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SUPREME COURT HOLDS SPECIAL LOK ADALAT FOR SETTLEMENTS

The Supreme Court's upcoming Lok Adalat will prioritize settling pending cases, including matrimonial and property disputes, motor accident claims, and labour disputes, to promote quicker and more harmonious resolutions

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In celebration of its 75th anniversary, the Supreme Court of India is organizing a special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3. This initiative aims to facilitate the amicable settlement of pending cases, reflecting the Court's dedication to enhancing alternative dispute resolution and expediting justice.

A press statement from the Supreme Court emphasized the significance of Lok Adalats within the Indian judicial system. These Adalats play a crucial role in promoting alternative dispute resolution, thus fostering quicker and more harmonious settlements.



The upcoming Lok Adalat aligns with the Supreme Court's commitment to ensuring accessible and efficient justice for all societal segments.

During this special Lok Adalat, various cases with potential for settlement will be considered. These

include matrimonial and property disputes, motor accident claims, land acquisition issues, compensation cases, and service and labor disputes. All these cases, currently pending before the Supreme Court, will be prioritized to ensure speedy resolutions.

The Role and Impact of Lok Adalats

Lok Adalats, or "People's Courts," have been an integral part of the Indian judicial framework since their formal recognition in 1987 under the Legal Services Authorities Act. They provide an alternative platform for dispute resolution, focusing on mutual consent and settlement rather than adversarial litigation. By encouraging compromise and understanding, Lok Adalats help reduce the burden on the regular court system and provide a quicker, less formal resolution process.

The Supreme Court's decision to organize this special Lok Adalat highlights its ongoing efforts to integrate

these principles more deeply into the judicial process. The aim is to make justice more accessible and less time-consuming, benefiting both the legal system and the public.

Enhancing Access to Justice

This initiative is part of a broader strategy to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of the Indian judicial system. The Supreme Court has been progressively adopting measures to reduce case backlogs and ensure timely justice. The special Lok Adalat is expected to handle numerous cases that have been pending, thus significantly reducing the caseload.

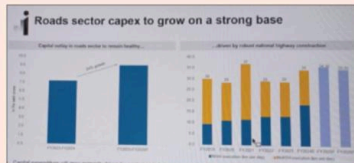
By focusing on cases with elements of settlement,

Investments in renewables, roads, realty to rise in FY25 & 26 to Rs 15 lakh crore

NIVEDITA MUKHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Investments in India's key infrastructure sectors—renewable energy, roads and real estate—are expected to grow 38 per cent in fiscal 2025 and 2026 compared with the previous two fiscals to Rs 15 lakh crore. The surge will ride on India's need for creation of sustainable infrastructure by adding more green power to the energy mix, improving physical connectivity through a denser road network, as well as rising demand for residential and commercial real estate, as emerges from CRISIL's Ratings Annual Infrastructure Summit 2024 on Tuesday.

The underlying demand drivers in these three sectors remain strong, with regular policy interventions fueling investor interest. This has also supported healthy credit risk profiles of private players and strengthened their execution and funding capabilities. Regular policy interventions in these sectors



have also increased investor interest, thus providing opportunities to developers to unlock equity capital, according to Manish Gupta, Senior Director and Deputy Chief Ratings Officer.

Cumulatively, Rs 2 lakh crore of equity capital has been deployed in these sectors over the past two fiscals driven by strong investor participation. A key enabler here has been the emergence of vehicles such as infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs). The capital inflows from investors have helped improve credit profiles of private players, thus strengthening their ability to fund future growth.

For renewables, the key growth driver is demand for sustainable energy transition. The government target is driving up auctions, which has created a strong pipeline. India saw auctions of 35 GW in fiscal 2024, the highest ever in a single fiscal, resulting in a strong pipeline of 75 GW. This will primarily drive implementation of 50 GW capacity over the next two fiscals. In the roads sector, the need for improved physical connectivity, which helps in efficiency gains for the economy, has driven healthy awarding over the past few fiscals, barring the last one. Strengthened order books of road developers, at 2.5 times of revenue, will support 11 per cent growth.

TOP OF THE DAY

INDIA SWAPS UP PRE-JPMORGAN ENTRY, HSBC

New Delhi: HSBC Holdings Plc has conducted nearly half of the bond-derivative trades in India's international finance hub over the past month, amounting to over \$250 million out of a total \$510 million, ahead of Indian sovereign bonds' inclusion in JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s emerging-market index on June 28. The bank utilized total return swaps to provide foreign investors onshore bond exposure without needing local licenses. This product has become key for foreigners to access Indian bonds amid increasing interest. Anita Mishra, head of markets and securities services at HSBC India, noted HSBC's role in facilitating both direct access and total return swaps for Indian government bonds. The International Financial Services Centres Authority chairman, K Rajaraman, highlighted the significant traction and \$10 billion inflows into India's index-eligible bonds since the announcement of their inclusion. Some investors also seek exposure through rupee-denominated supra-national bonds or Indian bond exchange-traded funds from providers like BlackRock Inc. and Legal & General Investment Management.

ASSAM CM SEEKS CBI PROBE IN IIT STUDENT DEATH

GUWAHATI: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma urged West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to direct the investigation of IIT Kharagpur student Faizan Ahmed's death to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a transparent and fair probe. Faizan was found dead in his hostel in October 2022, initially deemed a suicide by the college authorities. However, his parents suspected foul play, noting injury marks on his body. A second autopsy, ordered by the Calcutta High Court, revealed a gunshot wound on Faizan's upper left neck and a stab wound on the right, indicating homicide. CM Sarma emphasized the need for justice for Faizan and closure for his grieving parents, highlighting the importance of a thorough CBI investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Sankara eye foundation launches India's first eye care innovation lab

TBG NETWORK
COIMBATORE

The R&D Innovation Lab is dedicated to creating need-based solutions that go beyond existing options, ensuring world-class eye care access for all including the most remote villages in the country. Sankara Eye Foundation, India has launched the nation's first-of-its-kind Innovation Lab supported by G.D. Naidu Charities, aiming to advance eye care through cutting-edge research, development, and training. This center focuses on delivering high-quality eye care solutions to underserved populations, reaching remote rural villages with innovative diagnostic, treatment, and prevention approaches.

The center's inauguration was graced by Shri. G.D. Gopal, Chairman of G.D. Naidu Charities, along with Dr. SV. Balasubramanian, Chairman of Sankara Eye Foundation, India, Dr. R. V. Ramani, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sankara Eye Foundation, India, Mr. Bhaskar Bhat, Director of Tata Sons Private Limited, and other trustees and well-wishers of Sankara Eye Foundation, India. Shri. G.D. Gopal expressed his excitement about the initiative, highlighting its uniqueness in India and its potential to bring numerous innovations to the international ophthalmology sector.

Dr. Jagadeesh Kumar Reddy, Technical Director & Head of the Innovation Lab at Sankara Eye Foundation, India, emphasized the center's dedication to enhancing eye care through focused research and development. The lab aims to bridge healthcare gaps and deliver life-changing solutions to rural and underserved communities in India. The R&D Center will concentrate on four key areas: the design and development of new devices, digital eye care through AI-enhanced electronic medical records, clinical trials, and comprehensive training programs.

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India to grow at 7.2 % in FY25 on consumer spending, investment

NIVEDITA MUKHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Fitch Ratings on Tuesday upgraded India's growth forecast for the current fiscal, FY2024-25 to 7.2 per cent, a revision from 7 per cent projected in March 2024, on recovery in consumer spending with elevated consumer confidence even as investment continues to rise but more slowly than in recent quarters. In an update to its global economic outlook report, Fitch said it expects inflation to decline to 4.5 per cent by end of this year and RBI to cut policy interest rates by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent.

The rating agency expects growth in later years to slow and approach its medium-term trend estimate, forecasting real GDP growth of 6.5 per cent in FY26 (unchanged from March), and 6.2 per cent in FY27, driven by consumer spending and investment.

Reflecting back on the final quarter of the financial year



ending March 2024, Fitch Ratings notes that India's real GDP increased by 7.8 per cent yoy, terming it higher than its expectation in March, although slower than previous quarters of the financial year. For FY23-24, real GDP expanded 8.2 per cent with domestic demand driving growth, and investment rising by 9.0 per cent and consumer spending by 4.0 per cent. Falling indirect taxes net of subsidies have boosted GDP growth relative to gross value-added at basic prices. The latter is currently a better guide to underlying momentum and has been growing at just over 7 per cent.

The rating agency cites purchasing managers survey data pointing to continued growth at the start of the current financial year and expects that signs of the coming monsoon season being more normal, should support growth and make inflation less volatile, though a recent heatwave poses a risk. Fitch notes that consumer price inflation has only edged down since the start of the calendar year, with annual inflation at 4.7 per cent in May from 5.7 per cent in December 2023 and core inflation has fallen at a steadier pace to 3.0 per cent in May from 3.8 per cent in December and

India's gross direct tax collections for FY25 grows 22.19 %

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NEW DELHI

India's gross direct tax collections for financial year 2024-25, (before adjusting for refunds) stands at Rs 5,15,986 crore, registering a growth of 22.19 per cent over the collections of Rs 4,22,295 crore made in the corresponding period of FY24.

This gross collection (as on 17.06.2024) includes corporation tax (CIT) at Rs 2,26,280 crore and personal income tax (PIT) including securities transaction tax (STT) at Rs 2,88,993 crore, provisional figures released by the Ministry of Finance on Tuesday shows.

Minor head-wise collection comprises advance tax of Rs 1,48,823 crore, tax deducted at source of Rs 3,24,787 crore, self-assessment tax of Rs. 28,471 crore, regular assessment tax of Rs 10,920 crore and tax under other minor heads of Rs. 2,985 crore.

The provisional figures of direct tax collections for FY

2024-25 as on 17 June, 2024 show net collections at Rs 4,62,664 crore, compared to Rs 3,82,414 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, FY 2023-24, representing an increase of 20.99 per cent. The net direct tax collection of Rs 4,62,664 crore includes CIT at Rs 1,80,949 crore (net of refund) and PIT including STT at Rs 2,81,013 crore (net of refund).

The provisional figures of total advance tax collections for FY 2024-25, as on 17 June 2024 stand at Rs 1,48,823 crore, against advance tax collections of Rs 1,16,875 crore for the corresponding period of FY2023-24, showing a growth of 27.34 per cent. The advance tax collection of Rs 1,48,823 crore comprises CIT at Rs 1,14,353 crore and PIT at Rs 34,470 crore. Refunds amounting to Rs 53,322 crore have also been issued in the FY 2024-25 till

17 June 2024, which are 33.70 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same

Foreign investors flock to Indian markets, pumping in \$1.4 billion

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a strong comeback to Indian markets, with net investments surpassing USD 1 billion over the past five trading sessions. On June 14 alone, FPIs invested USD 644.61 million, pushing their total investment beyond the 1 billion USD mark.

Previously, domestic stock markets experienced significant volatility during the election period due to persistent selling by foreign investors. On the day election results were announced, the markets faced one of the worst sell-offs by foreign investors, driven by the uncertainty of a clear majority for any political party.



However, investor confidence was restored after the formation of the government under the National

Democratic Alliance (NDA), leading to renewed foreign investments. Data from the National Securities Depository

shows that on June 10, FPIs had a net investment of USD 805.82 million. This was followed by USD 317.82

million on June 11. However, June 12 saw a notable shift as FPIs sold off USD 285.32 million, resulting in a negative net investment for the day. The trend reversed on June 13 with FPIs investing USD 326.46 million, culminating in a significant buying spree on June 14 with USD 644.61 million invested. Over these five trading sessions, FPIs have collectively invested an impressive USD 1.45 billion. This influx of foreign capital highlights renewed confidence in the Indian market, particularly following the political stabilization brought about by the NDA government.

The return of FPIs is a positive indicator for the Indian economy, suggesting that the political stability and policy continuity offered by

the new government have effectively mitigated uncertainties. In May, FPIs sold equities worth Rs 25,586 crore, indicating a pattern of sustained selling in the cash market. For the year 2024 so far, FPIs have divested equity worth Rs 26,428 crore. A notable trend in FPI activity is the considerable selling through exchanges while simultaneously buying through the primary market route.

The market is gradually stabilizing following the high volatility triggered by the election results, including both exit polls and the actual outcomes. The upcoming budget will also provide a policy direction for the new government, with the market expected to adjust accordingly based on the budget announcements.

DISCUSSION ON LOK SABHA SPEAKER POST HELD AT RAJNATH SINGH'S RESIDENCE

Rajnath Singh leads efforts to build consensus among alliance parties and opposition groups for the upcoming election of the Lok Sabha Speaker, amid considerations by the INDIA bloc to field their own candidate if Deputy Speaker norms aren't met.

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Amid anticipation surrounding the appointment of the Lok Sabha Speaker ahead of the upcoming Parliament Session, sources indicate that a meeting of ministers will convene at Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's residence on Tuesday evening. The purpose of this gathering, scheduled just before the commencement of the first Parliament session post the 2024 general elections on June 24, is to strategize on enhancing floor coordination among National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners during the session. This session will also witness the election for the crucial Speaker post.

Rajnath Singh has been tasked with the respon-



sibility to facilitate consensus-building among alliance parties as well as opposition groups for the election of the Lok Sabha Speaker. Sources suggest that discussions will revolve around ensuring smooth proceedings and effective functioning of the lower house of Parliament.

The opposition INDIA bloc is reportedly contemplating fielding a

candidate for the Speaker's post, especially if the norm of granting them the Deputy Speaker's post is not adhered to. The election for the position of Lok Sabha Speaker is slated to take place on June 26.

Currently, the Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament is Om Birla, a Member of Parliament from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Birla was

elected as the Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha in June 2019, following a motion moved by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, Birla contested from Kota on a BJP ticket and secured the Parliamentary seat with a margin exceeding 41,139 votes.

Janata Dal (United), led by Nitish Kumar, has affirmed its support for the BJP's choice for the Speaker's post, JD(U) and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) are integral members of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and are expected to endorse the candidate nominated by the BJP.

The inaugural session of the 18th Lok Sabha is scheduled to conclude on July 3, primarily for the oath-taking or affirmation of newly elected members. President

Droupadi Murmu is slated to address a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha on June 27.

The final session of the 17th Lok Sabha, known as the Budget session, was held from January 31 to February 10, 2024, marking the end of its term.

In summary, as the political landscape prepares for the upcoming Parliament Session and the crucial election of the Lok Sabha Speaker, stakeholders are engaged in pivotal discussions aimed at ensuring effective governance and parliamentary proceedings. The meeting at Rajnath Singh's residence underscores efforts to forge consensus among diverse political entities for the smooth functioning of the lower house of Parliament in the ensuing session.

PM Modi urges gram panchayat presidents to promote yoga and millets for holistic health

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called upon gram panchayat presidents to lead a grassroots movement promoting holistic health through yoga and millet awareness, emphasizing their benefits in preserving soil health and combating climate change. In a letter dated June 13, 2024, PM Modi extended his best wishes to all residents of gram panchayats ahead of the 10th International Yoga Day.

"The initiative to organize Yoga-based programs in Panchayat premises, schools, Anganwadis, Community Health Centers, and other such places will serve as a catalyst to inspire people, particularly the youth, to embrace a sustainable, stress-free lifestyle," PM Modi urged in his letter.

Highlighting the global significance of Yoga, PM Modi noted the upcoming celebration of the 10th International Day of Yoga on



June 21, 2024. He described this event as a testament to Yoga's profound impact on the global community and its role in bringing positive changes to individuals' lives. The theme for this year, 'Yoga for Self and Society,' aims to further strengthen efforts towards building a healthy nation.

"Yoga, a gift from our ancient culture, fosters holistic health and wellness by strengthening us physically and mentally," PM Modi emphasized. In parallel, he underscored the nutritional benefits of millets, known as Shree Anna, which promote good health and contribute

to soil conservation and climate resilience. The increasing demand for millets also enhances the income of small farmers, he added.

The International Day of Yoga was established on June 21 following a resolution proposed by India and endorsed by 175 member states of the United Nations on December 11, 2014. PM Modi first introduced the proposal during his address at the opening of the 69th session of the UN General Assembly, emphasizing Yoga's role in achieving unity of mind and body, and its holistic approach to health and well-being.

Army creates first-ever skin bank for soldiers in India

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Army Hospital (Research and Referral) in New Delhi unveiled a pioneering initiative on Tuesday with the inauguration of a state-of-the-art skin bank facility, marking a significant milestone within the Armed Forces Medical Services. This establishment, the first of its kind under military auspices, aims to revolutionize the treatment of severe burn injuries and other complex skin-related conditions affecting service members and their families across India.

Led by Lt Gen Arindam Chatterjee AVSM, VSM, DGMS (Army) & Col Comdt, the opening of the skin bank underscores the Armed Forces' steadfast commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of its personnel. Lt Gen Chatterjee expressed that this facility signifies not only an advancement in medical care



but also a profound dedication to supporting those who have made sacrifices for the nation.

"This skin bank is a testament to our unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of our service members," emphasized Lt Gen Chatterjee. "It will significantly enhance the quality of care we provide and strengthen our ability to assist those affected by severe injuries."

The facility, overseen by a team of highly trained medical professionals including plastic surgeons, tissue

engineers, and specialized technicians, will serve as a central hub for the collection, processing, storage, and distribution of skin grafts. Rigorous adherence to stringent quality control and safety standards ensures the integrity and reliability of the grafts, essential for effective treatment outcomes.

Lt Gen Ajith Nilakantan, Commandant of Army Hospital (R&R), highlighted the transformative impact of the skin bank on the treatment landscape for severe burns and complex skin conditions. "Having a dedicated resource

for skin tissue allows us to deliver the most effective and personalized treatments," he affirmed. "This not only improves patient recovery prospects but also supports comprehensive rehabilitation efforts."

The establishment of the skin bank marks a pivotal advancement in the Armed Forces' ongoing initiatives to elevate medical care and support for its personnel and their families. This innovative initiative underscores the organization's proactive approach to prioritizing health and well-being within its ranks.

"This facility will not only enhance the quality of care we provide but also strengthen our ability to support those who have been affected by devastating injuries," added Lt Gen Chatterjee.

The skin bank is expected to cater to the diverse needs of military medical centers nationwide, ensuring equitable access to advanced skin replacement therapies.

Passenger seeks action against goods train pilots in Kanchenjunga Express crash

TBG NETWORK
DARJEELING

A passenger aboard the ill-fated Kanchenjunga Express, involved in a tragic accident on June 17 near Jalpaiguri station in North Bengal, has lodged a complaint against the loco pilot and assistant loco pilot of the goods train responsible for the collision. The incident occurred when a goods train reportedly ignored a signal and collided with the Sealdah-bound Kanchenjunga Express at approximately 8:55 am, resulting in a devastating outcome in the Phansidewa area of Darjeeling district.

The collision tragically claimed the lives of at least 10 individuals and left more than 25 others injured. Chinmoy Majumdar, one of the passengers, recounted in her complaint the sudden jolt felt while the train was in motion, causing panic



among passengers. She sustained injuries, while several co-passengers suffered severe wounds in the aftermath of the collision.

According to Majumdar's account, upon disembarking from the train, she discovered that the goods train had rammed into the rear of the Kanchenjunga Express, severely damaging parts of both trains, including the engine of the goods train. She attributed the accident to the rush and alleged negligence of the loco pilot and assistant loco pilot.

Dr. Sandeep Kumar Sengupta, the Dean of North Bengal Medical College and Hospital, confirmed that the death toll had risen to 10 following the tragic incident. He detailed that on the day of the mishap, 37 injured individuals were admitted, with two patients in serious condition succumbing to their injuries despite intensive care. Dr. Sengupta emphasized the critical condition of those with multiple organ injuries, highlighting the challenges in their treatment due to their

accident-related trauma. In response to the incident, Janak Kumar Garg, Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety for North-east Frontier Railway, announced a statutory inquiry into the Kanchenjunga Express tragedy. The inquiry aims to ascertain the circumstances leading to the collision, which claimed eight lives at the scene and later two more in hospital, while injuring 25 others.

Following extensive restoration efforts, the Kanchenjunga Express eventually reached its destination, Sealdah station in Kolkata, early the next day. The completion of restoration work allowed for the resumption of normal operations after the distressing incident.

The collision between the goods train and Kanchenjunga Express has raised significant concerns about railway safety and operational protocols.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Supreme court holds

the Supreme Court aims to clear disputes that can be resolved without prolonged litigation. This not only saves time and resources for the court but also provides relief to the involved parties by resolving their issues amicably.

Categories of Cases to be Addressed

The special Lok Adalat will address a variety of cases, including:

Matrimonial and Property Disputes: These cases often involve sensitive personal issues that are best resolved through mutual agreement rather than contentious court battles.

Motor Accident Claims: Quick settlements can provide much-needed financial relief to victims or their families.

Land Acquisition and Compensation Cases: Speedy resolutions in these cases can aid in the smoother implementation of infrastructure projects and fair compensation for affected parties.

Service and Labour Disputes: These cases involve employment issues that can benefit from expedient and equitable solutions.

The Future of Alternative Dispute Resolution

The Supreme Court's initiative underscores the growing importance of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in India. As the legal system continues to evolve, such measures are likely to become even more critical in ensuring that justice is not only delivered but also perceived as fair

and timely by the public.

The special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 represents a significant step in this direction. By prioritizing the amicable settlement of suitable pending cases, the Supreme Court is reinforcing its commitment to a judicial system that is efficient, accessible, and just for all.

Investments in renewables

in highway construction, which is seen at 12,500 km per year over the next two fiscals which is just slightly higher than the 12,349 km of national highways constructed in 2023-24. However, private sector confidence in roads has been boosted by models such as the hybrid annuity model (HAM) and improved concession agreements, which share risks more equitably between developers and concessionaires.

As for real estate, net leasing of commercial office space will see demand growth of 8-10 per cent this fiscal and the next. The primary drivers of the same will be global capability centres eyeing India's large talent pool and competitive rentals, as well as healthy demand from domestic sectors. Demand growth for residential real estate will sustain at 8-12 per cent this fiscal and the next, aided by favourable affordability and premiumisation. That said, there are some risks to watch out for as the growth momentum could be impacted if these play out in a meaningful way, says CRISIL.

Sankara eye foundation

The initiative aims to revolutionize eye care by developing advanced digital record systems and AI technologies to improve efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility. By integrating AI and digital health records into eye care, the lab seeks to enhance diagnostic accuracy and treatment outcomes, ensuring that even the most remote communities receive the highest quality of eye care.

The center will conduct clinical trials approved by CDSCO/DCGI for regulatory compliance, with a team of clinical research coordinators ensuring adherence to standards. Training programs will include hands-on sessions, simulation exercises, and virtual reality modules to enhance practical skills for Postgraduate Trainees, Fellows, and Practicing Eye Surgeons. Key research areas include developing new diagnostic tools, surgical instruments, intraocular devices, telemedicine solutions, spectacles, and assistive technologies. The lab will explore AI algorithms for medical imaging analysis, improving the detection and classification of common eye conditions such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and macular degeneration. Additionally, AI will be used to create personalized treatment plans based on patient data and predictive analytics. Equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including simulation laboratories, surgical training modules, and a tele-ophthalmology training area, the Innovation Lab aims to promote global best practices in eye care by fostering collaborations with international institutions and industry leaders.

Sankara Eye Foundation, India is a Not-for-Profit organization committed to providing quality eye care services to the poor and marginalized sections of society. Founded in 1977 by

Dr. R.V. Ramani and Dr. Radha Ramani, Sankara has grown into one of the largest and fastest-growing social enterprises, managing 13 super specialty eye care hospitals across Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. The foundation's network hospitals are equipped with state-of-the-art technology to perform advanced eye surgeries. As a protagonist of the National Eye Health Care Movement in India, Sankara Eye Foundation continuously transforms eye care delivery through various initiatives across age groups, cutting-edge technology, scientific approaches, innovation, research, and training. For more information about Sankara Eye Foundation, please visit Sankara Eye Foundation.

India to grow at 7.2 %

food price inflation has remained high, averaging 7.8 per cent in the first five months of the calendar year. According to official forecasts, rainfall during June-September is likely to be above average. This, says Fitch Ratings, should limit the inflationary risks from food price spikes. We expect headline inflation to continue declining to 4.5 per cent by calendar year-end, and average 4.3 per cent in 2025 and 2026, staying slightly above the mid-point of its target range (4 per cent +/- 2 per cent).

The agency also notes that at its latest meeting, the RBI maintained the policy rate at 6.5 per cent and confirmed its hawkish stance of "withdrawal of monetary accommodation" and the need to bring down inflation towards target. It still expects the RBI to cut its policy rate this year, but only once, to 6.25 per cent.

INDIA'S OILMEAL EXPORTS PLUMMET AMID GLOBAL TRADE CHALLENGES

India's oilmeal exports decline in April 2024, with soybean meal exports rising and mustard meal exports falling

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's oilmeal exports experienced a notable 17% decline in the first two months of the 2024-25 financial year, highlighting broader challenges in the agricultural trade sector. According to recent data from the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), India exported 767 lakh tonnes of oilmeal during April-May 2024-25, compared to 9.30 lakh tonnes in the same pe-



riod of 2023-24.

This decline has been primarily attributed to a drop in the export of key products such as rapeseed meal and

castorseed meal.

In May 2024 alone, oilmeal export volumes were reported at 302,280 tons, a sharp decline of 31 per cent from 436,597 tons in May 2023.

One of the main reasons for this decrease is the reduced demand for Indian oilmeals from major importers such as South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, and Bangladesh.

South Korea imported 166,583 tons of oilmeals, down from 189,705 tons the previous year.

Vietnam's imports saw

a drop from 142,285 tons to just 32,699 tons, while Thailand's intake fell from 152,063 tons to 57,390 tons.

Bangladesh imported 139,006 tons, compared to 193,606 tons during the same period last year.

The most notable drop has been in rapeseed meal exports. Vietnam, which imported 142,285 tons last year, significantly reduced its intake to just 32,699 tons.

Similarly, Thailand's imports of rapeseed meal fell from 152,063 tons to 57,390

tons. This decline in demand for rapeseed meal, a major export commodity, has had a significant impact on overall oilmeal exports.

Another critical factor affecting the oilmeal export market is the government's prohibition on the export of de-oiled rice bran, a key component in animal fodder.

India typically exports between 500,000 to 600,000 tons of de-oiled rice bran to countries such as Vietnam and Thailand.

However, an export ban

Delhi airport introduces 'Quick Drop' to cut luggage wait times

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi International Airport on Tuesday launched a state-of-the-art Self Service Bag Drop (SSBD) Quick Drop Solution at the airport.

The initiative by the airport will help in streamlining the baggage drop process and reduce waiting time for the luggage.

With this, Delhi Airport becomes the first airport in India and the second in the world after Toronto, Canada to implement this technology.

With approximately 50 Self Service Bag Drop units now operational across Terminal 1 and Ter-

минаl 3, passengers can enjoy a seamless and efficient check-in experience.

Earlier the self-service bag drop units enabled travellers to bypass check-in desks, allowing them to print their boarding passes and baggage tags at Common Use Self Service kiosks. Upon reaching the bag drop unit, passengers use to scan their boarding passes or face through biometric cameras, and proceed to drop their bags on the conveyor belt, with the entire process taking around a minute.

Now to make the bag drop facility smooth, the Delhi airport has started a new innovation called

'Quick Drop Solution'.

It is a one-step process where the need for the boarding pass or biometric validation is removed since these details are already available on the baggage tag. This reduces the processing time from about a minute to 30 seconds.

"We are thrilled to introduce the Self Service Bag Drop Quick Drop Solution at Delhi Airport, setting a new standard for passenger convenience and efficiency in India. This initiative underscores our commitment to leveraging advanced technology to enhance the travel experience."

Sony India launches BRAVIA 2 series with Google TV and gaming upgrades

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Sony India introduces its latest innovation, the BRAVIA 2 Series, featuring 4K Ultra HD LED display technology, aimed at elevating the entertainment experience for those looking to upgrade. Integrated with Google TV, users can effortlessly access a wide array of

apps, streaming services, and live TV channels, personalized to their preferences. Whether it is enjoying a thrilling gaming session or indulging in your favorite movies and TV shows, the BRAVIA 2 series delivers an unmatched viewing experience, making it a must-have for those seeking to enhance their home entertainment

setup. The BRAVIA 2 Series offers two distinct versions: the S25 variant, which unleashes unparalleled gaming capabilities, and its counterpart, the S20, which prioritizes other outstanding features without gaming enhancements.

Sony's new BRAVIA 2 series is available in 108cm (43"), 126cm (50"), 139cm (55"),

164cm (65") screen sizes. It encompasses of X1 Picture Processor. The powerful X1 processor uses advanced algorithms to cut noise and boost detail. With an even clearer 4K signal, everything you watch is closer to 4K resolution, full of life-like color powered by Life Color technology. The new BRAVIA 2, 4K televisions

let you see glorious 4K pictures, rich with real world detail and texture. Images filmed in 2K and even Full HD are upscaled close to 4K resolution by 4KX-Reality™ PRO using a unique 4K database. You can enjoy smooth and sharp details even in fast-moving sequences with Motionflow™ XR. This innovative technology creates

and inserts extra frames between the original ones. It compares key visual factors on successive frames, then calculates the split second of missing action in the sequences. Some models also include black.

BRAVIA 2 series comes with open baffle down firing twin speakers that delivers 20-Watt powerful sound

with Dolby audio. The open baffle speakers deliver impressive low-end sound that's ideal for movies, sport and music. Now experience sound which is clearer and more natural and immerse yourself in enriching music.

Clear Phase precisely analyses the speaker's frequency response, identifying and removing any peaks or dips

for pure, natural audio with smooth, even reproduction of all frequencies.

With new BRAVIA 2 series, download 10,000+ apps, see 700,000+ movies and TV episodes, plus live TV, all in one place. Google TV brings everyone's favourite content from across apps and subscriptions and organizes them.

Durlax top surface to raise Rs 40.8 cr in IPO opening June 19

TBG NETWORK
AHMEDABAD

Durlax Top Surface Ltd, leading company involved in the business of Solid Surface for over a decade is planning to raise up to Rs 40.80 crore from its SME public issue. The company has received approval to launch its public issue on NSE Emerge Platform of National Stock Exchange. The public issue open for subscription on June 19 and closes on June 21. The Proceeds of the public issue will be utilised to fund company's expansion plans including meeting working capital requirements and general corporate purposes. Expert Global Consultants Private Ltd is the book running lead manager of the issue.

* Company to issue 60 lakh Equity shares of Rs 10 face value in the price band of Rs 65-68 per share; To list NSE EMERGE Platform of NSE

* Grey Market premium on company's share is trading around Rs 23 per share indi-



cating a listing gain of over 33% as per <https://www.investorgain.com>

● Public issue opens for subscription from June 19 to June 21

● IPO of Rs 40.80 crore comprises of Fresh issue of Rs 28.56 crore and Offer for sale of Rs 12.24 crore

● Company operates through two brands LUXOR (Acrylic UV Solid Surface) & ASPIRON (Modified Solid Surface)

● Grey Market premium on company's share is trading around Rs 23 per share indicating a listing gain of over 33% as per <https://www.investorgain.com>

● Minimum lot size for application is 2000 shares; Minimum IPO application amount Rs 1.30 - 1.36 lakh

● Funds raised through the issue will be used to meet the working capital requirements and general corporate purposes

● For FY23-24 company reported revenues of Rs 90.84 crore and Net Profit of Rs 5.05 crore

● Expert Global Consultants Private Ltd is the book running lead manager of the issue.

The initial public offering of Rs 40.80 crore, comprises of a fresh issue of Rs 28.56 crore (42 lakh equity shares)

and offer for sale of Rs 12.24 crore (18 lakh shares) of face value Rs 10 each. Company has finalized price band of Rs 65-68 per equity share for the public issue. Out of the fresh issue of Rs 28.56 crore, company plans to utilize Rs 17.50 crore towards part finance the working capital requirements and Rs 6 crore towards general corporate purpose. Minimum lot size for the application is 2000 shares which translates in to investment of Rs 1.30-1.36 lakh per application.

Grey Market premium on company's share is trading around Rs 23 per share indicating a listing gain of over 33% as per <https://www.investorgain.com>.

Retail investor quota for the IPO is kept at not less than 35% of the offer while quote for QIB Investor is kept at maximum of 50% of the net offer and HNI quota at not less than 15% of the offer. Promoter holding pre issue stands at 95.44% which post issue will come to 60.35%.

Distinctive features of Shriram Finance's fixed deposit schemes

TBG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Shriram Finance, a leading financial services company in India, offers a diverse range of fixed deposit (FD) schemes catering to the varied needs and goals of investors. These schemes come with unique features that ensure secure and rewarding investment experiences.

Ensuring Flexibility to Meet Diverse Needs

● **Investment Tenures:** Shriram Finance FDs offer tenures ranging from 12 to 60 months, allowing investors to choose a period that aligns with their financial goal. Shorter tenures cater to immediate financial needs, while longer tenures help accumulate wealth for long-term goals.

● **Deposit Amounts:** The minimum investment amount is Rs. 5,000. This makes Shriram FD an ideal choice for a wide range of investors. Higher deposit amounts can help earn higher returns.

● **Interest Payment Options:** Investors can choose



to receive interest payouts regularly (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, yearly or at maturity) or opt for cumulative fixed deposit plans to benefit from the compounding interest. Renewing an FD can also provide an additional interest benefit of 0.25% p.a.

Competitive Interest Rates for Maximum Returns

● **Attractive Interest Rates:** Shriram Finance offers fixed deposit interest rates that are competitive with the market, ensuring investors earn optimal returns on their investments. Rates vary based on tenure and investor category (senior citizens typically receive higher rates).

● **Special Rates for Senior Citizens and Women depositors:** Recognising the

financial needs of senior citizens, Shriram Finance offers additional 0.50% p.a. and 0.10% p.a. for women providing them with enhanced returns.

● **Interest Rate Laddering:** Select schemes offer interest rate ladders, where interest rates increase with longer tenures, rewarding investors for committing their funds for extended periods.

Commitment to Safety and Security:

● **Safety Rating:** Shriram Finance FD is rated "ICRA AA+ (Stable)" by ICRA and "IND AA+/Stable" by India Ratings and Research, signifying its financial stability and creditworthiness, assuring investors of the safety of their deposits.

Shriram Finance's FD schemes cater to a wide range of investor profiles, with options for:

● **Risk-averse Investors:** FDs are low-risk investments as they provide assured returns and principal protection.

● **Income Seekers:** Regular income options through

monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly interest payouts.

● **Wealth Appreciation:** Long-term FDs with compounding interest help in capital accumulation.

● **Goal-Oriented Investors:** FDs are ideal for specific goals such as retirement planning or a child's education.

Shriram Finance's Fixed Deposit schemes provide a secure and rewarding avenue for investors seeking to grow their wealth. With flexible options, competitive interest rates, and additional benefits, these schemes cater to diverse investment needs and offer a compelling choice for individuals seeking financial stability and growth.

For more information on fixed deposits and other investment solutions offered by Shriram Finance, please visit www.shriramfinance.in or contact 18001034959 for assistance. Shriram Finance Limited is a leading diversified financial services company in India, offering a wide range of financial products and services across consumer, wholesale, and business finance segments.

Motorola edge50 ultra disrupts Indian market with AI-Powered features

TBG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Motorola, a global leader in mobile technology and innovation today launched its most advanced phone in the edge franchise, the Motorola edge50 Ultra. As the latest addition to the edge50 series, the Motorola edge50 Ultra is a smartphone full of intelligence and art that makes it truly unique in its segment. This effortlessly intelligent flagship smartphone features Moto AI, containing numerous functions such as stylesync with AI generative theming, magic canvas with text to prompt image generation, and several other cutting-edge innovations. Apart from this, the smartphone comes with Motorola's most impressive camera system ever, boasting an AI powered Pantone™ validated camera. Additionally, the Motorola edge50 Ultra also

comes with the revolutionary Smart Connect feature which allows effortless connectivity between devices and flaunts a nearly borderless 6.7" curved, pOLED display, with a beautifully crafted harmonious design and segment's only TurboPower™ 50W wireless charging along with 125W TurboPower charging. The smartphone comes with IP68 underwater protection along with Gorilla Glass Victus display protection and boasts 12GB RAM + 512GB Storage for a faster and more efficient performance.

The Motorola edge50 Ultra powered by Moto AI creates consumer delight with the AI Magic Canvas feature that allows users to generate images via text inputs, bringing the user's imagination to life and making it effortless to create any art for your work, WhatsApp shares, memes, content creation and more. Besides incredible GenAI



features, moto ai has been well integrated into the camera system. The Motorola edge50 Ultra features a pro-grade camera system that effortlessly captures stunning photos and videos with the most advanced camera technology powered by Moto AI, making it the brand's most impressive camera system ever. The AI features included in the camera are, AI

Action Shot which quickly takes blur-free photos even if the subject is in motion, AI Adaptive Stabilization which uses AI to recognize movement while filming, and dynamically adjusts the stabilization level for the best results while Intelligent Auto Focus Tracking automatically focuses on the primary subject without manually selecting it. Additionally, the AI Photo Enhancement Engine improves the dynamic range, boosting the ratio between the brightest and darkest parts of an image while delivering finer image details, which is essential when zooming. Other AI features include Smart Color Segmentation which analyzes photos to deliver enhanced, individualized tuning for specific segments,

combining multiple pixels into one large pixel and built in macro vision brings the users 4x closer than a standard lens. The third camera in the rear camera system is the world's 1st 64MP 3x telephoto optical zoom lens with OIS and 100x advanced hybrid zoom. The 3x telephoto lens equates to a 72mm equivalent focal length, so more of the subject can fill the frame as compared to the main lens. On the front, the Motorola edge50 Ultra sports a 50MP selfie cam, one of the highest-resolution front cameras. Users can now enjoy 4x better low-light sensitivity with Quad Pixel technology, which combines every four pixels into one and get great results in dark environments with an aperture of f/1.9 which is wider than most selfie cams.

Advanced Long Exposure, and Video Horizon Lock.

The Motorola edge50 Ultra boasts a Pantone Validated Truecolor 50MP main camera featuring a main 1/1.3" sensor with a massive 2.4mm pixel size which absorbs 20% more light than the previous generation for sharp and bright photos in every situation. Its Laser Autofocus gauges the distance of the subject and focuses swiftly, so users never miss a thing, moreover with its omni-directional PDAF, users get 32x more focusing pixels for faster, more accurate performance in any light. Coupled with OIS which eliminates unwanted shakes, so the photos are crystal clear. The second rear camera is a 50MP Ultrawide + Macro Vision camera with a 122x ultra-wide-angle lens to capture more in just one click. The ultra-wide sensor boosts brightness and sharpness in low light as well by

combining multiple pixels into one large pixel and built in macro vision brings the users 4x closer than a standard lens. The third camera in the rear camera system is the world's 1st 64MP 3x telephoto optical zoom lens with OIS and 100x advanced hybrid zoom. The 3x telephoto lens equates to a 72mm equivalent focal length, so more of the subject can fill the frame as compared to the main lens. On the front, the Motorola edge50 Ultra sports a 50MP selfie cam, one of the highest-resolution front cameras. Users can now enjoy 4x better low-light sensitivity with Quad Pixel technology, which combines every four pixels into one and get great results in dark environments with an aperture of f/1.9 which is wider than most selfie cams.

The camera system comes with numerous modes and settings, such as Tilt-Shift mode which captures im-

ages with multiple points of focus for any angle bokeh effect. This Pro-grade camera is capable of four portrait modes to capture professional-looking portraits with different intensity levels, by adjusting the focal lengths between full view (25mm), wide (35mm), standard (50mm), or close-up (85mm) and for the first time, access to Adobe Doc Scan right from the camera. All this along with the integration of Google AI Features like AI Magic Eraser, Photo Unblur and Magic Editor into this Pantone™ validated camera. Remove unwanted distractions with AI Magic Eraser. Improve out-of-focus or blurry photos, both new and old with Photo Unblur feature or use Magic Editor feature in Google Photos to reimagine your photos using generative AI, just tap or circle the object, hold and drag to reposition, or pinch to resize them.

MILK PRICES SURGE AMID KARACHI'S ECONOMIC CRISIS AND INFLATION

The cost of milk in Karachi surged notably after dairy farmers and wholesalers in collaboration with commissioner Karachi

TBG NETWORK
KARACHI

Pakistan is grappling with ongoing economic challenges as inflation increasingly impacts daily life, making essential goods like milk less affordable. The rising cost of living is a major concern, worsened by energy shortages and fluctuating global commodity prices, which have collectively raised prices for basic necessities.

In Karachi, the country's largest city and economic hub, voices of frustration and concern echo through its bustling streets. M. Akhter, a resident grappling with the realities of inflation, highlights the plight of daily wage workers and laborers who bear the brunt of these price increases. "The soaring prices of essentials like milk and Ghee have made it increasingly difficult to sustain our households," he laments, urging the government to prioritize the welfare of its citizens amidst these challenging economic circumstances.

Faizan, echoing similar sentiments, sheds light on the underlying reasons behind the steep rise in milk prices. He explains that dairy farm owners face escalating costs for essentials such as fodder, high rents, and wa-



ter, compelling them to pass on these expenses to consumers. "It's a cycle of hardship," he observes, emphasizing the need for government intervention to alleviate the burden on ordinary Pakistanis, regardless of political affiliations.

The struggle against inflation in Pakistan is not merely a matter of economic statistics but a stark reality faced by millions each day. Across the nation, families are forced to rethink their budgets as prices continue to climb unabated, impacting everything from grocery bills to education and healthcare expenses.

Local media reports from Karachi underscore the severity of the situation, particularly regarding the cost of milk.

Following extensive consultations involving dairy farmers, wholesalers, and government officials, an agreement was reached to raise the price of milk by PKR 20 per litre. This decision, facilitated by Commissioner Karachi after hours of deliberation, reflects a necessary adjustment to offset rising production costs and ensure the sustainability of dairy farming operations.

The agreed-upon increase sets the new price of milk at PKR 220 per litre, marking a significant jump from previous rates. While necessary from an economic standpoint, this adjustment places added strain on already stretched household budgets, prompting concerns about affordability and

access to nutritious food for vulnerable populations.

In response to these challenges, civic leaders and community advocates in Karachi are calling for greater transparency and accountability in price-setting mechanisms. They argue that while adjustments may be inevitable due to economic realities, measures must be in place to protect consumers from exploitative practices and ensure fair pricing that reflects both production costs and consumer affordability. Looking ahead, there is a collective hope that sustainable solutions will emerge to address the root causes of inflation and stabilize prices across essential sectors. Government policies focused on

energy security, agricultural sustainability, and consumer protection are seen as crucial steps towards achieving long-term economic stability and alleviating the hardships faced by ordinary Pakistanis.

As the debate on economic policies intensifies and communities grapple with the immediate impacts of inflation, the resilience and resourcefulness of the Pakistani people remain a steadfast beacon of hope. Through dialogue, collaboration, and concerted efforts at all levels of society, there is optimism that Pakistan can navigate these turbulent times and emerge stronger, with a more equitable and sustainable economic future for all its citizens.

Former Thai PM Thaksin Shinawatra released on bail amid charges

TBG NETWORK
BANGKOK

According to the Bangkok Post, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has been released on bail of 500,000 baht. This follows his arraignment on charges of lese-majeste and computer crimes related to comments made during a 2015 interview. The Criminal Court granted bail after Thaksin reported to public prosecutors on Tuesday morning and attended his arraignment, as confirmed by the Office of the Attorney-General's spokesperson.

Prayut Petcharakhun, speaking on behalf of the OAG, stated that the court formally accepted the case at 8:56 am, marking Thaksin as an official defendant. Conditions of his release include surrendering his passport and a prohibition from leaving Thailand without court permission. The decision to grant bail was made under the assurance that Thaksin would not flee, tamper with evidence, engage in harmful acts, or obstruct judicial proceedings, as reported by Bangkok Post.

Last month, the OAG announced its intention to indict Thaksin, who was under parole at the time. The indictment, originally scheduled earlier, was postponed due to Thaksin's reported contraction of Covid-19, rescheduled for June 18.

Thaksin, aged 74, faces accusations stemming from comments made to the South Korean newspaper



Chosun Ilbo in May 2015, alleging support for the 2014 coup by privy councilors, which led to the ousting of his sister Yingluck Shinawatra's government. The initial complaint was filed in 2015 by Gen Udomdej Sitabutr, then deputy defence minister under Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha's military administration.

The Judge Advocate General's Department, acting on Gen Udomdej's directive, pursued legal action against Thaksin, culminating in the OAG's filing of charges. The Criminal Court accepted the case in 2015, issuing an arrest warrant as Thaksin remained overseas until his return to Thailand in August of the previous year, according to Bangkok Post.

Authorities allege that Thaksin's statements in the interview violated Section 112 of the Criminal Code, known as the lese-majeste law, in addition to offenses under

the Computer Crimes Act. The OAG, following police recommendations, opted to press charges encompassing both statutes, according to their spokesperson.

The charge under the Computer Crimes Act pertains to Thaksin's purported inputting of data into a computer system deemed detrimental to national security. Denying any wrongdoing, Thaksin faces potential pre-trial detention should bail be denied subsequent to the indictment.

The lese-majeste law carries a maximum prison sentence of up to 15 years for each perceived affront against the monarchy. The legal proceedings against Thaksin underscore ongoing sensitivities and legal rigor concerning expressions related to the Thai monarchy, a cornerstone of the nation's legal and cultural framework, Bangkok Post reported.

Pakistan Govt prioritizes power over people's plight



TBG NETWORK
ISLAMABAD

According to an editorial in Tuesday's Dawn newspaper, Pakistan's financial planning during its severe economic crisis clearly indicates that the federal government is indifferent to the people's plight. The editorial criticizes the government for prioritizing an easy tenure in power over addressing the country's pressing issues. Interestingly, not too long ago, government officials would passionately oppose even a slight increase in electricity prices, sparking nationwide protests aimed at forcing the government out of office.

"Oh, how the times have changed. Days after dropping tax bombs that will further enslave the struggling masses, the authorities have announced that not only will they be

taking more money out of the paychecks of salaried individuals, they will also be squeezing whatever is left through significantly jacked-up electricity bills," the editorial read.

Citing news reports, it said that Nepra (National Electric Power Regulatory Authority) has hiked the uniform national tariff for the base price of electricity by almost 20 per cent to hand over electricity distribution companies almost half a trillion rupees more over the next fiscal year.

The average base tariff for a single unit of electricity, which was Pakistani Rupees (PKR) 27.78 in the outgoing year, will be PKR 35.50 from July 1.

On top of this, various duties, taxes, and surcharges, as well as fuel and tariff adjustments, will be levied, forcing ordinary citizens to pay

through their noses, not just for the fuel and operation and maintenance costs involved in generating electricity, but also for capacity charges that past governments have promised power generation companies, as well as the theft and transmission losses that distribution companies have shown a complete unwillingness to mitigate for many years.

The average middle-class bill-paying customer will be forking out between PKR 65-72 for each unit of electricity they use in a month. Meanwhile, the federal government will present this as an 'achievement' in front of the IMF to ask for even more loans to keep a clearly failing system running for a few years longer, the editorial added. However, at the same time, the government has announced a PKR 10.69 per unit 'relief'

for the industrial sector to 'make it competitive'. There can probably be no better example of crony capitalism. While the average salaried individual is finding it difficult to meet their ends on a shrinking real wage amidst month after month of unceasing, unchecked inflation, it is the big industries who get a break in the form of cheaper electricity so that they can pad up their profits while paying little back to the country in the form of taxes.

"That the government is failing the people seems like an understatement. It is clearly least bothered by their plight. Its financial planning shows that it has no interest in going after those who dodge their dues; it just wants to take the easy route and enjoy the ride for however long it is in power," the Dawn editorial stated.

Taiwan to receive 1,700 TOW 2B anti-tank missiles from US

TBG NETWORK
TAIPEI

Focus Taiwan, Taiwan's Defense Minister Wellington Koo announced on Monday that the country will receive all 1,700 TOW 2B anti-tank missiles and 100 launchers purchased from the United States by the end of this year, following a two-year delay. The update on the timeline was provided during a legislative session in response to inquiries from Democratic Progressive Party lawmaker Wang Ting-yu about the delivery schedule.

Originally budgeted at NTD 11.81 billion (USD 364 million) for procure-

ment over fiscal years 2018-2025, Taiwan initially anticipated deliveries to begin in 2022 but faced delays. According to Wang, Taiwan has not yet received any missiles as per the original schedule due to failed tests by the US Army.

Minister Koo acknowledged the delays were indeed caused by the weapons' failure to meet required US Army standards initially. However, he assured that all necessary tests have now been successfully passed, ensuring delivery before year-end, as reported by Focus Taiwan.

Highlighting the signifi-

cance of the acquisition, Koo mentioned the TOW 2B anti-tank missiles and launchers are part of three major arms packages purchased from the US, all of which have encountered significant delays.

Among these packages are 66 F-16V fighter jets and AGM-154 air-to-ground missile systems renowned for their precision in strikes against surface targets. Koo disclosed that Taiwan anticipates receiving two F-16V prototypes for further flight tests by the fourth quarter of this year, with a request to receive all 66 by the end of 2026. Regarding the AGM-154s, Koo did not specify

the quantity purchased or the expected delivery timeline. Describing the capabilities of the TOW 2B missiles, an unnamed military source explained they are designed to target the vulnerable tops of armored vehicles, enhancing Taiwan's defensive capabilities in potential invasion scenarios.

During a visit to Taiwan in May, Michael McCaul, chair of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, cited approximately USD20 billion worth of pending arms sales to Taiwan, attributing delays primarily to industry-related issues, Focus Taiwan reported.



MODI 3.0 — OPPORTUNITIES OF CHALLENGES



PROF. DR. VIVEK SINGH

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin from June 24. With the beginning of the session, the challenges of Modi Government 3.0 will also begin. If the challenges are handled properly, challenges can be converted into opportunities. This time the opposition is in a strong position. The opposition was limited to 91 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, this time in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the opposition i.e. INDIA Alliance is in a strong position with 234 seats. The first challenge before the NDA is regarding the selection and election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. In the past, the post of Speaker has been given to the largest party of the ruling coalition. In this regard, it is almost certain that BJP will get this post. However, there have been exceptions to this tradition. Due to the compulsions of the coalition government, the post of Speaker has also been with other allies of the alliance. This time, the two biggest allies of the NDA, JDU and TDP, have not indicated any such condition and are also not in a position to indicate any such condition. Out of 293 seats of NDA, 240 seats belong to BJP, hence it is expected that BJP will easily get the post of Speaker. There is a problem regarding the post of Deputy Speaker. It is more likely that the post of Deputy Speaker can be given to NDA. Modi 3.0 faces many challenges, out of which some important challenges, can be turned into opportunities as follows—

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR DEVELOPED INDIA

It is very challenging to manage the expenditure of

lakhs of crores of rupees in economic development, welfare schemes and subsidies simultaneously. The question is of priority. For inclusive and holistic development, the government will have to be very sensitive towards the poor, at the same time it will have the responsibility to accelerate the pace of economic development. A glimpse of this will be reflected in the full budget of the coming July month. The government has expressed its commitment to see India as a developed country in the coming 23 years, till 2047, which seems to be coming true. Despite the challenges, if the country continues to move forward on the path of progress in this way, India can join group of developed countries before 2047. For the last three years, the GDP growth rate has been between 7 to 8.5 percent, which is a record in itself. In the financial year 2023-24, the GDP growth rate was 8.2 percent. The Government of India has a target of \$2 trillion exports by the year 2030. In a few years, India will become the third largest economy in the world, leaving behind Japan and Germany. It is estimated that India can have an economy of \$8 trillion by the year 2026 and \$10 trillion by 2030.

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

Uniform Civil Code has been on the BJP's agenda since 1950. In this Lok Sabha election too, Uniform Civil Code was one of the major resolutions of the BJP's manifesto. Governments of many states have started to work on it. This resolution can be fulfilled only when there is harmony between various fractions of NDA as well as mutual consensus among the opposition parties. The role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju will be important in this regard. It may take months to build a consensus. If the Uniform Civil Code is implemented in the country, it will be a great achievement for the government, BJP and NDA.

ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION

Under One Nation One Election, elections to the Lok Sabha and all the Legislative Assemblies are held simultaneously. This tradition continued in the country till 1951-52, 1957, 1962, and 1967. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been in favor of One Nation One Election for years. He had also raised this issue while being the Chief Minister of Gujarat. The concept of One Nation One Election was also quoted in the BJP's manifesto for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Home Minister Amit Shah had repeatedly reiterated the resolution of One Nation One Election in election speeches and made it clear that the government would work on One Nation One Election if the BJP government is formed. One Nation One Election can be ensured only through constitutional amendment, for which consensus among all parties is necessary. There are many benefits of One Nation One Election. According to an estimate, about Rs 10 lakh crore is spent from local elections to Lok Sabha elections, if all the assembly elections are held along with the Lok Sabha, about Rs 5 lakh crore of the country can be saved. Wastage of election machinery will stop. Economic development will be promoted. Elections keep happening somewhere or the other throughout the year. Due to the implementation of the code of conduct, there is a delay in taking decisions in the interest of the public, which has an adverse effect on the public and development of country.

BALANCED, DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED BUDGET

The development of the country is linked with the development of 140 crore people. At this time, an inclusive, balanced and development-oriented budget is the imperative of the country. Increasing the income of the country is necessary, at the same time, it is imperative to curb expenses. Nirmala Sitharaman's work as Finance Minister in Modi Government 2.0 was commendable. It is expected that Nirmala Sitharaman's

work as Finance Minister in Modi Government 3.0 will be excellent. The interim budget for 2024-25 was of Rs 47.66 lakh crore. For the coming year, the total income was estimated to be Rs 31 lakh crore and the total expenditure was estimated to be Rs 48 lakh crore, in which the income from tax was estimated to be around Rs 26 lakh crore. The full budget will come next month in July, which may be more than Rs 50 lakh crore. The budget should meet the hopes and aspirations of the poor as well as promote the pace of economic development.

INCREASE IN FARMERS' INCOME

Certainly, the income of farmers has increased in the last 10 years, but the income growth is not as expected. Farmers should get the real price of their crops, for this it is very important to keep a check on the middlemen. The money that should go to the farmers is going the middlemen. The middlemen are rich and the farmers are in distress. Kisan Samman Nidhi is an excellent scheme of the government, which is benefiting the farmers and there has been a favorable improvement in the living standards of the farmers. Necessary amendments should be made in the farm laws and must be implemented as soon as possible so that the income of the farmers increases as expected.

INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Inflation was a major issue in the 2024 general elections, continuously raised by the opposition. After studying inflation data of the last 10 years, except for a few years, the inflation rate has mostly remained under control. Inflation is a continuous process. Inflation rate of 3 to 5 percent is beneficial in any economy. Inflation rate was 4.75 percent in May 2024, which is completely controlled. The government will have to ensure that there is no disruption in the supply of essential commodities and there is no black marketing of it.

Unemployment is a major problem in India. The main reason for this is the desire for a government job and the lack of necessary skills. After the implementation of the new education policy, we will see a significant reduction in the unemployment rate. We should also not forget that we are the most populous country in the world.

GLOBAL TRADE AND IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

During the last 10 years, exports have increased as expected. This year the total exports are \$778 billion, which is likely to be \$900 billion next year. The Government of India has set a target of \$2 trillion exports by the year 2030, which looks quite possible. In the last 10 years, defense exports have increased by 2300 percent, which is a record in itself. The government has increased the capital expenditure on infrastructure by 540 percent in the last 10 years. In the last 10 years, the Modi government has spent about 45 lakh crore rupees on infrastructure, as a result of which there has been a lot of improvement in infrastructure. This improvement needs to be taken forward so that the country's infrastructure system can become of world-class.

EDUCATION WITH CULTURAL VALUES

Despite having thousands of universities, the biggest problem in India today is the employment-oriented education system with cultural values. Most Indian students are lacking required knowledge and skills despite having degrees. Education should be based on the Indian education system in which special attention should be given to Indian languages, especially Hindi, regional languages and Sanskrit as medium of instruction. Whether it is engineering or management, technology or science, if their curriculum and medium of instruction is Hindi instead of English, students will learn comprehensively. By including ancient Indian knowledge in higher education,

students will not only be aware of values and ethics but their knowledge and skills will also increase. Attention has been given to these matters in the NEP and its implementation.

ANTI-CONVERSION LAWS AND CULTURAL SECURITY

There is nothing like conversion in Indian tradition and philosophy. Indian culture is based on correction and conversation, not conversion. In this culture, emphasis is laid on transformation, not transfer. There are constant reports of conversions in the country, which is unacceptable in a democracy. No one can be forced to convert by luring or through pressure. This is a disregard for humanity and the Constitution. The central government should bring a strict anti-conversion law so that the country and the countrymen can get cultural and religious security. Cultural development is very important for the economic and social development of any country. Indian culture is linked to the Sanskrit language, so the Government of India should pay special attention to the promotion of Sanskrit language. The influence of foreign culture is constantly increasing, having negative impact on the youth. Cultural and religious security is possible only with a strict anti-conversion law.

FOREIGN POLICY

There is a relationship between foreign policy and international trade. Whether the country's relations with other countries will be good or bad depends on the foreign policy. India's foreign policy has been very effective in the last 10 years. India's strategic and trade relations are good with almost all the countries of the world except few countries. As a result, foreign trade is increasing continuously. One of the main reasons for the strengthening of the Indian economy is its successful foreign policy.

Prof. Dr. Vivek Singh, Professor - ASMOC - NMIMS University, Economist and Political Analyst

PERSPECTIVE FLAIR AND EMOTION

CANDIDATE PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

Finally it is clear that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is all set to join Parliamentary politics for she will be contesting the Wayanad bypoll that will be vacated by her brother. It is a seat that the Congress will probably win. The state of Kerala is one state that has stood by the party at a time when most of



India deserted it in favour of the BJP. What would be interesting however is the role that Priyanka will play from now on. Until now she was merely the backroom person who managed constituencies for her family members. This will be the first election where she will be canvassing for herself. No doubt this is a reward for delivering both Amethi and Rae Bareilly, especially the former for she camped in both constituencies for over two weeks. The win in Amethi was a trophy won for she won back not just the constituency but also the symbol of her family's lost prestige.

She is currently a party general secretary but no portfolio has been allocated to her. That created its own speculation, for it was rumoured that Priyanka was not happy with the role planned for her (by her family?) and hence remained a general secretary without a portfolio. She had stayed away from the launch of the second leg of the Bharat Jodo Yatra in the North East and this added fuel to the speculation that she was miffed about something. However, once the elections were announced, she did not hold back and emerged as the star campaigner taking on the PM repartee for repartee. It was she who silenced the BJP when it went around claiming that the Congress was going to steal the family's gold if it came to power, specially the mangalsutras. Priyanka reminded the BJP that contrary to its propaganda, far from stealing mangalsutras, it was her mother who had sacrificed her 'mangalsutra' for the nation. The comment hit all the right chords. While travelling for the elections and waiting at various airport lounges, I could hear echoes of her speeches from the cellphones around me, as passengers sat in the waiting room scrolling YouTube videos. In 2019, it was Modi's voice that rang out from these same cell-phones.

Congress sources claim that while Priyanka is the better speaker, certainly she is an emotive orator, it is Rahul who is the organisational man. So be it; both the siblings have their strengths. And each compliments the other. The talk of sibling rivalry is restricted to the groups that surround each rather than emanating from the top. At the family level, all three seem to be in sync, with Rahul taking the lead. And Priyanka is happy to play her part. She certainly knows how to counter the BJP, both with flair and emotion. If Rahul is a schooled politician, his sister is an instinctive one. It is certainly going to be an exciting Parliament session ahead, with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in the House.

PRIYA SAHGAL

Gender sensitisation for women empowerment

OPINION

DR RITU KAMRA KUMAR



Questioning the reality of sexes has been as old as human civilization. Women's issues, women and sexual inequality stumbling through existence, pushed in various directions women battle life and challenge deep rooted preconceived notions about the path their lives should take. The road is often rocky but women have been treading on, carving their paths in the mountain of life. The question of gender sensitization

is a socially vibrant issue because the plight of women has been frustrating throughout human history, throughout different periods of chequered history women have been hamstrung by their servile and secondary position in family. The human values in all historical periods of civilization remained male dominated and women all ways marginalized.

History of women's subjugation to man can well be attributed to the book of genesis of bible which holds women born out of surplus bone of Adam and linguistic bias is seen where 'Man' 'Male' and 'he' are regarded as independent words and by adding prefixes, 'w', 'fe' and 's' we get woman, female and she. Gradually the socially constructed myths have been shattered and the modern age has brought

the ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity and freedom for women.

The constitution of India has certain provisions that specifically focus on women empowerment. Article 14 talks about equality before law. Article 15 enables the state to make special provisions for women. Many schemes have been launched by government such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao MUDRA Yojna, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan, Right to Education Act, The Mid-Day Meal Scheme and myriad scholarship schemes for girl child have captured public imagination at some levels. However, gender gaps when it comes enrolment into different streams of higher education still continues because we haven't been able to change mind set of society. Gender balance isn't still in sight and sex-selective abortion continues to take place and society is still rife with instances of frequent female foeticide, infanticide and neglect.

India has improved its position marginally in the Gender Inequality Index in 2021{0.490} from 2020 {0.493}. The GII measures



inequality in achievement between women and men across three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Despite the country lowering gender inequality over the years, the achievement is not outstanding even compared to immediate neighbours.

Yet patriarchy curfew hasn't saved Indian women from physical and mental scars. So, to be a woman in this age is both a privilege and a challenge. Still society sets boundaries for women. There is a lack of awareness and empathy on part of society on certain aspects of a woman's

life that is known to all of us. It is widely believed that a woman who is 'too independent' is considered having volatile ambition while we try to perpetuate the myth of gender equality but we all know how true it is in our patriarchal society. The reality is that we always endeavour to inculcate a spirit of sacrifice, submissiveness and sagacious sensitivity on our girls. According to National Family Health Survey data only 42.3% and 31.7% females said they own a house and land alone or jointly, respectively. While 51.2% of women respondents agreed to have auton-

omy in financial matters, while education and basic health indicators have improved, financial and personal autonomy eludes most women. Within the private realm rigid gender roles are practised and promoted and woman's socio-economic autonomy is discouraged and seen with suspicion.

Isn't there an urgent need to break the mould and stand up for what a woman wishes to raise her hand in protest because being a man is still considered a wee better in this part of the world than being a woman of her own will. The times are obviously better. Yet it

has not reached crescendo for a lot of women. In an equal world there is some unequal music.

Gender sensitization intends to raise certain issues—should a woman need to follow a straight jacketed existence to live with dignity. Doesn't a woman deserve to be at ease with her sexuality, femininity, and live fearlessly with free will and freedom. Isn't it the responsibility of society to make sure that gender justice prevails? Shouldn't the light of gender sensitization enter and spread the fragrance of justice in the milieu?

We need not believe in

fate nor in miracles but the act and gestures, measures steps taken by policy maker sitting at the apex matter a lot. The education policy needs to be more inclusive to ensure girls right to education. Also, education policy should target young men and boys to positively changes their perspective towards girls and women. There is a need for strict implementation of statutes that emphasise on women empowerment through education. For security purposes, gender friendly facilities should be provided to women. In order to make women self-dependent, there is need to promote skill development among women and platforms like Digital India should be used by women for marketing purposes. Policies and guidelines should be made in such a way that it is easy for women entrepreneurs to get credit facilities.

How true are Maya Angelou's words, "A wise woman refuses to be anyone's victim" How do the new age women even let this happen to her?

Dr Ritu Kamra Kumar, Academician, Educationist, Writer & Poet



Kabir Das's poetry is a reflection of his philosophy about life and against the caste system.



MYSTIC POET KABIR

RAJESH TALWAR

As Kabir Jayanti approaches on 22 June this year, it is an opportune time to remember Sant Kabir, a mystic poet who defies classification. Hindus and Muslim both claim him. It is said that upon his death the two communities both fought for custody of his body, one for burial and the other for burning, but when eventually the shroud was lifted only flowers could be found. Such is the power of Kabir's words, and the wisdom they radiate that his verses also find pride of place in the Guru Granth Sahib the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. Evelyn Underhill who helped translate Kabir's poetry writes how 'it is impossible to say of their author that he is Brahman, or Sufi, Vedantist or Vaishnavite.' According to Kabir himself, she writes, he was 'at once the child of Allah and of Ram.'

Many contradictory legends have surfaced concerning the life of Kabir. It appears probable that he was born to Muslim parents, based on the Arabic origins of his name. Despite being born or raised in a Muslim family he was deeply influenced by a Hindu saint named Ramananda. It is said that he waited for Ramananda to finish his bath at the Ganges and when by mistake the learned man's foot fell on Kabir and he uttered the words 'Ram! Ram!' Kabir seized the opportunity to at once declare himself



Nanak and Mardana with Kabir

Kabir's poems were borrowed from various dialects including Khadi boli, Braj, Bhojpuri, and Awadhi. They cover various aspects of life and call for a loving devotion for God. Kabir composed his verses with simple words. Most of his work was concerned with devotion, mysticism, spiritualism and discipline.

Ramananda's disciple. He pays tribute to his guru in several of his famous couplets. Perhaps the most famous of his couplets on the importance of the guru is:

The Guru is akin to a potter; and in his hands a disciple is like clay

The Guru's actions may appear harsh from the outside Yet it is all for the goodness of the one seeking guidance.

Kabir invoked the Divine repeatedly in his writings but the metaphors he used were often very earthy and even rustic. He did not

fear offending the Hindu priests or the Muslim mullahs and wrote his poems fearlessly.

For instance, he wrote
'The Purana and the Koran are mere words; Lifting up the curtain, I have seen.'

Kabir was also a musician and a weaver. It is said that a disciple sought to make him give up his weaving, considering it to be no more than a craftsman's skill but Kabir would not leave the practice considering it to be something that

gave him joy and was part and parcel of his creative expression, not something separate from his spiritual yearnings. It is such a touching and beautiful attitude given the times we live in, in which many so-called spiritual leaders love to pontificate and live in the lap of luxury, but do not have their own separate creative pursuits.

Anyone wishing to read the great mystic in English could do no better than to read 'One Hundred Poems of Kabir,' that has his po-

LEGACY

Kabir literature legacy was promoted by two of his disciples, Bhgods and Dharamdas. Songs of Kabir were collected by Kshitimohan Sen from mendicants across India, these were then translated to English by Rabindranath Tagore. Kabir's legacy continues to be carried forward by the Kabir panth ('Path of Kabir'), a religious community that recognises him as its founder and is one of the Sant Mat sects. This community was founded centuries after Kabir died, in various parts of India, over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its members, known as Kabir panthis, are estimated to be around 9.6 million. They are spread over north and central India, as well as dispersed with the Indian diaspora across the world, up from 843,171 in the 1901 census.

There are two temples dedicated to Kabir located in Benares. One of them is maintained by Hindus, while the other by Muslims. Both the temples practise similar forms of worship where his songs are sung daily. Other rituals of aarti and distributing prasad are similar to other Hindu temples. The followers of Kabir are vegetarians and abstain from alcohol. [TDG Network](#)

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

The philosophy of Kabir and other sants of the Bhakti movement is the seeking of the Absolute. The notion of this Absolute is nirguna which, writes Vaudeville, is same as 'the Upanishadic concept of the Brahman-Atman and the monistic Advaita interpretation of the Vedantic tradition, which denies any distinction between the soul (within a human being) and God, and urges man to recognize within himself his true divine nature'. [49] Vaudeville notes that this philosophy of Kabir and other Bhakti sants is self-contradictory, because if God is within, then that would be a call to abolish all external bhakti. This inconsistency in Kabir's teaching may have been differentiating 'union with God' from the concept of 'merging into God, or Oneness in all beings'. Alternatively, states Vaudeville, the saguna prema-bhakti (tender devotion) may have been prepositioned as the journey towards self-realization of the nirguna Brahman, a universality beyond monotheism. David N. Lorenzen and Adrián Muñoz trace these ideas of God in Kabir's philosophy as nirguna Brahman to those in Adi Shankara's theories on Advaita Vedanta school of Hinduism, albeit with some differences. [TDG Network](#)

ems translated by the great Rabindranath Tagore.

The first poem that appears in Tagore's wonderful collection is on the subject of the Divine not being found in temples or mosques, neither at the

Kaaba nor in Kailash, but within each one of us. It reads as follows:

I am neither in temple nor in mosque; I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash; Neither am I in rites and ceremonies, nor in Yoga and

renunciation.

If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see Me; thou shalt meet Me in a moment of time.

Kabir says, 'O Sadhu! God is the breath of all breath.'

Despite the clear sightedness and wisdom in his writings Kabir infuriated orthodox elements across the religious spectrum when he penned controversial verse such as the above.

Legend has it that Kabir was produced before Sikander Lodi as a poser who claimed divine powers. Something about the man must have impressed the ruler for he imposed the lesser punishment of banishment from Banaras, letting him escape with his life.

All those hundreds of years ago this mystic rallied against the caste system.

Do not ask the Sadhu's caste, O Friend

Ask him what he knows! Value the sword; and Set aside the scabbard.

Kabir is at once ancient and at the same time extremely contemporary. No modern-day poet, motivation speaker or management expert could have spoken on the value of time as profoundly as he did.

In one of his most popular dohas he writes as follows

What you have to do tomorrow; do today instead. What you have to do today; do it right away.

Within a second all can be destroyed What will you do then?

We live in an age with short attention spans, where tweets are limited by the number of characters

they use. This may pose a problem for spiritual gurus given to issuing long sermons, but Kabir was a master of communicating in short rhyming couplets also known as dohas. This begs a further question. Had Kabir been alive today, would he have published his dohas as tweets or on Insta as Rupri Kaur the Indo-Canadian poet did, and would they have similarly gone viral? According to marketing experts those aspiring to be social influencers should tweet or make Instagram posts at least once a day, but for Kabir's dohas a discerning audience would have waited for as long as was needed, weeks, months even, for it would be a special kind of nectar that a reader would eventually get to savour. Such profound verse would have also immeasurably raised the standard of what is these days referred to humorously as What'sApp University.

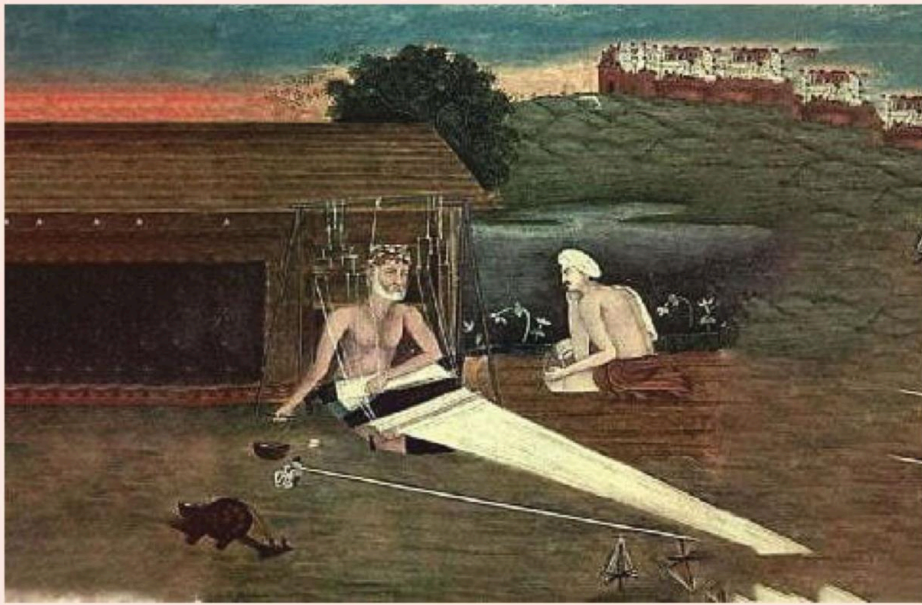
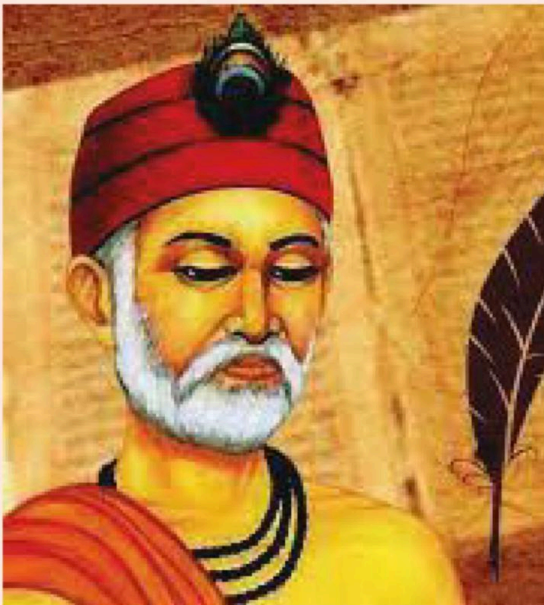
We need a Kabir for our times that will fearlessly speak out against fanaticism and bigotry. On human negativity, of which there is so much around these days, as translated by Tagore, the poet wrote

Empty the Cup! O be drunken

Drink the divine nectar of His Name Kabir says, 'Listen to me, dear Sadhu!'

'From the soul of the foot to the crown of the head, this mind is filled with poison.'

(Rajesh Talwar, the author of 40 books spanning multiple genres, has served the United



KARNATAKA HIGH COURT: CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIP IS NO LICENCE TO ASSAULT A WOMAN

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka High Court in the case ABC AND State of Karnataka & Anr observed and has refused to quash charges of assault levelled by a woman against a man with whom she was in a consensual relationship for years.

The single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna in the case observed and has stated that, 'Any amount of consensual or a consensual relationship between the accused and the complainant will not become a licence to the accused to assault a woman.'

The court in the case observed and has partly allowed the petition filed by the accused. The court also quashed the charges of rape on the pretext of marriage and cheating levelled against the accused.

In the present case, the complainant and the accused were



in a consensual relationship for more than 5 years.

It has been alleged by the complainant that petitioner is indulged in sexual activities with her on false promise of marriage and therefore, he has committed offences punishable as stated under section 376, section 417, section 504 and section 506 of the Indian Penal code, IPC. It has also been alleged by her that petitioner beat her leading to injuries depicted in the wound certificate.

The petitioner in the plea argued that complainant is ha-

bitual in registering repeated crimes on different men and thus the impugned proceedings needs to be quashed.

The bench observed that the narration in the complaint is the relationship was and all acts during the said period were consensual. The bench also took note of the fact that during the same time, petitioner had alleged identical offences against another accused. The bench stated that if the allegation in the complaint made against Kamalash Choudhary is juxtaposed to the subject complaint, it be-

comes unmistakably clear that it is verbatim similar and the manner of narration is identical. Thus, another factor that would become clear is that the complainant was sailing in two boats at the same time. The offence alleged is the one punishable as stated under Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code, IPC, on such consensual acts on the specious petition that it was on promise of marriage and later, the promise of marriage has been breached, are all on the face of it false.

Adding to it, the court stated that section 417 of the Indian Penal code, IPC is also loosely laid as it is an offshoot of the allegation that it is on false promise of marriage or the sexual relationship on account of promise of marriage and its later breach. Such acts would not amount to cheating as obtaining under Section 417 of the IPC, is by now a well settled principle of law. Therefore, laying of the said

offence against the petitioner is also unsustainable.

The court held that in regards to the offences pertaining to Section 323 (Voluntarily Causing Hurt) and Section 504 (Intentional insult) of the IPC, the court said the complainant's version is backed by a wound certificate which indicate that there have been multiple bruises on her body.

Further, the court held that the bruises are on account of assault by the accused, the petitioner. While the offence as stated under Section 376 of the IPC or section 417 of the IPC cannot be made out, the offence under Sections 323 and 504 of the IPC are prima facie met.

Accordingly, the court allowed the petition in part. The counsel, Advocate Venkatesh P Dalwai for

The counsel, HCGP Thejesh P for RL

The counsel, Advocate Balu P for R2.

Calcutta High Court Directed Bengal Govt To Ensure 1% Reservation For Transgender Persons I

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

N All Public Employment

The Calcutta High Court in the case Mrinal Barik Versus- The State of West Bengal & Ors observed and has directed the West Bengal government to ensure 1% reservation for all transgender persons in public employment in the State, in accordance with the Supreme Court's NALSA guidelines.

The single bench of Justice Rajasekhhar Mantha in the case observed and has held that in terms of paragraph 135 (3) in the National Legal Service Authority Vs. Union of India & Ors, the reservation has not yet been made in the State for transgender persons. The court in such circumstances directed the Chief Secretary of the Government of West Bengal to ensure 1% reservation for the category of persons men-



tioned in the NALSA case in all public employment in the State.

In the present case, the court was hearing the petition filed by a transgender person who passed the Teachers' Eligibility Test, TET in 2014 and in 2022 but was not called for the counselling process or interview.

The bench headed by Justice Mantha referred to the Supreme Court's judgement in the case NALSA v Union of India, which carved out reservations for transgen-

der persons to protect their rights under Part III of the Constitution.

The court observed that in the NALSA judgement, the court had directed the state and union governments to treat transgender persons as 'socially and educationally backward' and extend all kinds of benefits to them including reservations in public employment.

Further, the court noted that while the State had devised its own policy for reservations for transgender persons, it had not been made in accordance with the order of the Supreme Court.

The court directed for 1% reservations to be maintained for transgender persons in all public employment in the state and directed the Secretary of the West Bengal Board of Primary Education to arrange for an interview and counselling of the petitioner.

KARNATAKA HIGH COURT: VICTIM OF PROSECUTED UNDER SECTION 5 IMMORAL TRAFFIC PREVENTION ACT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka High Court in the case Mrs X and State of Karnataka & Anr observed and has held that a woman who is a victim of prostitution cannot be punished for offences punishable as stated under Section 5 of the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act.

The single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna in the case observed and has allowed the petition filed by a woman who had been charged under the provision and said, the provisions, the purpose or the object of the Act is not to abolish prostitution or the prostitute and there being no such provision under the law, which penalises a victim who indulges in prostitution. What is punishable is sexual exploitation for commercial purposes and to earn or make a living upon it against such person/s.

As per the prosecution

case, the Police received information that some girls are being illegally transported from Udupi to Goa for the purpose of putting them in the business of prostitution.

Therefore, the vehicle was intercepted and accused No.1 along with accused No.9 were found taking the petitioner or accused No.8 and others for engaging them in the business of prostitution.

The petitioner in the plea argued that she is the victim and therefore she should not be permitted to be prosecuted.

The prosecution opposed the petition filed wherein it is stated that the case is now 10 years old and she should come out clean in a trial.

The bench referred to Section 5 of the Act which pertains to procuring, inducing, or taking person for the sake of prostitution. It said, thus, nowhere the section 5 of the Act would indicate that a woman who

is a victim of prostitution should be punished for offences punishable under Section 5 of the Act.

It has clearly been stated under section 5 of the Act that any person who procures or attempts to procure a woman or a girl for the purpose of prostitution would become liable for such prosecution.

The court also referred to the Bombay High Court judgement in the case Kajal Mukesh Singh v. The State Of Maharashtra, wherein the court held that in the light of the admitted fact that the petitioner or accused No.8 is a victim and notwithstanding the fact that she is a victim of prostitution, if further trial is permitted to continue it would become an abuse of the process of law and result in patent injustice.

The counsel, Advocate Kumara appeared for the Petitioner.

The counsel, Additional SPP B.N Jagadeesh represented for RL.

Meghalaya High Court Treat Teacher's Resignation As Voluntary Retirement, Entitling Her To Pensionary Benefits, After 33 Yrs Of Service

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Meghalaya High Court in the case Smti. Uttora G. Sangma vs. The State of Meghalaya & Ors. observed and has considered the resignation tendered by a teacher as voluntary retirement wherein enabling the teacher to benefit from pension and other entitlements, which is based on the circumstances of her resignation from the service.

The bench headed by Justice H.S. Thangkhi in the case observed wherein it is stated that the claim of the petitioner that she cannot be deprived of her pensionary and other terminal benefits after having served for 33 years.

In the present case, the petitioner was appointed as an Assistant Teacher in 1989 and through an order dated September 01, 1998, the Inspector of Schools had regularised her services with effect from October 29,



1996.

The petitioner in the plea sought voluntary retirement from service in 2022 under Meghalaya Civil Services, Pension Rules 1983, it was rejected by the respondents which being on ground voluntary retirement scheme, VRS would only be applicable post regularisation and that her regularisation through the order dated September 01, 1998 was invalid as it was done by an incompetent authority.

Therefore, the petitioner resigned from her services on February 01, 2023 con-

test elections.

However, on April 25, 2023, the respondents regularised the service of the petitioner with effect from September 01, 1998.

The petitioner in the plea argued that in view of these circumstances, her resignation should be treated as voluntary retirement wherein she is entitled to pensionary benefits, whereas, the respondents maintained that petitioner has relinquished her entitlements through her resignation.

The High Court in the case stated that petitioner was under the bona fide impression that her services were regularised by the order dated September 01, 1998 and that she was she in the case was eligible for voluntary retirement under the Meghalaya Civil Services (Pension), Rules 1998.

Further, the court noted that the resignation from service would normally result in forfeiture of past

service

The court in the case remarked that had the petitioner continued in service after the rejection of her VRS application, she would have been entitled to all the benefits as her service was regularised by the order dated April 25, 2023.

The court observed that the petitioner's regularisation stood at the mercy of the respondents despite long years of service. Thus, it has been expressed that 'the writ petitioner in the instant case was faced with a situation, wherein her VRS application stood rejected, her regularization at the mercy of the respondents in spite of her long years of service, and with the impending elections, which she was keen to contest in, in jeopardy, culminated in her tendering her resignation. The High Court also referred to the case Shashikala Devi vs. Central Bank of India & Ors., wherein the Supreme Court held that in case

of claim of relinquishment of retirement and other benefits, there should be compelling circumstance to suggest that an employee consciously gave up the benefits despite long years of service.

The High Court held that the resignation of the petitioner's should be considered as voluntary retirement by the respondents.

Further, the High Court held that the petitioner in the case is entitled to pensionary and other benefits as per the Meghalaya Civil Services (Pension) Rules 1983.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has stated that where the petitioner cannot be said to be totally at fault, the resignation of the petitioner shall be considered by the respondents to be in effect and in continuation of the application for voluntary retirement, and the petitioner consequently be afforded all the retirement benefits, as entitled and permissible.

Relief For Forging Pattas: Nature And Gravity Of Offence Taken Into Account While Considering Anticipatory Bail

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Rajasthan High Court Denies

The Rajasthan High Court in the case Dilip Sharma v State of Rajasthan observed and has denied anticipatory bail to the person charged under five different FIRs for forging 'pattas' that were never actually being issued by the Ajmer Development Authority and taking lakhs of rupees from complainants for distributing these fabricated pattas and documents.

The bench headed by Justice Anoop Kumar Dhand in the case was hearing an application filed for grant of anticipatory bail.

The bench observed that the personal liberty of the accused as a relevant factor and at the same time it being the duty of the Court to take into account the nature of the offences involved and the charges levelled against the persons alleged.

The counsel appearing for the applicant argued before



the court that for the grant of anticipatory bail which being on the ground that during his period of incarceration entire investigation was done by the police.

The counsel appearing before the court also stated that during investigation, statements of two witnesses indicated applicant's involvement in the crime.

Furthermore, the court in the case stated that the reference was also made to the fifth First Information Report, FIR that was launched recently against the petitioner for same nature of allegations.

It has also been argued by the counsel that looking at the gravity of the matter, the applicant should not be granted bail.

well as complainants.

It has also been pointed out by the counsel appearing that during investigation, statements of two witnesses indicated applicant's involvement in the crime.

Furthermore, the court in the case stated that the reference was also made to the fifth First Information Report, FIR that was launched recently against the petitioner for same nature of allegations.

It has also been argued by the counsel that looking at the gravity of the matter, the applicant should not be granted bail.

The court referred to the case Prasanta Kumar Sarkar

v Ashis Chatterjee & Anr., wherein the court laid down certain factors to be kept in mind while considering applications for anticipatory bail. Some of the factors included, whether there was any prima facie or reasonable ground to believe that the accused had committed the offence; nature and gravity of the accusation; severity of punishment for the alleged offence.

The court also referred to the case Nimmagadda Prasad v CBI, wherein the court held that the Court should keep in mind the nature of evidence and accusation while deciding an application for anticipatory bail. The court also observed that many Supreme Court cases have settled that while deciding an anticipatory bail, the court should not make a detailed analysis of evidence but focus on some reasonable grounds that would reveal if the accused had committed the offence or would reflect the seriousness of the offence.

The court stated that the ob-

servations made in the case Nimmagadda Prasad v CBI, wherein the court has kept in mind that for the purpose of granting bail, the Legislature has used the words 'reasonable grounds for believing' instead of 'the evidence' which means the Court was dealing with the grant of bail can only satisfy it as to whether there is a genuine case against the accused and that the prosecution will be able to produce prima facie evidence in support of the charge. At this stage, it is not expected to have the evidence establishing the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt.

Further, the court held that the allegations raised of forging pattas and distributing these for lakhs of rupees, made in five different FIRs, were serious allegations that required investigation by the investigating agency.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has rejected the bail application.

MADRAS HIGH COURT ISSUED WARRANT AGAINST PRODUCER OF ARVIND SWAMI STARRER 'BHASKAR ORU RASCAL' OVER UNPAID DUES

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Madras High Court in the case Arvind Swami v K Murugan Kumar observed and has issued an arrest warrant against K Murugan Kumar, proprietor of Harshini Movies and producer of Arvind Swami starrer Tamil movie 'Bhaskar oru Rascal' in a case of non-payment of dues to the actor.

The bench of Justice P Velmurugan in the case observed and has noted that the producer had not disclosed his assets despite a court order to do so in 2020. Though the counsel appearing for Murugan informed the court that he had disclosed his assets, the court issued an arrest warrant and adjourned the case to July 8.

In the present case, Arvind Swami had approached the court in 2019 after Murugan failed to pay the remuneration dues and repay a loan taken from Arvind Swami. He also informed the court that as per an agreement between the two, Murugan was to pay Rs 3 Crore to Arvind for acting in the movie



as the lead. Of this, Murugan had paid and amount of Rs. 2,70,00,000 and was liable to pay the balance of Rs. 30,00,000 along with other charges as applicable. Additionally, Murugan had also taken a short term loan of Rs. 35,00,000 from Arvind to help with the release of the film on time.

It has also been informed by the actor to the court that after deducting TDS he had received a sum of Rs. 2,43,00,000 and it was the producer's duty to remit the amount deducted as TDS. Since Murugan had not re-

mitted any amount, Arvind sent the legal notice. The actor had alleged that Murugan was making a deliberate attempt to refuse the legal notices.

The bench of single judge in 2019, directed Murugan to pay Rs. 30,00,000 as professional charges, Rs. 35,00,000 towards settlement of loan amount, deposit Rs. 27,00,000 for TDS deducted and to pay a sum of Rs. 2,00,00,000 as compensatory cost.

Following this, Arvind had also moved an execution petition.



THE BUSINESS GUARDIAN

WEDNESDAY | 19 JUNE 2024 | NEW DELHI

BJP CONDEMNS 'FEUDAL' MINDSET AFTER CONGRESS PARTY WORKER WASHES FEET OF PARTY CHIEF

TDG NETWORK
AKOLA

Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole has come under criticism after a video surfaced on social media showing a party worker washing his muddy feet.

Bharatiya Janata Party has questioned the "culture" of the Congress over the incident.

The incident took place on Monday when Patole was on a tour of Akola district and attended a program in Wadegaon. Following this he took a 'darshan' of the palanquin of Saint Gajanan Maharaj.

Patole apparently had walked through the mud at Nanasah Chincholkar Vidyalaya, where people had stopped for a 'Palkhi Darshan'. On returning to his car, a man was seen washing the dirt away from the Congress leader's feet.



A purported video of the incident soon surfaced on social media.

Addressing a press conference today, the Maharashtra Congress chief said, "...I am not hiding yesterday's incident. The worker was pouring water (on my feet). There was no tap - 'Har ghar mein nal, har ghar mein jal', otherwise I would have used water from the tap..."

BJP Mumbai's official handle on X wrote in Marathi, "What is unfortunate is that the Congress

is repeatedly insulting the workers who fight for their lives. It's a shame that Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole made an activist wash his feet because his feet were muddy. Is this the culture of Congress?"

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla termed the action as Congress' "Nawabi feudal Shehzada" mindset and demanded the party and Patole himself should apologise. "Congress has a Nawabi Feudal Shehzada mindset. Maharashtra Congress President

The incident took place on Monday when Patole was on a tour of Akola district and attended a program in Wadegaon. Following this he took a 'darshan' of the palanquin of Saint Gajanan Maharaj.

Nana Patole gets his leg and feet washed by a party worker in Akola. They treat Janta and workers like Ghulam & themselves like Kings & Queens. Imagine how they treat people without coming to power! What will they do if they by mistake come to power? Nana Patole must apologise & so must Congress," Poonawalla said on X.

Elections set to stir Maharashtra Legislative Council as terms end

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Election Commission of India has slated the biennial election for 11 Maharashtra Legislative Council seats on July 12, marking a crucial event in the state's political calendar.

With the 6-year term for 11 MLCS ending on July 27, the ECI has issued a detailed schedule: the election notification on June 25, nominations by July 2, scrutiny on July 3, and the withdrawal deadline set for July 5. This election is particularly significant, coming ahead of the October assembly polls and following the recent splits within Shiv Sena and NCP. Notably, Shiv Sena led by CM Eknath Shinde and NCP led by Ajit Pawar will be contesting amid changing political dynamics.

Maharashtra Agriculture Minister backs OBC quota security



Maharashtra's Agriculture Minister Dhananjay Munde

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

In a significant political move, Maharashtra's Agriculture Minister Dhananjay Munde has affirmed the state's commitment to safeguarding the quota for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) amidst ongoing discussions over Maratha reservations. Speaking on behalf of the government, Munde assured that the concerns raised by fasting activists would be given top priority.

Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare have been on a hunger strike in Jalna district since June 13, seeking written

guarantees that the OBC reservation will remain unaffected. Their protest follows the recent passage of a bill granting 10 per cent reservation to Marathas in educational institutions and government employment.

Munde, accompanied by BJP leader Pankaja Munde, met with the activists and emphasised the need for clear communication from the government to prevent misunderstandings among different communities. The demand by activist Manoj Jarange to classify Kunbis as Marathas, potentially impacting the OBC quota, has added complexity to the issue.

Police team attacked preventing illegal slaughter

TDG NETWORK
PALGHAR

Authorities in Palghar district, Maharashtra, confirmed that a police team was assaulted while intervening to stop an illegal cow slaughter attempt on Monday morning in Dharanpada, Jawhar. Acting on a tip-off, the team encountered resistance during their operation. Seven individuals have been charged with offences including attempted murder, assault on a public servant, and violations of animal cruelty laws. Three suspects have been arrested, while efforts are underway to apprehend the others involved. Officials reported that the assailants threw stones at the police, and one officer was specifically targeted with a sickle during the altercation. As a result of the operation, six cows and five calves, intended for slaughter during Eid-ul-Azha, were rescued and transferred to a nearby cattle shelter.

Shiv Sena (UBT) plans HC challenge over Mumbai North-West election outcome

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The dispute surrounding Shiv Sena's Ravindra Waikar's victory against Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Amol Kirtikar in the Mumbai North-West constituency continues to escalate, with the Uddhav Thackeray-led faction preparing to contest the result in the High Court within a week.

"This defeat raises serious doubts, and we are taking this matter to court," stated Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anil Parab during a press briefing in Mumbai on Monday. "It was our victory, which was unjustly taken away through misuse of the system."

Meanwhile, the Shiv Sena faction led by Shinde denied any wrongdoing and criticised the Opposition alliance in Maharashtra, particularly Shiv Sena (UBT), for unwarranted accusations.

"Rahul Gandhi and Aaditya Thackeray owe an apology for spreading false information about EVMs. Even the news-



paper has retracted its news," remarked Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Nirupam to the media. In another press conference later that day, Shiv Sena leader Deepak Kesarkar addressed the issue, stating, "Aaditya is young and there is a proper electoral procedure in place. Every time an EVM seal is opened, signatures are taken. The recounting of postal ballots was the only issue. They are just creating confusion with baseless allegations."

Detailing the events of the counting day, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Anil Parab explained that everything was progressing smoothly until discrepancies arose during the

announcement after the 19th round.

"According to the Election Commission's procedure, results are announced after each round by the Returning Officer (RO)," Parab clarified. "Our party's polling agents were present at the tables where results were being tabulated before submission to the RO. However, there was a barrier between us and the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), making it difficult to comprehend the process."

Shiv Sena (UBT) alleged that the announcement of results was halted after the 19th round and resumed only by the 26th round, with a significant

discrepancy of 650 votes observed.

"We objected, but our concerns were disregarded. We were not provided with Form 17C part two after the 19th round, where a significant discrepancy was noted," stated Parab.

Regarding the allegation of EVM tampering, RO Vandana Suryavanshi clarified, "EVMs cannot be hacked using an OTP. The police investigation concerns the unauthorised use of a mobile phone inside the counting centre."

Moving forward, Shiv Sena (UBT) indicated their intention to approach the High Court soon, seeking either a recount or a fresh election.

"We have been seeking CCTV footage since June 6, but our requests have been ignored. We believe there has been mishandling of phones during this period," added Kirtikar. "We need clarity on these matters, as there are serious doubts about the integrity of the process."

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

A Delhi Court has granted bail to an alleged member of an organised crime syndicate, who was booked under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and shown absconder before his arrest, with his counsel submitting that the man was regularly supplying water to a chowki under Hari Nagar Police Station during the period he was reported to have been absconding.

After considering the facts and circumstances, Tis Hazari Court Special Judge Shivali Sharma granted bail to Saurav Bhargav, alias Bhinda. He is alleged to be a member of Salmaan Tyagi gang, which allegedly runs an organised crime syndicate.

The case pertains to Hari Nagar Police Station. An FIR under MCOCA was lodged on August 13, 2019, against Salmaan Tyagi and



his 22 associates, including Bhinda. Delhi Police filed a supplementary chargesheet on April 24, 2024.

Bhinda was arrested on December 23, 2023, and has sought regular bail under section 439 CrPC.

After considering the material on record, the Special judge granted bail to the accused.

"I am constrained to hold that there are reasonable grounds to believe that accused Saurav Bhargav is not guilty of offences under MCOCA for which he has been charge-sheeted," the

judge noted.

It is also well on record that the accused was not involved in any kind of criminal activities after 2018, the court said in the order passed on May 24.

Defence counsel Deepak Sharma argued that the accused has been wrongly booked by the Investigation Officer without any substantial evidence regarding him being a member of any crime syndicate. He was never called by the police to join the investigation before his arrest.

"In fact, during the period

in which he has been shown to be absconded, he was regularly supplying water at Police Chowki Hari Nagar under the jurisdiction of Police Station Hari Nagar and thus was very well available in Delhi within the knowledge of police officials of PS Hari Nagar. Still, no efforts were made to make him join the investigation, nor any notice was issued to him for this purpose," Sharma argued.

The bail plea was opposed by the Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) who submitted that allegations against the accused were serious in nature. He argued that the name of the accused has been specifically mentioned in the sanction for lodging of the FIR under MCOCA.

The Additional Public Prosecutor argued that the accused is involved in several cases and "extorted money by threatening financiers, property dealers and bookies".

Sharad Pawar comments on Maharashtra's evolving political scene

TDG NETWORK
PUNE

Sharad Pawar, the leader of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP - SP), spoke about the changing political dynamics in Maharashtra during a recent interaction with farmers in Nimbut village, Baranati tehsil. He highlighted that in the recent Lok Sabha elections, despite contesting only 10 seats, they secured victories in 8, which he interpreted as a shift in the state's political landscape.

Even with the BJP in power, Pawar sensed a different sentiment among the public during the campaign. He



pointed out that the ruling party lost 31 seats, while the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) secured victories in those constituencies. Pawar emphasised the responsibility of elected representatives to tackle urgent issues such as agricultural challenges and

water scarcity.

Additionally, Pawar mentioned his communication with Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, where he requested a meeting to discuss the drought-like conditions in several tehsils of the Pune district.

OBC quota dispute: Activists continue hunger strike

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare have now entered the sixth day of their hunger strike, demanding assurances that the OBC quota in Maharashtra remains intact amidst mounting calls for Maratha reservations. Their protest at Wadigodri village in Jalna district highlights the simmering tensions between OBC and Maratha communities regarding reservation privileges.

Hake criticised the government for allegedly sidelining OBC concerns while appearing to prioritise issues related to Maratha reservations, particularly mentioning activist Manoj Jarange. He also

expressed dismay over the silence of prominent political figures on the issue. The activists clarify that their stance is not against reservations for Marathas but emphasise that it should not encroach upon existing OBC quotas.

The Maharashtra government, facing pressure, recently issued Kunbi certificates to the Maratha community, thus granting them eligibility for OBC benefits—a decision that Hake views as discriminatory. Despite ongoing discussions between government officials and protesters, urging them to end their strike, a resolution to the dispute remains elusive amidst escalating tensions.

Maharashtra leaders convene late-night meeting after election setback

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde convened an urgent late-night meeting with Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar following the underwhelming performance of the ruling Mahayuti alliance in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections. Sources revealed that some state BJP leaders have already departed for Delhi to participate in a review discussion.

The meeting took place at Shinde's official residence, 'Varsha', and continued after Deputy CM Ajit Pawar left, with Shinde and Fadnis engaging in further

discussions. Such meetings are standard practice for the BJP to analyse electoral outcomes with state leaders.

Earlier, BJP leader Devendra Fadnis had resigned post-election, expressing his intention to focus full-time on preparing for the upcoming state assembly elections. This decision, along with other strategic considerations, is likely to be discussed in the Delhi meeting. Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav has been tasked with overseeing the Maharashtra BJP unit, supported by Ashwini Vaishnav.

The Mahayuti coalition secured 17 out of 48 seats, trailing behind the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, which won 30 seats.

Woman fatally stabbed by boyfriend in public

TDG NETWORK
PALGHAR

A tragic incident unfolded in Palghar district, Maharashtra, where Aarti Yadav,

a 20-year-old woman, was brutally stabbed to death by her boyfriend, Rohit Yadav, in broad daylight on Tuesday morning.

The assault occurred

around 8:30 am in the Chinchpada area of Vasai and was horrifyingly recorded on video, which subsequently circulated on social media.

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Mumbai woke up to overcast skies and light drizzles accompanied by gentle breezes on Tuesday morning. According to the Indian Me-

teorological Department (IMD), cloud cover is expected to intensify by late afternoon or evening, bringing moderate rainfall across Mumbai and its suburbs, including the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

Today's Weather Summary

Temperatures are projected to range from a low of 27 degrees Celsius to a high of 33 degrees Celsius, averaging around 28 degrees Celsius. Winds are anticipated to blow at 9.3 km/h from the south.

The sunrise was at 6:01 am, with sunset expected at 7:18 pm.

Weather Outlook for the Week
Minimum temperatures are forecasted to dip to 25 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, accompanied by heavy rainfall.

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Prof. M.D. Nalapat
MANAGING EDITOR Pankaj Vohra
EDITOR Joyeeta Basu
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