minister Gopal Rai has urged the Centre to facilitate collaboration between the administration in the national capital and its neighbouring states to address sources of cross-border sources of air pollution. In a letter to Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, Rai wrote on Tuesday that the air pollution crisis loomed large despite several efforts as the air quality "remains hazardous" mainly between November and December. He attributed the situation largely to factors "beyond the control of this state government".



Among these factors, Rai highlighted crop residue burning in neighbouring states, thermal plants, brick kilns, use of diesel generators because of disrupted power supply, and influx of private and commercial non-electric vehicles along with industrial emissions from neighbouring states. Adding to the woes, according to the minister, is Delhi's "peculiar" demographic location as it is "sandwiched among various states". "The scale of this challenge requires a more robust and coordinated response among all neighbouring states of Delhi," Rai

wrote. After stressing the need for a "long-term solution" to the crisis, Rai requested the Union minister to arrange a meeting to devise a common strategy. In his letter, the Delhi environment minister listed the initiatives the state government has taken. "We regularly undertake several initiatives to combat this issue, such as implementing the odd-even vehicle scheme, promoting electric vehicles, and enhancing frequency of public transport etc," he wrote.

Rai said there was a 35.5 per cent increase in days with good or moderate air quality from 2017 (152 days) to 2023 (206 days) and attributed this improvement to the Government's efforts. Among such efforts listed in Rai's letter are steps taken to reduce vehicular pollution, such as electric vehicle subsidies, strengthening of charging infrastructure and awareness campaigns. Other initiatives include banning firecrackers, increasing the electric bus fleet, undertaking large-scale plantation drives and ensuring a switch to clean PNG in industrial units. The Government, however, is yet to roll out its winter action plan. According to a press release issued on August 2, the Government will organise a Save Environment Round Table Conference on Wednesday at the Delhi Secretariat and the action plan will be prepared on the basis of opinions arising from the event.

Nearly 10,000 voters over 100 years in Haryana, EC officials surprised

GNS News Agency, August 22

In a surprising discovery, the number of voters aged over 100 in Haryana has been found to be significantly higher than in neighbouring Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, prompting election officials in the poll-bound state to verify the data at the booth level. Haryana is set to hold the assembly elections

Haryana Chief Electoral Officer Pankaj Agarwal revealed on Sunday that 9,554 voters in the state are aged over 100. "When our staff inquired from neighbouring states, they found that Punjab has 4,116 such voters, while Himachal Pradesh has 1,216," Agarwal told. Agarwal expressed skepticism about the high numbers, stating, "We will verify the data of those voters aged over 100 again, as the number seems unusually high. I am not satisfied with these figures. Therefore, we will conduct a verification with the help of booth level officers (BLOs)."

Interestingly, the number of such voters was even higher during the recent Lok Sabha elections in Haryana. At that time, 10,759 voters were in the 100 to 109 age group, and 41 voters were over 120 years old, including eight from Gurgaon. A total of 1.98 crore voters were eligible to participate in those elections in Haryana. In Punjab, 2.13 crore voters were eligible to cast their votes during the Lok Sabha polls, with 5,162 voters reported to



be over 100 years old.

Election officials in Haryana are particularly surprised by the high number of centenarian voters when compared to a larger state like Punjab. One official noted, "A few decades ago, people were often registered as voters based on estimated age as reported to the election officials. The practice of registering voters with documentation only started recently, which may explain the ambiguity in the ages of those over 100 years." However, another official suggested that the large number of centenarians in Haryana might be attributed to the state's rural residents, who often maintain healthy lifestyles, including vegetarian diet and physical work, which may have contributed to their longevity.

Bombay HC junks PIL seeking ban on noisy sound systems, laser beams



GNS News Agency, August 22

The Bombay High Court Monday disposed of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) that sought to ban high-decibel sound systems and hazardous laser beams, citing a failure by the state government and police to effectively implement noise pollution rules. The court clarified that petitioners have other remedies available to address grievances related to the non-implementation of the 2016 HC verdict on noise pollution guidelines. Individuals can make representations to the relevant authorities, including the police. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit R. Borkar ruled on the PIL filed by the Akhil Bharatiya Grahak Panchayat, Pune. The petition sought a complete ban on the sale, lease, import, and use of loudspeakers and

sound systems emitting noise levels that exceed permissible limits and cause hearing loss.

The petitioner, represented by advocate Sattiyendra Muley, cited a report from the College of Engineering, Pune, indicating that noise pollution levels in Pune during the 2023 Ganesh Festival reached hazardous levels. The PIL also requested a directive for authorities to submit a report on the use of hazardous laser beams during processions and ceremonies and sought a ban on their sale and use until appropriate regulations are established by the state. The petitioner argued that the recent trend of using dangerous light laser beams, particularly during the Ganesh festival, necessitated immediate action. Despite the 2016 HC judgement that set noise pollution guidelines, the petitioner claimed that authorities had not effectively implemented them. Government Pleader Priyabhushan P. Kakade countered that the directions issued in the 2016 judgement had been fully complied with. The court noted that some aspects of the PIL were vague and speculative, lacking concrete factual evidence. It ruled that the petitioner did not establish a prima facie case for the requested measures. In disposing of the plea, the HC advised that in the absence of specific legislation or regulations governing the use of light laser beams in public places, the petitioner could submit detailed representations to the relevant authorities and file complaints with the police under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

AIIMS issues treatment advisory, 3 Delhi govt hospitals to set up isolation rooms

GNS News Agency, August 22

AIIMS Delhi monkeypox According to the protocol upon arrival, patients with fever, rash, or a history of contact with confirmed Monkeypox cases should be flagged for immediate assessment. AIIMS Delhi Tuesday issued an advisory on handling suspected patients of mpox. The Delhi government also directed three of its hospitals — Lok Nayak, GTB and Baba Saheb Ambedkar — to set up isolation rooms to manage suspected and confirmed cases, officials said while stressing that no patient has been detected so far. The World Health Organisation, sounding its highest level of alarm, declared mpox, earlier referred to as monkeypox, as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern last week in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa. It is a viral zoonosis with symptoms similar to those seen in the past in smallpox patients, although clinically less severe. At AIIMS, an SOP has been issued to handle cases in the Emergency Department. Any patient coming to AIIMS will be screened in the triage area — patients will be assessed for fever, rash, or a history of contact with a confirmed mpox case and will be then flagged for assessment.



The symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, swollen lymph nodes, chills, exhaustion, and characteristic skin lesions. Beds have been earmarked in isolation areas for suspected patients; these will be allotted on the recommendation of the Emergency CMO and treated by the Medicine department. "AB-7 shall remain a temporary holding area for the patient till he/she is shifted to the hospital earmarked for the definitive care (Safdarjung Hospital)," said the AIIMS advisory. AIIMS will refer patients to Safdarjung Hospital, which has been designated to manage and treat cases. For this, a dedi-

cated ambulance has been allotted to shift patients to Safdarjung. "The Emergency staff has to inform the ambulance coordinator on the mobile number — 8929683898 — to shift the suspected patient to Safdarjung hospital," said the AIIMS advisory. An official from Safdarjung Hospital said discussions are ongoing on bed allocation and steps regarding treating patients.

The AIIMS advisory further said all suspected cases, when identified, will be notified to officials of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP). At Lok Nayak, Delhi government's largest hospital which has been designated as the nodal facility, there will be 20 isolation rooms, including 10 for confirmed cases. GTB and Baba Saheb Ambedkar hospitals, which will be on standby, will have 10 rooms each for such patients, with five for suspected cases. At least 99,176 cases and 208 deaths due to mpox have been reported from 116 countries since 2022, according to WHO data. Since 2022, 30 cases have been reported in India. The last case was detected in March 2024.

Amid MUDA row, Siddaramaiah says won't give up social justice fight 'whether in power or not'

GNS News Agency, August 22

Efforts to suppress backward communities that have gone on for centuries continues even in the present times, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said in a veiled reference to attempts to implicate him in a corruption case over housing plots allotted to his wife. Speaking at an event held to mark the birth anniversary of former chief minister and backward classes leader Devaraj Urs, to whom he is often compared, Siddaramaiah suggested that the attempts to taint his record with a corruption charge were part of a larger conspiracy to suppress backward classes.



"I became a minister for the first time in August 1984. It has been 40 years. There is no black mark against me. They have now started efforts to taint me. Even if I have not committed any mistake they are saying that I have committed a mistake. They are saying it daily and demanding that I resign. This is the conspiracy that is underway," Siddaramaiah said. "All those who are deprived of social justice must fight against this conspiracy, all those who have been suppressed and discriminated against must unite to fight this conspiracy. If you do not fight back, you will not get justice." He said the caste system is entrenched in the state and the country. "Even today there are efforts being made to suppress the backward classes," he added. "I will not give up the fight for social justice whether I am in power or not. I will not give up the principles that I believe in," Siddaramaiah said.

Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot has granted sanction to three activists to seek investigations against Siddaramaiah over the grant of 14 housing sites to his wife in Mysuru in exchange for 3.16 acres of land "wrongly acquired" from her by the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA). In a minor relief for Siddaramaiah, the Karnataka High Court on Monday asked a special court not to conduct proceedings till August 29 on private complaints filed against him by the people who were granted sanction by the Governor on August 16. "See, if you venture to touch the entrenched system, it becomes very difficult. It is very difficult to change the system. This is happening in the entire state and the country," Siddaramaiah said during the Devaraj Urs birth anniversary event in Bengaluru. Siddaramaiah suggested that he was being targeted by some sections of society for his pro-backward and pro-poor policies. "We have done the caste survey. Is it not necessary to understand the situation of various communities? They are angry that I have done it and want to finish me off politically. There is a conspiracy underway," he said. The survey report was submitted to Siddaramaiah in February but is yet to be accepted by his Congress Government for fear of drawing a backlash from dominant communities such as the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas, whose standing may be diminished by the survey's findings. "Land reform law tweaks to be reversed"

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah suggests certain sections of society want to finish him off politically because he has carried out a caste survey.

Siddaramaiah said his government would change modifications made to the Karnataka Land Reforms Act 1961 by the BJP government in 2020. Amendments had removed the Act's section 79A, which allowed only those earning less than Rs 25 lakh annually to buy agricultural land, and section 79B, which said only people earning a living through agriculture could buy agricultural land. The amendments also removed section 79 C, which empowered the revenue department to investigate violations of sections 79A and B. "The policy of land reforms carried out by Devaraj Urs allowed agricultural communities to own land through sections 79 A and B. We will restore the land laws when we have a majority in the Legislative Council," he said. "Those who oppose pro-poor programmes are those who cannot tolerate change? This has been in existence since Independence, during Devaraj Urs's time and even now," he said in a reference to the Congress's guarantees. "Our people support those who give pro-poor programmes and those who oppose it also. This is the problem. This is what happened during the time of Devaraj Urs." Siddaramaiah said a recommendation would be made to the Central Government to award the Bharat Ratna posthumously to Devaraj Urs. He also said Electronic City in Bengaluru would be named as Devaraj Urs Electronic City. "Last time I had said that Electronics City will be renamed as Devaraj Urs Electronics City and it is under process. We will carry out the change of name," the chief minister said.

What's behind jailed Imran Khan's bewildering Oxford chancellor bid

GNS News Agency, August 22

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has applied for the post of Chancellor of Oxford University. In jail for over a year, Imran will run in the Oxford election in October. What does his application mean for Imran and Pakistani politics? Is it just an attempt to attract global attention or a signal to Pakistan's powerful military?

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan is doing more than just stare at jail walls. He has applied to be the Chancellor of Oxford University. In jail for a year now, Imran Khan's surprise move to run for the elections for the Oxford top post could be a bid to attract global attention while his party holds rallies in Pakistan on the anniversary of his jailing. It could also be a signal to the powerful military of Pakistan that Imran is done with Pakistani politics and is interested in a third career, after cricket and politics. Imran's adviser Syed Zulfi Bukhari revealed that he submitted an application to run in the October election. He has applied at a time when elections and nominations for the position of the Chancellor have become online.

The former Pakistani Prime Minister will contest to replace Chris Patten, the former Conservative minister. Patten, the chancellor of Oxford University, announced he was stepping down from the post in February. Imran's journey in Pakistan's politics started with his promise of "Naya Pakistan" or "new Pakistan". He is now languishing in jail, facing several charges, which his supporters allege are part of a political conspiracy.

IMRAN KHAN: THE CHANCELLOR OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY? "It's a ceremonial post but one with the utmost prestige and importance and Imran Khan, being one of the larger or more popular names coming out of Oxford, it would be brilliant to see him as chancellor," Bukhari told AFP. The list will not be made public till October. But an entry into the prestigious British university might also be a going away from Pakistan's politics for Imran Khan. Imran Khan had a playboy lifestyle during his cricket career, regularly becoming the subject of Britain's gossip magazines. He later turned to philanthropy and politics, serving as Pakistan's Prime Minister from 2018 to 2022 as the leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-



e-Insaf (Movement for Justice). The party has now been banned.

He was removed as PM through an army-backed vote of no confidence in Pakistan's parliament and has been in prison for the past one year. Khan has alleged that this is part of a political scheme against him. The Chancellor's post won't be something exceptional for him. Imran has also been the Chancellor of the University of Bradford for eight years, from 2005 to 2014. If he does become the Chancellor, this time of Oxford, will he bid adieu to Pakistan's politics? Or is this a signal to Pakistan's powerful military, which he had taken on as the PM, that he is moving on?

CAN IMRAN KHAN MAKE IT IN THE UK? Imran Khan is also a graduate of Oxford, where he studied politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford's Keble College in the 1970s. He earned an honours degree for the university's cricket team. "If he does become the chancellor, he would be the first of Asian descent. It wouldn't be something only for Pakistan, but it would be a great achievement for all of Asia and the rest of the world," Bukhari added. Voting will take place from October 28. But only Oxford graduates and members of the university can vote. As for his chances of winning, his competitors are: UK ex-PM Tony Blair and Boris Johnson. This is not going to be a cakewalk for Imran Khan. What would be interesting to watch is what happens if he wins. Will it be an easing out of the tumultuous politics of Pakistan, and will he just leave behind the people who still swear by him? Anything is possible in the subcontinent's politics.

Mpox outbreak in Africa neglected



Mpox's recent history is yet another reminder that an infectious disease in one corner of the world should not be regarded as someone else's problem, as it can suddenly start to spread fast and far. It also highlights global inequities in resource allocation and access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatments. These were made available in many industrialised countries and helped curb the global outbreak, but are still largely lacking in most of Africa. The mpox outbreak in Africa is yet another example of how infectious diseases perceived to be "someone else's problem", and affecting mainly poor, developing countries, may suddenly pose unexpected global threats.

Mpox was discovered in 1958 (in captive monkeys, hence the original misnomer "monkeypox") and the first human case was identified in 1970. Then for decades it was largely neglected by the scientific and public health communities, regarded as an uncommon infection in remote rural areas in tropical Africa without relevance for the rest of the world. When a massive mpox outbreak hit developed countries in 2022, increased research funding led to a surge in scientific studies. On just one medical search engine, there's been more research produced since April 2022 than in the preceding 60 years.

The 2022-23 global mpox outbreak happened despite repeated calls from African researchers for increased global investment in diagnostic, therapeutic and infection prevention tools for mpox. The WHO has now declared the current upsurge of mpox in central Africa a public health emergency of international concern. This is the highest alert level for events that constitute a public health risk to other countries and requires a coordinated international response. We are infectious disease researchers who have worked on HIV, SARS-CoV-2 and other viral infections. Mpox's recent history is yet another reminder that an infectious disease in one corner of the world should not be regarded as someone else's problem, as it can suddenly start to spread fast and far. It also highlights global inequities in resource allocation and access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatments. These were made available in many industrialised countries and helped curb the global outbreak, but are still largely lacking in most of Africa. The disease has been renamed "mpox" but the name of the virus, for now, remains "monkeypox" (MPXV). It is closely related to the smallpox virus. MPXV was considered a zoonotic disease endemic in parts of central and west Africa. It was acquired mainly through close contact with wild mammals, especially handling bush meat, but there was no sustained human-to-human transmission.

Only very occasionally were cases seen outside the endemic areas, due to infected travellers or import of infected small mammals. This changed abruptly in 2022: a massive, rapidly evolving global outbreak caused over 99,000 laboratory-confirmed cases in 116 countries. At its peak in August 2022, over 6,000 cases were reported each week. This outbreak came as a total surprise: most cases were reported from non-endemic countries, mostly in men who have sex with men who had become infected during recent sexual encounters.

Even though most cases were clinically not particularly severe and the death toll stands at just over 200, the global outbreak was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization on 23 July 2022. Fortunately, case numbers soon plummeted due to a combination of behavioural changes and vaccination in at-risk groups. Modern vaccines and antiviral drugs with activity against mpox were made available in many affected high-income countries. These had been developed and stockpiled in the US and Europe, mostly in preparation for a potential bioweapon attack

using a poxvirus. The global outbreak in 2022 was caused by clade II of MPXV, which is endemic in west Africa and not as virulent as clade I MPXV, which so far has only been seen in the Congo Basin. That first mpox public health emergency of international concern was declared over in May 2023. Clade II MPXV infections are still occurring globally, but the worst seems over – for now. Complacency would be misguided, as illustrated by the current mpox outbreak that is gathering steam.

The African region is experiencing an upsurge in mpox cases which started in 2023. As the continent which includes the areas where mpox has been endemic for a long time, Africa now presents a complex mosaic: cases arising from the endemic, largely zoonotic, pattern that used to be predominant in the past cases linked to the 2022 global outbreak, for example in South Africa most worryingly, ever increasing numbers of MPXV clade Ib infections reported from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The current clade I MPXV (formerly called Congo Basin strain) is more virulent than the clade II (west African) strain, resulting in a higher case fatality rate. The ongoing outbreak has its epicentre in South Kivu province, eastern DRC, and has the potential to fuel a large pandemic. It has a distinct epidemiological pattern with sustained chains of human-to-human transmission, often via the sexual route. It may have increased transmissibility (we don't know yet). The virus which causes it is the newly defined clade Ib lineage. It displays mutations that are the hallmark of human-to-human spread that is estimated to have been happening since September 2023. Case numbers are rising rapidly, even though many suspected cases are likely not tested and thus not counted as confirmed. Complicating matters, a commonly used test was found to miss infections with this lineage of the virus. It affects mostly adults. The case fatality rate is higher than it was in the 2022 global outbreak. Already, this outbreak has resulted in mpox cases occurring in several neighbouring countries, including some (like Kenya) with no previous record of mpox. The challenge is enormous. The eastern DRC is an area beset by multiple problems. This includes natural disasters, violence and infectious diseases including measles, cholera and poliomyelitis for the DRC. In recent years the second-largest Ebola outbreak ever took place in the wider area and, despite the availability of vaccines and treatments, posed considerable challenges. A recent article we co-authored in The Lancet Global Health outlines what needs to be done to contain this outbreak and prevent it from turning into an epidemic, possibly even a pandemic. Equitable access to diagnostic tests, vaccines and antiviral treatments requires political commitment and financial investments. Scientific investigations are needed to learn more about exposure settings, transmission routes and clinical presentations. It's important to find the best ways to make these interventions. We have proposed the establishment of an African-led, multidisciplinary, multi-country Mpox Research Consortium (MpoxReC) in Africa. It should conduct research towards the elimination of mpox as a public health problem. There is no doubt that a disease in one corner of the world can suddenly become a global health threat. It's time the global health system woke up to this reality.

Venezuelan President says 'fascism has failed in Venezuela'

Caracas: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro declared "fascism has failed in Venezuela" in a meeting with the national leadership of the governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and its allies in the Great Patriotic Pole coalition. "We will not allow fascism to assault power in Venezuela," Maduro said on Monday, calling on supporters "to consolidate the victory against hatred, against lies, against manipulation".

Assessing Venezuela's political landscape after the July 28 presidential elections, the Venezuelan President said the coalition and its supporters were "defeating a coup d'etat", as reported by Xinhua news agency.

Obama praises Biden at Democratic Convention: Proud to call him my President

Joe Biden, with hands on the podium, stood a little straighter and tried to hold back the tears as everyone stood up in a rousing ovation. The moment was overwhelming for anyone to not get emotional, and so was former US President Barack Obama, who shared the clip on his official X handle. Former US President Barack Obama praised US President Joe Biden for his "decency, resilience, and unshakeable belief."

It was not the US President that the world had witnessed over the years who took centre stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. As opposed to earlier, Joe Biden, with hands on the podium, stood a little straighter and tried to hold back the tears as everyone stood up in a rousing ovation. The moment was overwhelming for anyone to not get emotional, and so was former US President Barack Obama, who shared the clip on his official X handle. Calling President Biden by his first name, Obama said, "What I admire most about Joe is his decency, his resilience, and his unshakeable belief in the promise of our country. Over the last four years, those are the values America has needed most."

"I am proud to call him my president, and I'm so grateful to call him my friend," he added. What I admire most about Joe is his decency, his resilience, and his unshakeable belief in the promise of our country. Over the last four years, those are the values America has needed most. I am proud to call him my president, and I'm so grateful to call him my friend. pic.twitter.com/7e14pc5VOQ



— Barack Obama (@BarackObama) August 20, 2024

Biden delivered a fiery speech on the opening night of the Democratic National Convention. Slamming Republican nominee Donald Trump, Biden said he is nothing but a "loser." "Donald Trump calls America a failing nation," Biden said, and added, "He says we're losing. He's the loser; he's dead wrong." Joe Biden, who stepped aside from running for re-election, said that America is "winning" and the world is "better off for it," adding that Trump continues to "lie" about matters such as crime and immigration. Biden also praised his successor (in party) Kamala Harris and stated, "Are you ready to vote for freedom? Are you ready to vote for democracy and for America? Let me ask you, Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris and Tim Walz?"

Possible work stoppage at Canada's two largest railroads could disrupt US supply chain next week

GNS News Agency, August 22

Canada's two largest railroads are starting to shut down their shipping networks as a labour dispute with the Teamsters union threatens to cause lockouts or strikes that would disrupt cross-border trade with the US. Both the Canadian Pacific Kansas City and Canadian National railroads, which haul millions of tons of freight across the border, have stopped taking certain shipments of hazardous materials and refrigerated products.

Both are threatening to lock out Teamsters Canada workers starting Thursday if deals are not reached. On Tuesday, CPKC will stop all shipments that start in Canada and all shipments originating in the US that are headed for Canada, the railroad said Saturday. The Canadian Press reported that on Friday, Canadian National barred container imports from US partner railroads. Jeff Windau, industrial analyst for Edward Jones & Co., said his firm expects work stoppages to last only a few days, but if they go longer, there could be significant supply chain disruptions. "If something would carry on more of a longer term in nature, then I think there are some significant potential issues just given the amount of goods that are handled each day," Windau said. "By and large the rails touch pretty much all of the economy." The two railroads handle about 40,000 carloads of freight each day, worth about USD 1 billion, Windau said. Shipments of fully built automobiles and auto parts, chemicals, forestry products and agricultural goods would be hit hard, he said, especially with harvest season looming.

Both railroads have extensive networks in the US, and CPKC also serves Mexico. Those operations will keep running even if there is a work stoppage. CPKC said it remains committed to avoiding a work stoppage that would damage Canada's economy and international reputation. "However we must take responsible and prudent steps to prepare for a potential rail service interruption next week," spokesman Patrick Waldron said in a



statement. Shutting down the network will allow the railroad to get dangerous goods off it before any stoppage, CPKC said. Union spokesman Christopher Monette said in an email Saturday that negotiations continue, but the situation has shifted from a possible strike to "near certain lockout" by the railroads.

CPKC said bargaining is scheduled to continue on Sunday with the union, which represents nearly 10,000 workers at both railroads. The company said it continues to bargain in good faith. Canadian National said in a statement Friday that there had been no meaningful progress in negotiations and it hoped the union "will engage meaningfully" during a meeting scheduled for Saturday. "CN wants a resolution that allows the company to get back to what it does best as a team, moving customers' goods and the economy," the railroad said. Negotiations have been going on since last November, and contracts expired at the end of 2023. They were extended as talks continued. The union said company demands on crew scheduling, rail safety and worker fatigue are the main sticking points. Windau said the trucking industry currently has a lot of excess capacity and might be able to make up some of the railroads' shipping volumes, but, "You're not going to be able to replace all of that with trucking."

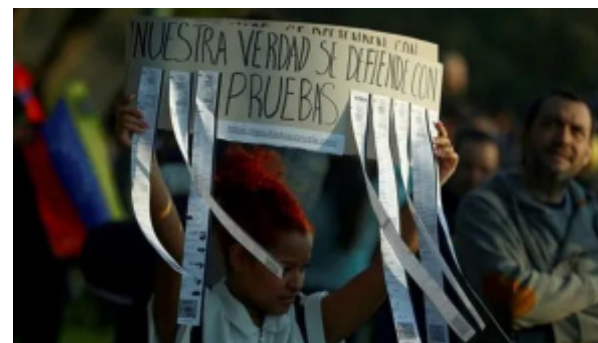
Venezuelan opposition protests as election dispute drags on

GNS News Agency, August 22

Venezuela's political opposition and its supporters gathered in cities around the country on Saturday to demand recognition of what they say is their candidate's resounding victory in a presidential vote nearly three weeks ago. The country's electoral authority, considered by the opposition to be an arm of the ruling party, has said President Nicolas Maduro won his third term in the July 28 contest, with just under 52% of the vote.

But the opposition, led by former lawmaker Maria Corina Machado, has published online what it says are 83% of voting machine tallies, which give its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez a hearty 67% support. The disputed vote has thrown the economically beleaguered nation into political crisis, and a government crackdown on protests has led to at least 2,400 arrests. Clashes connected to the protests have also led to at least 23 deaths. Venezuela protest A woman holds copies of electoral records, as people march in support of Venezuela's opposition coalition that continues to push for recognition of what it says is its resounding victory in last month's presidential election, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (REUTERS) The international community has offered a raft of suggestions for overcoming the nearly three-week-old election crisis - including a new vote - but most have been rejected outright by both the ruling party and opposition. In the capital Caracas, thousands gathered in the eastern part of the city along its main thoroughfare. Standing on a truck in the center of the crowd, Machado called for independent, international verification of the election and for her supporters to stay in the streets. "There is nothing above the voice of the people and the people have spoken," she said. Jesus Aguilar, a 21-year-old theology student, said he turned out to support the opposition in hope of a better future. We know that with this government there are no possibilities for growth. I've even seen myself trying to leave the country. "In cities across the country, Venezuelans were in the streets. In Maracaibo, Venezuela's once oil-rich city in the northwest, hundreds had gathered by 9 a.m. (1300 GMT).

"We have already been through the worst, we don't have any more fear," Noraima Rodriguez, 52, told Reuters. "My daughter died because there were no medical supplies in the university hospital. I have nothing to lose, but I want a future for my grandchildren." In the cities of Valencia, San Cristobal and Barquisimeto, hundreds demonstrated, many waving Venezuelan flags, protest signs or copies of voting tallies. In Maracay, about 110 km (70 miles) west of Caracas, about a hundred protesters were dispersed with tear gas.



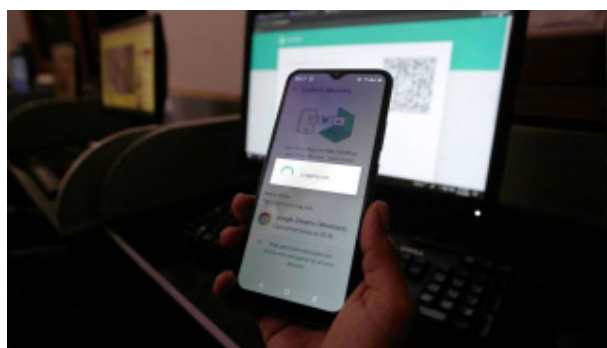
From Bogota to Madrid, the Venezuelan diaspora turned out in droves. In downtown Mexico City, nearly 1,000 people gathered at the central Plaza de la Revolucion. "This is the moment for a free Venezuela," said Jesus Mata, 30, a street vendor who arrived in Mexico two years ago.

Motivated by economic and political crisis, he was among tens of thousands of Venezuelans to cross the treacherous jungle between Colombia and Panama known as the Darien Gap, notorious for robberies, kidnappings, rapes and other dangers. Venezuela protest Supporters of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro attend a march amid the disputed presidential election, in Caracas, Venezuela.

"I hope for an end to 25 years of darkness, that there is freedom so that the almost 8 million Venezuelans who are outside the country can go back home," he added. Maduro has presided over economic collapse, with a loss of over 73% of Venezuela's gross domestic product since 2013, according to researchers from the Institute of Superior Administration Studies in Caracas. The opposition is still pushing for recognition of its victory, but its options are narrowing as international attention moves elsewhere, opposition sources and analysts told Reuters this week.

Many Western countries have urged full publication of results, while Russia, China and others have congratulated Maduro on his victory. Washington, which hardened oil sanctions in April on the OPEC member for what it said was Maduro's failure to comply with a deal on electoral conditions, and other Western countries are showing little sign of swift, tough action over what many of them have condemned as voting fraud. Latin American leaders will discuss the crisis this weekend when many are in the Dominican Republic to attend the inauguration of that country's new president, Panama's president has said.

Pakistan blames users for slow internet amid firewall rumors



For weeks, Pakistan has been grappling with slow internet speed, leaving users frustrated and sparking a debate over the cause. While activists claim that the government is constructing a China-style internet firewall to tighten control over online spaces, officials have pointed fingers at the widespread use of secure connections or VPNs as the reason for the sluggish speeds.

The Pakistani government has a history of shutting down the internet to suppress dissent, particularly after the riots following former Prime Minister Imran Khan's ousting last year. Social media platforms have been blocked, and connection speeds throttled as the government seeks to control public sentiment, which has increasingly shifted to digital platforms. The micro-blogging site X has been blocked since February due to "national security" concerns, a move that has particularly affected Mr. Khan's supporters, who are heavy users of the platform. However, Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima denied that the government is behind the recent internet slowdown. On Sunday, she stated

that her team has been "working tirelessly" with internet service providers and telecommunications companies to resolve the issue. According to Ms. Fatima, the problem stems from a "large population" using VPNs, which has "strained the network, causing the internet to go slow." She dismissed claims that the government was intentionally slowing down connections as "completely false."

Despite these reassurances, Ms. Fatima acknowledged that the government has been upgrading its systems to improve cybersecurity. "It is the right of the government to [take such measures] given the cyber security attacks that this country has to go through," she said. Activists, however, are not convinced. Shahzad Ahmad, director of the local digital rights group Bytes for All, stated that his organization has "ample tech evidence" to support the existence of a firewall. "It seems its purpose is to monitor online traffic and limit dissemination [of information] in online spaces, particularly curbing political expression," Mr. Ahmad said. The impact of the slow internet is also raising concerns beyond civil liberties. Fariha Aziz, co-founder of the free speech advocacy group Bolo Bhi, warned that the issue is now affecting livelihoods and the economy. Business leaders have echoed these concerns, with the Pakistan Software Houses Association warning that the slow connections could cost the IT sector up to \$300 million. The association described the situation as a "direct, tangible, and aggressive assault on the industry's viability" and cautioned that a "mass exodus of IT companies is not just a possibility but an imminent reality if immediate and decisive action is not taken." In response to the growing discontent, activists have filed a petition with the Islamabad High Court, urging that access to the internet be recognized as a fundamental right under Pakistan's constitution.

Global warming may be factor in deadly Italian shipwreck, climatologist says

Global warming may have contributed to the freak storm that sank a luxury British-flagged yacht off the coast of Sicily on Monday, Italian climatologist Luca Mercalli told Reuters. One man died and six people were missing, including British tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch, after the "Bayesian", a 56-metre-long (184-ft) sailboat, was suddenly hit by ferocious weather.

Mercalli, president of the Italian meteorological society, said the episode could have been a water spout, essentially a tornado over water, or else a downburst, a more frequent phenomenon that doesn't involve the rotation of the air. "We don't know which it was because it all happened in the dark in the early hours of the morning, so we have no photographs," he said. In Italy water spouts can involve winds of up to 200 kilometres (124 miles) per hour, while downbursts can produce gusts of more than 250 km per hour. Statistics show that downbursts are becoming more frequent around the country, which Mercalli said may be connected to global warming. Storms and heavy rainfall have swept down Italy in recent days after weeks of scorching heat.

"The sea surface temperature around Sicily was around 30 degrees Celsius (86 Fahrenheit), which is almost 3 degrees more than normal. This creates an enormous



source of energy that contributes to these storms," Mercalli said. "So we can't say that this is all due to climate change, but we can say that it has an amplifying effect." A similar freak storm killed four people, when their tourist boat sank on Lake Maggiore in northern Italy in May last year. The country's varied geology makes it prone to floods and landslides, while the fact it is flanked by rapidly warming seas means it is vulnerable to increasingly powerful storms. "Climate-driven catastrophes in Italy will become more frequent and more intense," Mercalli said.

'Banksy woz ere.' London Zoo is the latest to remove street artist's animal mural for protection



GNS News Agency, August 22

The gorilla and other animals that appeared to have escaped from the London Zoo in Banksy's most recent work have been taken into safekeeping. The zoo said it removed the elusive street artist's mural on its gate Friday evening to preserve it and return its entrance to full operation after mobs of visitors came to see it over five days last week. It was covered with a reproduction of the work and a sign using British slang that said: "Banksy woz ere." "We're thrilled by the joy this artwork has already brought to so many, but primarily, we're incredibly grateful to Banksy, for putting wildlife in the spotlight," Kathryn England, the zoo's chief operating officer, said on its website. "This has become a significant moment in our history that we're keen to properly preserve."

The work spraypainted with a stencil showed an ape holding up part of the roll-down gate, allowing birds to fly off and a sea lion to waddle away as three sets of eyes peered out from the darkness inside. It was the final animal-themed work by the artist to pop up over nine consecutive days around London. Britain Banksy People take pictures of a new mural by elusive street artist Banksy at the London Zoo. (AP)

And it's the most recent one to disappear from public view. The meaning of works by the artist known for making political statements has been widely debated online. The zoo said its mural had sparked thought-provoking conversations from people ranging from a 5-year-old to Banksy buffs. Some suggested it was a play on guerrilla art or a comment on the role of zoos. A representative for Banksy, whose real identity is not known, told the Observer that the series was intended to be uplifting and amusing during tough times. The zoo mural is at least the fifth in the animal series to be either stolen, defaced or moved to a secure place for protection. A howling wolf painted on a satellite dish to look like it's silhouetted against a full moon was taken by masked men hours after the artist confirmed it was his work by posting photos of it on his Instagram page. A rundown old billboard that featured a big cat stretching out was removed by a crew as on-lookers jeered them. The billboard's owner told police it would be reassembled at an art gallery, the BBC reported. A rhinoceros painted on a brick wall that appeared to be mounting a broken-down Nissan parked on the sidewalk was tagged with graffiti and the car was

taken away.

Britain Banksy The new artwork unveiled by Banksy at London Zoo, depicting a gorilla lifting up a shutter at the entrance allowing a number of birds to escape, while the eyes of other animals can be seen lurking in the darkness, the ninth artwork in his animal-themed collection, in London. (AP) A small police guard post that had a circling school of piranhas painted on its windows so it looked like a fish tank was removed by the City of London. A spokesperson said it would eventually be placed where it can be viewed by the public. Jasper Tordoff, the Banksy expert at MyArtBroker, told The Associated Press that he liked the idea that the final mural in the series may have been the revelation that all those other animals — elephants, a goat, monkeys and pelicans — seen around

Harris and Walz embark on a bus tour in Pennsylvania before the Democratic convention in Chicago

GNS News Agency, August 22

Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris and running mate Tim Walz embarked on a bus tour in southwestern Pennsylvania on Sunday, hoping to ride a wave of enthusiasm for her candidacy to their party's nominating convention in Chicago this week. Vice President Harris and Walz, the governor of Minnesota, were joined by their spouses, Doug Emhoff and Gwen Walz, as they arrived at Pittsburgh International Airport and greeted supporters. They will make stops in the Pittsburgh area to glad-hand with voters. Harris and Emhoff were scheduled to deliver remarks at an event in the borough of Rochester, in Beaver County, which Donald Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, won in 2020. The stop came exactly four weeks after President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid and endorsed Harris to replace him on the ticket. Southwestern Pennsylvania is a critical part of a key battleground state that has long commanded the attention of presidential candidates. The state voted for Trump in 2016 and for Biden in 2020. Both Harris and Trump are vying to see who can put Pennsylvania in their column on November 5. Most polls, including the New York Times/Siena College poll and Fox News, find Harris and Trump locked in a tight race statewide. Trump held a rally Saturday in Wilkes-Barre in the northeastern part of the state, following his earlier rallies in July in Harrisburg and Butler, where he survived an assassination attempt. The bus tour marks Harris' eighth trip to Pennsylvania this year, and her second this month. The vice president's August 6 announcement that Walz would be her running mate came hours before their first joint appearance as a ticket later that day in Philadelphia. "This is a state that traditionally has been super important, but southwestern Pennsylvania has been really kind of the battleground part of the battleground state," said Kristin Kanthak, associate professor of political science at the

Democratic Convention: Biden passes baton to Harris, says she will be 'historic President'



GNS News Agency, August 22

Chicago: US President Joe Biden formally passed the baton of his Democratic Party to his deputy Kamala Harris, saying she will be a "historic president" and describing her as the best person to save democracy. Biden, 81, received an emotional standing ovation when he came on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago on Monday night. Harris, 59, is scheduled to formally accept the Democratic Party's presidential nomination on Thursday to take on Republican rival Donald Trump, 78, in the November 5 election.

"Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris as the President of the United States of America," Biden said, amidst cheers from thousands of members and leaders of the Democratic Party at its national convention here in this windy city as he urged his countrymen to vote and elect his deputy of four years. Biden said Harris would be a "historic President". "I love my job. I love my country more. We need to preserve our democracy. We need you to beat Donald Trump and elect Kamala and Tim as President and Vice President of the United States," Biden said.

He said Trump is going to find out the power of women in 2024. Harris will soon serve as the 47th President of the United States, Biden said, amidst cheers from his party members and leaders. "We saved democracy in 2020 and we must do it again in 2024," he said urging his countrymen that America's future is in their hands.

"America, America, I gave my best to you. I made a

lot of mistakes in my career. But I gave my best to you," he said. "Let me ask you: Are you ready to vote for freedom? Are you ready to vote for democracy and for America? And let me ask you: Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris and Tim Walz as President and Vice President?" he asked. Biden appeared to wipe away a tear as he hugged his daughter Ashley Biden who introduced him at the four-day convention. Observing that the decisions that were being made now would determine the fate of the world and the country, Biden said he and Kamala had four years of extraordinary progress in the United States.

Making a strong pitch to elect Harris as the next President of the United States, Biden said Donald Trump promised infrastructure week every week for four years. He never built a damn thing, he alleged. "Together, we are building a better America," he said as he listed out some of the key achievements of the Biden-Harris Administration. "You cannot say you love your country only when you win," he said. "More Americans have health insurance today than ever before. And after fighting for 50 years to give Medicare the power to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, we finally beat Big Pharma. Kamala Harris cast the tie-breaking vote," he said. "He (Trump) is the loser," Biden said as he attacked Trump. "America is winning. America is prosperous. America is safer today than was under Donald Trump," he said as he accused Trump of killing the strongest border security bill in the history of the country.

Donald Trump open to offer Cabinet role for Elon Musk

GNS News Agency, August 22

San Francisco: Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk on Tuesday said he is willing to serve the country after the US presidential candidate Donald Trump stated that he will consider the tech billionaire for a cabinet role or an advisory post if he wins the election in November. Musk posted "I am willing to serve" the country on X social media platform after Trump reportedly said he would welcome the billionaire to become part of the US administration once he is elected.

The tech billionaire, albeit jokingly, even approved to lead the "Department Of Government Efficiency (DOGE)" in the new US government under Trump. "That is the perfect name," he replied to a user who proposed the name of the Ministry for Musk who has been supporting Trump on his social media platform. In an audio interview on X last week, Trump and Musk discussed a wide range of issues — from immigration to the economy, education, climate change, Russia and Ukraine, the relationship with North Korea's Kim Jong Un, Russia's Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping in the context of the 2024 presidential election. Musk even tried to educate climate change sceptic Trump on greenhouse gas peril and renewable energy. Later, venture capitalist Vinod Khosla slammed Musk over his climate-talk tutorial, saying his



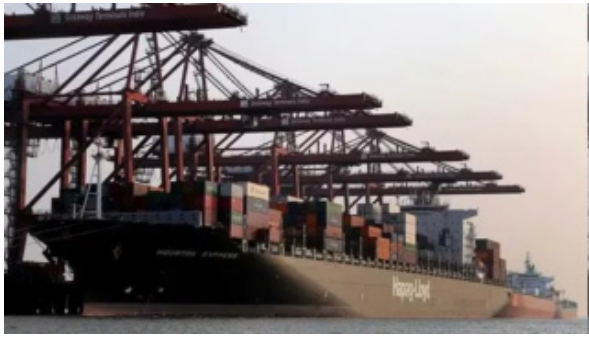
thoughts about CO2 ppm (parts per million) levels and their consequences were simply 'dumb'. The X owner endorsed the former President against his Democrat rival, Vice President Kamala Harris. Trump said that illegal immigration saved his life while talking about the assassination attempt on him at an election rally. The interview broadcast was delayed by a cyber attack. The former President was permanently suspended from X in January 2021, when the social media platform was known as Twitter. The ban was lifted by Musk after he bought the platform.



sylvania Center for Women & Politics, said in an interview that Harris will use the bus trip to reach out to voters in the state's southwestern region "while she still has a great deal of momentum at her back" and spin up local media coverage. "She is going to garner a lot of that free media attention," Brown said. "I believe their hope, right, is to keep that momentum up and focused on her and less so on her opponent." Bus tours have become a staple of political campaigns partly because of the free media coverage they generate. Such trips get the candidates out of their power suits and out of Washington so they can travel the country and score face time with voters in small venues like diners and mom-and-pop shops. Biden rolled across Iowa on an eight-day bus tour he dubbed "No Malarkey" in December 2019. During his 2012 reelection campaign, President Barack Obama travelled through small-town Ohio on his "Bet on America" bus tour. "It's always fun just being out of Washington, and for me to be able to interact with folks is wonderful," Obama said at one stop. Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton also travelled by bus when they campaigned for a second term. The Democratic National Convention opens Monday.

Dana Brown, director of Chatham University's Penn-

US alerts Indian companies on export of defence tech to Russia



US government officials are sensitising Indian companies and exporters to deter them from supplying Russia with items and technology that could end up being used in Russian missiles and other defence equipment, which would attract Western sanctions, a government official said on condition of anonymity. This follows reports of sanctions on Bengaluru-based Si2 Microsystems in November last year for its alleged role in supplying dual-use technology to Russia. Electronic components, machine tools, drones, and software for drones are some of the dual-use items that can be used for both civil and military applications and are included in the sanctions list imposed by the West in the backdrop of the Ukraine war. "They (US government officials) are leading consultation and sensitisation meetings with the industry to make Indian companies more aware of the importance of not exporting specific types of products, such as chemicals, aeronautic parts, and components that can be used in missile systems and other defence equipment," the official said.

Moreover, a US Treasury official had also warned India's banks that financial institutions that do business with Russia's military industrial base risk losing access to the US financial system, Reuters had reported in July this year. "We know that the Russian military relies on importing sensitive goods, like machine tools and microelectronics, and it looks to foreign financial institutions to facilitate these transactions," Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo said in the letter to the Indian Banks' Association, as per the Reuters report. Also, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in June this year had expressed concerns over Chinese exports of dual-use goods. By

placing over 300 companies on an export blacklist, the US said that China is the top supplier of machine tools, microelectronics, and nitrocellulose, which are critical for manufacturing munitions and rocket propellants, as well as other dual-use items that Russia is using to bolster its defence capabilities.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry in January 2024 had said that the government is working to liberalise export norms for certain products with dual-use applications. However, the official clarified that the items identified by the US are not Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies (SCOMET) items, which require licensing for trade. Dual-use goods are categorised under the SCOMET list in India. "There are many items that the US is scrutinising. They are not SCOMET items, but the US believes they are entering the (Russian) defence manufacturing system. The two or three firms identified by the US do not export SCOMET items," the official clarified. India's exports of machines, auto parts, steel and aluminium products, internal combustion (IC) engines, pumps, and other items to Russia are on the rise. Official data from the ministry showed that India's total exports to Russia in 2023 surged by 40 per cent to exceed \$4 billion, largely driven by engineering goods, which nearly doubled to \$1.32 billion in 2023 from \$680 million in 2022. Significant gains were also seen in the drugs and pharmaceutical category, as well as in organic and inorganic chemicals. This increase in exports comes as Russia has ramped up its defence investments. In July, the World Bank reported that economic activity in Russia was influenced by a significant increase in military-related activity in 2023. Russia's military spending grew by 24 per cent in 2023 to an estimated \$109 billion, as per Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) states. "After the initial recessionary impact of sanctions in 2022, the (Russian) economy returned to growth in 2023, supported by fiscal stimulus, including military spending and credit expansion, and by successfully mitigating the impact of the sanctions. Restrictions on trade and financing from the G7 countries and the EU resulted in trade diversion to China, India, Türkiye, Central Asia, and the South Caucasus, as well as investment in new infrastructure and logistics," the World Bank noted. A query emailed to the Ministry of External Affairs on Monday evening remained unanswered till press time.

Cautious monetary policy needed if food price pressures continue: RBI

Reserve Bank of India, RBI Monetary policy report, food price, RBI monetary policy, RBI Deputy Governor Michael Patra, economy news, RBI news, Indian express news. The report said persistence in food inflation has increased due to repeated climatic shocks of rising intensity. A cautious monetary policy approach is warranted if food price pressures persist and continue to spill over, a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report said on Monday. "Monetary policy is the only active disinflationary agent in the economy. The conventional treatment of food price perturbations as transitory in the setting of monetary policy is increasingly becoming untenable," the report authored by RBI Deputy Governor Michael Patra and others said.

"A large part of this increase in persistence is driven by the secular upward drift in food inflation expectations. Past high food inflation episodes — intrinsic persistence — have a bearing in shaping these expectations," the report said. The inelasticity of the demand for food to price shocks makes food inflation persistence all the more worrying, it cautioned. The report, titled 'Are food prices spilling over', said the conventional treatment of food price perturbations as transitory in the setting of monetary policy is increasingly becoming untenable. "A large part of this increase in persistence is driven by the secular upward drift in food inflation expectations," it said.

Headline inflation moderated from its spike in June to 3.5 per cent in July, but this was primarily due to the downward statistical pull of base effects. "If high food inflation persists, however, a more cautious monetary policy approach is warranted to quell the propagation of food inflation pressures into a more generalised inflation," it said. The Monetary Policy Committee of the RBI had kept the Repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent in its review earlier this month. "Past high food inflation episodes — intrinsic persistence — have a bearing in shaping these expectations. The inelasticity of the demand for food to



price shocks makes food inflation persistence all the more worrying," the report said. With spillovers to costs, service charges and output prices, the danger of food inflation surfacing as a more generalised phenomenon has increased, it said. Under these circumstances, the sources of food price shocks may lie outside the realm of monetary policy but when they result in food inflation acquiring persistence and spilling over into other components of inflation and into consumer behaviour, monetary policy must be disinflationary to quell these price pressures in order to achieve its mandate of price stability and thereby retain credibility, the report said. It said failing to act against persistent food inflation risks expectations getting unanchored, generalisation of price pressures and loss of control over inflation, undermining of consumer and business confidence, and erosion of external sector sustainability and competitiveness. The report said persistence in food inflation has increased due to repeated climatic shocks of rising intensity. "The increase in food inflation persistence is driven by the secular upward drift in its time varying trend, signifying rising expectations of higher food prices due to overlapping supply shocks. Empirical evidence points to spillovers to non-food components, which is being offset by disinflationary monetary policy," it said.

Pronounced income gaps evident in case of stigmatised-caste business owners: new study

Business owners from stigmatised groups such as Dalits experience a business income gap of around 16 per cent compared with others, including those business owners who are from communities that are disadvantaged but are not similarly stigmatised, a new study has revealed. This gap increases at higher levels of social capital, reflecting the social processes of stigmatisation that limit the benefits that Dalits can reap from social capital, a research article titled "It's not who you know, but who you are: Explaining income gaps of stigmatised-caste business owners in India" has stated.

The research report published in PLOS ONE journal on August 7 this year is authored by Prateek Raj, Assistant Professor in Strategy at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) along with Thomas J Roulet, Professor of Organisational Sociology and Leadership at Cambridge Judge Business School and Co-Director of the King's Entrepreneurship Lab at King's College; and Hari Babuji, Professor in the Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Business and Economics, The University of Melbourne, Australia. The report, which states human capital and social capital as two potential tools to facilitate economic mobility and to reduce inequalities, has attempted to find out whether these tools work equally well for stigmatised groups, particularly in societies with systemic inequalities.

There is a high income gap for stigmatised groups and instead of getting reduced, this gap increases at higher levels of social capital. However, Dalits can reap similar income benefits as others from human capital, the report said, adding that human capital helps stigmatised groups mitigate the implications of stigma, but social capital does not. Community business, income gaps, stigmatised-caste business, news business study, Dalits

business, income gap, PLOS ONE journal, Indian express news. "That social capital fails to improve the incomes of Dalits as much as they do for others. We know from past research that social capital benefits people in business. So, it is commonly assumed that they will benefit everyone equally. Our study shows that that is not the case. We were surprised to find that other groups, including groups that are disadvantaged due to caste (e.g., OBCs, STs) and religion (e.g., muslims) benefit from having social capital and improve their incomes. But, for Dalits (SCs), the social capital does not help as much. We argue that this is because Dalits face a stigma that is attached to them as persons and is perpetuated in social interactions," the research paper's author Prateek Raj told The To address income disadvantages faced by the marginalised groups, that is, OBCs, adivasis/STs and muslims, it is adequate to provide them opportunities, for example, in the form of business leads, credit facilities, collaterals for large orders, Hari Babuji, the co-author of the study, said. While noting that the government has developed several initiatives for the mobility of Dalits and other disadvantaged communities, the study states that the stigmatised groups (Dalits) and other historically disadvantaged—but not similarly stigmatised groups) face different social processes, which need to be considered in designing initiatives to reduce inequalities. There is a need to rethink development strategies involving human capital and social capital, the study said. "Since Dalits/SCs not only face marginalisation but also experience institutional stigma, it is necessary to counter the social processes that stigmatise them. For example, the destigmatisation strategies can include education (e.g., curriculum that discusses the historical injustices and educates on the ways inclusion is achieved globally),

Ananya Panday's 'Call Me Bae' show promises to slay; to stream on Prime



Mumbai: After much anticipation, the trailer of the upcoming streaming show "Call Me Bae" is finally here, and it won't be wrong to say that Bae is here to slay. The trailer, unveiled at a 5 star property in the Bandra area of Mumbai on Tuesday, shows actress Ananya Panday's titular character of Bae wrapping her head around the realities and curveballs that life throws at her. Bae belongs to an affluent family from Delhi and has grown up in a very protected environment but has to move to Bombay for reasons that the viewers will get to see in the show.

The trailer is funny, glossy, a little over the top and self-referential, cue in the last dialogue exchange between Ananya and a watchman which is directly taken from what her "Gehraaiyaan" co-actor Siddhant Chaturvedi told her about "struggle", years ago during a roundtable conversation. The series also stars Vir Das, Gurfateh Pirzada, Varun Sood, Vihaan Samat, Muskaan Jafari, Niharika Lyra Dutt, Lisa Mishra, and Mini Mathur in pivotal roles. The series offers a peek into the life of Bae as she hustles with all her muscle in the maximum city of Mumbai.

Talking about the series, Ananya said, "From the get go, I knew 'Call Me Bae' was a project I wanted to be a part of. Even without having heard the script I knew this was going to be something special. As an actor, it is always exciting and rewarding to play a multi-layered character like Bae. There's more to Bae than what meets the eye and that is what makes her journey from heiress to hustler, compelling and intriguing. Despite the challenges she faces, she remains true to herself, retaining her innocence and zest for life". She shared that the authenticity of the narrative drew her to the role. This is her first long format original series. The actress further mentioned, "I am thrilled to be collaborating with Prime Video and Dharmatic Entertainment for the series and I am looking forward to introducing Bae to audiences worldwide". The series has been directed by Collin D'Cunha and created by Ishita Moitra, who has also written the series along with Samina Motlekar, and Rohit Nair.

Bollywood royalty Karan Johar, who has bankrolled the series, said, "While there have been many stories that follow the rags-to-riches trope, 'Call Me Bae' offers a fresh twist by turning the genre on its head. It centers on a young woman from a privileged background, where extravagance was a birthright, who, due to unforeseen circumstances, must now navigate life on her own and hustle and reinvent herself in the bustling city of Mumbai". He added, "Through this transformative journey, she discovers her true passions and learns to stand on her own. This series presents a modern coming-of-age story with a playful, comedic edge that la'm confident will captivate audiences across India and globally, resonating with viewers from all walks of life. This is our third original collaboration with Prime Video, and it is a partnership that has just gone from strength to strength and now with 'Call Me Bae', and with Ananya wholeheartedly embracing everything Bae stands for, we're hoping to introduce audiences to a character that is as iconic as she is relatable". "Call Me Bae" is Dharmatic Entertainment production with Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, and Somen Mishra serving as executive producers. Collin D'Cunha called the show an incredibly rewarding journey as a director. He said, "The idea of taking a fish out of water and watching them evolve is both fresh and engaging, making it a standout coming-of-age story."

After Paris Olympics loss, PV Sindhu says 'my body and mind' need a 'break'; tips to identify if you need one too

The Paris Olympics proved to be a bittersweet experience for India's badminton star, PV Sindhu. The two-time Olympic medalist experienced a heart-wrenching defeat, bowing out in the Round of 16. In a heartfelt social media post, Sindhu acknowledged the difficulty of accepting the defeat, and shared how "this loss is possibly one of the hardest of my long career." The ace shuttler added, "it will take time to accept, but as life moves forward, I know I will come to terms with it."

Sindhu's journey to the French capital was fraught with challenges. Injuries and extended breaks from the sport tested her resilience and determination. Her candid social media post revealed the emotional toll of the defeat, a stark contrast to the typically upbeat image of a champion. "Regarding my future, I want to be clear: I will continue, albeit after a small break. My body, and more importantly, my mind need it. However, I plan to carefully evaluate the journey ahead, finding more joy in playing the sport I love so very much," Sindhu wrote in the end. It is important to take breaks to avoid a breakdown. According to Dr Neerja Agarwal, psychologist and co-founder, Emoneeds, here are 7 tips to recognise if you need a break too: 1. Increased Stress Levels: Notice if you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or consistently stressed. Persistent high stress can be a sign you need to pause and recharge.

2. Emotional Exhaustion: If you're experiencing persistent feelings of sadness, irritability, or emotional numb-



ness, it may indicate a need for a break. 3. Difficulty Concentrating: Struggling with focus or memory issues can be a sign of mental fatigue, suggesting that a break could help restore clarity. 4. Physical Symptoms: Headaches, fatigue, or changes in sleep and appetite often reflect mental strain. If these symptoms are frequent, consider taking time off. 5. Decreased Motivation: A noticeable drop in enthusiasm for work or activities you once enjoyed may signal the need for a mental health break. 6. Burnout Signs: If you feel disconnected from your work or responsibilities and find it hard to find joy in your achievements, it's a signal to take a step back. 7. Strained Relationships: Increased irritability or conflict with friends, family, or colleagues may indicate that you're overextended and in need of a break. Listening to these signs and prioritising self-care can help maintain mental well-being and prevent burnout.

The many benefits and risks of consuming water soaked with coriander seeds

Acid reflux is a common digestive issue that affects millions of people worldwide, prompting many to seek natural remedies for relief. Among the various home treatments circulating on social media, one particular suggestion by content creator Kirti Tewani has gained attention — drinking water infused with coriander seeds each morning. In a reel posted on Instagram, she says, "Never go to bed without soaking one tablespoon of coriander seeds if you are someone who suffers from acid reflux or any sort of indigestion." This simple concoction can potentially prevent chronic acid reflux, but is there any merit to this remedy? Kanikka Malhotra, consultant dietician and certified diabetes educator says, "Coriander seed water holds some promise for digestive health. Studies suggest it might stimulate digestive enzymes, potentially aiding digestion and reducing bloating and indigestion. However, its effectiveness for chronic acid reflux is less clear. For some, it might even worsen symptoms by increasing stomach acid production." Vedika Premani, clinical dietician, Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, Mumbai, adds, "Coriander seeds have multiple health benefits and can be consumed anytime of the day." Potential benefits and risks of consuming water soaked with coriander seeds Coriander seed water has potential benefits and risks regarding digestive health and acid reflux, says Malhotra. Benefits

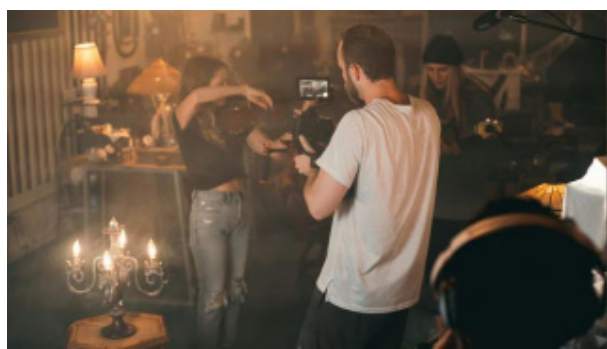
*Aiding Digestion: Some studies suggest coriander seeds might help digestion by stimulating the production of digestive enzymes, potentially leading to better food breakdown and reducing the need for excess stomach acid. *Soothing Discomfort: There's some anecdotal evidence that coriander seed water eases bloating and indigestion. *Worsening Reflux: For some, coriander seeds might worsen acid reflux. This is because they may stimulate the production of stomach acid, which can back up into the oesophagus and cause heartburn.

Specific considerations or contraindications for individuals with chronic acid reflux According to Malhotra, here are some specific considerations or contraindications for individuals with chronic acid reflux when incorporating coriander seed water into their daily routine. *Dosage *Start Low: Begin with a small amount of coriander seeds (around ½ teaspoon) steeped overnight in water. This allows for a gradual introduction and helps



assess your tolerance. *Monitor Response: Pay close attention to how your body reacts. If symptoms worsen, discontinue use. *Preparation *Soaking vs. Boiling: Soaking the seeds overnight is a gentler method compared to boiling, which might extract more potent compounds that could irritate the digestive tract. *Contraindications and Interactions *Medications: Coriander can interact with certain medications, so consult your doctor if you take any prescriptions, especially blood thinners or medications metabolised by the liver. *Pre-existing Conditions: If you have any underlying health conditions, especially liver or kidney disease, discuss incorporating coriander seed water with your healthcare provider first. *Other natural remedies and conventional treatments for managing chronic acid reflux Malhotra says, "If you're looking for natural remedies to manage chronic acid reflux, there are several excellent Indian herbal options. Tulsi leaves, with their stomach-soothing properties, are believed to reduce inflammation and irritation in the digestive tract." Mint tea, a popular coolant in Ayurveda, offers carminative properties that help expel gas and relieve bloating. Fennel seeds, with their antispasmodic properties, might relax the oesophageal sphincter, potentially preventing acid reflux. Cumin seeds, another carminative spice, can aid digestion and reduce gas, while also possibly stimulating digestive enzyme production and reducing the need for excess stomach acid.

No toilets, 19-hour shifts, sexual abuse: Junior artistes treated 'worse than slaves in Malayalam cinema'; Justice Hema Committee reports



that generally, they aren't even provided water by the production team.

Further asserting the extremely inhumane treatment they receive, the report mentions that although only 100 persons are required for a shoot, thousands of junior artistes are told to come to the set. From this large group, the movie's team selects those they deem fit and only they receive food coupons. The others, instructed to remain on set, are seldom given food or water and are not provided any space to sit. One person recalled how a junior artiste with a heart condition was fired from a set merely because she sat on a chair after becoming exhausted from standing under the hot sun for a long time.

Sexual exploitation of junior artistes rampant "Women come for cinema shooting as junior artistes only because of their very bad financial position," the report states, asserting that those in power shamelessly exploit their situation. The report also emphasises that junior artistes are rarely paid on time. "The junior artiste would have to meet the producer or the person who has engaged them for the work repeatedly and they have to beg for the money which they owe to the artiste." The panel also found that middlemen/coordinators take a lion's share of the wages meant for each person. Another shocking revelation in the report is that many individuals in the industry exploit women for sex. "The girls who are called for working as junior artistes are told that they would be given a chance in the cinema if they comply with the demands for sex." The report states, "WhatsApp groups are created by certain coordinators or managers with both men and women as members and thereby give them the opportunity to contact each other and they get acquainted. Their acquaintance leads to undesirable results and even ends up in the flesh trade." The panel also found that there are many fake junior artiste coordinators in the industry exploiting women.

No time limit for the work of junior artistes Furthermore, the committee revealed that many production teams abandon junior artistes after late-night shoots without providing accommodation or transport. "The women will have to go home all alone and there were occasions where they have to sleep even in the railway stations for safety." The report also states that film personnel show little concern for junior artistes who sustain injuries during work. "One of the witnesses stated that while shooting was going on for a high-budget movie recently, in which very famous artistes were working, a 70-year-old woman got burn injuries when hot oil happened to spill over her body. Even though she was taken to the hospital by the production team, no amount was paid for her treatment," it adds. The same was the case with another person who fractured his leg on the same set. The report also mentions that there is no time limit for the work of junior artistes, and they are not given any compensation for overtime.

In addition to the ordeals faced by actors and technicians, Justice Hema Committee report also delved into the problems faced by junior artistes, who are unorganised workers since they are neither recognised as artistes nor technicians. Justice Hema Committee report states that junior artistes are not provided even basic facilities, including toilets, on movie sets.

The release of the Justice Hema Committee report, which looked into the problems faced by women working in Malayalam cinema, has sent shockwaves across Kerala. The report vehemently states that women in the film industry face extreme discrimination and exploitation. From the casting couch and lack of basic facilities on sets to pay disparities and ostracism if they refuse to comply with demands from perpetrators, the report has unmasked the industry and exposed its vile side. The three-member committee, chaired by former Kerala High Court judge K Hema and comprising veteran actor T Sarada and retired IAS officer KB Valsalakumari, was constituted by the Kerala government in July 2017 in the aftermath of the sexual assault of a prominent actor in a moving vehicle in February that year. In addition to the ordeals faced by actors and technicians, the panel also delved into the problems faced by junior artistes, who are unorganised workers since they are neither recognised as artistes nor technicians and therefore are not members of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes (AMMA) or the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA). During its study, the committee discovered that junior artistes face very serious issues in the Malayalam film industry and are "treated worse than slaves on certain sets." The report clearly states that this group is not provided even basic facilities, including toilets, on sets despite being required to be present on-site for as long as 19 hours on certain days. No food, no water, no chairs to sit

One junior artiste shared with the panel that during a shoot on a large open ground, they were all made to stand in the hot sun for a long period without any provision for shade, while the bigger artistes were at least given an umbrella. "The junior artistes who were all made to stand in the hot sun were not even given anything to eat or drink on many sets," the report states, emphasising

Priyanka Chopra, Kareena Kapoor slashed fees for Fashion, Heroine, says Madhur Bhandarkar: 'Entire film was resting on their shoulders'

Priyanka Chopra and Kareena Kapoor starred in Madhur Bhandarkar's films Fashion and Heroine. Priyanka Chopra and Kareena Kapoor starred in Madhur Bhandarkar's films Fashion and Heroine.

Madhur Bhandarkar, who is known for making films like Fashion, Page 3, Corporate among many others, recently shared that actors like Tabu and Priyanka Chopra slashed their fee when they worked with him because they were keen on getting the films made and did not want to burden the film with their fee. "Every female actor slashed her price when working with me," shared Madhur with Bollywood Hungama. Madhur shared that Tabu made a deal against the number of tickets sold for Chandni Bar and didn't charge any other fee for the film.

Madhur recalled that they had a budget of just Rs 1.5 crore for Chandni Bar and shared, "She took



money against Bombay or Delhi territory, and nothing else apart from that." Madhur added that not just Tabu, even Raveena Tandon, Bipasha Basu, Priyanka Chopra and Kareena Kapoor slashed their fee for Satta, Corporate, Fashion and Heroine. "They didn't charge the market price from me because they were keen on making these movies. The entire film was resting on

their shoulders so everybody slashed their prices," he said. In the same chat, Madhur also spoke about the rising entourage cost of actors and insisted that this should be controlled as it increases the cost of the film exponentially. When asked how much does a star's entourage cost, Madhur revealed that he had never faced unnecessary demands and said that the cost for these things de-

pends on the film's budget. Madhur Bhandarkar has previously received National Film Awards for his films like Traffic Signal, Page 3, Chandni Bar. He said that he is planning to make a sequel for his Priyanka Chopra-starrer film Fashion but added that he isn't sure if he wants to make a film or an OTT series. Madhur said that he has enough material that can go on for 2-3 seasons.

Sonakshi Sinha puts her Rs 25 crore apartment up for sale after hosting wedding festivities with Zaheer Iqbal there.

Actor Sonakshi Sinha recently tied the knot with her longtime boyfriend Zaheer Iqbal at her Bandra residence, and now, the fancy apartment is seemingly up for sale. After a video of the apartment was shared by a real estate Instagram handle, netizens were quick to notice its similarities to Sonakshi's house. The actor had previously given a tour of her house to Architectural Digest India, and her fans could immediately spot that the house on sale was hers. The house was prominently in Sonakshi and Zaheer's wedding photos as well.

In the video shared by The Property Store, the host takes the audience through the "2 BHK of 4200 square foot carpet area in Bandra West, with a sea view." It is mentioned that the apartment has a private elevator and has interiors worth Rs 5 crore. The video ends with the quoted price, which is Rs 25 crore. Saqib Saleem, who also lives in the same building, wrote in the comments section, "I know this building." One of the fans wrote, "Isn't

this Sonakshi Sinha's house? Saw it on YouTube." Another fan wrote, "That's Sonakshi Sinha's home.. moving out too soon."

Sonakshi had first opened up about buying this house in an Instagram post in May 2023. A few months later, Sonakshi gave a tour of the house in a video shared by Architectural Digest India. It was previously reported by Hindustan Times that Sonakshi bought this apartment in March 2020. In September 2023, she bought another apartment in the same building for Rs 11 crore. In the video tour of the apartment, Sonakshi had presented it as her 'home away from home', as at the time, she was living with her parents - Shatrughan Sinha and Poonam Sinha. She also shared during one of her recent promotional interviews that she was still living with her parents but was using this house for her work meetings. In June this year, Sonakshi tied the knot with Zaheer in the same apartment. In a chat with Bollywood Bubble, Sonakshi said, "I

Arbaaz Khan says mom Salma never turned them against Helen; Salim Khan recalls telling his kids, 'I want the same respect for her'



"Love is rooted in respect," Salim Khan shared while discussing his second wife, veteran actor Helen, in the recently released documentary Angry Young Men. In the third episode, the Khan family reflects on their journey of accepting Helen as Salim's second wife, and how his first wife, Salma Khan—mother to Salman Khan, Sohail Khan, and Arbaaz Khan—never influenced them against Helen or their father.

Recalling her first meeting with Salim Khan, Helen said, "We were shooting for the film Kabli Khan. He was the villain, and I was the heroine. I can't imagine Salim sahab as a villain. We never talked to each other on the set of that film. The first time I really met him was during Don." The 1978 film Don, starring Amitabh Bachchan, was written by Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar, and Helen played a pivotal role in the film. Salim shared how their bond grew during the shoot of Don. "After the day's shooting, Helen would come over, and we would have a drink together, and then she would leave." When asked how he fell in love with her, he responded, "Pyaar toh apne agar kiya hoga toh pata lagega (You will know if you have fallen in love)."

Arbaaz Khan spoke about the relationship between Salman and Helen, emphasising how his mother, Salma Khan, never spoke ill of Helen or Salim Khan. "My mother never influenced us to think or say anything against our father. She had her troubles, but she never influenced us to think, 'Your dad is like this,' or, 'This is what he is doing.' Never," he said. Salim also explained how he broke the news about Helen to his children. "I sat all the kids down and discussed it with them. I told them, 'You won't understand it now, but you will get it when you're older. I am in love with Helen aunty, and I know you can't love her as much as you love your mother, but I want the same respect for her.'" Arbaaz added, "We still call her aunty because she was Helen aunty at that time. Though we treat her as a mother, we call her Helen aunty. She is part of our lives. More than us, my mom ensures that she is part of everything." Helen also expressed her gratitude for the affection and respect she received from the Khan children. "They don't have to care for me or love me or anything, but the respect and the love I get is unbelievable," she said.

Trisha shares photos with Ajith Kumar and team Vidaamuyarchi: 'Surrounded by oooooo people'

The makers of Vidaamuyarchi are working in full swing to complete the shooting of the Magizh Thirumeni film, headlined by Ajith Kumar and Trisha. The movie, which is backed by Lyca Productions, is speculated to be either a Diwali release or hit the screens this November. With reports about the Hyderabad schedule of the action entertainer coming to an end, Trisha shared a photo of members of the cast and crew having a rather fun evening at a terrace garden.

Sharing the photos, Trisha wrote, "No big! Just surrounded by some oooooo people (sic)." This is the first time Trisha is sharing screen space with Ajith after the 2015 film Yennai Arindhaal. The photos shared on her social media handles feature Ajith and Trisha along with their Vidaamuyarchi co-stars Arjun, Arav, and Regina Cassandra, among others. With the movie rumoured to be an official adaptation of the 1997 film Breakdown, it is expected that Ajith and Trisha play a married couple in Vidaamuyarchi. The movie also marks the third collaboration between Ajith and Anirudh Ravichander after Vedhalam and Vivegam. With cinematography by Om Prakash and editing by Srikanth NB, Vidaamuyarchi is gearing up to be an action-packed road drama, and is right up the forte of Maghizh, who is known for making gritty action thrillers. Trisha, who is fresh off the success



of her digital debut Brinda, which is streaming on SonyLIV, is part of multiple projects, including Kamal Haasan-Mani Ratnam's Thug Life in Tamil, Vishwambara with Chiranjeevi in Telugu, and Identity in Malayalam. Apart from Vidaamuyarchi, Ajith is also shooting for Adhik Ravichandran's Good Bad Ugly, which is expected to be a flashy and outlandish movie just like the filmmaker's previous outings. With two contrasting films coming from the stable of Ajith, all eyes are on the announcement of his next. It is speculated that the project could be the first collaboration between Ajith and Prashanth Neel. However, there have been no official updates on this front.

'Kareena Kapoor's K3G character Pooh left a major imprint on me': Ananya Panday



Ananya Panday is gearing up to step into the web series space with Karan Johar-backed show Call Me Bae. The series revolves around the riches-to-rags concept, where a girl from an affluent family has to lead a middle-class life. While Ananya plays a high society girl on the show, Karan feels her character Bae has a strong

resemblance to Kareena Kapoor's character Pooh from Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham. At the trailer launch of Call Me Bae, Karan Johar said, "It's been 23 years to K3G, but if Pooja (Pooh) and Rohan Raichand had a daughter, she would be like Bae. Ananya's character in this show is a 2.0 derivative of Pooh."

Ananya Panday also spoke about her character's resemblance to Kareena Kapoor's character from Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham and said how she has been a fan of the character. "Pooh is iconic. I dress up like her even now at 23. I have all her quotes on my mirror. She has left an imprint on me." When asked about her character being tagged as a 'bimbet', Ananya said the best way to understand Bae is by not judging her. She said, "As a character, I never made fun of Bae even though she said some really silly things. It's very important not to judge her as a character, even though people in the show do judge her. She is a very positive girl. But her best quality is she doesn't judge people back."

Music director Yuvan Raja files Rs 5 cr defamation suit against former landlady

Chennai: Popular music composer and singer Yuvan Shankar Raja has filed a Rs 5 crore defamation suit against his former landlady and her brother in Chennai. Raja, the son of noted legendary composer Ilayaraja, has issued a legal notice to Hajmat Jameela Begum, who rented out her house which was used as a studio by the 44-year-old composer. In the notice, Raja demanded a compensation of Rs 5 crore for the 'emotional distress' and 'reputational damage' caused by certain remarks made by his former landlady and her brother.

Jameela Begum's brother, Mohammed Javid, earlier filed a police complaint against Raja, accusing him of not paying rent arrears amounting to Rs 20 lakh. Javid also claimed that Raja had vacated the house abruptly

without informing its owners besides causing damages to the property. Begum's brother filed the complaint with the Nungambakkam police station on Saturday, claiming that despite multiple requests, Raja didn't pay rent nor did he respond. In his career spanning 25 years, Raja has composed music for around 170 films. He began his career at the age of 16 when he composed music for the film 'Aravindhan'. His breakthrough Tamil movie was 'Thullavadhoo Ilamai' (2002), which established himself as one of the most sought after music composers in the Tamil film industry. Yuvan currently has several projects in the pipeline, including 'Vijay Digt', 'Sardaar 2', and 'Morrison'. Raja has frequently collaborated with several acclaimed film directors such as Selvaraghavan,

Who after PR Sreejesh? Goalkeeper Krishan Pathak ready to take over with Suraj Karkera, Mohit HS and Pawan as backups



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In the happy family photo, he isn't in the centre of the frame. You can see him in the bottom corner, sitting second from right. He flashes a big, hearty smile. But unlike others, there isn't a medal around his neck. The image was taken on the podium of the Paris Olympics. But it might as well have been the Tokyo Games. It must be tough being Krishan Pathak. The only player to be with the hockey squad for the last two Olympics, as a reserve, and not receive a winner's medal at both. On the eve of the Paris Olympics, the International Hockey Federation shared a photo of the 27-year-old Pathak and PR Sreejesh — a complete brothers-in-arms vibe — with a caption: The future and the legend.

That one frame captured two unusual happenings in Indian hockey. Sreejesh, the custodian of India's dreams for more than a decade, had announced the Paris Games would be his last dance. Indian hockey players don't say they'll hang the boots — they just fade away into twilight. Sardar Singh was a rare breed who started the trend of formally announcing retirement. But it was unheard of for a player to do it before a tournament. It's equally rare to have a succession plan in place. Sreejesh's might be ultra-large boots to fill. But in Pathak, a veteran of 125 games, India have a ready replacement, a worthy successor. "Oh, he's definitely eager. One hundred per cent," says Dennis van de Pol, a Dutch goalkeeping expert who works closely with the Indians. "Yes, they are big shoes to fill. But I also know that Pathak can do that. And it can only be better as he grows in confidence." Next month's Asian Champions Trophy could be the first time Pathak enters a tournament as the first-choice goalkeeper. One of Suraj Karkera and Mohit HS — the two keepers who were in the core probabilities for the continental competition — would be Pathak's backup.

Sreejesh's role in the revival of Indian hockey is profound. Without him, it would have been next to impossible for India to win the 2014 Asian Games — their first since 1998 — that triggered a momentum shift leading to the two Olympics bronze medals, which would be tough to imagine without Sreejesh's match-defining interventions. He was unlike typical Asian goalkeepers

who, according to Van de Pol, 'have a tendency to just stay there (in the goal), drop down and hopefully save the shots.' Sreejesh charged out, was aggressive from the get-go and doubled up as an on-field coach, barking instructions to the players in front of him and organising the defence. Sreejesh's might be ultra-large boots to fill. But in Pathak, a veteran of 125 games, India have a ready replacement, a worthy successor. (Krishan Pathak Instagram) Sreejesh's might be ultra-large boots to fill. But in Pathak, a veteran of 125 games, India have a ready replacement, a worthy successor. (Dennis van de Pol Instagram)

Pathak is a polar opposite in nature. If Sreejesh talked non-stop, Pathak's voice can barely be heard on the field. If Sreejesh liked engaging in one-on-one duels with the attacker, Pathak remains in control and doesn't leave the line so frequently. If Sreejesh made himself big in the goal, Pathak deceives the attackers with his relatively small frame. "Pathak knows he is really powerful, and maybe his opponents think, 'hey, you're a little bit smaller than the average goalkeeper (so) we can beat you in the corners,'" Van de Pol says. "But since he's so powerful, he can still cover the corners easily." In Tokyo, Pathak was conscious of the gap between him and Sreejesh, who mentored the goalkeeper 9 years younger than him during the 2016 Junior World Cup. Pathak used the Tokyo experience and the lessons learnt by playing along with Sreejesh to narrow the gap to the extent that there remained very little to choose between the two.

Former coach Graham Reid began giving both the goalkeepers equal amount of playing time and his successor Craig Fulton continued the philosophy. "They split the match times 50-50 not because we wanted to give the other some more experience... but also because we thought they are quite equal," Van de Pol says. "It didn't matter to us who we put in the goal, who started the first quarter or ended the game because we thought they were equals. Just months before the Olympics, Sree really just stepped up a bit." Pathak might not have a medal to show but the experience of being at two Olympics, Van de Pol adds, will be 'immense'; just like how Sreejesh benefited from being at London as the back-up to then captain Bharat Chetri. "Yes, it is another four years, but there are so many big tournaments before that that he can attend. So, he will only grow because I know for sure that if he gets more playing time now, he will only be better and better." As the second choice after Pathak, India have the option of picking 28-year-old Suraj Karkera, who has made 43 international appearances, and Mohit, a promising 19-year-old who's been a part of the senior set-up but has yet to make his debut. Pawan, sparingly used in the last cycle, is also knocking on the door.

"When Sreejesh had some time off during his injury, or when Pathak got married, had kids, then it was mostly Suraj or Pawan who stepped in and they did amazing," Van de Pol says. "They are also both completely different goalkeepers. Suraj is more like Pathak; more relaxed, more on the line. Pawan is like Sreejesh, a lot of energy, always talking. Mohit, from the under-21s, is more like Pathak and Suraj." As India look at life after Sreejesh, it'll be up to these players to ensure the team does not sorely miss the goalkeeping stalwart. And as the leader of this pack, and based on the succession plan laid out, they'll turn to Pathak, who will hope to move from the corner of the frame to the front and centre.

Samoan Darius Visser breaks Yuvraj Singh's record, sets new T20I record

GNS News Agency, August 22

a new world record has been set for the maximum number of runs in a single over in T20 international cricket. Samoa middle-order batter Darius Visser smashed 39 runs against Vanuatu in the T20 World Cup East Asia-Pacific Region Qualifier in the capital city of Apia. Visser got hold of pacer Nalin Nipiko who also stepped over the popping crease thrice in the over. Playing his third T20I the 28-year-old made a blistering 132 off just 62 balls.

Visser is the first Samoan batter to score a hundred in this format, and his knock guided the side to a competitive 174 all out. The next highest score in Samoa innings was 16 by captain Caleb Jasmat. In reply, Vanuatu gave a strong chase but ended up at 164 for nine, losing the match by 10 runs. Opener Nipiko nearly amended his waywardness with the ball with a 73 off 52 balls with six fours and three sixes. He had good support from skipper Joshua Rasu (23 off 14 balls) and Tim Cutler (21 off 11 balls) but Vanuatu fell short. Previously, there were five occasions when a bowler conceded 36 runs in an over and they were Stuart Broad (2007), Akila Dananjaya (2021), Karim Jannat (2024), Kamran Khan (2024) and Azmatullah Omarzai (2024). Yuvraj Singh smacked Broad



for six sixes. West Indies hard-hitting batter Kieron Pollard too got hold of Sri Lankan offie Dananjaya during a T20I game. On the other two occasions although the batters did not hit sixes the bowlers still managed to concede 36 runs courtesy of their lack of discipline and slipping in extras. Nicholas Pooran smacked Karim Janat for 36 runs at the T20 World Cup 2024 and Indian batters Rohit Sharma and Rinku Singh combined to squeeze 36 against Kamran Khan earlier this year in January in a bilateral series.

he has retired from international cricket, we can count on his full focus and commitment for the entire tournament." Smith, meanwhile, has secured his future with the Sixers through a three-year contract. While Smith is currently one of Australia's Test openers, the deal gives him the option to play a full BBL season if he decides to retire from international cricket within the next three years. Smith, however, remains noncommittal about his Test future, stating, "I don't have any plans. I'm just enjoying playing at the moment, I'm pretty relaxed and looking forward to this summer." Smith, who was part of the Sixers team that won the inaugural BBL in 2012, made a memorable return two summers ago with back-to-back centuries in a five-game stint. His presence in the upcoming season, even if only for a few games, is expected to add a significant edge to the Sixers' campaign. In addition to Warner and Smith, other Australian Test stars like Marnus Labuschagne and Alex Carey have re-signed with their respective BBL teams. Labuschagne will return to Brisbane Heat, the reigning champions after Australia's tour of India concludes in early January.

Interview series with Neeraj Chopra, other top athletes, taking sports 'a little easier': What long jumper Sreeshankar Murali did on missing Olympics due to injury



GNS News Agency, August 22

Long jumper Sreeshankar Murali, who had to withdraw from the Olympics due to a knee injury, still kept a close eye on the action unfolding at Paris. As an expert commentator on India's official broadcasters for the Games, the Commonwealth and Asian Games silver medalist found another perspective on the track and field events. "I thoroughly enjoyed my stint as a commentator and got to learn about different sports. Although I had great fun while doing commentary for the long jump finals, I can't deny I was feeling a little bad that I wasn't on the field. The way my practice was going this season, I had a very strong chance of finishing on the podium," Sreeshankar tells.

The knee injury also gave Sreeshankar time to reassess his goals and take sports "a little easier". Earlier, he was fully consumed in training, workouts and competitions, turning a blind eye on life beyond sports. This injury-induced break helped him realise that the approach could lead to burnout. It also gave him an opportunity to produce an interview series ahead of the Games where he managed to get Neeraj Chopra, Hamish Kerr (Paris high jump gold medalist) and friend Miltiadis Tentoglou (long jump gold medalist). "I made this video series for the Indian audience. I wanted to get these international champions to tell us how they train. Our Indian athletes believe that training as hard as you can is the best approach. But you will see these international athletes talking about how they train just five days a week and not more than three hours a day. It's something our young athletes can watch and learn from," he says. The injury came just months before the Olympics during a light training session at Sreeshankar's hometown of Palakkad, Kerala, shattering him emotionally. What made things worse for the athlete was the fact his family had come to the stadium to watch him train. No one fathomed that Sreeshankar, who was in excellent form until then, would leave the stadium with a ruptured tendon and a broken

spirit.

"It wasn't even a full motion jump but the moment I landed, I heard a pop. I immediately knew what it meant. I had to be lifted off the ground. The next few days I just spent weeping. When doctors took a look at my scans, they said such injuries only happen in car crashes. I still don't know how it happened," Sreeshankar says. The athlete knew he did not have much time and needed surgery at the earliest to address the "career-threatening injury". After consulting with Dr Sameul Pullinger, head of sports science at JSW's Inspire Institute of Sports (IIS), Sreeshankar boarded a flight to Doha to get his knee operated on at Aspetar Hospital, known for treating top football stars like Lionel Messi and Neymar.

Post surgery in late April, Sreeshankar decided to fly down directly to Bellary to begin his rehab program instead of heading home. "His rehabilitation isn't a one-man job. A huge team is involved. The medical department is always in contact, alongside the nutrition department that assists him with any additional supplementation needs for his injury," says Pullinger. Sreeshankar was in constant touch with his family, giving them daily updates during this period but didn't really understand the toll the injury took on them, especially his dad, until he visited home. "More than the physical strain, it was an emotional toll on my family. After returning home two months after my surgery in Doha and initial rehab, I noticed nothing had changed. All the stuff at home hadn't moved an inch. The resistance band I was using on the day of injury was still wrapped around the railing," Sreeshankar says. "I didn't have time to sit in despair for too long. My family was quite upset, and I needed to reassure them. My father was deeply involved in every step of my journey. It was hard for him initially, but the support he received from various quarters was very helpful," he says. During that phase, Sreeshankar received calls from top athletes on the circuit, including Chopra, but it was one special call from an athlete friend in Delhi that turned the tide for him. Asian and Commonwealth Games medalist Tejaswin Shankar's short, but effective, pep talk was enough to lift Sree's spirits. "Tejaswin was actually surprised that I picked the call. He said, 'Brother, if there is anyone who can make a comeback from here, it's you'. The belief he had in me renewed my faith," says Sreeshankar. He has no qualms in admitting that he needed professional help to take care of his mental health. Sessions with sports psychologist Maithil Bhuptani, who is part of the national camp, helped the youngster and his father immensely. "Dad was 100 times more involved than I was. He was soaking in the entire process with training, recovery, rest, planning. It was so hard for him initially. A lot of athletes, friends spoke to him, as did my sports psychologist," recalls Sreeshankar. Sreeshankar has already been cleared to do light running and weight training, though the jump sessions have to wait for now. The Kerala athlete is eyeing a return to competition by June next year. "I will return to action in a domestic meet and then travel to Europe to get some good 7.90m jumps that will help me earn ranking points for the Tokyo World Championships," he says.

Could Vinesh Phogat's Day 1 results have been retained? Breakdown of key findings from CAS' full verdict

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Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat's disqualification from the women's 50kg event at Paris 2024 Olympics after being 100 grams over the weight limit on the day of the gold medal match after being eligible to compete on day one, is 'draconian' but still cannot be disputed under existent rules, the Court of Arbitration for Sport stated in the detailed report that it published on Monday. "The consequences of the failed second weigh-in, which do not arise from any illegal or wrongful act on the part of the Applicant are, in the opinion of the Sole Arbitrator, draconian," one of the points in the CAS report said. "A consequence of elimination without ranking from the round for which the Athlete was found ineligible, having been eligible for the rounds for which she competed, would seem to be a fairer solution." Could Vinesh Phogat's Day 1 results have been retained? Here's a breakdown of key findings from CAS' full verdict: The Applicant (Vinesh Phogat) fought three difficult competitions on August 6 and needed to eat and drink for her health. Short time between bouts, due to the distance between the venue and the Athletes' Village, which left Vinesh Phogat with little time for losing weight before the second weigh-in. The IOA produced a medical certificate dated August 8, 2024 that Vinesh Phogat was in her pre-menstrual phase and cited medical literature on body weight changes during menstruation. "The biological difference in the bodies of male and female wrestlers, particularly in light of the menstruation of women, needs to be taken into account whilst determining the eligibility of female wrestlers on the second day of the weigh-in," the IOA submitted.

CAS: There is no evidence in this case of the consequences of differences in the bodies of male and female athletes with regard to weigh-in and weight categories. The weight categories generally and the 50 kg weight category for Vinesh Phogat as a woman wrestler are not challenged. The effects of any such differences, and of steps to mitigate such effects, are speculative and unsupported by evidence and cannot be considered for the purposes of this application.

Vinesh Phogat disqualification, Vinesh Phogat returns, Vinesh Phogat Olympics, Vinesh Phogat, Wrestler Vinesh Phogat, Paris Olympics, Indian express news, current affairs Wrestler Vinesh Phogat is greeted by supporters at New Delhi's IGI Airport after she returned from the Paris Olympics on Saturday. The IOA brought up that the weighing machine when empty showed a measurement of 50 grams, being half of the athlete's excess weight. CAS: The fact remains that the Applicant was above the 50 kg limit at the second weigh-in. There is no evidence to support the contention that, somehow, the scales were faulty. Vinesh Phogat submitted that there was insufficient training of, and explanation to, athletes from diverse backgrounds and levels of understanding



of the procedures. CAS: However, it is apparent from Vinesh Phogat's evidence that she did understand the need to weigh-in at under 50 kg and that she made efforts to do so, both before presenting for the second weigh-in and on the occasion of the second weigh-in during the 15 minutes available to her to repeat the standing on the scales. The IOA argued that Article 8 does allow a 2 kg tolerance, as such tolerance is allowed for International Tournaments. Article 8 provides in part: "2 kg weigh tolerance is allowed for World Cup, UWW Ranking Series Tournaments and for the International Tournaments". The argument that was put forward was that this means that a 2 kg weight tolerance is allowed for the Olympic Games, as an International Tournament. CAS: The Sole Arbitrator concluded that... the preferred construction of "the International Tournaments" in Article 8 of the Rules, as used in that Article, does not include the Olympic Games and that the Athlete was not entitled to that tolerance on her second weigh-in. Vinesh Phogat mainly contested that she should not be deprived of the rights that had accrued prior to her failed second weigh-in, for which she had been eligible. This, she submits, applies to entitle her to a silver medal and all rankings and scores and points, as to which she had a "legitimate expectation". CAS: Much as the Sole Arbitrator sees the logic in a rule that limits the consequences to the round for which the wrestler is not eligible while maintaining the results of rounds for which she was eligible, the Rules do not provide for such an outcome — to the contrary. The Rules use the words "eliminate" and, further, provide that the wrestler is ranked last, without rank. CAS case law is replete with the conclusion that it is not the prerogative of CAS Panels or Sole Arbitrators to rewrite federation rules. Vinesh Phogat did not seek orders that the Rules be overturned or otherwise declared unenforceable. Her challenge is to their implementation and application to her situation. Many of her submissions would be relevant to such a challenge of validity but that is not the relief that Vinesh Phogat seeks. The consequences of the failed second weigh-in, which do not arise from any illegal or wrongful act on the part of the applicant are, in the opinion of the Sole Arbitrator, draconian.