

Rainwater harvesting to overcome water scarcity

Nationally and internationally, 2023 is an important year for the water-related goals. The United Nations (UN) adopted a resolution in 2017, declaring 2018-28 as the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development. Water is an important resource for the development of any society and is helpful to maintain the integrity of the ecosystems. It is a critical resource for the growth of any economy. Water management is very essential to get the food security and prevent the soil erosion. It has been observed that demand of water has been increased almost eightfold in the last 100 years. There is availability of about 1,400 Million Cu. Kilometers of water in the world but only 0.003 per cent of this can be used for the hygiene, drinking, agriculture and industry. But all this water is not accessible because part of it flows through in to the rivers during the seasonal floods. The average annual rainfall overland is 1, 10,000 Km³, but about 70,000 km³ evaporate before reaching to the sea. The remaining 40,000 km³ is available for human use but two-thirds of it run off in floods. About 60 per cent area in India is still rain fed so the monsoon rains play a significant role in India. Global population is increasing at an alarming rate whereas the natural resources such as land and water are static. The world may face 40 per cent shortfall between forecast demand and available supply of water by 2030. It has been observed that the global water withdrawal grew 1.7 times faster than the population. Climate change may worsen the situation by increasing the frequency and intensity of floods and droughts, making water more unpredictable by altering hydrological cycles.

About 80 per cent of land is rain fed in the world and this land contributes about 60 per cent of food production. Rest 20 per cent comes under irrigated agriculture which contributes about 40 per cent of food production. It brings the self-sufficiency in the developing nations across the globe. The complexity of problems in rain fed agriculture is greater than that of irrigated agriculture. In India about 127 million ha cultivable land comes under rain fed condition which is approximately 70 per cent of the total cultivated land. Agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater and during the last 30 years food production has been increased by 100 per cent. Over 1 billion people across the world are involved in agriculture. And they generate about \$ 2.4 trillion in economic every year. Thus the importance of rainwater harvesting is increasing over the years. In India huge amount of budget is being invested on rainwater harvesting to mitigate the climate risks. Cost-effective technologies and an in depth analysis on rain water management are needed for the sustainable agriculture. There is need to adopt alternative food crops and irrigation practices for sustainable agriculture. Millets can be promoted under rain fed agricultural system as they can be grown with less water. Rainwater is recognized as the viable alternative to mitigate the demand of washing, sanitation and crop irrigation. It is also helpful to mitigate the demand of droughts. It will give the food security and reduce the impact on humans and environment. During rainfall 70 per cent of annual ground water is contributed by the states such as Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Gujarat etc. There is 61 per cent contribution of recharge rainfall both from the monsoon and non-monsoon to the country's to the country's total annual groundwater and the remaining 39 per cent recharge comes from other sources such as recharge from tanks, canal seepage, ponds and water conservation structures.

Monsoon plays a significant role in the Indian agriculture as the major sown part of the country is still rain fed. The summer monsoon accounts for 70 to 80 per cent of the annual rainfall over the major parts of the South Asia. Timely rainfall is important for the Kharif season crops. Coastal areas of the country such as Tamil Nadu receive the much of the rainfall from the North-East Monsoons, between October and December. Average rainfall in India is 1183 mm out of which 75 per cent is received during the monsoon period i.e. July to September.

Is International Law Significant for Dispute Resolution?

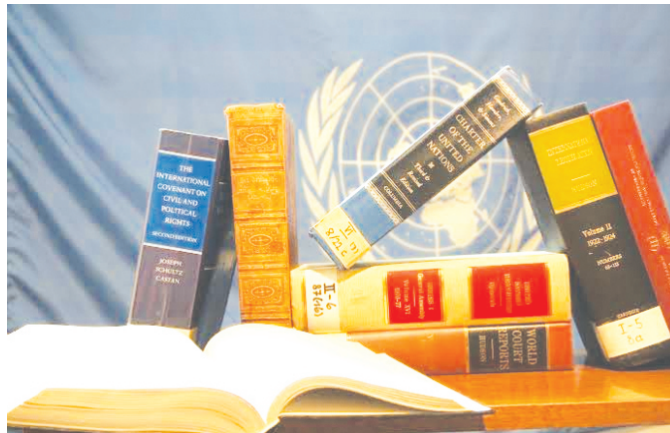
International law refers to the body of legislation that governs relations between States. International conflict resolution is the process of controlling or settling disputes between nations so they can each pursue their own objectives, whether they be collective or personal. States are acknowledged as the actors within the legal system by the framework provided by international law. It describes what they have to do to treat people living inside their borders and how they should interact with one other. These duties cover a wide range of topics, including the use of force, behavior during hostilities, immigration and refugee concerns, international criminal activity, disarmament initiatives, and prisoner care.

International law also regulates space operations, international commerce laws, global communication networks, sustainable development strategies for the oceans, and the environment. A treaty is an international agreement signed between States that is subject to international law, regardless of whether it is included in a single document, two or more related instruments, or known by another name. Treaty law, also referred to as the law of international agreements, governs the creation, interpretation, modification, and termination of treaties. The law of treaties, a pillar of international law, is essential for fostering mutual understanding and amicable conflict settlement.

PEACEFUL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The foundation of Pacific dispute settlement is the idea that, while it can certainly be used for other objectives like status-seeking and fear-mongering, war is essentially a tool for resolving disagreements. Additional presumptions include the idea that a lack of understanding among decision-makers about the possibility of peacefully resolving issues to the mutual benefit of both sides—a lack of awareness stemming from pride, ignorance, a lack of imagination, or self-centered and cynical leadership—often leads to war. Thus, by conceiving and institutionalizing alternative, peaceful conflict resolution procedures and convincing the nations to employ them, international organizations may be able to help prevent wars. The International Criminal Court is one of the most significant mechanisms (ICC). The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a permanent court that was created to try people for the most

heinous crimes that affect the entire world, like crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. When it comes to encouraging responsibility and making sure victims of human rights atrocities receive justice, the ICC has been instrumental. A peace strategy known as "collective security" entails an agreement amongst governments to take joint action against any state deemed to be an aggressor. It focuses on preventing violence by using an overwhelming international force against any aggressor, putting aside issues with resolving conflicts, upholding the law, or ensuring justice. Even though collective security was a major component of both the League of Nations Covenant and the United Nations Charter, albeit in slightly



different forms, it was an utter failure in both instances. The idea behind disarmament and weaponry limitation is that states have a natural tendency to want to outgun any prospective competitors and that this leads to arms races that ultimately result in conflict. This theory's main flaw is that it frequently tends to mix up cause and effect. Even though arms races gain speed on their own, political tensions that escalate into conflict are what cause them. To put it briefly, tensions rather than armaments contests are what lead to conflict. To believe differently would be to confuse a symptom with the cause. As a result, lowering weaponry levels does not always result in lowering tensions.

CONFLICT REDUCTION

Due to the lack of success with these key peace initiatives outlined in its Charter, the UN has created two new processes designed to reduce the number of wars. First, "preventive diplomacy," which mostly consists of the secretary-general's

diplomatic initiatives and the deployment of peacekeeping troops, has helped to keep local crises under control and avoid escalation, particularly when the superpowers are involved. Second, although not having any legal power behind them, the General Assembly has grown in importance as a key player in the process of what has been dubbed the communal legitimization of state programs. A state's likelihood of receiving universal censure increases the cost of resorting to war. However, hostilities that the assembly may favorably see as wars of colonial liberation are not affected by this new constraint on war. Furthermore, states could not be expected to refrain from going to war in order to further an interest they believed to be truly necessary despite the assembly's rejection.

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

International law also encourages the protection of human rights. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which is a seminal document outlining each and every person's fundamental rights and freedoms. International law has created a number of procedures to guarantee the protection of human rights because it understands how important they are.

Globally, human rights advocacy and protection are greatly aided by international law. It lays out the rights and freedoms to which every person is entitled and offers a framework for holding states accountable for how they treat people living under their control. The relationship between human rights and international law is intricate and multidimensional, involving numerous organizations, treaties, and conventions aimed at preserving human dignity. This paper explores the complexities of this relationship by examining important elements, historical trends, obstacles, and the influence of international human rights law on international justice.

Historical Development of International Human Rights Law

The genesis of international human rights law can be found in the wake of World War II, which saw previously unheard-of atrocities and a worldwide resolve to stop them from happening again. A turning point in this process was the United Nations General Assembly's 1948 ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Wayanad calamity

Landslides expose lapses on ecological front

A massive rescue operation is in progress in Kerala's Wayanad district, which has been ravaged by a series of landslides triggered by heavy rain. The death toll has crossed 150, even as the immediate priority is to evacuate and rehabilitate as many people as possible. Though it is being conveniently described as a natural calamity, the impact of factors such as climate change, an eco-sensitive terrain and the loss of forest cover cannot be discounted. As per the landslide atlas released by the Indian Space Research Organisation's National Remote Sensing Centre last year, 10 out of the 30 most landslide-prone districts in India are in Kerala, with Wayanad ranked 13th. According to a 2021 study, all landslide hotspots in Kerala are in the Western Ghats region, concentrated in Idukki, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram districts. Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and former Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi has asked the Central Government to prepare an action plan to



address the growing frequency of natural disasters in the ecologically fragile region of the Western Ghats. No less important is the need to assess the preparedness of various states and work out ways to make them better equipped to handle such catastrophes. The loss of lives and property can be minimised through an efficient early warning system, which doesn't seem to have happened in Kerala's case. India's approach to disaster management has improved from reactive to proactive as well as pre-emptive in recent years, but there are still some gaps to be plugged. A major stumbling block is the unwillingness of state governments, industries and local communities to pay heed to experts' warnings about the ramifications of infrastructure development and promotion of tourism in ecologically sensitive zones. As the nation extends support to a battered Wayanad.

Havoc on Ecology and Economy: Small Hydro-power Project Branwar and Broken Vows

We all know that in order to gain something, one has to lose something. Even happiness is built on someone else's misfortune and for every loss there is a hidden gain. For hidden gain there is a loss as well. In this world, there are some occasions and times when people lose everything and get nothing in return except disasters and stress. A famous Urdu couplet explains this aptly: This couplet describes the fate of many communities and people living in remote areas of Jammu & Kashmir especially the forest dwellers whose resources (land, forest, water) were acquired for so-called developmental projects. These projects, especially hydropower generation ones, left communities with economic losses and ecological damage. Even small hydropower projects, otherwise minimal in their impact on the environment, have been harming the biodiversity, ecology and economic conditions of people. When the 7.5 MW Branwar Hydropower project was being constructed around 15 years back in a forest village called Branwar in District Budgam, a lot of false promises were made to villagers by the local politicians in power. Many villagers whom I met in the recent past told me that the former Finance Minister of J&K Mr A R Rather who was also the five-times legislator from Charar-e-Sharief had assured residents of Branwar that they would get free electricity from the hydropower project. "We were told by Mr A R Rather, our former MLA and Finance Minister of J&K, that within a 5 kms radius people would get free electricity, especially the residents of Branwar Neeugu and Jabbad villages. That remained only a promise and the successive PDP-BJP Govt also could not make sure we get free or at least subsidized electricity from the power project", said Ghulam Qadir Ganai a local resident of Branwar. After more than a decade, the electricity crisis is still bad in Branwar. Infact, it is just as bad in but also in adjoining areas and villages like Neeugu, Jabbad, Surasyar, Bonen, Batwodder



and Kutbal as well. During winters people get mere 4 to 5 hours of power supply and when it snows, power supply is interrupted for weeks. No new electric cables, transformers or iron pylons have been erected. Lot of electricity transmission loss is taking place and locals have to pay for these losses as well. Even after a drizzle, power supply is cut in most of the villages in this remote area of Budgam which comes under the Surasyar block. Recently, when I visited Mechi Khanain meadow, trekking 12 kms up Branwar, I found the old course of Doodh Ganga dry. This was the area I along with my friends would catch fresh trout but that is now a history. From Meche Khanain downstream to Branwar, the Doodh Ganga is almost dry. A little water joins it around Yusmarg from the Kalnag stream but that is very little. From Meche Khanain to Frasnag and downstream 2 kms this waterbody is completely dry now and everything in this stream has perished.

Hundreds of Trees axed in Branwar forest

The private company which got the project on a 40-year lease only destroyed the local forest landscape and biodiversity with the support of the then Government especially the Forest department. After 15 years, locals of Branwar and adjoining villages say that it seems that hundreds and thousands of forest trees (Kail, Fir, Deodar) were axed to help this company. On the other hand, the local people who actually own these forests under the Forest Rights Act 2006 got nothing in return. Not only were the trees in Branwar forest uprooted and axed but even the course of Doodh Ganga was changed which not only impacted the aquatic life but also continues to impact the forest cover even after 15 years.

Green Meadow dredged

The pristine and green meadow around Metch Khanain 12 kms up Branwar was dug with huge JCBs to create an artificial canal for diverting Doodh Ganga waters. A small water reservoir was created and a huge pipeline was laid through another green meadow

called Haijan. JCB cranes, trucks and lorries went into deep jungle which was virgin until 2008-2009. The massive pipeline was laid over the green meadow of Haijan which is like a massive scar on its landscape and beauty. Trees were axed to make the canal in deep forest and trees which are there on the embankments of this artificial canal continue to get impacted with water. No concrete embankments or stone pitching was done to prevent oozing of water from the canal towards surrounding forest and trees.

Misleading information on UNFCCC

There is hardly any detailed information available on Govt websites in J&K about the Branwar 7.5 MW small hydropower project. After surfing the internet, I found a document related to this project called Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) on the website of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC is the UN process for negotiating an agreement to limit dangerous climate change. It is an international treaty among countries to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system. The CDM allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂. These CERs can be traded and sold, and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Under the Kyoto Protocol it is required that countries limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by setting such targets. It also helps countries meet their emission targets, and to encourage the private sector and developing countries to contribute to emission reduction efforts, negotiators of the Protocol included three market-based mechanisms - emissions trading, the clean development mechanism (CDM) and joint implementation.

13 children 'mysteriously' die in 20 days at Delhi shelter home

The cause of the deaths at Asha Kiran shelter home in Rohini is not known yet. A report by the SDM has raised questions about the quality of drinking water.

New Delhi: An investigation by a sub divisional magistrate has found that 13 children have died at a Delhi government-run shelter home for the specially abled in the past 20 days. So far, 27 deaths have been reported since January at the Asha Kiran shelter home in Rohini, inviting allegations of neglect and poor living

conditions from the BJP. The cause of the deaths at Asha Kiran shelter home is not known yet. Noting that the number of deaths was much higher than last year, the SDM said the real cause of the fatalities would be known after the post-mortem reports. The report by the SDM has raised questions about the quality of drinking water being provided to the children. The National Commission for Women (NCW) has sent a fact-finding team to the shelter home while lashing out at the AAP government for negligence. "For years, the Asha Kiran shelter home run by the Delhi government has lost all asha (hope). People are suffering and dying in it and the Delhi government does nothing, nothing at all. Taking cognisance and sending my team to enquire into it," NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma said. She said the NCW was also carrying out an audit of night shelters run by the Delhi government.

Delhi minister Atishi, however, differed on the number of deaths and asked the additional chief secretary (ACS) of the Revenue department to initiate a magisterial probe and submit a report in 48 hours. In her letter, Atishi noted that there were 14 deaths since January 2024 at the shelter home. The minister also sought recommendations on action to be taken

against those whose negligence had caused the deaths. She also sought suggestive measures to be taken to prevent the occurrence of such incidents in the future.

BJP VS AAP OVER SHELTER HOME DEATHS

A team from the Delhi BJP has also reached Asha Kiran shelter home to take stock of the situation. "As per our information, the children are getting dirty water, they don't get food, they don't get treatment. An inquiry should be conducted and all the officers who are involved in this should be punished," Rekha Gupta, BJP Mahila Morcha vice president, said.

Hitting out at the BJP, Delhi minister Gopal Rai said the leaders of the saffron party did not visit the home of the mother and son who had drowned in a drain in Mayur Vihar. "The BJP is protesting.

But, they did not protest when a woman and her son died in Mayur Vihar after slipping into a drain. They came to protest at Asha Kiran because they know that it comes under the Delhi government," Rai said. He also said the concerned minister was closely monitoring the case and the guilty people would not be spared. "The Delhi government stands with the people," he said.

27 deaths since January at Asha Kiran shelter home

Official says number of deaths much higher than last year

Raises questions about quality of drinking water



Rain fury across many north Indian states, more showers likely in Delhi

New Delhi: At least 14 people died and 10 more were injured in heavy overnight rains that triggered flooding and a house collapse as several rivers swelled in Uttarakhand on Thursday. This came as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said India is predicted to record above-normal rainfall in August and September, with a high possibility of landslides and floods. The Kedarnath Yatra was suspended as heavy rain triggered landslides in many places.

The trek route remains blocked by boulders at Ghoraparav, Lincholi, Badi Lincholi and Bhimbali, officials told news agency PTI. In an official statement, the Uttarakhand government said the Centre has dispatched two Indian Air Force helicopters, a Chinook and an MI 17, to aid rescue operations in the state after the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) took stock of the situation in the wake of the intense showers. So far, 425 pilgrims have been brought to safety in helicopters from Lincholi and Bhimbali, while 1,100 pilgrims have reached Sonprayag on foot from various places with the help of rescue teams, according to police. Neighbouring Himachal Pradesh also reeled under monsoon fury as multiple cloudburst incidents killed five people and left about 50 missing. Homes, roads and bridges were swept away by torrents of mud and water. The state emergency operation centre said the cloudbursts occurred in Nirmand, Sainj and Malana areas in Kullu district, Padhar in Mandi and Rampur district in Shimla district. The Manali-Chandigarh National Highway has been damaged at several places due to landslides, an official said.

FLASH FLOODS IN JAMMU KASHMIR

While most parts of Jammu and Kashmir received moderate rainfall on Thursday, torrential downpours in some parts triggered flash floods. The Dachan area of Kishtwar and the Khrew area of Pulwama experienced torrential rains, leading to flash floods in these localities.

308 dead in Wayanad landslides, drone-based radar to look for survivors

New Delhi: The death toll in Tuesday's massive landslides in Kerala's Wayanad district crossed the 300 mark on Friday with rescuers racing against time to search for survivors who are still trapped in collapsed buildings and under the debris. So far, 308 people have died in the landslides triggered by heavy rainfall in the hilly areas of Wayanad. Rescue operations, which entered the fourth day, will be further widened and also include a drone-based radar to find the survivors. Over 200 people suffered injuries as rescue efforts were hampered by various challenges, including treacherous terrain due to destroyed roads and bridges, and a shortage of equipment and a shortage of heavy equipment, making it difficult for emergency personnel to clear mud and uprooted trees that fell on houses and other buildings.

WAYANAD RESCUE OPERATIONS UPDATES

A joint team comprising the Indian Army, NDRF, Coast Guard and the Indian Navy were conducting the searches in the affected areas. Each team will have three locals and one forest department employee. Forty teams of rescue personnel will divide the search areas into six zones to carry out the rescue operations. The first zone consists of Attamala and Aaranmala. Mundakkai is the second zone, Punjirimattam is the third zone, Vellarmala Village Road is the fourth zone, GVHSS Vellarmala is the fifth zone and downstream of the river Chaliyar is the sixth zone.

Police personnel from eight police stations surrounding the river and locals who are experts in swimming will also participate in the searches. Meanwhile, the Indian Army found four people -- two men and two women -- who were stranded in Padavetti Kunnu in Wayanad. They were evacuated by helicopter. However, one of the rescued women is experiencing difficulties with her leg and is receiving necessary medical attention. As many as 25 ambulances will cross the Bailey Bridge constructed by the Indian Army in record time to Mundakkai after the structure collapsed due to the landslides. The Indian Air Force will deploy its C-130 aircraft from Hindon airbase in Ghaziabad for the rescue operations and will carry specialised drone systems along with a team of experts to Wayanad for sub-soil evacuation monitoring and searching for survivors.

South Delhi school evacuated after receiving bomb threat via email

New Delhi: Summer Fields School in Delhi was on Friday evacuated after the authorities there received a bomb threat via an email. According to the details, the email was received at 12.30 am on Friday. However, the authorities noticed the email only after the school was opened this morning. The school is located in South Delhi's posh Greater Kailash area.

The police were informed, and an evacuation was ordered on the school premises. As the investigation into the case progressed, the police said they suspect it was a hoax call. Case was registered, and a probe was underway. Commenting on the email, Shalini Agarwal, the school principal said the students were evacuated within 10

minutes after the authorities saw the email. She also said the school premises was being checked by the



bomb squad. "We received an email late at night which was checked early morning today. As per the SOP, we evacuated the students within 10 minutes of receiving the email. We

informed the police and district administration, and we are thankful to the police - they supported us magnificently as they came immediately," she told reporters.

"There are hardly any students here, we are just waiting for a few parents to come and collect their wards." Police and bomb squad are here and they are checking the premises. There was absolutely no panic amongst the parents," she added. In June this year, several museums in Delhi received a

bomb threat, which later turned out to be a hoax. Prior to that, many schools and hospitals in Delhi received bomb threat emails, which also turned out to be hoaxes.

Akali Dal expels patron Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa for 'anti-party activities'

New Delhi: The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) disciplinary committee on Thursday expelled party patron Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa from the primary membership for anti-party activities, including taking up the leadership of expelled leaders. A decision to this effect was taken unanimously by a three-member party disciplinary committee which was presided over by chairman Balwinder Singh Bhundur and included the other two members - Maheshinder Singh Grewal and Gulzar Singh Ranike. Briefing the media about the decision, Grewal said "The committee was of the opinion that Mr Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa was not upholding the honour of his post. He was not only issuing unauthorised statements but was also acting against the party's constitution and its rich and glorious traditions". He said the disciplinary committee also

took into account the various statements issued by Dhindsa in the recent past as well as the manner in which he took on the leadership of the eight expelled party leaders on Wednesday. Disciplinary committee



chairman Balwinder Singh Bhundur said Dhindsa forced the party to take this action. He said that the party, on its part, had invited all the disgruntled leaders to attend meetings and discuss their misgivings in the party forum.

"Instead of doing this, the disgruntled leaders became part of a conspiracy scripted in Nagpur to weaken and divide the party. These leaders have even given credence to the wild allegations of the main perpetrator of the sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 2015", Bhundur said.

When due action was taken against them, Mr Dhindsa sought to come to the rescue of the leaders and even tried to mislead the party cadre by asserting he had overruled the same. Now the party has taken definite action against Mr Dhindsa to set the record straight", he added. Meanwhile, the disciplinary committee members said that indiscipline would not be tolerated at any cost even as it appealed to Punjabis to shun opportunistic persons who had entered into a conspiracy with agencies to weaken the party.

ED conducts first raid in Leh-Ladakh region in fake cryptocurrency case

The raid, conducted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), targeted six premises located in Leh, Jammu, and Sonipat in connection with a fake cryptocurrency business run by AR Mir and others.

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) of the Srinagar zone conducted its first-ever search operation in the Leh-Ladakh region on Friday. The raid, conducted under the provisions of the



Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), targeted six premises located in Leh, Jammu, and Sonipat in connection with a fake cryptocurrency business run by AR Mir and others. According to the official statement, thousands of investors had invested their money in a cryptocurrency named 'Emollient Coin.' However, they

have not received any returns or the currency itself, following which multiple FIRs were filed in the Leh region, while numerous complaints have been lodged in Jammu and Kashmir.

The agency launched the search operation based on a complaint from Leh's Additional District Magistrate. The complaint named AR Mir and Ajay

Air India suspends flights to Tel Aviv until August 8 amid Israel-Iran tensions

Air India cancelled its Delhi-Tel Aviv flights until August 8 due to escalating tensions in the Middle East. In an official statement, the airline said the suspensions were effective immediately.

New Delhi: Air India on Friday said it suspended its flights to and from Tel Aviv in Israel due to Middle East tensions, with immediate effect. The flight operations were suspended until August 8, the airline said in a statement. "In view of the ongoing situation in parts of the Middle East, we have suspended scheduled operation of our flights to and from Tel Aviv with immediate effect up to and including 08 August 2024," the statement read. "We are continuously monitoring the situation and are extending support to our passengers with confirmed bookings for travel to and from Tel Aviv



during this period, with a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges," it read.

"Safety of our guests and crew remains our foremost priority. For more information, please call our 24/7 Contact Centre at 011-69329333 / 011-69329999," the statement added. Air India operates four flights from Delhi to Tel Aviv every week. In another update on its website, Air India said it has cancelled its flights AI139 from Delhi to Tel Aviv and AI140 from Tel Aviv to Delhi on August 1 due to operational reasons. "Passengers having confirmed bookings for travel on these two flights, will be provided with a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges. The inconvenience caused is sincerely regretted," it said.

Kumar Choudhary as the accused. A probe held by a panel formed by the District Magistrate revealed that AR Mir and his agents were running a fake cryptocurrency business under the name "Emollient Coin Limited" from an office at the Anjuman Mo-in-Ul complex in Leh. Following the probe, the panel closed the office. In an elaborate scheme, individuals were enticed into buying the fake cryptocurrency, Emollient Coin, through cash, bank transfers, or Bitcoin exchanges via a mobile app. The scam promised investors returns of up to 40% after a 10-month lock-in period. Additionally, investors were incentivised to recruit others, earning commissions of up to 7% for direct referrals. This multi-level marketing structure offered further commissions of 3% at the second level and 1% for subsequent levels up to the tenth, creating a complex and deceptive financial web. The investigation revealed that 2,508 investors had invested a total of Rs. 7,34,36,267 in the scheme.

News box

Vladimir Putin receives Russians returning to Moscow after prisoner swap

Moscow. Russian nationals involved in a complex swap of prisoners with Western countries arrived in Moscow late on Thursday and were met at the airport by President Vladimir Putin, Russian news agencies reported.

The agencies quoted Putin as saying that the eight returnees would all be presented with state awards and that he told them that their homeland "had not forgotten them, not for a single minute". Also meeting the returnees, according to the agencies, were the head of the FSB intelligence service, Alexander Bortnikov, the head of the SVR foreign intelligence service, Sergei Naryshkin, and Defence Minister Andrei Belousov. The eight returnees included Vadim Krasikov, convicted by a German court of killing a Chechen dissident in Berlin, and two men convicted of cyber crimes in the United States, Vladislav Klyushin and Roman Seleznev.

US recognizes opposition candidate González as the winner of Venezuela's presidential election

CARACAS. The stakes grew higher for Venezuela's electoral authority to show proof backing its decision to declare President Nicolás Maduro the winner of the country's presidential election after the United States on Thursday recognized opposition candidate Edmundo González as the victor, discrediting the official results of the highly anticipated vote.

The U.S. announcement followed calls from multiple governments, including close allies of Maduro, for Venezuela's National Electoral Council to release detailed vote counts, as it has done during previous elections. The electoral body declared Maduro the winner Monday, but the main opposition coalition revealed hours later that it had evidence to the contrary in the form of more than two-thirds of the tally sheets that each electronic voting machine printed after polls closed. "Given the overwhelming evidence, it is clear to the United States and, most importantly, to the Venezuelan people that Edmundo González Urrutia won the most votes in Venezuela's July 28 presidential election," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement.

Maduro responded with a quick admonishment: "The United States needs to keep its nose out of Venezuela!"

The U.S. government announcement came amid diplomatic efforts to persuade Maduro to release vote tallies from the election and increasing calls for an independent review of the results, according to officials from Brazil and México. Government officials from Brazil, Colombia and Mexico have been in constant communication with Maduro's administration to convince him that he must show the vote tally sheets from Sunday's election and allow impartial verification, a Brazilian government official told The Associated Press Thursday.

Chinese parents install spy camera in 20-year-old daughter's bedroom, spark outcry on social media

World. Social media in China is in an uproar after a 20-year-old student went to the police because her parents put a surveillance camera in her bedroom, according to the South China Morning Post.

The student, identified only as Li, went to a police station in Beijing on July 26, seeking help after fleeing from her home in another province. Li, a second-year university student, revealed that her parents had installed a camera to monitor her every move. They reportedly became violent, hitting her and throwing her phone on the floor whenever she made mistakes.

Li explained that this extreme parenting style had caused her significant trauma and was driving her to seek independence. She planned to find part-time work in Beijing to support herself and escape her controlling parents. Concerned that her parents might report her missing and cause a commotion, Li went to the police to inform them of her situation and ensure her safety. Police officer Zhang Chuanbin reassured her, stating that her parents' approach was an inappropriate way to show care. Zhang contacted Li's parents and advised them to respect their adult child's need for personal space. Following this intervention, Li's parents agreed to remove the surveillance camera, and she subsequently returned home. However, the incident has sparked widespread condemnation online, with many criticising the invasion of privacy.

"So horrible. Having no private space at all despite being 20," commented one user on Weibo. "Children are independent individuals, not parents' belongings - some Chinese parents should keep this in mind," said another.

"Even a prison respects people's privacy more than this," another person remarked.

Donald Trump loses appeal of gag order in hush money criminal case

The New York court's decision means that Trump cannot comment publicly about individual prosecutors and others in the case until Justice Juan Merchan sentences him on September 18, seven weeks before the November 5 election.

New York. A New York state appeals court on Thursday rejected Donald Trump's challenge to a gag order in his hush money criminal case, where the former US president was convicted in May on charges stemming from hush money paid to a porn star. The decision by the Appellate Division in Manhattan means the Republican presidential nominee cannot comment publicly about individual prosecutors and others in the case until Justice Juan Merchan sentences him on September 18, seven weeks before the November 5 election.

Trump's lawyers have argued that the gag order violated Trump's constitutional free speech rights under the First Amendment. The gag order is blatantly un-American", Steven Cheung, a spokesperson

for Trump's campaign, said in a statement.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Tuesday showed Trump locked in a tight race with Vice President Kamala Harris, who is poised to become the Democratic nominee. Harris led Trump 43 per cent-42 per cent among registered voters, within the margin of error. On Thursday afternoon, Trump's lawyers renewed their demand that Merchan recuse himself, citing his daughter's work as a Democratic political consultant and her "long-standing" relationship with Harris.

They also said the "unjust and unconstitutional" gag order restricts Trump's ability to respond to Harris, saying she framed her candidacy as that of "prosecutor vs convicted felon." Harris served as California's attorney general earlier in her career. Merchan rejected a similar recusal request by Trump before the trial began, and another recusal request last year.

The judge imposed the gag order a few weeks before the trial began on April 22, saying



Trump's history of making threatening statements could undermine the proceedings. Merchan's original order prevented Trump from commenting on prosecutors, court staff, witnesses and jurors. A separate order against naming the anonymous jurors remains in effect. Merchan lifted the restrictions on witnesses and jurors following Trump's May 30 conviction.

The Appellate Division, a mid-level appeals court, said threats that Bragg's staff received in the wake of the verdict continue to pose a "significant and immediate" threat.

Justice Merchan did not act in excess of

jurisdiction by maintaining the narrowly tailored protections," the five-judge panel said. The appeals court upheld Merchan's original gag order in May, citing the need to protect people from "threats, intimidation, harassment, and harm," and rejecting Trump's First Amendment argument.

The order leaves Trump free to speak about Bragg and Merchan. Jurors found Trump guilty on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, for covering up former personal lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen's \$130,000 payment to adult film actress Stormy Daniels. The payment was made in exchange for Daniels' silence before the 2016 election about a sexual encounter she says she had with Trump a decade earlier, which Trump denied. Trump won the presidency by defeating Democrat Hillary Clinton. The criminal trial was the first of any US president. Trump faces up to four years in prison, and can also be fined.

Time behind bars is rare for people convicted in New York for falsifying business records, especially those like Trump with no prior criminal histories.

Hamas chief Haniyeh killed by bomb snuck into guesthouse 2 months ago: Report

World. Top Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated by an explosive device covertly smuggled into the Tehran guesthouse where he was staying, the New York Times (NYT) reported, citing officials. The bomb had been hidden around two months before his stay.

Haniyeh had travelled to Iran's capital for the inauguration of President Masoud Pezeshkian. He was put up in a guesthouse run and protected by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in an upscale neighbourhood of northern Tehran. He had often stayed at the guesthouse during visits to Tehran. Officials told NYT the bomb was detonated remotely once it was confirmed that he was inside his room at the guesthouse, killing him and a bodyguard. The explosion shook the building, shattered some windows, and caused the



partial collapse of an exterior wall. In the immediate aftermath, speculation centred on the possibility of an Israeli missile strike, but the operation exploited a security lapse that allowed the bomb to be planted and remain hidden for weeks. While Israel has not publicly taken responsibility for the killing, NYT reported that Israeli intelligence officials briefed the United States and other

Western governments on the details of the operation. The United States, however, denied receiving advance knowledge of the assassination plot, according to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

A public funeral ceremony for Haniyeh was held in Tehran on Thursday, with crowds of mourners paying their respects. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh, having earlier threatened "harsh punishment" for his killing. Qatar is set to hold funeral ceremonies for Haniyeh on Friday, with Arab and Islamic leaders as well as representatives of other Palestinian factions and members of the public expected to attend, reported AFP.

The assassination came just hours after Israel conducted an airstrike in Lebanon's Beirut, killing Fuad Shukur, a military commander of Hezbollah, a Hamas ally.

US continues to expect accountability from India on Pannu assassination bid

WASHINGTON. The United States continues to expect accountability from India concerning the alleged role of an Indian government employee in the failed attempt to assassinate an American citizen on US soil last summer, an official said. We continue to expect accountability from the government of India in relation to the alleged role of an Indian government employee in the failed attempt to assassinate a US citizen on US soil that occurred last summer. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters at his daily news conference. We continue to raise our concerns directly with the Indian government at senior levels, he said.



Patel, however, declined to comment on a news report alleging that Canadian authorities claim to have arrested five Indian nationals planning to target a Sikh separatist at a wedding ceremony.

"As it relates to the news that you mentioned out of Canada, I would refer you to the Canadian government to comment on issues that are happening within their law enforcement system," the official said. We continue to raise our concerns directly with the Indian government at senior levels, he added. In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Gurbatwant Singh Pannun in New York.

Gupta, who was arrested in the Czech Republic in June last year, was extradited to the US on June 14.

Biden credits allies for prisoner swap with Russia: Why it's vital to have friends

Joe Biden called the multinational prisoner swap deal "a powerful example of why it's vital to have friends in this world."

World. The US President shared an image with the families of Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan and Alsu Kurmasheva and Vladimir Kara-Murza standing inside the Oval Office. All four have been released by Russia as part of the prisoner swap deal. "Today, I stood beside the families of Paul, Evan, Alsu, and Vladimir in the Oval Office as they spoke to their loved ones for the first time since they regained freedom. These families never lost hope.

And today, they'll each be reunited with the missing piece of their soul," Biden tweeted. Evan Gershkovich is a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reporter who was arrested by Russia last March on espionage charges. Former US Marine Paul Whelan was arrested in Moscow in 2018 on espionage charges. Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva was accused of spreading false information about the Russian military. Vladimir Kara-Murza, an outspoken critic of Russia's war in Ukraine, was sentenced to 25 years in 2023. He holds dual citizenship of Britain and Russia.

US national security advisor Jake Sullivan said that no money was exchanged as part of the biggest East-West prisoner exchange since the



end of the Cold War. He added that no sanctions were loosened to facilitate the deal.

The landmark prisoner swap agreed by Russia, the United States and several of its allies that freed

16 people was more than two years in the making, involving secret talks and complex diplomacy involving Germany, Russia and the US, a Reuters report mentioned.

Welcome home: Biden greets Evan Gershkovich, others freed in Russia prisoner swap

World. A plane carrying three freed Americans, including journalist Evan Gershkovich and former US Marine Paul Whelan, landed at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland late on Thursday as part of a massive prisoner exchange deal involving multiple nations, which saw 26 prisoners being released.

Gershkovich, Whelan and Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva were freed on Thursday by Russia as part of the biggest prisoner swap since the end of the Cold War.

All three American detainees were warmly welcomed and received by US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. They were also greeted and hugged by families who had tears of joy and relief as they saw them after a long time. "Welcome home," Biden told the released detainees. According to the White House, the US had negotiated the prisoner swap with Russia, Germany and three other countries. The agreement, negotiated in secrecy in Turkey's Ankara for over a year, had 26 prisoners, including 16 of those coming to the West from Russia and

eight being sent back to Russia from the West.

The families of the released detainees had an emotional moment at the Oval Office as they spoke to their loved ones by phone. In a brief conversation, Biden told the three Americans that they were detained "wrongfully" and "we were overwhelmed" that they returned home.

"We just want to say how overwhelmed we are. You've been wrongfully detained for a long time, and we are glad you are home," Biden told the released detainees as the families stood around the presidential Resolute Desk.

"Every parent, child, spouse and loved one who joined me in the Oval Office today has been praying for this day for a long time," he said. In an emotional conversation, the mother of Gershkovich, a Wall Street Journal reporter based in Russia, told her son over the phone that it was her speaking.

"This is momma. Do you hear me? It's your mom," Gershkovich's mother told her son over the phone. The entire moment was captured in a two-minute video posted on the X handle of Biden's office. Gershkovich was arrested

in March last year on espionage charges, which he and the US government vehemently denied. He was subsequently sentenced to 16 years in a high-security Russian prison. Whelan, a former Marine who was working as a corporate security executive from Michigan, was detained in Moscow in 2018 and convicted on espionage charges. He has been serving a 16-year sentence in a Russian prison. Whelan and the US government have denied that he is a spy, and Washington has designated him as "wrongfully detained". Kurmasheva, an editor with Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), a media organisation funded by the US government, travelled to Russia in May last year to meet her mother. However, she was temporarily detained by Russian authorities while waiting for her return flight and her dual US and Russian passports were confiscated, USA Today reported. The 47-year-old was initially fined for failing to register her US passport with Russian authorities. However, she was arrested and charged in October for "failing to register herself as a foreign agent."



Shivali Parab

Bewitches In Brown Bodycon Mini Dress

Marathi television actress Shivali Parab recently captured attention on social media with her chic outfit. In the photos, Shivali is seen wearing a body-hugging dress with a tie-dye pattern in shades of brown and beige. The outfit perfectly accentuates her figure, giving her a sophisticated yet edgy look. Paired with trendy sunglasses and holding a glass, Shivali exuded confidence and elegance. Her minimalistic makeup and curly hair added to the overall appeal, making her look effortlessly glamorous. Shivali captioned the post with the hashtags #shivaliparab, #kalyanchichulbuli, and #love, reflecting her character's name and her love for the stylish look. The post quickly garnered attention, receiving over 13,000 likes and numerous comments praising her fashion sense. There was another section of netizens who trolled her.

On Shivali's post, one user commented, "Don't lose the popularity you gained from the comedy shows". Another commented, "It seems you're also getting attracted to Bollywood". "This doesn't suit you; you look better in traditional Marathi attire", someone commented. Shivali Parab is an active social media user and often engages her fans through her posts and videos. She recently shared some pictures on Instagram that were widely shared on social media platforms. In the pictures that went viral, she was seen wearing a light blue oversized shirt, perfectly teamed up with denim shorts. The shirt has text written on it which has created some buzz among her fans. The text written on her shirt is Onkar 71. Netizens mockingly questioned whether the shirt belonged to actor Onkar Raut.



Onkar was also part of the show itself. Onkar Raut himself commented on the photo as well, he asked whether this shirt had his name on it.

Malaika Arora Is All Smiles As She Goes On Lunch Date With Son Arhaan Khan



Apart from being a model, dancer and fitness influencer, Malaika Arora is also a doting mother to Arhaan Khan, whom she shares with her ex-husband Arbaaz Khan. The diva has a very healthy bond with her 21-year-old son and they are often seen spending quality time together on vacations or lunch dates. On Wednesday, the mother-son duo was papped outside a restaurant in Mumbai. Several pictures and videos of them have now surfaced on social media. In one such video, both Malaika and Arhaan are seen exiting the restaurant and making their way to the vehicle. As soon as they headed out, paps stationed outside requested them to pose for a picture together.

Malaika, who is a true fashionista, for the recent outing opted for a casual outfit. She wore a white deep-neck sleeveless top paired with blue denim and white sneakers. She accessorised her look with black shades and a grey handbag. As for the tresses, she tied her hair in a messy low bun style. Talking about Arhaan, the young star kid wore a green T-shirt that he paired with black pyjamas and white sneakers.

Malaika and Arbaaz Khan got married in 1998 and welcomed their son Arhaan in 2002. The two parted ways in 2017 and have been co-parenting Arhaan since then. Earlier while talking to Hello Magazine, Malaika shared that it was initially "tricky" but now she and Arbaaz have struck a balance in co-parenting their son. She said, "For what it's worth, touch wood, we've finally struck a good balance. Initially, it was a little tricky. And rightly so, because that's how life is. We both realized that whatever happens between two adults, it should never be reflected on a child—and we have found a really friendly style of co-parenting." However, Arbaaz is now married to Sshura Khan, whereas Malaika has reportedly ended her relationship with Arjun Kapoor after a few years of dating. Meanwhile, talking about Arhaan, he recently made his debut as a podcaster and launched his venture Dumb Biryani, in collaboration with his friends.

Tara Sutaria Finds Love Again After Break-Up With Aadar Jain ? Here's What We Know



Looks like Bollywood actress Tara Sutaria has given love another chance. Sources close to the actress have revealed that she has been seeing actor Arunoday Singh for quite some time now. Buzz is that, they have been secretly dating for over a year and a half, taking their friendship to the next level. It seems Cupid has struck the duo, and they are now more than just good friends. According to a report in ETimes, "It all started from mutual liking for art and led to the two currently finding solace in each other. Tara's family is not only aware of Arunoday but also likes him a lot. The two often go out on dates. It is just that they have not hired a PR to publicize their relationship."

The source further added, "Tara wishes to keep the relationship private, and Arunoday has always been very private. The two are very similar. They have the same penchant for the English language and culture. They are also very much into art. Reportedly they have also been spotted the two on a date with Tara's mum and dad in a restaurant in Bandra, Mumbai. Tara was previously dating actor Aadar Jain. The two reportedly broke up somewhere in January 2023 or a little before that. In an exclusive chat with News18 Showsha, Tara confirmed the relationship has indeed ended. Tara and Aadar parted amicably and have decided to remain friends. However, they haven't been spotted together in recent times. Arunoday Singh, on the other hand has been living separately from his ex-wife Lee Elton since their divorce in 2019. Neither Tara or Arunoday have commented on their relationship. Last seen in the 2023 survival thriller Apurva for Disney+Hotstar, Tara is said to be a part of the upcoming film titled Humraaz.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu

On Working With Varun Dhawan In Citadel Honey Bunny: 'He's The Nicest Human Being'

Varun Dhawan is gearing up for his OTT debut with 'Citadel: Honey Bunny,' co-starring Samantha Ruth Prabhu. The series has been generating buzz since its announcement, keeping fans eagerly anticipating its release. Now, the wait is over as the makers have unveiled the much-awaited teaser and announced the release date. At the grand launch event, Samantha Ruth Prabhu shared her experience of working with Varun Dhawan for the first time, adding to the excitement surrounding the series. The actress heaped praises at her co-star by stating, "All he thinks about from the moment he wakes up is how to improve his craft. He's constantly focused on how to perform each scene better. Not only is he dedicated to his work, but he's also one of the nicest human beings I've ever met."



She continued, "His wonderful sense of humor and positive attitude make sure everyone on set is happy. He's always smiling, ensuring that there's never a rough day for anyone around him. In 'Citadel,' he has brought a completely new vision to his role, particularly in the action scenes, showcasing a fresh and unique approach." The teaser, released on Thursday, introduces Samantha as Honey and Varun Dhawan as Bunny, both playing spies. It opens with the track 'Raat Baaki Baat Baaki' playing in the background, setting a nostalgic tone. The teaser combines the elements of a gritty spy thriller with high-octane action sequences and a love story, all set against the vibrant backdrop of the 90s. We see glimpses of Samantha and Varun excelling in their spy roles, as well as snippets of their on-screen romance. The teaser culminates in a tense moment with Samantha pointing a gun at Varun, leaving viewers eager for more.

Citadel: Honey Bunny is an exciting new spin-off

from the original Citadel series, which featured Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden. Amazon Prime Video has revealed that these spin-offs will take place in various locations, including India, Spain, Italy, and Mexico, with Priyanka's series serving as the central hub connecting all the narratives. The first of these spin-offs to debut is set in India, titled Citadel: Honey Bunny, and boasts a stellar cast. Joining the ensemble are Kay Kay Menon, Simran, Soham Majumdar, Shivankit Singh Parihar, Kashvi Majumdar, Saquib Saleem, and Sikandar Kher in significant roles. The series is slated to release later this year on November 7.

