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PM Modi extends his warm greetings to Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu on Eid-al-Adha. The frosty relations between India and the Maldives have witnessed an apparent thaw after Muizzu attended PM Modi's swearing-in-ceremony recently

Supersub Wout Weghorst scores late to give the Netherlands a narrow win over Poland in a Euro 2024 match **P 14**

Israel says it will hold daily tactical pauses in military activity along a main road in southern Gaza to allow more aid to flow into the enclave **Page Opp**

Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana slams 117 off 127 balls while leg-spinner Asha Sobhana shines with a 4-wicket haul on debut to set up India's 143-run thrashing of SA in the first ODI. Mandhana also becomes second Indian woman to reach 7,000 runs in int'l cricket **Page Opp**



OBC activists on fast for 4 days, CM makes plea

The indefinite hunger strike launched by OBC activists Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare at Wagdodri in Jalna to protect their community's quota entered fourth day Sunday. Earlier, CM Shinde said he had spoken with Hake on Saturday on phone through OBC leader Prakash Shendge who met the activists to express his solidarity. **P 4**

37 in MHT-CET in 100 percentile

Thirty-seven students, including 9 from Mumbai, are in the 100th percentile in MHT-CET, the entrance test for engineering (PCM) and pharmacy (PCB) in Maharashtra. Of the 20 in the top bracket in engineering, 13 are boys and 7 girls. **P 2**

Zomato in talks for Paytm movie biz

Paytm is in advanced stages of discussion to sell its movie and events ticketing business to Zomato as part of strategy to divest non-core assets, sources told TOI. The deal, if finalised, could value the vertical of Paytm at close to Rs 2,000 crore. **P 15**

4 flatmates among dead in bus crash

Among the 23 tourists on board the ill-fated Tempo Traveller which fell into a gorge in Rudraprayag district on Saturday, leaving at least 15 dead and 11 injured, were six women, who shared a flat in Noida. While four of them died, 2 are injured. **P 8**

Man claims plot to kill Yogi, held

An Allahabad driver who posted a message on social media saying a Kanpur police SI Yogi murdered, was arrested. The SI had lodged a complaint alleging threat, verbal abuse and defamation by the accused. **P 9**

Ganga Dussehra: 13 drown in 3 states

Thirteen drownings were reported across Bihar, UP and Uttarakhand during Ganga Dussehra — on which it is considered auspicious to take a dip in the river. In Bihar, 4 of a family drowned as their overcrowded boat capsized in the Ganga. **P 6**

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Times Interact | P 6 & 8

EVMs can be hacked: Musk. Not in India: Ex-IT jr minister

Rahul, Akhilesh Join In, Doubt EVM Security

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Electronic voting machines (EVMs) were again in focus with Elon Musk, the multi-billionaire founder of Tesla and SpaceX, and former Union IT minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar engaging in a debate on X after Musk suggested eliminating the machines following reports of EVM irregularities in Puerto Rico's primary elections.

Chandrasekhar said it was a "huge sweeping generalisation" that held no truth for the EVMs used in India which are not connected to internet. He said EVMs could be "architect-

'HAPPY TO RUN A TUTORIAL, ELON'

"We should eliminate EVMs. The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high | ELON MUSK ON X, RESPONDING TO POST BY US POLITICIAN ROBERT F KENNEDY JR ALLEGING IRREGULARITIES IN PUERTO RICO'S PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Indian EVMs are custom-designed, secure and isolated from any network or media... Factory-programmed controllers that cannot be reprogrammed... | RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR, BJP'S FORMER UNION MINISTER

ted and built correctly", as India has done, and even offered to run a tutorial for Musk on the subject.

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav raised Musk's comments to flag "concerns" about EVMs.

Polling officer rebuts claim of OTP use to rig Mum N-W result

Prafulla Marpakwar & Nitasha Natu | TNN

Mumbai: With allegations of unauthorised EVM access intensifying, the Mumbai Suburban Returning Officer (RO) issued a rebuttal on Sunday and notices to publications that carried reports on use of a phone by a polling agent in the Mumbai North-West LS constituency. The RO, Vandana Suryavanshi, clarified that EVMs are standalone devices without wired connectivity and need no OTPs on mobile phones for unlocking.

Vanraj police had booked Mangesh Pandlikar, working for an independent candidate and a relative of Sena MP Ravindra Waikar, for unauthorised use of a phone in a counting centre at NESCO. Police said some media outlets incorrectly reported that the phone provided OTPs for opening EVMs. The phone, belonging to the EC portal operator, was sent for analysis.

EVM ACCESS

- ▶ Returning officer of Mum North-West says no OTP can unlock EVM, it is non-programmable with no wireless links
- ▶ A candidate's representative was accused of using phone inside a counting centre to gain access to EVMs
- ▶ OTPs are only to unlock EC portal to enter polling data

Some irregularities detected in NEET at specific locations: Min

'Will Spare No One, Including NTA, If Confirmed'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Taking a serious view of the row over National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to medical colleges, Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan

▶ Docs, students unite to lead fight against NEET flaws, **P 10**

Sunday said no one, including officials of National Testing Agency that conducts the exams, will be spared if irregularities are found, and interests of all students who took the test will be protected. Govt is looking at reforms to ensure that such problems do not occur in future.

Pradhan admitted that "some irregularities in NEET exam have come to light from some specific locations" and assured all candidates that no illegal practice will be tolerated. NTA and the education ministry are looking into allegations of paper leak at some centres in Patna, which

"I assure students and parents that govt has taken this (irregularities) seriously. Even if big officials of NTA are found guilty, they will not be spared. A lot of improvement is required in NTA. Govt is concerned... no culprit will be spared, they will get the harshest punishment" — DHARMENDRA PRADHAN, UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

has been flagged by local police although govt officials maintained that the number of candidates who cleared the exams from these centres was not significant.

Usually, as a matter of abundant precaution, there are two sets of papers, with the final one to be used decided on the morning of the exam.

"Some irregularities have come to light in two places. I assure students and parents that govt has taken this seriously. Even if big officials of NTA are found guilty, they will not be spared. A lot of improvement is required in NTA. The govt is concerned

'Scrap NEET': Stalin renews demand

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin reiterated his party's demand to scrap NEET, highlighting complaints of alleged irregularities in the medical entrance test this year. Stalin cited Gujarat Police FIRs on invigilators allegedly tampering with exam sheets for money amid claims that cheques, some of several crores, had changed hands. **P 8**

about this, no culprit will be spared, they will get harshest punishment," Pradhan said.

The assurance from the minister came amid attacks from the opposition over NEET-UG, where 23 lakh candidates appeared on May 5. The results were declared on June 4, and NTA has come under severe criticism, amid allegations of irregularities, inflated marks and paper leak.

Stating that information on alleged irregularities have emerged, Pradhan said, "Govt is working towards its resolution and reform."

▶ '100% transparency', **P 10**

After terror strikes, Shah reviews scene; Jammu troop levels to go up

Bharti.Jain@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Jammu division of J&K — which witnessed back-to-back terror attacks in its Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts last week — is set to get a big boost in number of security forces who will dominate the mountain tops to tackle fresh infiltration bids by terrorists from Pakistan and comb its forested and undulating terrain for terrorists holed up there with an intent to create unrest and communal flare-up among the region's mixed Hindu-Muslim population.

At a review meeting chaired by him here on Sunday, home minister Amit Shah directed security agencies to use "innovative means" and replicate the successes achieved in Kashmir region over the past few years — as reflected in the sharp decline in terrorist attacks and law and order-related incidents in the traditional Valley hotbeds, record flow of

BOOST FOR VILLAGE DEF COMMITTEES?

▶ HM Amit Shah directs security agencies to use 'innovative methods' & replicate successes achieved in Kashmir by rolling out an area domination plan and zero-terror plan in the Jammu division

▶ Sources tell TOI that revised counter-terror strategies for Jammu

tourists and high voter turnouts in recent Lok Sabha polls — by rolling out an area domination plan and zero-terror plan in the Jammu division that seems to be the new target of Pakistan-based terror outfits.

Shah, in a separate meeting, also reviewed security and other arrangements for the Amarnath Yatra beginning June 29. Among measures stressed by him to make the yatra secure and hassle-free for devotees were



HM Amit Shah flanked by NSA Ajit Doval (L) & J&K LG Manoj Sinha during a security meet

▶ Seamless coordination, **P 10**

Third threat to Salman this yr, Raj man held

Mumbai: The city crime branch has arrested a 25-year-old man from Rajasthan for uploading a video threatening to eliminate actor Salman Khan.

This is the third threat against Salman this year, including the firing at his Bandra residence in April, reports S Ahmed Ali.

Banwarilal Laturial Gurjar from Bundi allegedly uploaded a video on YouTube in which he says: "Goldy [Bhar], Rohit [Godara], Nitin and Vivek [all associated with jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi] are with us. Salman has an attitude. Despite being told to apologise for the blackbuck killing, he hasn't... However tight his security... we will eliminate him."

▶ In police custody, **P 5**

Russia not at Ukraine meet, India refrains from signing communique

Sachin.Parashar @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The issue of Russia's absence loomed large at the peace summit in Switzerland, as India joined over a dozen countries in not signing a joint communique that declared any peace agreement must be based on Ukraine's territorial integrity. India backed out saying abiding peace wasn't possible in the absence of options acceptable to both sides, as the summit also could not elicit the kind of support Ukraine was hoping for from the Global South.

Among others who did not back the communique, which was endorsed by 84 countries and organisations out of the 100 that participated, were important Indian BRICS partners like UAE, Brazil and South Africa, apart from countries like Indonesia and Thailand.

NOT MUCH SUPPORT FROM GLOBAL SOUTH

- ▶ 'Respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty can serve as a basis for achieving comprehensive, lasting peace in Ukraine', says communique
- ▶ Endorsed by 84 countries and organisations out of the 100 that participated
- ▶ India didn't associate with communique as only options acceptable to both parties
- ▶ can lead to abiding peace, says MEA secretary (west) Pavan Kapoor, who led the Indian delegation
- ▶ India's position in line with stand taken by China, which boycotted the summit
- ▶ Summit could not elicit the kind of support that Ukraine was hoping for from the Global South

Given the efforts to keep Russia out and Moscow's own reservations about the summit, India was represented, as reported by TOI Saturday official, by a secretary-level official at the two-day summit that ended on Sunday. India never considered participation at the highest or even ministerial level.

Justifying India's decision to not associate itself with any communique/document

▶ 'Will strive for peace', **P 10**

1st Modi 3.0 Budget to eye job creation by expanding PLI scheme, focus on MSMEs

Sidhartha@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Steps to boost jobs by expanding the Production Linked Incentive scheme to furniture, toys, footwear and more segments of textiles, along with a focus on MSMEs, while increasing income levels of women and boosting infrastructure are

▶ FM to meet farmers' bodies, economists, **P 10**

expected to be among the key thrust areas of the Modi govt's first budget in its third term with several of the issues also being part of govt's 100-day agenda that will feed into the targets for 2030.

Besides, the finance ministry is looking at sops for the middle class, which may not necessarily be limited to options around tax concessions but may extend to interest rate subsidies for housing lo-

MIDDLE CLASS SOPS?

- ▶ FM looks at sops for the middle class, which may not be limited to tax concessions but may extend to interest rate subsidies for home loans
- ▶ Multiple suggestions to raise income levels for women
- ▶ In case of infrastructure, govt is keen to continue with the thrust on public spending

Expand base, avoid super rich tax: CII

ITC CMD Sanjiv Puri, in an interview to TOI, emphasised the need to widen the tax base, while rejecting higher levies on the super rich and backed a three-slab GST structure. **P 11**

ans and other measures.

▶ Meeting with state FMs, **P 10**

No need to teach kids about riots, says NCERT chief after revisions in textbook

New Delhi: Rejecting accusations of saffronisation of curriculum, NCERT director Dinesh Saklani clarified that references to the Gujarat riots and Babri Masjid demolition were modified in school textbooks to avoid creating "violent and depressed citizens".

Textbooks have seen several crucial topics dropped or altered. The assertion that ancient DNA from the Rakhigarhi site rules out Aryan immigration, leading to calls for more research into whether the Harappans and Vedic people were the same, has been removed. Also omitted is a table of Mughal emperors' achievements. Other deletions include BJP's 'rath yatra' to Ayodhya, the role of kar sevaks, communal violence after Babri Masjid demolition; and BJP's expression of 'regret over the happenings at Ayodhya'

with PTI, Saklani emphasised these tweaks were part of the annual revision process and should not stoke a controversy. "Why should we teach about riots in school textbooks? We want to create positive citizens, not violent and depressed individuals," he said.

▶ 'Learn as they grow up', **P 8**

'NOT TO CREATE DEPRESSED CITIZENS'

- ▶ Revised class 12 political science textbook does not mention Babri Masjid, but refers to it as 'three-domed structure'
- ▶ Ayodhya section in textbook pruned from four to two pages
- ▶ Latest deletions include: BJP's 'rath yatra' from Somnath to Ayodhya; role of kar sevaks; communal violence after Babri Masjid demolition; and BJP's expression of 'regret over the happenings at Ayodhya'

with PTI, Saklani emphasised these tweaks were part of the annual revision process and should not stoke a controversy. "Why should we teach about riots in school textbooks? We want to create positive citizens, not violent and depressed individuals," he said.

▶ 'Learn as they grow up', **P 8**

Speaker's post will be decided by parties: Birla

Mid growing speculation that the BJP leadership may prefer his continuation as Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla Sunday said the decision would be made by all political parties, reports Manish Gohain.

"Changes should keep happening. But I am nobody to comment on this. The Speaker's post will be decided by political parties in the House," he said. Speculation about Birla getting a second term has gathered force amid strong indications that the constitutional position will stay with BJP; and that two of its crucial allies — TDP and JD(U) — are comfortable with the idea. **P 6**

July launch for Maha's health scheme, premium up by 60%

Mumbai: The annual premium for the state's revamped flagship health scheme, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Jan Arogya Abhiyan (MJPJAY), has surged by 60% to over Rs 3,000 crore, as Maharashtra joins a handful of states to roll out universal health coverage for all citizens. Following more than a year of announcements, the upgraded MJPJAY is set to launch on July 1. This is MJPJAY's biggest upgrade yet since its launch in 2012, reports Sumittra DebRoy.

MJPJAY 2.0 offers substantial improvements as coverage will extend to every resident of the state, so long as they can produce a valid ration card and domicile certificate. Importantly, the amount allotted per family has been increased from Rs 1.5 lakh to

IN A NEW AVATAR

Features	Previous	New
Coverage /family	₹1.5 lakh	₹5 lakh
Eligibility	Specific ration cards + Annual income only up to ₹1L	No income ceiling; all citizens eligible
Empanelled hospitals	1,000	1,900
▶ Premium to be paid by state for each family: ₹1,300		▶ In 2023-24, 5.7L families availed scheme to cover ₹10.3L procedures

Rs 5 lakh. The state has recently finalised the tender process, selecting United India Assurance as the insurance provider once again. For an estimated 12.3 crore families, the state will pay a premium of Rs 1,300 per family.

▶ 50% public hospitals, **P 5**

7 hamlets in state's Red bastion ban entry of Maoists

Soumitra.Bose @timesgroup.com

Nagpur: Seven tribal hamlets along the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border have volunteered to shut out armed Maoists for good, going from laying booby traps for govt forces at the guerrillas' behest barely two months ago to braving the fear of a backlash to extricate themselves from the stranglehold of four decades of indoctrination.

Paraynar, Nelgunda, Kucher, Kawande, Gongewada, Midadapalli and Mahakapadi in Bhamragarh taluka sit at the foothills of Abujmarh on the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border, housing the headquarters of the proscribed People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA). There is a leap of faith powered by the promi-



Reversing a four decade-old trend, tribals assembled at a krishi melava (agricultural congregation) to adopt the 'gaonbandi' scheme of the development they missed out on through the decades when Maoists held sway. The guerrillas still strike fear in the villagers, but their writ is being slowly erased.

This LS election was first in memory that the run-up to voting day and beyond in so-

among those who embraced govt's Gaonbandi scheme during a "krishi melava", or farmer congregation, at the Dhodraj police outpost. In return for taking a vow not to collude with Maoists, they were promised benefits of all welfare programmes that form the bulwark of the scheme.

"The same tribals who were working with the Maoists two months ago came forward to pinpoint ambush locations and help sanitise the area by uprooting IEDs," a senior police officer said. Gadchiroli SP Neelotpal said the tribal population of Bhamragarh had always been hostile towards security forces, but were waking up to the promise of infrastructural and economic development.

▶ Surrender by guerilla, **P 8**

'93 blasts convict ran ganja racket in jail, had enmity with many inmates: Murder probe

Abhijeet.Patil@timesgroup.com

Kolhapur: Two weeks after 1993 Mumbai serial blasts convict Mohammad Ali Khan (63) — aka Munna — was murdered by five inmates in Kalamba central jail, Kolhapur police have found that he ran a cannabis (ganja) distribution racket inside the prison. The racket helped Khan, who was lodged in Kalamba prison since 2013, increase his influence among other inmates, Kolhapur police, who are investigating the murder, said, adding, this was the main reason for the attack.

Inspector Sanjeevkumar Zade of Juna Rajwada police told TOI, "We have found that he was the key in operation of

JAIL MIRED IN ROW FOR COUPLE OF YRS

WHO: 1993 Bombay serial blasts convict Munna — aka Mohd Alikhan and Manojkumar Gupta. He had escorted Tiger Memon to and fro between Mumbai & Raigad for landing of huge cache of arms

ACCUSED: While two of the attackers were in judicial custody, while three are in prison for MCOCA cases. All five are from different places

THE JAIL: Kalamba Jail has been mired in controversy for a couple of years. Narcotics and SIM cards have been found inside. Recently, over 200 mobile phones were recovered after which 11 staffers, including two officials, were dismissed

MURDER: Munna was attacked and killed by five inmates in Kolhapur's Kalamba Central Jail on June 2. He was beaten up with concrete and metal cover of drainage chamber near Jail's bathing well

a ganja racket. He used to distribute ganja smuggled into the jail... We also found that Khan was threatening other inmates who challenged him

and his position. Over time he had developed enmity with many inmates.

RTS: ₹10 reward for 'flawless' service delivery!

State chief commissioner of Right to Services (RTS) commission Manu Kumar Srivastava has recommended to state an annual incentive of Rs 10 per application/case to designated officers "flawlessly" discharging services requested by citizens in a time-bound manner. There are over 1.5 lakh designated officers for 662-plus online govt services delivered online. Given the capacity of average 300-400 applications per officer; they can get an annual reward of Rs 4,000. "If the delivery of services is not flawless that case will not be counted. The flawlessness will be decided by the commission," said sources. **P 2**

Nine of 37 in MHT-CET 100 percentile from Mumbai

Hemali Chhaphia @timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Thirty-seven students, including nine from Mumbai, are in the 100th percentile in MHT-CET, the entrance test for courses like engineering (PCM) and pharmacy (PCB) in Maharashtra.

The state's CET cell declared results on Sunday. Of the 20 to be in the top bracket in engineering, 13 are boys and 7 are girls. In case of PCB, 11 are boys and 6 are girls.

Another principal said it is difficult to say much about cut-offs till the first list is declared. But with a wide variety of options that students have among central institutes, private universities and multiple deemed institutes, the entry scores may be similar to last year's cut-offs with a small rise in popular programmes.

The results that were to be out at 6 pm on Sunday were declared after a 45-minute delay but the website was riddled with glitches till almost

MEET THE STUDENTS WHO MADE MUMBAI PROUD

Consistency was instrumental in my success. Preparing for NEET, I found MHT-CET comparatively simpler. My strategy was to attempt all questions since there was no negative marking. I also appeared for IIT-JEE and achieved 94.5 percentile. My teachers provided unwavering support. Chemistry is my favourite subject, and my ambition is to become a scientist

-Aadya Harichandan



I meticulously planned my study sessions. Joining coaching for IIT mains was pivotal, leading to my achievement. I regularly solved previous years' questions to grasp the patterns. When feeling tired, I took short breaks, often going for walks or listening to music. My aspiration for the future is to pursue computer science

-Pranav Arora

I used to study 6-7 hours daily. Simultaneously, I prepared for IIT-JEE, where I achieved 99.67 percentile. Maths is my favourite subject. I owe my success to my teachers and parents. My dad always emphasized that I give my hundred percent and do my best so that I wouldn't have any regrets, which truly motivated me

-Vanshika Shah



MHT-CET came to me effortlessly as I prepared for NEET, where I achieved AIR 110. Chemistry is my favourite subject, and I aspire to pursue MBBS. My study routine of 15-16 hours daily, coupled with attention to diet and sleep helped me. I meditated regularly, which contributed to my success. I received unwavering support from my parents and teachers

-Sanmay Shah

registering for the exam. Of these, 3.1 lakh registrations came from the PCB group, of which 2.9 lakh students took the test. Of the 4.1 lakh students who registered for the PCM exam, 3.8 lakh appeared. Last year, 6.4 lakh students had registered for the test and in 2022, the figure was 6 lakh, which rose from 5.2 lakh in 2021.

8.15 pm and anxious aspirants spent their Sunday evening refreshing their internet browser. Data as per the CET Cell showed that by 9.32 pm, almost 2.3 lakh candidates had downloaded their scorecards and in the next 15 minutes, the number rose to 3.5 lakh downloads.

MHT-CET 2024 attracted one of the highest registrations compared to previous years, with 7.3 lakh students

lakh boys took the test and in the biology group, the gender ratio is 1.7 lakh girls to 1.3 lakh boys. This MHT-CET was conducted at 159 examination centres, of which 143 were in Maharashtra and 16 were out of the state. Last year, out of a total 1.6 lakh seats available under various engineering branches, 1.2 lakh students confirmed admissions for the academic year 2023-24.

Mum N-W verdict ruckus: CM points to Shiv Sena vote share

Prafulla Marpakwar & Nitasha Natu | TNN

Mumbai: Refuting allegations of EVM rigging, the returning officer of the Mumbai North-West LS constituency, Vandana Suryavanshi, said on Sunday, "there is no OTP (one time password) on mobile phones for unlocking EVM as it is non-programmable, and it has no wireless communication capabilities. It is a complete lie being spread which is being used by some leaders to create a false narrative. EVMs are standalone devices without any wired or wireless connectivity with units outside EVM system/ Advance technical features and robust administrative safeguards are in place to rule out any possibility of manipulation. Safeguards include conducting everything in the presence of candidates or their agents."

Suryavanshi also pointed out that the counting of electronically transmitted postal ballot systems (ETPBS) takes place in physical form (paper ballots) and not electronically, as suggested by the false narratives. She mentioned that a criminal case has been filed in response to the spread of misinformation. In his statement to Vanrai Police, Mangesh Pandilkar, a representative of independent candidate Lata Shinde, said he had borrowed the phone from Dinesh Gurav, the operator of the Election Commission's Encore portal, claiming he needed to call his driver. He claimed that the phone was seized by police before he could make the call following a complaint by candidate Surinder Arora of the Bharat Jan Aardhar Party. Gurav was the one authorized to use the device for receiving OTPs for the Encore portal. A forensic examination of the phone will confirm if Pandilkar's claims are true or whether he used the phone and for what purpose.

A bureaucrat explained that Encore portal operators like Gurav are responsible for entering polling data at the end of each round on the portal. The operator receives an OTP on a registered cell phone, which they enter into the system to gain legal authorization to enter the polling data. The seized phone has been sent for forensic analysis to determine its purpose, calls made, and texts received. The bureaucrat noted that the phone may have received several OTPs whenever Gurav needed to upload data from his computer. The controversy has led to political reactions, with Congress' Rahul Gandhi and Aditya Thackeray of Sena (UBT) expressing concern about the

transparency of the electoral process. Chief minister Eknath Shinde, however, dismissed the allegations as baseless and attributed them to frustration over the Shiv Sena's (Shinde faction) electoral success. The CM said the allegations in case of Waikar's victory are to "mislead" people. "Our Shiv Sena has not only gained 2 lakh votes more in Mumbai and Maharashtra respectively than the UBT Sena but has also scored strike rate of 48% over their 42%." According to Shinde, out of 19.50% votes to Shiv Sena, 14.50% are for the bow-arrow symbol and is a "clear indication that their traditional voter has shifted to us." "This is the reason why they are feeling shattered and frustrated and making baseless allegations," he said. (With inputs by Chittaranjan Tembhekar)

Now, produce govt ID as age proof to buy, drink liquor

Chittaranjan Tembhekar & Anjali Jhangiani | TNN

Mumbai/Pune: Many pubs, bars and liquor stores in Mumbai and Pune have made govt-recognised identification documents, such as voter ID, PAN or Aadhaar card, or driving licence, mandatory for entry to ensure that alcohol is not served to those under 25. Many have even deputed dedicated staff to counters for the job.

One has to be 21 to drink or buy wine or beer, while the legal age for hard liquor is 25. The measure comes in the wake of the Pune Porsche crash and the excise department's recent directive to all establishments selling alcohol, holding them accountable under Maharashtra Prohibition Act for minors' unlawful acts and those found drunk without a liquor permit.

Sukesh Shetty president of Ahar, which has thousands of bars, hotels in Mumbai and Maharashtra as members, said proof is checked mainly when a person looks visibly younger than 25. According to Pradeep Shetty, president of HRAWI, which

has hundreds of star hotels and premium bars as members, said since DigiLocker is a govt app, ID documents on it are also being considered, which was confirmed by Sumit Chawla, president of Association of Progressive Retail Liquor Vendors. Welcoming the move, Bandra resident Prathamesh



Joshi said IDs should be checked properly in case of doorstep deliveries. Manish Agarwal from Pune said a shop insisted on taking a photo of his driver's licence, sparking a fear in him that his personal data could be misused. Vignesh Patel from Ghatkopar raised the same concern. "CCTVs capture my face anyway. What's the point of taking a photo of my ID card?" he asked.

Open Karave island for residential devt: Cidco; activists fume

Umesh K Parida

Navi Mumbai: Cidco has proposed that the Karave island area, located between Nerul and Thane creek off Palm Beach Road, be opened for residential development. In 2017, the area was tagged a no-development zone (NDZ) and was reserved as a regional park zone.

Even as Cidco's development plan for Karave island is in the last stage of approval, activists claim that making it a residential zone will destroy the entire area, including T S Chanakya lake which is frequented by flamingoes.

"Karave island is surrounded by mangroves and coastal regulatory zone area. There is no way to construct connecting roads, water pipelines, sewage lines, among others without disturbing the ecosystem of this area," pointed out activist Sunil Agarwal. "Disturbance of flamingos at T S Chanakya lake will force them to move towards Navi Mumbai international airport site resulting in bird strikes and endangering passengers' safety. Bom-

bay Natural History Society report has warned against any disturbance at the NRI wetland and TS Chanakya wetland." On Dec 17, 1991, state govt had notified 44 villages, including Karave island (under Karave village), Dighe, Uthan, Tetwali, Rabale, Ghanoli, Mhape, Borivali, Padghar, Wahal, Nagoan, and Chanje, to Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Then, on Oct 31, 2017, urban development ministry appointed Cidco as the special planning authority for these 44 villages.

In 2014, Cidco had prepared a development plan for Karave island and had invited suggestions and objections for the same. With limited area remaining for development in Navi Mumbai, the urban development ministry is slowly opening up the balance areas in these villages for residential use. However, the villagers are opposed to the move.

Samrat Patil from Karave village, who is also president of Prakalpa Grassh Palak Sanstha, insisted that the island belongs to the villagers.

Greens help collect mango seeds to plant trees, bring down rising temp

BB Nayak

Navi Mumbai: Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) initiated a unique concept of collecting mango seeds in an attempt to bring down rising temperatures and to increase green cover.

With the help of volunteer organisations the NMMC waste management wing and garden department, collected over 50k mango seeds from various nodes as it had urged the residents to not discard the seeds and hand them over to the civic body deployed collection vans. The civic body plans to continue the drive while setting a target of collecting 1 lakh mango seeds. Later the civic body will reach out to the farmers either with the seeds or saplings.

NMMC will also sow the seeds and plant saplings to turn the city's landscape into a green corridor.

Dr Kailas Shinde, NMMC commissioner said, "In order to push the volume of indigenous tree population and help the farmers, an innovative environmental initiative is being undertaken by the civic body with public participation." The initiative was kicked off on World Environment Day on June 5. It has involved school students in the drive to achieve the massive target of 1 lakh seed collection.



Over 50K seeds have been collected by volunteers from across Navi Mum

Volunteers clean up mangroves, collect over 5 tonnes of garbage

Navi Mumbai: In collaboration with the Maharashtra Forest Department, the Environment Life Foundation, Beach Please, Mazi Vasundhara, and Vanashakti NGO organized a significant clean-up drive in the Sarsole mangrove forest on Nerul Palm Beach Road. The event saw enthusiastic participation from students of SIES College, Vidyalkar College, and officers from the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation. During the drive, over 5 tonnes of waste, including plastic, thermocol, footwear, and glass bottles, were removed. "Thane Creek, the largest creek in Asia, boasts rich biodiversity but faces severe threats from sewage and non-biodegradable waste. These pollutants endanger the ecosystem, affect local fishermen's livelihoods, and cause flooding during the rainy season," said environmentalist D Stalin of Vanashakti. This effort highlighted the need for proper waste management and community involvement in environmental conservation. - Vijay Singh

Known as the king of fruits, the mango is a favourite for many. After enjoying the delicious ripe mangoes, their seeds are usually discarded. Hence, NMMC launched the

initiative, spearheaded by Shinde, to collect as many as mango seeds as possible.

NMMC garden department head Dilip Nerkar who has 30 years of experience in horticulture segment said, "The seeds will be treated organically. Our Turbhe landfill site will be utilized to grow saplings. Later, they will be planted around the dumping area and elsewhere in the city to improve green cover."

Retired agriculture officer in the state government Pralhad Mahajan said, "It's a traditional method of growing mango trees unlike the hybrid process which is faster to bear fruit. The natural system of putting the seeds in the soil will take at least 10 years to yield fruits. The concept is welcomed as it has two benefits; it provides fruits and protects the environment. However, questions are being raised about nurturing which is a difficult procedure."

The civic body will sow the seeds at its designated nurseries. Later, the saplings will be planted at gardens and roadside parks. They will also be distributed to residents interested in the plantation. Supplementary programs are being organized to promote tree planting by collection of mango seeds from various societies, juice centers, restaurants, and hotels.

Sewage fills Mahalaxmi graves, BMC blames pvt line

Bella Jaisinghani & Richa Pinto | TNN

Mumbai: Grief-stricken mourners attending a funeral at St Peter's Church cemetery at Haines Road, Mahalaxmi, were left stunned by a revolting sight last Friday: 10-15 graves at the back were half submerged in sewage water.

Fr Calistus Fernandes of Victoria Church, Mahim, who had led the mourners, said, "It was very disheartening to see sewage water flowing on the graves. Bodies need to be exhumed every two years to make way for new burials. How can that be done if the graves are submerged in sewage water?" He said the cemetery's caretakers had complained to BMC in Oct 2023 ahead of All Souls' Day, when



BMC has attended to the overflow of sewage three times since Feb 2023. St Peter's Church cemetery officials feel a British-era pipe is leaking

hundreds of people visit the cemetery on Nov 2. "Yet, no solution has been found. BMC must take the matter seriously and rectify the problem."

Advocate Godfrey Pimentra from NGO Watchdog Foundation said it isn't only a health and sanitation issue but also "amounts to an intentional act of desecration of graves, which is an offence under Indian Penal Code."

G-South ward officials said BMC had attended to the overflow of sewage in Feb 2023 and in Oct. "We attended to it last week, too, but the sewage line is getting choked again. The ward has recommended to the sewerage department to replace the line. Since it's a private line, BMC can't begin replacing it on its own. We have proposed undertaking the work, though," said a civic official, adding that the owner of the nearby Raghuvanshi Mills is responsible for the line.

Civic officials also pointed out that while undertaking repairs of the sewage line, some portions of the graveyard may get damaged. So, the community members' permission will also have to be sought before the work can be taken up. On BMC's contention that the faulty pipe runs on private land, Fr Calistus said the cemetery has a boundary wall. "There is a slum over the wall where a workshop is being operated," he said. The property dispute arising from this workshop has compounded the problem. Theo Figueiredo, administrator of the cemetery, said, "We have made numerous complaints to BMC. The occupant of the neighbouring marble workshop—which is located on our burial land—has barricaded the plot and covered the ground with layers of soil to mask the sewage water on his side. We suspect an old British-era pipe beneath is leaking sewage."

TEARFUL FAREWELL TO KUWAIT FIRE VICTIM

Sandeep Takke



Nearly 400 mourners attended the funeral of Kuwait fire victim Denny Baby Karunakaran at Charkop Christian cemetery Sunday afternoon. These included childhood classmate Umar Sayyed who held fond remembrances. Church friend Thomas Varghese recalled Denny's loyalty. Fifty pastors and several outsiders came to commiserate. Pastor Thomas Philipose and senior pastor Philip John of Penial AG Church, who conducted various services, comforted Denny's father Baby Karunakaran and sister Daisy

1993 blasts convict's murder accused moved to 'anda cell'

Abhijeet.Patil@timesgroup.com

Kolhapur: The police custody of five Kalamba central jail inmates accused of murdering 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts convict Mohammad Ali Khan ended on Saturday after which they were returned to the prison.

Vivek Jhende, superintendent of Kalamba jail, said, "The five accused have been moved to the 'anda cell' and security has been beefed up. Four other convicts of the blasts case have been shifted to Yerwada central prison in Pune. The internal inquiry into the murder case has been completed and we are waiting for the report."

Khan had been lodged in Kalamba since 2013. On the morning of June 2, while Khan was bathing near the common water tank, the five accused cornered him, and attacked him with iron and cement chamber covers, leading to his death.

The ongoing investigation by Kolhapur police into the murder found he ran a ganja distribution racket inside the jail. Inspector Sanjeevkumar Zade of Juna Rajwada police station told TOI, "He used to distribute ganja that was smuggled into the jail. The prison was also in the news for smuggling of mobile phones, following which the prisons department took

action against some of the jail staff last month."

The accused—Pratik alias Pilya Suresh Patil, Dipak Netaji Khot, Sandip Shankar Chavan, Rutaraj Vinayak Inambar and Sourabh Vikas Sidh—were in judicial custody. "Among the five, Chavan working closely with Khan. But tension grew between them recently over some financial dispute," said Zade.

Police said Chavan used to smuggle snacks and dry fruits from the jail's canteen and used to supply them to Khan in exchange of ganja.

Khan was convicted for helping the key accused of the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, Tiger Memon.

Co's Madh bungalow seized over ₹5cr loan default

Court Commissioner Takes Possession Of Punia Group's Secured Asset Under SARFAESI Act

Ahmed.Ali@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The court commissioner has taken possession of a bungalow at Madh island in Malad West belonging to the Punia group of companies under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act for default in repayment of nearly Rs 5 crore to Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd, formerly known as Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.

According to the Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd, the Punia group had created a security interest



L A Masia bungalow at Madh island, Malad in its asset — L A Masia bungalow on Marve Road — in favor of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation as part of fi-

ancial assistance provided. However, the Punia group defaulted on the repayment, leading to the classification of the account as a non-performing asset in Dec 2019.

Demand notices were issued in Jan 2021 under the SARFAESI Act, requiring the respondents — Dinesh Punia, Oriental Air and Ship Services, Mama Punia, Manisha Punia, and Mahesh Punia — to repay the outstanding amount of Rs 4.8 crore within 60 days. Despite several notices and paper publication, the respondents failed to comply with the payment requirements within the stipulated period.

In Feb, metropolitan magistrate

Jaywant Yadav noted that it was neither practicable nor feasible for the subordinate officers of the court to possession of the secured assets expeditiously, given the high volume of applications under Section 14 of the SARFAESI Act and the workload of the officers. Yadav then appointed advocate Sunil Pandey as court commissioner and directed him to take possession of the bungalow.

Last week, Pandey informed the metropolitan magistrate that he and his team had encountered resistance from Punia's security personnel, necessitating the use of police force to take possession of the bungalow.

3 of family hurt as Kopri flat's ceiling collapses

Thane: Three members of a family, including two minor children, sustained injuries when the ceiling plaster of their flat collapsed in the early hours of Sunday at Mithbunder road, Kopri.

The incident occurred at around 3:30am in a four-storied building, said Yasin Tadv, Chief of the Disaster Management Cell of the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC). The injured family members have been identified as Pradeep Mohite, 46, and his children, Yash Mohite, 16, and Nidhi Mohite, 12. They were taken to a hospital for medical aid.

Following the alert, local firemen and members of the Regional Disaster Management Cell (RDMC) responded quickly to the scene, working to clear the debris and ensure the safety of the building's residents. The building houses a total of 65 occupants. Officials informed that the building is 30-35 years old and consists of 20 flats, and is currently under the control of an administrator from the co-operative department.

The building has been identified with structural issues, with plaster and column cracks present in at least ten flats. Tadv noted that the building had been classified as dangerous under the C-3 category, indicating the need for minor repairs, during a recent survey of dangerous buildings.

Despite being issued notices to conduct a structural audit and carry out necessary repairs, the building management failed to comply. — Nishikant Karliker

Man arrested for bid to extort ₹1cr from Kandivli developer

Ahmed.Ali@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Kandivli police last week arrested a man for demanding extortion and threatening to stop work on a developer's project if Rs 1 crore was not paid to him.

Samta Nagar police on Thursday arrested Madhukar Masavkar alias Ahu, for threatening and extorting money from a prominent developer redeveloping a Mhada layout in the area. The Borivli court has sent him to judicial custody.

According to the police, the developer's deputy general

manager Satish Hegde registered the FIR, alleging that Masavkar had been demanding and collecting small amounts of money regularly from the project head of Samata Nagar Redevelopment Project, Mukesh Waghela, under duress for many years.

Recently, Masavkar escalated his demands, insisting that Waghela pay him Rs 1 crore or allot a shop free of cost in the project. When the developer refused, he started accusing and threatening his employees in the locality.

Thereafter he barged into the developer's office at site

and threatened to kill his project head, saying he would meet the same fate as ex-corporator from the area, Ashok Sawant. Masavkar threatened that some of his accomplices had recently come out of jail and were in touch with him.

It may be recalled that Ashok Sawant, an ex-corporator and senior Shiv Sena functionary from Kandivli (east), was murdered by some men in full public view.

Later police arrested four persons including Jagdish Pawar alias Jaggya over cable distribution.

A police officer involved in

the investigation said that they will be conducting a forensic analysis of the coercive and abusive messages that Masavkar had posted against the developer on a common WhatsApp group of residents of Sarova complex which the developer has constructed.

Police sources said Masavkar was also booked in a similar extortion attempt a few years ago but later secured bail. The police are currently verifying his antecedents and possible links with gangsters and also trying to find out if he extorted money from other developers and businessmen.

₹10/case incentive mooted for flawless, on-time govt services

Chittaranjan.Tembhekar @timesgroup.com

Mumbai: State chief commissioner of Right to Services (RTS) commission Manu Kumar Srivastava has recommended to govt an annual incentive of Rs 10 per application or case to designated officers "flawlessly" discharging services in a time-bound manner.

As each officer handles an average 300-400 applications, he can expect to earn an annual incentive of Rs 4,000. Srivastava, however, has recommended up to Rs 10,000 annual incentive, which means an officer can flawlessly dispose of 1,000 applications in time, which, sources said, is difficult.

There are over 1.5 lakh designated officers for 662-plus online govt services that are to be delivered to the public through Aaple Sarkar portal or apps like RTS Maharashtra.

The state has 40,255 manually operated service centres across all major talukas to help citizens file, track and appeal for their applications.

Among the services offered under RTS through 27 govt departments on Aaple Sarkar portal are death and birth certificates, income certificate, residency certi-

SERVICES OFFERED ON RTS PORTAL

27 Govt depts offering online public services via Aaple Sarkar, other apps
662+ Number of services offered
91.3L Registered users on portal
16.3cr Applications received so far
15.4cr Applications disposed of

Services offered on RTS portal include death & birth certs, change of name, change of birth date, change of religion, caste cert, income cert, domicile cert among others

Applications and disposals in last 4 yrs

Year	Applications received	Disposed of
2020-21	1.5cr	1.4cr
2021-22	1.7cr	1.6cr
2022-23	2.1cr	1.9cr
2023-24	2.4cr	2.2cr

(All figures rounded off)

cate, caste certificate, age or domicile certificate, non-agriculture land certificate, and non-creamy layer certificate.

"We have forwarded the proposal to govt...only after it gives consent, the nitty-gritty involved could be shared," Srivastava told TOI on the sidelines of a recent conference by Mumbai First.

Former IAS officer and executive board member of Mumbai First Sanjay Ubale moderated the session attended by Pune and Konkan RTS commissioners Dilip Shinde and Baldev Singh, respectively.

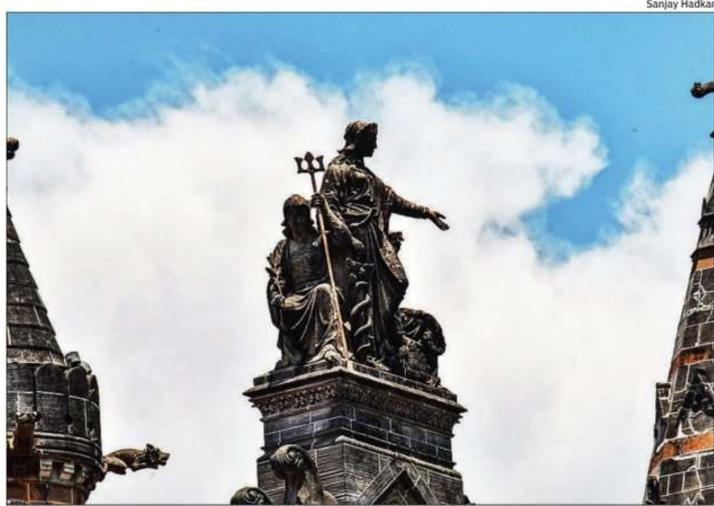
Processing of RTS applications is completely electronic and citizens can track their application using a unique identification code. If service is delayed, refused

or unsatisfactory, citizens can approach appellate officers and even the commission within 30 days. "If the delivery of services in any case is not flawless then that case will not be counted. The flawlessness will be decided by the RTS commission," said sources.

The reward will be over and above the annual increments or other incentives that officers get as part of their salary.

However, if the designated officer defaults on delivering cases, he will face a penalty ranging from Rs 500 to Rs 5,000 which can be deducted from his salary. If the defaulting on cases rises to a higher quantum, there is already a provision of disciplinary action, sources pointed out.

BRIGHT SUNDAY IN JUNE



Fluffy white clouds amid an azure sky seen through the heritage Chhatrapati Shivaji Memorial Terminus Sunday

Customs seizes gold worth ₹7cr at airport in 11 smuggling cases

Mumbai: The airport commissionerate, Mumbai Customs zone-III, seized 10.8 kg gold valued at nearly Rs 7 crore in 11 cases recently.

Gold was found concealed in various forms — gold dust in wax, crude jewellery, bars in an ingenious way in pockets, on the accused passengers.

One person has been arrested for gold smuggling and 6.5 kg of gold worth 3.83 crore seized from the flyer. The air intelligence unit of customs arrested Moinuddin Shakil Zordarwala (24), a south Mumbai resident who had arrived from Sharjah. Asked if he was carrying any dutiable goods, he replied in the negative. A search yielded the contraband cleverly concealed in pockets of his jeans.

In another case, two Indians travelling from Sharjah to Mumbai and from Mumbai to Kathmandu were found carrying 24 karat gold dust weighing over 7kg concealed in their trousers and on their persons, said the officials. —S Ahmed Ali

Finger found in ice cream: Probe into Pune manufacturing unit

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Malad Police investigating the case of a human finger being found inside an ice cream ordered online has started making inquiries at Fortune Dairy in Indapur taluka of Pune where the batch of ice cream was made.

Police said that they will determine when the batch of ice cream was made, the process of manufacture and whether any mishap had oc-

curred at that time.

Last Wednesday, Malad doctor Brendan Ferrao had lodged a police complaint after a Yummo ice cream he had ordered through delivery app Zepto contained a portion of a human finger.

Explaining the chain of supply, police said that from Fortune Dairy in Indapur, the ice cream batch was sent to a godown in Hadapsar. From there, it made its way to a godown in Sakinaka, then to Bhiwandi and finally

to a godown in Malad from where it was delivered to Ferrao's home.

Teams of policemen were sent to each of these five locations to conduct investigations and make inquiries.

Yummo had earlier released a statement which said that they have stopped manufacturing at the third-party facility. Yummo had also said that they have isolated the said product at the facility.

City drug kingpin's network in Nagpur busted, four arrested

Soumitra.Bose@timesgroup.com

Nagpur: Mumbai's top MD (mephedrone) drugs kingpin Zuber Shaikh's network in Nagpur was busted by crime branch's anti-narcotics cell with the seizure of contraband powder worth around Rs 30 lakh and the arrest of four persons. Following a tip-off from Nagpur police, the Mumbai police and also the State Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) have launched a manhunt for Zuber.

Apart from Nagpur, Zuber's drug network is also learnt to be spread across Vidarbha. In the latest case, Amravati-based Sonu Qazi too is wanted now for being part of the network which received the highly priced MD powder through Zuber's supply chain operated via Nagpur.

Azaruddin Qazi, 37, a key operative of Zuber, was caught after a 30-hour non-stop operation and surveillance by the crime branch team. His arrest paved the way for arrest of three more, identified as Irfan Ahmad, Nade-

Charas worth ₹17 lakh found at mechanic's Bhiwandi home

Thane: A 42-year-old motor mechanic has been arrested after the seizure of charas valued at Rs 17.2 lakh from his residence at Bhiwandi, near Thane, the police said on Sunday.

Acting on a tip, a team of the police's anti-extortion cell conducted a raid on the residential premises of the accused in Bhiwandi on Friday and seized 1.72 kg of the contraband, according to a release issued by the police.

The accused was arrested on Saturday and has been booked under provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, said the release.

A search has also been launched for another person involved in the crime, according to the release. ☐

em Khan and Sayyed Sohal. Police have recovered their cellphones, getting substantial data of the city's narcotics trade and networks.

Sources said that the anti-narcotics cell, under the supervision of CP Ravinder Singal, Jt CP Aswati Dorje and DCP crime Nimit Goyal, had started a vigorous crackdown on the network of MD drugs in Nagpur controlled by Mumbai kingpins, including Zuber.

Zuber, who operates from

suburban Mumbai, is said to have a chemical laboratory to manufacture the narcotics. Officials said that the 306gm top quality MD, which was recovered from Qazi, was packed into different packets with colour codes for supply to different peddlers.

Sources said that the team of anti-narcotics cell comprising of assistant sub-inspectors Siddharth Patil, and Vivek Adawu, constables Manoj Neware and Suraj Bhanawat among others under se-

nior inspector Gajana Gulhane and assistant inspector Manoj Ghorde had received a tip-off about Qazi, whose wife works with a bank marketing team.

The drugs courier was returning with substantial MD powder by Duroto Express from Mumbai to Nagpur.

Despite laying a trap, Qazi had managed to sneak out of the railway station and reached Teka Naka in north Nagpur.

During searches, the police said that they managed to zero in on Qazi at Teka Naka in Nagpur and trapped three others whom Zuber had sent to collect the MD drugs according to their orders which had been placed earlier.

"Qazi does not have any crime records. He was introduced to Zuber through a contact in Mominpura. Qazi, Na-deem and some others seem to have started working for Zuber for fast money as they don't have any past crime records. Only Sohal has a past record in narcotic peddling," said a source.

Man lets fraudsters use his bank a/c, held

Mateen.Hafeez @timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The cyber crime police recently arrested a 21-year-old mobile shop owner from New Delhi for allegedly opening a bank account using fake documents and allowed a gang of cyber fraudsters to use it to cheat people. The gang duped a bank manager of nearly Rs 32 lakh in an online share trade fraud for which the account was used.

The accused, Rishabh Gupta, has been brought to Mumbai. The police probe found that Gupta's bank account was also used in three other cases

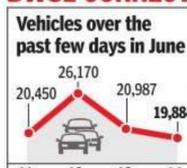
where complainants lost a total of Rs 1.17 crore.

In the latest case, the 40-year-old bank manager told the police that the fraud took place between Dec 9, 2023 and Jan 15. The complainant told the police that he saw an advertisement about online share trading on social media, clicked on it and got an invite link. He was added to a WhatsApp group.

He was told to download an app for share trading. "He invested Rs 48 lakh, and could view his investment and profit touch Rs 70 lakh in a virtual account. But since he couldn't withdraw money, he approached the police.

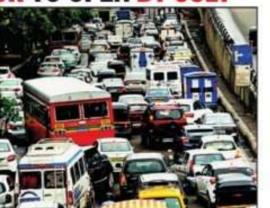
87k+ vehicles use just-opened coastal road tunnel

BWSL CONNECTOR TO OPEN BY JULY



Currently operational:

- Worli to Marine Drive & stretch from Marine Drive to Haji Ali
- At Breach Candy, all 4 interchanger arms. At Haji Ali, 4 of 8 operational



What remains:
Car parking
Development of 70 hectares of public open space

Project deadline Oct 2024

Richa.Pinto@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: A total of 87,491 vehicles drove through the newly opened coastal road's north-bound tunnel in the first week of its opening.

On day two (Jun 12), the road saw the maximum number of trips at 26,170. The peak traffic count on this day was between 10pm and 11pm at 3,180 vehicles followed by 3,000 vehicles between 9 pm and 10 pm and 2,080 vehicles from 8 pm to 9 pm. The least number of vehicles (19,884) used the coastal road on Jun 14, Friday, with its peak traffic count 1,830 between 6 pm

and 7 pm. The authorities have plans to open the first phase of Bandra Worli sea link connector from the coastal road by July which would mean that motorists would be able to drive from Marine Drive to Bandra signal free. "This will be only one of the connecting bridges while works on the other connecting bridge will continue to take place," said a civic official. The entire road is proposed to be opened by Oct this year.

The northbound carriageway currently caters to motorists going from Marine Drive to Haji Ali, cutting

down travel time significantly. The south-bound stretch was made operational in March this year just before the code of conduct for Lok Sabha elections was set in.

The coastal road authorities are also looking at increasing the signages along the route, especially near inter-changers. Currently, the four Haji Ali and four Breach Candy interchanger arms have been made operational. The interchanger arms at Worli are yet to be opened up.

Meanwhile BMC is yet to float the tender to develop open spaces along the coastal road. Officials said that they

are working on it and the same is likely to be floated after the monsoon.

From water bodies, Miyawaki forest, musical fountains, sculptured elements to a 15 km cycle track, the 70-hectare area running along the coastal road will be divided into three interconnected zones: Nature Cove, Park Line, and Green Shore. The Park Line would start from Worli sea face going up to Worli jetty. Nature cove would continue from there up to Amarsons garden interchange while Green Shore will start from Amarsons garden and end at Priyadarshani Park.

Taste the added goodness!

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Chairperson, JAC-2024

CR collects ₹63 crore from drive against ticketless travel

Somit.Sen@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The Central Railway registered revenue of Rs 63.6 crore from 9 lakh cases of unauthorised and irregular travellers during the past two months, an official said on Sunday.

"Our squads conducted intensive ticket checking in suburban, Mail / Express and special trains across all divisions to curb ticketless and irregular travel in order to provide comfortable travel and better services to all bonafide rail users," he said. This is an increase of 15% in revenue against the scheduled target of Rs 55.5 crore for the above period.

The division wise earning for CR for April and May is as follows:

Mumbai division Rs.25 crore from 4 lakh cases;Bhusawal division Rs.17 crore from 1.9 lakh cases;Nagpur division Rs.7.56 crore from 1.19 lakh cases;Solapur division Rs.3.10 crore from 54,000 cases;Pune division Rs.6.56 crore from 83,100 cases ;CR headquarters Rs.4.30 crore from 46,810 cases.

Now, students to get ST bus pass in schools and colleges

Mumbai: Lakhs of students travelling by the state transport buses across Maharashtra will now get the ST bus passes distributed directly in schools and colleges, announced MSRTC managing director Madhav Kusekar on Sunday. This will ensure that neither students nor their parents have to take the trouble of going to ST stands or waiting in long queues at counters to make bus passes.

The government has given a 66% concession to students to travel from home to school by the state bus - which means students can get a monthly pass by paying only 33%. Similarly, under a government scheme, free ST passes will be distributed in schools and junior colleges for all female students studying upto class 12. "From this year onwards, students will no longer have to stand in queues for the pass," Kusekar said. — Somit Sen

GITYLIGHTS

Surviving Prison

A way from home, several prisoners nurse guilt which begets anger and depression. A city-based social organisation which works to get first-time offenders and undertrials languishing in jail for want of bail amount released, has stepped forward with help. It offers prisoners counselling, anger management and motivational lectures. Under the guidance of the District Legal Services Authority, Pune, Global Care Foundation, in association with Yerwada jail authorities, has trained 35 "highly educated" inmates at the prison to counsel and motivate fellow inmates. "There are doctors, lawyers, CAs and even PhDs among convicted inmates and we have trained a group of them to guide less-educated



HEALTH FIRST: People take part in a yoga session in Juhu on Sunday

ones on how to deal with negative thoughts, anger and depression. They are taught to remain positive and motivated. We will soon introduce

this in Mumbai jails too," said Abid Ahmed Kundalam from the foundation. These trainers will be paid too, according to rules laid down by govt.

Coach's Dilemma

This past Thursday during the 2024 T20 World Cup in New York, when USA's

left-arm pacer Saurabh Ne-travalkar dismissed Indian captain Rohit Sharma, caught superbly running backwards by left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh, Mumbai under-19 men's team head coach Dinesh Lad, watching the match thousands of kilometres away at his home in Kandivli, experienced mixed emotions. Having coached both Rohit and Harmeet at the Swami Vivekanand International School in Borivali, Lad's "loyalties" were divided in this case. "As a coach, it was a proud moment for me to see two of my wards play international cricket against each other. I felt very happy when Harmeet took Rohit's catch, but I would have been happier if Harmeet had taken Rohit's wicket. Harmeet would have turned out to be a great bowler for India in Test cricket. He has changed his action a bit to sidearm, but his ear-

lier round arm action would enable him to generate turn and bounce on any wicket," Lad told this correspondent.

Delayed Reaction

During the ongoing delays in the Central Railway suburban services, when trains were stranded on the tracks between Sandhurst Road and Masjid, commuters began to vent their frustration. A few even jumped on the tracks and began to walk to the nearest station. By contrast, this group of youngsters travelling to CSMT had smiles on their faces as one of them had switched on reels on his phone. The small group made use of the time cheerfully while office-goers fumed and checked their phones for any update on the delay.

(Contributed by Mohammed Wajihuddin, Gaurav Gupta & Somit Sen)

OBC activists on fast dig in heels as CM makes plea

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: The indefinite hunger strike launched by OBC activists Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare at Wadigodri in Jalna to protect their community's quota entered the fourth day on Sunday.

Earlier, CM Eknath Shinde said he had spoken with Hake on Saturday evening over the phone through OBC leader Prakash Shendge, who met the activists to express his solidarity. Despite the CM's plea to withdraw their agitation, the activists said they would continue and will also stop intake of water.

"The CM should give us a written assurance that the OBC quota will remain untouched while fulfilling demands of the Maratha community," Waghmare said. Hake said the distribution of Kumbi certificates to Marathas in a "blanket manner" has already encroached upon the quota of lakhs of OBC community members. —Prasad Joshi

Feud over Sangli again: Cong neta pushes for 5 MLA seats, NCP (SP) 4

Abhijeet.Patil@timesgroup.com

Kolhapur: The battle among MVA partners over Sangli is set to play out again. Congress MLA Vishwajeet Kadam has said his party will contest five of the eight segments in Sangli district in the assembly polls, a few days after NCP (SP) state president Jayant Patil staked claim to four constituencies, of which undivided NCP had won three in 2019.

During the seat sharing talks, Congress and Sena (UBT) had bitterly fought over the Sangli LS seat, which ultimately landed with the latter. The arrangement prompted Congress's Vishal Patil to contest as an independent from

the seat; he won by a margin of over 1 lakh votes.

Sangli and Miraj assembly segments are with BJP, while Khanapur MLA is from Sena. Congress won Palus Kadegaon and Jat in the last assembly polls and the legislators of Tasgaon Kavathemhankal, Shirala and Walva stood with Sharad Pawar's faction after the party split.

Sources in both parties said Patil, MLA from Walva, is eyeing Khanapur as the fourth segment, while Congress is expecting to get Sangli, Miraj and Khanapur, other than the two seats already in its pocket. Stakes are high for Patil as he could be in the race for the CM post if MVA gets a majority with NCP (SP)

as the single largest party. Sena (UBT), on the other hand, is not likely to insist on Khanapur as its MLA Anil Babar, who died recently, had joined Eknath Shinde's camp.

"Those who tried to spoil the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections will not dare to repeat their attempt this time. Congress will contest four to five seats and win all of them," Kadam said at an event on Saturday.

Although Kadam and Vishal Patil, who has extended support to Congress, are not naming any leader who attempted to help BJP's Sanjaykaka Patil for the Sangli LS constituency, social media was flooded with accusations against Patil for allegedly

playing a role in allotting the seat to Sena (UBT). Patil dismissed those charges.

Congress is also likely to ruffle Shiv Sena (UBT)'s feathers—its Kalyan district president, Sachin Pote, has staked claim to the Kalyan East assembly seat. Undivided Shiv Sena had contested the seat the last three times since the constituency was carved out, and Sena (UBT) was expected to fight from there as it had in the parliamentary election from Kalyan. Pote said since Sena lost to Ganpat Gaikwad, who joined BJP ahead of the last state polls, from the constituency, he will demand that the seat be given to Congress.

(With inputs from Pradeep Gupta in Kalyan)

Oppn's false claims hit LS poll maths, will win all 4 MLC seats: DCM

Mumbai: The results of the four MLC seats will create a new narrative in the state to counter the "setback (to NDA) due to a false narrative in the Lok Sabha elections, the deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis said on Sunday, referring to the claim during the parliamentary polls that BJP wanted to win 400 seats in the Lok Sabha to change the Constitution and end reservation for various segments.

"MLC polls are going to be held for four seats in Maharashtra. The NDA must outperform the opposition and create a new narrative as we received a setback due to a

false narrative in the Lok Sabha elections. Ours is a people-friendly govt and we need to push this narrative further," he said in Thane.

"The false narrative of the opposition parties disturbed our political arithmetic. The opposition gained 43.9%, while we received 43.6% of votes, but they won 31 Lok Sabha seats, and we could win only 17 [out of 48 seats in Maharashtra]... We are confident of winning all four [MLC] seats," he asserted.

Voting for the legislative council seats will take place on June 26 and the results will be declared on July 1. ■

After LS election loss, farmer leader to take up urban issues in state polls, open to tie-up

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kolhapur: Farmer leader Raju Shetti-led Swabhimani Paksha, that faced a drubbing in the LS polls after going solo, has decided to change tack for the assembly elections.

Shetti told TOI that party functionaries had believed that they would win the LS elections "on the basis of farmers' movements". "We were proven wrong by the re-

sults. Now, we will adopt a more practical approach, like appealing to other parties to help us win and vice-versa.

CHANGING TACK: Raju Shetti

We will form alliances with understanding and strategic adjustments," he said.

Shetti also plans to launch agitations by farmers over agrarian issues after a state convention in Bar-amati on June 22-23.

The farmer leader said a primary meeting of state office-bearers of his party for the assembly polls was held online. In the 2019 assembly elections, Swabhimani

Paksha had contested from six constituencies.

"We have been betrayed by both alliances in the recent past. We plan to change our strategy and we cannot win merely with the support of farmers and on the basis of their issues as the electors have changed. Now, many sections of society, mainly those living in urban areas, have their own issues, which we will raise," Shetti said.

'Urban Naxal' NGOs created fake narrative in LS polls: CM

Thane: Chief minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday alleged that certain NGOs had created a false narrative against the Mahayuti alliance during the Lok Sabha elections. Mahayuti won 17 of the 48 parliamentary constituencies in the state, of which Shinde's Shiv Sena bagged seven. Dubbing them "urban Naxals", he accused these unnamed NGOs of working to undermine Mahayuti's position. "Not all NGOs are bad. Some do exceptional work to uplift society, but some are anti-govt and these few NGOs spread misinformation and tried to create a false narrative against us," he said at a guidance session for office-bearers of BJP's Konkani graduates constituency nominee Niranjan Davkhare. "[NDA] won the Lok Sabha elections under the guidance of PM Narendra Modi. Nothing can change this reality, even though the opposition keeps spreading rumours that govt would fall," he said.—Nishikant Karlikar

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Jabalpur, Dated : 13.06.2024

OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY
Ref. : Corrigendum to Tender No. 07-01/STPS/PH-V/Unit#12/PRG
Floated through Domestic Competitive Bidding route (Tender ID:2023_PPGC_315012_1)
INTIMATION FOR ALLOWING FOREIGN BIDDERS TO BID
M.P. Power Generating Co. Ltd. have uploaded tender inviting E-Bids for Design, Engineering, Supply, Civil Works, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 1x660 MW Ultra-Supercritical Thermal Power Unit, on EPC Turnkey basis; at Satpura Thermal Power Station, Sarni, Distt. Betul. The detailed NIT & Bidding Documents are available for sale on e-tendering website www.mptenders.gov.in from 14.06.2024, with last date of Bid submission is 09.08.2024 and date of bid opening is 12.08.2024. Bidders are advised to regularly visit the e-tendering website; for any further Clarification/Corrigendum/Addendum and/or Extension of due dates. Foreign Bidders; through this corrigendum are allowed to bid against the tender; with a stipulation of all payments in Indian Rupee, only.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PRG) MPPGCL, JABALPUR
M.P. Madhyam/114880/2024 // Save Electricity //

MADHYA PRADESH POWER GENERATING COMPANY LIMITED
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E-mail : prgstps660mw@gmail.com, Phone : 0761-2925650 (CIN No.-U40109MP2001SGC014882)
Jabalpur, Dated : 13.06.2024

OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY
Ref. : Corrigendum to Tender No. 07-01/ATPS/ST-V/Unit#6/PRG
Floated Through Domestic Competitive Bidding Route (Tender ID : 2023_MPPGC_311686_1)
INTIMATION FOR ALLOWING FOREIGN BIDDERS TO BID
M.P. Power Generating Co. Ltd. have uploaded tender inviting E-Bids for Design, Engineering, Supply, Civil Works, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 1x660 MW Ultra-Supercritical Thermal Power Unit, on EPC Turnkey basis; at Amarkantak Thermal Power Station, Chachai, Distt. Anuppur. The detailed NIT & Bidding Documents are available for sale on e-tendering website www.mptenders.gov.in from 14.06.2024, with last date of Bid submission is 07.08.2024 and date of bid opening is 09.08.2024. Bidders are advised to regularly visit the e-tendering website; for any further Clarification/Corrigendum/Addendum and/or Extension of due dates. Foreign Bidders; through this corrigendum are allowed to bid against the tender; with a stipulation of all payments in Indian Rupee, only.

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CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
No. COS/CRJ/PUB/E-Tender/19/0162
Date: 08.06.2024. The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link www.reps.gov.in. Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link www.reps.gov.in login → E-Tender Stores/Supply. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information if any, Dy.CMM/HQ/CLW/Chittaranjan, 0341-2525594 or SMM/CON/HQ, 0341-2525594. Office Address: Office of the PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan, Sl. No.: Tender No.; Brief Description of Item; Quantity; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees); Tender Closing Date & Time (IST) are as follows: [1]: 75244130; Stainless Steel Sheets, Plates, Bars and Flats for WAG 9HC as per Specn. no. CLW/MS/3/039 Alt.7, (One Set consisting of 17 items as per set details attached). [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; 5652.00 Numbers; ₹ 20,00,000.00; 31.07.2024 at 11:00 AM. [3]: 91240884; Machined Stator Assembly [Modified], Drg. No.: ITWD.096.102 Alt-14, Specn. No. 4TMS.096.070 Rev-2, Alt.-1, STR No. CLW/TM/18600, Rev-2. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; 940.00 Set; ₹ 20,00,000.00; 12.07.2024 at 11:00 AM. [4]: 81240992; Brazing Flux suitable for Silver Brazing Alloy Rod & Silver Brazing Alloy Foil as per Specification No. IS 2927-75, 4TMS.096.096 Rev-1, GR BA-CU-Ag -16A, STR No. CLW/TM/961 Rev-1. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
No. COS/CRJ/PUB/E-Tender/19/0162
Date: 07/06/2024. The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link www.reps.gov.in. Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link www.reps.gov.in login → E-Tender Stores/Supply. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information if any, Dy.CMM/HQ/CLW/Chittaranjan, 0341-2525594 or SMM/CON/HQ, 0341-2525594. Office Address: Office of the PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan, Sl. No.: Tender No.; Brief Description of Item; Quantity; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees); Tender Closing Date & Time (IST) are as follows: [1]: 75243823; (i) SS PIPE FITTINGS FOR WAG-9HC (SHELL PIPING) FOR E70 BRAKE SYSTEM as per Specn. CLW/MS/3/053 ALT-21 (One set consisting of 33 items as per set details attached) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; (ii) SS PIPE FITTINGS FOR WAG-9HC (SHELL PIPING) FOR CCB BRAKE SYSTEM as per Specn. CLW/MS/3/053 ALT-21 (One set consisting of 32 items as per set details attached) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; (iii) SS PIPE FITTINGS FOR CO-CO BOGIE PIPING FOR WAG-9HC AS PER SPECN. NO. CLW/MS/3/053 ALT-21 (One set consisting of 09 items as per set details attached) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; (iv) 429.00 Set, (ii) 392.00 Set, (iii) 960.00 Set; ₹ 20,00,000.00; 25/07/2024 at 11:00 AM. [2]: 75243732; Housing for WAG-9HC for CLW Drg. No. - 1209.01-113-002 Alt-7. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; 3635.00 Numbers; ₹ 20,00,000.00; 10/07/2024 at 11:00 AM. [3]: 91241010; ASSOCIATED COMPONENTS OF MACHINED STATOR ASSEMBLY EACH SET CONSISTING OF 11 ITEMS DRG. NOS. AS PER ANNEXURE-A, SPECN. NO. 4TMS.096.068 Rev-2, ALTI, RD50 STR

पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन ऑफ उत्तराखण्ड लिमिटेड
(उत्तराखण्ड सरकार का उपक्रम)
अधीक्षक अभियन्ता (जानपद) परिष्करण विभाग, नजीक-आइएलसीपीडी सीमा, सहारनपुर, जे. माजरा, देहरादून-248002 दूरभाष नं. 7088117360

निविदा विस्तारित सूचना 4 - 63/SE(C)/O&M/E-Tender/PTCUL/D.Dun/2023-24
निविदा सं 63/SE(C)/O&M/E-Tender/PTCUL/D.Dun/2023-24 की जाउनलोजिङ, प्राप्ति एवं खुलने की तिथि क्रमशः दिनांक 16.07.2024 तथा 17.07.2024 तक विस्तारित की जाती है। निविदाएं दिनांक 16.07.2024 समय 5:00 बजे तक अधीक्षक अभियन्ता (जानपद) परिष्करण विभाग, पिटकुल, विद्युत भवन, माजरा, देहरादून के कार्यालय में प्राप्त की जाएगी। तथा निविदा के तकनीकी भाग दिनांक 17.07.2024 समय 3:30 बजे जानपदीय कार्यों हेतु पंजीकृत इच्छुक फर्मों के समक्ष खोला जायेगा। निविदा सम्बन्धित अन्य विस्तृत विवरण ई-निविदा वेबसाइट www.ptcul.org एवं ई-निविदा सूचना पिटकुल वेबसाइट www.ptcul.org से जाउनलोजिङ किये जा सकते हैं।
निविदा सम्बन्धित अन्य विस्तृत विवरण ई-निविदा वेबसाइट www.uktenders.gov.in/PTCUL एवं ई-निविदा सूचना पिटकुल वेबसाइट www.ptcul.org से जाउनलोजिङ किये जा सकते हैं। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित जानकारी हेतु अथवा किसी भी सहायता के लिए PH.No.-91-8899890000, +0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005, 0120-6277787 से सम्पर्क स्थापित करें।
संकांक- 234 / अधीक्षक अभियन्ता (जानपद) परिष्करण विभाग, नजीक-आइएलसीपीडी सीमा, सहारनपुर, जे. माजरा, देहरादून-248002 दूरभाष नं. 7088117360
दिनांक- 15.06.2024
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KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED
No.1, Dr. Siddalah Puranki Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 560079. Phone: +91-08-23232318, E-mail: md.ksmscl@gmail.com

No.HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/NPPCD/Re-TND/04/2024-25 Date: 15-06-2024
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
Ref: 1) Tender Notification No: HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/NPPCD/Re-TND/04/2024-25, (IND-0117) Date: 15/06/2024.
2) Tender Notification No: HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/NPPCD/TND/OAEO/05/2024-25 (IND-0118) Date: 15/06/2024.
Nationwide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tenders:
1. Re-Tender for Supply of ENT Equipments under NPPCD programme.
2. Tender for Supply of Oto Acoustic Emission Analyzer under NPPCD programme.
The tenderers who have registered under e-Procurement department may participate through e-tendering system.
Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from 15-06-2024. The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.
Sd/- General Manager (Admin & Procurement)
KSMSCL, Bengaluru.
DIPR/CP/387/2024-25

POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.
(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Enterprise)
Vidyal Bhawan, Near ISBT Crossing, Saharanpur Road, Majra, Dehradun-248002
Corporate ID : U40101UR2004SGC028675, Tel. No. 0135-2842711

E-TENDER NOTICE
Power Transmission Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited invites E-Tender for "Augmentation of Transformer capacity from 2x80 MVA (132/33 kV) + 1x50 MVA (220/33 kV) + 1x25 MVA (220/33 kV) to 2x80 MVA (132/33 kV) + 2x50 MVA (220/33 kV) at 220 kV S/S SIDCUL, Haridwar" against Tender Specification No. PTCUL/E-Tender/C&P-I/SS-02/2024-25. The last date of bid submission of e-bid is 18.07.2024 upto 15:30 Hrs. For more details please visit e-tender website www.uktenders.gov.in (tender id no. 2024_PTCUL_72219_1) and for e-tender notice our website www.ptcul.org.
For any assistance on E-Tendering, please contact +91-8899890000
NO. 1017/HQ/PTCUL, Dt. 15.06.2024
Superintending Engineer (C&P-I)
"Save Electricity in the Interest of Nation"

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY
INDIAN RAILWAYS
TENDER Notice No. ICF/EL/Cons/2024-25 dt. 17.06.2024
For and on behalf of The President of India, The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer / Maintenance/ Shell, Integral Coach Factory, invites E-Tender for the following works.

Tender No.	Name of the Work	Approx. Value in Lakhs Rs.	EMD (Rs.)	Tender Closing Date and Time
202424521456	EL-W-882 Energy Management System (Energy Meter) in ICF	82.99	1,66,000/-	17.07.2024 at 15.30 hrs.

Web site for submission of offer : www.reps.gov.in
Hindi version of the above tender notification is available in : <https://icf.indianrailways.gov.in>

मध्यप्रदेश पुलिस आवास एवं अधोसंरचना विकास निगम
कार्यालय परियोजना यंत्री, संभाग क्र.1, ब्रह्मदा रोड, भोपाल
क्र./722/तारा/प.च./2024 दिनांक : 11.06.2024

प्रेस-विज्ञप्ति
इस कार्यालय द्वारा म.प्र. राज्य श्रृष्टि अकादमी, भोपाल में फायनल रैंज, ट्रेण एंड स्क्रीट रैंज नं. 1, 2, 3 एवं स्क्रीट रैंज 4 व 5 में अतिरिक्त विभिन्न निर्माण कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा क्रमांक 2024_MPPHC_350284_1 दिनांक 26.06.2024 समय अपरान्ह 17:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन खरीदे जा सकते हैं। विस्तृत निविदा सूचना व अन्य विवरण Portal : www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखे जा सकते हैं।
म.प्र. माध्यम/114837/2024 परियोजना यंत्री

50% public hospitals part of 900 new empanelled slots

Sumitra.DebRoy
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: As the state rolls out universal healthcare, besides increasing the coverage amount for each family, the new version expands the number of medical procedures covered from 996 to 1,356 and empanelled hospitals from 1,000 to 1,900. Ramesh Chavan, CEO of the State Health Assurance Society (SHAS), which implements MJPJAY, said the scheme has growing demand. The number of surgeries performed under the scheme increased by 70% in five years, rising from 6.03 lakh in 2019-20 to 10.25 lakh in 2023-24. "We are encouraging good hospitals to join the scheme as the rates of procedures have been increased by 15-20%," Chavan said.

Since its inception, over 65 lakh surgeries have been carried out under MJPJAY. Some of the most demanded specialties include all modalities of cancer treatment, cardiac procedures and cardiothoracic surgeries, kidney procedures, paediatrics, and polytrauma. To expand the scheme's reach, SHAS is scrutinising nearly 1,600 applications for the additional 900 empanelment slots that have opened. "Of the 900 new hospitals, 50% will be public," an official said. In Mumbai, where 57 hospitals are currently part of the scheme, more than a dozen have requested to be empanelled, including SevenHills Hospital. But the city's five-star charitable hospitals have yet to show any inclination to join.

A senior public health activist said that while the expan-

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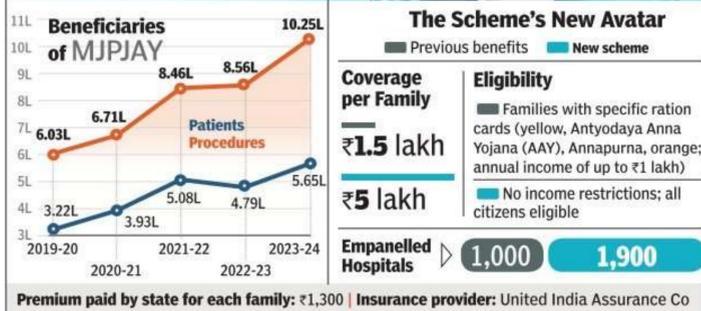
*Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Jan Arogya Yojana

Universal access: All citizens of Maharashtra can get free treatment at empanelled hospitals

Coverage: Each family is covered for up to ₹5 lakh

No income restrictions: Available to everyone, regardless of income level

Easy access: Just present your ration card or domicile certificate to avail of the benefits. No prior enrolment required



The Scheme's New Avatar

Coverage per Family
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₹5 lakh

Eligibility
Families with specific ration cards (yellow, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Annapurna, orange; annual income of up to ₹1 lakh)
No income restrictions; all citizens eligible

Empanelled Hospitals
1,000 → 1,900

Premium paid by state for each family: ₹1,300 | Insurance provider: United India Assurance Co

sion of the scheme is encouraging news, there are areas where the government needs to strengthen surveillance. "The state needs to guarantee the elimination of extra cash demands for beneficiaries, which are still rampant at several hospitals. There also needs to be higher distribution in less privileged districts," the

activist said. Karnataka, Tripura, Meghalaya are among the first few states to have rolled out universal coverage in the last few years.

Chavan mentioned their plan to engage a third-party agency to closely monitor service utilisation, identify specialties experiencing higher demand, and detect any misuse

of the scheme by centres, leveraging AI and data analytics. In Maharashtra, alongside the MJPJAY, Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) is also operational in an integrated manner, providing coverage to 83 lakh families identified through the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011).

Forex from export of onion dips 41% in state

Nashik: Foreign currencies coming to the state through onion export dipped by 41% in the last financial year following the Centre's ban on it.

The state's loss amounts to Rs1,170 crore in Indian currency. The export value of onion in the 2023-24 fiscal was Rs2,848 crore. It dipped by 41% to Rs1,678 crore in the last financial year.

According to statistics provided by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority (APEDA), a statutory body under the ministry of commerce and industries, the state witnessed a sharp decline of 48% in onion exports in the 2023-24 financial year (FY) compared to that in 2022-23 FY. The quantity of export declined from 14.45 lakh metric tonnes in FY 2022-23 to 7.5 lakh metric tonnes in FY 2023-24. Consequently, its export value decreased by 41% — from Rs 2,848 crore in the 2022 fiscal to Rs1,678 crore in the 2023-24.

The Centre implemented various measures to restrict onion export in the last financial year to stabilise price in the domestic market.

According to onion exporters, the Centre imposed a 40% duty on onion export in August last year and levied a minimum export price (MEP) of US\$800 per tonne in October last year. —Tushar Pawar

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Video threat to Salman: Raj man in cop custody till Tues

Ahmed.Ali@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: A 25-year-old Rajasthan man, who was arrested on charges of criminal intimidation for allegedly uploading a video threatening to eliminate Salman Khan, was brought to Mumbai on Sunday and produced before a local court which remanded him in police custody till June 18.

The south cyber police registered an FIR on June 12 after Banwarilal Laturial Gurjar allegedly uploaded the video on his YouTube channel.

Police said the video was shot on a highway. They traced the IP address to Rajasthan. "Considering the seriousness of the case, a team of the anti-extortion cell of crime branch, led by inspector Arun Thorat, was sent to Rajasthan and Gurjar was arrested from Bundi village," said DCP Datta Nalawade.

Police said Gurjar had used a fictitious name, 'Are choddo yaar', and email address, but they managed to track him down from his mobile number. "We are checking if he has a criminal background. Gurjar has been charged under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, including Section 506(2) (punishment for criminal in-



Police with the accused, Banwarilal Gurjar (second from right)

timidation), as well as the Information Technology Act," said a police officer.

In 2022, Khan's security was elevated to Y-plus category — six personal security officers in three shifts 24x7 and five armed guards at his residence — following multiple threats from the Bishnoi gang due to the actor's alleged involvement in the 1997 blackbuck killing case during the shooting of the film 'Hum Saath Saath Hain' in Rajasthan. Blackbucks are considered sacred by the Bishnoi community.

In the wee hours of April 14, two bike-borne men, allegedly belonging to the Bishnoi gang, fired multiple rounds outside Khan's Bandra residence. A total of seven persons were arrested in connection with the firing case. One of accused, Anuj Thapan, allegedly hanged himself in police lock-up on May 1.

Last month, Navi Mumbai police arrested five men who were allegedly planning an ambush near Khan's Panvel farmhouse using sophisticated weapons.

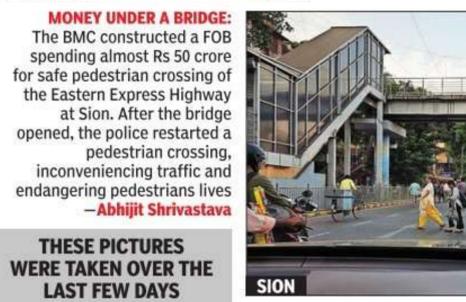
35-year-old man's body fished out from creek

Nishikant.Karlikar
@timesgroup.com

Thane: The body of a 35-year-old man was fished out from the Kharigaon creek in Kalwa on Sunday morning. Police suspect a case of suicide but are investigating further. The deceased has been identified as Bablu Vishwakarma, a resident of Wagle estate.

Yasin Tadvil, Chief of the Disaster Management Cell of the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC), informed that the incident occurred on Saturday night around 7pm. Vishwakarma and a woman were allegedly seen jumping into the creek from the Saket Bridge. Upon receiving an alert, firemen and members of the Regional Disaster Management Cell (RDMC) immediately rushed to the scene to initiate a search operation. "The search was hindered by darkness and was temporarily halted after an hour. The team resumed their efforts early Sunday at 7:00am. Around four hours later, Vishwakarma's body was located and retrieved from the creek," the official informed. Kalwa police have registered a case of accidental death. Preliminary investigations suggest that Vishwakarma was heavily in debt and severely depressed, which may have driven him to take this drastic step. Contrary to initial reports, the Kalwa police have confirmed that only Vishwakarma had jumped into the creek and there was no second person involved.

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...BESIDES SUNDRY OTHER LOCATIONS:
Open gutters remain unattended to by the BMC in Bandra (west) despite complaints to the BMC
—Richard Almeida

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NULLAH BIZARRE:
What is the use of cleaning a drainage line before the monsoon and dumping the waste a little ahead? This is in Thakur Village, Kandivli (east)
—Pankaj Kulkarni

MONEY UNDER A BRIDGE:
The BMC constructed a FOB spending almost Rs 50 crore for safe pedestrian crossing of the Eastern Express Highway at Sion. After the bridge opened, the police restarted a pedestrian crossing, inconveniencing traffic and endangering pedestrians lives
—Abhijit Shrivastava

THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS

Murmurs in BJP as Vikhe Patil to probe Nanded defeat while his son also lost

The state BJP brass is facing flak for ordering a probe by revenue minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil into the reasons for the humiliating defeat of the party's sitting MP Pratap Patil Chikhlikar in Nanded in the LS polls. Chikhlikar lost to a little-known Congress candidate, Vasant Balwant Chavan, who had been away from active politics for more than a decade, by a margin of 59,442 votes.

Congress's original plan had been to field party veteran Ashok Chavan from the seat, but he quit and joined BJP in Feb. The very next day, he was nominated to RS from BJP. Congress then launched an extensive search for a replacement, ultimately landing on Vasant, even though he was not keen on contesting. Chikhlikar had strongly

opposed Ashok Chavan's induction in the party, saying he had been banned from many villages in Nanded owing to the former Congress functionary's failure to resolve the Maratha quota row.

Senior BJP leaders feel it was wrong to appoint Vikhe Patil, who failed to secure his

ner, who was then in the Ajit Pawar camp. After several rounds of talks, Lanke agreed to join NCP (SP) and contest from Ahmednagar. Pawar made the battle a prestige issue and addressed a few meetings himself, besides mobilising the support of Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray.

After a brief search, Sharad Pawar felt that Bhagare, despite having limited resources and support, would be the better choice. NCP (SP) does not have even a single legislator in Dindori and Nashik, because of which the party brass had even given up hopes of securing a win from Dindori in the LS polls. A former member of Nashik zilla parishad, Bhagare made massive efforts and Sharad Pawar, too, campaigned for him. Villagers rallied behind Bhagare, even mobilising election funds for the ordinary teacher, who went on to defeat a powerful politician.

powerful and politically connected Bharati — not only did she have BJP's full support, but her father-in-law was also an eight-term legislator and former state cabinet member.

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Dahanu-Nashik rail link priority, says MP

Palghar: Newly elected BJP MP Hemant Sawra on Sunday said the revival of the Dahanu-Nashik rail link project in Maharashtra will be his top priority. Talking to PTI, Sawra said he is committed to reviewing ongoing and pending projects in his constituency. Palghar. The MP said he will push for the immediate consideration of the Dahanu-Nashik rail link project in the upcoming session of the Parliament.

The proposed railway link would cover around 167 km between Dahanu Road and Nashik Road stations and increase connectivity to the interior areas of Thane district. He further said that he would systematically address the issues of health care, malnutrition, migration, and unemployment in the district, which has a considerable tribal population. ❧

PUBLIC EYE

PRAFULLA MARPAKWAR

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TRINAMOOL'S ABHISHEK BANERJEE UNDERGOES MINOR PLASTIC SURGERY ON HIS BACK, IS STABLE

BJP IGNORED INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WHILE IT WAS IN OFFICE IN STATE: JHARKHAND CM CHAMPAI SOREN



Ist trial train from Sangaldan to Reasi in J&K runs via world's highest rail bridge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Indian Railways operated the first trial train from Sangaldan to Reasi, including on the world's highest rail bridge built on Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir, on Sunday. With this rail link, travel between the Valley and the rest of the country is set to become a reality in the next four-five

months, officials said.

Reasi was recently in the news because of a terror attack that claimed nine lives. The railway also achieved this feat days before PM Narendra Modi visits Srinagar to celebrate International Yoga Day.

In a social media post, railways minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, "All construction work for the USBRL are nearly

finished, with only tunnel No. 1 remaining partially incomplete." Railway officials said the Commissioner of Railways Safety (CRS) is scheduled to conduct a two-day inspection. The project is significant because of the Chenab rail bridge, which has been constructed 359 metres (around 109 feet) above the Chenab river and it is 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower.

3 workers die in gelatin blast while digging well in Nagar

Nashik: Three workers died and another suffered serious injuries in a gelatin explosion that took place when they were digging a well on Saturday in Ahmednagar district, reports Santosh Sonawane.

Police have registered a case under Section 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the IPC against the person given the contract of digging the well.

The deceased workers have been identified as Nagnath Gawde (29), Suraj Yusuf Inamdar (27) and Ganesh Walunj (29). Inspector Dynaneshwar Bhosale said a farmer wanted to dig a well on his farm and gave the contract to a person. "The contractor will be arrested soon," Bhosale said.

A source said the work of digging the well was under way for the past few days. After the workers dug up to 15 feet, it was decided to use a gelatin blast to dig further.

The police said four workers had planted three gelatin sticks inside stones in the half-dug well. Around 5.30 pm, the sticks suddenly exploded. The four workers inside the well were thrown out under impact of the blast. Three of them died on the spot.

Parties to take call on Speaker's post: Birla

I Am Nobody To Comment, Says Birla

Manash Gohain
@timesgroup.com



Om Birla was re-elected from Kota-Bundi LS constituency, becoming first Speaker in 20 years to win 2nd straight term

New Delhi: Amid speculation that BJP leadership may prefer his continuation as Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla on Sunday said decision would be made by political parties.

"Changes should keep happening, but I am nobody to comment on this. The speaker's post will be decided by political parties in the House," he said.

Speculation about Birla getting a second term as Speaker has gathered force amid indications that constitutional position will stay with BJP, the single largest party in Lok Sabha by a huge margin and that its allies TDP and JD(U), are comfortable with the idea.

BJP's preference for continuity in key appointments, especially for Cabinet Committee on security

ministries of defence, home, finance and external affairs, has also reinforced the estimate in certain quarters about the outgoing speaker being continued.

An agriculturist and grassroots worker, Birla was re-elected from Kota-Bundi LS constituency, becoming the first Speaker in 20 years to win his second straight election. Prior to this, he was a member of Rajasthan assembly, representing Kota South constituency from 2003 to 2014.

Birla's first term saw him developing equations

across the spectrum, especially because of his declared stance of preferring newcomers, the 'back-benchers' who always chafed at chair's 'out of turn' indulgence of veterans. He also encouraged the 'back-benchers' to participate in proceedings, motivating them to overcome the fright of the big stage, although the effort did not succeed with Sunny Deol, the actor who was elected from Gurdaspur on a BJP ticket in 2019.

The first session of 18th Lok Sabha will be held from June 24 to July 3 and Speaker's election has been scheduled on June 26 by when the newly-elected members would have been sworn in. On Sunday, Birla justified the move to relocate the status of freedom fighters and national icons spread across the Parliament premises to new enclosure Prerna Sthal. He said the relocation was part of the landscaping and beautification exercise for which all stakeholders were consulted.

13 celebrating Ganga Dussehra drown in Bihar, UP & Utkhand

Thirteen drownings were reported across Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand during Ganga Dussehra festival—on which it is considered auspicious to take a dip in the river—on Sunday.

In Patna's Barh, eight people from a family fell into the Ganga as their overcrowded boat capsized near Umanath Ganga ghat, drowning 4 of them. In Bhojpur, four friends from Bara Kharau village drowned while recording their holy dip in the Ganga at Shivpur ghat.

In Uttar Pradesh's Shahjahanpur, two teenagers—Vipin Yadav, 16, and Vivek Yadav, 17—drowned in the Ramganga river. In Sambhal district, four friends fell into the water. Of them, two were rescued and two went missing.

Anil Kumar, SHO of Junawal police station, said that the deceased were identified as Bablu Kumar, 21, and Lokesh Kumar, 22. "We are searching for their bodies," he added.

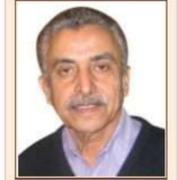
In Meerut, two teenage cousins from Panipat in Haryana drowned in the Eastern Yamuna Canal. Whereas in Uttarakhand's Rishikesh, an 18-year-old boy from UP's Saharanpur drowned in the Ganga. TNN

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DEATH ANNIVERSARY

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Dr. Suresh B. Kalgutkar
10.12.1933 - 17.06.2023

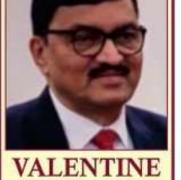
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Miss You

Kaumudi
Jaideep, Anu, Arnav
Rajdeep, Kelly, Ravi

SAD DEMISE

It's with heavy hearts we announce the passing of



VALENTINE ANTHONY
(23.09.1959 - 15.06.2024)

Funeral on Monday
17th June 2024
at 3:30pm at Our Lady of Mercy Church,
Pokharan, Thane

In our Hearts Forever

Family & Friends!

SAD DEMISE



KHORSHEED PHIROZE MOOS
(Aged 91)

Beloved wife of Phiroze Rustamji Moos Mother of Firza and Neville Mother-in-law of Lorraine Grandmother of Farruk & Carl Great grandmother of Kareena Daughter of late Rati J Bapasola & late Rustam Jamsheji Mehta Step daughter of late Jal Bapasola Sister of late Silloo Russi Patel. Late Sorab Mehta, late Jasmine Boni Mistry and Noshir Bapasola.

Passed away peacefully at home on Sunday 16th June.

Uthamna on Tuesday 18th at 3.40 pm. Hodiwala Bungli, Doongerwadi.

No condolence visits please.

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9th Death Anniversary



Mrs. Geeta Surinder Mohan Sharma
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With fond Memories

Jagdish & Preeti Sharma
Jayani & Pravir Sharma

Staff of:
Sunpack Corporation
Bhandup & Asangaon

In loving memory of



Shri S.R.V. EASWAR

beloved husband, father and grandfather who was an Embodiment of "WORK IS WORSHIP". He was self effacing, altruistic with noble ideals who touched many lives.

In Grief:
Family members.

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Maha, AP, T'gana plaintiffs about cross-border fuel runs behind hike: K'taka

Sandeep.Moudgal@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: A day after the Karnataka govt effected a Rs 3 increase in motor fuel prices with immediate effect, the administration on Sunday claimed that a lot of "inter-state losses" had influenced the move. In a statement, Siddaramaiah said fuel prices in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, apart from the governing parties in Maharashtra, to increase the prices of petrol and diesel in the state. "Basavaraj Rayareddy, economic advisor to Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, told TOI.

On Sunday, Siddaramaiah too defended the tax revision amid ramped-up calls by opposition parties for a state-wide protest starting on June 17 till the hike is rolled back. In a statement, Siddaramaiah said fuel prices in Karnataka—despite raising tax on petrol to 29.84% and diesel to 18.44%—continue to remain the lowest in the entire south and "more affordable" compared with BJP-governed Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to maintaining reasonable fuel prices for our citizens," he said.

According to Rayareddy, "across as much as 700km, people from the other side of the border have been entering Karnataka to fill their tanks due to petrol and diesel being available cheaper than in their own states. This had created an impression that

'Petrol ₹8.2/l dearer in K'taka than in UP, Guj'

Reacting to the hike in Karnataka fuel prices, oil minister Hardeep Puri took a swipe at Congress's Rahul Gandhi and said, "After this decision, people of Karnataka will be forced to pay higher amounts for food items, clothing, medicines and all items of basic necessities as fuel prices directly impact prices of all goods. Such a decision just after elections has been concluded exposes the hypocrisy of Congress which talks about mehengai but levies approximately Rs 8-12/litre additional VAT in comparison with states governed by BJP."

Puri said with this increase, petrol in Karnataka was now Rs 8.2/litre more expensive than BJP-run govts in UP and Gujarat. TNN

Karnataka taking volume sales from the neighbouring states was hurting their economies. They had been demanding repeatedly to hike prices." Rayareddy, who is an MLA from Yelburga, claimed that the price hike was a rational decision which had to be considered for the purpose of ensuring "inter-state harmony".

Meanwhile, "internally", govt officials said the proposal for hiking fuel prices had already been approved by Siddaramaiah during budget 2024-25 but was held back due to political reasons with Lok Sabha and subsequent MLC elections.

Pakistan spies pose as Indian women to honey-trap defence officials, reveals court papers

Shishir.Arya@timesgroup.com

Nagpur: A beehive of Pakistani spies posing as young Indian women with alluring names honey-trap officials in Indian defence establishments, reveal court papers on Nishant Agrawal, a former scientist of Brahmos Aerospace Private Limited's (BAPL) Nagpur unit, who was recently convicted of leaking military secrets.

Many could fall for the Indian-sounding Sejal Kapoor, Arohi Alok or Aditi Aaron. Agrawal did so, too, six years ago. Uttar Pradesh's Anti-Terrorist Squad (UP-ATS) arrested Agrawal in Oct 2018. The UP native was sentenced to life by a court in Nagpur earlier this month. Pankaj Awasthi, UP-ATS investigation officer, said in his deposition during Agrawal's trial that one 'Sejal' had set up a Facebook account from Pakistan. Using this, she chatted with Pakistani operatives and Indian targets.

The chats showed she was part of a group that shared data and tips on deceiving Indian defence staffers. Awasthi added that one of the chats showed the group was trying to launch a cyber attack.

According to Awasthi, Sejal introduced herself to Agrawal as a recruiter from a UK-based compa-

ny, and as a student from Manchester to a former IAF staffer.

For Agrawal, Sejal was a recruiter in UK's Hays Aviation. Agrawal's profile had mentioned that he was a senior systems engineer at Brahmos Aerospace. He was also Facebook friends with two other individuals, Neha Sharma and Pooja Ranjan, whose accounts too were active from Pakistan, testified Awasthi.

'APPS STOLE DATA FROM EX-SCIENTIST'S LAPTOP'

Agrawal had chatted with Sejal on Linked-in too, where she showed interest in hiring him. Awasthi told the court that on Sejal's directions, Agrawal had clicked on links sent by her and installed three apps—Qwhisper, Chat to Hire and X-trust—on his personal laptop in 2017.

The apps were malware that stole data from Agrawal's laptop, which contained classified information. Sejal and other spies tried to contact other defence officials too, both serving and retired, Awasthi told the court.

In the case of the Lucknow-based former IAF officer, the sleuths had come across romantic chats between him and Sejal.

Govt. of Bihar
Office of the Chief Engineer, Flood Control & Drainage
Water Resources Department (WRD), Birpur
1st Floor Kausiki Bhawan, Birpur
Supaul, Bihar, India (854340)

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE
Invitation for BIDS (IFB)

For
Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training and Operation & Maintenance of Equipment's, instrumentation & tools for Hydraulic modelling lab, Sediment lab, Electronic and Instrumentation workshop at Physical Modelling Centre (PMC), Centre of Excellence (CoE) Birpur, Supaul, Bihar.

Employer: CHIEF ENGINEER Flood Control & Drainage, Water Resources Department (WRD), Birpur, Supaul

Project: Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project (BKBDP)

Contract title: Supply, installation, testing, commissioning, training and operation & maintenance of equipment's, instrumentation & tools for Hydraulic modelling lab, Sediment lab, Electronic and Instrumentation workshop at Physical Modelling Centre (PMC), Centre of Excellence (CoE) Birpur, Supaul, Bihar

Country: INDIA

Loan No. /Credit No. / Grant No.: IDAIN5696

RFB No: IN-BIHAR/BAPEPS/WRD/PMC/GOODS/2024-25/04

Issued on: June 28, 2024 (28/06/2024)

- The Government of India (GoI) on behalf of Government of Bihar (GoB) has received a credit of from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project (BKBDP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training, Operation & Maintenance of Equipment's, Instrumentation & Tools for Hydraulic modelling lab, Sediment lab, Electronic and Instrumentation workshop at Physical Modelling Centre (PMC), Centre of Excellence (COE) Birpur, Supaul, Bihar.
- The Chief Engineer, Flood Control & Drainage, Water Resources Department (WRD), Birpur, Supaul GoB is sub-implementing agency on behalf of Bihar Aapda Punarwas Evam Punarnirman Society (BAPEPS), GoB now invites sealed Bids from the eligible Applicants for Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training, Operation & Maintenance of Equipment's, Instrumentation & Tools for Hydraulic modelling lab, Sediment lab, Electronic and Instrumentation workshop at Physical Modelling Centre (PMC), Centre of Excellence (COE) Birpur, Supaul, Bihar.
- Bidding will be conducted through National competitive Bidding procurement using Invitation for Bids (IFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers", January 2011 revised July 2014 ("Procurement Guidelines"), and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines.
- Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information from
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Water Resources Department,
Birpur, Supaul-854340 (India)
Phone No 91-7463889422, Fax -06471-222019
Email: cebirpur@gmail.com and inspect the bidding document during office hours 10:00 AM to 5 PM.
- The bidding document in English Language are available online on <https://eprocure.gov.in/> for a non-refundable fee of INR 10,000, in the form of Demand Draft on any Scheduled/Nationalized bank payable at Supaul in favour of Executive Engineer, Head Works Division, Birpur, Supaul-854340 (India). Bidders will be required to register in the website, which is free of cost. The bidder would be responsible for ensuring that any addenda available on the website is also downloaded and incorporated.

a)	Price of bidding document: (Non-refundable)	₹10,000 (Rupees Ten thousand Only)
b)	Date of commencement of downloading of bidding document	28/06/2024 at 15:00 Hours onwards
c)	Last date for downloading of bidding document from e-procurement Platform: https://eprocure.gov.in/	30/07/2024 at 16:00 Hours
d)	Last date and time for bid Submission/ uploading of Bid in e Procurement Platform:	30/07/2024 at 16:00 Hours
e)	Time and date of opening of bids- Technical part:	30/07/2024 at 16:30 Hours
f)	Time and date of opening of bids- Financial part:	The financial bid of the bidders who are technically qualified will be opened through e-procurement portal on a date to be notified later

6. A pre-bid meeting will be held on 11/07/2024 at 16:00 hrs. in Office of Chief Engineer Flood Control & Drainage, Water Resources Department, Birpur, Supaul-854340 (India) to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in clause 7 of ITB.

7. The address (es) referred to above is.
For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

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PR- 002031 (WRD) 2024-25
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In loving memory

Shri Purshottam J Hiranandani
(1936-2024)

Left for his heavenly abode on
16th June 2024
We will pay tributes and
celebrate his life on
Tuesday, 18th June 2024
5:30pm - 6:30pm at Sophia Bhabha
Hall, Sophia College Lane
Off Bhulabai Desai Road

Fondly Remembered by
Pushpa, Bindu, Narendra, Nita,
Krish, Samiksha, Pranet

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4 women sharing Noida flat among dead in U'khand crash

Pankul.Sharma@timesgroup.com

Dehradun: Among the 23 tourists on board the ill-fated tempo traveller which fell into a gorge in Raitoli area of Uttarakhand's Rudrapur district on Saturday, leaving at least 15 dead and 11 injured, were six women, who shared a flat in Noida.

The six friends, all in their 20s or early 30s, were working in different firms in Noida and staying together in a shared apartment in Sector 51. Little did they know that a short break from work to visit Chopta and Tungnath temple in the Garhwal hills would lead to the death of four of them and lea-

ve two others severely injured.

Mohini Pandey (27), Smriti Sharma (28), Nikita Bhatt (26) and Anjali Srivastava (27) lost their lives while Vandana Sharma (30) and Shubham Singh (27) sustained injuries.

The six friends had boarded the vehicle at Noida on Friday night, as per information available with police. The tempo traveller travelled through the night and the driver is believed to have dozed off, plunging the vehicle down a gorge. Information officer at Rudrapur, Rati Ram Singh, said parents of Shubham and Vandana took them from the hospital on Sunday.

Bihar cop hit by sand mafia's tractor, injured

Nawada: An assistant sub-inspector (ASI) suffered injuries after being hit by a tractor ferrying illegally mined sand in Bihar's Nawada on Sunday. Kumar tried to stop the vehicle in Laund village but the driver knocked him down and fled. The vehicle was plying despite a prohibition on sand mining in the area from June 15 to Oct 15. According to SHO Ranjit Ram, Kumar had gone there after a tip-off about sand-laden vehicles. This is second attack on a cop a week after a constable was crushed by a tractor of sand mafia in state's Aurangabad district. —SB Sinha

Stalin reiterates NEET ban demand amid 'irregularities'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin has reiterated his party DMK's demand to stop NEET, highlighting complaints about alleged irregularities in the medical entrance test this year. In a post on X on Sunday, Stalin cited Gujarat Police FIRs pertaining to investigators allegedly tampering with exam OMR sheets in exchange for money amid claims about cheques, some of several crores and others blank.

"This conspiracy, implicating a school principal, a physics teacher, and several NEET coaching

centres, underscores the urgent need for systemic change," Stalin posted. Banning NEET has been one of the key demands of DMK and a poll promise. A few days ago, Stalin had shared on social media the report of a panel, Justice A K Rajan committee, constituted by his govt to expose NEET's purported flaws. According to Stalin the ongoing controversies around NEET highlight its "fundamentally inequitable nature". "In a society where education has been denied for thousands of years, we must offer more opportunities for advancement of the oppressed," he wrote.



M. K. Stalin

At 47.6°C, Prayagraj hottest in country; 5th time in 10 days

No Let-Up For Next Two Days: Met Department

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: Heatwave continued to torment Uttar Pradesh as mercury soared above 46 degrees Celsius in several cities on Sunday.

For the fifth time in the last 10 days, Prayagraj was the hottest city in India with the maximum temperature of 47.6 degrees Celsius. The city had recorded 46.9 degrees Celsius on June 14. After Prayagraj, Jhansi recorded the maximum temperature of 47.1 degrees Celsius, followed by Kanpur IAF station (46.8), Varanasi (46.8), Barabanki (46.1), Agra (46.5), Sultanpur (46.4), Hamirpur (46.2) and Fatehpur (46.2). The Met department has predicted no let-up in heatwave for the next two days.

Lucknow sweltered at 45.6 degrees Celsius—the highest temperature in June in the past eight years. The minimum temperature was 31.4 degrees Celsius. The maximum and minimum temperatures in Lucknow on Monday are expected to be around 45 and 32 degrees Celsius, respectively. This year, its hottest day was on May 31, when the mercury level reached 45.8 degrees Celsius. "Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions are likely to continue in most of UP districts," said senior scientist at the Met department, Mohammad Danish.

At 33.2°C, Sunday Delhi's 2nd warmest night in 6 yrs

The scorching heat in Delhi shows no signs of abating. On Sunday, the maximum temperature at the city's base station, Safdarjung, was 44.9 degrees Celsius, six notches above normal, against 44.6 degrees Celsius a day earlier. The minimum was recorded at 33.2 degrees Celsius, six notches above normal, making it the second warmest for June in the past six years, reports **Kushagra Dixit**. The weather department has issued a series of alerts for heatwaves, including a red alert for Sunday, an orange alert for Monday, and a yellow alert for Tuesday and Wednesday.

IMD red alert for Assam, Meghalaya & Arunachal

Amid torrential downpour in Meghalaya, Assam's western districts are now witnessing increased intensity of rain. This has prompted the IMD to renew "red alert" for Assam and Meghalaya till Tuesday, and add Arunachal Pradesh to the list. IMD officials attribute the heavy to extremely heavy rain in the northeast to moisture incursion from Bay of Bengal due to south-westerly winds blowing towards the NE. This indicates strong southwest monsoon in the region, officials said. Owing to the incessant rainfall since Friday, Manas river in Assam is flowing above the danger level. **TNN**

Ensure 1% job quota for transgenders, HC tells Bengal govt

Kolkata: Calcutta high court has mandated Bengal govt to ensure a 1% reservation for transgender persons in all public jobs, noting that no quota was offered to the community despite the existing policy advocating equal treatment in employment.

In his ruling Friday, Justice Rajasekhara Mantha instructed the state's chief secretary to enforce this reservation, referencing the 2014 Supreme Court's NALSA judgment—the first to legally recognise non-binary gender identities and uphold the fundamental rights of transgender people. HC's order followed a petition from a transgender person who was excluded from counselling or interviews despite passing the teachers' eligibility test (TET) in 2014 and 2022. Justice Mantha highlighted SC's 2014 declaration that "hijras" and eunuchs be considered as "third gender" to protect their rights. **TNN & AGENCIES**

Goats mustn't be sacrificed in public on Bakrid: Minister

Patna: Union textiles minister Giriraj Singh on Sunday said goats should not be sacrificed in public places on the occasion of Bakrid, reports **Manoj Chaurasia**.

He also asked district administrations across the country to maintain communal harmony on the occasion, triggering sharp reactions from the opposition.

"Goats should not be sacrificed in public places as it may give rise to communal tension on Bakrid. I appeal to authorities in every district across the country to maintain peace and communal harmony," Singh told mediapersons in Begusarai on Sunday. The minister said officials concerned should make all efforts to ensure the festival passes off peacefully.

Reacting sharply to Giriraj's remark, RJD said the "no work other than creating communal tension in society by making such statements." The Congress said Singh should focus on his work.

'Students can learn about these events as they grow up'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Amid an ongoing row over modifications to NCERT books, the new Class 11 political science textbook claims 11 political parties prioritise minority groups' interests for "vote bank politics", leading to "minority appeasement", a shift from the 2023-24 session's focus on the lack of evidence for this idea. Additional changes include dropping references to the Babri Masjid demolition, the killing of Muslims in the Gujarat riots, Hindutva, and tweaking the reference to Manipur's merger with India.

"Should we educate our students in a way that makes them defensive or creates societal hatred? Teaching about riots at a young age is unnecessary; they can learn about these events as they grow up," **Dinesh Saklani** said and pointed out that there was no similar outcry over the absence of the 1984 riots in textbooks. Saklani's comments come as new textbooks, featuring several deletions and changes, were released. The revised Class 12 political science textbook now refers to Babri Masjid as a "three-domed structure" and focuses more on the Supreme Court judgment that allowed the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site, rather than the details of the Ayodhya issue.

This judgment led to reconstruction of the temple with the consecration performed by the PM on Jan 22. On allegations of saffronisation, Saklani said, "If something has become irrelevant, it must be changed. There's no saffronisation. We teach history based on facts, not to create conflicts. Talking about the Indian knowledge system or the metallurgical advancements is not saffronisation. These are facts." Saklani, who was head of the ancient history department at HNB Garhwal University before becoming NCERT director in 2022, has faced criticism over these textbook changes, particularly concerning historical facts.

Surrender by guerilla who held sway over tribals led to change

From P 1

Project Udaan under Dadalora Khidki, the single-window scheme to dispense benefits on behalf of the revenue department, is one of the welfare initiatives," the SP said.

Dadalora Khidki was launched a few years ago under the supervision of ex-SP Ankit Goyal, who is now DIG of the Naxal range. The idea was to take govt benefits to the tribals' doorstep.

In 2022, some residents of these seven hamlets, all of which were once-impregnable Maoist dens, to the guerrilla diktat to torch 12 road-construction vehicles and equipment near Irapur.

The recent surrender of PLGA platoon commander Mukesh Kankane of the Bhamragarh area committee, who had considerable influence over the tribals, played a role in the mindset changing from blind faith in the Maoists to that of pro-development.

At the police outpost event, the villagers pledged to henceforth boycott all Maoist meetings and bar the entry of armed guerrillas, who often use these areas as launchpads for operations against security forces and to organise political and military training.

These remote villages also used to house Maoist camps and function as a crucial link in the logistics chain of the guerrillas, police said.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

REDEVELOPMENT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed Developers for redevelopment of Kapilvatu Chsl, at CTS No. 519, 519/1 to 7, Plot No. 16A, Tejpal Scheme Road No. 2, Vile Parle (E), Mumbai-400057. Plot area is 663.7 Sqm as per PR card & 696.49 Sqm as per physical survey. Existing Carpet Area is 6901 Sqft of existing 14 members in GF-4 (part) storied existing building. Conveyance & Property Card is in Society's name. Society Plot is abutting 9.15m wide road Tejpal Scheme Road No. 2. Blank Tenders are to be collected from PMC office: SIMCON Designers & Consultants Pvt. Ltd., #G-2, Bhagirthi Smriti, Shubhamkaroti Chsl, Next to Koteswar Niwas, Subhash Road, Vile Parle - East, Mumbai- 57. Tel: 9870243173, on payment of Rs. 5,000/- (Non-refundable) by demand draft favouring "Kapilvatu Chsl Ltd.", between 17-06-2024 to 18-07-2024. Tender Submission on 20-07-2024 between 4-7 pm. The Society reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in full or in parts without assigning reasons.

TENDERS

TENDER NOTICE

State Bank of Sikkim is inviting eligible bidders for selection of System Integrator for supply, implementation & maintenance of compute, network & security components & infrastructure solutions through Request For Proposal (RFP) process. Interested Companies/Firms may obtain the RFP at www.statebankofsikkim.com from 17/06/2024. Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids received.

STATE BANK OF SIKKIM NIH-10, GANGTOK

Sealed Tenders/Offers are invited by Varuna Co-operative Housing Society Ltd, building no. D4 to D9, Plot No. 10, Sector-06, Nerul, Navi Mumbai - 400706 for proposed Redevelopment in lieu of rights to sell the additional Flats from Developers of repute. The Tender Document can be collected from the PMC Office - Urban Analysis and Solutions Consultancy Services, A 1307, Shelton Sapphire, Sector 15, CBD Belapur (Contact No.-Rohit Malli-9113550080) from Dates: 17/06/2024 To 01/07/2024 (Both dates included) between 11 am to 5 pm on payment of Rs.20,000/- (Non-Refundable) by Demand Draft in favour of Varuna Co-operative Housing Society Ltd. Sealed Tender Bids shall be submitted in the manner as prescribed in the instructions to tenderers as mentioned in 'Tender Document on and before 22/07/2024 by 6 pm in the PMC Office. The Society reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason.

Chairman /Secretary/ Treasurer
Varuna Co-Op Housing Society Ltd

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Chairman /Secretary/ Treasurer
Varuna Co-Op Housing Society Ltd

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large that my clients, Ms. Savita Jetley, Mr. Vivek Jetley, Mr. Raoul Jetley, Mrs. Pooja Raichoudhuri, Mrs. Prathiba A. Anand, Mrs. Subhadra Anand, and Mrs. Kiran Karmick, had without prejudice and without any consideration entered into an MOU dated 17th August 2023 with Pinaki Projects for the property more particularly described in the Schedule hereunder. M/s Pinaki Projects have not taken any steps in furtherance of the said MOU, which was to be ratified in writing by executing and registering a Development Agreement.

We inform the public at large that the said MOU dated 17th August 2023 has been cancelled with immediate effect by my clients vide letter dated 14th June 2024. We further inform the public at large not to enter into any arrangement with the said M/s Pinaki Projects, as any such arrangement shall not be binding on us. We further inform the public at large that my clients shall be at liberty and may proceed to deal with the said property at their own discretion.

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of land bearing Plot No.122 situate and lying at all piece and parcel of land admeasuring 608.10 Sq.mtrs, bearing C.T.S. No. 209, 209/1-4 village Chembur, situated at Sindhi Society, Chembur Mumbai 400071, and structure standing thereon, consisting of 4 flats on the ground 2 flats on the first floor and 1 flat on second floor.

MP man nabbed in Prayagraj over post claiming cop could kill UP CM

Kanpur: A man, who had posted a message on X saying that a sub-inspector of Kanpur police's crime branch could get Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath murdered, was arrested from Prayagraj on Saturday. Sub-inspector (SI) Mohamad Arif, in his complaint, said he received a call from an unknown number three times on June 12. The caller introduced himself as SI posted in Lucknow, and later, abused him and accused him of extorting money in the name of religion. The caller said he will get Arif murdered. Later, in a post on 'X', he said Arif could get the UP CM killed. Arif lodged a report with cyber cell. Cyber police station in-charge Harmeet Singh said the accused is one Deepak Srivastava from Madhya Pradesh's Rewa. "He has studied till class 10 and works as a driver at his aunt's house in Prayagraj. He spoke incoherently when asked about the threat. Going by his behaviour, it seems he is suffering from some psychological disorder," he said. **TNN**

Fan's lewd texts angered Darshan girlfriend: Cops

'Had Sent Similar Messages To Many Other Women'

Chaitanya Swamy @timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Darshan's fan Renuka Swamy started sending the star's girlfriend Pavithra Gowda messages through a fake Instagram profile two weeks before his June 8 murder and the content turned lewd in the last week before his killing allegedly at the hands of the actor and his aides, according to a senior police officer. Police have also claimed that Swamy sent such messages to many other women. These included a couple of actresses. Pavithra has been arrested along with Darshan and his aides over the murder. According to the senior officer, Swamy posted comments on Pavithra's Instagram posts criticising her relationship with Darshan, prompting her to block him.



Actor Darshan Thooogudeepa being taken to court on Saturday

Swamy then began sending the lewd messages, including pictures of his private parts, to Pavithra through the fake Instagram profile 'Reddy2205', created in the name of Tanisha Reddy and opened much earlier, police said. The fake account has about 500 followers and Swamy was following 2,348 people. He had posted around 304 messages through it. Asked about the details of other women whom Swamy allegedly messaged, the senior police officer said: "We are not sure who all he had sent the messages as his phone is missing. We are going to write to

Instagram to give details about the account. We will submit them in court while filing the chargesheet," the officer said. According to the officer, the messages sent to Pavithra through the fake profile had been collected from her account. "We have seized her phone and taken screenshots of a few messages he had sent her and a few posts he had made about Darshan travelling with his wife Vijayalakshmi," the officer said. An annoyed Pavithra is said to have informed Pavan K, an aide working for her on instructions of Darshan and who is among those arrested, about the messages and asked him to track Swamy down. Pavan traced Swamy to Chitradurga and told Darshan about the messages. According to Pavan's confession, Darshan asked his men to kidnap Swamy and bring him to Bengaluru, where the fan was allegedly thrashed to death in a shed. Police are scouring a storm-drain in Bengaluru's Sumanahalli along which Swamy's body was dumped, for his mobile phones as well as those of Raghavendra, one of his alleged killers.

Oppn netas raise EVM row; Shinde asks Rahul to quit & contest again

New Delhi: Opposition leaders Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav raised questions about the "lack of scrutiny" of EVMs, warning that "absence of accountability" was threatening to turn democracy into a sham and that voting be held with paper ballots. The remark came after a discussion thread on X where Elon Musk called for a ban on voting machines for fear of hacking. Rahul posted a news report which alleged a relative of the narrow winner by 48 votes in Mumbai belonging to BJP alliance, had accessed EVMs through a cellphone. He said, "Democracy ends up becoming a sham and prone to fraud when institutions lack accountability." Meanwhile, Yadav wrote, "BJP should clarify reason behind insistence on using EVM." In response to Rahul's comments, Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde said, "Rahul Gandhi has won in two constituencies using same EVMs. If he believes they are faulty, he should resign, and contest elections again." **TNN**

India, US in 'advanced talks' for co-production of Stryker combat vehicles

Rajat.Pandit@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: India and the US are now in an "advanced stage of talks" for the proposed joint manufacture of latest generation of Stryker armoured infantry combat vehicles (ICVs) as part of their defence-industrial cooperation roadmap. With the US also recently offering to demonstrate mobility and firepower of the eight-wheeled Stryker in high-altitude areas in India, the ministry of defence (MoD) is examining a three-phase plan for the proposed project, sources told **TOI**. Under the plan, there will be limited off-the-shelf purchase of the Strykers under foreign military sales (FMS) programme of the US, which will be followed by joint production in India, and finally there will be co-development of its futuristic versions, sources said. All this, however, is contingent on Stryker meeting operational requirements of Army's mechanised infantry battalions and a high level of indigenisation and transfer of critical technologies to the Indian co-production partner, which could be a defence PSU or private firm. "If the project is finalised, existing Indian capabilities in ICVs will be taken into account. The Strykers will have to be customised and technologically configured for Indian terrain, including operations in



If finalised, Strykers will have to be customised and technologically configured for Indian terrain, including for eastern Ladakh and Sikkim, a source said

high-altitude areas like Ladakh and Sikkim," a source said. With Army having huge requirement of futuristic wheeled and tracked ICVs to progressively replace its existing fleet of over 2,000 Russian-origin BMP-II vehicles in the years ahead, the MoD is also pursuing indigenous projects. "Army also needs ICVs capable of amphibious operations in large numbers. Strykers are not amphibious," another source said. The US is hard-selling the Strykers. Ahead of US national security advisor Jake Sullivan's visit to India, secretary of defence Lloyd J. Austin cited the "co-production of armoured vehicles with India" as yet another indicator of upward trajectory in the bilateral defence partnership during the Shangri La dialogue in Singapore two weeks ago.

Stuck in creek for 16 hrs, 3 jumbos find way back

Riyan.Ramanath @timesgroup.com



NAIL-BITING WAIT: Officials said they were prepared to either lift the animals or create a passage, but they walked out on their own

Bhubaneswar: Over 50 personnel from forest, fire, police and revenue departments waited nervously for nearly 16 hours to help rescue three male adult elephants that were trapped in a creek filled with aquatic weeds in Angul forest circuit of Odisha on Sunday. In the end, the elephants came out of the creek on their own and were safely guided back to the forest, bringing to an end a vigil that began around 3am. "Happy to inform that the three elephants stranded from morning have been successfully guided back to the forest," Susanta Nanda, principal chief conservator of forests, wildlife, posted on X. When located, only their upper parts of body and trunk were visible. Movement was

difficult for the elephants. The creek looked like a canal and was around 100-ft wide, said regional chief conservator of forests (Angul) Sudhanu Khora. The department had planned to slice through the embankment to create a direct passage for the elephants to walk out. "Thankfully, we did not have to use an excavator," Khora said, relief evident in his voice.

In U-turn, Gopi says called Indira 'mother of Cong'

Thiruvananthapuram:

Union junior minister Suresh Gopi on Sunday said he never called Indira Gandhi 'mother of the country'. Clarifying that his "Indira is mother of India" remark about the former PM was misinterpreted by media, Gopi said what he had said was Indira is 'mother of Congress' and 'mother of modern India.' Gopi said he firmly believed there was nothing wrong in what he had said about her. He said the media did not understand the "contextual meaning of his language". He added that he wouldn't be bothered about such controversies since he has a huge responsibility. **TNN**

Can't set timeframe for speaker to accept MLA resignation, rules HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Shimla: A court of law can't fix a timeframe for an assembly speaker to decide if and when to accept an MLA's resignation, a single-judge bench of Himachal Pradesh HC said while ruling on a petition filed by three Independent legislators who put in their papers on March 22 and joined BJP. The trio was seeking a directive to the speaker to accept their resignations. Case had been referred to Justice Sandeep Sharma after division bench of Chief Justice MS Ramachandra Rao and Justice Jyotsna Rewal Dua gave differing views on plea in separate judgments on May 8. "Judgments passed by both members of division bench reveal that relief prayed for cannot be granted, but only difference of opinion is if timeframe can be issued to speaker of legislative assembly to decide issue of voluntariness/genuineness of resignations of petitioners or not?" Justice Sharma said. He said Chief Justice Rao had held that no direction can be issued to speaker to take decision on resignation letter within a fixed timeframe, whereas Justice Dua directed the speaker to decide the issue within two weeks. The June 14 verdict came 11 days after speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania accepted the resignations of Ashish Sharma (Hamirpur), Hoshiyar Singh (Dehra) and KL Thakur (Nalagarh). The trio resigned in March after voting in favour of BJP's candidate in Rajya Sabha election in a challenge to Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu-led Congress govt, which they had been supporting till then. By-elections to these three seats were on hold till speaker's decision came. Hamirpur, Dehra and Nalagarh will now vote on July 10.

'Kids adopted post retirement can't be denied pension'

Chandigarh: There can't be discrimination in granting family pension to legally adopted children on account of date of adoption, Punjab and Haryana high court has said. Court said children adopted post-retirement can't be deprived of pension. Justice Tribhuvan Dahiya passed the order while allowing a petition filed by Vikas Kumar from Jhajjar, Haryana. He had sought quashing of Haryana govt order dated Feb 14, 2019, that rejected his claim for family pension. He had also sought to release family pension, effective from Sept 24, 2012, with interest, till he turns 25. HC ordered state to release his family pension from date of his father's demise till he turns 25, and arrears with 6% interest per annum from due date to actual payment. —Ajay Sura

Dhanbad villagers dig river pits amid govt's parched promises

Chandan Paul | TNN



PITTING THEIR HOPES: Villagers of Dongabera dig along Nagra river

Dhanbad: Since independence, residents of several villages in Paschmi Tundi block in Jharkhand's Dhanbad have been dependent on digging pits, known as "chua", along Nagarwa river for potable water during summers due to ineffective govt water supply schemes. The groundwater level in Charakkala, Kurhawa, Dhongabera, Mohli and Kolharia under Jatakhunti panchayat has dropped significantly, rendering hand pumps useless and forcing women to fetch water from "chuas". "I have been fetching drinking water this way since I got married 12 years ago, just like my mother-in-law," said Lalita Devi from Dhongabera village. Kurhawa tola resident Muni said, "There's only one well in the village. During summer, we have to wait for hours to collect water seeping from the surrounding area. Earlier, we used to dig pits along Damodar River, but no longer, after mining activities depleted the sand. Now we

dig pits along Nagarwa Jhoria." In 2016, then BJP govt initiated Rs 46-crore Thethatand Mega Water Supply Scheme, but the project missed its 2018 deadline and the contractor abandoned the project in 2020, said Jatakhunti panchayat mukhya Asha Murmu. He added that requests with departmental engineers have yielded no results, and the supply pipes have not been laid. Mathura Mahato, JMM MLA from Tundi, said, The 'Har Ghar Jal Yojana' is nearing completion. A Jharkhand legislative team is expected to inspect the area in July."

Row over uniform mass bid in Kerala churches

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: An attempt to implement uniform holy mass, prescribed by the Synod of the Syro Malabar Church in the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese in Kerala, led to clashes on Sunday between faithful. The police had to intervene after the stand-off. The latest circular of the Church, which warns priests that they would be ipso facto out of Catholic communion if they conduct any mass other than the synodal form after July 3, was supposed to be read out in churches on Sunday. However, it didn't happen in majority of churches in archdiocese, and in churches like Edappally St George Church the faithful boomed and jeered at a group which demanded the unification. At Udayamperoor synodal church, some of the laity (lay pe-

ople, as distinct from the clergy) members entered into an argument over the circular even as the mass progressed. Churchgoers pushed and shoved at each other over the issue. Meanwhile, Almaaya Munnetam, the laity group coordinating resistance to synodal mass in archdiocese, said churches in archdiocese have completely rejected the circular issued by Syro-Malabar Church major archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil and Mar Bosco Puthur. The group said in a statement that it was not read out in any of the 321 churches in Ernakulam archdiocese. Laity activists protested by burning the circular in front of most churches. In many churches, the circular was torn and deposited in waste bins. At Udayamperoor Kochupally, the circular was thrown into the backwaters.

MP man rapes, blackmails Mum woman, arrested

Ajmer: A man from Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain was arrested on Sunday for allegedly raping and blackmailing a woman by obtaining her obscene photos and videos. The woman alleged Wasim Khan (41) posed as a Hindu to deceive her. The woman, who lives in Mumbai, filed a complaint in Ajmer on June 11. She said they became friends after she got a call from a "wrong number" three years ago. Khan invited her to Ajmer two years ago, when he allegedly raped her. On April 22 and 23, he threatened her and called her to Ajmer again and raped her. **TNN**

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL, AUTONOMOUS STATE MEDICAL COLLEGE KAUSHAMBI
 Letter No. ASMC/KAUSHAMBI/ADVERTISMENT/2024-25/349 Date 15-06-2024
ADVERTISEMENT
 APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE POST OF PROFESSORS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS, ASSISTANT PROFESSORS AT AUTONOMOUS STATE MEDICAL COLLEGE, KAUSHAMBI UP. FOR DETAILS VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.ASMCKAUSHAMBI.IN AND DGME WEBSITE- WWW.DGME.UP.GOV.IN
 LAST DATE OF ACCEPTING APPLICATION IS 13.07.2024 TILL 05:00 PM.
Principal,
AUTONOMOUS STATE MEDICAL COLLEGE, KAUSHAMBI

Superintending Engineer, Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.
 Regional Office Nagpur.
 (A Government of Maharashtra Undertaking)
 Office Address - A/142, Quarter, Ravi Nagar Government Premises, Telangkhedi Road, Nagpur-440001.
 Telephone No. 0712-2955658 | E-Mail- se.nagpur@msidc.org
 CIN-U43900MH2023SGC412992

E-TENDER NOTICE
 Online Tenders (e-tender) by the Superintending Engineer, MSIDC, Nagpur are invited for Design Competition for appointment of architects for the following works concerning "Re-development of NMC Market Site(s)":
 Tender documents shall be available from 18.06.2024, 3pm onwards.
 Date and time of submission of bids shall be 09.07.2024 at 3pm.
 Tender Notice No. 12. The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Maharashtra e-Tendering Portal, <https://mahatenders.gov.in>

S.No.	Name of Project	Site Area in Sq.M. (approx.)	EMD (INR)	Cost of Document
1.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Cotton Market Site in Nagpur.	47,997	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)
2.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Dahi Bazar Site in Nagpur.	1,669	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)
3.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Six nos. combined Market Sites at Itwari in Nagpur	13,767	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)
4.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Netaji Market Site in Nagpur.	9,393	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)
5.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Santra Market Site in Nagpur.	12,895	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)
6.	Design Competition to appoint Architect for Re-Development of Dik Dawakhana Site in Nagpur.	3,800	3000/-	Rs. 1180/- (Rs. 1000/- + GST)

Note:
 1. Downloading & Submission of Tender Documents will be done on - <https://mahatenders.gov.in>
 2. The right is reserved to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/2024/206/2024
 Superintending Engineer, Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development MSIDC
 Date: 14/06/2024

(Prashant N. Pagrut)
 Superintending Engineer
 MSIDC Ltd. Nagpur

Western Railway - Ratlam Division
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT - E-TENDERING NOTICE
 No. : W/623/NIT/1, Date : 12.06.2024
 The Divisional Railway Manager (WA) RATLAM for and on behalf of the President of India invites "Open Tender" through e-tender on website www.ireps.gov.in in the details as under :-
Sr. No. : 1, E-Tender No. : RTM-2024-25-44, Name of Work : Ratlam Division - Up-gradation in Infrastructure Facility for ART/ARME, SPART & Disaster Management Facility for COR Station, **Approx Quantity :** As per tender schedule, **Approx Value :** ₹ 56,42,045.08, **Earnest Money in Rs :** ₹ 1,12,900.00, **Cost of Tender Form Rs :** Nil, **Completion period :** 09 Months, **Similar Type of Work :** Any Civil Engineering Work, **Date of uploading on website :** 12.06.2024, **Date of Opening & Time at :** 08.07.2024. **Sr. No. : 2, E-Tender No. : RTM-2024-25-36, Name of Work :** Chanderiya-Ratlam (UP) - TRR(P) - 2.080 Tkm & Ratlam-Khandwa - TRR(P) - 6.746 Tkm Total 8.826 TKM, **Approx Quantity :** As per tender schedule, **Approx Value :** ₹ 1,17,94,181.14, **Earnest Money in Rs :** ₹ 2,09,000.00, **Cost of Tender Form Rs :** Nil, **Completion period :** 12 Months, **Similar Type of Work :** Any Track Work, **Date of uploading on website :** 12.06.2024, **Date of Opening & Time at :** 08.07.2024. **Sr. No. : 3, E-Tender No. : RTM-2024-25-35, Name of Work :** Ratlam-Khandwa Section - CTR(S/P) - 1.524 Tkm & TRR(S) - 3.963 Tkm, **Approx Quantity :** As per tender schedule, **Approx Value :** ₹ 95,72,402.87, **Earnest Money in Rs :** ₹ 1,91,500.00, **Cost of Tender Form Rs :** Nil, **Completion period :** 09 Months, **Similar Type of Work :** Any Track Work, **Date of uploading on website :** 12.06.2024, **Date of Opening & Time at :** 08.07.2024. **Sr. No. : 4, E-Tender No. : RTM-2024-25-38, Name of Work :** Ratlam-Khandwa Section - Providing metal cattle safety fencing at CRO, **Approx Quantity :** As per tender schedule, **Approx Value :** ₹ 1,46,36,487.78, **Earnest Money in Rs :** ₹ 2,23,200.00, **Cost of Tender Form Rs :** Nil, **Completion period :** 09 Months, **Similar Type of Work :** Any Civil Engineering Work, **Date of uploading on website :** 12.06.2024, **Date of Opening & Time at :** 08.07.2024. Detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria and terms and conditions are available at website www.ireps.gov.in.
 ADM/5/1/095
 Like us on: [Facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)
 Divisional Railway Manager(WA)
 Western Railway, Ratlam Division

IN THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF DELHI (ORIGINAL COMPANY JURISDICTION) IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 1956 & IN THE MATTER OF TRIVENI INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CO. LTD. COMPANY PETITION NO. 39/2009 E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Tenders/bids are invited for E-auction of the Joint Development & Marketing Rights of following asset/project of the company (In Lign) on "As is Where is Whatever there is basis" from the prospective buyers. The details of Land, License & Reserve Price and EMD are as under:

S. No.	Name of the Company and Location, details of License & FSI	Reserve Price/Fair Market Value	Earnest Money	S. No.	Name of the Company and Location, details of License & FSI	Reserve Price/Fair Market Value	Earnest Money
1.	Triveni Infrastructure Development Company Limited. Project: Triveni Galaxy Project at Sector- 78, Faridabad, Haryana. Area: 30.254 Acres FSI Area: 214258 Sq. Mtr. *Additional terms and conditions as directed vide order dated 21.12.2023 passed in CP No. 39/2009 as mentioned below.	Rs. 550,00,00,000/-	Rs. 55,00,00,000/-	3.	Land owned by M/s Triveni Infrastructure Development Company Limited & M/s R.M.S. Club & Resorts Pvt. Ltd. Village Faridpur, Faridabad		
					Rect. No. Killa No. Area K-M		
					12/1 2-17		
					11/3 1-11		
					20/1 7-13		
					12/2 2-17		
					10/2 6-5		
					28 3/1/2 2-12		
					3/2/2 1-16		
					4 8-0		
					8 8-0		
					31 9/2 7-3		
					12/1 5-17		
					12/2 2-3		
					22/1 2-2		
					18/2 0-2		
					19/2 6-8		
					20/2 1-3		
					21 0-2		
					1/2 3-17		
					10/1 6-18		
					28 23/2 7-11		
					31 3 8-0		
					4/1 4-3		
					17 24/2 1-0		
					25 8-0		
					18 21 7-9		
					18 17 8-0		
					18/1 1-12		
					18/2 3-9		
					18/3 2-19		
					22 7-3		
					23 7-9		
					24 7-9		
					17 17 8-0		
					24/1/2 4-10		
					Land owned by M/s Triveni Infrastructure Development Company Limited - Village Fajupur Majra Nimka, Faridabad, Haryana		
					Rect. No. Killa No. Area K-M		
					2 20 5-4		
					28 11/2/2 1-8		
					20/1/1 2-6		
					Land owned by M/s. R.M.S. Club & Resorts Pvt. Ltd. Village Faridpur, Faridabad		
					Rect. No. Killa No. Area K-M		
					17 24/1/1 1-2		
					18 19 6-16		
					28 24/1 7-15		
					29 4 3-8		
					5/1 2-3		
					5/2 5-17		
					6 7-18		
					7 0-13		
					15 7-10		
					28 1/1 7-9		
					1/2 0-11		
					10 8-0		
					11/1 4-16		
					18 11/2 6-3		

* The DTCP has renewed the Licence No. 37-39 of 2007 upto 22.01.2025. Thereafter, the auction purchaser/developer shall renew the license on its own.
 * The Auction Purchaser/Developer will bear the EDC (charges as on 12.12.2023) payable to DTCP and the details whereof are as under- Amount in Rs. lakhs

Head	Principal Amount	Interest	Penal Interest	Total
EDC	2327.75	559.06	5781.65	8668.46
IDC	Fully Paid			

* The Auction Purchaser/Developer shall be liable to pay outstanding dues of enhanced EDC, as and when demanded by the DTCP after the final decision of the Hon'ble High Court of Punjab & Haryana in CWP No 5835 of 2013-Balwan Singh and others vs. State of Haryana.
 * The Auction Purchaser/Developer will also renew the Bank guarantees held with the DTCP against the said property and complete all the formalities/clearances as required by the DTCP.
 * The Auction Purchaser/Developer shall construct EWS Plots on the said land and transfer the same as per policy of DTCP.
 * The auction purchaser/Developer shall abide by the latest policy/regulations of DTCP (including policy dated 18.02.2015) / other statutory authorities as per law.

Note:
 1. Inspection of the above assets/property will be held on 24.06.2024, 25.06.2024 & 26.06.2024 between 11:00 A.M to 4:00 P.M.
 2. The e-auction will be conducted through the website <https://olauction.envidia.com> on 05.07.2024 between 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM with auto time extension of 10 minutes each time if the bid is made in the Last 10 minutes before the close of e-auction.
 3. The bidders/tenderers should submit their online offer through the website <https://olauction.envidia.com>
 4. The tenderers should collect the detailed information, terms & condition through the website <https://olauction.envidia.com> and may also take help from the below contacts:-
 Raittel- Navneet Mishra - 9355030630; Amrendra Kumar - 8448288980; Anand Kumar - 9355030602, Office of Official Liquidator - Mr. M.S. Kataria & Mr. Wasim Raja - 8076311561;
 5. The EMD amount (interest free) should be deposited through the modes available on the portal. The last date for online submission of EMD is

Doctors, students and activists team up to lead fight against NEET irregularities

Himanshi Dhawan & Shruti Sonal | TNN

Three days before the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) on May 5, some students received pop-up alerts on Telegram: "Leak paper available, price Rs 5000, message to buy @HQPaper."

The Supreme Court has now issued notices to the Centre and NTA on these alleged leaks after PILs piled up. But RTI activist Vivek Pandey says he had posted about these "leak paper" offers on social media platforms even before the test. "But it fell on deaf ears," he says. On May 5, the day of the exam, Pandey felt a sense of déjà vu.

But rather than just being happy with his I-told-you-so moment, Pandey has been spending most of his time filing complaints with the Union health ministry on the problems with NEET-UG, seeking updates from Bihar



QUESTION MARK OVER FUTURE: Besides hitting the streets to protest, stressed students are seeking advice and aid for filing complaints and petitions

up in arms against the NTA.

Like Pandey, Kota-based educator and students rights' advocate Dr Amit Gupta regularly posts videos sharing the plight of aspirants, amassing nearly 30,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter). Gupta, who completed his MBBS but decided to become a teacher instead, began his 'activism' in 2015 after the AIPMT paper leak. "I gathered about 2,000 students, and we decided that enough was enough. Every time the cheaters just get away," Gupta says. The group held rallies and dharnas, demanding a re-exam. However, they soon realised that taking the judicial route would bear more fruit. Eventually, the SC ruled in their favour.

Since then, 46-year-old Gupta has been fighting for other reforms too. This year, after the NEET results row, Gupta began helping students out to file petitions. Years of experience in fighting legal battles have come in handy as his lawyers help students draft petitions and crowdsource legal fees. "If students take a single exam on one date with a single question paper in offline mode, there are bound to be leaks. Why can't we adopt the JEE model where multiple question papers are prepared and exams are held on different dates online?" he asks.

Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan has denied that there have been any leaks calling the allegations motivated. But the turmoil among students and parents has been hard to contain. Students Islamic Organisation of India too has been vocal in its protests on the exam. The group has about 10 lakh students in their network who

look to them for career guidance or funds as many belong to economically deprived backgrounds. SIO national secretary Abdullah Faiz says they received 300 complaints from students related to NEET discrepancies. "Then we saw reports about grace marks being given without a proper explanation, paper leaks in Bihar and Gujarat and six toppers from just one centre in Haryana. We decided to file a petition as we no longer trust the agency conducting the exam." SIO also conducted a survey among its students and found 64% had encountered problems like delayed start or early finish of the exam while 48% found discrepancies or errors in their scorecard. The most troubling thing, Faiz says, is that controversies surrounding the exam had impacted the mental health of over 70% of students.

Desperate students have hit social media, organised street protests and petitioned influencers and politicians. The recent controversies also prompted Dr Dhruv Chauhan, national council coordinator with the Indian Medical Association Junior Doctors Network, to request a re-examination. "Students have approached me saying they feel helpless. They and their families spend years planning and preparing for a medical career. Their faith has been shaken," Chauhan says.

Among the other petitioners are coaching institutes such as PhysicsWallah's Alakh Pandey and students like 19-year-old Andhra student Jaripiti Kartheek who took the exam for the third time. Even with the result of 506, he finds himself at a rank of 200520 which makes state medical colleges out of reach. "So many of the students who sat for the exam are struggling. NTA should change its approach—divide the courses and branches, and conduct different exams for each," he says.

HELPING HAND: Amit Gupta gives legal aid to students

DHRUV CHAUHAN DOR-ACTIVIST

Students approached me saying they feel helpless. Their families spend years planning and preparing for a medical career. Their faith has been shaken



police about investigations into a leak from the state while also petitioning for action against the NTA in the SC. He had earlier filed an RTI seeking clarifications on the grace marks awarded by NTA which later withdrew them.

Discrepancies in exams are personal for him. He attempted to pass the pre-medical test (PMT) in Madhya Pradesh for nearly four years but always ended up in failure. It was only when the Vyapam scam—where students cheated on a large scale to pass the state medical exam in connivance with senior officials, teachers and many middlemen—hit headlines that he realised that he was trying to win a fixed match. Pandey eventually cracked NEET but decided to work towards greater transparency in the medical education system, filing around 1,000 RTIs since 2016. Though no one paid heed to his warnings in May they are paying attention now.

"When the 'leak' stories came out, we had a small group of 50 students who were disturbed by the reports. Now our support group has expanded to 4,500," Pandey says, adding that there are lakhs who are now



Nalla Muthu, TOI 'Tiger Anthem' creator, gets award at MIFF

Nagpur: Subbaiah Nalla Muthu, renowned for his wildlife conservation campaign film, Tiger Anthem, made in association with The Times of India, was presented V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award at Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) on Saturday, reports Vijay Pinjarkar.

Tiger Anthem, part of TOI's initiative to commemorate 50 years of Project Tiger, garnered over 100 million views worldwide and received praise from PM Narendra Modi. It was also featured at G20 summit. "Its success has shown that non-fiction and awareness-driven subjects can be effectively presented in an engaging and entertaining musical format," Muthu told TOI.

Muthu's unparalleled body of work on Indian tigers establishes him as one of the foremost natural history filmmakers worldwide, dedicating 16 years to telling soulful stories about India's big cats. Ministry of I&B acknowledged Muthu's exceptional contributions to non-feature and wildlife documentary filmmaking with this esteemed award.

Indian EVMs not connected to internet like those in US: EC

Bharti Jain
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Reacting to Elon Musk's post on X about eliminating EVMs, a senior EC functionary said it was unfortunate that EVM methodology in India was being doubted when "it has systematically evolved and is accepted here, with the highest court having ruled in its favour time and again".

"Also, the electoral system in the US does not provide for a watchdog at par with Election Commission of India that has its duties clearly laid out in Article 324 of the Constitution," the functionary said.

The EC functionary explained that each state in the US could choose its voting methodology and these ranged from paper ballot to direct recording electronic (DRE) systems with or without a paper trail. "Electronic systems are used variedly in the US systems, but none partakes the technical characteristics of Indian EVM. EVMs in India are standalone machines with mandatory VVPAT and are not connected to the internet. EVM



DRE systems in the US are varied and mostly rely on internet platforms, which distinguish them categorically from the Indian context

methodology is carefully enshrined in a rule-based operating procedure, providing for very robust and continuous disclosures to all stakeholders including political parties and candidates," the functionary said.

The functionary underlined that EVMs and VVPATs created an immutable audit trail for post-incident forensics. "Thus, the system finds validation not only in the successful conduct of national and state assembly elections since 2004 and more than 20 transition/transfer of power among political stakeholders. It has rightfully been validated through several court rulings, the most recent being SC ruling after a very unusual 'direct evidence' being provided in open court by EC," he explained.

DRE systems in the US are varied and most rely on internet platforms, which distinguish them categorically from the Indian context. "Each voting methodology finds credibility among the electors in its respective country contexts. India has a robust system which heralded significant improvements over the difficulties and questions on credibility of the paper ballot system and thus has been accepted by the electors at large, as reflected in ever increasing voter turnout," the EC functionary said.

► From P 1

We should eliminate electronic voting machines. The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high," Musk wrote on X, sharing a post by Robert F Kennedy Jr that cited media reports about hundreds of voting irregularities related to EVMs in Puerto Rico.

Chandrasekhar argued that Musk's view may be applicable to the US and other places where regular computing platforms are used to build "internet-connected voting machines". He added, "This is a huge sweeping generalisation statement that implies no one can build secure digital hardware. Wrong. Indian EVMs are custom designed, secure and isolated from any network or media—no connectivity, no Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, internet, i.e., there is no way in. Factory programmed controllers that can't be reprogrammed."



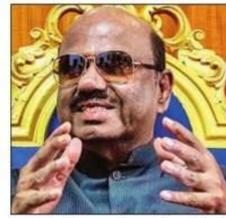
Replying to this, Musk said, "Anything can be hacked." Chandrasekhar agreed that "anything is possible", at least in theory. "With quantum compute, I can decrypt any level of encryption. With lab-level tech and plenty of resources, I can hack any digital hardware/system including the flight controls of a glass cockpit of a jet, etc. But that's a different type of conversation from EVMs being secure and reliable," he said. Supreme Court on April 26 upheld EVM system of polling.

Zero FIR against Bengal gov's kin over dancer's rape charge

Kol Cops Shift Case To Delhi On Court Order

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kolkata: The Kolkata Police have lodged a zero FIR against Bengal governor C V Ananda Bose's nephew linked to rape and criminal conspiracy allegations levelled against Bose and the nephew by an Odissi dancer, saying she was assaulted in a Delhi hotel in Jan 2023.



An Odissi dancer has alleged that governor Bose assaulted her in a Delhi hotel in Jan 2023

since the alleged assault took place there.

Raj Bhavan is still to respond to the development.

The case, based on a complaint filed at Kolkata's Hare Street police station in Oct last year, has been transferred to the Delhi Police on orders of the chief metropolitan magistrate's court.

Police declined to comment on the complaint, registered under sections 376 (rape) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), beyond saying that the chief metropolitan magistrate's court ordered that a zero FIR be filed and the case transferred to Delhi

was staying at Delhi's Banga Bhavan at the time, had allegedly visited her at the hotel and abused her.

She hasn't explained why she waited 10 months to lodge a complaint, officials said.

On May 2 this year, a Raj Bhavan staffer had also complained that the governor molested her twice (on April 24 and May 2).

In this case, three Raj Bhavan employees, implicated in a different FIR, got bail from a lower court. They have since moved Calcutta HC to quash the criminal charges against them.

Bose cited the apex court's interpretation of Article 361 in the Rameshwar Prasad case to point out that the governor enjoys complete immunity, even for their personal acts, while in office.

In a statement, he said, "It logically follows that police cannot investigate/inquire into the matter, in any manner, whatsoever. Thus, in view of the immunity enjoyed by the governor, police are constitutionally barred from carrying out any kind of preliminary inquiry or registering an FIR."

The Odissi dancer said she received flight tickets and a hotel booking in Delhi for Jan 5 and 6, 2023, through the governor's nephew. Bose, who

'Won't see CM till I meet poll violence victims'

Kolkata: The rift between Bengal governor CV Ananda Bose and Trinamool Congress got escalated on Sunday with Raj Bhavan shutting the door on CM Mamata Banerjee until Bose meets all the people affected by post-poll violence in state. This decision follows a Calcutta HC order on Saturday permitting alleged victims and BJP MLA Suvendu Adhikari to meet the governor.

Bose expressed his dismay over the treatment of violence-affected people. "All victims will be allowed to meet me at Raj Bhavan. The CM will not be allowed to meet me till then. Police working at Raj Bhavan will be transferred (if they disallow affected people from meeting him)," he said.

This escalated a month-long tension since Banerjee's public declaration on May 11, vowing never to visit Raj Bhavan again, accusing the governor of misconduct. TNN

Nirmala will meet state FMs to seek inputs on Budget

► From P 1

These are preliminary areas of emphasis, some flowing from the election outcome, with detailed consultations yet to begin given that ministers took charge last week and PM Narendra Modi was travelling, sources familiar with the deliberations told TOI.

The pre-Budget consultations are to begin this week, but a lot of groundwork has already been done by officials, who were tasked by Modi to prepare the 100-day plan.

On Saturday, Nirmala will meet state finance ministers to seek their inputs on the Budget, before joining them for GST Council meeting in the afternoon.

While the proposal for expanding PLI to more sectors has been on the table for a while, including to specialty chemicals where European companies are retreating, there have been issues around the size of investment that should be promoted by govt as large global champions are sought to be created in India.

Details of the MSME package are yet to be firm up but the idea is to empower small businesses, which were a focus of the post-Covid scheme too, so that there is enough impetus to create employment in the largest sector after agriculture. Jobs, both in terms of quantity and quality, have been a key concern during the election and many see BJP falling short of the majority mark as a fallout of the widespread discontent on this count.

Similarly, there have been multiple suggestions to increase income levels for women, and increase their participation in the workforce, including through some tax arrangements. Officials said the proposals will be discussed in detail as women are a key target group for NDA.

FM to meet economists, farm bodies for pre-Budget talk

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: As part of her pre-Budget consultations with stakeholders, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman will meet farmers' associations and agriculture economists on Friday and seek their suggestions on the policy landscape for politically and economically crucial sector, reports Vishwa Mohan.

"Ideas and suggestions of stakeholders are thoroughly discussed before Budget preparation. It's a standard procedure and is followed for finalising the budget for all ministries/sectors," said an official. This time, however, given complaints of farm and rural distress, the agriculture sector will be a crucial component of the Budget and will also outline Modi govt's strategy for the coming five years.

Promises made in the interim Budget may get a concrete shape with more specific allocation, sources said.

Ensure seamless coordination, Shah tells security agencies

► From P 1

Pointing to Modi govt's resolve to uproot terrorism in all its forms through "innovative means and seamless coordination among various security agencies," Amit Shah said the fight against terrorism in J&K was in a decisive phase. He emphasised on seamless coordination among security agencies, identifying vulnerable areas and addressing the security concerns of such areas.

Reiterating govt's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and commitment to crack down on terrorists through "innovative means", he directed all security agencies to work in a mission mode and ensure quick response in a co-ordinated manner.

Sources in the security establishment told TOI that the revised counter-terror strategies for Jammu region shall include returning to the force deployment pattern of the 1990s, with more personnel guarding the mountain tops, resuming and intensifying counter-operations sector-wise and strengthening village defence committees (VDCs) in all districts of the Jammu region by refining their training and equipping them better to bust future terrorist strikes.

"Deployment levels of J&K police, central paramilitary forces as well as Army troops will be considerably enhanced in the Pir Panjal region," a senior officer said.

With higher force deployment expected to boost the intelligence flow and reduce response time to alerts on the presence or movement of ter-

Amid search for terrorists, J&K police warn against rumours, fear-mongering

Security forces have been conducting search operations across J&K's Jammu division following reports of suspicious movements of armed men. Some of these operations have resulted in wild goose chases, prompting police to reiterate their advice for public to stay vigilant but not to succumb to rumours and fear-mongering, reports Sanjay Khajuria.

Panic has gripped locals following four terrorist attacks on June 9, 11, and 12 in the three frontier districts of Reasi, Kathua, and Doda. These attacks resulted in the deaths of seven pilgrims, their bus driver and conductor, and a CRPF constable. In a counter-offensive, two terrorists were killed.

Police also assured the public that areas around Vaishno Devi temple in Katra are safe. Searches by police, Army, and paramilitary teams confirmed no threats, an official said.

rorists in Jammu region — which unlike the flat-floor Valley has a difficult terrain with limited road and communication connectivity — counter-operations will be intensified in the days to come. Any local support to terrorists in Jammu division, like Kashmir, will invite serious consequences.

Good flow of intelligence followed by quick response by the counter-terror forces has helped to curb terrorist activities in the Valley, an officer said and added that the strategy will now be replicated in Jammu region.

'Govt committed to 100% transparency'

► From P 1

Keeping the cognisance of the (Supreme) court, specific action has been initiated. Everything is being done under supervision of the court."

The minister said the govt was committed to 100% transparency for an important exam like NEET. "The SC itself is keeping an eye on the matter. Action will be taken on those found responsible."

Earlier on Friday, Dharmendra Pradhan had indicated that scrapping the entire examination was unlikely as the sanctity of the process could not be judged by alleged irregularities at a handful of centres. Some states with a large presence of a powerful lobby of education institutes have been opposing NEET and officials argued that coaching centres were fanning the row as the syllabus aligned with Class 12, helping more students secure high marks.

Officials said of 4,750 centres, concerns were expressed at eight. There are only a handful of centres in Patna, where there are paper leak allegations.

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3 killed on tracks as music by DJ dims train sound

Jaipur: A 50-year-old man, his wife, and sister-in-law were fatally struck by a train in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh on Saturday night while crossing tracks, unable to hear the approaching train due to loud DJ music from a nearby temple.

Eyewitnesses said they tried to warn Mohanlal Dhobi, his wife Lalita (45), and Lalita's sister Jayshree (40) about the approaching Bandra-Ajmer Express, but their voices were drowned out by the music. The trio didn't use the underpass. The women died on the spot. Mohanlal succumbed on the way to hospital. Police handed over the bodies to the family after postmortem. TNN

Will strive with all for Ukraine peace: India

► From P 1

Justifying India's decision to not associate itself with any communique/document emerging from this summit, MEA secretary (west) Pavan Kapoor, who led the Indian delegation, said in India's view, only those options acceptable to both parties could lead to abiding peace. "In line with this approach, we have decided to not associate with the joint communique or any other document emerging from the summit."

In a separate statement, the foreign ministry said a lasting and peaceful resolution required "sincere and practical engagement between the two parties to the conflict". "India's participation in the summit, as well as in the preceding NSA/politi-

cal director-level meetings based on Ukraine's peace formula, was in line with our consistent approach to facilitate a lasting and peaceful resolution to the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy," said the Indian statement, alluding to PM Modi's repeated assurances to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that India would do everything within its means to support a peaceful solution.

However, India and others who did not endorse the communique had doubts whether the peace summit would be able to achieve its objective of "just peace" in the absence of Russia. Govt also said India will continue to remain engaged with all stakeholders as well as both the parties to contribute to all "earnest efforts" to bring about an early and abiding peace.

Indian EVMs secure, isolated from networks

► From P 1

We should eliminate electronic voting machines. The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high," Musk wrote on X, sharing a post by Robert F Kennedy Jr that cited media reports about hundreds of voting irregularities related to EVMs in Puerto Rico.

Chandrasekhar argued that Musk's view may be applicable to the US and other places where regular computing platforms are used to build "internet-connected voting machines". He added, "This is a huge sweeping generalisation statement that implies no one can build secure digital hardware. Wrong. Indian EVMs are custom

designed, secure and isolated from any network or media—no connectivity, no Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, internet, i.e., there is no way in. Factory programmed controllers that can't be reprogrammed."

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Cong to review 'problem' states, revamp AICC and state units

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Seeking to plug organisational loopholes and prepare for the future, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will soon kickstart a review of states where the party performed badly in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. It will be followed by meetings with functionaries of states that will go for assembly elections in coming months.

Sources said Congress will effect an organisational reshuffle in AICC and state units after the string of meetings where the role of party chiefs and managers will also be assessed. Of special concern is the sub-par performance in Karnataka and Telangana, where the party recently came to office with a solid performance, and Himachal Pradesh, where the party won a good



Union minister Kiren Rijju with Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi on Sunday

majority but failed to win any of the four seats in the parliamentary elections. The party also performed poorly in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu, in a repeat of 2014 and 2019 polls.

The review is likely to start later this month. The issue came up for discussion in the recent CWC meeting held to discuss the 2024 election results. The party also wants to

Tankha wants change of guard in MP, C'garh

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Vivek Tankha Sunday said there was a need for new leadership in the party in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. "Both states need to introspect and need a new leadership," he said. Tankha's statement comes at a time when speculation is rife about organisational changes in both the state Congress units. "Despite setbacks, Congress made significant gains overall." TNN

quickly finalise the strategy for Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand, which will go for assembly elections in the coming months.

Party sources said J&K may go for polls later, and it is crucial that the unit readies itself on the difficult turf.

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CL 1525

Paytm in talks with Zomato to sell its movie, ticketing biz

Transaction Seen Valuing Fintech's Vertical At ₹2,000 Crore

Asmita.Dey@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Paytm is in advanced stages of discussion to sell its movie and events ticketing business to Zomato as part of the fintech's strategy to divest its non-core assets, sources aware of the development told TOI. The deal, if finalised, could value the business vertical of Paytm at close to Rs 2,000 crore.

In a stock exchange filing late Sunday, Zomato said that it is in discussions with Paytm to acquire its movies and events ticketing business. The discussion, the firm said, is being undertaken with an intent to strengthen its 'going-out' business. "However, no binding decision has been taken at this stage that would warrant a board approval and subsequent disclosure," Zomato added.

In a separate filing, Paytm also said that the discussions

To Boost Zomato's 'Going-Out' Segment

► Paytm's movie and events ticketing vertical is housed under its marketing services business which also includes advertising, credit card marketing, deals and gift vouchers

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► The co had said that it aims to achieve significant cost efficiencies, among other things, through the pruning of its non-core businesses

► The deal would give a leg-up to Zomato's going-out business, which already offers discovery and ticketing of offline experiences such as in-restaurant dining and live events such as Zomaland

are preliminary and do not involve any binding agreements that require approval or disclosure. "The company routinely explores various strategic opportunities aimed at enhancing shareholder value. The potential transfer of Paytm's entertainment business, a component of our marketing services, is one opportunity under consideration. As noted in our earnings

call, our focus will be on payment and financial services along with digital goods commerce, which are designed to help our merchants scale their businesses," the firm said.

"Paytm wants to focus on its payments and financial services businesses. It will only focus on opportunities which would help its merchants scale their businesses," sources said. For Zomato, the deal will

add value — acquiring Paytm's movie and events ticketing verticals would fit in well with and give a leg-up to its going-out business, analysts said. The food delivery firm's 'going-out' vertical already offers discovery and ticketing of offline experiences such as in-restaurant dining and live events such as Zomaland.

Revenues from its going-out segment have grown by over 100% year-on-year to Rs 93 crore in the March quarter. "Paytm is currently merging its movies and the Insider (events platform) vertical into one team. For now, customers may continue to book both movies and events on the Paytm app," sources said. However, Zomato is likely to work on integrating the two verticals within its platform once the deal is through, they added. A formal announcement of the deal could happen as early as next week, sources said.

Hero Future Energies to invest \$2bn

Sanjay.Dutta@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Hero Future Energies, the renewable energy arm of the Munjal family-promoted Hero group, will invest upwards of \$2 billion over the next 30 months to ramp up its generation capacity. It will focus on projects with energy storage to leverage a sharp fall in battery prices, company's global CEO Srivatsan Iyer told TOI.

"Currently we have an operating capacity of 1.8 gigawatts (GW). We reached here in about 12 years. We will implement projects with a total capacity of 2.6 GW in the next two-and-a-half years as we feel the time has come for the company to spread its wings," Iyer said.

A good part of the projects in the pipeline include battery energy storage systems and were won in auctions conducted by SECI (formerly Solar Energy Corporation of India), the state-run agency tasked with implementing the National Solar mission. "We want to focus on integrating multiple technologies such as solar, wind and energy storage, instead of pure-play solar or wind projects," he said.

Industry frets over new ad mandate

Self-Certification Norms To Kick In From Tomorrow As Directed By Supreme Court

Rupali.Mukherjee@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Starting Tuesday, advertisers in India face a new mandate: A self-declaration certification (SDC), as directed by the Supreme Court. Conceptualised as a "positive step for protecting consumers, fostering trust, transparency, and enhancing brand reputation", the move aims to ensure that all stakeholders are more vigilant and compliant. Yet, opinion is divided among advertising bigwigs, media agencies, and marketing experts on the ease of its implementation and whether it will effectively curb the widespread issues of misleading claims and surrogate advertising.

On May 7, in a case involving the Indian Medical Association and the Centre, SC directed that no advertisements on television, print, digital, or radio can be published or aired without the SDC, aiming to ensure compliance with regulations and prevent misleading claims. "The entire advertising ecosystem, be it advertisers, agencies or publishers will need to create internal systems to be compliant," Manisha Kapoor, CEO and secretary general, Advertising Standards Council of India, told TOI.

This is true for all sectors and categories. "Practices such as advertising reviews, prior to publishing and preventive risk assessments to avoid potential backlash will now be embedded in the brand strategy of an organisation. The threat of adverse impact that emerges from this regula-

tion requires that organisations invest in verifying the claims of external communication," said Mustafa Surka — partner, risk advisory services at KPMG India.

The pre-release approval by the regulatory agency works better for all the stakeholders and saves time, resources and effort rather than a post-correction, feels Nandini Dias, former CEO of Lodestar UM. "Often after ad is released, someone objects and puts a stop to it. If the ad is pulled off, it disrupts the entire marketing activity for that quarter and causes huge loss to the brand. In the Doordarshan days, one had to submit the complete storyboard, frame-by-frame and get approvals,

Most consumer-focused sectors will face increased scrutiny, while the lens is now on the entire product life cycle, say industry experts. Several misleading ads are still being aired, despite the existence of several regulatory agencies, they add

and only after that was the film shot. And once we had DD approval, no other objections were considered. Today, the scenario is far more dynamic and complicated, it is essential to create a new system. While there is resistance as it will slow the systems down in the short-run, it will be beneficial to consumers and will help transparency in the long-run," she added.

"All consumer brands may associate themselves with a cause, but these claims may not be trustworthy. For

instance, making claims like a product is green, net zero, plastic neutral, will all need to be verifiable. Building brand trust requires clarity, responsibility, and accurate advertising," said Namrata Rana — partner, national head (ESG), KPMG India.

Advertising experts fear it may increase red tape, and companies and agencies will need manpower to navigate the cumbersome process.

"This seems to be an exercise in bureaucracy rather than the law. Creating bureaucratic hurdles make things difficult for advertisers, without solving the problem of misleading ads," said Santosh Desai, advertising veteran and former CEO, Future Brands.

More efforts may be needed. "Prima facie (the move) has been conceptualised to protect consumer rights. However, it may not be able to curb the menace of surrogate advertising and misleading claims — the basic objective for which it was created. The entire implementation and thereafter — monitoring, policing and punishment require a lot of thought, and is not clear at this stage," said Sandeep Goyal, chairman, Rediffusion.

In a representation to the I&B ministry, the Indian Newspaper Society too has flagged several concerns, including problems with the portal where self-declaration has to be made, and sought that the implementation may be deferred. It has suggested that the existing mechanisms should be strengthened and govt may consider limiting the mandate to healthcare related or medical ads.

Frequent policy changes a worry, impact investment, says Hyundai

Pankaj.Doval@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Korean car major Hyundai, which is eyeing a Rs 25,000 crore fundraise from the Indian stock market by selling 17% equity, has flagged "frequent changes" in govt policy as a key concern, saying it impacts investment flows into India as well as pace of technology changes.

The company, which has invested nearly Rs 30,000 crore in India since it began operations around 1996, has said stability in policy will be key to adapting confidently to the required technological upgrades mandated by govt.

"Another challenge that the industry is facing is frequent changes in policies, which make it difficult for auto industry stakeholders not only to ensure adherence but also commit investments," the company said in the Draft Red Herring Prospectus filed with market re-

'CNG share to be more than EVs by FY29'

New Delhi: Hyundai said in its DRHP that the share of EVs will go up from the current 2.3% to as much as 17-20% by the end of FY29. However, EVs will trail CNG, which will see its share go from the current 15% in FY24 to 22-27% by FY29, the company said. "CNG station infrastructure is projected to rise at a healthy pace till 2030," it added. **TNN**

gulator Sebi. "Overall policy stability and transparency will be required going forward to ensure smooth technology transition and localisation in the country," the company said.

Hyundai has said it will invest a fresh Rs 32,000 crore in India over the next few years, mainly towards launching electronics and creating the requisite component and changing infrastructure for the greens, apart from boosting its production capacity.

It said EVs will be a key focus area for the company and it will start localising the manufacturing of elec-

trics for the mainstream, high-volume market.

However, the draft prospectus also expresses concerns over the localisation norms mandated by govt, which is pushing the growth of EVs. "Govt is encouraging localisation across sectors, especially in automotive sector via policies like PLI for automotive technology, PLI for advanced cell chemistry, phased manufacturing programme, atmanirbhar Bharat, and make in India. While the end goal of localisation is to reduce import dependence and bring down overall manufacturing costs, it also involves significant initial

capital investments from several stakeholders within the automotive industry. While the government has designed the schemes to support investments by offering several subsidies and import duty benefits, there are still concerns around meeting the eligibility criteria and availing of the benefits," the company said.

It said that "simplification and better tracking of policies" will ensure localisation in India. "The progress of the vendors tied up with individual OEMs would also lead to a change in the risk profile of the industry from a supply-side perspective."

To maximise price competitiveness of its EV models, Hyundai said it intends to focus on securing local production capabilities for key parts such as cells, battery packs, power electronics, drivetrain and building a localised EV supply chain.

RBI bags risk manager award

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: RBI has been awarded the "Risk Manager of the Year 2024" by Central Banking, UK, for improving its risk culture and awareness. The award was received by RBI executive director Manojan Mishra last week.

RBI's Risk Monitoring Department has been central to formulating and implementing an enterprise-wide risk management (ERM) framework. Over the past year, RBI has focused on three main areas: strengthening existing risk controls, developing new frameworks to cover a broader range of risks, and promoting a robust risk culture throughout the organisation. Their efforts have improved RBI's operational risk management from a "managed" to an "advanced" category by international standards.

RBI has benchmarked its practices against international standards and is working on cybersecurity controls.

Expand base, avoid super rich tax: CII prez

Surojit Gupta & Sidhartha | TNN

ITC chairman and managing director Sanjiv Puri took over as the new CII president during elections. The industry chamber is recommending several measures, including creating more jobs, skilling and generating political consensus on crucial reforms related to land & labour laws and farm & power sector. In an interview with TOI, Puri emphasised the need to widen the tax base, while rejecting higher levies on the super rich and backed a three-slab GST structure. Excerpts:

How is a coalition govt at the Centre going to impact policymaking?

A number of policy instruments have been used in the past, while following a model of inclusive growth within the fiscal glide path and dealing with energy transition. The outcome is before us, the economy grew 8.2% last year. The economy is in robust health, that's really shows the strategy of investment-led inclusive growth is directionally right, because it creates

One of the first recommendations that CII has given is to create some institutional mechanism to develop consensus on some of the big reforms of land, labour, power, agriculture, fiscal sustainability because that also involves the states"

For creating good quality of jobs, CII is recommending some policy enablers to provide impetus to labour-intensive sectors, like apparel, toys, retail, entertainment, logistics, tourism, wood-based industry"

We are recommending three (GST) slabs...Real estate, petroleum are outside, all these should be brought in"

— SANJIV PURI | PRESIDENT, CII

a virtuous cycle and enhances the productive capacity. That should energise more reforms. One of the first recommendations that CII has given is to create some institutional mechanism to develop consensus on some of the big reforms of land, labour, power, agriculture, fiscal sustainability because that also involves the states.

What are the stumbling blocks that you want govt to remove to accelerate job creation?

Job creation is also a responsibility of the private sector, govt mainly has to put the enablers in place. Private capex is on the right trajectory. In FY22-23, it was at 23.8% of GDP, which is higher than

what it was pre-Covid and had dropped to 20.7% of GDP in 2021. There are several sectors where investments are coming, sectors related to infrastructure, cement and steel, sectors which have received impetus PLI like electronics, food processing, telecom, pharma, logistics, renewable energy, automobiles, EVs, semiconductor. On the issue of jobs — it's about jobs and also the quality of jobs. For creating good quality of jobs, CII is recommending some policy enablers to provide impetus to labour-intensive sectors, like apparel, toys, retail, media, entertainment, logistics, tourism, wood-based industry. There are so many areas where the employment to capital ratio is very favourable. So,

we're recommending employment-linked incentives for these sectors, with some outcome metrics.

The second important thing is to provide impetus to MSMEs, which create a lot of employment and there is larger integration into global value chains. The journey has started because the world also is looking at supply chain diversification. So, free trade agreements provide some impetus to this. Human capital development and social infrastructure is important. We have recommended increasing the investment in education to 6% of GDP and for healthcare to 3%. What is also important is to create a vibrant rural economy. The first piece that has to be solved is agriculture, both from a productivity perspective plus also resilience because weather events are only going to multiply. The second is to empower the youth in rural areas to be able to participate in other opportunities in the economy.

There has been a lot of debate around inequality and there have been suggestions about taxing the super rich to raise resour-

ces. What is your view?

The most important facet is really about continuing to create the virtuous cycle of employment consumption, investment and creating good quality jobs. Improving farm incomes, that's the most important area to focus on. As far as specifically direct tax is concerned, it's more about getting more people within the tax system, and not resorting to, as some have suggested, taxing the so-called super rich, or (imposing) wealth tax and things like that. The focus right now has to be on creating an economy that creates a lot of jobs, that's ultimately where the solution is going to live. The second is expanding the (tax) base.

How complex do you find GST in terms of number of slabs, classification issues? What changes would you want?

We are recommending three slabs. In addition to that, we are also saying it should be more inclusive. Real estate, petroleum are outside, all these should be brought in. There is room for process simplification, which is an ongoing exercise.

MFs' Net Asset Value: The What, When (Is It Calculated) & How

Every mutual fund scheme declares its net asset value (NAV) at the end of each working day. The NAV is updated daily at 11 pm for all schemes, except for fund of funds, which are updated at 10 am the next day and displayed on websites of the fund house, Amfi, and investment platforms.

What Is Net Asset Value?

The NAV represents a fund's per unit market value. This is the price at which investors are allotted units by the fund house or the price at which they can sell it back to the fund house. This is calculated by dividing the total value of all the assets in a portfolio, minus all its liabilities. The NAV is calculated by the fund house or by an accounting firm hired for the purpose.

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For Know Your Customer (KYC) guidelines along with the documentary requirements and procedure for change of address, phone number, bank details, etc., please visit the Education and Guidance section on www.invescomutualfund.com. Investor should deal with only SEBI registered Mutual Funds, details of which can be verified under "Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure Institutions" on <https://www.sebi.gov.in/index.html>. For any grievance / complaint, please call us on 1800-209-0007 or write to us at mfservices@invesco.com. Alternatively, complaints can be registered on the SEBI SCORES Portal at <https://scores.gov.in>

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

When Is Scheme's NAV Calculated?

The NAV is calculated and declared after market closing hours at the end of the day. Since stock prices move up and down every second, it is difficult to calculate NAV during market hours as the price of the underlying stocks in the portfolio could change. Hence, the NAV is calculated at the end of every market day, factoring in the closing market prices of the securities that the fund holds.

What Is The Applicability Of A Day's NAV?

Investors are allocated units in a scheme after a fund house receives money to purchase units on a market trading day. For equity and debt funds, and redemptions from liquid and overnight funds, orders placed before the cut-off time of 3 pm will be



processed at the same day's NAV. The cut-off time for purchase orders in liquid and overnight funds is 1:30 pm. For buy orders, the fund house should receive the payment by the cut-off time for applicability of same-day NAV. Orders & payments received beyond cut-off times will be processed at the next trading day's NAV

Is NAV Key In Picking A Scheme?

Wealth managers believe the mere NAV number of a scheme is irrelevant for an investor looking to buy a mutual fund. It should not matter to an investor if the NAV is ₹10 or ₹ 1,000. Take, for example, an investment of ₹1 lakh each in Scheme A at a NAV of ₹20 and Scheme B at a NAV of ₹50. The investment amount being equal, Scheme A would appear cheaper as 5,000 units were allotted compared to 2,000 units in Scheme B. Now suppose both schemes grow by 10% in a month. Scheme A's NAV will be ₹22 and Scheme B's will be ₹55. The value of your investment in both cases is ₹1,10,000.

For two schemes with identical portfolios and other things remaining constant, the difference in NAV will hardly matter and both schemes will grow at the same rate. Financial planners say daily changes in NAV don't matter. It is best to look at the annualised return of a fund over different timeframes to judge its performance.

— PRASHANT MAHESH

CONTRAPUNTO

It is error alone which needs the support of govt.
Truth can stand by itself

-THOMAS JEFFERSON

EC, Talk Better

Controversy over Mumbai North West LS poll result must be settled quickly by the commission

That the Mumbai North West Lok Sabha victory would snowball into a controversy was almost a given. When Shinde Sena nominee Ravindra Waikar beat UBT Sena candidate Amol Kirtikar by 48 votes after recounting of both EVMs and postal ballots, concerns of a misconduct amped up to strong suspicions of misconduct in opposition camps. UBT Sena and others allege three serious counts of wrongdoing.

One, Shinde Sena candidate's agent/associate used a mobile phone inside the counting area. None except the Returning Officer can carry a mobile phone into counting centres. Call records of this phone are under police investigation. Two, following SC's order to store all VVPAT machines with symbol loading units, UBT Sena has sought technical inspection of the same - but EC website apparently has no SOP for such a technical probe, so it's vague what the "probe" might entail. Three, allegations centre on RO at the NESCO centre, the site of irregularities.

That very day, both Kirtikar and party workers raised alarm over the counting. Once the presence of an unauthorised phone was established, surely EC could have reacted immediately by putting out a statement. This kind of incident puts EC in the spotlight, not simply the state poll commission. And every such incident contributes to the chatter. For instance, before counting day, opposition sought EC walkback on allowing postal ballots to be counted after EVMs. Law says postal ballots be counted first. Why tweak that in the first place?

Kirtikar has written to EC with his complaints. Mumbai North West has pressed all the buttons for those asking for complete transparency of the election process. EC is firm about sanctity of its processes; it holds results speak for themselves. It argues due process is underway. But reality is instances where EC doesn't make its response public run the risk of getting a life of their own online. EC must necessarily communicate to today's alert electorate on its due processes.

In the internet era, EC has faced civil society scrutiny like never before. Reliability of EVMs, including VVPATs, its "unhackability", is at the core of EC's business of trust. Elon Musk's tweet, unrelated to India's election, that EVMs should be done away with, can only add fuel to the fire. EC has yet to make a statement on breaches of protocol. It must engage with the electorate more - on processes, its parallel paper trails, and its MO in the event of a breach.

Swiss Fantasy

Ukraine-Russia peace conference without Moscow in the room, is more spectacle than substance

More than 90 countries participating in a weekend conference to forge a peace plan for Ukraine, suggested its ambition was realistic. But this was an out and out misreading. Because one crucial country was not invited: Russia. International mediators are not going to get far without first bringing both Ukraine and Russia to the same negotiating table.

Western prioritisation | This conference in Switzerland was preceded by a G7 commitment to a new \$50bn loan for Ukraine, securitised through interest on the frozen assets of Russia's central bank. An architect of this plan, US treasury secretary Janet L. Yellen says that it's about "getting Russia to help pay for the damage it's caused". This is quite a distinct goal from a ceasefire or peace.

Russian maximalism | Even less formidable goals - from food security to return of Ukrainian children - cannot be accomplished without negotiations with Russia itself. The great stumbling block, of course, is "the realities of today" that are Putin's precondition to negotiate. He wants to hold on to the Ukrainian territory gained through incremental advances on the battlefield, and more. Such maximalism has been propped up by the surprising resilience shown by both Russia's military and economy. And now an additional factor is, calculating that he will get a better deal by waiting it out till Trump is US president.

Middle ground | A March opinion poll found that Ukrainians under 35 are the most pessimistic about victory and the most willing to accept limited war outcomes. Two years of death and destruction later, the bitterest truth is actually identical for Zelenskyy and Putin. It is that victory remains elusive for both Ukraine and Russia. This is what international diplomacy must build on. A shared truth is more fertile ground for compromise, than an unshared conference.

Fashion vs Fahrenheit

Neanderthals matched dress to weather, we don't

Shinie Antony



The weather is a handy icebreaker. We say 'too hot' and 'such a cold winter' to fill awkward pauses. Harmless, obvious statements like these further the cause of human interaction, and let us all occupy the planet in consensual boredom. In fact, entire marriages have gotten by on weather reports - 'I love you' replaced by 'looks like rain'. Novelists go on and on about the snowclad and the sun-dappled... But all ye who take its name in vain, beware! Weather wreaks revenge by being utterly unpredictable. It blows hot and cold.

However humid it may be, no human being is willing to sacrifice sartorial levels for comfort. At the ministerial swearing-in ceremony in Delhi recently, conducted in the open air, everyone came in bandhgalas and Banarasis. Brocade was the dress code. This despite the fact that due to an insufferable summer the city is stewing in its own juices. Deep underneath such finery, where the innermost fabric scratches skin, is where global warming gets personal. We are all about style statements. In strappy white linen when it's freezing and quilted jackets when sunny, pants cut at the ankle as if expecting floods, hair left loose in gyms. Spanx under skinny jeans two sizes small even if vital organs asphyxiate.

There was a time when cavemen ripped off the fur of the first bear they met to keep warm. In summers Neanderthals turned up naked for business meetings. Wardrobes used to be straightforward, attuned to climate conditions. But in the era of selfies, being photo-ready trumps discomfort. A grand occasion, like say a wedding or funeral, cannot succumb to whimsical temperatures. The kanjeevams and Nehru jackets must be unpacked, drycleaned and donned on D-day, just like the white chikankari kurtas must be teamed with mournful cream or beige dupattas. Brides and bridegrooms gently steam on stage in all their dolled-up finery. A corpse seldom minds the thinness of cotton sheets inside icy morgues.

Vanity at some point meets ACs and central heating, when entering a door means frostbitten Narnia or the fires of hell. In a magical reversal of Celsius, you are now boiling or shivering. Suddenly covered in goosebumps, rubbing your arms, shifting closer to people for warmth, like the Little Match Girl lighting her last matchstick. Or beaded with perspiration and expected to remove your sweater, your sole outerwear. That's when you insist it's actually cold and borrow someone's shawl.

Note For FM: Save For India

Declining savings rate is a red flag in a growing economy. Unemployment as an election issue showed how low savings-led patterns of growth have a political cost

Narendar Pani



With general elections behind us, FM can take a step back from celebrating high growth rates and the size of the Indian economy to look more closely at some points of concern. Election results were a reminder that India's growth rates haven't always translated into an improvement in critical social indicators as well as in employment.

The conventional wisdom that inequality does not matter if growth is high enough to lift large numbers above an economists-defined poverty line, is losing some of its political sheen. Besides, there are warning signals in the growth process itself. Prominent among these red flags is the challenge of declining savings rates.

Savings trend since 1991 | The proportion of Gross Domestic Savings to GDP since liberalisation began has followed an inverted U curve. It rose steadily from 23.3% of GDP in 1990-91 to 37.8% in 2007-08. Since then, there has been an equally steady decline, reaching 28.2% in 2020-21. Studies have shown that the increase was largely achieved through increased inequality. As the share of the rich in GDP rose, income moved from the poor who consumed most of their earnings to the rich who could afford to save more.

Increasing savings by raising the share of the rich in GDP, necessarily limits, if not squeezes, the share of consumption of the poor. This pattern cannot continue indefinitely.

In a democracy, there is political pressure to transfer resources to the worst off through welfare measures. While these measures could be dismissed as freebies, they've become a political necessity. There's also the possibility that, beyond a point, a rising share of income

for those at the top of the economic pyramid may only lead to assets being held outside the country, without a sustained effect on domestic savings. And there are signs that this has become an increasingly significant factor.

Price to pay for shift to tech | Decline in the rate of savings hasn't had an immediate impact on growth. Rise in FDI has made up for some of the shortfall in domestic investment. There has also been a structural shift in the Indian economy towards more productive sectors. But these are not unmixed blessings.

FDI can fluctuate quite sharply. The shifts to more productive sectors are no doubt very good news as far as growth rates are concerned, but this increase in productivity often comes from movement towards more capital-intensive work practices. This can leave large sections of the labour force out of work.

With employment already becoming a political issue, there'll be a price to be paid for a sustained shift to labour-substituting technologies. Lower domestic savings rates thus raise the prospects of both fluctuating growth rates as well as patterns of growth that are insensitive to employment.

Revising domestic savings rates would need a review of economic strategies that have taken deep root since liberalisation. In his 1991 Budget speech, Manmohan Singh suggested opening up the economy to make Indian industry more competitive. When that did not always happen, the economy became more dependent on foreign investment, both FDI and Foreign Institutional Investment (FII).

Losing out on small investors | Efforts to make India more attractive to FIIs included sustained pressure to move from multiple regional stock exchanges to two

large stock exchanges in Mumbai. Closure of regional stock exchanges had a negative impact on the still-developing links between local savings and investment in emerging corporate entities.

The regional stock exchanges helped businesses with local reputations to raise local capital. The more successful among these businesses could then move on to the national and even international stage. The Ambanis may have been the more striking story of movement from small business to a global empire, but they were not the only ones.

The emergence of local economic players also suited another dominant, but usually ignored, trend in the Indian economy: the movement from agriculture to industry. Agrarian families with access to traditional capital had an opportunity to move into local industry, and then use their local reputations to tap regional capital. This also allowed small savers to invest in the enterprises of families they had long known about.

The closure of regional stock exchanges cut a critical link in this chain. The large stock exchanges were associated with much larger Initial Public Offerings (IPOs), where the minimum investment was well beyond the capacity of very small investors. From a capital market in the 1980s where investors with no more than ₹1,000 could apply for shares in IPOs, we moved to a regime where such investors had no place.

Revive regional stock exchanges | A meaningful strategy to raise the savings rate would need to build links between small savers and the local, national and global economies. This would require mobilising local savings in ways that develop the relationship between local investors and small savers. This could include the revival of regional stock exchanges as small cap exchanges, as well as other financial innovations that recognise all levels of the economic pyramid from the bottom to the top.

The writer is JRD Tata Chair Visiting Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

Why Govt Jobs Should Be Less Secure

Dismissing or demoting bureaucrats must be made simpler to ensure efficiency and accountability. Without this, no administration can achieve the speed of development it desires

Praveen Gedam & Arghya Sengupta



With a new govt taking charge, the spotlight turns to bureaucrats who'll work to fulfil its mandate. The tenure and service conditions of bureaucrats are often overlooked, but are critical to ensuring the whole govt works in concert to achieve its development goals. Highest in criticality is the ability of govt to hire and fire civil servants.

Mis-firing officers | Most of us haven't heard of a govt employee being fired. This tells us how super secure govt jobs are. That's one reason why lakhs of highly educated people apply for lower-level govt positions every year, and why govt servants are often preferred over higher paid private-sector employees in arranged marriages.

Such security of tenure was a key feature of govt jobs globally as well, but has changed over time. In India, it hasn't.

Pleasure to permanence | Traditionally, all civil servants served at the "pleasure" of the Crown. This meant that the monarch could dispense with their service at any time. When India became a democratic republic, this was sought to be balanced by the need to create an independent and empowered bureaucracy. This led to the incorporation of Article 311 of the Constitution based on which disciplinary laws for govt servants were enacted. But the process laid down has become so complicated over the years that it's almost impossible to dismiss someone from a govt job. The only exception is if the person is convicted by a criminal court, another rarity in India for govt servants. The pendulum has swung from pleasure to permanence.

Unlike private sector, where bosses can fire someone for not doing her job well, in govt it's practically impossible. No doubt, job security is of paramount

importance. But it also means that it's extremely difficult to get rid of employees who're not discharging their duties. Anecdotal, we know of numerous cases where an engineer was unaware of standard guidelines for construction, a police officer prepared a criminal chargesheet under civil laws, and a clerk couldn't even write the name of his office. Most of them, and countless others like them, continue to 'serve'.

Long & winding process | Here's how extant disciplinary rules work in practice. The process starts with gathering evidence, followed by a showcause notice, some-



times suspension, hearing the govt employee's side, deciding whether to conduct an inquiry, gathering more evidence, preparing a chargesheet, appointing an inquiry officer, holding hearings, examinations and cross-examinations, giving the employee a chance to defend, preparing a report, giving this report to the employee, hearing the employee again twice - first on the report, and then usually also on the quantum of punishment - seeking views of the public service commission, and then finally making a decision.

Unsurprisingly, this takes years to complete. By

that time, every stakeholder other than the employee involved has moved on, and the problem leading to the inquiry isn't seen as important anymore. As a result, the employee is usually declared not guilty.

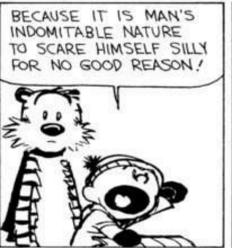
Urgent reform needed | For an efficient, modern, service-oriented bureaucracy, this process must be simplified. It should be completed within three months, during which other stakeholders (say, seniors and affected persons) are still around and consequences of misconduct of the employee are fresh in memory. Second, the quantum of punishment should also be an effective deterrent. At least for corruption, inefficiency, lack of delivery, insubordination, gross negligence and frequent absenteeism, major punishments such as dismissal or demotion should be made mandatory.

Idea for first 100 days | That said, protection from undue influences needs to be kept intact or even bolstered by shielding bureaucrats from arbitrary transfers (legally not punishments, but in practice so) through enacting suitable rules. The Indian bureaucrat is rightly praised for holding the vast and diverse country together, and guiding it towards progress. But at the same time, she is also criticised, again rightly so, for being slow and inefficient.

As India celebrates 75 years of its Constitution and with govt ready to unveil its first-100-day plan, it's time to rethink how govt itself works. Listening to people and reducing friction are important. A part of this can be achieved by ensuring faster and tougher punishments for bureaucratic inefficiencies while increasing protection of bureaucrats from undue influences. We must move away from the idea that govt jobs should be secure and permanent at any cost. Instead, let us start instilling accountability by ensuring that the dead wood is weeded out regularly and expeditiously. This will be one reform that will change the face of govt service for 100 years.

Gedam is Divisional Commissioner, Nashik. Sengupta is Research Director, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy

Calvin & Hobbes



Sacredspace

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding... And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life, your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy.

Kahlil Gibran

Knowledge Of The Self Liberates Us From Sorrows

V Balasubramaniam

Adi Shankaracharya said, "Though ignorance, avidya is beginningless - it is completely wiped out by the emergence of Vidya, knowledge."

Ignorance never goes away unless knowledge, its opposite, is born. The moment we learn what a pot is like, our unfamiliarity with it is over. Similarly, when we learn what a camera is like, our lack of knowledge of how it works is addressed.

Vedanta reveals that all our sorrows, fears, anxieties, stress, and confusion are not because we do not know physics, maths, or other subjects; they are because we do not know ourselves. Only knowledge of the Self liberates us from all sorrows and leads to a state of fearlessness.

In Vivekachudamani, Shankara-

charya states that all our sufferings are only due to a lack of awareness of our true nature. Just as a lack of understanding of physics can only be remedied by learning about physics, an absence of self-awareness can only be remedied by acquiring Self-knowledge.

Action cannot sublimate ignorance. Knowledge does verily destroy avidya just as light eradicates deep darkness. Trying to sweep darkness out of a dark room is futile. Even if an army of men carry the darkness in baskets and pour it out, the room will still be dark. Sweeping is not the right method of removing darkness. Only light can remove darkness, however thick it may be. Similarly, ignorance in us can be overcome by the pure light of Self-knowledge. That is why it is said

action cannot sublimate ignorance; knowledge is its only antidote. By removing avidya, one uncovers the Self.

The Bhagwad Gita states that the Lord does not take the virtue or sin of any; knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, and thereby, beings are deluded (5.15). Our scriptures clearly say ignorance is the problem, and knowledge of the Self is the only solution.

When *ajnan*, unawareness, is removed, there is nothing more to be done. Everything is clear, like daylight. Ignorance is like night; when it passes, you are in the daylight of enlightenment.

Sometimes, we see thick mist enveloping a garden. If we try to grab it, nothing comes into our hands. It is not a wall; we can walk through it. Still, it obstructs our vision and hinders our

progress. The mist continues till the bright sunlight emerges. Thereafter, it evaporates. Similarly, this inexplicable ignorance causes troubles and endless sorrows in our consciousness. It can be dispelled only by the flash of Self-knowledge.

As a child, one looks, touches, tastes, smells, and listens to the sound, which is a word naming the object being perceived. In this way, ignorance is shed, and knowledge is gained, first of forms and names, then of colour and other related attributes. Later, finer distinctions, including shades of colour, various sizes, and shapes, become apparent.

Ignorance is present in every individual; it is like a dark place where the light of knowledge is essential. It is a cause of bondage and will disappear, just as a solitary lamp dispels darkness in a dark room.



"WE'VE LET THE ENTIRE NATION DOWN AND WE ARE SORRY. BUT WE HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED THIS MUCH FOR A WORLD CUP. IT'S NOT AN EXCUSE. ONLY SRI LANKA AND THE DUTCH PLAYED FOUR MATCHES IN FOUR DIFFERENT LOCATIONS."

—Angelo Mathews | SL ALLROUNDER



USA DONE, OFF TO THE CARIBBEAN

India Hit The Nets In Barbados Today As Afghans Loom In Super 8

TIMES IN THE US
Dwaipayan.Datta@timesgroup.com

Miami: It's travel time. The American duty is over for India and now we're into what matters most — the Super-8 in the West Indies.

There wasn't everything perfect about the US leg — bad pitches, poor outfield, washed out game — but India didn't find it too tough to cross the first hurdle of the month-long marathon. Now it's Afghanistan, Bangladesh (most likely) and Australia in Barbados, Antigua and St Lucia respectively. And with two teams going ahead from the group — Rohit Sharma's boys should be there in Guyana for the semifinal on June 27.

With their last league game against Canada at Fort Lauderdale getting washed out without a ball being bowled, Team India players got a bit of time to put their feet up and relax. But with no practice also possible since their last match in New York on June 12, batting coach Vikram Rathour sounded a little worried. "This was of course not ideal. We would have preferred to build on the momentum and this was the game to express ourselves. But there's not much we can do about it," Rathour said.

The Indian team will hit the nets in Barbados on June 17 to prepare for their game against Afghanistan — a team that has been in fine form so far. But much like India, they, too, haven't played in Barbados and will have to adapt to conditions. The England vs Australia game was played at the Kensington Oval where the Aussies had plundered 201 and then leggie Adam Zampa got 2/28 to become Man of the Match.

Unlike Nassau County Ground in New York, where India played their three games, the Kensington Oval pitch should be batting-friendly and with no dew in the equation, the spinners, too,



Rohit Sharma and team during one of their league encounters

could come in handy. It's to be seen whether India stick to the four-pacer theory or drop Mohammed Siraj, whose form has been slightly up and down, and play Kuldeep Yadav as the third spinner. Rathour kept the options open when he said: "We need to be a flexible team. We need to look at the conditions that are in front of us and be ready to deal with those. We'll react to what we get on that day and we have the resources to deal with any condition," Rathour said.

Afghanistan, of course, is a team that banks heavily on spinners with Rashid Khan leading the line. Mohammed Nabi and Noor Ahmed are the two other spinners who should get the nod. All of them were part of the IPL and they know everything about bowling to the Indian batters.

For India, it will be crucial that Virat

Kohli, who had an indifferent USA leg with scores of 1, 4 and 0, gets into the groove. Opening the batting, it could well be on Kohli to take the attack to the Afghan bowlers, and we might see him playing the slog sweep, a weapon that he has included in his arsenal to deal with the spin.

Rathour insists that a "hungrier" Kohli, following his slight bad patch in New York, could be even more dangerous. "I have absolutely no concern about his form. He batted superbly in the IPL and a couple of dismissals here doesn't change anything. Actually, it's good that he is a little hungrier, he is really keen to do well and really switched on," Rathour said.

That should be music to the ears of all those fans who have been waiting for India to break a decade-long ICC title jinx. The signs so far aren't bad at all.

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Pant, Arshdeep emerge as key players for India

Team Looking Forward To More Contributions From The Duo

Dwaipayan.Datta
@timesgroup.com

Miami: These are two guys at two different ends of the spectrum. One's a phenomenal talent who is still lucky to be alive, let alone playing, while the other is an honest trier who keeps fighting.

Rishabh Pant and Arshdeep Singh are two completely different personalities, but if you're to closely analyse India's United States leg of the T20 World Cup — they are the two stars who have gone slightly under the radar.

Arshdeep, of course, has won a Man of the Match award with a spell of 4/9 against the United States, but Pant's contribution has almost gone unnoticed. In all the three games that India won, the wicketkeeper-batter who is playing for India for the first time after his life-threatening injury late in 2022, played crucial knocks. 36 not out, 42 and 18 might not look huge, but if you put it in context, the importance becomes clearer.

Pant is batting at No. 3, a position that is always reserved for the crème-de-la-crème of any batting line-up. And in New York, Pant came into bat when India lost the early wicket of Virat Kohli with virtually nothing on the board.

The world knows Pant is a dynamite with the bat, but what made it special for him here was he wasn't always at his destructive best. Yet, the southpaw never went below run a ball, in fact his 31-ball 42 against Pakistan was probably the best batting effort on the New York minefield by any batter.

Pant's promotion to the No. 3 spot was the product of a brain-wave of captain Rohit Sharma, who seems to have meticulously prepared for this T20 World Cup after the heart-break of the ODI World Cup in India. "The moment I saw Pant

bat in the IPL, I knew where he would be batting in the World Cup," Rohit said in one of his press conferences. The decision was communicated to the wicketkeeper-batter early and the 26-year-old has gone out of his way to justify the captain's faith in him.

In New York before the first game, on a practice pitch which everyone was avoiding due to its uneven nature, Pant asked the throwdown expert to test him with vicious short balls from less than 22 yards. Pant was getting hit on the body a few times, but you could see that the lion-hearted cricketer was trying to overcome fear.

The team management was also looking to have the left-right combination going through the middle-order, something that Pant's promotion facilitates. In his decision to promote Pant to No. 3, Rohit is in fact looking forward to the West Indies leg as well, where he wants to use the dasher's counter-attacking abilities.

"The kind of ability he has, it's always tough to find the right number for Pant. But with three right-handers in the top four, I thought it was nice to have him in the middle. And later on, in West Indies, when spin is going to play a big part, his counterattacking can come into picture in a big

way. He has got an all-round game and we want to utilize that upfront, where he gets to play maximum balls along with some of the other experienced players," Rohit said.

While Pant's batting is crucial to India's success going forward, Arshdeep's ability to swing the new ball and deliver the yorker at the death are equally important. The fact that he is also a left-arter adds the much-needed variety to the pace attack, which has three more right-armers.

After doing well against Ireland, Arshdeep was entrusted to bowl the last over against Pakistan, where he did just enough to keep the desperate batters at bay. That was followed by his matchwinning effort against USA and in all probability, if the team management decides to go with three specialist pacers in West Indies in the XI, he will be one of them. Arshdeep, though, doesn't want to think that far.

"I remember what (batting coach) Vikram Rathour told us in the team meeting — 'stay where your feet are'. So right now, we just stay in the present and prepare for that."

For now, the Super-8s are "the present" and Arshdeep would surely love to be at the top of his game at the Kensington Oval on Thursday.

Arshdeep Singh and Rishabh Pant celebrate a Pakistan wicket during the league stage of the T20 World Cup in New York

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Pakistan register consolation 3-wkt win over Ireland

Lauderhill: Pakistan beat Ireland by three wickets to register a consolation win in their inconsequential T20 World Cup match here on Sunday.

Pakistan and Ireland have already been eliminated from the tournament with India and debutants USA progressing to the Super 8 from Group A.

Left-arm pacers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Mohammad Amir wreaked havoc with the new ball, helping Pakistan restrict Ireland to 106 for nine.

Shaheen finally came to the party, albeit in a lost cause, returning with impressive figures of 3/22, while Amir scalped two wickets for 11 runs as Pakistan bowlers ignited fire on a damp pitch after electing to bowl.

Imad Wasim (3/8) bowled brilliantly while Haris Rauf (1/17) also accounted for a batter: Gareth Delany (31 off 19) and Mark Adair (15 off 19) shared 32-run for the seventh wicket to keep Ireland in the game.

Pakistan made a heavy weather of the chase as they were reduced to 57 for 5 in 9.3 overs before skipper Babar Azam (32 not out) and Abbas Afridi (17) did the repair job.

Barry McCarthy (3/15) was the pick of Ireland bowlers.

BRIEF SCORES: Ireland 106/9 (Delany 31; Shaheen 3/22, Imad 3/8, Amir 2/11) lost to Pakistan 111/7 in 18.5 overs (Babar 32 n.o.; McCarthy 3/15). AGENCIES

Pakistan's Shaheen Shah Afridi collides with teammate Usman Khan while taking a catch



Pakistan's Shaheen Shah Afridi collides with teammate Usman Khan while taking a catch

Australia sink brave Scotland; England reach Super 8

Gros Islet (St Lucia): Australia saw off a determined challenge from Scotland to claim a five-wicket victory in a decisive final Group B match of the T20 World Cup for both teams at the Daren Sammy Stadium here on Saturday.

Replying to the Scots' 180 for five, their highest total in a T20 World Cup match, half-centuries from Travis Head (68; 49b, 5x4, 4x6) and Marcus Stoinis (59; 29b, 9x4, 2x6) paced them to the target and a 100 percent winning record in the group with two balls to spare. Tim David's unbeaten 24 off 14 balls finished the job to lift Australia to 186 for five.

But he required a generous slice of luck when dropped at deep mid-wicket before finishing off the match with a huge six in the same direction off the next ball from seamer Brad Wheel.

That result also eliminated Scotland and allowed title-holders Eng-



Marcus Stoinis in action against Scotland

land, who beat Namibia by 41 runs earlier in the day in a rain-affected match in Antigua, to qualify for the Super Eight alongside Australia.

Earlier, Brandon Mc Mullen led the Scottish effort with a topscore of 60 off 34 balls after they were put in. His ultra-aggression, and support

from opener George Munsey (35) in an 89-run second-wicket partnership, pushed the scoring rate up to ten runs per over. However Australia were able to regain a measure of containment when McMullen fell to leg-spinner Adam Zampa in the 12th over.

Despite a battling unbeaten 42

from skipper Richie Berrington, only 69 runs came off the last 52 balls of the innings when Scotland would have been looking to put up a total in excess of 200.

Glenn Maxwell's off-spin earned him the best figures of two for 44 although Zampa was the most economical, conceding 30 runs off his four overs.

A team that prides itself on impeccable fielding and catching, Australia fell away from that high standard with six chances, of varying degrees of difficulty, being put down by the 2021 champions.

Brook boost for England
Anything other than win would have seen England knocked out and they were left fearing an early exit when rain delayed the scheduled start by three hours.

England, in a match eventually reduced to 10 overs per side, col-

lapsed to 13-2 after losing the toss. But a stand of 56 between the Yorkshire duo of Harry Brook (47 not out off 20 balls) and Jonny Bairstow (31) helped take them to a total of 122-5.

Namibia were left with a target of 126 under the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method for rain-interrupted matches. But they were never up with the required run-rate against England's new-ball duo of Reece Topley (0-6 in two overs) and Jofra Archer (1-15), with the non-Test nation finishing on 84-3.

BRIEF SCORES: Scotland 180/5 (McMullen 60, Berrington 42 n.o., Munsey 35; Maxwell 2-44) lost to Australia 186/5 in 19.4 overs (Head 68, Stoinis 59, David 24 n.o.; Watt 2-34, Sharif 2-42).

England 122/5 in 10 overs (Brook 47 n.o., Bairstow 31; Truempelmann 2-31) bt Namibia 84/3 in 10 overs (Van Lingen 33, Wiese 27). AGENCIES

Wiese retires from international cricket

North Sound (Antigua): Namibia allrounder David Wiese has retired from international cricket after his teams final T20 World Cup group stage match against England on Sunday.

Namibia's campaign ended after their third group stage loss on Sunday to defending champion England. Their only win in the tournament came against Oman.

After Wiese was dismissed in the final over of Namibia's chase, he raised his helmet and bat to the crowd as he walked off before being greeted by his teammates at the dugout.

"The next T20 World Cup is still two years away, I'm 39 years old now, so in terms of international cricket, I don't

know if there's much left in me," Wiese said later.

Wiese, who usually bats in the middle order, was promoted up the order to no. 3, smashed two sixes and a four in successive Adil Rashid in his 27 off 12 innings.

Originally from South Africa, Wiese has played in three consecutive T20 World Cups for Namibia. Wiese made his T20I debut for South Africa in 2013 and his ODI debut in 2015. He also represented the Proteas in the 2016 T20 World Cup. IANS

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GALLERY

DeChambeau leads in US Open

American Bryson DeChambeau has a three-stroke lead (seven-under par 203) going into Sunday's final round of the US Open at Pinehurst. Rory McIlroy on four-under 206 with American Patrick Cantlay and France's Matthew Pavan are following him. AFP

Walsh sets a world record: Gretchen Walsh shattered the 100m butterfly world record in the semifinals at the US Olympic trials on Saturday. He clocked 55.18sec to eclipse the 55.48sec record set by Sweden's Sarah Sjöström at Rio Olympics. AFP

Nagal loses in Perugia Challenger final: Sumit Nagal's nine-match winning run ended after a 6-1, 6-2 loss to home favourite Luciano Darderi in the final of the ATP Challenger in Perugia on Sunday. TNN

ACTION TODAY

CRICKET: T20 WC: B'desh vs Nepal 5am; SL vs Ned 6am; NZ vs PNG 8pm (Star Sports)
FOOTBALL: Euro 2024: Romania vs Ukraine 6.30pm; Belgium vs Slovakia 9.30pm; Austria vs France, 12.30 am Tuesday (Sony Sports)

BCCI may introduce awards in jr. cricket

Gaurav.Gupta@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: In a first, the BCCI is likely to start giving Player of the Match/Series awards in all its junior tournaments from the 2024-25 domestic season onwards, TOI has learnt. A decision regarding this could be taken at the BCCI's apex council meeting on June 18. BCCI secretary according to the agenda (TOI has a copy) circulated to the members.

The BCCI conducts Under-16 (Vijay Merchant Trophy), U-19 (Cooch Behar Trophy) and U-23 (CK Nayudu Trophy) tournaments at the junior level for men, and the U-15, U-19 and U-23 events for women. While the governing body of the game gives annual awards for the best performers in these tournaments, this could be the first time that 'POTM' and 'POTS' awards are given to the players at this level.

On May 11, BCCI secretary Jay Shah had announced that the Board wanted to eliminate the toss in the CK Nayudu Trophy for the 2024-25 season, with the visiting team now having the right to

choose whether to bat or bowl first. Meanwhile, showing some leniency to some players who still have a foreign passport (but have surrendered it in favour of an Indian passport), the BCCI is also considering granting "temporary permission to players with foreign passport who have surrendered such foreign passport in favour of Indian passport" to enable such players to participate in domestic cricket.

This paper had reported on May 23 that the BCCI has made it mandatory for a player to have an Indian passport in order to be eligible to participate in the BCCI's tournaments, even if he/she has a PIO/OCI (Person of Indian Origin/Original Country India) card.

India ride on Smriti's ton, Asha's 4-wkt haul for easy win over SA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Smrit



MY WIFE WAS VERY, VERY HAPPY FOR ME TO BE HERE. ON SATURDAY IT WAS HER BIRTHDAY AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN SPAIN. IT THEN CAME DIFFERENTLY. MY FIRST CONTACT WITH THE COACH WAS ON WEDNESDAY. I MISSED HIS FIRST CALL."

—EMRE CAN
GERMANY MIDFIELDER

BENCH PRESS

Weghorst takes the pole: Supersub Scores Late Again In Netherlands' 2-1 Win Over A Defiant Poland Team

Hamburg: Modern-day football sometimes shuns the strapping centre forward but Netherlands supersub Wout Weghorst came off the bench to spare their blushes on Sunday and show the value of a number nine with a killer instinct in a 2-1 Euro 2024 win over Poland.

There was no question that the Dutch were the dominant side against a Polish outfit who were perfectly happy to sit and wait for their moments.

Yet goals win games and if the Netherlands are to go far at the tournament they will need to sharpen their knives after a largely wasteful display in Hamburg.

The Dutch started the game with a dynamic front three of Cody Gakpo, Memphis Depay and Xavi Simons who were full of running and creative interplay, carving apart the Poles and creating chance after chance. They had 64% of possession and 20 shots on goal but apart from Gakpo's deflected effort in the 29th minute to level the scores, the opportunities came and went.

As the Netherlands' hopes of opening their Group D campaign with a victory started to fade, boss Ronald Koeman summoned Weghorst off the bench in the 81st minute, one of a number of changes he made as he looked to shift the dial in their favour. Two minutes later, the Netherlands had the lead as Weghorst latched on to Nathan Ake's pass and rifled the ball into the back of the net left-footed.

Weghorst, who came on with the Dutch trailing 2-0 to Argentina at the 2022 World Cup to score twice, has



FINISH LINE: Wout Weghorst (9) does the job for the Netherlands

POLAND	1
Buksa 16	
NETHERLANDS	2
Gakpo 29 Weghorst 83	

STATS THE WAY

Poland		N'lnds
12	Goal attempts	21
7	On target	4
33%	Possession	67%
293	Passes	583
78%	Pass accuracy	88%
10	Fouls	8
0	Yellow cards	1
0	Red Cards	0
2	Offsides	0

netted with his past three shots at major tournaments.

And underlining his super-sub credentials, it was the third consecutive game in which he has come off the bench to score for the Dutch.

"A real No.9 knows exactly where he needs to be to get those sort of goals," said former Netherlands striker and Dutch TV analyst Pierre van Hooijdonk.

Those who have followed Weghorst's club career would be forgiven for thinking they are watching a different player from the version who lines up for the Dutch.

He scored no goals in 17 league

games during a dismal loan spell at Manchester United last season, while this campaign he has scored seven in 28 games for his loan club Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga. He has bagged the same number for the Dutch this season in 11 appearances.

While the victory was deserved, Poland can take some solace from a competitive display when many had been predicting a more comprehensive defeat. There was some trepidation among Polish fans after they scraped into the tournament through the playoffs following a woe-filled qualifying campaign, even if their recent form had shown more

promise. With record scorer Robert Lewandowski, who boasts a remarkable 82 goals in 150 internationals, sidelined through injury, it was always going to be an uphill task.

There are occasions when losing your best player can be a blessing in disguise, as a team that has become overly reliant on an individual's brilliance is forced into a rethink.

In came Adam Buksa to lead the line, a big man to replace a big star and not only did the 1.93-metre striker open the scoring for the Poles but his all-round game gave the Dutch defence headaches. REUTERS

"WE SHOULD HAVE MADE MORE USE OF OUR OPPORTUNITIES. WE HAVE TO GIVE A HUG TO WOUT. ALL THE SUBS PERFORMED GREAT TODAY."

—Cody Gakpo, DUTCH GOALSCORER

"I TRIED TO EXPLAIN TO EACH PLAYER THE POSSIBILITY FOR STARTING OR COMING ON THE FIELD IN THE SECOND HALF WHEN WE MIGHT NEED A DIFFERENT APPROACH. AND WOUT WAS A LITTLE UPSSET. THAT'S A GREAT MENTALITY FROM THE PLAYER."

—Ronald Koeman, DUTCH COACH

TONIGHT'S TUSSLES

Group E		
Romania vs Ukraine	6.30pm	
Belgium vs Slovakia	9.30pm	
Group D		
France vs Austria	12.30am	

Live on Sony Sports Network

Eid al-adha Mubarak!



STANDINGS: GROUP A						STANDINGS: GROUP B							
TEAMS	P	W	D	L	GD	Pt	TEAMS	P	W	D	L	GD	Pt
Ger	1	1	0	0	4	3	Spain	1	1	0	0	3	3
Swi	1	1	0	0	2	3	Italy	1	1	0	0	1	3
Hun	1	0	0	1	-2	0	Alb	1	0	0	1	-1	0
Sco	1	0	0	1	-4	0	Cro	1	0	0	1	-3	0

Slovenia scupper Eriksen's fairytale return to Euros

Midfielder Scores 3 Years After His On-Pitch Collapse

all of their set pieces while also scoring a 17th minute goal that handed the Danes the lead in a performance that will go a long way in silencing the critics.

Stuttgart: Denmark captain Christian Eriksen marked a memorable return to the European Championship three years after suffering a cardiac arrest at the previous edition of the tournament, scoring the goal that secured a 1-1 draw with Slovenia in their Group C opener on Sunday.

Group C: SLOVENIA 1 (Janza 77)
DENMARK 1 (Eriksen 17)



The 32-year-old missed his team's run to the semi-final in 2021 after his shock on-pitch collapse in the opening match against Finland. On Sunday he did not waste any time to put the trauma of that game behind him as he played his first Euro game since then.

In a textbook playmaking performance, especially in a strong Danish first half, Eriksen orchestrated their game and set a quick early pace as per the orders of coach Kasper Hjulmand who fielded two strikers. He delivered almost

criticism of the international. "Christian Eriksen sits on the bench and watches football. Christian Eriksen as we know him, he is no more."

Eriksen was coming off a disappointing season with Manchester United that saw him earn little playing time under coach Eric ten Haag. That was hardly the run-up he needed for a major tournament. Many fans back home were surprised that Hjulmand had kept faith with him, while others were certain the midfielder was well past his best. REUTERS

Deschamps eyes a ton of triumphs

Hamburg: After a shock last 16 exit from Euro 2020 and finishing runners-up as hosts in 2016, France can do themselves a big favour with a decisive win against an inform Austria on Monday to stamp their authority on the tournament early on.

When coach Didier Deschamps takes to the dugout on Monday for France's European Championship opener, it will be an opportunity to register a phenomenal 100th win in charge of the team.

The 55-year-old is by some margin the most experienced coach at the tournament in Germany, with his almost 12 years in charge of Les Bleus, and brings with him impressive credentials as a player too.

Monday's Group D match in Dusseldorf marks Deschamps' 154th game as French coach with 99 wins, 30



MBAPPE AGAINST 'DIVISIVE IDEAS' EVEN AS OFFICIALS URGE RESPECT FOR TEAM'S NEUTRALITY

France captain Kylian Mbappe declared himself "against extremes and divisive ideas" when asked about crucial upcoming legislative elections in the country. "We are a generation that can make a difference. We see the extremes are knocking on the door of power and we have the opportunity to shape our country's future," he said.

The striker also defended comments made by his teammate Marcus Thuram, saying he "had not gone too far" in calling on the country "to fight every day to stop" the far-right National Rally winning the elections. France's football federation has called for the national team's neutrality to be respected and for Les Bleus to not be politicised.

80 Kylian Mbappe is on course to play his 80th game for France and a hat-trick would take him to 50 career international goals.

"(The political) situation is even more important than the game tomorrow. One does not impede the other, not at all. We know that it is a pivotal moment for French history, this is a never-before-seen event." —Mbappe

AUSTRIA VS FRANCE

Dusseldorf Arena

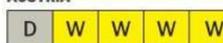
HEAD TO HEAD (25 games)

AUSTRIA WON 9 DRAW 3

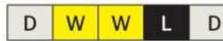


FORM GUIDE

AUSTRIA



FRANCE



(most recent first)

draws and 24 losses in a glory-filled career, where consistency and calmness have been his hallmarks. He has been coach of his side more than three years longer than the next most experienced manager at Euro 2024 — England's Gareth Southgate.

There is the possibility in Germany for him to become the first to win the World Cup and the Euros as both a player and a coach but that is not something he said he was concerned about. AGENCIES

Romania face tough test against Ukraine

Munich: While Romania cruised through the qualifying stages and topped their group, they face a stern test in their return to the European Championship finals after eight years when they take on an experienced and motivated Ukraine side on Monday.

Ukraine, making their fourth straight Euros appearance, have a talented squad with players such as Chelsea winger Mykhailo Mudryk and have a fierce desire to put on a performance to give supporters facing war at home something to cheer.

With manager Serhiy Rebrov's side appearing in their first major tournament since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, the former player underlined the importance of their opening Group E clash at the Munich Football Arena.

"I see a lot of kids supporting us when we play and it definitely gives our players extra motivation," Rebrov said. "Wherever we play we feel the support of all Ukrainians for whom football is a source of positive emotion."

BELGIUM VS SLOVAKIA

Frankfurt Arena

HEAD TO HEAD (3 games)

BELGIUM WON 1



FORM GUIDE

BELGIUM



SLOVAKIA



(most recent first)

ROMANIA VS UKRAINE

Munich Football Arena

HEAD TO HEAD (6 games)

ROM WON 3 DRAW 1



FORM GUIDE

ROMANIA



UKRAINE



(most recent first)

Lukaku looks for redemption

Frankfurt: Romelu Lukaku cut a disbelieving figure after missing a succession of chances in Belgium's 0-0 draw with Croatia that sealed an early exit from the 2022 World Cup, but returns to the big stage at the European Championship hoping to banish those memories.

A half-fit Lukaku managed 53 minutes across Belgium's three games in Qatar and was not at fault for their disastrous group-stage campaign, but it was a low point for the 31-year-old. He will lead the line against Slovakia in Belgium's Group E opener in Frankfurt on Monday having scored 17 goals



in 11 national team appearances since the World Cup.

Rejuvenated Belgium hope to banish the memories of a dismal World Cup campaign and extend a 15-match unbeaten run in their European Cham-

pionship Group E opener. The country's golden generation were tarnished by a first-round exit in Qatar but, with several fresh faces in the team and some new energy, Belgium have been unbeaten since coach Domenico Tedesco took over in February last year.

If they keep cool heads in the changing room and their key players remain injury-free, then anything is possible. Belgium have kept clean sheets in 10 of their 15 games and have scored 33 goals, with Romelu Lukaku, Kevin De Bruyne and Jan Vertonghen the old heads among young talents Jeremy Doku, Johan Bakayoko and Amadou Onana.

Mean boys: Spalletti wants upped ante against Spain

Holders Italy Come Back Strong After Early Albania Shock

Dortmund: Italy must be meaner and more direct when they face Spain, though they may get more attacking opportunities, coach Luciano Spalletti said after his side's 2-1 win over Albania at Euro 2024 on Saturday.

Having conceded inside 23 seconds, defending champions Italy were ahead after 16 minutes and limited Albania to very few chances until a frantic finish as their opponents pushed for an unlikely equaliser. Spalletti said his team had showed character to recover from the early deficit and displayed a togetherness that will serve Italy well if they progress beyond the group stage. "We switched off but we need to appreciate the desire to try and go and play football even when the going got tough," he said.

Spalletti, who appeared frustrated during the second half, was clear Italy needed to improve, not least on Thursday against Spain who blew Croatia away 3-0 on Saturday. "There are a number of things we still have to improve because we thought we were better than we were in too many situations," he said. "We need to be



NO DOUBT! Italy celebrate Barella's winner on Saturday

Group B: ITALY 2	1
Bastoni 11, Barella 16	
ALBANIA 1	1
(Bajrami 1)	

meaner, neat and tidy in the way we build things up, you free up a man but then you need to go and hurt the opposition... we thought we were brilliant at just keeping possession."

But Spalletti suggested Spain's strengths could also play into Italy's hands. "We need to move the

ball a bit more quickly, because we did so badly on occasions tonight, but against Spain there will be (chances) to play the ball forward more," he said. "Because they tend to be more aggressive in their press, there might be greater scope to actually play in behind their defensive line."



FASTEST GOALS IN EURO HISTORY

- 0:23** Nedim Bajrami (Italy 2-1 Albania, 15/06/2024, group stage)
- 1:07** Dimitri Kirichenko (Russia 2-1 Greece, 20/06/2004, group stage)
- 1:22** Emil Forsberg (Sweden 3-2 Poland, 23/06/21, group stage)
- 1:39** Yussuf Poulsen (Denmark 1-2 Belgium, 17/06/2021, group stage)
- 1:40** Robert Lewandowski (Poland 1-1 Portugal, aet, Portugal win 5-3 on pens, 30/06/2016, quarter-final)

Fans lay wreaths at Dachau site for Nazi victims

Cologne: Fans from Scotland, Ukraine, Germany, Israel and other nations laid wreaths at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site on Saturday to commemorate victims of the Nazis, vowing "never again" and to use football as a force to unite people.

The group toured the camp and heard how the Nazis had persecuted Jewish footballers and coaches, forced prisoners to play soccer for propaganda before banning it, then allowed only some inmates to play under the camp's hierarchy of privileges for different categories of prisoner. Fans also heard the children of former camp victims tell their parents' stories, walked in procession with a Scottish bagpiper. Dachau is half an hour's drive from Munich's football stadium, where Euro 2024 began on Friday. It was one of the first concentration camps to be set up by the Nazis, weeks after Adolf Hitler took power in January, 1933.

"It is a sombre place. You walk in and it is an uncomfortable feeling. But I think this sort of service is important to remember what happened, to



make sure we learn from mistakes... it has opened our minds to a lot of things," said Cole Cattanach, 21, a Scottish student from Falkirk, travelling through Germany to support the Scotland team. Andreas Erbel, representing German football fans, said he came to the commemoration to help protect democracy. "I wanted to show that there is also a counterweight to the move to the right across Europe, that there are more people... who are open to the world."



THE TIMES OF INDIA

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CELEBRITY CHEF GORDON RAMSAY 'LUCKY TO BE HERE' AFTER A 'REALLY BAD' BICYCLING ACCIDENT: 'HELMET SAVED MY LIFE'

JOE ALWYN BREAKS SILENCE ON TAYLOR SWIFT SPLIT, SAYS IT IS 'ABNORMAL' FOR BREAK-UP TO BE WEIGHED-IN BY OUTSIDERS



Kyiv's territorial integrity must be basis of any peace: Summit

Snubbed Moscow Mocks Meet; No Country Volunteers To Host Sequel

Buergenstock: Eighty-four countries called Sunday for the "territorial integrity" of Ukraine to be the basis for any peace agreement to end Russia's two-year war, though some key developing nations at a Swiss conference did not join — and the way forward for diplomacy remains unclear.

Over 90 countries attended the two-day talks at a Swiss Alpine resort at the behest of Ukrainian Prez Volodymyr Zelensky, billed as a "peace summit" even though Moscow was not invited. A decision by China to stay away all but assured that the summit would fail to achieve Ukraine's goal of persuading major countries from the "global South" to join in isolating Russia. Brazil attended only as an "observer". India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and South Africa all withheld their signatures from the summit communique, even though some contentious issues were omitted in the hope of drawing wider support.

Still, the conference provided Kyiv with a chance to showcase the support from Western allies that it says it needs to keep fighting against a far bigger enemy. Leaders including US vice-president Kamala Harris, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French Prez Macron gathered at the mountain-top resort of Buergenstock. US Prez Biden did not attend despite invitations from Zelensky.

In the absence of a clear path to ending the war, Zelensky emphasised practical issues, such as securing food supplies and nuclear safety. Ukraine, one of the world's biggest grain exporters, has thwarted a blockade of its Black Sea



European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen with Zelensky in Lucerne

Zelensky says Russia not ready for peace, wants China to play a bigger role in talks

Ukrainian Prez Zelensky said Sunday that Russia was not ready for a "just peace", insisting Kyiv was open to immediate talks if Moscow pulls its troops out of the country. The Ukrainian head of state was speaking at the end of a major summit in Switzerland, to which Russia was not invited. "Russia can start negotiations with us even tomorrow, if they leave our legal territories... (But) Russia and their leadership are not ready for a just peace, this is a fact," he said. Zelensky also said he would like to see China play a bigger role in discussing a settlement. Beijing, a close ally of Russia, did not attend in protest at Moscow not being invited. "I believe that China could help us. That is why I would very much like to see certain proposals that the Chinese side has," he said. "Ukraine has never said China is our enemy," he added. Asked whether he would consider China a friend, Zelensky said: "I believe that friends are those who help when things are difficult. I would like China to be a friend to Ukraine." AFP

ports, and also wants to build consensus around safety at a Russian-occupied nuclear power plant. In her closing remarks, Swiss Prez Viola Amherd warned that the "road ahead is long and challenging". Russia, as it has for weeks, mocked the gathering. "None

of the participants in the 'peace forum' knows what he is doing there and what his role is," said Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's deputy chairman of the country's Security Council. The final document said the UN Charter and "respect for territorial integrity and so-



ROD STEWART BOOED FOR UKRAINE SUPPORT: UK pop star Rod Stewart was greeted with loud boos at a concert in Germany on Friday while making a show of support for Ukraine. Wearing the colours of the country's flag, he dedicated the song 'Rhythm of My Heart' to Ukrainians before shouting a profane insult against Russian Prez Vladimir Putin

vereignty ... can and will serve as a basis for achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine." It also called for Ukraine's control over the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant and its Azov Sea ports to be restored. But it omitted tougher issues of what a post-war settlement for Ukraine might look like, whether Ukraine could join Nato alliance or how troop withdrawals from both sides might work. No country came forward to host another such meeting, with notable silence from Saudi Arabia, mooted as a possible future venue.

Moscow has demanded recognition of its rule over territory its forces captured. Western leaders at the summit endorsed Kyiv's refusal to negotiate under such terms. "Confusing peace with subjugation would set a dangerous precedent for everyone," said Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. REUTERS & AP

Russian forces kill six IS-linked hostage takers at detention centre

Moscow: Russian special forces freed two prison guards and shot dead six inmates linked to the Islamic State militant group who had taken them hostage at a detention centre in the southern city of Rostov on Sunday, Russian media said.

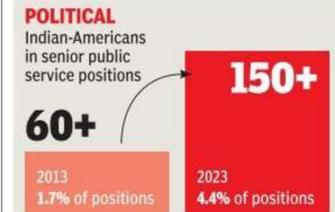
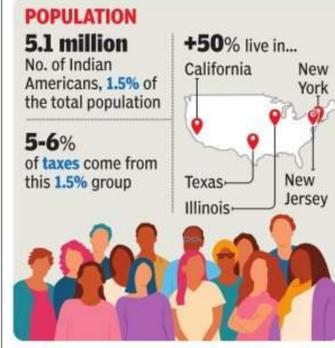
State media said that some of the men had been convicted of terrorism offences and were accused of affiliation with the Islamic State militant group, which claimed responsibility for a deadly attack on a Moscow concert hall in March.

The six hostage takers, one of whom wore a headband with the flag used by the Islamic State that bears an Arabic inscription, knocked out window bars and climbed down several floors by rope before taking the guards hostage with a knife and fire axe. In video published by the 112 Telegram channel, one was shown brandishing a knife beside one of the bound guards in Rostov-on-Don. In negotiations with the authorities, they demanded free passage out of the prison.

But Russian special forces decided to storm the prison. Intense automatic gunfire could be heard in clips published on Telegram channels. "The criminals were eliminated," Russia's Federal Penitentiary Service said. "The employees who were being held hostage were released. They are uninjured," it said. According to local media, the hostage takers were from Russia's southern republic of Ingushetia and three of them had been detained in 2022 for planning an attack on a court in another Russian republic, Karachay-Cherkessia. REUTERS

1.5% OF USA, DIASPORA PAYS 6% OF TOTAL TAXES

The no. of Indians living in US has grown to 5m (till 2023), which represents a 50% increase since 2010. A look at their far-reaching impact on...



Kamala Harris made history as the first Indian-origin woman to be sworn in as vice-president in 2021

CULTURAL
96 Indian movies grossed over \$1 million in North America, and \$340 million collectively between 2015 and 2023

10+ awards won by Indian Americans across the Oscars, Golden Globes, and Grammys since 2015

28 of the 34 Scripps National Spelling Bee champions have been of Indian origin since 2000 (PIO Bruhat Soma was this year's winner)

ECONOMY

\$40 billion Indian investments in US as of 2023

4,26,000 No. of jobs created in US

16 of the Fortune 500 in US are currently led by Indian-origin CEOs

72 out of 648 unicorns in US led by Indian-origin CEOs

\$26 billion US top source of global remittances to India in 22-23

25% of 114 unicorns in India in 2023 have US-educated founders

EDUCATION

2,50,000 Indian students enrol in US universities, making up 25% of int'l students annually

10% of US patents included a co-inventor of Indian origin in 2019, a 5X growth from 1975

35 out of 50 top US colleges have an Indian-American in leadership posts

10% of all physicians in the US Indian-origin in 2023 serving 30% of patients

PHILANTHROPY

\$1.5 billion donated by Indian-American households in 2023

\$3 billion given to US universities since 2008

(65+) donations of **\$1m+** to **40+** universities

Scottish poll PIO candidate's Modi, RaGa posts spark row

Naomi Canton

London: Social media posts on PM Narendra Modi and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi by an Indian-origin candidate for Glasgow in the Scottish elections have ignited controversy in UK, prompting a police report under new hate crime laws. Alba Party candidate Dhruva Kumar, 36, reported his rival party Scottish Greens for allegedly inciting hatred between Hindus and Muslims in Scotland.

Scottish police investigated the complaint lodged on June 8 and found no criminality. Scottish Greens dismissed the claims as a publicity stunt by Alba. Kumar, born in Bihar's East Champaran, has alleged criticism from Scottish Greens over his past social media posts about Modi and Gandhi as an attack on his religion and ethnicity. He claims to be the first India-born candidate to stand in Scotland and has expressed support for Modi and BJP.

The controversy arose from alleged posts by Kumar on X from 2014, which contained inflammatory comments against "Nehru dynasty" and how "India has paid the price". Scottish Greens commented on these posts in National, a newspaper. In response, Kumar insisted his account was hacked and that someone "politically motivated" twisted his words into "bad English". He said: "In 2014 Modi took office and I remember I did some posts praising him and a new era for India. They have twisted what I wrote." Scottish Greens candidate Niall Christie accused Kumar of exploiting right-wing politics.

ITALIANS TAKE POPE FRANCIS TO PRIDE



At Rome's Pride celebration, bare-chested men in pink angel wings danced to songs, women wrapped in rainbow flags kissed, and shimmering drag queens waved from parade floats. And then there was Pope Francis. His image was everywhere. On cardboard cutouts adorned with flower necklaces, on glittery banners, on stickers. Romans came to the Pride parade on

Saturday dressed like Francis, wearing papal hats and T-shirts that read, "There is never too much froggiagne," a reference to an offensive slur against gay men that the pope has been accused of using twice in recent weeks. The slur "is the slogan of the 2024 Pride," said Martina Lorina, 28, an actress who was holding up a banner bearing the word. After Italian media reported that the

pope used the slur at a meeting with priests to complain that there was too much "gayness" in the church, the Vatican apologized. But Rome's Pride attendees took a different tack to respond to the insult: They made it their own. Pride participants symbolically invited the pope and his slur to the party, using a tactic of the LGBTQ community to turn insults into words of pride. NYT

Le Pen: Ready to work alongside Macron

Marine Le Pen, the leader of the French far-right, said she won't try to push out Prez Macron if she wins the snap parliamentary election that begins later this month. "I'm respectful of institutions, and I'm not calling for institutional chaos," Le Pen told Le Figaro newspaper. "There will simply be cohabitation." Le Pen is seeking to appe-

al to mainstream voters as she aims to cement a majority in the next parliament. Her group, the National Rally, is already on track to become the biggest party, a prospect which has caused alarm among investors and France's international partners. Le Pen said that if she can form a majority — either with National Rally lawmakers alone, or with allies —

she would lead her party's parliamentary caucus and 28-year-old party leader Jordan Bardella will become PM. The two-round election concludes on July 7. Le Pen's party is on course to win as many as 270 of the 577 seats in the National Assembly, according to a projection by pollster Elabe, with 289 required for an absolute majority. Macron and his allies are projected to win between 90 and 130. BLOOMBERG

Hollywood helps Biden raise \$30m for campaign

Los Angeles: Some of Hollywood's brightest stars headlined a fundraiser for Prez Joe Biden that took in a record \$30 million-plus for a Democratic candidate, according to his campaign. George Clooney, Julia Roberts and Barbra Streisand were among those who took the stage at the 7,100-seat Peacock Theatre in Los Angeles on Saturday. Late-night host Jimmy Kimmel interviewed Biden and former prez Barack Obama, who both stressed the need to defeat former prez Donald Trump in a race that's expected to be exceedingly close.

During more than half an hour of discussion, Kimmel asked if the country was suffering from amnesia about the ex-



George Clooney and Julia Roberts were among those who took the stage at the fundraising event

prez, to which Biden responded, "all we gotta do is remember what it was like" when Trump was in the White House.

The amount raised outpaced the then-record \$26 million from Biden's fundraiser in March in New York that featured late-night host Stephen Colbert interviewing Biden, Obama and Bill Clinton. AP

Trump challenges Biden to a cognitive test but confuses name of doc who examined him

Donald Trump on Saturday suggested Prez Biden "should have to take a cognitive test", only to confuse who administered the test to him in the next sentence. Trump referred to Texas Republican Rep. Ronny Johnson, who was the White House physician for part of his presidency, as "Ronny Johnson." The moment came as Trump was questioning Biden's mental acuity, something he often does on the campaign trail and social media. "He doesn't even know what the word 'inflation' means. I think he should take a cognitive test like I did," the former prez said of Biden during a speech in Detroit. Seconds later, he continued, "Doc Ronny Johnson. Does everyone know Ronny Johnson, congressman from Texas? He was the White House doctor, and he said I was the healthiest president, he feels, in history, so I liked him very much indeed immediately." Jackson was elected to Congress in 2021 and is one of Trump's most vociferous defenders on Capitol Hill. Trump took the cognitive test in 2018 at his own request, Jackson said at the time. The exam is designed to detect early signs of memory loss and other cognitive impairment. AP

'Unaware' Netanyahu slams military's tactical pauses plan

Israeli PM Netanyahu criticised plans announced by the military on Sunday to hold daily tactical pauses in fighting along one of the main roads into Gaza to facilitate aid delivery to the Palestinian enclave.

The military had announced the daily pauses from 0500 GMT until 1600 GMT in the area from the Kerem Shalom Crossing to Salah al-Din Road and th-

en northwards. "When the prime minister heard the reports of an 11-hour humanitarian pause in the morning, he turned to his military secretary and made it clear that this was unacceptable to him," an Israeli official said. The military clarified that normal operations would continue in Rafah, the main focus of its operation in southern Gaza.

The strange choreography of the messaging became stranger still when the govt suggested that Netanyahu only learned of the military's plan from news reports. But analysts said it was likely that the prime minister was aware of the plan and that each announcement was tailored to different audiences. The whipsaw statements appeared to reflect the competing pressures facing Netanyahu, as he juggles demands from the Biden administration and elsewhere around the world with those of his own hawkish govt. His far-right coalition partners oppose any concessions in Gaza. National security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who leads one of the nationalist religious parties in Netanyahu's coalition, denounced the idea of a tactical pause, saying whoever decided it was a "fool" who should lose their job. The spat was the latest in a series of clashes between members of the coalition and military over the conduct of the war. It came a week after centrist ex-general Benny Gantz quit the govt, accusing Netanyahu of having no effective strategy in Gaza. REUTERS & NYT

AROUND THE WORLD



FUN WITH A CAUSE: Amateur surfers participate in 'Paddle for Peace' to mark Juneteenth and International Surf Day in California

Day after 1st public appearance, Kate takes snap of Will & kids for Father's Day



'WE LOVE YOU, PAPA'

The three young children of British heir-to-the-throne Prince William and his wife Kate released a Father's Day message and photograph on Sunday, saying "We love you, Papa". The photo shows the three children, Prince George, 10, Princess Charlotte, 9, and Prince Louis, 6, hugging William on a beach, with the photograph taken from behind as they all look out to sea. The caption says the photo was taken by Kate and reads: "We love you, Papa. Happy Father's Day," followed by two red hearts and G, C & L. The photograph was released a day after Kate, Britain's Princess of Wales, was seen in public for the first time since she revealed she was undergoing treatment for cancer. Kate, William and the children joined King Charles and other members of the royal family on the balcony of Buckingham Palace after watching a military parade to celebrate the monarch's official birthday.

Unruly passenger who was restrained with duct tape faces record \$81k fine
An American Airlines passenger who kicked and spit at flight attendants and passengers and attempted to open the cabin door before she was secured to a seat with duct tape has been sued by the US FAA for \$81,950, the largest fine issued by the agency for unruly behaviour. The passenger, Heather Wells, 34, of San Antonio, was travelling first class on July 7, 2021, when about an hour into the flight she ordered a Jack Daniel's and became agitated and said she "wanted out" of the plane. Wells began running toward the back of the plane, where she dropped to her knees in the aisle and began "talking incoherently to passengers, before crawling back toward the main cabin," the lawsuit said. Wells told a TV channel that she was having mental health issues.

Why a 3-legged lion and its brother swam across a crocodile-filled river

On a dark night in Feb, two male lions stood in the shallows of the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth National Park, in Uganda, and looked across the water. Nearly a mile away was the shore on the other side. Hippos and 16-foot crocodiles inhabit the channel, which can be 20 feet deep in places. Barely 12 hours earlier, the two males had lost a battle for territory and were lucky to still be alive. Remaining on this side of the channel was dangerous, and they could probably hear the roars of female lions in the distance. As with many cat species,

lions don't like to swim. And one of the lions, known as Jacob by researchers, has only three legs. He lost a limb in a poacher's trap in 2020. But neither Jacob nor his brother, Tibu, were deterred. The two big cats set out for what the researchers call the longest-recorded swim ever taken by lions. The lions struggled on their first three tries to cross. During the second attempt, the drone that was tracking them picked up a large thermal signature that may have been a crocodile or a hippo in pursuit; the two male lions split into a Y formation before hurrying back to shore. Less



SURVIVAL: Researchers say the two male lions swam nearly a full mile across the Kazinga Channel, the longest by big cats ever recorded. The reason: Sex. Uganda's national park's lion population has fallen to around 40 today from 71 lions in 2018 with males outnumbering females 2 to 1

than an hour after their first attempt, the two set out again for a third time. The path seemed clear and they kept going until they crossed the channel. "It was pretty dramatic," said Alexander Braczkowski, a conservation biologist who has been studying the lions since 2017. Lions have been observed swimming in Okavango Delta in Botswana, but rarely farther than 150 feet. In 2012, a lion swam around 330 feet across the Zambezi River, from Zimbabwe to Zambia. In Nov 2023, a young male lion swam across the Rufiji River in Tanzania, crossing as much as 985 feet of water.

But Braczkowski estimated that the two lions swam nearly a full mile. Why would lions make such a dangerous crossing? "Sex," said Craig Packer, who ran the Serengeti Lion Project for 35 years. "If there's nobody to mate with, what are you doing?" According to Braczkowski, the park's lion population has fallen to around 40 today from 71 lions in 2018, with at least 17 lions, mostly females, poisoned by nearby residents aiming to protect their livestock. Males outnumber females 2 to 1. "These males and these swimming events are a symptom of this problem." NYT

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