

THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI MONDAY 10 JUNE 2024



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Sania Mirza embarks on 'sacred journey of Hajj' to seek 'spiritual renewal'



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WINDOWS



A damaged bus after it plunged into a gorge following an alleged attack by terrorists in J&K's Reasi district on Sunday.

9 killed as bus falls into gorge in J&K amidst terror attack

YUSUF JAMEEL SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

At least nine pilgrims were killed and 33 injured as the bus they were travelling in fell into a deep gorge reportedly after being fired upon by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Sunday evening. A report put the death toll at ten. However, in a post on 'X', the media centre of the Jammu police said, "8 deaths confirmed, 33 injured sent to hospitals. A joint security operation is ongoing." The incident happened at around 6:10 pm when the bus carrying pilgrims on their way to the Shiv Khori temple, the base camp of the Mata Vaisno Devi shrine, came under terror attack in Teryath village in Poni area. Reasi's SSP Mohita said apparently the 53-seater bus, en route from Shiv Khori temple to Katra, veered off the road following the gunfire and fell into a deep gorge. Initial reports suggest that militants had laid an ambush in the area and they opened fire on the bus which had just left Shiv Khori and was on its way to Katra. Full report on Page 4

Benny Gantz quits Israel War Cabinet

Jerusalem: Israeli war Cabinet minister Benny Gantz said Sunday his party was quitting the government after threatening last month to leave over the lack of post-war strategy for the Gaza Strip. "Netanyahu is preventing us from progressing to a real victory. That is why we are leaving the emergency government today," Mr Gantz said. — AFP

COUNTERPOINT



He hugged you, kissed you... that was during elections!

WEATHER

Max: 44°C
Min: 30°C
RH: 15%
Rain: 0%
Forecast: Sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Krodhi: Uttarayana
Tithi: Jyestha Shukla Chaviti till 4.19 pm
Star: Pushyami till 9.43 pm
Varjyam: Shesha Varjyam till 6.31 am
Durmuhurtam: 12.42 pm to 1.34 pm; 3.18 pm to 4.10 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
SUNSET TODAY 7.19 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.23 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 9.39 AM
MOONSET TODAY 10.53 PM

■ BJP to retain key portfolios; keeps 25 of 30 Cabinet berths ■ J.P. Nadda rejoins govt, hunt for new BJP president to start at Centre; Smriti, Rajeev axed ■ Shivraj Chouhan makes debut

New coalition govt era begins: Modi begins 3rd term with 72 ministers, 11 from allies

YOJNA GUSAI NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

It was history in the making as Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi took the oath of office for the third consecutive time. Mr Modi thus equals the record of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister.

Despite widespread speculation, the BJP asserted its influence by keeping 25 of the 30 Cabinet berths, while each of its allies received one. Dressed in a white kurta pyjama and a blue jacket, Mr Modi was greeted with cheers and thunderous applause as he reached the venue, Rashtrapati Bhavan, where the ministers-designate were waiting.

A minor quake hit the NDA as the Ajit Pawar-led NCP rejected the offer of a minister of state (independent charge) portfolio. The NCP has so far remained firm on a Cabinet berth. Former Union minister Praful Patel, who was offered the MoS berth, turned it down saying "I was a Cabinet minister and accepting a MoS post will be a demotion for me".

The BJP heavyweights who made a comeback in the Modi 3.0 Cabinet included Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, S. Jaishankar, Nirmala Sitharaman, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Dharmendra Pradhan and Hardeep Singh Puri, among others. Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who was kept away from the post of Madhya Pradesh chief minister despite leading the party to a resounding victory in the Assembly polls, joined the Modi Cabinet, making his debut at the Centre. BJP president J.P. Nadda, who was in charge of the health ministry in Mr Modi's 2014 Cabinet, returned as a Cabinet minister. Mr Nadda's return to the Modi government is all set to trigger a race for the next president of the BJP in the party. Among the new faces from the BJP in Mr Modi's team are C.R. Patil, Malayalam actor-

turned-politician Suresh Gopi, former Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar, Kiritivardhan Singh and Bandi Sanjay Kumar

turned-politician Suresh Gopi, former Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar, Kiritivardhan Singh and Bandi Sanjay Kumar. Among ministers from the allies who were sworn in are LJP's Chirag Paswan, HAM leader Jiten Ram Majhi, RLD's Jayant Chaudhary, JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy, JD(U)'s, Rajeev Ranjan Singh (Lallan Singh) and Ramnath Thakur and the TDP's Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu and Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani, AJSU's Chandra Sekhar Choudhary. Altogether 30 Cabinet ministers and 41 ministers of state (including five MoS with independent charge) took the oath on Sunday evening.

The sitting Union ministers who faced the axe included former I&B minister Anurag Thakur, Smriti Irani, Sanjeev Balyan, Arjun Munda, Narayan Rane and Rajeev Chandrasekhar. While Mr Thakur won for the fifth consecutive time from Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur, Ms Irani lost to the Congress' K.L. Sharma by a margin of over 1.5 lakhs from Amethi Lok Sabha constituency. Mr Balyan, Mr Munda and Mr Chandrasekhar had also lost the polls. However, Mr Rane won his Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg seat.

All eyes will be on the portfolios, which are expected to be allotted late on Sunday night or early on Monday. Mr Rajnath Singh is likely to retain defence, Mr Amit Shah is likely to continue as home minister. Nirmala Sitharaman and S. Jaishankar are likely to continue at finance and external affairs respectively. Sources said

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President Droupadi Murmu administers the oath of office to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday evening. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY



TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu (left) and Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar arrive for the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. — PTI

NCP's Praful says 'no' to MoS

SANJAY BASAK NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

A slight tremor hit the BJP-led NDA on the day of the swearing-in, with the Nationalist Congress Party led by Mr Ajit Pawar rejecting the post of minister of state offered to it. Mr Praful Patel, who was expecting a Cabinet berth, told the media that

he could not accept the MoS berth as it would be a "demotion" for him. NCP leader Ajit Pawar also echoed the same sentiment, saying the "MoS berth offered to us was not acceptable and we have rejected it". Mr Pawar and Mr Patel preferred to "wait" for a Cabinet berth. The NCP appears to be

the first NDA ally to not get a Cabinet minister post. Despite the snub, however, both Mr Pawar and Mr Patel said that the rejection of the MoS berth "does not indicate any bad feelings". Following the rumblings, sources revealed that the BJP leadership has indicated that

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Thakur, Rane, Rupala among 37 ministers to be dropped

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

As many as 37 ministers have been dropped from the government in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third term, including seven with Cabinet rank — prominent among them being Smriti Irani, Anurag Thakur and Narayan Rane. Parshottam Rupala, Arjun Munda, R.K. Singh and Mahendra Natha Pandey, also held Cabinet positions in the second Modi government but were not retained in the 72-member council of ministers that took oath on Sunday.

While all three ministers with independent charge have been retained, out of 42 ministers of state, 30 have been dropped. Those who have not been repeated include V.K. Singh, Faggansingh Kulaste, Ashwini Choubey, Danve Raosaheb Dadarao, Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti, Sanjeev Balyan, Rajeev Chandra Sekhar, Subhas Sarkar, Nisith Pramanik, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh and Pratima Bhoumik.

Meenakshi Lekhi, Munjapara Mahendrabhai, Ajay Kumar Mishra, Kailash Choudhary, Kapil Moreswar Patil, Bharati Pravin Pawar, Kaushal Kishore, Bhagwanth Khubha and V. Muraliedharan have also not been retained.

More on Page 5

Film stars, tycoons, celebs at Rashtrapati Bhavan

RAKESH K. SINGH NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Film stars Shah Rukh Khan, Rajinikanth, Akshay Kumar and Kangana Ranaut, the BJP MP-elect from Mandi constituency in Himachal Pradesh, along with business magnates Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani and high-profile seers, were part of the galaxy of celebrities who attended the swearing-in ceremony of Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Other celebrities from the tinsel world who attended the mega event were actors Anil Kapoor, Anupam Kher, Raveena Tandon, Vikrant Massey, director Rajkumar Hirani and producer Mahaveer Jain. While Mr Khan, dressed in a black bandhgala, was accompanied by his manager Pooja Dadlani, Mr Rajinikanth, who donned a white kurta, took part in the event with producer-wife Latha Rajinikanth. Ms Ranaut, who was draped in an off-white saree and pearl and emerald necklace and earrings, shared a series of videos of her getting ready for the ceremony on her Instagram stories. Mr Rajinikanth, who flew in from Chennai for the function, had earlier told reporters that it was a "historic event". "I congratulate Modi Ji for becoming Prime Minister for the third consecutive time," he added. Hours before the ceremony, Mr Kher said it will be his third opportunity to attend the swearing-in ceremony. "This is indeed special. But the bigger and more special thing is that #SameToSame is that Prime Minister all three times. The dialogue this evening will also be the same!!! I am Narendra Damodardas Modi... Jai Ho! Jai Hind! #PrimeMinister @narendramodi," the actor posted alongside the photo of the invitation letter on X. Turn to Page 4

While Mr Khan, dressed in a black bandhgala, was accompanied by his manager Pooja Dadlani, Mr Rajinikanth, who donned a white kurta, took part in the event with producer-wife Latha Rajinikanth. Ms Ranaut, who was draped in an off-white saree and pearl and emerald necklace and earrings, shared a series of videos of her getting ready for the ceremony on her Instagram stories.

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Iran okays 6 candidates for June 28 Prez polls, but blocks Ahmadinejad

Dubai, June 9: Iran's Guardian Council on Sunday approved the country's hard-line Parliament Speaker and five others to run in the country's June 28 presidential election following a helicopter crash that killed President Ebrahim Raisi and seven others. The council's decision represents the starting gun for a shortened, two-week campaign to replace Raisi, a hard-line protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

once floated as a possible successor for the 85-year-old cleric. The Guardian Council also continued its streak of not accepting a woman or anyone calling for radical change to the country's governance. The campaign likely will include live, televised debates by the candidates on Iran's state-run broadcaster. They also advertise on hoardings and offer stump speeches to back their bids. — AP

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A galaxy of foreign dignitaries, including the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and Nepal, and the Presidents of Sri Lanka and the Maldives, at Rashtrapati Bhavan during the oath-taking ceremony of the Narendra Modi government for its third term in New Delhi on Sunday evening. President Murmu hosted a banquet in honour of the visiting dignitaries Sunday night. — PTI

MODI 3.0

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Cabinet

- ▶ Rajnath Singh
- ▶ Amit Shah
- ▶ Nitin Gadkari
- ▶ J.P. Nadda
- ▶ Shivraj Singh Chouhan
- ▶ Nirmala Sitharaman
- ▶ S. Jaishankar
- ▶ Manohar Lal Khattar
- ▶ Haradanahalli D. Kumaraswamy (JD-S)
- ▶ Piyush Goyal
- ▶ Dharmendra Pradhan
- ▶ Jitan Ram Manjhi (HAM)
- ▶ R.R. Singh 'Lalan' (JD-U)
- ▶ Sarbanand Sonowal
- ▶ Virendra Kumar
- ▶ Ram Mohan Naidu (TDP)
- ▶ Pralhad Joshi
- ▶ Jial Oram
- ▶ Giriraj Singh
- ▶ Ashwini Vaishnav
- ▶ Jyotiraditya Scindia
- ▶ Bhupender Yadav
- ▶ Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
- ▶ Annapurna Devi
- ▶ Kiren Rijiju
- ▶ Hardeep Singh Puri
- ▶ Mansukh Mandaviya
- ▶ G. Kishan Reddy
- ▶ Chirag Paswan (LJP-RV)
- ▶ C.R. Paatil

MoS (Ind Charge)

- ▶ Rao Inderjit Singh
- ▶ Jitendra Singh
- ▶ Arjun Ram Meghwal
- ▶ Prataprao Jadhav (Shiv Sena)
- ▶ Jayant Chaudhary (RLD)

More ministers: Page 5

PMs, Presidents of 7 countries in Delhi, attend Modi oath-taking

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Leaders of seven countries that are part of India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region attended the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the council of ministers on Sunday evening. Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of Maldives Mohamed Muizzu, vice-president of Seychelles Ahmed Afif, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, PM of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Nepal PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" and PM Bhutan Tshering Tobgay attended the event. The visiting foreign leaders also attended a banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Turn to Page 5

SHORT TAKES

Fitness festival held at Pragati Maidan

New Delhi: The international health, sports, and fitness festival (IHFF), kick started in the national capital's Pragati Maidan. The festival expected to attract a large audience of around 1.5 lakh spectators across all three days and witnessing the participation of over 500 athletes, including 200 international athletes. One of the organisers said, "The show is a milestone event for Indian bodybuilding and the only road in India to the world's most prestigious bodybuilding championship - Mr Olympia, USA, offering a life-changing opportunity to Indian bodybuilding athletes. Past champions like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Phil Heath cemented their legendary status on this very stage. A win here unlocks sponsorships, lucrative prize money, and international recognition for these dedicated athletes. We aim to propel bodybuilding - a rapidly growing sport - to the forefront alongside cricket and football by 2050."

Delhi max temp at 42.5°C, AQI is 181

New Delhi: The national capital on Sunday recorded a maximum temperature of 42.5°C, 2.5 notches above the season's average, according to the India meteorological department. The humidity at 5.30 am was at 16 per cent. The Air Quality Index (AQI) of the national capital was recorded in the "moderate" category with a reading of 181 at 6 pm, according to the central pollution control board. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

Fire breaks out in game arcade at CP

New Delhi: A fire broke out at a theme-based adventure games area in the Connaught Place here, officials of the Delhi fire services said. "We rushed five fire tenders to the spot. So far, no injuries were reported," DFS chief Atul Garg said. He said that a call was received at 3.22 pm from a game arcade Mystry Rooms located in Block M, in the outer circle area of Connaught Place reporting that a fire had broken out in the games area. "Fire is under control," he said adding that operations are underway. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, he added.

10 VANDE BHARAT DRIVERS ATTEND PM SWEARING-IN

New Delhi: A loco pilots' union hailed the decision to honour 10 Vande Bharat drivers by inviting them to the swearing-in ceremony of the third Modi government on Sunday, while also reiterating its long-pending demand to improve drivers' working conditions. After the Railway Board selected the Vande Bharat loco pilots - four women and six men - from 10 railway zones to attend the oath-taking ceremony, the union expressed satisfaction for making them a part of the historic event. The women drivers who attended the event are Surekha Yadav, India's first female train driver from the Central Railway; Preeti Sahu from the West Central Railway; Srinivastava for the Northeastern Railway and Aishwarya Menon from the Southern Railway. The six others are ASP Tirkey (Southeastern Railway), Sneha Singh Baghel (Southeast Central Railway), N Prakash (South Central Railway), Lalith Kumar (Southwestern Railway), Surendra Pal Singh (Northern Railway) and Satya Raj Mandal (Northeast Frontier Railway). "We welcome the decision of the government but these symbolic measures don't bring real relief to the frontline workers. Loco pilots, especially the female ones, have pathetic working conditions and all our demands have fallen on deaf ears of the government as of now," M. Thirumurugan, secretary general of the Indian Railway Loco Runningmen Organisation (IRLRO), said. The Indian Railway has more than 1.27 lakh loco pilots.

NETA'S NATTER

IN THE NEWS FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS

Kedarnath Dham has been in the news lately for all the wrong reasons. First, locals raised their voices against the "commercialisation" of the holy place. Then, the pujaris objected to the Badri-Kedar temple committee's failure to "save" Kedarnath from becoming a favourite of "reel makers." And now, the locals and environmentalists are protesting against the state government's decision to deploy SUVs to ferry handicapped and elderly people to temples from the base camp and its "misuse" as well.



Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's office was flooded with

complaints over the deployment and misuse of the vehicles. Now, the state government has set up an inquiry to probe into the SUVs being used to "ferry VIPs."

ALLIANCE WAS 'NEVER GENUINE': AAP TO FIGHT CONGRESS FOR DELHI

The AAP's recent announcement that the party will go solo in next year's Assembly polls may have come as news to the general public, but not to the party workers, as right from the beginning the alliance with the Congress in Delhi was anything but natural. After the party recently said that the alliance with the Congress was only for the Lok Sabha elections and clarified that it will contest the next year's Delhi Assembly polls alone, a party leader said that "all this is mere formality as there has never been a genuine alliance with the Congress on the ground".

1st-time MP Malhotra sworn in as MoS

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Often considered as calm and composed man with organisational prowess, first time parliamentarian Harsh Malhotra from East Delhi was inducted in the Narendra Modi 3.0 government on Sunday. He has emerged as the BJP's strong Punjabi face in Delhi. The 58-year-old is the lone Delhi MP to be inducted in the BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) council of ministers under PM Modi. He was sworn-in as a minister of state (MoS). The former mayor from East MCD, Mr Malhotra was chosen to be fielded from the BJP stronghold of East Delhi parliamentary constituency, claimed 52.33 per cent of the votes defeating the INDIA bloc's candidate, AAP's Kondli

MLA Kuldeep Kumar. He polled 6,64,819 votes against Mr Kumar's 5,71,156 votes, for a victory margin of 93,663 votes. However, his victory margin of 6.85 per cent votes is the lowest in terms of vote share among the seven BJP MP elects from Delhi.



Harsh Malhotra

Mr Malhotra was earlier serving his second consecutive term as the Delhi BJP general secretary when he was chosen to replace former India cricketer Gautam Gambhir from the constituency. He is regarded as a loyal "organisational man". Mr Malhotra is a graduate in botany from Hansraj college and later went on to pursue law from Delhi University's faculty of law and has climbed up the organisational ranks of the party over several decades. He is a former district president from

stipulation. Apart from his political commitments, Mr Malhotra is also the president of Dadhichi Deh Dan Samiti, a non-government organisation (NGO) dedicated to the cause of spreading awareness on organ donation. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva welcomed the inclusion of Mr Malhotra in the Union Cabinet and calls it a honour for grass root workers. Mr Sachdeva said, "Mr Malhotra has been my long time colleague who has worked to strengthen party organisation in Delhi in all through his over 3 decades long political career." Recalling Mr Malhotra's tenure as mayor of East Delhi Municipal Corporation, the Delhi BJP chief said that his work to get development projects started showed his administrative skills.

Bharti refuses to shave head, says Modi win not absolute

New Delhi, June 9: Aam Aadmi Party leader Somnath Bharti, who had earlier vowed to shave his head if Narendra Modi becomes Prime Minister



again, on Sunday refused to make good on his promise. Mr Bharti said Mr Modi's third term was not solely his own but rather a result of consolidated efforts of allies part of the NDA.

"I stated that I would shave my head if he were elected for a third term. However, he has not won on his own, he has won the election with the support of his alliance," he told a news agency. "I stand by my words. If he did not win on his own, it's not his victory. So, as I said, if he has not won independently, I will not shave my head," he said.

Mr Bharti had ahead of the results announced on social media platform X. "I will shave off my head if Mr. Modi becomes PM for the third time." Consequent to the third term of the Mr Modi government, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor in a post on X asked Mr Bharti to shave his head immediately.



Visitors arrive for the swearing-in-ceremony of the new government at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

HC asks for medical test of Lalu's aide Katyal for bail

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

The Delhi high court has directed the constitution of a medical board to evaluate the medical condition of RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's close aide Amit Katyal, who sought interim bail on medical grounds in a money laundering case linked to the alleged land-for-jobs scam in the Indian Railways. The high court observed that even though the report from the jail did not indicate any "underlying medical condition", the accused recently had a bariatric surgery and, therefore, asked the AIIMS director to immediately constitute the team of doctors from minimum three different specialties to ascertain the nature of ailments he is suffering from. The high court emphasised that the right of health of an individual, being a facet of right to life under Article 21, cannot be abridged without due process of law in a mechanical manner and an individual can be released on an interim bail when specialised treatment and care, which cannot be provided in jail, is necessary. The high court said after the evaluation of medical records and examination of the petitioner accused, the medical board shall furnish a report on or before June 14.

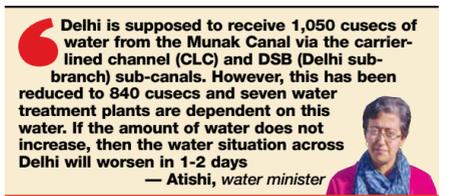
Continuing its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress on Sunday said he would get himself sworn-in this evening as "the leader of the Narendra destructive alliance (NDA)", though he lacks all legitimacy. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said Mr Modi has suffered a huge personal, political, and moral defeat. "A vastly diminished 'one-third' Pradhan Mantri, now lacking all legitimacy, has managed to get himself sworn in this evening, as the leader of the Narendra Destructive Alliance

■ 'Haryana not releasing enough amount of water'

Delhi on the cusp of water crisis: Atishi

AVINASH PRABHAKAR
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Amid the ongoing water crisis in the city, Delhi lieutenant-governor V.K. Saxena will meet with water minister Atishi on Monday over the "inadequate" amount of water being released by Haryana through the Munak Canal, one of the national capital's primary sources of potable water. Mr Saxena has asked officials to ascertain the actual position of water being released by Himachal Pradesh and Haryana to Delhi. Earlier in the day, Ms Atishi had sought time from Saxena for an emergency meeting over the issue. She also wrote to Haryana chief minister Nayab Singh Saini, requesting him to ensure 1,050 cusecs water is released from the Munak Canal for the national capital, otherwise "Delhi will have a major crisis in the next 1-2 days."



In a post on X, the water minister said Delhi is supposed to receive 1,050 cusecs of water from the canal, but it has reduced it to only 840 cusecs. "I have sought time from the hon'ble @LtGovDelhi for an emergency meeting to apprise him of the inadequate water being released by Haryana from the Munak Canal," she said. Responding to the Delhi minister's post, Raj Niwas Delhi, the official account

of the L-G secretariat, said, "Hon'ble L-G will meet Ms Atishi at 11.00 am on Monday. In the interim he has asked officials to ascertain the actual position of water released by Himachal Pradesh and Haryana, measures to check wastage and leakage of water in Delhi, and the status of desilting of Wazirabad reservoir, as directed by the Supreme Court."

Ms Atishi said in her post that Delhi is supposed to receive 1,050 cusecs of water from the Munak Canal via the carrier-lined channel (CLC) and DSB (Delhi sub-branch) sub-canals. However, this has been reduced to 840 cusecs and seven water treatment plants are dependent on this water. If the amount of water does not increase, then the water situation across Delhi will worsen in 1-2 days, said Ms Atishi, adding that Delhi L-G is the representative of the Central government and will request him to intervene and resolve the situation.

Meanwhile, Ms Atishi, in her letter to the Haryana chief minister, said, "If Haryana doesn't release an adequate amount of water by today, Delhi will have a major crisis in the next 1-2 days. Therefore, I humbly request you to ensure that 1,050 cusecs water is released from Munak Canal for Delhi. "According to the agreement in the 53rd meeting of the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB), which was convened in May 2018, around 1,050 cusecs was allocated to Delhi at Munak through the CLC canal and DSB canals," Ms Atishi said. "Considering the transmission loss, the allocation of 1,050 cusecs at Munak corresponds to about 1,013 cusecs. This is measured by Delhi at the Bawana contact point, where the water metres have been installed by Delhi. These flow metres have been checked by representatives of the UYRB, last week itself," she said.

Luxury car rams into rickshaw pullers, 1 die

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

A 45-year-old rickshaw puller died while another was injured after being hit by a luxury car near the main gate of Ramjas College in North Delhi on Sunday, the police said. The car, an Audi Q3, belongs to lawyer Virendra Mehta (56), a Mukherjee Nagar resident. He was arrested and was sent for a medical examination, they said. Deputy commissioner of police (North) M.K. Meena said Maurice Nagar police station got information regarding the accident at 1.16 pm. A police team found a white Audi Q3 car at the spot and found that the driver had lost control of

the vehicle and rammed into Govind and Ashok, who were sitting on a bench nearby, he said. The two injured rickshaw pullers were taken to Hindu Rao Hospital for treatment from where Govind was referred to the LNJP, where he died during treatment, the DCP said. "Alcohol was not detected in the breath analyser; however, a blood sample has been taken for FSL examination," DCP Meena said. According to a source, as the car hit the two men from the side, they did not even get time to move from there to save themselves. The police said legal action is being taken against the accused lawyer.

Faulty number plate offenders skyrocket by 286%: Police

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

The Delhi traffic police has booked over 16,800 people for defective number plates so far this year, up by 286 per cent from the corresponding period of last year, according to official data. According to a senior officer of the Delhi traffic police, 16,859 people were booked for defective number plates between January 1 and June 5 this year. The officer said the figure was at 4,363 in the corresponding period of 2023. This represents a notable surge of nearly 286 per cent in prosecutions compared to the previous year, he added. "This surge in prosecution is part of a broader effort to enhance road safety and enforce compliance with traffic regulations," he said. The traffic police department said it has intensified the crackdown on vehicles with defective number plates and the initiative has led to a significant increase in the number of penalties imposed. "Defective number plates, which include those that are illegible, improperly formatted or do not conform to the prescribed standards, have been identified as a major issue contributing to traffic violations and security concerns," the officers said. Special drives and checkpoints have been established across the city, with a particular focus on high-traffic areas and entry-exit points, the police said.

Will raise Neet exam issue in Parl: Rahul to students

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Continuing its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress on Sunday said he would get himself sworn-in this evening as "the leader of the Narendra destructive alliance (NDA)", though he lacks all legitimacy. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said Mr Modi has suffered a huge personal, political, and moral defeat. "A vastly diminished 'one-third' Pradhan Mantri, now lacking all legitimacy, has managed to get himself sworn in this evening, as the leader of the Narendra Destructive Alliance



Rahul Gandhi

related to their future. Six students from a single exam centre topped the exam with maximum marks, while many others got such marks which is technically not possible, but the government is continuously denying the possibility of paper leak, the former Congress chief said. He said the Congress had made a robust plan to deal with this "paper leak industry" running in connivance with the education mafia and the government machinery. "We had pledged in our manifesto to give students 'freedom from paper leak' by making a law.

Ved Lahoti tops JEE, scores highest ever marks

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Ved Lahoti from the Delhi zone has topped the IIT entrance exam JEE-Advanced announced on Sunday with securing 355 out of 360 marks, the highest ever. The previous highest was 352 in 2022. Dwija Dharmeshkumar Patel from IIT Bombay zone is the topper among female candidates with 332 marks and all-India rank at seven. Four of the top 10 rank-holders are from IIT Madras which conducted the Joint entrance exam (JEE)-Advanced this year. The second rank has been bagged by Aditya (Delhi zone) followed by

Bhogalpalli Sandesh (Madras zone) at the third position. Rhythm Kedia (IIT-Roorkee zone), Putti Kushal Kumar (IIT-Madras), Rajdeep Mishra (IIT-Bombay zone), Koduri Tejeswar (IIT-Madras zone), Dhruvi Hemant Doshi (IIT-Bombay zone) and Alladabona SSDB Sidhvik Suhas (IIT Madras zone), have bagged the subsequent ranks in that order. The maximum number of candidates have qualified from the IIT-Madras zone, followed by the IIT-Delhi Zone and the IIT-Bombay zone. Among the top 500 candidates, 145 are from the IIT-Madras zone, followed by 136 from the IIT-Bombay zone and 122



Ved Lahoti

from the IIT-Delhi zone. A total of seven foreign candidates have passed the exam while 179 Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) have also cleared it. A total of 1,80,200 candidates appeared in both papers in IIT-JEE Advanced, of which 48,248, including 7,964

females, have qualified. A resident of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Mr Lahoti was enrolled in one of the several coaching centres in Rajasthan's Kota - a hub for competitive examination preparation. Mr Lahoti said, "I devoted three to four hours for self-study daily and scored 332-340 in routine tests regularly. So, I was confident. "Since the paper was a bit easy as compared to the test papers, I succeeded," he said. "I scored very low in one of the routine tests but I did not get disappointed and instead focused on my weak aspects," he said in response to a query.



Indian Youth Congress activists protest in New Delhi on Sunday over the alleged irregularities in Neet 2024 results. — PTI

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|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|
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Classroom Course | AIR 22
Namish Bansal
Classroom Course | AIR 23
Ansh Garg
Classroom Course | AIR 26
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| AIR 35
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Arnav Baranwal
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| AIR 61
Advait Gupta
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Classroom Course | AIR 69
Avik Das
Online Live Classroom | AIR 73
Raghav Chandak
Classroom Course | AIR 74
Himanshu
Classroom Course | AIR 75
Manya Jain
Classroom Course | AIR 77
Mohd Emaad Arif
Classroom Course | AIR 79
Reyansh Shinde
Classroom Course | AIR 80
Abhinav P J
Classroom Course | AIR 81
Harshal Kanani
Classroom Course |
| AIR 85
Bibaswan Biswas
Classroom Course | AIR 86
Bhagyansh Sahu
Classroom Course | AIR 87
Devansh Gattani
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SHORT TAKES

Woman's body cut into 2 found in train

Indore: The GRP has recovered an unidentified woman's body cut into two pieces, with her hands and legs missing, and stuffed in two bags in a train in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, an official said. The police suspect the woman was murdered at some other place and the body was dumped in the train on Saturday night, they said. After being informed by a sanitation worker, the body was recovered from Dr Ambedkar Nagar-Indore passenger train, government railway police (GRP) station in-charge Sanjay Shukla said. The deceased, who was yet to be identified, was believed to be in the age group of 20 to 25 years, he said. "The upper part of the body from head to waist was found in a trolley bag left in the train, while the body part below waist was found in a plastic bag. Both her hands and legs are missing," Mr Shukla said. — PTI

UP cop crushed to death by sand mafia

Farrukhabad, UP: A 24-year-old constable was run over with a tractor allegedly by the sand mafia in Nawabganj area, police said on Sunday. The incident took place on Saturday night when constable Rohit Kumar, a resident of Bijnor, went to Nagla Chandan on a tip-off about illegal sand mining with sub-inspector Santosh Kumar and constable Chaman. When they stopped the tractor-trolley, and other policemen began questioning the mafia, the driver hit Kumar with the tractor and injured him seriously, police said. Kumar was rushed to the Lohia hospital and was later taken to a private hospital. He died during treatment. Kumar was 2021 batch constable, superintendent of police Vikas Kumar said. The SP said those involved in the incident have been identified and will be arrested soon. — PTI

2 run over by train while taking selfies

Mumbai: Two teenagers were run over by a train while they were taking selfies and shooting reels for social media on a railway track in Maharashtra's Nashik district, an official of the government railway police (GRP) said on Sunday. The incident occurred on the railway track near the Valdevi river bridge on Saturday evening, the official said. The victims, Sanket Kailas Rathod and Sachin Dilip Karwar, were shooting reels and taking selfies on the track and didn't notice the train behind them, he said. The boys died on the spot, the official said, adding that on being alerted about the incident, the railway police rushed to the scene. The duo were students of Bhatia College in Deolali Camp and had recently passed their Class 11 examination, official said. — PTI

9 pilgrims die after bus falls in J&K gorge amid terror hit

YUSUF JAMEEL SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

At least, nine Hindu pilgrims were killed and 33 injured as the bus they were travelling in fell into a deep gorge reportedly after being fired upon by terrorists in J&K's Reasi district on Saturday evening. However, the media centre of the Jammu police in a post on X said, "8 deaths confirmed, 33 injured sent to hospitals. A joint security operation is ongoing."

A report put the death toll at 10, adding that it might go up further as the condition of some of the injured was critical.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday took stock of the situation arising out of the terror attack on pilgrims in Reasi district that killed nine. Lieutenant-governor Manoj Sinha said the PM directed him to con-

stantly monitor the situation and ensure all possible help to the affected families. Meanwhile, Union minister Amit Shah condemned the terror attack on a bus carrying pilgrims and said culprits of this dastardly attack will not be spared and will face the wrath of law.

Mr Shah in a post on X said, "Deeply pained by the incident of the attack on pilgrims in Reasi, Jammu and Kashmir. Spoke to the lieutenant-governor and the DGP, J&K, and inquired about the incident. The culprits of this dastardly attack will not be spared and will face the wrath of the law. The local administration is working on a war footing to provide immediate medical attention. May the Almighty give the loved ones of the deceased the strength to bear this pain. I also pray for the speedy recovery of



The damaged bus after it plunged into a gorge following an alleged attack by suspected terrorists, in Reasi district of J&K on Sunday. — PTI

The bus was on its way to Katra, the basecamp of the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, from Shiv Khori, a cave-shrine devoted to Lord Shiva in the Sangar village and of Reasi's Pouni area. The police said that the inci-

dent occurred at a place called Kanda-Teryath.

Reasi's SSP Mohita Sharma told reporters that apparently the driver of the ill-fated bus lost balance following the bus came under terror attack and it fell into the gorge.

"There are no two opinions about it being a very unfortunate incident. Initial reports with us suggest that terrorists had laid ambush in the area, and they opened fire on the bus which had just left Shiv Khori and was on its way to Katra," Ms Sharma added.

"It was because of the firing that the driver lost balance and the bus fell in a gorge. We immediately started a rescue operation. Nine are feared dead and 33 are injured who were evacuated to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana super-speciality Hospital and the district hospital of Reasi".

WB BJP may get new chief as Sukanta set to be minister

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, JUNE 9

West Bengal BJP, which had a poor performance in the Lok Sabha election, is likely to undergo a top-level reshuffle and get a new president as the incumbent, Sukanta Majumdar, has been tipped to be a Union minister of state in the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr Majumdar, who won from Balurghat parliamentary constituency in South Dinajpur of North Bengal for the second time, was made the state party chief on September 20 in 2021 in place of the then Midnapore MP Dilip Ghosh before the end of his term.

However state BJP, under Mr Majumdar's leadership, lost six key parliamentary seats to Trinamul Congress this time and has been reduced to 12 MPs, which has triggered a

huge discontent within the party about poll strategy and candidates' selection.

Hinting at his departure as the state BJP president to take up his ministerial role, Mr Majumdar said on Sunday, "All responsibilities, including those to come to me in future, are temporary. I always see that a chair is not permanent for anyone." He also pointed out, "The day I got this chair (state president), I told many of my visitors clearly that I would not retain it forever as it is not permanent for me. So the question of likes and dislikes do not arise. I'm bound to follow what is asked by the party."

Mr Majumdar observed, "It can't happen that a soldier chooses where he will fight, right or left. His job is to fight anywhere his commander orders him to be." His elevation has created a race among some BJP heavyweights for the top party post in the state.

One of them is his predecessor, Mr Ghosh, who is also from RSS. He made a cryptic post on Facebook, "old is gold", on Saturday after openly criticising his party for a poll debacle here. Though Mr Ghosh lost the polls this time, many in the BJP hope for his comeback to the helm since the party had won 18 parliamentary seats in 2019 during his tenure as state chief.

Another strong contender is Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari who added two seats — Kanthi and Tamruk — which earlier went to TMC, to BJP tally this time in his home turf of East Midnapore. But a section of the state BJP leaders have blamed him for the loss of seats. Two-time Purulia MP Jyotirmoy Singh Mahato, hailing from the Kurmi community, is also in the fray for the post of state BJP chief.

IMD's heavy rain warning in Mumbai & other regions

AGE CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, JUNE 9

Maharashtra will have to brace for incessant rains as the India meteorological department (IMD) has predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall across the state over the next five days.

Isolated extremely heavy rain (over 20 cm) is also very likely over south Konkan and Goa, south Maharashtra on June 10, the IMD has warned. It has also issued a red category warning for these areas, which implies that authorities need to act to prevent emergencies due to flash floods or heavy rain.

The IMD has identified conducive conditions for the southwest monsoon to extend its reach into the central Arabian Sea and select areas of Maharashtra, including Mumbai, and Telangana within the next 2-3 days. "Conditions are favourable for further advance of Southwest Monsoon into remaining parts of central Arabian Sea, some more parts of Maharashtra (including Mumbai) and Telangana during next 2-3 days," the IMD said on X.

On late Saturday night and Sunday morning, Mumbai and its neighbouring areas received heavy rains bringing down the mercury levels and providing relief to residents from the hot and humid weather. In the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Sunday, Mumbai received more than 60 mm of rainfall.



Police personnel use water cannons to disperse Youth Congress activists during a protest against alleged irregularities in the Neet entrance exam in Bhopal on Sunday. — PTI

'Left-wing extremism is not identity of C'garh' Sai: Naxal menace confined to 'limited areas' of 5 C'garh dists

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY RAIPUR, JUNE 9

Chief minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Sunday said that Left-wing extremism is not the identity of Chhattisgarh, "as people think," since the Maoist menace is confined to "only limited areas" in five districts of the state.

A wrong impression has been created among the people that Chhattisgarh is only known for Maoist violence, Mr Sai lamented.

He said that Left-wing extremism is not the identity of Chhattisgarh as the Maoist menace is confined to "only limited areas" in five districts (in Bastar) in the state.

The chief minister who is currently on a tour of Delhi to attend the swear-



Vishnu Deo Sai

ing-in ceremony of the new NDA government led by Narendra Modi was addressing a news conference in the national capital. "Left-wing extremism is not the identity of Chhattisgarh."

"There is an impression among people that Chhattisgarh is only known for Maoist violence. But, it is not so. The Naxal base is fast shrinking in Bastar," said Mr Sai. "I appeal to the media not to identify Chhattisgarh with Left-wing insurgency", the CM said, according to a press release issued by Chhattisgarh government.

Mr Sai said that as many

as 25 security camps have been established in the insurgency-hit areas in these five districts so far.

The establishment of each security camp has helped the government reach the benefits of its various welfare schemes to the people residing in a radius of five km from it.

He said that his government has intensified counter-insurgency measures to combat Maoism in Bastar.

Describing Bastar as tourists' paradise, Mr Sai said that tourist hotspots such as Chitrakote waterfall and Kutumsor cave in Bastar have attracted a huge number of tourists every year. He said that his government has focused on development of tourism in the state particularly in Bastar to generate revenue and employment.

Film stars, tycoons, celebs & seers at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Continued from Page 1

Actor and Jana Sena Party president Pawan Kalyan arrived at the venue with his wife Anna Lezhneva.

Former Bhojpuri cinema star-singer Manoj Tiwari, who won from the North East Delhi constituency on a BJP ticket and actor-BJP politician Dinesh Lal Yadav, better known by his stage name Nirahua, were also among the invitees who witnessed the function.

Actor-turned-politician Smriti Irani, who lost to Congress' candidate from Amethi constituency in Uttar Pradesh Kishori Lal Sharma, also graced the occasion.

Several religious leaders, including Rambhadracharya, founder and head of Tulsi Peeth, a religious and social service institution in Chitrakoot named after Saint Tulsidas, also participated in the ceremony.

People from the transgender community and sanitation workers also attend the swearing-in ceremony. This is the first time that people from the transgender community were formally invited to the swearing-in ceremony. These participants have made contributions to the empowerment of the transgender community. Sonam Kinnar from the UP BJP unit said she, along with 50 members of the community,

have come to give blessings to the new government.

Several distinguished religious leaders, lawyers, doctors, artists, cultural performers, and influencers also attended the oath-taking ceremony.

Nearly 90 construction workers working on the Central Vista redevelopment project were among the invitees for the Modi 3.0 swearing-in ceremony. Besides, 30 sanitation workers from MCD and some government hospitals were also invited.

Earlier in the day, actors Ajay Devgn, Rajkumar Rao and Rishab Shetty congratulated Mr Modi on social media.

"Congratulations to Prime Minister @narendramodi Ji on his re-election! Wishing continued success in guiding India towards prosperity and greatness with his wisdom and compassion," Mr Devgn wrote in his post on X.

"My heartiest congratulations to our esteemed PM Shri @narendramodi Ji on this historic third consecutive win. May our country continue to flourish under your exemplary leadership. God bless you, sir: @PMOIndia," wrote Mr Rao.

"Kantara" star and director Mr Shetty also congratulated Mr Modi on his third term as Prime Minister. "We deeply value your dedication towards development, education, and national safety," he added.

PM begins 3rd term with 72 ministers

Continued from Page 1

Mr Gadkari could continue to be in charge of road transport and highways. It remains to be seen who gets the crucial information and broadcasting and human resources development ministries.

Prime Minister Modi is likely to chair his first Cabinet meeting on Monday. Soon after taking the oath on Sunday evening, Mr Modi posted on a social media platform: "Took oath as Prime Minister at the ceremony earlier this evening. I look forward to serving 140 crore Indians and working with the Council of Ministers to take India to new heights of progress."

While almost none of the INDIA alliance leaders could be spotted at the grand swearing-in ceremony, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge was present on the occasion.

The sprawling lawns of Rashtrapati Bhavan were packed to capacity. Seven heads of state or government from Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Seychelles, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Nepal and Bhutan attended the mega oath-taking ceremony. Film stars and

top corporate honchos were among the invitees. Among the guests was J a g a d g u r u Rambhadracharya, who played a key role during the hearing of the Ram Mandir case in the Supreme Court.

Earlier on Sunday morning, Mr Modi visited Rajghat to pay tribute to the Father of the Nation. He then visited late BJP patriarch Atal Behari Vajpayee's memorial "Sadaiv Atal". Mr Modi also offered his respects at the National War Memorial, a monument to soldiers who have made the supreme sacrifice for the country.

Mr Modi later invited the ministers-designate to his official residence for tea. During the informal session, Mr Modi, while addressing leaders spoke of humility. For him, people love those who are humble and do not compromise on probity and transparency.

Mr Modi also asked the ministers-designate to be courteous and also respect government employees and officers. Mr Modi was insistent that the council of ministers should work as a team.

Praful says 'no' to MoS post

Continued from Page 1

"remedial measures" were being taken to address the NCP's "grievances". The NCP's lone MP, Sunil Tatkar, also did not get a Cabinet berth. Speaking to the media, Mr Patel said that "last night we were informed that our party will get a minister of state with independent charge post... I was earlier a Cabinet minister in the Union government, so this will be a demotion for me. We have informed the BJP and they have already told us to wait for a few days, they will take remedial measures". Earlier, Maharashtra deputy CM Devendra Fadnis said that "Praful Patel's name was finalised... He was already a Cabinet minister, therefore he couldn't accept an MoS post".

While the NCP has decided to "wait" for its coveted prize, Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena, which won seven Lok Sabha seats, managed to get just one Cabinet berth. The ruling Mahayuti, which includes the BJP, Shiv Sena (Shinde faction) and NCP (Ajit Pawar faction), won 17 of the 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra. Among these 17, Ajit Pawar's NCP could win just one seat. The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, comprising the Shiv Sena (UBT), the Sharad Pawar-led NCP and the Congress, won 30 LS seats.

Bangla MP's murder: Key suspect quizzed

CID recovers parts of human bones

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, JUNE 9

Weeks after the brutal murder of Bangladesh MP Anwarul Azim Anar under mysterious circumstances in Kolkata, the criminal investigation department (CID) of the West Bengal police recovered his skeletal remains from Bhangar in South 24 Parganas on Sunday. The breakthrough recovery was based on the statement of Siam Hossain, an accused who was arrested by the CID from Bongaon in North 24 Parganas on June 7 in the Awami League leader's murder that took place at Sanjiva Gardens housing complex in New Town on May 21.

Siam, who has been in the CID custody, told that he had disposed of the body parts of the Bangladeshi MP on the South Eastern bank of

Bagjola Canal at Krishnamati village in Bijoyganj Bazar of Bhangar in South 24 Parganas, who is a butcher by profession. On Sunday morning, multiple parts of human bones, including some long ones, were recovered by the state detective agency from the same spot in presence of Central forensic science laboratory experts. They were later sent for forensic examination followed by a DNA test for confirmation.

An unnatural death case has been initiated at Bijoyganj Bazar. So far five persons were arrested in the sensational case. While three persons were arrested by the detective branch of the Dhaka metropolitan police, CID arrested Hossain and Hawladar.

Odisha govt seeks info over appointment of retd officials

AKSHAYA KUMAR BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 9

The Odisha home department has sought information regarding the appointment and re-engagement of retired officers in various departments.

The officer-on-special-duty (OSD) cum-deputy secretary has shot off a letter in this connection to Odisha DGP, chief resident commissioner-Odisha Bhawan, New Delhi, chief electoral officer, director (intelligence),

chairman-cum-managing director of Odisha state police Housing and welfare corporation, registrar (general) Orissa high court, director Odisha judicial academy among others.

As per official sources, information has been sought from 13 departments. The concerned authorities have been asked to submit details in a prescribed format including the names of retired officers, designation, place of posting, remuneration, and their engagements up to.

Situation in Manipur still 'tense', but in 'control'

Imphal, June 9: The situation in Manipur's Jiribam district remained "tense" but "under control" on Sunday, after suspected militants torched two police outposts and at least 70 houses in a fresh bout of violence in the state, the police said.

Additional security forces have been deployed in the affected areas following the incident on Saturday, they said. "The situation is tense but under control in the wake of violent disturbances that broke out in Jiribam district in which miscreants torched two police pickets, a forest beat office... And several houses belonging to both Meitei and Kuki communities," the Manipur police said in a statement.

More than 70 houses were set on fire in Lamtai Khunou, Dibong Khunou, Nunkhal and Begra villages, a senior police officer said.

"Police is also actively monitoring social media updates, which may incite communal feelings amongst the communities and requests general public to refrain from spreading unfounded/unverified information," it said.

Violence broke out in Jiribam in the ethnic strife-torn state on Thursday evening, after suspected militants killed a 59-year-old man.

The person, Soibam Saratkumar Singh, went missing after he had gone to his farm on June 6 and later, his body was found, an official had said. — PTI



Devotees during the 'Char Dham Yatra' at Badrinath temple in Chamoli district on Sunday. — PTI

Farm outfits march in support of constable who slapped Kangana

Chandigarh, June 9: Several farmer outfits, including the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, on Sunday took out a march in Mohali in support of the CISF woman constable, who allegedly slapped actor and BJP MP-elect Kangana Ranaut. Farmer leaders also lashed out at Ranaut for allegedly making provocative statements against the people of Punjab. Kaur was apparently upset with Ranaut over her stance on the farmers' protests. The CISF, tasked with providing security at airports, has also ordered a court of inquiry into the incident.

The Mohali police has booked Kaur under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt) and 341 (punishment for wrongful restraint). — PTI

SHORT TAKES

7 former CMs part of ministers' council

New Delhi: Seven former chief ministers, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, are part of the new council of ministers sworn in on Sunday. The other six former chief ministers are Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh), Rajnath Singh (Uttar Pradesh), Manohar Lal Khattar (Haryana), Sarbananda Sonowal (Assam), H.D. Kumaraswamy (Karnataka), and Jitan Ram Manjhi (Bihar). While five of these former CMs are from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Mr Kumaraswamy and Mr Manjhi represent two of the BJP's allies — JD(S) and Hindustani Awam Morcha, respectively. Mr Modi, along with his council of ministers, took oath as the new coalition government that was formed after two full tenures during which the BJP enjoyed a majority on its own. — PTI

Rahul & Priyanka to thank Amethi for win

Amethi: Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi will address a thanks-giving public meeting at Himachal Ka Purwa in Amethi on Tuesday, a party leader said on Sunday. Congress district unit president Pradeep Singhal said following the party's historic victory in Amethi and Rae Bareilly, Mr Gandhi will address a thanks-giving public meeting with the workers of the two parliamentary constituencies at Himachal Ka Purwa in Rampur Jamalpur village under Tiloi Assembly of Amethi parliamentary constituency on Tuesday. Mr Singhal said newly-elected Amethi MP Kishori Lal Sharma will also address the meeting. In the recently held LS polls, Mr Gandhi defeated Uttar Pradesh minister Dinesh Pratap Singh in Rae Bareilly. — PTI

Deve Gowda slams Cong's 'arrogance'

New Delhi: In a scathing attack on the Congress, Janata Dal (Secular) chief H.D. Deve Gowda on Sunday slammed the Opposition party for its "arrogance and negativity", while extending his party's full support to the new NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Mr Gowda's remarks came as he thanked PM Modi for offering a Cabinet position to the JD(S), assuring that his party's minister would serve the coalition with "total commitment". His son and former Karnataka chief minister H.D. Kumaraswamy made a debut in national politics and took oath as part of PM Modi's new council of ministers. In a letter, the former PM congratulated PM Modi on his "historic" third consecutive term, attributing the poll victory to "the almighty's extraordinary blessing" on the prime minister. — PTI

VICTORY CALLS FOR HUMILITY, GRACE: ABHISHEK

Kolkata, June 9: Trinamul Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Sunday said any victory calls for humility and responsible behaviour. Mr Banerjee said in a message on his official X handle that TMC leaders and workers must strive to honour the trust placed by the people of the state. "Victory calls for humility and grace. I request all @AITCofficial leaders and members to recognise the trust the people of WB have placed in us and strive to honor it," TMC MP and nephew of chief minister Mamata Banerjee said in the post. The TMC won 29 of the total 42 seats in West Bengal in the just concluded Lok Sabha elections. "Elected public representatives owe their positions to the people's mandate and should act more responsibly," said Mr Banerjee, who won from Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat. Though Mr Banerjee did not name any elected representative or cite any incident, his message is preceded by the controversy over the alleged assault of a restaurant-owner by actor-turned-TMC MLA Soham Chakraborty. — PTI

Smriti, Thakur among 37 dropped in NDA 3

18 dropped lose elections ■ L. Murugan only to retain position despite LS poll defeat

New Delhi, June 9: As many as 37 ministers have been dropped from the government in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third term, including seven with Cabinet rank — prominent among them being Smriti Irani, Anurag Thakur and Narayan Rane. Parshottam Rupala, Arjun Munda, R.K. Singh and Mahendra Natha Pandey, also held Cabinet positions in the second Modi government but were not retained in the council of ministers that took oath on Sunday. While all three ministers with Independent charge have been retained, out of 42 ministers of state, 30 have been dropped. Those who have not been repeated include V.K. Singh, Faggansingh Kulaste, Ashwini Choubey, Danve Raosaheb Dadarao, Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, Sanjeev Balyan, Rajeev Chandrashekar, Subhas Sarkar, Nisith Pramanik, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh and Pratima Bhoomik. Meenakshi Lekhi, Munjapara Mahendrabhai, Ajay Kumar Mishra, Kailash Choudhary, Kapil Moreshwar Patil, Bharati Pravin Pawar, Kaushal Kishore, Bhagwanth Khubha and V. Muraleedharan have also not been retained. Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, John Barla, Bishweswar Tudu, Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad, Devusinh Chauhan, Ajay Bhatt, A. Nara-yanaswamy, Som Parkash, Rameswar Teli and Darshana Vikram Jardosh have also not made it to the new council of ministers. Eighteen of the dropped ministers had lost the elections. L. Murugan is the only minister of state from the previous government who lost the election but has been retained. He is already a member of Rajya Sabha. Smriti Irani, a Cabinet minister in both terms of the Modi government, lost the election from Amethi to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's aide Kishori Lal Sharma by a margin of over 1.69 lakh votes. Ms Irani was HRD and textile minister in the first term while she held the women and child development and minority affairs portfolios in Modi 2.0. Parshottam Rupala was the minister of fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying in the second term of Modi government. — PTI

Khadse youngest, Manjhi oldest in ministers' council

New Delhi: Raksha Nikhil Khadse is the youngest minister at 37 while Jitan Ram Manjhi at 79 is the oldest minister to be sworn in. Ms Khadse won the Raver LS seat in Maharashtra. Some of the other young ministers include Chirag Paswan and Jayant Choudhary. — PTI



Apna Dal(S) leader Anupriya Patel (clockwise from left), Union minister Amit Shah, former Karnataka CM H.D. Kumaraswamy, RLD president Jayant Chaudhary, LJP(RV) chief Chirag Paswan and TDP's Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu during the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY



Dignitaries attend banquet hosted at Rashtrapati Bhavan 7 world heads grace Modi's event

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Leaders of seven countries, who are part of India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean Region, attended on Sunday the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the council of ministers. Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of Maldives Dr Mohamed Muizzu, vice-president of Seychelles Ahmed Afif, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, PM of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Nepal PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" and PM Bhutan Tshering Tobgay attended the event at Rashtrapati Bhavan. There were also a large number of diplomatic corps members present at the event. In addition to participating in the swearing-in ceremony, the leaders also attended a banquet hosted



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with world leaders after taking oath at Rashtrapati Bhavan. — Pritam Bandyopadhyay

by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday evening. Mr Modi is likely to hold separate bilateral meetings with the foreign leaders. "The visit of the leaders to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his third consecutive term is in keeping with the highest priority accorded by India to its

ministers. India and Maldives are maritime partners and close neighbours," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. The invitation by New Delhi to Mr Muizzu comes in the backdrop of frosty ties between India and Maldives. On Saturday, Mr Muizzu said he looked forward to working with Mr Modi to further strengthen the close relations with India, noting that the relationship between the two countries is heading in the "positive direction". Bangladesh President Sheikh Hasina and vice-president of Seychelles Ahmed Afif arrived in Delhi on Saturday. Mrs Hasina was the first one to arrive in New Delhi. She paid a courtesy visit to veteran BJP leader L.K. Advani. India has been cooperating with the countries of the Indian Ocean Region under the broader policy framework of Sagar or Security and Growth for all in the Region.

33 1st-timers take oaths, 6 hail from political families

AMRESH SRIVASTAVA and RAKESH K. SINGH NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Being prominent among the first timers who took oath to the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the third term, former chief ministers Shivraj Singh Chauhan (Madhya Pradesh), Manohar Lal Khattar (Haryana) and Jitan Ram Manjhi (Bihar) and H.D. Kumaraswamy (Karnataka) were inducted into the council of ministers on Sunday. Among all the 33 first-timers, at least six of them hail from well-known political families. Mr Chouhan is a five-time MP from Vidisha, a constituency represented by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and former external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj in the past. He is also the longest-serving CM of Madhya Pradesh. A former Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) pracharak, Mr Khattar served as the chief minister of Haryana twice. He resigned from the post in March after ally the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) withdrew support from the government. Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) founder Jitan Ram Manjhi — a formidable force in Bihar's political arena — was made a Central minister on Sunday. Mr Manjhi's rise has been nothing short of extraordinary. Since 2014, he has relentlessly pur-



Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Manohar Lal Khattar, Jitan Ram Manjhi

sued the Gaya Lok Sabha seat, facing one crushing defeat after another before finally wresting the seat this time. Mr Manjhi's political journey took a dramatic turn when, in 2014, he was unexpectedly anointed chief minister by Nitish Kumar, who had resigned after a disastrous Lok Sabha election. Seven first-time ministers in the Modi government belong to the allies — TDP's K. Ram Mohan Naidu and Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani; JDU's Lalan Singh and Ram Nath Thakur; RLD's Jayant Chaudhary, LJP's Chirag Paswan and H.D. Kumaraswamy of the JD(S). Two-time chief minister of Karnataka and son of the former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, Mr Kumaraswamy also took oaths as Union minister. Mr Jayant Chaudhary, the 45-year-old national chairman of the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), is the grandson of Chaudhary Charan Singh — India's fifth Prime Minister — and the son of former Union minister Chaudhary Ajit Singh.

Naveen's key aide Pandian quits BJD after poll fiasco

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 9

Bureaucrat-turned-politician V. Kartikeyan Pandian, the outgoing Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik's blue-eyed boy, on Sunday announced his retirement from active politics. Mr Pandian is in the eye of a storm following the Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) drubbing defeat in the recently concluded 2024 elections. Mr Pandian announced the decision in a video statement. The development came after BJD president Naveen Patnaik had categorically defended him, saying he had no fault in the BJD's rout in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state. He also termed the ongoing criticisms against Mr Pandian as "unfortunate." Prior to the 2024 elections, Mr Pandian had announced that he would quit active politics if Mr Patnaik failed to take oath as chief minister for the sixth time. The Tamil Nadu-born Pandian was targeted within the BJD after the party's poll debacle. Recently, the youth BJD

New CM's oath on June 12, Modi set to hold roadshow

AGE CORRESPONDENT BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 9

In a major announcement, there has been a change in the grand swearing-in ceremony of the new Odisha chief minister of the newly elected BJD government. The mega event will now be held on June 12 instead of June 10, 2024. On the other hand, the meeting of the BJD legislative party, which was also scheduled to be held on June 10, is likely to be held on June 11. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend several crucial meetings on Monday. Hence, the oath-taking ceremony of the new Odisha chief minister will be held after two days, informed BJD spokesperson Jatini Mohanty. According to Mr Mohanty, the oath-taking ceremony has been changed, as PM Modi will be attending similar events in two other states. Mr Modi is scheduled to attend the oath-taking ceremony of the new Odisha CM which will be held at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar. Senior journalist Prasanna Mohanty said, "It is an end to a big drama in Odisha politics and within BJD. Finally, V.K. Pandian has announced his retirement

from politics. He had become most powerful within six months in the BJD. Mr Pandian did not have any other option than to quit the BJD. Though the BJD president tried to give Mr Pandian a clean chit, it appeared that he was reading a written script. Mr Pandian has realised that Odisha is no longer safe for him." — PTI

LS LoP after 10 yrs, Opp. hopeful on dy Speaker post

New Delhi, June 9: With the INDIA bloc parties' numbers increasing in the 18th Lok Sabha, the lower house is set to get a Leader of the Opposition (LoP) after ten years. The Opposition leaders also hope that a deputy speaker will be elected soon — a post that had been vacant for the last five years. The 17th Lok Sabha, which was dissolved on June 5, did not have a deputy speaker for its full term, and it was the second consecutive term of the lower house without an LoP. All eyes are set at the lower house, which will get an LoP and is also expected to have a deputy speaker, a post which usually goes to the Opposition ranks. An Opposition leader said they will mount pressure that the deputy speaker's post is not left vacant this time. "The BJP government has been rejected by people. Hope they have learnt a lesson and will elect a deputy speaker this time," a TMC leader said. — PTI

Kharge, lone INDIA leader, attends PM's oath ceremony

New Delhi, June 9: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge was probably the lone Opposition leader, who attended the swearing-in ceremony of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister on Sunday evening. Though an invite was sent to some other Opposition leaders too, Mr Kharge was among those who attended the Prime Minister's oath-taking ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Mr Modi took oath as the Prime Minister for the third time in a row on Sunday evening. President Droupadi Murmu administered the



Mallikarjun Kharge

oath to him at a function attended by several dignitaries, including some heads of state of neighbouring countries. None of the Opposition leaders attended the oath-taking of Mr Modi and his Cabinet. Mr Kharge represented the INDIA bloc in the ceremony there.

TMC leader Sagarika Ghosh posted her invitation letter on X earlier and said that she would not be attending the ceremony. "Respected @rashtrapatibhvn. Thank you for your kind invitation. I regret that since we in the Opposition do not accept the moral legitimacy of the swearing in of Shri @narendramodi who has lost the mandate of the people, I have made a personal decision not to attend," she wrote on X. Another TMC leader said, "Our leader (Mamata Banerjee) has already announced, we are not attending the swearing in." — PTI

MODI 3.0

- MoS
- ▶ Jitin Prasada
 - ▶ Shripad Yesso Naik
 - ▶ Krishan Pal
 - ▶ Pankaj Chaudhary
 - ▶ Ramdas Athawale (RPI-A)
 - ▶ Ramnath Thakur (JD-U)
 - ▶ Nityananad Rai
 - ▶ Anupriya Patel (Apna Dal-S)
 - ▶ V. Somanna
 - ▶ Pemmasani Chandrasekhar (TDP)
 - ▶ S.P. Singh Baghel
 - ▶ Shobha Karandlaje
 - ▶ Kirti Vardhan Singh
 - ▶ B.L. Verma
 - ▶ Shantanu Thakur
 - ▶ Suresh Gopi
 - ▶ L. Murugan
 - ▶ Bandi Sanjay Kumar
 - ▶ Ajay Tamta
 - ▶ Bhagirath Choudhary
 - ▶ Kamlesh Paswan
 - ▶ Satish Dubey
 - ▶ Sanjay Seth
 - ▶ Ravneet Singh
 - ▶ Durga Das Uikey
 - ▶ Raksha Khadse
 - ▶ Sukanta Majumdar
 - ▶ Savitri Thakur
 - ▶ Tokhan Sahu
 - ▶ Raj Bhushan Choudhary
 - ▶ B.R.S. Verma
 - ▶ Harsh Malhotra
 - ▶ Nimuben Bambhniya
 - ▶ Murlidhar Mohol
 - ▶ George Kurian
 - ▶ Pabitra Margherita

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	76,693.36	2.16
Nifty 50	23,290.15	2.05
S&P 500*	5,346.99	-0.11
Dollar (₹)	83.38	0.11
Pound Sterling (₹)	106.69	0.02
Euro (₹)	90.81	0.001
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	71,341.12	-0.02
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	79.47	-0.69
IN 10-Yr bond yield	7.017	0.003
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.434	0.152

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Bajaj arm files DRHP with Sebi for ₹7,000-cr IPO

Bajaj Housing Finance (BHFL), part of the Bajaj Group, has filed a draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with Sebi for ₹7,000 crore initial public offering (IPO). The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares of up to ₹4,000 cr and an offer for sale of up to ₹3,000 cr. BHFL proposes to use the net proceeds for augmenting its capital base to meet future business requirements of company towards onward lending.

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India big aviation market, says CEO of Star Alliance

Dubai, June 9: India is a big aviation market and a stronger partnership between Air India and Lufthansa is good, as efforts of the Star Alliance are to bring the partners together to provide a unique value proposition for the passengers, the airline grouping's chief executive officer Theo Panagiotoulas has said.

Air India and Lufthansa are part of Star Alliance, where 26 member airlines come together at more than 50 global hubs to offer smooth connections across a global network.

A management company, based in Frankfurt and Singapore, coordinates Star Alliance projects and activities. It includes airport co-location, digital infrastructure, frequent flyer integration and joint business lounge projects to improve the travel experience.

On the sidelines of IATA annual general meeting in Dubai this week, Panagiotoulas said that he was bullish about the prospects in the Indian market that offers "so much of opportunities".

"The alliance is to bring the partners together to provide a unique value proposition. It is all about more choices, options and for a market size of India that is the very best thing," he said.

When asked about the enhanced partnership between Air India and Lufthansa, Panagiotoulas said it is good to have stronger partnerships within the alliance. Both airlines have a strong code-share partnership that



● **THE ALLIANCE** is to bring the partners together to provide a unique value proposition. It is all about more choices, options and for a market size of India that is the very best thing.

provides for a seamless connectivity for the passengers of both airlines.

Meanwhile, on the sidelines of the IATA annual general meeting, Lufthansa Group chairman and CEO Carsten Spohr had a meeting with Air India CEO and managing director Campbell Wilson.

To a query about the Indian market during a media roundtable here, Spohr said he had a long meeting with Air India CEO but did not disclose the details. He also replied in the affirmative when asked whether the partnership with Air India could go beyond Star Alliance.

Star Alliance has 50 standards for the member airlines and the effort is to provide a strong value proposition to customers. It needs to be made sure that the right value proposition is there in India, which is a big market, he said. —PTI

START-UPS MAY GET MORE FUNDS IN BUDGET, SAYS GOVT OFFICIAL

New Delhi, June 9: The commerce and industry ministry may seek more funds for start-ups in the forthcoming Budget, to be announced by the new government, to promote innovation in the country, an official has said.

The new government may announce the Budget for 2024-25 in July. The seed fund scheme, announced in April 2021 with a corpus of ₹945 crore, will end in 2025, and the ministry may consider proposing a new scheme on similar lines.

The seed fund scheme was aimed at providing financial assistance to start-ups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market-entry, and commercialisation. The fund was divided into four years for providing seed funding to eligible start-ups through incubators across India.

Easy availability of capital is essential for entrepreneurs at the early stages of growth of an enterprise, and the capital required at this stage often presents a make-or-buy situation for start-ups with good business ideas, another official said.

There are over 1.17 lakh government-registered start-ups in the country. These start-ups have been reported to have created over 12.42 lakh direct jobs.

The ministry is also expected to propose a policy for deep tech start-ups. —PTI

Global, domestic events to guide stock markets

Trading by foreign, domestic investors will be under observation

New Delhi, June 9: The US Fed interest rate decision, domestic inflation data and global trends would be key driving factors in dictating movement in the market this week, as the Lok Sabha elections outcome and the RBI policy decision are behind us, analysts said.

The past week was a roller-coaster ride for investors as markets swung sharply in both directions before closing with strong gains.

In an eventful week, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,732.05 points or 3.69 per cent and the Nifty zoomed 759.45 points or 3.37 per cent. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,720.8 points or 2.29 per cent to hit a new record peak of 76,795.31 in day trade on Friday. The benchmark ended at a record high of 76,693.36, up 1,618.85



● **ELECTIONS AND** the RBI policy decision are settled, attention now turns to global factors. Key areas to watch include the US Fed interest rate decision, rupee's movement against dollar, crude oil prices and commodity prices.

points, or 2.16 per cent.

"Now the Lok Sabha elections and the RBI policy decision are settled, attention now turns to global factors. Key areas to watch include the US Fed interest rate decision, rupee's movement against dollar, crude oil prices and commodity prices."

"Additionally, investments by foreign portfolio investors and domestic institutional investors will remain under close observation," said Pravesh Gour, senior tech-

nical analyst, Swastika Investmart.

Globally, significant events are scheduled for June 12, including announcement of the US core and consumer price inflation figures, alongside the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and federal open market committee economic projections, he added.

"India's economic calendar is also marked with key releases. On June 12, both India's IIP and inflation data will be

unveiled," Gour added.

"Trading activity of foreign investors would also be crucial in dictating terms in the market."

"The outlook for the market will be guided by major domestic and global economic data. India WPI inflation, China CPI inflation, UK GDP data, US CPI data, and the US Fed interest decision will guide the market this week," said Arvinder Singh Nanda, senior vice president, Master Capital Services.

"We believe volatility is likely to decrease now that major events are behind us, with focus shifting to domestic macroeconomic data for further signals. Additionally, global cues, particularly the upcoming US Fed meeting, will be closely watched by participants," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare

Broking, said. —PTI

Passenger vehicle exports cross 6.72 L units in FY24

New Delhi, June 9: Passenger vehicle exports from India rose by 2.68 lakh units in the last four financial years with Maruti Suzuki India accounting for nearly 70 per cent of the incremental shipments during the period.

As per the industry data, passenger vehicle exports in the 2020-21 fiscal stood at 4.04 lakh units. It rose to 5.77 lakh units in the 2021-22 fiscal year and to 6.62 lakh units in 2022-23 financial year. Last fiscal, exports stood

at 6.72 lakh units, an increase of 2.67 lakh units since 2020-21.

In the last three fiscal years, Maruti Suzuki has accounted for 70 per cent of incremental 2.67 lakh units across the industry which were shipped to overseas markets.

The auto major's export shipment increased by 1.85 lakh units between FY21 and FY24.

Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) executive officer corporate affairs Rahul Bharti said that factors

● **MARUTI SUZUKI** has accounted for 70 per cent of incremental 2.67 lakh units across the industry which were shipped to overseas markets.

like addition of more models, adherence to global production standards and tie-up with Toyota have helped in ramping up the exports' volume.

He noted that the company is currently exporting models to around 100

nations across the globe. Top overseas markets for the company currently are South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Chile and Mexico.

As per SIAM data, overall PV exports stood at 6.72 lakh units in FY24, an increase of 1.4 per cent over 6.62 lakh units in FY23.

MSI exported 2.80 lakh units last fiscal, an increase of 10 per cent over 2.5 lakh units in FY23.

Hyundai shipped 1.63 lakh units in FY24 as compared with 1.53 lakh units in FY23. —PTI

WORLD

SHORT TAKES

HAITI INTERIM PM STABLE AFTER HOSPITALISATION

Port-Au-Prince, June 9: Haiti's new interim prime minister, Garry Conille, is in stable condition after being hospitalised for an unspecified illness, his office said.

Conille, 58, who took office just over a week ago, was rushed to hospital after suffering breathing problems, local media reported earlier. His office did not provide details on the cause of his hospitalisation. "Following a week of intense activities, the Prime Minister ... had a slight illness and went to the hospital for treatment," his office said.

FACING COURT CASE, THAI PARTY READY TO FIGHT

Bangkok, June 9: The former leader of Thailand's progressive opposition Move Forward party vowed on Sunday to keep fighting as the party faces a court case that could result in its dissolution.

The Constitutional Court has agreed to rule on whether the party violated the constitution by proposing to amend a law that forbids defaming the country's royal family. The petition requested the party's dissolution and a 10-year ban on political activity by its executives. The court has not said when it will rule on this case.

UKRAINE: HIT SU-57 FIGHTER INSIDE RUSSIA

Kyiv, June 9: Ukraine on Sunday said its forces hit an ultra-modern Russian warplane stationed on an air base 600 km from the front lines, after its Western allies allowed Kyiv to use their weapons for limited strikes inside Russia. Kyiv's main military intelligence service shared satellite photos it said showed the aftermath of the attack. If confirmed, it would mark Ukraine's first known successful strike.

Israel pounds Gaza; Hamas says rescue toll rises to 274

Hamas armed wing says 3 hostages were killed in Israel's Gaza operation

Cairo, June 9: Israeli forces pounded central Gaza anew on Sunday, a day after killing 274 Palestinians during a hostage rescue raid, and tanks advanced further into Rafah in an apparent bid to seal off part of the southern city, residents and Hamas media said.

Hamas' armed al-Qassam Brigades said in a video posted on its Telegram channel on Sunday that three hostages were killed, including a US citizen, in an Israeli military operation on Saturday in which some hostages were freed.

The group did not release the names of those said to be killed, but the video showed what appeared to be three unidentifiable corpses using censor bars over their faces.

Palestinians remained in shock over Saturday's death toll, the worst over a 24-hour period of the Gaza war for months and including many women and children, Palestinian medics said.

In an update on Sunday,



Palestinians inspect the damage and debris a day after an operation by the Israeli Special Forces in central Gaza Strip's Nuseirat camp, on Sunday. —AFP

Gaza's health ministry said 274 Palestinians were killed — up from 210 it reported on Saturday — and 698 were injured when Israeli special force commandos stormed into the densely populated Al-Nuseirat camp to rescue four

hostages held since October by Hamas militants.

Sixty-four of the dead were children and 57 were women, the Hamas-run Gaza government media office said on Sunday.

Israel's military said a special forces officer was

killed in exchanges of fire with militants emerging from cover in residential blocks, and that it knew of "under 100" Palestinians killed, though not how many of them were fighters or civilians.

A Hamas assertion that

ISRAEL EXTENDS AL JAZEERA BAN BY 45 DAYS

Jerusalem, June 9: A ban on Al Jazeera's operations in Israel was extended for another 45 days by Israel's telecoms regulator on Sunday after the Cabinet agreed its broadcasts posed a threat to security.

A Tel Aviv court last week upheld an initial 35-day ban on Al Jazeera operations in Israel, imposed by the government on national security grounds, which ended on Saturday.

In a separate ruling, Israel's Supreme Court described the measure as "precedent-setting". —Reuters

some hostages had died was rejected as "a blatant lie" by the Israeli military. Gaza's health ministry said 4-year-old Tawfiq Abu Youssef was in critical condition when visited in hospital on Sunday by his father Raed. —Reuters

Final votes cast, European Parl set to shift right

Brussels, June 9: Voters across Europe were casting their ballots on Sunday in an election for the European Parliament that is likely to shift the assembly to the right and boost the numbers of eurosceptic nationalists.

The expected move to the right means the assembly may be less enthusiastic on policies to address climate change while eager on measures to limit immigration to the EU, a bloc of 450 million citizens.

The Parliament could also be more fragmented, which would make adopting any measure trickier and slower as the EU confronts challenges including a hostile Russia and increased industrial rivalry from China and the United States.

"I don't always agree with the decisions that Europe takes," 89-year-old retiree Paule Richard said after voting in Paris. "But

● **THE EXPECTED** move to the right means the assembly may be less enthusiastic on policies to address climate change while eager on measures to limit immigration to the EU, a bloc of 450 million citizens.

I still hope that there will be a reckoning in all European countries, so that Europe can be a unified bloc and look in the same direction."

Voting began on Thursday in the Netherlands and in other countries on Friday and Saturday, but the bulk of EU votes will be cast on Sunday, with France, Germany, Poland and Spain opening their polls and Italy holding a second day of voting.

The European Parliament votes legislation that is key for citizens and businesses in the 27-nation EU. —Reuters

SEOUL RESUMES LOUDSPEAKER PROPAGANDA

Seoul, June 9: South Korea resumed loudspeaker broadcasts directed at North Korea on Sunday, its military said, following through on a warning demanding Pyongyang stop sending balloons carrying trash into the South.

The decision to resume the broadcasts, as a form of psychological warfare, was made after North Korea began launching on Saturday about 330 balloons with trash attached, with about 80 of them dropping over the border, South Korea's military said on Sunday. —Reuters

PML-N doesn't 'budget in' PPP

Islamabad, June 9: The Pakistan Peoples Party has said it was not consulted by the ruling PML-N-led government on the upcoming federal budget despite being a coalition partner, according to a media report on Sunday.

The Pakistan government will likely present the budget for the financial year 2024-25 on June 12. The government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, "neither told us anything related to the budget nor took us into confidence," Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah said. "We

Nawaz: Imran snag in political accord

Islamabad, June 9: Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has said his successor Imran Khan was the main hurdle in political reconciliation in the country and underscored the ruling PML-N party's commitment to dialogue and not indulging

don't know what the PML-N is doing about privatisation policy, taxes, developmental programme," the report said. After the controversial

in vengeance, according to media reports.

Sharif's remarks came during a meeting with party senators on Friday evening, where the issue of negotiations with Khan's Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf party was extensively discussed. —PTI

Feb. 8 polls marred by rigging allegations, the PML-N and PPP formed a coalition government after intense negotiations. —PTI

PAK, IMF TALKS INDECISIVE OVER INCOME TAX RATES

Islamabad, June 9: Talks between Pakistan and the IMF have ended inconclusively due to a disagreement over new income tax rates for salaried and non-salaried persons and the imposition of a standard 18 per cent sales tax on agriculture and health sector goods, according to a media report on Sunday.

On Friday, Pakistan and the IMF authorities discussed the outstanding issues related to taxation and the energy sector. —PTI

Missing British scribe found dead

Athens, Syri, June 9: British TV presenter Michael Mosley has been found dead in a rocky area of Syri, days after he disappeared during a walk on the Greek island, local officials and police told Reuters.

The 67-year-old healthy living advocate, who has been a prominent face on British TV for two decades, was found on Sunday morning, ending a four day search that included aircraft, drones and sniffer dogs.

"It's devastating to have lost Michael, my wonderful, funny, kind and brilliant husband. We had an incredibly lucky life together. We loved each other very much," Mosley's wife said in a statement issued



Michael Mosley

on her behalf. Police spokeswoman Constantina Dimoglidou said the body of a person believed to be Mosley had been found in Agia Marina, north of the village of Pedi and opposite the northeast beach of Agios Nikolaos where he set out for his walk.

"It is certainly him," said deputy mayor Nikitas Grillis. —Reuters

THE ASIAN AGE

10 JUNE 2024

Opp. must work unitedly to keep govt on its toes

As India returns to the coalition era after a gap of 10 years with Narendra Modi being sworn Prime Minister of the NDA ministry, the Opposition has a major role to ensure that the institutions of the country function and that it remains democratic upholding constitutional values. For it to happen, the Opposition also has to function as a well-knit coalition.

The strength of the Opposition in the 18th Lok Sabha has almost doubled from that in the previous one. Rules dictate that the leader of the largest Opposition party with not less than 10 per cent of the total strength of the Lok Sabha be named the Leader of the Opposition. The Congress will get the position now, a privilege that was denied to it in the previous two Houses because it fell short of winning the required number of seats.

The rise in the Congress' numbers reflects the popular mood, too, as well as the shape of the polity. The people had overwhelmingly approved the saffron agenda and given Mr Modi and his team the mandate to run the government in the last two consecutive terms. The very same people have now decided that the BJP and Mr Modi seek a larger consensus instead of unilaterally guiding the nation.

It is now for the Opposition to ensure that the government acts as per the will of the people. In fact, it has been appointed by them as the executors of their will. The previous two Lok Sabhas witnessed the sight of the government getting bills, even very important ones, passed in a hurry, owing to the failure of an emaciated Opposition to put up a resistance. The government did get almost the entire Opposition suspended from Parliament using its brute majority in the previous Lok Sabha's last session. Never mind if such acts run contradictory to the principles of democracy.

The INDIA bloc that was formed last year represents a wide variety of opinions and aspirations which at times lie in contradiction to one another. A major chunk of the bloc is formed by regional and state parties which will have their respective agendas. In fact, several of them fight each other in their own strongholds. But it is their collective antipathy towards the saffron ideology and the BJP's style of governance that keep them together. The Congress will, therefore, have a tough time keeping the INDIA alliance together.

That the BJP depends on two allies who have joined the alliance a few months ago to run the government will be a cause of concern for the Opposition. The BJP has a history of dividing and/or swallowing its allies in the states; there is no reason why it would not try it at the Centre as well. The ruling party will legitimately use the difference of opinion among the Opposition ranks to woo away potential allies, too, for it has power and pelf to offer in return. It will be up to the Congress and Mr Rahul Gandhi, whom the party has named as the Leader of Opposition, to ensure that consensus becomes the language of transaction and also to force the government to speak this language.

In Gaza, a war without end

The sigh of relief in Israel was brief as the daring rescue of four hostages came with considerable collateral damage, including the deaths of 274 Palestinians. The rescue helped raise the spirit of the people, but it may have done little for the situation Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finds himself in as he keeps his country at war in the Gaza Strip.

Netanyahu declared that the IDF is the most moral military in the world even as the United Nations threatened to place it on a blacklist, along with Hamas, for failing to protect children in war. The operations of Israeli defence forces seem to be causing more and more fatalities among defenceless Palestinian civilians as not a week has gone by in the last eight months without Gaza having to count its dead, the total now beyond 36,000.

Attacks on hospitals, reportedly housing Hamas leaders, and schools, including one run by the UN, have been struck in this culture of impunity that is deeply embedded in the likes of Mr Netanyahu. The hostage rescue was accompanied by the heaviest air and ground strikes since October 7 and left behind large swathes of the town of Nuseirat in central Gaza in rubble.

Only a little over half of 120 hostages taken on October 7 are thought to be alive, but their rescue, even if it comes with the dazzling Israeli bravado of being the world's top strategist in hostage rescue situations, is an emotional issue for Israelis who are gathering by the thousands every day in Tel Aviv to protest.

Far from achieving stated objectives of rubbing out Hamas' military and governing capabilities, Israel is only getting into a morass of military action in Gaza even as its northern border with Lebanon is being increasingly threatened by Hezbollah strikes with missiles.

With war cabinet member Benny Gantz of the National Unity Party calling for dissolution of the Knesset and far-right sections of the cabinet threatening to quit and bring down the government, Mr Netanyahu is totally beleaguered as his future as PM is tied to the war continuing.

Only the knowledge that in an election year none of the contenders in the US can afford to withdraw their support to Israel propels Mr Netanyahu further into military operations without an end as an exchange of hostages and prisoners in a peace proposal awaits a nod from the Israeli government.

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KAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

K. SUDHAKAR
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Subhani



Can Naidu play a decisive role at the national level?



Sanjaya Baru
Sanjayovacha

From the time the final Lok Sabha tally was out and it was clear that Narendra Modi would fall short of a majority, all eyes have been on the role that his newly-acquired allies in the National Democratic Alliance would play. On Friday, after the meeting of the NDA members of Parliament, it became clear that both Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar are now shadows of their past selves. It would, however, be unfair to criticise them for this. Age takes its toll. Politics too. Both need Prime Minister Modi as much as he needs them. And, all said and done, Mr Modi is not Atal Behari Vajpayee. NDA 2.0 is not NDA 1.0.

The national media was agog with speculation that Mr Naidu would be a tough customer and would keep Mr Modi on a short leash, extracting concession after concession, dictating appointments, securing favours and so on. That was how he played it in NDA 1.0 with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. In 1998, Vajpayee returned to power determined to hold on to it after having lost it in 1996, after a 16-day term. In 1999 he was voted out and regained power with the support of allies like the Telugu Desam Party that remained loyal during his one year in office.

Between 1996 and 2004, through the tenures of H.D. Deve Gowda, Inder Kumar Gujral and Vajpayee, Mr Naidu tasted the fruits of power in New Delhi. Those nine years as chief minister of united Andhra Pradesh, working with PMs dependent on his support, defined the political personality and national image of

Chandrababu Naidu. He used the opportunity to lay the foundations of the Greater Hyderabad of today — adding Cyberabad to the “twin cities” of Hyderabad-Secunderabad. Mr Naidu's local, national and global image was made by that opportunity.

While Mr Naidu's demands on Mr Modi may be restricted to the needs of Andhra Pradesh, as the seniormost chief minister in India today (he first became CM in September 1995), he can play a constructive national role as the voice of a more federal polity. Recall the fact that the TDP came into being in 1982, led by the indomitable N.T. Rama Rao, in opposition to the centralisation of power in New Delhi and the misuse of that centralised power. It was NTR who made Prime Minister Indira Gandhi appoint the Sarkaria Commission that recommended restoring balance to Centre-State relations.

While NTR remained a provincial politician as chief minister, he played an important national role as the voice of the states. He reminded one and all the opening lines of the Constitution: “India, that is Bharat, is a Union of States”. NTR's famous quote, that I often heard Prime Minister Manmohan Singh deploy with a smile to disarm chief ministers making too many demands on him, was: “The Centre is a conceptual myth.”

During Mr Modi's decade in New Delhi, he weakened India's federal structure. He wound up the Planning Commission and the National Development Council. As a CM, Mr Modi was a voice of the states against the Centre. As a PM, he has centralised power not just

The problem with Mr Naidu, as I told him at my last meeting with him a few months back, was that he is resting on his laurels. Brand Naidu was about what he did. Not what he would want to.

edging the BJP's help in his victory, made it a point to also thank Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. He made a political point.

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in Delhi but in the PM's office. Mr Naidu would have to speak for the states. He would also have to lend his voice to all those who have been demanding greater balance and transparency in the functioning of the Union government.

While Mr Naidu's role in national politics during the United Front and Vajpayee years is often commented on, few today may be aware of what it actually was. Mr Naidu was the first CM to use the space offered by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and finance minister Manmohan Singh to directly approach the World Bank and undertake a state-level structural adjustment programme. He became the blue-eyed boy of corporate leaders in India and overseas and was the first CM to commission a long-term development strategy with his “AP: Vision 2020” report. Long before Mr Modi spoke of “Amrit Kaal” and the next 25 years, Mr Naidu worked to a plan and a strategy.

The problem with Mr Naidu, as I told him at my last meeting with him a few months back, was that he is resting on his laurels. Brand Naidu was about what he did. Not what he would want to. Over the next five years, Mr Naidu will of course be judged by the administrative leadership he provides in Andhra Pradesh, building a new capital and improving state finances. However, he would and should also be judged by the political leadership he is able to provide at the national level. The former is a role he is used to and handled well in the past. The latter is a new role and he will have to play that well for him to be remembered not just as an Andhra Pradesh leader but as a national leader.

The writer is an author, a former newspaper editor and adviser to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He has recently edited The Importance of Shinzo Abe: India, Japan and the Indo-Pacific.

LETTERS
PUNISH PRINCIPAL

As if rape wasn't evil and cruel enough, there is a sick growing trend of taking videos of the despicable act either to further blackmail the victim or intimidate her against complaining to the police. The principal of a school in UP who raped a 15-year-old student of his school deserves the harshest punishment. It is reported that the victim attempted suicide. It must be made mandatory to counsel rape victims' families, and more so if they are minors. Society needs to change its attitude towards the victims. It has been observed that, instead of the perpetrators, it is the victims who have to bear the censure of society and families, hence the rape paranoia.

Anthony Henriques
Mumbai

SHAME ON MEDIA

A LARGE SECTION of the media have lost their credibility. Now, the pollsters joined them after the 2024 Lok Sabha exit polls. Just like the opposition parties, it is the duty of the media to ask the government questions of the people. Media is a bridge between the ruling (and Opposition) parties and the people. But apart from some notable exceptions, the fourth estate preferred to play the role of cheerleaders for the ruling or batting side.

Sujit De
Kolkata

HIDDEN MESSAGE

THE IMPACT of the BJP's poll debacle in UP was evident in how the UP CM, Yogi Adityanath, was treated in the Central Hall of the old Parliament building. While Adityanath was seated in the front row along with some NDA leaders, Mr Narendra Modi walked up to treat the latter but didn't even look towards Adityanath. The Yogi joined other leaders to greet him with a bouquet. In return, Mr Modi patted Adityanath on the back but leaders in the visitors' gallery saw it not as appreciation but as a warning.

Sankar Paul
Chakdaha, West Bengal

₹500 for the best letter of the week goes to S.H. Quadri (June 9). Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

Kishwar Desai
London Diary



Women liven up UK poll debates... a lit fest boycott to save the earth?

As we race towards Election Day in the UK, it is the TV debates which are dominating the media. Prime Minister Sunak was the first to demand at least six debates with the leader of the Labour Party, Sir Keir Starmer — one per week. However, to be honest there was barely any enthusiasm among viewers as neither Mr Sunak nor Mr Starmer are likely to set the Thames on fire. But even though they tried to give us an ill-tempered first debate to add some excitement to the fray, it is unlikely to skew the outcome either way. Honestly, after “boisterous” Boris and “let-tuce” Lizzie we are longing for a non-thrilling Prime Minister who just does his work. Mr Sunak could have continued — but then he surprised everyone by calling an early election. So now it is actually the debates with the “others” which are garnering eyeballs — and include some rather interesting women — the finance minister hopeful Rachel Reeves, the hopeful for Deputy PM Angela Rayner and the ever-hopeful replacement for Rishi Sunak, Penny Mordaunt. And then also the hopeful right winger Nigel Farage who is tired of being just a celebrity and wishes to be a politician again. This lot is a motley assortment — it is like watching the Eurovision contest without the tedious singing and dancing.

One of the abiding political topics over the last few years has been Brexit — the UK leaving the European Union. But because

so much has happened — it is the little things that really count especially where trade is concerned — for instance, strawberries!

Let us remember that the UK — when trading with neighbouring countries across the channel — has to obey the strict rules imposed in other European countries. British strawberry growers have faced the problem for some years now. So now they have found a way around it. The locals like their strawberries large, red and sweet. But the market now for British strawberries has opened up in Japan miles away, so the British strawberry growers have adapted themselves to Japanese tastes who like small pale strawberries that can be used to adorn cakes. Small strawberries travel more easily — so off to Japan go these sweet small strawberries. Hmmm... that's the new shape and taste of Brexit.

Meanwhile... Shakespeare goes on providing business to the West End century after century. Of course, producers are free to let their imagination run riot. Thus at the Globe Theatre we have a new look Richard the Third. This story of a cruel king (with a hunchback) is a challenge as Shakespeare has packed a lot of English history into the play. Michelle Terry who is the creator of this latest reincarnation has decided to stage it with an all-female cast. The physical deformity of Richard (we are told) is all in his masculinity — and not necessarily visible. It is attracting a lot of attention, even though the Bard is re-interpreted

over and over and over...

What is the connection with Taylor Swift and London? Or maybe the UK? Her popularity graph keeps rising here and one of the reasons could be that, as per the gossip columns, she has had a line of British boyfriends since 2012. Her love affair with the UK is reflected in the towns she performs in as they link themselves with her — recently “Beate” Liverpool rebranded itself (albeit temporarily) as Taylor Town, and when in 2015 she said she has Scottish ancestry — the sponsors of the show changed their tag line from Scottish Gas to Scottish Lass. Later it was revealed that her great-grandfather Lance G. Findlay had Scottish and South African ancestors — though he lived in London.

And now with her latest sold out show in Edinburgh this weekend she is charging ahead of Madonna without resorting to conical bras and other stunts. Among the richest star performers today — Taylor Swift is also one of the few not afraid of mixing politics with music, especially in the US where she has not kept her priorities hidden — just like she has worn her heart on her sleeve for the very special city of London.

And here we go again with the cancel culture. An organisation called Fossil Free Books is insisting that Baillie Gifford (an investment firm that invests in fossil

fuels) pull out of all the festivals it supports. The Hay Festival and the Edinburgh international book festival decided that they would reject its sponsorship. These are all noble intentions — but then oddly enough, we are all, as authors, happy to use paper to publish our books which is made from pulping trees. And when we travel for literature festivals we are constantly adding to our carbon footprint. Everything we do — the food we eat, the clothes we wear — makes the world a poorer place. Yes, we must take a stand and shine a light — but each time we must hold ourselves accountable as well.

And let's not forget, that there is a Baillie Gifford literary prize, too!

So to remain sane we all need to visit the upcoming exhibition on Barbie at the Design Museum. As per the publicity, “Highlights include a rare first edition of the very first doll released by Mattel in 1959 (‘Number 1 Barbie’), the groundbreaking Day to Night Barbie from 1985 and the best-selling Barbie of all time, 1992's Totally Hair Barbie which sold over 10 million across the globe.” For intellectual stimulation during election season, it sounds perfect!

Kishwar Desai is an award winning author and columnist. She is also the Chair of the Partition Museums in Amritsar and Delhi.

CRICKHIT



ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

SHORT SINGLES

Proteas take on plucky B'desh

South Africa will hope for a better batting performance when they take on a plucky Bangladesh in their Group 'D' match of the T20 World Cup in New York on Monday. Both teams will have their task cut out as they will have to navigate the unpredictable surface at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium.

While South Africa may have a slight edge having played their previous two games here, Bangladesh are somewhat familiar with the conditions having faced India in their warm-up fixture at this venue.

South Africa laboured to victory against the Netherlands on Saturday and their batters didn't look comfortable in the win against Sri Lanka either while chasing 103 and 77 respectively.

The Proteas are not expected to tinker with their four-pronged pace attack comprising Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Marco Jansen and Ottneil Baartman that has served them well in the tournament so far with Keshav Maharaj taking on the spin duties.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh began their campaign with a win over rivals Sri Lanka which will boost their morale.

But like the Proteas, the Bangladesh batters will also have to do better. They had struggled in the warm-up game against India and also against Sri Lanka.



Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar waves to the crowd prior to the start of the India vs Pakistan match in New York on Sunday. — MOHAMMED JAFFER SNAPSINDIA

Pulling out of IPL best call: Zampa

Australia spinner Adam Zampa said that pulling out of IPL 2024 was the "best thing" to do coming into the T20 World Cup, adding that skipping the league also allowed him to spend time with family and tend to injuries.

Zampa played a pivotal role in Australia's 36-run win against arch-rivals England on Saturday.

"Yeah, obviously made that decision a little while ago to pull out of the IPL and I thought it was the best thing for me moving forward into this World Cup," said Zampa at the post-match press conference.

"I was tired, I had some niggles and I'm a family man as well, so trying to put them first over work sometimes is pretty important."

"I actually am a bit of a slow starter and I put in a little bit of extra work. My body feels great and I just did that bit of extra work. Maybe a bit more bowling than I usually would before a tournament like this. And then the practice games and everything just feels nice at the moment."

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BLUES OUT OF SYNC

India bowled out for lowly total against Pakistan

MOSES KONDETY
NEW YORK, JUNE 9

Team India flattered to deceive as they put up a poor show against Pakistan in their crucial Group 'A' match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium here on what was supposed to be a Super Sunday.

Put in to bat on a wicket where shot-making was difficult, the mighty Blues came a cropper to be all out for a paltry 119 despite some generous fielding against a disciplined bowling attack led by Naseem Shah. The right-arm pacer was right on the money, taking three wickets while conceding just 21 runs in his four overs.

Haris Rauf (3/21) and Mohammed Amir (2/23) were the other bowling stars for Pakistan. Both were on hat-tricks, in the 18th and 15th overs respectively.

At the time of this edition going to bed, Pakistan were 35 for 1 after six overs, looking in control of the chase.

Naseem put the skids under the Indian batting by dismissing the dangerous Virat Kohli, who has been Pakistan's nemesis in the past, in the second over itself. The IPL top-scorer cut the pacer loosely to Usman Khan at cover point to depart for 4.

His opening partner Rohit Sharma tried to shake off the setback with some aggressive batting but to no avail. After hitting a six and a boundary in his 12-ball 13, the Indian captain played a flick that had fetched him a six earlier off Shaheen Afridi only to be caught by Haris Rauf at deep square leg this time.

That prompted the team management to promote Axar Patel as a pinch hitter at No. 4. The left-hander joined Rishabh Pant and put up a decent stand of 39 for the third wicket before leaping out of his crease in an attempt to nail Naseem. He missed the line and saw his stumps disturbed. Axar's 20 came off 18 balls and included two boundaries and the only other six of the innings.

Pant was India's top



Naseem Shah (right) of Pakistan celebrates the dismissal of India batter Shivam Dube during their T20 World Cup match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York, on Sunday. — AP

scorer with a chancy 42 that included six boundaries. The left-hander was fortunate to get away,

twice, in the sixth over bowled by Amir. First, Iftikhar Ahmed at first slip couldn't quite get

close to an edge flying past him, and then Usman Khan failed to hold on to a skier while running back-

SCOREBOARD

India: Rohit Sharma c Rauf b Afridi 13, Virat Kohli c Usman b Naseem 4, Rishabh Pant c Babar Amir 42, Axar Patel b Naseem 20, Suryakumar Yadav c Amir b Rauf 7, Shivam Dube c&b Naseem 3, Hardik Pandya c Iftikhar b Rauf, Ravindra Jadeja c Imad b Amir 0, Arshdeep (run out) 9, Jasprit Bumrah c Imad b Rauf 0, Mohammad Siraj (not out) 7. Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-5) 7. Total (all out in 19 overs) 119.

Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-19, 3-58, 4-89, 5-95, 6-96, 7-96, 8-112, 9-112.

Bowling: Shaheen Shah Afridi 4-0-29-1, Naseem Shah 4-0-21-3, Mohammad Amir 4-0-23-2, Iftikhar Ahmed 1-0-7-0, Imad Wasim 3-0-17-0, Haris Rauf 3-0-21-3.

Scoreboard is incomplete

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wards from cover. Rishabh was dropped once again, while on 17 as Usman could not get his fingers around a top edge running from deep.

Pant continued to live on the edge though, trying switch-hits that did not connect. He reversed the trend in the 10th over bowled by Haris Rauf, middling three fine shots that raced to the boundary as India stepped up to 81 for 3 at the halfway stage.

From thereon, they nosedived. Earlier, the start of the match was delayed by an hour due to rain and subsequent interruptions.

SCOREBOARD

West Indies: Brandon King b Ramjani 13, Johnson Charles c Ramjani b Nakrani 44, Nicholas Pooran c & b Masaba 22, Rovman Powell c Obuya b Masaba 23, Sherfane Rutherford b Kyeuweta 22, Andre Russell not out 30, Romario Shepherd not out 5. Extras (b-5, lb-1, nb-3, w-5) 14. Total (For 5 wickets in 20 overs) 173.

Bowling: Alpesh Ramjani 3-0-16-1, Cosmas Kyeuweta 4-0-42-1, Juma Miyagi 3-0-29-0, Frank Nsubuga 3-0-29-0, Brian Masaba 4-0-31-2, Dinesh Nakrani 3-0-20-1.

Uganda: Roger Mukasa lbw b Hosein 0, Simon Ssesazi c Joseph b Shepherd 4, Robinson Obuya b Russell 6, Alpesh Ramjani lbw b Hosein 5, Kenneth Waiswa lbw b Hosein 1, Riayat Ali Shah b Hosein 3, Dinesh Nakrani b Hosein 0, Brian Masaba c Pooran b Joseph 1, Juma Miyagi not out 13, Cosmas Kyeuweta lbw b Motie 1, Frank Nsubuga b Joseph 0. Extras (lb-3, w-2) 5. Total (all out in 12 overs) 39.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-8, 3-15, 4-15, 5-19, 6-22, 7-23, 8-25, 9-34.

Bowling: Akeal Hosein 4-0-11-5, Romario Shepherd 2-0-9-1, Andre Russell 1-0-4-1, Alzarri Joseph 3-0-6-2, Gudakesh Motie 2-0-6-1.

HOSEIN FIFER FASHIONS WINDIES WIN

Providence (Guyana), June 9: Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein worked his inimitable sorcery with a fifer as hosts West Indies hammered Uganda by 134 runs in the T20 World Cup here. Hosein knocked the wind out of the Uganda batting unit with career-best figures of 5/11, helping West Indies bowl out Uganda for 39 in 12 overs, the joint-lowest team total in the men's T20 World Cup.

This was after Johnson Charles (44) emerged the top scorer while Andre Russell (30 not out) provided the hosts with the

final push to help West Indies post a challenging 173/5.

The win has boosted West Indies' Net Run Rate to a healthy 3.574, which will help them in their bid to finish in the top two in Group C.

"It gets tougher from here but we understand conditions and cricket is not easy in the Caribbean," West Indies skipper Rovman Powell said after the match.

"We talk about improving 10-15 per cent every match. Last game, we were flat so we just wanted to improve as a team.

When you are playing at home, the pressure can sometimes get to you. So, a little bit of rust (in the first match). We started off at 60, now up to 70-80 percent," he added.

The gulf between the two sides was evident when the West Indies bowlers were operating.

"Tough day for us. It is a very steep learning curve. Just shows the difference in class. We were outplayed but we must take the learnings from it: as a batting unit, what we can do better to keep us in the game." Uganda captain Masaba said. — PTI

SANJIVANI BAGS TOP SPOT IN PORTLAND

Portland (USA), June 9: Asian Championships bronze medallist runner Sanjivani Jadhav won the gruelling women's 10,000m race at the Portland Track Festival High-Performance Meet, clocking a personal best time of 32:22.77 seconds here. Portland has turned out to be a happy hunting ground for the 27-year-old long-distance runner, who had finished second in the event last year, registering 32:46.88 seconds, her first sub-33 mark.

Another Indian in the fray, Seema finished fifth clocking 32:55.91. Commonwealth and Asian Games medallist, Avinash Sable clocked 8:21.85 seconds in men's 3000m steeplechase to finish second, though he was a good 10 seconds adrift of his national record of 8:11.20, set at the 2022 CWG where he had won the silver medal. — PTI

Alcaraz downs Zverev to win 1st French Open

Paris, June 9: Carlos Alcaraz fought back to defeat Alexander Zverev in a five-set French Open final on Sunday and become the youngest man to win Grand Slam titles on all three surfaces.

The 21-year-old battled cramps to recover from 2-1 down in sets and win a gripping contest 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 after four hours and 19 minutes.

Alcaraz adds the Roland Garros crown to the Wimbledon title he won against Novak Djokovic last year and the 2022 US Open.

He will head to the Australian Open next year with the chance to become the youngest man to com-



Carlos Alcaraz of Spain celebrates after beating Germany's Alexander Zverev 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 in the French Open men's singles final in Paris on Sunday. — AP

plete the career Grand Slam.

Fourth seed Zverev, who settled a court case in Germany two days ago

over domestic abuse allegations, is still waiting for a maiden major title.

He had also lost his only previous Slam final in five

sets, when he blew a two-set lead against Dominic Thiem at the 2020 US Open.

Zverev had high hopes of

finally getting over the line — he has also lost six Slam semifinals — but Alcaraz was too strong in the key moments as he levelled their head-to-head record at 5-5.

Alcaraz said before the final he wanted to join the list of men's players from his country, including his idol Rafael Nadal, to win the Roland Garros title, and he celebrated becoming the eighth Spanish champion by falling to the clay with his head in his hands in disbelief.

Zverev endured a miserable start, double-faulting on the first two points of the match en route to being broken in the opening game. — AFP

POINTS TABLE

GROUP A						
TEAMS	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
USA	2	2	0	0	4	+0.626
INDIA	1	1	0	0	2	+3.065
CANADA	2	1	1	0	2	-0.274
PAKISTAN	1	0	1	0	0	0.000
IRELAND	2	0	2	0	0	-1.712

GROUP B						
TEAMS	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
AUSTRALIA	2	2	0	0	4	+1.875
SCOTLAND	2	1	0	0	3	+0.736
NAMIBIA	2	1	1	0	2	-0.309
ENGLAND	2	0	2	1	1	-1.800
OMAN	2	0	2	0	0	-0.975

GROUP C						
TEAMS	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
AFGHANISTAN	2	2	0	0	4	+5.225
WEST INDIES	2	2	0	0	4	+3.574
UGANDA	3	1	2	0	2	-4.217
PNG	2	0	2	0	0	-0.434
NEW ZEALAND	1	0	1	0	0	-4.200

updated after West Indies vs Uganda match

GROUP D						
TEAMS	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
SOUTH AFRICA	2	2	0	0	4	+0.789
BANGLADESH	1	1	0	0	2	+0.039
NETHERLANDS	2	1	1	0	2	+0.024
NEPAL	1	0	1	0	0	-0.539
SRI LANKA	2	0	2	0	0	-0.777

Ruthless Aussies punish England

Bridgetown (Barbados), June 10: Jos Buttler said England must "dust ourselves down" after a damaging 36-run defeat by ruthless Australia in Barbados on Saturday left their T20 World Cup defence in the balance.

Australia raced out of the blocks at the Kensington Oval, posting 201/7 in their 20 overs, and England wickets tumbled after a bright start as they struggled to 165/6.

Buttler's men, who flopped badly when defending their 50-over title in India last year, are still winless after their opening game against Scotland was wrecked by rain.

But Australia top Group B after two wins as they stay on track to become the first nation to hold all three global cricket titles simultaneously — Test, one-day and T20.

Opener David Warner top-scored for the winners with 39 while spinner Adam Zampa was player of the match after taking 2/28, including the crucial wicket of Buttler for 42.

Buttler won the toss in Bridgetown but watched in horror as Australia's openers Warner and Travis Head savaged his bowlers.

Spinner Will Jacks was smashed for 22 runs in his first over and paceman Mark Wood also conceded 22 runs in his opening over as Australia raced to 55/0 off four overs, relishing a short boundary on one side of the ground.

SCOREBOARD

Australia: Travis Head b Archer 34, David Warner b Ali 39, Mitchell Marsh st Buttler b Livingstone 35, Glenn Maxwell c Salt b Rashid 28, Marcus Stoinis c Brook b Jordan 30, Tim David c Livingstone b Jordan 11, Matthew Wade not out 17, Pat Cummins run out 0, Mitchell Starc not out 0. Extras (lb-1, w-6) 7. Total (for 7 wickets in 20 overs) 201.

Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-74, 3-139, 4-141, 5-168, 6-200, 7-200.

Bowling: Moeen Ali 2-0-18-1, Will Jacks 1-0-22-0, Jofra Archer 4-0-28-1, Mark Wood 3-0-32-0, Adil Rashid 4-0-41-1, Chris Jordan 4-0-44-2, Liam Livingstone 2-0-15-1.

England: Phil Salt b Zampa 37, Jos Buttler c Cummins b Zampa 42, Will Jacks c Starc b Stoinis 10, Jonny Bairstow c Maxwell b Hazlewood 7, Moeen Ali c Warner b Cummins 25, Harry Brook not out 20, Liam Livingstone c Starc b Cummins 15, Chris Jordan not out 1. Extras (lb-3, w-5) 8. Total (for 6 wickets in 20 overs) 165.

Fall of wickets: 1-73, 2-92, 3-96, 4-124, 5-128, 6-152.

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 3-0-37-0, Josh Hazlewood 4-0-28-1, Pat Cummins 4-0-23-2, Marcus Stoinis 3-0-24-1, Adam Zampa 4-0-28-2, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-22-0.

Moeen Ali made the breakthrough England desperately needed, bowling Warner for 39, and paceman Jofra Archer flattened the stumps of Head (34), leaving Australia 74/2. — AFP

RUSSELL ON CANADIAN POLE AFTER DEAD HEAT WITH MAX

Montréal (Canada), June 9: George Russell beat Max Verstappen to pole position for the Canadian Grand Prix on Saturday when the pair shared a best lap time of one minute and 12.000 seconds. The Briton took the prime starting spot because he set his lap time earlier in the session. In a dramatic conclusion to a closely-contested qualifying session, Mercedes' Russell was unable to improve on his Q2 time while Red Bull's series leader and three-time world champion shaved more than a second off his lap.

It was enough to lift the Dutchman to the front row of the grid alongside the Briton, who secured his second career pole to give a boost to Mercedes as they emerge from a long period in the doldrums thanks to successive upgrades packages.

Verstappen, who was chasing a third successive Montreal pole, was philosophical. "It is what it is," he said. "Going into qualifying, I would have taken that."

Lando Norris was third just 0.021 seconds off their pace ahead of McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri, RB's Daniel Ricciardo, Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin and Lewis Hamilton in the second Mercedes. — AFP