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UP Police save 10 lives in week with Meta's help

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh police, with the help of social media Meta, have saved the lives of 10 people who attempted suicide in the last one week in the state. Meta had shared with the police the information about suicide-related posts on social media. Acting on the information, these people could be prevented from committing suicides.

DGP Prashant Kumar said here on Friday that information about suicide posts on social media is received with the help of Meta Company. Taking prompt action in such cases and cognizance of the alerts received in 14 cases in the last one week, the police talked to the victims and their families. A total of 10 lives could be saved. The officer, however, did not reveal the places or persons whose lives were saved. The DGP said that if a post related to suicide is made by any person on Facebook or Instagram.

India has always advocated for peace and it will always

“India’s peace cannot be disturbed under any circumstances,”: Rajnath Singh

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday responded to his earlier statement that “Armed Forces need to be prepared for war”. The Defence Minister said that he gave that statement so that India’s peace cannot be disturbed under any circumstances.

Highlighting India’s message of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’, Singh said that India has always advocated for peace but keeping in mind the today’s geopolitical situation, India always needs to prepare for war to establish peace in India and world. Speaking to media persons, Rajnath Singh said, “India is the only country in the world that has given the message of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’. India has always advocated for peace and it will always. But today given the geopolitical situation, I told the army that to maintain peace in India and the world, we should



always be ready for war. I said so that India’s peace is not disturbed under any circumstances.” During his Lucknow visit, Union Minister Rajnath Singh also offered prayers at Khatu Shyam Mandir in the city.

On September 5, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired the inaugural Joint Commanders’ Conference (JCC) in Lucknow, emphasising the need for jointness and integration among the three services for future challenges. He commended

the Armed Forces for their invaluable contribution in safeguarding national interests and advancing the vision of ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’, and appreciated the efforts being undertaken for furthering jointness and integration among the three Services.

In line with the theme of the conference, ‘Sashakt aur Surakshit Bharat : Transforming the Armed Forces’, Singh stated that India is a peaceloving nation and the Armed Forces need to be prepared for

war in order to preserve peace.

He stressed upon the significance of evolving joint military vision and preparing for the type of challenges the country may face in future wars, while emphasising on synergised, swift and proportionate response to provocations. Referring to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas conflicts and the current situation in Bangladesh, the Defence Minister exhorted the Commanders to analyse these episodes, predict the problems that the country may face in the future, and stay prepared to deal with the “unexpected”.

He emphasised on the need of a broader & deeper analysis by the top military leadership in view of the situation along the Northern border and the happenings in neighbouring countries, which are posing a challenge to peace & stability in the region.

AAP's Delhi MLA joins Congress

New Delhi: In a setback to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), former Delhi cabinet minister Rajendra Pal Gautam joined the Congress on Friday. Gautam, a prominent Dalit leader and MLA from Seemapuri, joined the Congress in the presence of party leaders KC Venugopal, Devender Yadav, and Pawan Khera. Gautam’s switch is also a significant gain for the Congress in Delhi, as the Grand Old Party looks to reclaim its lost voter base ahead of Assembly elections in the national capital next year. Rajendra Paul Gautam, a lawyer by profession joined AAP in 2014 and was elected as an MLA from the Seemapuri constituency in the 2020 Delhi Assembly polls. Gautam’s political career has been marked by his activism for Dalit rights. He was a key figure in the AAP government, holding various portfolios including Social Welfare, SC & ST, Water and Cooperative Societies.

BSF soldier injured after Pak violates ceasefire near LoC



Srinagar: A Border Security Force (BSF) personnel was injured on Wednesday after Pakistani forces violated the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) near Jammu. In response to the unprovoked firing by the Pakistani Rangers, the Indian troops retaliated.

The incident took place at about 02:35 am on Wednesday morning in the Akhnoor area. “At about 2.35 am, an incident of unprovoked firing in the Akhnoor area from across the border happened, and which was befittingly responded by the BSF. One BSF personnel sustained injuries in Pakistani firing,” newswire PTI quoted a BSF spokesperson as saying. The force further said that Indian troops along the International Border and the LoC have been put on high alert. The unprovoked ceasefire violation comes ahead of the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir. This year, J&K will vote in an assembly election for the first time in 10 years. The elections in J&K will take place in three phases -- first phase on September 18, second and third phases on September 25 and October 1, respectively. The counting of votes will be done and results shall be announced on October 8.

CM Kejriwal to be produced today in Delhi court

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who is behind bars in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam, will be produced on Wednesday before Delhi’s Rouse Avenue Court.

Taking cognizance of the charge sheet filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Special Judge Kaveri Baweja, last week, issued a production warrant for CM Kejriwal on September 11, apart from extending his judicial custody till the same date. Earlier, the CBI had filed its supplementary charge sheet before a court here against the Delhi CM and other accused persons in the excise policy case. The Supreme Court is yet to pronounce its verdict on CM Kejriwal’s plea challenging his arrest by CBI and seeking bail in the corruption case.

Uttarakhand govt allows employees to participate in RSS activities

Dehradun: The Uttarakhand government has said that participation of state employees in morning and evening meetings and other cultural and social activities of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) will not be considered a violation of Uttarakhand State Employees Conduct Rules-2002.

In this regard, Additional Chief Secretary Anand Vardhan has issued orders that state employees can participate in RSS programs provided this work does not cause any hindrance in their official duties and responsibilities. In a letter dated September 5 Additional Chief Secretary Anand Vardhan said, “After due deliberation by the Government, it has been decided that participation of any Government employee in Rashtriya Swayamse-



vak Sangh (RSS) branch (morning/evening meeting) and other cultural/social activities will not be considered as a violation of Uttarakhand State Employees Conduct Rules, 2002 (as amended from time to time). “Additional Chief Secretary further stated that such participation or contribution can be done only before and after Government office hours. “In this connection, I have been directed that a Government employee can participate or contribute in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) branch (morning/evening meeting)

and other cultural/social activities only on the condition that this work does not cause any hindrance in his official duties and responsibilities. Such participation or contribution can be done only before and after Government office hours,” he added. He further stated that in this regard, all the Government orders issued earlier shall be deemed to be superseded. Earlier an order reportedly issued by the Ministry of Personnel that permits government servants to part in the activities of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh had resulted in a war of words between the opposition and the BJP. Amit Malviya said that that the “unconstitutional order” issued 58 years ago imposing a ban on government employees from taking part in RSS activities.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO IMPLEMENT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS BY APRIL 15, 2025

Assam Cabinet Approves Key Measures For Indigenous Rights Under Clause 6

Guwahati: The Assam government has decided to implement 57 of the 67 recommendations of a committee formed by the Ministry of Home Affairs for the implementation of Clause 6 of the historic Assam Accord.

The decision was made at a meeting of the state cabinet held in Lakhimpur on Wednesday evening.

The Assam Accord's Clause 6 says, "Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people." The accord, signed between the central government and the All Assam Students' Union



(AASU) in 1985 at the end of the bloody six-year-long anti-immigrants' agitation, says the illegal immigrants, who entered Assam after March 24, 1971, are to be detected and deported.

Himanta said the Biplab Sarma-led committee was formed to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord. He said the committee gave the government

three years to examine its recommendations. "There are altogether 67 recommendations. We approved 57 of them for implementation. Following consultations with AASU and other organisations, the cabinet prepared a roadmap for the implementation of the 57 recommendations by April 15, 2025. We will make public these 57 recommen-

ations in the next four to five days," the Assam CM said. "The remaining 10 recommendations are to be dealt with at the level of Government of India. We will take up those with the Government of India in a phase-wise manner," he added. The committee prepared its recommendations after a series of meetings with various organisations.

The decision of the cabinet comes amid demands by some organisations, especially in upper Assam, for the protection of the rights of indigenous people. The demands were raised in the backdrop of the rape of a minor Assamese girl by three persons, all of them Bengali Muslims, in central Assam's Nagaon district recently.

CM Pema Khandu Meets Dalai Lama In Mcleodganj



Itanagar: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu met with the Dalai Lama on Friday, joining special prayers for the spiritual leader's long life. The Dalai Lama is expected to join the prayers on Saturday.

CM Khandu reported an improvement in the Dalai Lama's health and extended an invitation for him to visit Arunachal Pradesh, which was accepted. Meanwhile, MP Tapir Gao urged the 17th Karmapa, Urgyen Trinley Dorjee, to return to India and oversee his institution for the well-being of Buddhism and Tibetans. The Karmapa left India in 2017 and

has since taken Dominican Republic citizenship.

MP Gao, CM Khandu, and other leaders visited the Gyuto Tantrik Monastery in Dharamshala, expressing a strong desire for the Karmapa's return. The 17th Karmapa met the Dalai Lama in Zurich, Switzerland, on August 25, marking their first meeting since the Karmapa left India.

MP Gao emphasized the importance of the Karmapa's return, stating, "He should return to India, to Dharamshala, and look after this institution for the well-being of Buddhism and Tibetans in India, and spread a message of peace and tranquility worldwide."

Police apprehend suspect in Arunachal child sexual assault case



Itanagar: A collaborative effort between police forces across state and district lines led to the arrest of a suspect in a disturbing child sexual assault case in Arunachal Pradesh. The Itanagar Women Police Station (WPS) spearheaded the investigation, which began on September 3, after receiving a complaint about the assault of a 10-year-old girl.

The incident, which occurred on August 31, came to light when the victim's mother noticed her daughter's discomfort and sought medical attention. A subsequent examination confirmed the sexual assault. The young girl had reportedly been lured by an unknown man offering chips.

Upon receiving the complaint, a case was registered under ITA WPS Case No. 45/2024 under Section 65(2) of the Bharatiya

Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023, read with Section 4 of the POCSO Act. Inspector Nich Rupa led the investigation, with a special team formed under the supervision of the SP Capital. The team's thorough work, including witness interviews and analysis of CCTV footage, quickly identified the suspect as a labourer from Naharlagun who had fled the area.

The hunt for the accused spanned multiple locations. An initial raid in Lakhimpur on September 5 proved unsuccessful, but further intelligence led the team to Yomcha in West Siang district. There, with crucial assistance from the West Siang Police, the suspect was finally apprehended. The SP Capital praised the dedication of all officers involved, emphasising the police force's commitment to protecting vulnerable citizens, especially children.

Fresh bomb attack in Bishnupur district by suspected militants

Imphal: Suspected militants launched a fresh bomb attack in Manipur's Bishnupur district on Friday morning damaging at least two structures, police said.

Rockets were fired from elevated positions in the nearby hill areas of Churachandpur district toward the low-lying residential locality of Tronglaobi, located around 45km from state capital Imphal. The range of the rockets was estimated to be over 3km, police said.

Fortunately, there were no injuries reported from the attack. However, a local community hall and an empty room were damaged because of the bombing, police added. In addition, the suspected militants also fired several rounds towards Bishnupur district, prompting security forces to retaliate.

On Thursday night, Kumbi village, located a few kilometers from Tronglaobi, experienced heightened tension after multiple drones were spotted hovering less than 100 metres above the ground, eyewitnesses said.

Nagaland schools get new working day rule in line with NCFSE 2023

Kohima: The Department of School Education, Nagaland has issued new regulations for working days in all schools, both Government and Private, in consultation with all stakeholders and in consonance with the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023.

As per the new guidelines, all Saturdays shall be observed as holidays for the Foundational Stage (Classes A & B, Classes 1 & 2) and the Preparatory Stage (Classes 3 to 5). For the Middle Stage (Classes 6 to 8) and Secondary/Higher Secondary Stage (Classes 9 to 12), the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month shall be observed as holidays.

Assessments, examinations, 10 bagless days, and other non-academic activities or sports events may be held on Saturdays, depending on the context of the school. This notification has been issued with the approval of the competent authority and comes into force with immediate effect.

Centre Deploys 2,000 CRPF Personnel As Violence Escalates



Imphal: The Ministry of Home Affairs has deployed two battalions of CRPF (around 2,000 personnel) to Manipur to address the escalating violence and student protests. The CRPF personnel will be deployed in tribal-dominated areas, including Churachandpur and Kangpokpi districts. Manipur already has over 60,000 personnel from the Army, Assam Rifles, and Central Armed Police Forces. The deployment comes amid protests over the removal of two Assam Rifles battalions from Kangpokpi and Churachandpur. The Manipur

Police has handed over the investigation into drone bombings to central agencies and appealed to students to protest peacefully. Mobile internet services have been suspended in five districts, and educational institutions have been closed until September 12. Defying curfew, students staged protests in Imphal, leading to clashes with security forces. The Governor met with student representatives and assured them of taking steps to address their demands, including restoring peace and protecting Manipur's territorial integrity.

TCS celebrates silver jubilee of Rural IT Quiz, ignites tech passion in India's heartlands

Bangalore: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is commemorating the 25th edition of its pioneering TCS Rural IT Quiz, in partnership with the Department of Electronics, IT, BT, and Science and Technology, Government of Karnataka. As a highlight of the Bengaluru Tech Summit 2024, this iconic quiz continues to make waves, celebrated for its role in elevating IT education among rural students. Recognized by the Limca Book of Records, it stands as the first



IT quiz designed specifically for India's rural areas.

This year's quiz invites students from Classes 8 to 12 in smaller towns and

districts, excluding city corporation areas, to test their knowledge through online and physical rounds. Topics will span AI, cloud comput-

ing, and the transformative effects of IT on sectors such as banking and education.

The quiz represents a golden opportunity for students in the northeastern region to delve into the world of technology. With the region's growing focus on tech education, this initiative is expected to spark enthusiasm and offer valuable exposure, potentially shaping future tech leaders. Students can register before October 1, 2024, at TCS Rural IT Quiz Registration.

Vi raises security standards with PCI DSS 4.0 certification

Bangalore: Leading telecom operator Vi has announced a significant achievement by attaining the Payment Card Industry-Data Security Standard version 4.0 (PCI DSS 4.0) certification for its retail stores & payment channels. This positions Vi as the first telecom operator in India to secure this prestigious certification, further highlighting its commitment to safeguard customer payment information through adherence to the highest global security standards. PCI DSS 4.0, established by the Payment Card Industry Security Standards Council (PCI SSC), represents the most rigorous and up-to-date security protocols designed to protect organisations handling credit and debit card transactions from data breaches and fraud.

Jagbir Singh, CTO, Vi, said, "At Vi, the security of our customers' data is not

just a priority, it is our commitment. Achieving PCI DSS 4.0 demonstrates our commitment to having the best security measures in place."

Vi's commitment to data security is further underlined by its earlier distinction this year, as the first telecom operator in India to achieve SOC2 Type II attestation. With the addition of the PCI DSS 4.0 certification, Vi continues to solidify its leadership in the telecom industry, consistently focusing on protecting its customers' data and setting new standards for best security practices in the industry. Jagbir Singh, CTO of Vi, commented, "Securing PCI DSS 4.0 certification underscores our dedication to maintaining the highest security standards. We are pleased to lead the telecom industry in this crucial area and continue our commitment to customer data protection."

Israel seeks to recruit 10,000 Indian construction workers and 5,000 caregivers



Guwahati: To address its skill shortages in construction and healthcare, Israel has requested India to conduct a new recruitment drive for 10,000 construction workers and 5,000 caregivers. This marks a continuation of a previous recruitment initiative earlier this year. The Population, Immigration, and Border Authority (PIBA) has outlined specific requirements for the construction roles, including Framework, Iron Bending, Plastering, and Ceramic Tiling. A PIBA team will visit India next week to administer skill tests and select candidates who meet their standards. The recruitment drive for construction workers will be conducted in Maharashtra.

Additionally, Israel is seeking 5,000 caregivers to enhance its healthcare services. Candidates must have completed at least the 10th standard and possess a caregiving certificate from a recognized Indian institute, including 990 hours of on-the-job training. In the previous round, 16,832 candidates underwent skill tests, with 10,349 being

selected. These workers will receive a salary of Rs 1.92 lakh per month, along with medical insurance, food, accommodation, and a monthly bonus of Rs 16,515. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), following a government-to-government agreement signed in November 2023, has reached out to various states to facilitate this recruitment. The first phase of this initiative was executed in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Telangana. This initiative aligns with India's goal of becoming a global skill hub, with NSDC spearheading training and capacity-building efforts in collaboration with international partners.

The recruitment drive is expected to have a positive impact on the Guwahati market, as local training institutions and job placement agencies gear up to meet the increased demand for skilled candidates. This influx of opportunities will provide a boost to the local economy and enhance skill development programs in the region.

Nissan launches extensive support for flood-affected vehicle owners across India

Gurugram: In response to the severe flooding impacting various regions of India, Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) has rolled out a comprehensive support initiative for owners of flood-affected vehicles. The automaker has set up a dedicated helpdesk to assist customers, offering free Roadside Assistance (RSA) services, including vehicle towing to authorized Nissan service workshops. Additionally, Nissan is waiving insurance claim process fees of up to INR 1000 for affected vehicles. These support measures will be in effect until 30th September 2024.

Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director of Nissan Motor India, stated, "We recognize the difficulties our customers face due to the ongoing floods. Our top priority is their safety and satisfaction. By extending our support until the end of September, we aim to provide essential relief and expedite vehicle repairs." The flood crisis has heightened demand for vehicle repair services, and Nissan's assistance is seen as a crucial support for local residents. The special offers, including 10% discounts on engine oil and floor carpet replacements, along with free vehicle health check-ups, are expected to provide significant relief to the community.

Data-based credit need RBI's push to grow

Mumbai: There is a general concern across the board in the Indian lending industry about an uptick in bad debts in the unsecured loan books of bank and non-bank lenders. Numbers indeed reflect this situation. Retail unsecured credit on Indian banks books surpassed 12 percent of total bank credit in FY24 versus 10 percent in FY21.

The regulator has proactively issued an alarm and weighed in on the industry to contain growth and prioritize credit quality. Much of the industry has acknowledged the issue, appreciated the regulator, and firms have been recalibrating business plans. The response of the industry and the regulator and the nature of discourse around the problem is leaving a huge opportunity to move Indian banking to next

level. We need to leverage this adversity to demand next phase of innovation in India's credit practices. Let's start with appreciating the unique demands of credit for India development journey ahead. Unsecured credit is here to stay in India. The huge credit hungry unorganized small business in India, which takes unsecured personal loans for business purposes, simply does not have enough clean assets to offer a security to lenders. There is thus a natural limit to how much secured lending lender can do. If we want credit to reach where it is sorely needed, we need alternate mechanisms to control risks in unsecured credit. The real strategic need for India is to make unsecured credit to small business safer with technology and data.

LEAD Group launches TECHBOOK: A game-changer for education in India

Guwahati: LEAD Group, the leading School Edtech company in India, has introduced TECHBOOK, a revolutionary educational tool set to transform classroom learning. Designed to replace traditional textbooks, TECHBOOK integrates Augmented Reality (AR), personalized reading assistance, and interactive exercises to offer a cutting-edge, personalized learning experience.



The TECHBOOK features Augmented Reality Instructor (ARI) to bring subjects like Science and Mathematics to life in 3D, Independent Reading Assistant (IRA) to enhance language skills with real-time feedback, and Personalized Interactive Exercises (PIE) for adaptive learning at each student's pace. LEAD Group aims to have this innovative tool adopted by India's top 5,000 schools

by 2028. In Guwahati, TECHBOOK is poised to revolutionize educational practices. With its advanced features, it promises to elevate the learning standards in local schools, setting new benchmarks for interactive and personalized education in Assam. The introduction of TECHBOOK could position Guwahati as a leader in adopting high-tech educational solutions.

LEAD Group's co-founder and CEO, Sumeet Mehta, emphasized the importance of this shift, stating, "TECHBOOK is not just a product but a significant leap towards modernizing education with AI and AR." The company plans to pilot TECHBOOK in 400 top schools before a broader rollout, with a goal to impact over 60,000 schools across India by 2028.

Cristiano Ronaldo's 900th goal helps Portugal to 2-1 win over Croatia

Croatia: Cristiano Ronaldo's 900th career goal helped Portugal to a 2-1 win over Croatia in their first Nations League game on Thursday as Diogo Dalot opened the scoring for the hosts and netted an own goal. Dalot put Portugal ahead in the seventh minute when Bruno Fernandes played a clever chipped pass into his path and the defender went past Borna Sosa before firing his shot through the legs of the keeper. Ronaldo, who failed to score in Portugal's five Euro 2024 games, reached his milestone when he got on the end of a perfect cross from Nuno Mendes and the unmarked 39-year-old tapped in from close range to double the lead in the 34th



minute. Croatia pulled one back four minutes from the break when Dalot deflected a sliding effort from Sosa into his own net but a scoreless second half gave Portugal a winning

start to their campaign. In Thursday's other League A Group 1 game, Poland beat Scotland 3-2. Portugal host Scotland and Croatia entertain Poland on Sunday.

Praveen Kumar wins India's record-breaking sixth gold at Paris Paralympics



Paris: India's Praveen Kumar won the gold medal in the men's high jump T64 event at the 2024 Paris Paralympics, clearing 2.08 meters to claim his second consecutive Paralympic medal. Praveen had previously secured silver at the 2021 Tokyo Paralympics with a personal best of 2.07 meters, marking a remarkable continuation of his success on the international stage.

The 21-year-old athlete from Noida, Uttar Pradesh, became only the second Indian, after Mariyappan Thangavelu, to win gold in Paralympic high jump competitions. The 21-year-old athlete from Noida, born with a shorter leg, delivered a season-best jump of 2.08m in a six-competitor field to secure the top spot on the podium. USA's Derek Loccident took sil-

ver with the best jump of 2.06m, while Uzbekistan's Temurbek Giyazov, achieving a personal best of 2.03m, finished third. Praveen competes under the T44 classification, designated for athletes with lower leg movement affected to a low or moderate degree, whereas the T64 category is for athletes with moderate movement impairment in one lower leg or those missing one or both legs below the knee. With this achievement, Praveen became the third Indian high jumper to medal in Paris, following Sharad Kumar, who took silver, and Mariyappan Thangavelu, who earned bronze in the men's high jump T63 event. India's tally at the Paris Paralympics now stands at 26 medals: six gold, nine silver, and 11 bronze.

Time for KL Rahul to repay selectors

Chennai: KL Rahul's first-class career has seen him craft several memorable innings on challenging tracks, including the likes of Lord's and The Oval in London, and Centurion in South Africa. However, despite these impressive performances overseas, his spot in India's Test side has often come under scrutiny due to periodic inconsistencies in domestic conditions. Rahul's last century in India came during the 2016 series against England, where he scored a brilliant 199 in Chennai. His form continued into early 2017 when he notched six fifties in seven innings during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, signaling his readiness for bigger challenges as a Test opener. Yet, since then, Rahul has appeared in just seven Test innings on home soil, a puzzling statistic for a player of his talent and experience. As India prepares for the upcoming Test season, starting with a two-match series against Bangladesh on September 19 in Chennai, all eyes will be on KL Rahul.

Neeraj Chopra qualifies for Diamond League season finale in Brussels

Brussels: India's two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra has qualified for this month's season finale of the prestigious Diamond League after finishing fourth in the overall standings at the end of its 14 series meetings across the world. The season finale will be a two-day affair on September 13 and 14 in Brussels. Chopra accumulated 14 points from his two second-place finishes in the one-day meets held in Doha and Lausanne. He skipped the last series meet in Zurich on Thursday. The 26-year-old is two points adrift of Czechia's Jakub Vadlech. Grenada's Anderson Peters and German star Julian Weber occupy the top two spots with 29 and 21 points respectively. Peters had pipped Weber in the Zurich meet.

Chopra, who won gold in the Tokyo Olympics in 2021 and added a silver to



his kitty in the Paris edition last month, has been struggling with his fitness this season. The Haryana-lad has talked about a groin injury troubling him since before the Olympic Games that has come in the way of his quest to hit the 90m mark.

The Indian finished second in the Lausanne Diamond Leg, bested by Peters, who threw 90.61m. In Paris Olympics, Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem had taken the gold with a monster throw of 92.97m. "First goal, go to the doctor and

make my groin 100 per cent fit and also I will be technically better and try to throw far again," he had said last month about his plans for this year and the coming one. Chopra had won the Lausanne leg in 2022 and 2023 and finished second behind Vadlech in the winner-takes-all finale in Eugene, USA, last year. Each Diamond League season finale champion is awarded a prestigious "Diamond Trophy", USD 30,000 prize money and a wild card for the World Athletics Championships.

Afghanistan's shocking U-turn on BCCI after 'huge mess' and 'rejection' allegations

Noida: After hard-hitting statements from an anonymous Afghanistan Cricket Board official slamming the conditions at the Greater Noida Stadium and accusing the BCCI of rejecting the ACB's request for alternate venues were widely reported by multiple Indian media outlets, Afghanistan are trading on tricky waters. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has offered Afghanistan venues to train and host matches outside their troubled nation, including in the northern Indian cities of Lucknow and Dehradun. Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) officials have been cautious about criticism, fearing it could spoil relations with the BCCI, but said they were disappointed.

"You won't believe me but the stadia in Afghanistan have better facilities than this one. We have improved our infrastructure in the past few years. Our first choice was the Lucknow stadium and the second was Dehradun. Our requests were rejected by the BCCI and we were told that both the states are hosting their respective T20 leagues. This was the only ground available and we had no other choice left," an ACB official was quoted as saying. But after the second day's play was scrapped, Afghanistan officials spoke officially to reporters. "Everyone, including the ground authorities, have worked hard," Menhajuddin Naz, the ACB international cricket manager, told reporters. "Even if it had been any other venue, they would have struggled to get it back on time."

"We chose Greater Noida over Kanpur and Bengaluru"

Naz said they had been offered to host the Test in the northern city of Kanpur or the southern city of Bengaluru but had opted for Greater Noida. "We chose Greater Noida as it was most convenient in terms of logistics. It was closer to Delhi and also connectivity from Kabul was better," said Naz.

Efforts to dry the pitch at the Greater Noida ground for the Afghanistan-New Zealand one-off Test, were unsuccessful, leading to a second consecutive day of play being called off. Ground staff used electric fans to dry the wet patches, covered areas of the pitch, and even dug up and refilled a wet outfield area with dry soil and fresh turf. Despite these efforts, umpires deemed the conditions unplayable, leading one official to describe the situation as "a huge mess". The venue, hosting its first Test, has faced criticism for its basic drainage system and inadequate facilities. Persistent rain from the monsoon season has left the outfield soaked, despite sunshine on Monday and Tuesday. New Zealand, who were unable to train ahead of the Test, set up nets on the ground and conducted drills, while Afghanistan has previously hosted several international matches at this venue since 2017.

There has been no public reaction from Tim Southee's New Zealand, who will next travel to Sri Lanka for two Tests before returning for three more against India.