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PM: BIG ROLE FOR AGRI TO MAKE INDIA 3RD BIGGEST ECONOMY

Addressing citizens in his constituency Varanasi, PM released Rs 20,000 crore 17th instalment of PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

TDG NETWORK
VARANASI

Visiting his Varanasi constituency which elected him to the Lok Sabha for a third consecutive time, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said it appears that mother Ganga has now adopted him. He was addressing a PM Kisan Samman Sammelan, where he released the Rs 20,000 crore 17th instalment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi for more than 9.26 crore farmers.

"The people of Varanasi have not only chosen me as MP for a third time but also as Prime Minister," Modi said on his first visit to his constituency after the Lok Sabha polls.

He won from Varanasi with a margin of 1,52,513 votes in the 2024 polls, less than his



PM Modi waves to the gathering during the PM Kisan Samman Sammelan as Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and UP Governor Anandiben Patel, and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and others look on, in Varanasi on Tuesday. (ANI Photo)

nearly 4.8 lakh margin in 2019.

The Prime Minister said the mandate given by the people in this Lok Sabha election is

truly unprecedented and has created history, and added that the first decision of the new government related to farmers and the poor.

"I consider farmers, women, the youth and the poor strong pillars of 'Viksit Bharat'," Modi said. ■ P4

NEET-UG row: NTA must 'act fair', says apex court

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday told the Centre and National Testing Agency (NTA) that if there is any negligence in conducting the NEET-UG, 2024 exam, it should be thoroughly dealt with.

"If there is 0.001 per cent negligence on the part of anyone, it should be thoroughly dealt with. All these matters ought not to be treated as adversarial litigation," observed a vacation bench of Justices Vikram Nath and SVN Bharti.

The bench told counsels appearing for Centre and NTA that children have prepared for the exams and "we cannot forget their labour" for preparing for these exams.

It told the counsel of NTA that as an agency which is conducting the examination, it must "act fair".

"If there is a mistake, say yes, this is a mistake, and this is the action we are going to take. At least that inspires confidence in your perfor-



Several students organisation stage a protest over the alleged irregularities in the NEET exam, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. ANI

mance," the top court told NTA while adding that it expects timely action from them. Aspirants have raised the issue of leakage of the question paper, awarding compensatory marks and anomalies in the question of National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Under Graduate (NEET-UG) 2024.

The apex court, while hearing fresh petitions relating to alleged paper leaks and malpractices in the NEET-UG, 2024 exam on May 5 this year, issued notices and sought a response from NTA within two weeks.

It has tagged these pleas, along with several petitions

pending before it and posted them for hearing on July 8.

Several petitions were filed in the apex court seeking direction to recall NEET-UG 2024 results and to conduct the examination afresh, alleging paper leakage and malpractices in the test held on May 5.

Last week, the NTA told the Supreme Court that the scorecards of 1,563 NEET-UG 2024 candidates who got "grace marks" to compensate for the loss of time suffered while appearing for the exam will be cancelled and the students will have a chance to reappear for the exam. ■ P4

Data shows rail accidents have actually come down in last few years

ABHINANDAN MISHRA
NEW DELHI

In wake of the recent train accident at West Bengal's Darjeeling district involving a passenger and a goods train, the government has stated that safety of passengers was its utmost priority and it has taken a series of step in the last few years to develop railway infrastructure, modernize the system and improve operational efficiency and safety. At least 10 people have died in the accident.

This is the second major train accident in the last one year. In June 2023, three trains collided in Balasore district in Odisha leading to the death of 280 people.

As per government sources, the railways has observed a steep decline in the number of consequential train accidents. In 2000-01, 473 accidents had taken place which went down to 40 in 2022-23.

Data shared by officials showed that from 2004 to

Leaders of BJP, allies meet to decide names for Speaker's post

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A meeting of top BJP leaders was being held at defence minister Rajnath Singh's residence on Tuesday evening to discuss the names of candidates for the Lok Sabha speaker and deputy speaker.

Among those who attended the meeting were Manohar Lal Khattar, Bhupender Yadav, Virendra Kumar, Piyush Goyal, Annapurna Devi, S Jaishankar, JD(U)'s Lalan Singh, and Lok Janshakti



Party (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan. The election for the Lok Sabha speaker's post will be held on June 26, two days after the beginning of the first session of the Lower House. Meanwhile, a separate meeting of the Maharashtra BJP core group was

also expected to be held at the party headquarters later in the evening to discuss the party's strategy for the assembly polls, due to be held in the state later this year, sources said. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, party state president Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Ashish Shelar, MP Ashok Chavan, minister Girish Mahajan and other leaders are expected to attend the meeting, which will be presided over by BJP chief JP Nadda.

Oppn may exert pressure, but BJP is up to the challenge

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

The formation of Modi cabinet 3.0 was done with a lot of deliberation. On the other hand, the Opposition has been trying to corner BJP on the question of Speaker in the 18th Lok Sabha. Taking a decisive step, the BJP has decided to keep the Lok Sabha Speaker post and is planning to assign the Dep-

uty Speaker role to one of its allies.

According to sources, it is a strategy of BJP to send a message to the Opposition. BJP is trying to make the Opposition comprehend that the post of Deputy Speaker might go TDP or JD(U).

The government will, however, try to build a consensus on both the posts. The responsibility of building a consensus has been given to

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh as his relations with the Opposition have been cordial. This indicates that in Modi 3.0 Rajnath will act as a bridge between the government and the Opposition.

Given the Opposition's current stance, it seems unlikely that the government will be able to run the Parliament smoothly this time as well. The situation will become ■ P4

Haryana Cong leader Kiran Choudhry, daughter quit party

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

The Congress suffered a major setback on Tuesday as senior party leader Kiran Choudhry resigned from the primary membership of Congress saying that the party is being run as the "personal fiefdom" leaving no space for "sincere voices" like herself.

Her daughter Shruti Choudhry also resigned from the Congress on Tuesday.

"To spread the values and ideology of the father of Haryana, Choudhary Bansi Lal in Haryana and honest development of the region and the state will always be my priority," Kiran Choudhry said in a post on 'X' while sharing her resignation letter.

Choudhry further said that unfortunately, the Congress Party in Haryana has left no space for leaders like her who have been "stifled, humiliated and conspired against" in a most "well-orchestrated and systematic



manner".

"...it is most unfortunate that the Congress Party in Haryana is being run as the personal fiefdom leaving no space for sincere voices like mine, who have been stifled, humiliated and conspired against in a most well-orchestrated and systematic manner, thus, significantly hampering my diligent efforts to represent our people and uphold the values, I have always stood for," Choudhry said in her resignation letter tendered to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

Pointing out that she has been ■ P4

Srinagar to host Yoga Day, PM to attend

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ministry of Ayush Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha said that this year the main Yoga event will be held in Srinagar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in it. "The theme of this year is 'Yoga for Self and Society'. The message is that we should do Yoga...And we should motivate the

chief Uddhav Thackeray, and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav.

Maliwal, AAP Rajya Sabha MP, said she has been working on the ground for nine years and has heard over 1.7 lakh cases in Delhi Commission of Women. She further alleged that she was "beaten badly" at CM Kejriwal's and there was "character assassination" for speaking against the incident. ■ P4



Party (SP) supremo Sharad Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT)

Maliwal writes to I.N.D.I.A on assault at Kejriwal's house

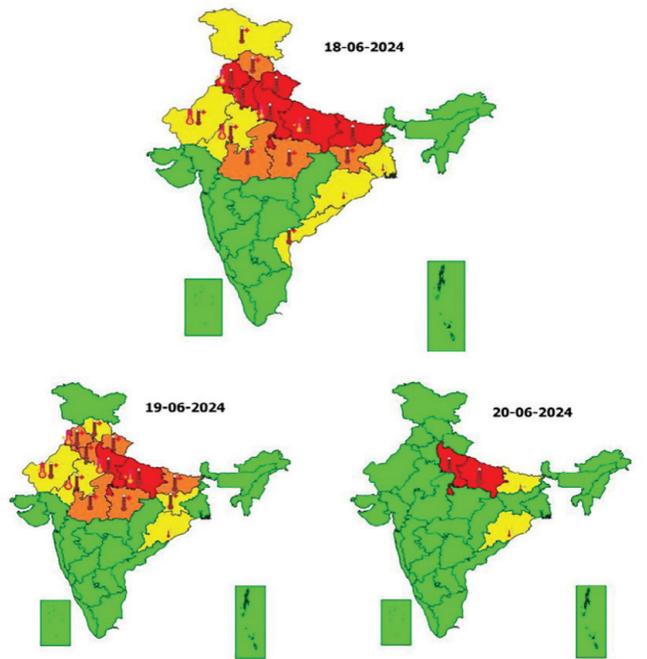
TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal on Tuesday wrote a letter to I.N.D.I.A bloc leaders, elaborating on the alleged assault by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's former aide Bibhav Kumar, and sought time to meet them.

She wrote the letter to leaders, including former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, Nationalist Congress

Blistering heat makes life miserable in North India

Large parts of northern and eastern India remained in the grip of a sweltering heat wave on Tuesday, driving power demands to record highs with warmer-than-usual nights further exacerbating people's distress. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions prevailed in parts of Uttar Pradesh, south Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and pockets of north Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and the Jammu division. ■ REPORT P4



Warning Symbol:
Heat Wave
Warm Night
Hot & Humid

Legend:
NO WARNING
WATCH (BE UPDATED)
ALERT (BE PREPARED)
WARNING (TAKE ACTION)

Feels-like temperature exceeds 50°C in Delhi

A severe heat wave engulfed Delhi, with temperatures peaking at 45.2 degrees Celsius on Monday, according to the India Meteorological Department's Safdarjung observatory centre. The weather office, however, has forecast some relief from June 19 onwards.

■ DETAILS P5

Seven people found dead in Noida

Seven people were found dead in different parts of Noida in the last 24 hours without any visible signs of injury amid heat wave, with police on Tuesday saying the cause of deaths is yet to be ascertained. According to police, an unidentified person, believed to be a ragpicker, was found dead near Gate No. 5 of Amity University.

■ DETAILS P5

INSIDE

MYSTIC POET KABIR



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.

DETAILS ■ P9

CONG DEMANDS RAILWAY MINISTER ASHWINI VAISHNAW'S RESIGNATION

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Accusing the government of "destroying" Indian Railways, the Congress on Tuesday demanded Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav's resignation in the wake of the Kanchanjunga Express accident and said that he has no moral right to remain in the position.

The opposition party also took a swipe at Vaishnav for reaching the accident site riding pillion on a motorcycle, asking whether he is a rail minister or a "reel minister".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said whenever there is a train accident, Modi government's railway minister reaches the spot under the glare of cameras



and behaves as if everything is fine.

"Narendra Modi ji, tell us who should be held accountable, the Railway Minister or you?" the Congress chief asked.

Kharge posed seven questions to the government and demanded answers.

After a major accident like Balasore, why was not even a single kilometer of the much-hyped "Kavach" anti-train collision system added, he asked.

"Why are nearly 3 lakh posts vacant in the Railways, why were they not filled in the last 10 years? According

to the NCRB (2022) report, 1,00,000 people have died in rail accidents between 2017 and 2021 alone! Who will take responsibility for this?" the Congress chief asked.

The Railway Board itself has admitted that the long working hours of loco pilots due to acute shortage of manpower are the main reason for the increasing number of accidents, he said and asked why were the posts not filled.

"In its 323rd report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee had criticised the Railways for the 'neglect' shown by the Railway Board towards the recommendations of the Commission of Railway Safety (CRS). It was underlined that the CRS investigates only 8%-10% of accidents, why was the CRS

not strengthened?" Kharge asked.

According to the CAG, why was 75% funding reduced in the 'Rashtriya Rail Suraksha Kosh' (RRSK), while Rs 20,000 crore was to be made available every year, he asked.

Why is this money being used by railway officials on unnecessary expenses and comfort facilities, Kharge further asked.

"Why has travelling by train in the common Sleeper Class become very expensive? Why has the number of Sleeper Coaches been reduced? The Railway Minister recently said to use police force against the people 'overcrowding' rail coaches. But does he not know that 2.7 crore people had to cancel their tickets last year due to abysmal shortage of

seats -- a direct result of Modi government's policy to reduce coaches?" Kharge said.

Did the Modi government merge the railway budget with the general budget in 2017-18 to avoid any kind of accountability, he asked. "Self-glorification will not undo the criminal negligence perpetrated by the Modi government on the Indian Railways! Accountability needs to be fixed at the top," Kharge said in his post on X. Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate said the Railways is perhaps the most preferred mode of transport as far as the middle class, lower middle class and the poor are concerned simply because it is the most economical means of transportation.

Dubai-bound flight receives bomb threat email before take-off, turns to be hoax

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Adding to the series of hoax call incidents hitting the national capital, a Dubai-bound flight that was scheduled to take off from Delhi received a bomb threat via email, police said on Tuesday.

According to the Delhi Police, the bomb threat was received on Monday at 9:35 am. "On June 17 at 9:35 am, an email was received in the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) office, IGI Airport with the threat of a bomb inside a Delhi to Dubai flight," the police said.

They further informed that, after receiving the threat, necessary legal action was taken and nothing suspicious was found.

Last week, several museums in Delhi received bomb threats, which later turned out to be bogus, the police said.

Officials said that bomb threats were sent to around 10-15 museums including the Railway Museum in Delhi via emails.

The police reached the spots after receiving the information. Upon investigation, the officials found that the mail was a 'hoax' and no bomb was found in the museums.

Several institutions; schools, colleges, hospitals, and airports, in the national capital have received hoax bomb threats lately.

Two Delhi University colleges received hoax bomb threats in May.

In the same month, over 100 schools in the Delhi-NCR region received hoax bomb threats.

Earlier, in April, the High Court sought a detailed status report from the Delhi government on the hoax bomb threat email incidents in private schools.

Cong worker washes Patole's feet

TDG NETWORK
AKOLA (MAHARASHTRA)

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 Wade-gaon. Following this he took a 'darshan' of the palanquin of Saint Gajanan Maharaj.

Patole apparently had walked through the mud at Nanasaheb 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 and 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 was 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 apologize. "Congress has a Nawabi Feudal Shehzada mindset. Maharashtra Congress President 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.

Kanchanjunga Express reaches Sealdah with 850 passengers

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

The unaffected coaches of the Kanchanjunga Express, which was hit by a goods train near New Jalpaiguri, arrived at Sealdah station here on Tuesday morning with nearly 850 passengers, according to an Eastern Railway official.

"Around 800 to 850 passengers arrived at Sealdah at 3.16 am," ER spokesperson Kausik Mitra said.

The unaffected coaches began their onward journey from the accident site on Monday afternoon.

The passengers were provided with medical facilities, food, and water at various stations, including Malda Town and Sealdah, he added.

Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim, West Bengal Transport Minister Snehasis



Chakraborty, and Divisional Railway Manager of Sealdah Division Deepak Nigam were present at Sealdah station to help passengers reach home safely, Mitra said.

Train 13174 Kanchanjunga Express from Agartala, scheduled to reach Sealdah at 7.20 pm on Monday, arrived eight hours behind schedule.

The transport department provided 16 buses and 60

cars to transport passengers home, he added.

Various railway employee unions have objected to the railway ministry's initial response to the West Bengal train tragedy when it prima facie blamed the driver of the goods train that hit the Kanchanjunga Express from the rear for the accident.

The employees' unions said that squarely blaming

the driver, who is not alive to defend himself, amounts to making him a scapegoat of the systematic shortcomings of the Railways.

"It was highly insensitive on the part of the Railway Board to say that the driver overshot the red signal which caused the accident," Shiva Gopal Mishra, general secretary of All India Railway Men's Federation (AIRF), said.

"My advice to the Railway Board is that in such cases, instead of blaming any staff, they should wait till the probe concludes. I don't think that the driver was solely responsible for the accident," he said.

Mishra referred to various operating norms and questioned why the driver was authorised to cross all red signals in the section when there was a train in between

them. "The authority to cross the red signals should have been given only when the section (distance between the two stations) was clear and there was no train in between," he said.

The Railway Board admitted on Monday that there was a signal failure between the Ranipatra Railway Station and Chattar Hat Junction between which the accident took place.

Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety, Northeast Frontier Railway, Janak Kumar Garg, will hold a statutory inquiry in connection with the Kanchanjunga Express tragedy.

The inquiry will be held on Wednesday at the ADRM/NJP's chamber from 10 am onwards. The inquiry may also be extended if required, according to a press release.

PM Modi to participate in International Yoga Day event in Srinagar on June 21

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ministry of Ayush Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha said that this year the main Yoga event will be held in Srinagar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in it.

"The theme of this year is Yoga for Self and Society. The message is that we should do Yoga...And we should motivate the community...We shall make Yoga implemented at every aspect of our life," Kotecha told ANI.

"This year the main celebration is happening at Srinagar. Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) will participate. In addition to this, the Jammu and Kashmir government is side by side organising (Yoga events)

at all district headquarters at the same time," Kotecha added.

Kotecha added: "The special thing is this year all the offices of the government of India is celebrating (Yoga). All state governments are celebrating. Everywhere it is being celebrated".

Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolising the union of body and consciousness.

Since 2015, the International Day of Yoga has been celebrated across the world annually on June 21, following its adoption by the United Nations in 2014.

Several Yoga events are

being organised at various places in India and even outside the country ahead of International Yoga Day.

Ahead of the International Day of Yoga, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called upon people to reiterate their commitment to making yoga an integral part of their lives.

PM Modi shared a set of videos showing various 'Asanas' on X, describing their benefits. "As Yoga Day approaches, I am sharing a set of videos that will offer guidance on various Asanas and their benefits. I hope this inspires you all to practice Yoga regularly," the Prime Minister posted on X. He also asked people to encourage others to make it a part of theirs.

"As we approach this year's Yoga Day, it is essential to reiterate our commitment to making Yoga an integral part of our lives and also encouraging others to make it a part of theirs. Yoga offers a sanctuary of calm, enabling us to navigate life's challenges with calm and fortitude," PM Modi stated. "In ten days from now, the world will mark the 10th International Day of Yoga, celebrating a timeless practice that celebrates oneness and harmony. Yoga has transcended cultural and geographical boundaries, uniting millions across the globe in the pursuit of holistic well-being," he added in a subsequent post.

BJP attacks Rahul Gandhi for vacating Wayanad constituency

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party leaders have attacked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for vacating the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat in Kerala and accused him of "deceiving" the people of the constituency.

Rahul Gandhi won from both Wayanad and Raebareli Lok Sabha seats.

Former Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar called it an "insult" to the Wayanad people. He also slammed Rahul Gandhi for not announcing before the elections, that he will contest from two seats.

Former Union Minister V Muraleedharan said the Congress wants to make Wayanad a Gandhi family constituency.

"Priyanka Gandhi has the right to contest from anywhere in the country but there are many questions that arise from this decision of the Congress and in particular, Rahul Gandhi...He hid from them (voters of Wayanad) the fact that he was



also going to contest in Raebareli," Rajeev Chandrasekhar told ANI.

"He (Rahul Gandhi) deceived them and today, after they have in good faith, supported him and given him one more chance to do something for the people, he is washing his hands and saying I am going to Raebareli. It is a betrayal of the people of Wayanad. She (Priyanka Gandhi) is making her political debut in a seat that is going to be extremely easy for her to win because IUML supports her," he added.

Muraleedharan alleged that Priyanka Gandhi has no connection with Kerala.

"It's an insult to the entire state of Kerala and especially to the people of Wayanad. Now, instead of Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi is going to contest from Wayanad. It means that the way Amethi and Rae Bareilly are family constituencies, the same way Wayanad will be their family constituency. Why Priyanka Gandhi, who has no connection with Kerala, is contesting from Wayanad?" he asked.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge announced Priyanka Gandhi's candidature from Wayanad at a special press conference on Monday, after Rahul Gandhi announced that he would resign as an MP from Wayanad and will keep the Raebareli constituency.

Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday formally informed the Lok Sabha Speaker's office about retaining the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat and vacating the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat.

'Welcome to Wayanad, Priyanka Gandhi!'

TDG NETWORK
WAYANAD

The Congress party in Kerala welcomed the candidature of the party's general secretary, Priyanka Gandhi for the by-poll in the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat.

The bye-election in the seat was necessitated after Rahul Gandhi decided to retain Uttar Pradesh's Raebareli seat, which he won along with Wayanad in the recently held Lok Sabha elections.

Leader of Opposition in Kerala Legislative Assembly, VD Satheesan, expressed confidence in Priyanka Gandhi's victory with a historic majority.



"Rahul and the party have assigned dearest Priyanka to Wayanad. Welcome to Wayanad, Priyanka Gandhi. With a historic majority, Priyanka will become Kerala's dearest," Satheesan said in a post on Facebook.

Satheesan also quoted Rahul Gandhi, where he spoke about Wayanad and

shared a picture of both Rahul and Priyanka along with his post.

From now on, two Gandhi voices will speak for Kerala in the Parliament, said Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president K Sudhakaran as he welcomed Priyanka's candidature.

"Wayanad is walking towards history. Both Wayanad and Raebareli are dear to Rahul Gandhi, who won both seats with a huge majority, thereby leading the Congress as well as the INDIA bloc to create a remarkable impact across the country. Retaining one of the seats and leaving the other was a tough decision yet he and the Congress party ensured it did not hurt his people. So

he decided to assign his dearest as his replacement in Wayanad," Sudhakaran said in a post on X.

He further called it a proud moment for each Congress member and Malayalis, saying, "Priyanka, who is seen as equivalent to India's Iron Lady Indira Gandhi, chose Wayanad for her debut electoral battle."

"Welcome to Wayanad, Indira's successor. Priyanka Gandhi will become Wayanad's dearest with a huge majority," he added.

Robert Vadra, a businessman and husband of Priyanka Gandhi, also shared a picture of Priyanka with an emoji of a heart.

Apex court to organise special Lok Adalat

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In the 75th year of its establishment, the Supreme Court of India is organising a special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 to facilitate amicable settlements of suitable pending cases.

"Lok Adalats are an integral component of judicial system in this country, enhancing alternative dispute resolution as a means of expediting and fos-



tering amicable settlements," a press statement said.

It further added that organising of the ensuing Lok Adalat is

pursuant to the commitment to accessible and efficient justice delivery for all sections of the society.

Cases having elements of settlement including cases relating to matrimonial and property disputes, motor accident claims, land acquisition, compensation, service and labour which are pending before the Supreme Court would be taken up to facilitate speedy disposal.

EMERGENCY ANNIVERSARY: BJP TO OBSERVE BLACK DAY ON JUNE 25

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The BJP will observe Emergency Anniversary on June 25 as a Black Day as on this day in 1975 former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had declared an Emergency in the country.

By observing Emergency Day across the country, the BJP intends to remind people of the dark and painful memories of the period which destroyed democracy across the country. The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed an emergency in the entire country and people were sent to jail.

According to senior BJP sources, the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) prisoners will be

According to senior BJP sources, the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) prisoners will be honoured across the country on June 25 and seminars will be organized. The senior BJP leaders will organise press conferences at all places to refresh the memories of the Emergency. The party will also share the memories of Emergency on social media.

honoured across the country on June 25 and seminars will be organized. The senior BJP leaders will organise press conferences at all places to refresh the memories of the Emergency. The party will also share the memories of Emergency on social media.

All senior leaders, and Union Ministers have been instructed to hold press conferences at different places on June 25.

The responsibility of conducting the programme has been given to the BJP's National General Secretaries Tarun Chugh, Dushyant

Gautam and Vinod Tawde.

By observing Black Day across the country on June 25, the BJP aims to tell the country who had ended democracy and who had abolished the Constitution, a source told ANI.

Notably, during the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress and I.N.D.I.A. bloc had campaigned against the BJP and said that if the party came to power, democracy would end in the country and the Constitution would be abolished.

The source further added that a strategy has been made to highlight the double character of Congress behind observing Emergency Day. Those who talk about saving the Constitution and democracy will be shown a mirror.

BJP fact-finding panel meets post-poll violence victims at South 24 Parganas

TDG NETWORK
SOUTH 24 PARGANAS (WB)

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) fact-finding committee that has been formed to investigate post-poll violence in West Bengal met post-poll violence victims in South 24 Parganas district and listened to their grievances.

The members of the fact-finding committee who interacted with the victims include MLA Agnimitra Paul, former Union minister and MP Ravi Shankar Prasad and former Tripura Chief Minister and Rajya Sabha MP Biplab Kumar Deb.

Speaking to the accompanying media crew while visiting the shop of a middle-aged woman whose shop was allegedly vandalised by Trinamool Congress goons, Ravi Shankar Prasad said that her only fault is that her



son supports the BJP.

"She (victim) belongs to the Dalit community...The only fault of hers is that her son supports BJP. Shame on you. Please stop talking about Constitution. This is too much. I condemn this. If you have any shame left, immediately reconstruct the roof of her shop. Your goons destroyed her shop," Prasad said.

Biplab Kumar Deb, a member of the fact-finding committee said, "She (victim) fears that TMC goons might

come to her place and threaten her for giving statement to the media. What is this rule? This cannot go on."

"The results were announced on June 4. The next day goons broke her shop. Her only fault is that her son was a candidate for the BJP in the panchayat elections," he added. When the victim declined to narrate her ordeal to the media out of fear that it might put her son in harm's way, Deb said, "Look at your face, Mamata Banerjee. People

cannot speak in fear. Her shop through which she makes a living has been demolished but she prefers not to speak in fear that her son may be killed."

Deb dared the TMC to send their goons while the BJP fact-finding team are at her place. "Send your goons now. We have come. Why are you hiding like thieves now?...They are depriving poor of their rights," he said.

The former Tripura Chief Minister also hit out at the ruling Trinamool Congress government saying that they have done nothing for the victim and on top of that, they are depriving her of livelihood by destroying her shop. "When asked if she has got any benefit from the Trinamool government, she said she has not been given anything.

Assam CM requests Mamata to hand over IIT Kharagpur student death case to CBI

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday requested his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee to hand over the death case of the IIT Kharagpur student to the Central Bureau of Investigation for a transparent and fair investigation.

He said that the second autopsy report of the deceased student showed a gunshot and stabbing wound on his neck.

The case pertains to the death of IIT Kharagpur student Faizan Ahmed who was found dead in his hostel in October last year.

"Late Faizan Ahmed was found dead in his hostel room on October 14, 2022. Although his death was claimed by the college authority to be a case of suicide, his bereaved parents



had observed injury marks on his body which indicated that it was a case of homicide. I had, therefore, requested you for a thorough investigation into the unnatural death of the bright young student," CM Sarma stated in the letter.

"It is now reported that, as directed by the Calcutta High Court, a second autopsy was carried out by exhuming Late Faizan

Ahmed's body. According to the second forensic report, there was a gunshot wound on the upper left side of Faizan Ahmed's neck and a stab wound on the right side of his neck," he added.

The Assam Chief Minister further said that given the "shocking findings" of the latest forensic report, the perpetrators of the crime must be brought to justice.

Cyber gang that cheated AKT varsity of Rs 120 cr arrested

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow police has busted a cyber gang that cheated Rs 120 crore from Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Technical University's (AKTU) account by creating fake mail IDs on behalf of AKTU and opening bank account in Union Bank of India.

By creating fake mail IDs of AKTU, the fraudsters had got Rs 120 crore transferred from AKTU's State Bank of India account. The mastermind of the gang disguised himself as the Chief Account Officer of AKTU and started doing transactions by opening a savings account at Union Bank of India in the name of AKTU. Informing about the matter, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) East, Prabal Pratap Singh said

that out of Rs 120 crore, the police team has managed to recover Rs 119 crore. He said, "An amount of Rs 120 crore from AKTU's account was transferred to Shree Shradha Education and Charitable Trust of Ahmedabad, out of which Rs 119 crore has been recovered and the remaining money is also being recovered." All the accused in the case are being taken into custody and presented before the court. Meanwhile, the Lucknow Police also took to its official X handle and posted about the cyber fraud incident and said, "The police station cyber crime police team arrested seven cyber criminals who had cheated Rs 120 crores by sending emails using fake mail ID of AKTU and posing as official operators by giving fake authority letter and KYC form and opening an account in Union Bank."

Karnataka HC grants interim bail to Bhavani Revanna in kidnapping case

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has granted anticipatory bail to Janata Dal (Secular) suspended MP Prajwal Revanna's mother, Bhavani Revanna in a kidnapping case related to the obscene video case. The bail exempts her from arrest.

Krishna Dixit, a single judge bench of the special representative court, granted bail to Bhavani Revanna. While granting bail, the court also said the petitioner must not visit Mysore and Hassan.

Earlier on June 15, the court extended anticipatory bail granted to Bhavani, in a kidnapping case related to the obscene video case. The bench, headed by Dixit, completed the arguments and reserved the verdict.

The court ordered the extension of interim anticipatory



tory bail granted earlier until the next order.

Earlier on June 7, the Karnataka High Court granted anticipatory bail to Bhavani in the case.

The petitioner attended the hearing for three days, as ordered by the court.

The petitioner said, "Bhavani is not cooperating with the investigation. Everything is false information. No correct answer is given to any question. Bhavani

Revanna is the main accused in the whole case. She played an important role in the abduction of the victim. In case of non-cooperation, she should be detained and interrogated. Therefore, already granted anticipatory bail should be cancelled."

In this case, the bench asked the investigation authority to explain the reason for which the detention should be conducted.

Upper age limit for police constable recruitment raised to 26 in Himachal

TDG NETWORK
SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Tuesday approved one-time relaxation for one year in the upper age limit to the candidates appearing for the recruitment of 1,226 posts of constable in the police department.

"The State Cabinet in its meeting held here today under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu gave approval to give one time relaxation for one year in upper age limit to the candidates appearing for the recruitment of 1226 posts of Constable in the Police department," as per a press release.

Now, general candidates between the age of 18 to 26 years, SC/ST, OBC, Gorkhas, distinguished sportsper-

sons, between 18 to 28 years and Home Guards between the age of 20 to 29 years will be eligible for constable recruitment. "The cabinet also decided to create and fill up more than 6630 posts in various government departments including engaging 6297 Early Childhood Care and Education Tutors in the education department to provide better education to tiny tots," the release said.

It decided to create and fill up 200 posts of Medical Officers in Health and Family Welfare department. In addition to this, the Cabinet also gave its nod to fill up 22 posts of Professor;

Associate Professor and Assistant Professor in various medical colleges in the State, which include three posts of Professor and two posts of Associate Professors in Dr Yashwant Singh

Parmar Government Medical College, Nahan, two posts of Professor and one post of Associate Professor in Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Government Medical College, Ner Chowk, Mandi, four posts of Professor and five posts each of Associate and Assistant Professors in Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru Government Medical College, Chamba to provide specialized health services to the people nearer to their homes. "It was also decided to create and fill up 8 posts of Casualty Medical Officer in Tanda Medical College and five posts of Assistant Professor in Chamba Medical College along-with requisite supporting staff including staff nurse, operation theatre assistant, technicians, multi task workers etc. in order to make Trauma Centres functional in both these medical colleges.

Ex-Andhra CM Jagan Reddy calls for ballot papers instead of EVMs

TDG NETWORK
AMARAVATI

Former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, asserted on Tuesday that in "upholding the true spirit of our democracy," ballot papers must be used in place of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

In a post on X, YS Jagan said, "Just as justice should not only be served but should also appear to have been served, so should democracy not only prevail but must appear to be prevalent undoubtedly. In electoral practices across the world, in almost every advanced democracy, paper ballots are used, not EVMs. We too must move towards the same in upholding the true spirit of our democracy."

Several opposition leaders are raising questions about the EVMs and pressing



about using ballot papers instead in the electoral process. Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole on Monday said that ballot papers must replace EVMs and emphasized that the Congress party has been constantly raising the demand for ballot papers but the centre has shown reluctance.

"Voting is our fundamental right. There is a question in front of people if their vote gets delivered in favour of the candidate whom they

cast their vote for. Why doesn't the central government use ballot paper for voting?" Patole pointed out.

"The developed countries including the US and Japan have been practicing voting on a ballot paper. Then why not in India? Congress has been asking the same question repeatedly," Patole said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi on Monday said that it is the responsibility of the Election Commission to clear the doubt of voters in this country adding that the "constitutional methods" of the country should not be affected and the election process should be "free and fair."

CPI General Secretary D Raja said that the credibility of EVMs has become an issue and people are questioning it.

BJP will win Amarwara assembly bypoll with huge margin: MP CM Mohan Yadav

TDG NETWORK
CHHINDWARA (MP)

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav expressed confidence that the BJP will win the Amarwara assembly seat bypoll with a huge margin.

"I am happy and today we have filed nomination papers for Amarwara bypolls and our candidate has been declared..We (BJP) will definitely win elections with a huge margin," CM Yadav told ANI.

BJP candidate Kamlesh Shah from Amarwara today filed his nomination in Chhindwara district in the presence of CM Yadav and other party leaders.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has nominated candidates for the upcoming assembly by-elections in Punjab and West Bengal.

"The Central Election Committee of the Bharatiya Janata Party has given its approval to the following names for the upcoming assembly by-elections to be held in the states of Punjab and West Bengal," a press release from the central office of the BJP said.

While the BJP has nominated Sheetal Angural from Jalandhar West (SC) assembly constituency, in West Bengal, Manas Kumar Ghosh has been nominated from Raiganj, Manoj Kumar Biswas from Ranaghat Dakshin (SC), Binay Kumar Biswas from Bagda (SC) and Kalyan Chaubey Bhattacharya from Manikatala.

Earlier in the month, the Election Commission announced the dates to hold bye-elections to fill vacancies in 13 assembly constituencies of seven states.

'Probe stock market manipulation ahead of LS poll results declaration'

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

A delegation of Trinamool Congress (TMC) Shiv Sena (UBT) and Nationalist Congress Party (SCP) leaders met with officials of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Tuesday and demanded a probe into the alleged stock market manipulation ahead of the declaration of Lok Sabha election results.

The leaders protested and raised slogans outside SEBI



over the alleged stock market manipulation.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Arvind Sawant said, "The agencies because of which Rs

13 lakh crore has been lost of the common man, the same agencies are working for FII and exit polls. That linkage with them is a serious thing

to be investigated..."

TMC leader Kalyan Banerjee said, "...We will take the matter in the monsoon session. PM Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman should resign..."

Earlier in the day, the TMC delegation met NCP (SP) President Sharad Pawar who supported their demand for an investigation into the alleged stock market manipulation following the exit polls.

NCP (SCP) leader Nirmala Samant Prabhavalkar said "...SEBI is a regulating authority which controls the stock exchange. If there is any complaint about anything unethical or illegal, there is only one institution that can intervene is the stock exchange..."

Ahead of their meeting with SEBI officials the leaders of Trinamool Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) met with Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar.

Earlier, TMC Rajya Sabha

member Saket Gokhale wrote to financial markets regulator SEBI, alleging "manipulation" in trading activities, a day after private exit polls were announced.

In a letter to the Securities and Exchange of India Chairperson Madhavi Puri Buch dated June 11, the Trinamool parliamentarian registered his complaint with the regulator, what he termed "stock market manipulation".

Gokhale has specifically demanded an investigation

into statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah during the poll campaign, where they apparently "advised" people to invest in stocks hinting at positive election results for BJP.

During TV interviews, both Modi and Shah had asserted that the Indian stock markets will trade firm soon after election results, which was inferred by many in the Opposition, including TMC and Congress, as stock ad-

vice.

"PM Modi and BJP do not run a brute-majority government anymore. Along with SEBI action, this matter will also be taken up in Parliament if required," Gokhale wrote on his X timeline, attaching the letter he wrote to the SEBI. "There was something very rotten about stock market fluctuations on 3rd and 4th Jun after rigged exit polls. The statements by Modi and Shah also contributed to losses of investors," said Gokhale.

Blistering heat makes life miserable across North India

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Large parts of northern and eastern India remained in the grip of a sweltering heat wave on Tuesday, driving power demands to record highs with warmer-than-usual nights further exacerbating people's distress.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions prevailed in parts of Uttar Pradesh, south Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and pockets

of north Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and the Jammu division.

Maximum temperatures ranged from 44 to 46 degrees Celsius in many parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and some parts of north Madhya Pradesh, south Bihar and north Rajasthan.

The blistering heat has left a large number of people scrambling for water, with storage levels in reservoirs and rivers hitting record lows. The shortage of water for irrigation is impacting agriculture in some areas.

The power grids are under immense pressure and there has been an increase in incidents of short circuits and fires.

Delhi, which is facing a severe water crisis, recorded a maximum temperature of 44 degrees Celsius over five notches above the normal. The minimum temperature in the city was 33.8 degrees Celsius, at least six notches above what is normal for this time of the year.

The national capital's peak power demand on Tuesday afternoon reached 8,647 MW, the highest ever for



An ice-cream seller takes a nap on his cart during a hot summer afternoon, in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

the city. According to officials, cooling load due to the increased use of air conditioners and other cooling appliances amid the relentless heat wave has led to the record rise in power demand.

Hospitals in Delhi-NCR have been seeing an influx of patients with complaints of heat stroke and heat exhaustion as the mercury continued to soar, with doctors advising the elderly and immuno-compromised patients to avoid stepping outdoors.

IMD officials said high

minimum temperatures or warm nights are exacerbating the impact of the deadly heat.

High night temperatures are considered dangerous because the body does not get a chance to cool down. Increasing nighttime temperature is more common in cities because of the urban heat island effect, in which metro areas are significantly hotter than their surroundings. At least 10 places in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab and Haryana reached or surpassed 45 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, with Orai in Uttar

Pradesh being the warmest place in the country at 46.4 degrees Celsius.

India is experiencing one of its hottest summers this time. Multiple heat waves have pushed millions in the country to their limits and many states have reported heat-related deaths.

According to IMD, around 40 per cent of the country has recorded double the number of heat wave days than it usually does.

In Rajasthan, Sangaria was the hottest place in the state with a maximum temperature of 44.9 degrees Celsius.

PM wants Indian products on every dining table in world

TDG NETWORK
VARANASI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said he hopes to see Indian food products on dining tables across the world.

Addressing a PM Kisan Samman Sammelan here, Modi said, "We have to think about the global market. We have to become self-reliant in pulses and oilseeds and a leader in agricultural exports. Look, 'Langda' mango of Banaras, Jaunpur's radish, Ghazipur's lady finger, and many such products are reaching the foreign market today."

He said that with the 'one district one product' initiative and the formation of hubs at the district level, exports are increasing.

"Now, we have to take the country to new heights in the global market of packaged food. My dream is that there should be some food products from India on every dining table in the

world," he said.

He also said production of 'zero defect' food items should be encouraged.

Noting the presence of women in large numbers, Modi underlined their importance and support in agriculture and said, "Without mothers and sisters, it is impossible to imagine farming."

"Therefore, now the role of mothers and sisters is being expanded in giving a new direction to agriculture. Like Nano Drone Didi, the Krishi Sakhi programme is one such effort. We have seen the work of sisters as ASHA workers. We have seen the role of sisters as bank sakhis. Now we will see agriculture getting new strength in the form of Krishi Sakhi," he said.

At the event, Modi released the Rs 20,000-crore 17th installment of the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KSN) for more than 9.26 crore farmers.

He discussed in detail the

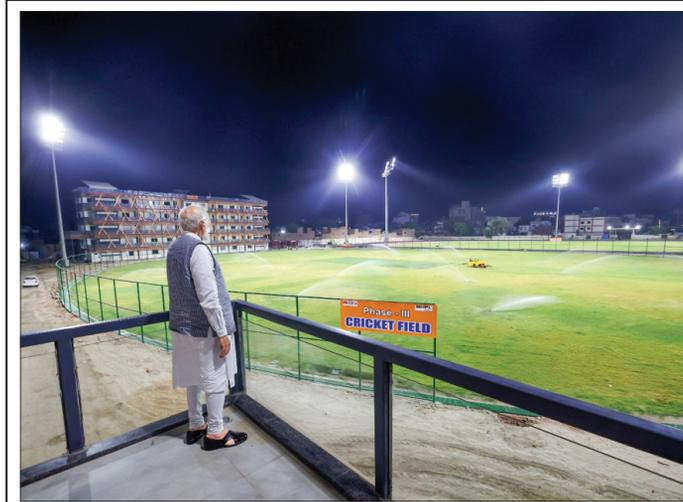
benefits of agricultural work and the schemes being run by the Centre and the state government for farmers in Varanasi.

The Prime Minister also said that "Banas Dairy is going to add 16,000 more cattle farmers of Kashi in the next one and a half years. Last year, a bonus of more than Rs 100 crore went into the accounts of cattle farmers".

"The government is continuously working to increase the income of fish farmers in Banaras. It is enriching them through the PM Matsya Sampada Yojana. A modern fish market is being constructed in Chandauli at a cost of Rs 70 crore," he said.

Modi expressed happiness that PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna is in demand in Varanasi.

Around 40,000 people have registered for the scheme and 2,500 houses have already got solar panels and work is ongoing for 3,000 houses, he said.



After the day's programmes in Kashi, which included the programme to hand over Kisan Samman Nidhi, Ganga Aarti and prayers at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, PM Modi undertook a surprise visit to review the work underway to build the stadium and sports complex in Varanasi. Once ready, it will cater to the needs of the youth and further enhance a sporting culture in Varanasi. ANI

PM: Big role for agriculture

CONTINUED FROM P1

Referring to his reelection from the constituency in Uttar Pradesh, he said, "With the blessings of Baba Vishwanath and Maa Ganga, and the immense love of the people of Kashi, I have got the privilege of becoming the country's 'pradhan sevak' for the third time."

He said the people of Kashi have blessed him by electing him as their representative for the third consecutive time and added that "ab to Maa Ganga ne bhee jaise mujhe god le liya hai, main yaheen ka ho gaya hoon (Now, it

seems as if Mother Ganga has also adopted me, I have become one of this place".

It is very rare in democratic countries for governments to be elected for a third consecutive term but the people of India did this, he said.

The people of Varanasi, Modi said, have not only chosen him as an MP for a third time but also as prime minister. He also asserted that agriculture will play big role in making 21st century India third largest economic power in world.

After being sworn-in as Prime Minister, Modi signed

his first file authorising the release of the 17th installment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.

He said decisions like building more than three crore houses for poor families or extending the PM Kisan Samman scheme across the country will help many.

On the results of the Lok Sabha elections, he said this victory gives huge confidence.

Modi said this trust of the people in him inspires him to continuously work hard to serve them and take the country to new heights.

Maliwal writes to I.N.D.I.A

CONTINUED FROM P1

Taking to X, Maliwal wrote, "For the last 18 years, I have worked on the ground and in 9 years, have heard 1.7 lakh cases in the Women's Commission. Without fearing anyone and bowing before anyone, I took the Women's Commission to a very high position. But it is very sad that first I was beaten badly at the Chief

Minister's house, then my character assassination was done."

"Today I have written a letter on this subject to senior leaders of the INDIA alliance. I have asked for time to meet them," she added.

Delhi's Tis Hazari court last week extended Bibhav Kumar's judicial custody till June 22.

Kumar was arrested on May 18 by Delhi Police. A case was registered by Delhi police after receiving a complaint from Maliwal on May 16. Bibhav Kumar has also filed a police complaint against Maliwal.

The incident of the alleged assault occurred on May 13 at Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's residence.

Data shows rail accidents have actually come down

CONTINUED FROM P1

2014, the average number of consequential train accidents was 171 per annum, which significantly declined to 68 per annum during the period from 2014 to 2024.

Officials pointed out the establishment of the Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh (RRSK) in 2017-18 with a substantial corpus of Rs. 1 lakh crore over five years. This fund was dedicated to the replacement, renewal, and upgradation of critical safety assets.

Similarly, in the realm of technology, the KAVACH system has been introduced for enhanced safety. Adopted as the National Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system, KAVACH ensured safer operations by automatically applying brakes when necessary, even in adverse weather conditions. By 2024, KAVACH had been implemented on 1,465

kilometers of track and 121 locomotives, safeguarding countless journeys.

Sources said due to the government's vision to make railway train accidents free, by January 2019, all unmanned level crossings on Broad Gauge routes were eliminated.

To further enhance safety, 6586 stations had been provided with Electronic Interlocking (EI) by May 31, 2024. Additionally, Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) was implemented on 4111 Rkm of High-Density Routes by Oct 2023. Safety at level crossing gates was addressed by interlocking 11137 gates with signals during the same time period.

Official records show that all locomotives are now equipped with Vigilance Control Devices (VCD) to ensure the alertness of loco pilots, and GPS-based Fog Safety Devices (FSD) have

been installed in fog-affected areas.

In the field of track safety, advanced Track Recording Cars have been introduced which are faster and more reliable. Complete track circuiting has already been provided at 6609 stations by the end of May 2023. To verify track safety, ultrasonic testing of rails is being conducted to detect flaws.

In the field of bridge safety, a Bridge Management System (BMS), a web-based IT application, has been developed to provide 24x7 access to bridge information which helps in bridge inspection. Other measures, such as continuous water level monitoring, drone inspections, and 3D scanning of riverbeds, have been introduced.

To improve the safety of rolling stock, advanced technologies like the Online Monitoring of Rolling Stock System (OMRS) and

Wheel Impact Load Detector (WILD) have been adopted for predictive maintenance. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags are being fitted to rolling stock for automatic tracking.

The replacement of conventional ICF design coaches with LHB design coaches is ongoing at frantic pace, sources said.

The railway ministry is also investing significantly in installation of fire detection systems in AC coaches and fire extinguishers in non-AC coaches. Details shared by officials comparing the safety performance parameters vis-à-vis 2004-14 and 2014-24 shows that the expenditure in safety related work has increased 2.5 times, from Rs. 70273 crore in 2004-14, to Rs. 178 lakh crore during 2014-24.

Similarly, track Renewal Expenditure increased 2.33 times, from Rs. 47018 crore

Tuesday said even if there was "0.001 per cent negligence" on the part of anyone in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2024 examination, it should be thoroughly dealt with.

Observing that students have to labour hard while preparing for these examinations, the apex court said the litigation pertaining to the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate)-2024 examination ought not be treated as adversarial.

Rahul slams PM Modi for 'silence' on NEET row

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for maintaining "silence" on the NEET exam issue and asserted that his party is committed to strongly raising the voice of the youth from the streets to the Parliament for ensuring strong policies against paper leaks.

The former Congress president said the arrests made in Bihar, Gujarat and Haryana clearly show that there has been organised corruption in the examination in a planned manner and added these BJP-ruled states have become the "epicentre" of paper leaks.

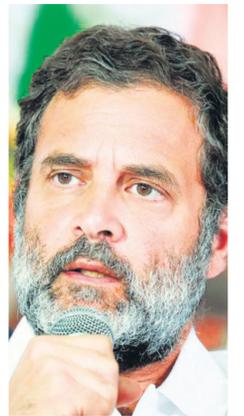
"Narendra Modi, as usual, is maintaining silence on the tampering with the future of more than 24 lakh students in the NEET examination," Gandhi said in a post on X in Hindi.

"The arrests made in Bihar, Gujarat and Haryana clearly show that there has been organised corruption in the examination in a planned manner and these BJP ruled states have become the epicentre of paper leak," he claimed.

In the manifesto, the Congress had guaranteed to secure the future of the youth by making strict laws against paper leaks.

"While fulfilling the responsibility of the opposition, we are committed to formulate such tough policies by strongly raising the voice of the youth from the streets to the Parliament and putting pressure on the government," he said.

Gandhi's remarks came after the Supreme Court on



“While fulfilling the responsibility of the opposition, we are committed to formulate such tough policies by strongly raising the voice of the youth from the streets to the Parliament and putting pressure on the government.”

Modi to participate in Yoga Day

CONTINUED FROM P1

community...We shall make Yoga implemented at every aspect of our life," Kotecha said. "This year the main celebration is happening at Srinagar. Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) will participate. In addition to this, the Jammu and Kashmir government is side by side by organising (Yoga events) at all district headquarters at the same time," Kotecha added. Kotecha added: "The special thing is this year all the offices of the government of India is celebrating (Yoga). All state governments are celebrating. Everywhere it is being celebrated".

Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolising the union of body and consciousness.

Kiran Choudhry quits Congress

CONTINUED FROM P1

compelled to look ahead at a fresh start, Choudhry said, "I have been a loyal and steadfast Member of the Congress Party for the last 4 decades and have, over these years, devoted my life to the Party and the people whom I represent."

"In Haryana, I also represent the rich legacy of Late Ch.

Since 2015, the International Day of Yoga has been celebrated across the world annually on June 21, following its adoption by the United Nations in 2014. Several Yoga events are being organised at various places in India and even outside the country ahead of International Yoga Day.

Ahead of the International Day of Yoga, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called upon people to reiterate their commitment to making yoga an integral part of their lives.

PM Modi shared a set of videos showing various 'Asanas' on X, describing their benefits. "As Yoga Day approaches, I am sharing a set of videos that will offer guidance on various Asanas and their benefits. I hope this inspires you all to practice Yoga regularly," the Prime Minister posted on X.

Bansi Lal, the architect of Modern Haryana and my late husband Ch. Surender Singh," the two-time former Cabinet Minister added. "The Congress Party in Haryana has unfortunately become one-person-centric who has compromised the interest of the Party for his own selfish and petty interests and it is thus time for

me to move on so that I may continue to uphold the interest of my people and the values that I stand for," Shrutika Choudhry said in her resignation letter.

In the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls, the Congress won five seats from Haryana, while the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party won five seats.

Oppn may exert pressure

CONTINUED FROM P1

clearer after the election of the Lok Sabha Speaker, scheduled for June 26. During Prime Minister Modi's last two terms, the BJP had a majority, so there were no issues. However, in his first term, Prime Minister Modi allocated the Deputy Speaker position to the AIADMK, a BJP ally.

Then Thambi Durai was the deputy speaker. But in the second tenure, the post of deputy speaker remained vacant.

This time BJP could not get majority on its own strength, as a result of which it had to

form the government with the help of allies.

The Opposition emerged strong and it is playing politics of pressure on the government for the post of Deputy Speaker.

The strategy of the Opposition is to keep the pressure on the government from the very first day. Therefore, the opposition leaders have definitely tried to provoke the BJP allies in the government, but they do not seem to be successful in their efforts. JDU's KC Tyagi has made it clear that he will support the BJP candidate.

Regarding the TDP, there

are two potential scenarios. If there is a consensus on D Purandeswari, the TDP might offer the Deputy Speaker post to another BJP ally. If no agreement is reached on Purandeswari, the BJP will propose other candidates, and the TDP could be offered the Deputy Speaker position.

Om Birla is making significant efforts from the BJP's side. After Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP President JP Nadda visited Birla's official residence on Monday, speculation grew that Birla might get another chance.

TERRIBLE DAY

WATER REMAINS SCARCE COMMODITY



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Long lines of people were seen queuing up on Tuesday to fetch water from tankers across parts of the national capital, as the city sizzled in the summer heat.

Morning visuals showed people from Kusumpur Pahadi in Vasant Vihar, Geeta Colony, and Okhla area seen standing in queues, holding onto cans and buckets and crowding around water tankers.

Amid soaring temperatures, these scenes have become a daily occurrence in the national capital in many areas since the start of the summer season this year.

A local resident from Okhla described her plight and said that their whole day goes into fetching water for the family. "The situation is much worse here. Only two to three tankers come here in a day. The whole day goes into fetching water, when will we do the rest of the work?" she said.

Chanakyapuri's Sanjay Camp, Geeta Colony in East Delhi, Patel Nagar, Mehrauli, and Chhatrapur are some of the areas in the national capital that have been affected by severe water crisis.



Delhi Jal Board providing less water for NDMC area, says NDMC

New Delhi: Kuljeet Singh Chahal, a member of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) on Tuesday targeted the Delhi Jal Board and said that the council is facing an acute water problem due to a shortage of water supply being provided by the Board during the past few days.

Out of three Water Treatment Plants, the Delhi Jal Board has not provided a single drop of water in the Wazirabad Plant, due to which hospitals like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital, Lady Hardinge Hospital are facing problems, the press release by NDMC said.

Chahal said that the minimum committed quantity of water supposed to be provided by the Delhi Jal Board to the NDMC is 125 million of litres per day (MLD). Water is being provided to NDMC by the Delhi Jal Board from mainly three Water Treatment Plants—Wazirabad, Chandrawal and Sonia Vihar.

Meanwhile, the water crisis has also incited a political storm in the national capital, with both BJP and AAP at loggerheads.

The Aam Aadmi Party has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of "orchestrating" the shortage in the national capital by trying to block the flow of water into the national capital.

The BJP has been blaming the AAP government for the water crisis saying that it did not take effective action against the tanker mafia who pilfer water. It even held protests in different parts of Delhi against the water crisis. Congress, which had

fought the recent Lok Sabha elections in alliance with the AAP in the national capital, has also held protests in the national capital.

Earlier on Monday, Delhi Water Minister Atishi appealed Haryana government to release the water and solve the problems of the people of Delhi amid the escalating water crisis and sweltering heat. Addressing the media persons, Atishi said, "Today we are here at Wazirabad barrack. Water from here is sent to various water treatment plants including Wazirabad, Chandrawal, and Okhla. Currently, no water is being released into the Wazirabad barrage. The

water level has stepped so low that now the river bed is visible. Again, we are appealing to the Haryana government to release the water and solve the problems of the people of Delhi."

“The situation is much worse here. Only two to three tankers come here in a day. The whole day goes into fetching water, when will we do the rest of the work?”
Alka, Resident

"Till the time Haryana doesn't release water into the Yamuna, water shortage will continue in Delhi.

Munak Canal receives very little water and on the other hand, Wazirabad Barrage receives no water. The water from Yamuna goes to water treatment and is then sent to Delhi's public after re-treatment. But there is no water in Yamuna, the reason why the supply is halted. I can just stand before the Haryana government with folded hands and appeal to save the lives of Delhi's public," she added.

On the other hand, Haryana Chief Minister took a potshot at Delhi's government for "neglecting" and "mismanaging" the issue of water supply.

Feels-like temp exceeds 50°C

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A severe heat wave engulfed Delhi, with temperatures peaking at 45.2 degrees Celsius on Monday, according to the India Meteorological Department's Safdarjung observatory centre. The weather office, however, has forecast some relief from June 19 onwards. Delhi remains under a 'red' alert through Tuesday, with temperatures expected to reach 45 degrees Celsius again. The Safdarjung observatory, the main weather station in Delhi, recorded a high of 45.2 degrees Celsius, which is 6.4 degrees above the seasonal average.

The heat index, or the feels-like temperature, in Delhi surged to 50 degrees Celsius on Monday and could remain in the range of 49-51 on Tuesday, according to IMD. Thereafter, on Wednesday, the heat index could drop to 47-49 range.

These extreme temperatures pose a significant risk of heat illness for individuals exposed to the sun for prolonged periods or those engaging in strenuous activities.

Amid heatwave, 7 people found dead with no injury marks

TDG NETWORK
NOIDA

Seven people were found dead in different parts of Noida in the last 24 hours without any visible signs of injury amid heat wave, with police on Tuesday saying the cause of deaths is yet to be ascertained.

According to police, an unidentified person, believed to be a ragpicker, was found dead near Gate No. 5 of Amity University in the Sector 126 area, while a 60-year-old man, appearing to be a nomad, was found dead in Sector 1, Noida.

"In Sector 58, two bodies were recovered in the Green Belt park near Khoda T-point. No visible injuries were observed on the bodies. The local police inspected the scene and sent



Rickshaw drivers rest under shade during a hot summer afternoon, in New Delhi on Tuesday.

the bodies for postmortem," police said in a statement. "Yesterday (Monday), another unidentified person was found unconscious in Sector 61. The individual was rushed to a hospital, where he died during treatment," it said. In the Expressway area, Brahmanand, 51, a security guard, "suddenly" fell ill and

was admitted to a hospital, where he was declared dead by doctors. In another case, Shyamal Bashak, a 45-year-old labourer from West Bengal currently residing in Greater Noida, also fell ill and was declared dead upon arrival at the Community Health Centre in Bhangel, the statement said.

Heatwave to severe heat wave conditions are likely over many parts of Uttar Pradesh and some parts of Haryana-

Chandigarh-Delhi as people in various parts of the country continue to grapple with severe heat conditions.

Heatwaves drive power demand to record high of 8,647 mw

New Delhi: The extreme heatwave continues to push Delhi's power demand northwards. According to the State Load Dispatch Centre data, at 3:22 PM on Tuesday, Delhi's peak power demand clocked 8,647 MW. It is the highest ever in the history of the national capital.

Delhi's peak power demand clocked 8000 MW for the first time on May 22, 2024. Since then, Delhi's peak power demand has crossed the 8000 MW mark on 8 occasions.

Before the records of 2024, Delhi's previous high of 7695 MW was recorded on June 29, 2022. Last year, Delhi's peak power demand was 7438 MW. Tuesday marks the 30th day in a row when Delhi's peak power demand has crossed the 7000 MW mark. Delhi's peak power demand never crossed 7000 MW during the month of May 2023 and crossed the 7000 MW mark in May only once in 2022. It is also important to remember that barring last year, when Delhi's demand peaked in August, it usually peaks during late June and early July. But the trend has changed this year. The surge in power demand can be attributed to weather conditions that led residents to use more air conditioning and coolers, leading to an increase in electricity consumption.

Influx of heat stroke patients in hospitals

New Delhi: Hospitals in Delhi-NCR are seeing an influx of patients with complaints of heat stroke and heat exhaustion as the mercury continues to soar in the national capital, with doctors advising the elderly and immunocompromised patients to avoid stepping outdoors. Last month, Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj had announced that the Delhi government-run hospitals will reserve two beds each for heatstroke patients while five beds will be reserved at the LNJP Hospital. Dr Ritu Saxena, deputy medical superintendent, LNJP Hospital, said, "We are getting eight to 10 patients every day. There are serious patients also who require ICU admission. Yesterday, we got two patients who were hospitalised and prior to that we had four ICU admissions."

"The patients who are developing severe illness are those who are elderly or have co-morbidities like hypertension, diabetes and Coronary Artery Disease (CAD). We are also getting few patients from other hospitals like Babu Jagjivan Ram Hospital and Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra Hospital," she said. The senior doctor said the rise has been in proportion with the intensifying of heatwave conditions.

NEET exam row: AAP protests, demands SC-monitored probe

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders staged a protest at the Jantar Mantar here on Tuesday against the alleged irregularities in the NEET exam. The AAP leaders demanded the cancellation of the exam and a Supreme Court monitored probe over the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the test. The protesters burnt copies of the NEET paper and raised slogans against the Central government.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh lashed out at the Centre and alleged the NEET exam shows its corruption. "The Ministry of Education and the NTA under it, along



with its leaders in BJP-ruled states, have messed up with the future of lakhs of children of the country. Therefore, our demand is that this NEET exam should be cancelled and the exam should be held again," he said.

Singh claimed that the NEET results were to come on June 14, but were released 10 days earlier on June 4.

"So that the media remains busy with the election results and there is no discussion

about the BJP's paper leak. There should be an investigation as to why the NEET results were released on June 4 instead of June 14," he said. The AAP leader exhorted the youth and students of this country to come forward and raise their voice.

"Today we have raised your voice on the road. The Parliament session is going to start from June 24 and the session of the Rajya Sabha will start from June 27.

Ashwani Kumar new MCD commissioner

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Union home ministry has appointed senior IAS officer Ashwani Kumar as MCD commissioner. Kumar will succeed Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Gyanesh Bharti, who was transferred to the Union women and child development ministry as additional secretary in March.

Kumar is currently serving as the Delhi divisional commissioner and the additional chief secretary (home) in the Delhi government.

He was the first special officer of the unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). "I am directed to say that with approval from the competent authority, it is



decided to appoint Ashwani Kumar, IAS (AGMUT), 1992, as commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, with immediate effect," according to a home ministry order to the Raj Niwas.

Kumar is a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre.

Massive fire breaks out at 3-storey factory in Shahdara

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A massive fire broke out at a three-storey factory in Raghubar Pura of Shahdara in the national capital on Tuesday.

Upon receiving the information, six fire tenders rushed to the spot. Efforts to control the fire are underway.

Further details are awaited. Earlier on Sunday, a massive fire broke out at an LED light manufacturing unit in Mundka industrial area of the national capital, according to officials.

However, no casualties were reported. According to the Delhi Fire Services Department



officials, they received a call about the fire at 83/6, Company Mundka Industrial Area at 7:17 am.

Immediately after getting word about the incident, fire tenders reached the spot to carry out the fire extinguish-

ing procedure.

According to Delhi Police, following the information, local staff immediately reached the spot and found that initially there was a fire on a vacant plot. Later, it spread to a nearby factory.

Man killed in Burari area, accused held

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old man was killed and robbed of Rs 5,500 by one of his friend in Burari area of north Delhi, police on Tuesday said. The accused has been identified as Love (21), they said.

"On June 11, at 7:18 pm, a PCR call was received at the Burari police station regarding a man lying in an injured condition. The injured was shifted to the BJRM Hospital by the staff wherein he was declared brought dead by the doctors," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) Manoj Kumar Meena.

The police initially suspected the case as an accidental death and registered an FIR, he added.

Subsequently, the spot was examined forensically.

"On June 14, the deceased was identified as Neeraj of Sant Nagar area in Burari...A case of 302 (murder) of the IPC was registered. During the course of investigation, the family members revealed that the deceased was unmarried and had left the house alone at about 12.30 am on June 10 under the influence of alcohol carrying his mobile phone and some cash with him," the DCP said.

The police checked 100 CCTVs during the investigation. The deceased was seen going with two persons on a motorcycle, police said.

"We traced the motorcycle and apprehended Love and Rajan Kumar (22). Both Love and Rajan were roaming in

the town under the influence of alcohol on the intervening night of June 10 and 11. As the deceased and they were known to each other, they convinced him to come along and have some more drinks. All three went near Ashok Vihar," said the DCP.

They purchased liquor and returned near Mukundpur Flyover and drank again. Rajan left the spot, leaving Neeraj and Love.

The accused Love was having knowledge that Neeraj is carrying cash with him, said the DCP. The accused Love with the intention to rob murdered Neeraj by hitting his head multiple times with a cemented beam lying on the roadside "We recovered Rs 2,500 and robbed mobile phone from the accused.

Airport launches 'Quick Drop Solution' to reduce luggage waiting time

TDG 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 Terminal 3, passengers can enjoy a seamless and ef-

ficient 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 board-

ing 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. The Quick Drop Solution not only speeds up the baggage drop process but also ensures a smoother, more enjoyable journey for our passengers.

2 'Thak-Thak' gang members held; theft case solved, claims police

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

With the arrest of two members of 'Thak-Thak' gang including a woman, the Delhi Police on Tuesday claimed to have solved a theft case where diamond jewellery worth Rs 1 crore was stolen from a car in Agra. According to police, they have recovered 23 diamond articles from the accused out of 36 articles which were reportedly stolen from the car of a diamond merchant last week.

The male accused has been identified as Kunal (23), a resident of Madangir in Delhi. However, police have not revealed the name of the 38-year-old woman accused

who is from Inderpuri area. Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Ankit Chauhan said that members of the gang mainly target businessmen and jewellery shop owners moving in luxury vehicles.

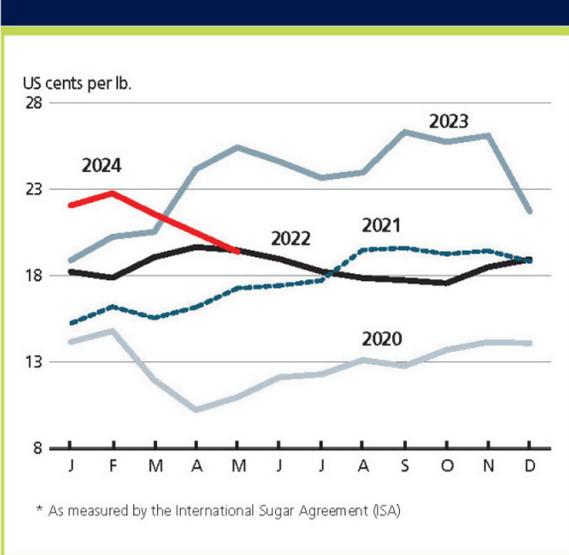
Elaborating about the gang's modus operandi, Chauhan said, "The gang members move in group of two to four people riding motorcycle/scooter and use different techniques of 'thak-thak' to commit snatching/thefts from the vehicles."

"After setting the target, they used to stop the targeted vehicles by diverting the attention of the driver or passengers.

FAO: SUGAR OUTPUT TO RISE, MEAT PRODUCTION MAY GO UP marginally

Global milk production will increase to 979 million tonnes in 2024, says the biannual report

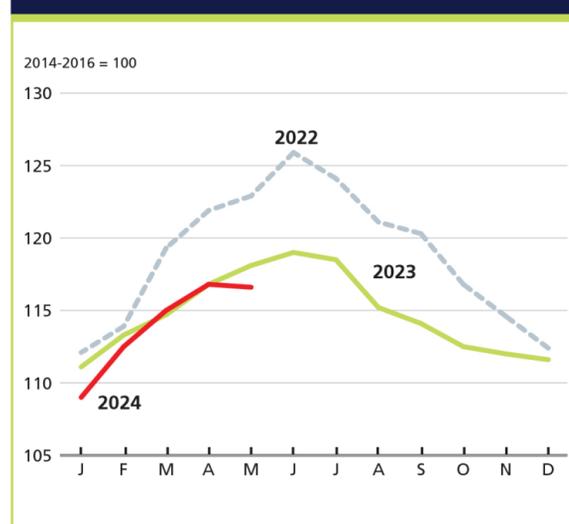
INTERNATIONAL SUGAR PRICES*



FAO INTERNATIONAL DAIRY PRICE INDEX (2014-2016 = 100)



FAO INTERNATIONAL MEAT PRICE INDEX (2014-2016 = 100)



WORLD SUGAR MARKET AT A GLANCE

	2021/22	2022/23 <i>estim.</i>	2023/24 <i>f'cast</i>	Change: 2023/24 over 2022/23
<i>million tonnes</i>				
WORLD BALANCE				%
Production	174.6	178.8	179.4	0.29
Trade*	62.4	62.7	63.3	0.97
Total utilization	173.8	174.9	177.4	1.43
Ending stocks	111.9	115.6	117.4	1.52
SUPPLY AND DEMAND INDICATORS				
Per caput food consumption:				
World (kg/yr)	22.0	22.0	22.1	0.55
LIFDC (kg/yr)	12.4	12.5	12.5	0.40
World stocks-to-use ratio (%)	64.4	66.1	66.2	0.09
ISA DAILY PRICE AVERAGE (US cents/lb)	2022	2023	2024 <i>Jan-May</i>	Change: Jan-May 2024 over Jan-May 2023 %
	18.49	23.43	21.14	-3.16%

*Trade figures refer to exports.

WORLD DAIRY MARKET AT A GLANCE

	2022	2023 <i>estim.</i>	2024 <i>f'cast</i>	Change: 2024 over 2023
<i>million tonnes (milk equivalent)</i>				
WORLD BALANCE				%
Total milk production	951.6	965.2	978.5	1.4
Total trade	85.6	84.7	85.4	0.8
SUPPLY AND DEMAND INDICATORS				
Per caput food consumption:				
World (kg/year)	119.4	120.0	120.6	0.4
<i>Trade - share of prod. (%)</i>	9.0	8.8	8.7	-0.5
FAO DAIRY PRICE INDEX (2014-2016=100)	2022	2023	2024 <i>Jan-May</i>	Change: Jan-May 2024 over Jan-May 2023 %
	150	124	123	-8.4

WORLD MEAT MARKET AT A GLANCE

	2022	2023 <i>estim.</i>	2024 <i>f'cast</i>	Change: 2024 over 2023
<i>million tonnes (carcass weight equivalent)</i>				
WORLD BALANCE				%
Production	364.7	370.0	370.7	0.2
Bovine meat	75.8	76.7	77.2	0.7
Poultry meat	142.7	145.1	146.2	0.8
Pig meat	122.8	124.5	123.3	-0.9
Ovine meat	16.8	17.1	17.3	0.8
Trade	41.1	40.5	41.2	1.8
Bovine meat	11.7	11.9	12.1	1.9
Poultry meat	16.1	16.1	16.3	1.5
Pig meat	10.7	9.8	10.1	2.5
Ovine meat	1.1	1.2	1.3	3.5
SUPPLY AND DEMAND INDICATORS				
Per caput food consumption:				
World (kg/year)	45.5	45.8	45.5	-0.7
<i>Trade - share of prod. (%)</i>	11.3	10.9	11.1	1.6
FAO MEAT PRICE INDEX (2014-2016=100)	2022	2023	2024 <i>Jan-May</i>	Change: Jan-May 2024 over Jan-May 2023 %
	119	115	114.0	-0.7

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY

PRIYANKA GANDHI CONTEST FROM WAYANAD SEAT		DATE: 18 TH JUNE 2024
MALE: 93%		FEMALE: 7%
Q-1 What is your opinion on the announcement of Priyanka Gandhi contesting elections from Wayanad seat?		
A- Right decision of Congress	43.00%	
B- Priyanka's entry was delayed	18.00%	
C- South India got a strong face	24.00%	
D- Can't say	15.00%	
Q-2 Will Priyanka Gandhi's entry in Parliament be of great benefit to the Congress/Indian alliance?		
A-yes	66.00%	
B-no	32.00%	
C-Can't say	2.00%	
Q-3 What should be the next big role for Priyanka Gandhi in Congress?		
A- Leader of Opposition	21.00%	
B-Congress President	26.00%	
C- wait now	46.00%	
D-Can't say	7.00%	
Q-4 There are reports of tussle between Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, your opinion?		
A- There is a tug of war	19.00%	
B- There is no tension	31.00%	
C- Propaganda of opponents	39.00%	
D-Can't say	11.00%	

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY

MU ZAFFARPUR HOSTAGE CASE		DATE: 18 TH JUNE 2024
MALE: 93%		FEMALE: 7%
Q-1 Is the incident of taking hostage of more than a hundred girls in Muzaffarpur a failure of Nitish government?		
A-yes	84.00%	
B-no	13.00%	
C-Can't say	3.00%	
Q-2 Torture of girls has been going on in Muzaffarpur for two years, what do you think is the reason?		
A- Protection of police	58.00%	
B- Failure of local intelligence	10.00%	
C- Silence of the local people	27.00%	
D-Can't say	5.00%	
Q-3 Can cases like Muzaffarpur hostage case be prevented by social activism?		
A-yes	97.00%	
B-no	2.00%	
C-Can't say	1.00%	
Q-4 Should there be bulldozer action against organized criminals like Muzaffarpur hostage case?		
A-yes	85.00%	
B-no	10.00%	
C-Can't say	5.00%	



POWER UTILITIES ASKED TO BE ON HIGH ALERT AS DEMAND RISES

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The power ministry on Tuesday said it has asked all utilities "to maintain a high state of alert and minimise forced outages of equipment" amid heatwave pushing electricity demand, especially in the northern region where Monsoon is yet to arrive. The country's northern region has been experiencing high electricity demand due to a prevailing heatwave since May 17, 2024, the ministry said in a statement.

Despite these challenging conditions, the ministry said, the highest ever peak demand of 89 GW in the northern region was successfully met on June 17, 2024.

It was made possible by importing 25-30 per cent of the region's power requirement from neighbouring



regions, it said. "All utilities have been advised to maintain a high state of alert and minimise forced outages of equipment," the statement said.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast, heatwave conditions in North-West India are expected to abate from June 20.

In response to the increased electricity demand and to ensure adequate power availability across the country, the Ministry of Power has implemented a series

of measures to meet the highest ever peak demand of 250 GW during the ongoing summer season.

The ministry has estimated that peak demand can touch a level of 260 GW during this season.

These measures include directions issued under Section 11 of the Electricity Act, 2003, for ICB (imported coal based) plants to continue the generation support during the high demand period.

The ministry has instructed power generating units to have minimum planned

maintenance during this period.

Efforts are being made to minimise partial and forced outages to maximise the availability of generation capacity, it stated, adding that plants under long-term outage have been sensitised to revive their units to ensure maximum power generation. All generating companies (GENCOs) have been advised to keep their plants in healthy condition to ensure full capacity availability for optimal operation of various generation sources, it stated. About the coal stock maintenance, it stated that adequate coal stocks are being maintained at coal-based thermal stations.

The hydro stations have been advised to conserve water during solar hours and dispatch maximum generation during non-solar hours to ensure power adequacy at all times, it stated.

India, US agree to step up cooperation on semiconductors, critical minerals

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India and the US have agreed to closer engagement and cooperation on supply chain, semiconductors and critical minerals during the meeting of the India-US initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), led by Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his US counterpart Jake Sullivan in New Delhi.

India and the US Monday launched a new strategic semiconductors partnership to co-develop semiconductor design and manufacturing processes for precision-guided ammunition.

"Launching a new strategic semiconductor partnership between General Atomics and 3rdTech to co-develop semiconductor design and manufacturing for precision-guided ammunition and other national security-focused electronics platforms," read the fact sheet issued by the



US and India.

Semiconductors (essential for defence, automobiles and telecommunications sectors) have grown into a key geopolitical battleground, with the US, Japan and China investing heavily in developing domestic capabilities.

"Celebrating the conclusion of a joint Semiconductor Readiness Assessment through a partnership between the US Semiconductor Industry Association and the India Electronics Semiconductor Association, which identifies near-term industry opportunities and facilitates longer-term strategic development of complementary

semiconductor ecosystems," the factsheet added. This engagement with Indian and US investors in the semiconductor industry in India aims to continue building India's robust semiconductor and information communication technology ecosystem.

Notably, India in March approved three semiconductor plant proposals, aiming to bolster India's semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem. The projects entail an estimated investment of Rs 1.26 lakh crore and are expected to significantly contribute to India's electronics manufacturing sector.

Tata Electronics and Tai-

wan's Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp. (PSMC) will establish India's first semiconductor fabrication plant (fab) in Dholera, Gujarat. Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test Pvt Ltd (TSAT) will set up a semiconductor unit in Morigaon, Assam. CG Power, in partnership with Renesas Electronics Corp., Japan, and Stars Microelectronics, Thailand, will establish a semiconductor unit in Sanand, Gujarat. US and India also aimed to work together to ensure a reliable supply of critical minerals, which are essential for clean energy technologies and other important industries. "Promoting India's vital role in the Mineral Security Partnership, including through co-investing in a lithium resource project in South America and a rare earths deposit in Africa, to responsibly and sustainably diversify critical mineral supply chains," read the fact sheet.

NIA seizes over Rs 1 crore used for funding studies of Maoist leaders

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday seized more than Rs 1 crore, extorted from contractors and others in Bihar and Jharkhand, which was being used to finance medical studies of a relative of a senior Maoist leader. The seizure came as part of the agency's probe into a 2021 case pertaining to a conspiracy hatched by members of the banned outfit CPI (Maoist) for its revival in Magadh zone and to raise funds for the organisation.

"In a major seizure linked with the CPI (Maoist) Magadh zone attempted revival case, the NIA on Tuesday seized, as proceeds of terrorism, funds extorted from contractors and others in Bihar and Jharkhand which were used to finance the medical studies of a relative of some of the accused," the probe agency said in a statement.

Magadh division in Bihar largely covers areas falling under Gaya, Nawada, Aurangabad, Jehanabad and Arwal districts.



The money, amounting to Rs 1,13,70,500, has been seized in the case registered suo motu by the NIA on December 30, 2021, the statement said.

"NIA investigations revealed that the said amount had been directly transferred to the bank account of a medical college in Chennai, Tamil Nadu for the medical education of a relative of a senior Maoist leader," it said.

The transfer was done through bank accounts of close relatives of the accused persons, under the garb of a loan amount, it added.

"The beneficiary of the funds extorted by CPI (Maoist) is the niece of the FIR named charge sheeted against and Special Area Committee member of

CPI (Maoist) Pradyuman Sharma. She is also sister of arrested charge sheeted accused Tarun Kumar, and cousin of arrested charge sheeted accused Abhinav alias Gaurav alias Bittu," the NIA said.

The NIA had, on January 20 last year, filed a charge sheet before its special court in Ranchi, Jharkhand against two accused persons under various sections of Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

In June last year, the agency had filed its first supplementary charge sheet in the case against one more accused, followed by a second supplementary charge sheet against two others in December 2023, the statement said.

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 In-

dia'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 growing 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 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.

1.52 lakh safety category posts vacant, says Railways in RTI reply

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Out of around 10 lakh sanctioned posts under the safety category in the Indian Railways, more than 1.5 lakh are vacant, the Railway Ministry has said in response to an application under the Right to Information Act in March. Officials, however, have said the safety of trains is of top-most priority and the railways has made significant investments in this matter in the past 10 years while also taking up many structural and systemic improvements that have had a positive impact on safe operations.

Safety category posts include train drivers, inspectors, crew controllers, loco instructors, train controllers, track maintainers, station masters, pointsmen, electric signal maintainers and signalling supervisors among others.

Being directly involved in the running of trains, personnel in these posts are crucial to safe train operations. "The total number of sanctioned, on roll (working) and vacant posts in safety category of Indian Railways,



as available in this office, as on 01.03.2024 (provisional) are: 10,00,941, 8,48,207 and 1,52,734 respectively," the ministry said in response to the RTI application.

Responding to a question in the RTI application about vacant posts of loco pilots (mail/express/passenger/goods/shunting), the Railway Ministry said out of a total sanctioned post of 70,093, as many as 14,429 are vacant.

Chandra Shekhar Gaur, the RTI applicant based in Madhya Pradesh, said, "The response shows the Railways also suffers due to the vacancy in post of the assistant drivers. Out of the total sanctioned posts of 57,551 for assistant drivers, 4,337 are vacant."

In the RTI application, Gaur also sought to know how many new posts were

created and how many posts were surrendered in the Indian Railways in the past four years.

To this, the Railways replied, "It is stated that this information is not centrally maintained in this office. It is scattered. It pertains to more than one Public Authority i.e. All Zonal Railways and Production Units etc."

"The ministry advised me that such information can be obtained from the public authorities concerned by submitting separate applications to them under the RTI Act. I think such crucial information should be centrally maintained," Gaur said.

Railway trade unions have raised the issue of rising stress on officials and workers in the safety category due to a shortage of personnel.

Brahmaputra River rises due to torrential rain

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

The water level of the Brahmaputra River has risen following incessant rainfall in parts of Assam and neighbouring states.

The water level of the Kopili River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra River, is flowing above the danger level mark at Kampur in Nagaon district, according to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority.

"Right now the water level is going up and down. There is a statue in the middle of the river and when the water reaches its neck, we realize that the water level has risen," a local said.

Notably, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday, issued a week-long forecast predicting continuous rainfall in Guwahati.

Alerts have been issued for various parts of the country, including Assam and Meghalaya, where heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected until June 20.

IMD has specifically warned of exceptionally heavy rainfall on June 18, ie,



Tuesday.

"Assam and Meghalaya is very likely to get isolated heavy (64.5-115.5 mm) to very heavy rainfall (115.5-204.4 mm) on 16th & 17th June and exceptionally heavy rainfall on 18th June whereas likely to get heavy (64.5-115.5 mm) to very heavy rainfall (115.5-204.4 mm) on 19 and 20th June," IMD said on its official Twitter account on Sunday.

The streets of Anil Nagar and Chandmari areas in Guwahati were severely waterlogged on Monday, disrupting normal life, following heavy rainfall in the region. A resident of Anil Nagar urged the administration for a solution.

"Water fell during the night

and there is so much water that it has filled up. How will we come and go here? I want to tell the administration that we need a diversion here because, without diversion, there is no solution," the resident said.

Meanwhile, Cyclone Remal has brought about intense rainfall in Assam, leading to widespread flooding.

14 districts and 309 villages have been affected due to the floods with Karimganj being the worst affected, as per the Assam State Disaster Management Authority.

According to the latest bulletin, 1,05,786 people in rural Assam have been impacted and 1005.7 hectares of crop area is also affected due to the floods.

Bypolls to 5 legislative council vacancies in 4 states on July 12

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Bypolls to fill five legislative council vacancies in four states will be held on July 12, the Election Commission said on Tuesday. Elections to three of the five seats were necessitated due to the resignation of members of legislative council (MLCs) and to the remaining two due to disqualification.

In Karnataka, former chief minister Jagadish Shettar had resigned as an MLC in January. He had quit the BJP and joined the Congress after being denied a ticket to contest the election from the Dharwad Central Assembly seat which he represented.

Shettar had later rejoined the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha polls and won the parliamentary election.

A vacancy was created in the Uttar Pradesh legislative council when Swami Prasad Maurya quit the Samajwadi Party and resigned from the House in February.

One seat each in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh fell vacant due to the disqualification of sitting members.

'Mann Ki Baat' to resume from June 30

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced that his monthly radio broadcast, Mann Ki Baat, will resume on June 30.

PM Modi also called upon the people to share their ideas and inputs for his radio broadcast on MyGov Open Forum, NaMo App or by record message on 1800 11 7800

"Delighted to share that after a gap of some months due to the elections, #MannKiBaat is back! This month's programme will

take place on Sunday, 30th June. I call upon all of you to share your ideas and inputs for the same. Write on the MyGov Open Forum, NaMo App or record your message on 1800 11 7800," PM Modi said in a post on X.

Prime Minister Modi's monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast was last aired on February 25, after which it was stopped considering the Lok Sabha elections.

"Mann Ki Baat will not be broadcast for the next three months in view of upcoming Lok Sabha polls," PM Modi had said in his 110th edition of the programme.

The 2024 Lok Sabha elections took place from April 19 to June 1, in seven phases. The votes were counted and the results were declared on June 4, leading to the formation of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Mann Ki Baat is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme, where he discusses important national themes and issues with citizens of India.

Launched on October 3, 2014, Mann Ki Baat aims to connect with various segments of Indian society, encompassing women, the elderly, and the youth.

The programme is broad-

cast on the last Sunday of every month. Apart from 22 Indian languages and 29 dialects, 'Mann Ki Baat' is broadcast in 11 foreign languages, including French, Chinese, Indonesian, Tibetan, Burmese, Baluchi, Arabic, Pashtu, Persian, Dari, and Swahili. Mann Ki Baat was broadcast by more than 500 broadcast centres of All India Radio.

A study conducted regarding the impact of 'Mann Ki Baat' on the lives of the people showed that over 100 crore people have connected to 'Mann Ki Baat' at least once, it speaks directly to people.

Jungle Safari in Raipur all set to welcome new animals

TDG NETWORK
RAIPUR

Nandanvan Jungle Safari in Chhattisgarh's capital is all set to welcome new guests like chimpanzee, zebra, Assam's monkey, ring-tailed lemur and other animals.

The authority of the jungle safari is planning to develop new enclosures for the new animals.

"Presently, the Jungle Safari is housing 28 animals

in 36 enclosures and in the future eight more enclosures will be developed here. The authority here is planning to bring different animals like chimpanzees, zebra, Assam monkey and ring-tailed lemur," Director of Jungle Safari Ganveer Dhammshil, elaborating that process in this direction is underway.

According to the requirements of different animals and parameters of Central

Zoo Authority, the enclosure will be developed, said the officer.

He elaborated that the enclosure for zebra will be sprawling in an area of around 10000 square meters while 700 meters will be for monkeys. Enclosures of different sizes will be developed for separate animals.

The jungle safari will have a special animal keeper to take care of the new ani-

mals, informed Dhammshil and further added that the animals will be provided with separate diets, sitting arrangements, trees and spaces for movement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the massive man-made jungle safari, spread around 800 acres of land, in Naya Raipur on November 1, 2016. The Jungle Safari includes four safaris: herbivore, Lion, Tiger, and bear.

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. INDI Alliance is in a strong position with 234 seats. The first challenge before the NDA is regarding the selection & 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 \$5 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 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 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 educa-

tion, 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 - ASMSOC - NMIMS University, Economist and Political Analyst

PERSPECTIVE
FLAIR AND EMOTIONCANDIDATE
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 complements 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! 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

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



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 autonomy 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?

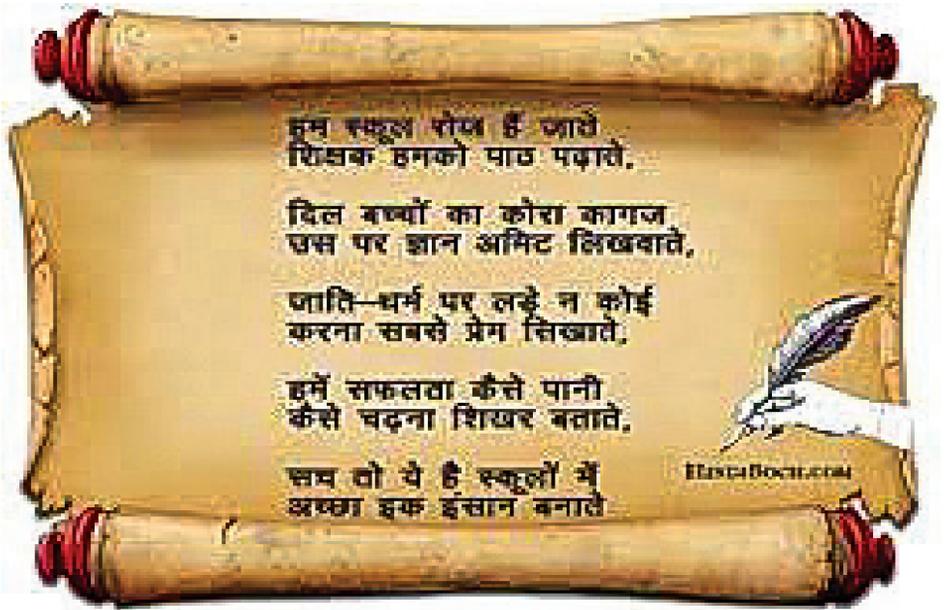
We need not believe in fate nor in miracles but the act

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.

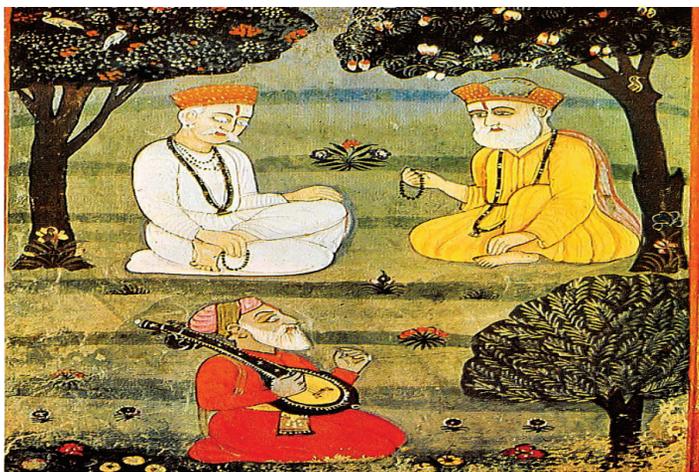


MYSTIC POET KABIR

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 poems translated by the great Rabindranath Tagore.

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 saints 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 saints 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

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 are a true seeker, thou

shalt at once see Me: thou shall 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 railed 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 gu-

rus 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 WhatsApp 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

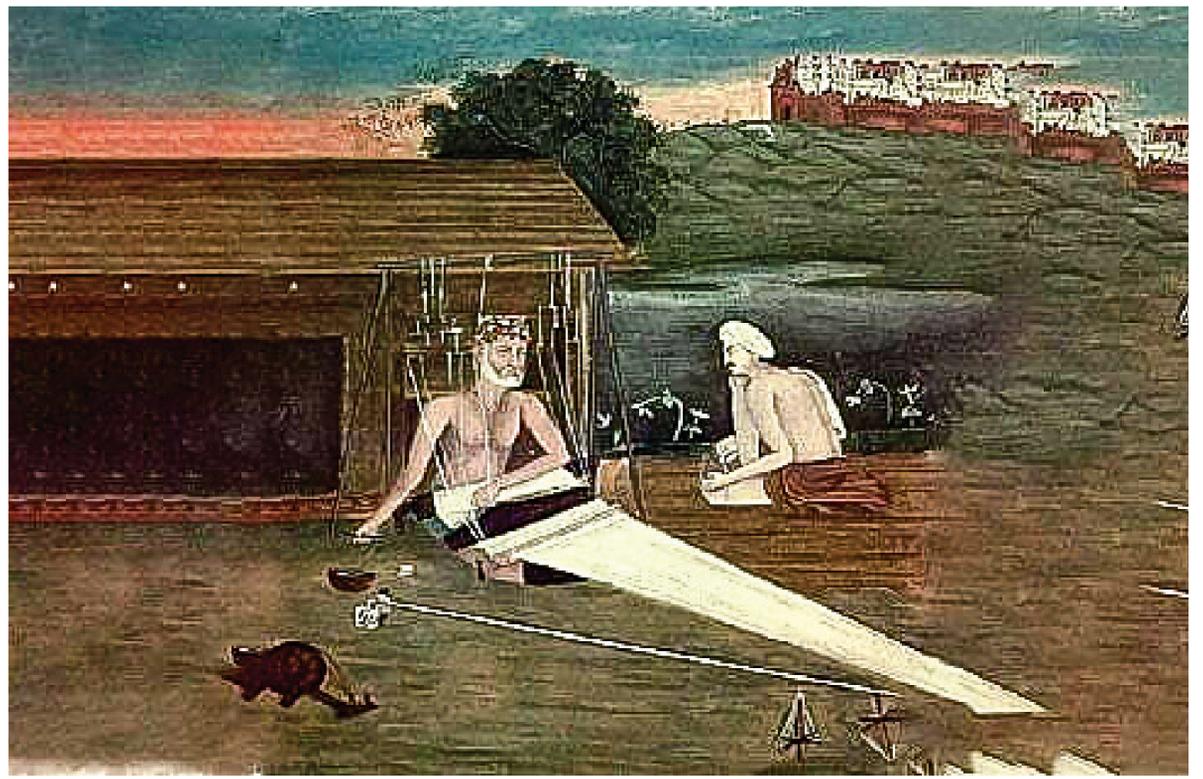
Kabir says, 'Listen to me, dear Sadhu!'

'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 Nations for over two decades across three continents.)



Kabir Das



Kabir Das spent his life coordinating the religion by giving a universal path that all human beings can follow.

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 consensus 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 spurious 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 RI.

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 Rajasekhar 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 transgender 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 Udipi 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 RI.

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. Thangkhiew 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 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 retiral 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 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 retiral 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 filing of repeated FIRs for same allegations amounted to abuse of the process of law.

On the other hand, the application filed was countered by the counsel for the complainant who contended that it had been concluded in the chargesheet that after fabricating the documents, thus, the applicant also destroyed the evidences as well as threatened the material witnesses as

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's 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. 2,00,000 as compensatory cost.

Following this, Arvind had also moved an execution petition.

PROTEST RALLY HELD IN TURBAT ON EID TO DEMAND RECOVERY OF MISSING PERSONS

AGENCIES
TURBAT

The families of forcibly disappeared individuals held a protest rally on the first day of Eid in the central city of Kech, Turbat. The demonstration saw a large turnout, with participants demanding the recovery of their missing loved ones.

The families, joined by supporters, have also established a sit-in at Shaheed Fida Chowk, determined to draw attention to their plight.

This ongoing protest has gained notable support from the community and various human rights organizations.

The Baloch Yakjehti Committee, a prominent advocacy group, has been vocal about the issue on social media.

Citing a United Nations report, the committee emphasised the broader impact of enforced disappearances.



“Enforced disappearance has frequently been used as a strategy to spread terror within society. The feeling of insecurity generated by this practice is not limited to the close relatives of the disappeared but also affects their communities and society as a whole. It is a crime against humanity,” the committee stated in a post on X.

The committee further criticized the state of Pakistan, accusing it of dehumanizing the Baloch people through systematic enforced disappearances and alleged genocide.

“However, the State of Pakistan constantly reminds us by committing this crime and our genocide—that Baloch doesn’t qualify to be human. The international community and human

rights advocates, proud of their humanity, seem to agree with the state by keeping their silence on crimes against the Baloch people,” the statement added.

The protest on Eid highlighted the emotional toll on the families of the disappeared.

“On every Eid, Baloch mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, wives and children, friends and relatives; torn by the pain of their disappeared loved ones, look to the world and ask: when did they lose their humanity to deserve this tyranny?” the Baloch Yakjehti Committee expressed.

They implored the global community to break their silence and advocate for the release of those held in captivity.

“We are humans, free our loved ones from dark dungeons and give us back our humanity,” the BYC said.

EU raises human rights concerns with China in 39th Dialogue session

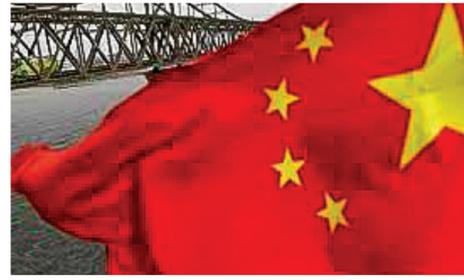
AGENCIES
CHONGQING

The European Union reiterated its persistent concerns regarding fundamental freedoms, labour rights, judicial independence, and cases of forced labour in China, during the 39th session of the joint Human Rights Dialogue held in Chongqing.

The session, which took place on June 16, followed a side visit to Tibet from June 13-15.

In a press statement, the EU voiced concerns over restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly, and religion in Tibet. It also highlighted the issues of rights to equality and freedom from discrimination, including the rights of women and LGBT.

The EU also reiterated its unequivocal opposition to the death penalty, urging China to implement a moratorium and provide transparent data on its use.



It emphasized that religious leaders should be selected without government interference, respecting religious norms, particularly in the case of the Dalai Lama’s succession.

The EU highlighted the vulnerability of religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, including Uyghurs and Tibetans, the negative impact of Hong Kong’s new national security legislation on rights and freedoms, and the erosion of the region’s autonomy.

Expressing deep concerns over the human rights situation in Xinjiang, Tibetan ar-

reas, and Hong Kong, the EU cited reports of crackdowns on human rights defenders, lawyers, and journalists.

It further urged Beijing to stop human rights violations and investigate the cases of unlawful detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and ill-treatment.

Specific cases raised included EU citizen Gui Minhai, Uyghur academic Ilham Tohti, and Tibetan Activists Go Sherab Gyatso and Tashi Dorje.

The EU also addressed the detention of individuals for exercising freedoms of religion, belief, expression, and

peaceful assembly, highlighting the cases of Xu Na, Pastor Wang Yi, Zhang Chunlei, Ding Yuande, Yu Wensheng, Xu Yan, Zhang Zhan, Li Qiaochu, Peng Lifa, and Kamile Wayit.

The European Union also called for a reassessment of China’s national security framework to ensure compliance with international human rights law.

It encouraged Beijing to invite UN Special Procedures and monitoring bodies to assess and improve its human rights record.

China, in response, discussed the situation of refugees, migrants, and manifestations of racism in the EU, and focused on economic, social, and cultural rights there.

The EU also updated China on incoming European legislation requiring human rights due diligence for companies and prohibiting products made with forced labour on the EU market.

Thousands of protesters seek early polls, Gaza hostages’ release

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

Tens of thousands of protesters gathered in front of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) demanding early elections and the release of hostages in Gaza, The Times of Israel reported.

The anti-government protesters gathered in front of the Knesset and later marched towards Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s home, where violent clashes broke out with police, with at least three people requiring hospitalization.

Authorities stated that they had permitted the protest to continue until a few of the attendees attempted to scale the crowd control barriers erected around Netanyahu’s home.

Police said at least nine people were taken into cus-



today. Outside Netanyahu’s house, demonstrators were again met with the threat of a water cannon by police, who they claimed were using excessive force. The Times of Israel reported. The demonstrations were part of the second day of what has been branded a “week of disruption” by various protest groups.

There were also chants

calling for fresh elections and accusing Netanyahu of being “guilty” of the October 7 failures during the protests.

Netanyahu has stated time and time again that elections shouldn’t take place while the conflict in Gaza is still going on. The next general elections in Israel are formally scheduled to be in October 2026, according to The Times of Israel.

Former Thai PM Shinawatra released on bail

AGENCIES
BANGKOK

Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has been released on bail amounting to 500,000 baht following his arraignment on charges of lese-majeste and computer crimes related to remarks made during a 2015 interview, Bangkok Post reported.

The Criminal Court granted bail after Thaksin reported to public prosecutors on Tuesday morning and appeared for his arraignment, as confirmed by the Office of the Attorney-General’s spokesman.

Prayut Phetcharakhun, 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 councillors, which led to the ousting of his sister Yingluck Shinawatra’s government.

South Korea fires warning shots as North Korean soldiers cross border

AGENCIES
SEOUL

South Korea’s military said that a group of 20 to 30 North Korean soldiers crossed the border early Tuesday morning, prompting South Korean forces to respond with warning shots. The incident occurred around 8:30 am local time in the central part of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), according to Yonhap news agency citing the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

The JCS clarified that the North Korean soldiers swiftly retreated after South Korean forces fired the warnings shots, indicating that the crossing was likely unintentional. A similar event occurred just over a week ago in the same DMZ sector.

Additionally, South Korean military officials said that several North Korean



soldiers had been injured or killed in recent landmine explosions near the border, though the exact timing of these incidents was not specified. The DMZ and its surroundings are notorious for being heavily fortified and mined, making it one of the world’s most heavily militarised borders, according to Yonhap News agency.

“Numerous casualties have resulted from multiple landmine explosions in the

frontline area,” stated the JCS during a briefing.

Last November, North Korea announced its decision to nullify a 2018 military agreement with South Korea and escalated its troop presence along the border. This action followed South Korea’s suspension of parts of the agreement in response to North Korea’s launch of its first military reconnaissance satellite, as reported by Al Jazeera.

Taiwan warns China for influencing political party recruitment

AGENCIES
TAIPEI

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) of Taiwan issued a stern warning, cautioning against the formation of political entities under foreign influences. This advisory follows allegations that a Chinese entity attempted to recruit Taiwanese celebrities to establish a political party, Focus Taiwan reported.

Taiwanese have the right to form political parties but cannot accept instructions or funding from foreign forces to develop parties, as this would violate the National Security Act and the Anti-Infiltration Act, the MOI said in a statement.

The statement was prompted by social media posts made by Taiwanese singer



R-chord on June 14 and actress Alexis Ho on June 15. These posts detailed efforts by Beijing Ciguang Film and Television Media Co, Ltd, a Chinese company, to recruit them via email for pro-China activities. Screenshots of the emails revealed that the artists were invited to release a statement titled “Establish a new type of cross-strait relations” on their Facebook

pages, after which they would be appointed as vice chairpersons of a purported “Taiwan Pro-Peace Party.” The correspondence also promised lucrative employment opportunities with an annual income exceeding NTD10 million (USD308,950), projecting recruitment of at least 1,000 founding members for the party, as reported by Focus Taiwan.

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

AGENCIES
TAIPEI

Taiwan’s Defence Minister Wellington Koo announced on Monday that the island nation is set to 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, Focus Taiwan reported.

The timeline update came during a legislative session in response to queries from ruling Democratic Progressive Party lawmaker Wang Ting-yu about the delivery schedule.

Originally allocated NTD11.81 billion (USD364 million) over the fiscal years 2018-2025 for the procurement, Taiwan had expected delivery to commence in



2022 but faced setbacks. According to Wang, Taiwan has yet to receive any missiles as per the original schedule due to failed US Army tests.

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 significance 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.

Ex-South Korean First Lady files defamation against ruling party lawmaker

AGENCIES
SEOUL

Former South Korean First Lady Kim Jung-sook, wife of ex-President Moon Jae-in, has taken legal action against ruling party lawmaker Rep Bae Hyun-jin, accusing him of spreading false information and defamation regarding her solo trip to India in 2018, Yonhap News Agency reported.

The defamation suit, filed with the police, marks a significant development in a contentious issue that has sparked political tensions in South Korea.

According to a statement released by Rep Yoon Kun-young of the main opposition Democratic Party, Kim

filed the suit against Rep Bae, a member of the ruling People Power Party (PPP), citing his claims that her trip incurred undue expenses to the tune of 230 million won (approximately USD166,400). Of this amount, Bae alleged that over 62 million won was spent solely on in-flight meals.

The controversy surrounding Kim’s trip escalated further as it emerged that she undertook the journey without President Moon, marking the first time in 16 years that a South Korean first lady had engaged in foreign diplomacy without accompanying the president, according to Yonhap News Agency.

‘G7 political tool to perpetuate US, Western supremacy’: China

AGENCIES
BEIJING

China has criticised the G7 Leaders’ Communique, accusing the group of using China-related issues as a pretext to vilify and attack the nation.

In response to a media query on China’s comment to G7 Leaders’ Communique, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian denounced the G7’s statements as baseless and biased, reflecting what Beijing views as a continued



effort to perpetuate US and Western dominance in global affairs.

“The G7 Leaders’ Communique again used China-related issues to vilify and

attack China, resorting to the same old false accusations that have no factual, legal or moral basis and are filled with arrogance, bias and falsehood,” Lin Jian said, addressing the media.

China further criticised the G7’s composition and relevance in today’s global context. “The G7 does not represent the world. The seven countries only account for 10 per cent of the world’s population; even combined, they contribute less than China to global economic growth,”

Lin Jian asserted, highlighting what Beijing perceives as a declining influence of the group.

According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, the G7 has “long strayed from its original purpose of coordinating for stability in the global economic environment, and has increasingly become a political tool to perpetuate US and Western supremacy.”

“It puts its own rules and decisions above the purposes and principles of the

UN Charter and the international law, and has lost its ability to represent the world and credibility among the international community,” he remarked.

Regarding the G7’s stance on global peace and security, Lin Jian accused the group of exacerbating tensions through military maneuvers and regional interventions. “While claiming to safeguard world peace, the G7 keeps drawing lines along differences in ideology and values, forming

exclusive groupings and inciting bloc confrontation,” Jian criticised, asserting that such actions undermine international order.

China also condemned the G7’s allegations of “Chinese overcapacity” as unjustified and motivated by protectionism. “The G7’s ‘Chinese overcapacity’ allegation is unsupported by facts or the laws of economy. It is just an excuse for protectionism,” he emphasised, pointing out the detrimental impact on global economic coopera-

tion and climate initiatives.

The G7 Summit leaders have reaffirmed their dedication to a free and open Indo-Pacific governed by international law.

“We reiterate our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, based on the rule of law, which is inclusive, prosperous, and secure, grounded on sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful resolution of disputes, fundamental freedoms, and human rights,” the White House said in a statement on Friday.

THE SPARKLING SKY



A firework display over the River Cam during the May ball at Cambridge University's Trinity College in Cambridge, England. Source: PA

New 'opportunity' to engage with new Indian govt post G7 Summit: Trudeau

AGENCIES
OTTAWA

Days after his first interaction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Italy amidst the chill in bilateral ties, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said that there is an "alignment" on several "big issues" with India and he sees an "opportunity" to engage with the new Indian government including on economic ties and "around national security".

Prime Minister Modi posted an image on social media of the two leaders shaking hands on Friday, with a one-liner saying "met Canadian PM Justin Trudeau at the G7 Summit".

The meeting which took place on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Apulia, south-



Italy, was the first amid strained diplomatic relations over pro-Khalistani extremism after Trudeau alleged in September last year of "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a designated Sikh terrorist.

Back in Ottawa, Trudeau told CBC News that one of the really good things about the Summit is that "you get an opportunity to engage

directly with a huge range of different leaders with whom there are various issues and certainly with India, there are massive people to people ties, they're really important economic ties."

"There's alignment on a number of big issues that we need to work on as, as democracies as a global community. But now that he (Modi) is through his election, I think there is an op-

portunity for us to engage, including on some very serious issues around national security and keeping Canadians safe and the rule of law that we will be engaging."

When asked if he has seen improvement in cooperation from India on the Canadian probe into the murder of Nijjar in Surrey in British Columbia, Trudeau said, "There is work ongoing very much."

Trudeau's allegations from last year were strongly rejected by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) as "absurd and motivated". India has been maintaining that the main issue between the two countries is that of Canada giving space to pro-Khalistani elements operating from Canadian soil with impunity.

Mediterranean migration accident: 51 evacuated, over 10 dead

AGENCIES
ROME

More than ten suspected migrants died and 51 were evacuated on Monday during a failed travel attempt in Mediterranean waters on the southern Italian island near North Africa, Euro News reported citing the German aid group RESQSHIP statement.

German aid group RESQSHIP, which operates the Nadir rescue ship, said it picked up 51 people from a sinking wooden boat, including two who were unconscious, and found 10 bodies in the vessel.

In a post on X, RESQSHIP said that their crew were "caring" for 51 people evacuated off the boat. "The rescue



came too late for 10 people."

"Two of whom were unconscious - they had to be cut free with an axe," the post on X added.

According to Euro News, the southern Italian island near North Africa is a famous target destination for human smuggling, with 127,000 migrants arriving last year.

Simultaneously, the Italian

Coast Guard is searching for approximately 50 people missing after a vessel shipwrecked off the southern Calabrian coast. According to a statement from the Italian Coast Guard, the search and rescue operation began following a Mayday call from a French boat, which was sailing about 120 miles (193 kilometres) from Italian shores, as per Euro News.

King Charles honours India-born brain trauma expert

AGENCIES
LONDON

An India-born brain trauma expert and Professor of Anaesthesia at the University of Cambridge has been conferred with one of the high honours by Britain's King Charles III for "services to neurocritical care".

Prof. David Krishna Menon, Head of Division of Anaesthesia at the University of Cambridge, was conferred with a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) by the 75-year-old monarch in his annual Birthday Honours list over the weekend.

Menon, who trained in Medicine, Anaesthesia and Intensive Care at the Jawaharlal Institute of Post-graduate Medical Educa-



tion & Research (JIPMER) in Pondicherry, founded the Neurosciences Critical Care Unit (NCCU) at Addenbrooke's National Health Service (NHS) teaching hospital in Cambridge and is renowned for his global clinical and research leadership in traumatic brain injury.

Far-right violence a threat to German democracy: Minister

AGENCIES
BERLIN

A surge in far-right violence, Islamist extremism and cyber-attacks from Russia and China are putting German democracy under "significant" threat, the interior minister, Nancy Faeser, said as she presented a government report on domestic and foreign adversaries.

The wars in Ukraine and

Gaza are having strong ripple effects on German security, driving radicalism and attacks, the study by the office for the protection of the constitution (BfV) found.

"Our democracy is strong but it is under significant pressure," Faeser said. "We have got to stand up to domestic threats from extremism as decisively as to external threats, above all from the Russian regime."



Tories expected to target voters with letters signed by Boris

AGENCIES
LONDON

The Conservatives will turn to Boris Johnson in an attempt to boost their faltering election campaign, according to reports.

Tens of thousands of letters signed by the former prime minister are expected to be delivered later this week in the closest campaign engagement yet by Johnson, whose involvement so far has been limited to endorsing individual Tory MPs.

Voters who backed the Conservatives in the 2019 general election but who are now tempted to switch to Nigel Farage's resurgent



Reform UK are among those who are to be targeted in the direct mail push, the Telegraph reported.

Johnson has been recording personal endorsements in the form of video messag-

FLORIDA RESTRICTS CHINESE NATIONALS FROM PURCHASING PROPERTY

AGENCIES
FLORIDA

Florida signed a law restricting Chinese nationals without US green cards from purchasing property in the state leaving them fuming over the law, CNN reported.

The law underscores the heightened tensions between the two biggest economies in the world in a US presidential election year, the rules have fostered uneasiness and confusion among ethnic Chinese people living in the state. Some say the law has damaged their businesses, while others say they are considering abandoning Florida altogether.

Bian, a 31-year-old soft-



ware engineer who has lived in the US for 12 years, is a recipient of an H-1B visa, which allows companies to employ foreign workers was told that this decision might get him prison time.

"That was really shocking to me. It's just purchasing property," Bian, who is originally from Nanjing, China, said. "Once I learned that, I didn't even bother to look anymore."

Ever since Florida Senate Bill 264 went into effect on July 1, 2023, Chinese citizens without green cards face a felony charge and possible prison time if they purchase property in the state. Sellers and real estate agents can also be found liable under the law, reported CNN.

Bian said he has recently started reconsidering his life in Florida, and he isn't alone. The law specifically bans the

"purchase or acquisition of real property" by "any person who is domiciled in the People's Republic of China and who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States." But the term "domiciled" isn't fully defined in the law's language.

"We feel like we're different from everyone else because of this type of law," said Echo King, a US citizen who was born in China and is president of the Florida Asian American Justice Alliance. "We feel like we're not welcome." Susan Li, a 47-year-old small business owner in Orlando, Florida, who holds a green card, said she "really felt the discrimination" when she learned about the bill.

Russia, N Korea to work together to counter Western sanctions: Putin

AGENCIES
MOSCOW

Ahead of his two-day visit to North Korea beginning Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that the two countries will together build the security architecture in Eurasia, counter Western sanctions, and establish independent transaction systems.

Putin said this in his article for North Korea's Rodong Sinmun, published on the Kremlin website, state news agency TASS reported.

"We are ready to closely work together to bring more democracy and stability to international relations. To do this, we will develop alternative trade and mutual settlements mechanisms not controlled



by the West, jointly oppose illegitimate unilateral restrictions, and shape the architecture of equal and indivisible security in Eurasia," Putin wrote.

Putin will be on a state visit, his first visit to North Korea in 24 years, on the invitation by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, the country's state news agency KNCA said.

During his visit, the Russian President is expected to hold talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and discuss military and other cooperation.

The visit follows Kim's travel to Russia's Far East in September 2023 for a summit with Putin. Putin's visit to North Korea will show Moscow's desire to conduct equal dialogue and coop-

eration with all countries, a Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov was cited as telling reporters by the TASS news agency.

"On June 18-19, our President will pay a state visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This will be the second visit of the Russian head of state to Pyongyang in the entire history of our relations. The program is very intensive," Ushakov said.

On June 19, both bilateral negotiations and a meeting with leader Kim Jong Un are planned, he said.

"This includes various areas of the economy, energy, transport, agriculture, inter-regional relations, security issues, issues of cooperation in the international arena, and so on," the Kremlin aide said.

US refrains from commenting on pro-Khalistani terrorist Pannun

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

The White House on Monday (local time) refrained from commenting on the question of the plot to kill pro-Khalistani terrorist, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun came up in National Security Adviser (NSA) Jake Sullivan's meetings in India and if it will be part of the discussions. In a White House press briefing, National Security Spokesperson John Kirby said, "I don't have more to add on the conversations that Jake Sullivan is having. He is still over there having these conversations"

Kirby said that the main focus of his visit was to look for ways to deepen the US-India bilateral relationship,



particularly when it comes to emerging technology.

"He is still over there having these conversations. But the main focus of his visit, as I said, was to look for ways to deepen the US-India bilateral relationship, particularly when it comes to emerging technology. I don't have anything more to add to the conversations..." said John Kirby. Sullivan's visit

to Delhi, from June 17 to 18, marks the first trip to India by a senior Biden Administration official after the Modi government came to power for the third term. Earlier in the day, US NSA Sullivan and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval attended the annual meeting of the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET) between the two countries.

US Secret Service agent robbed during Biden's visit

AGENCIES
LAS VEGAS

A Secret Service agent was reportedly robbed at gunpoint in California over the weekend, coinciding with President Joe Biden's presence in the state for a high-profile fundraiser in Los Ange-

les, according to local law enforcement, Fox News reported.

The incident occurred late Saturday evening at approximately 9:30 pm local time in the Tustin Fields 1 residential community, as confirmed by the Tustin Police Department. Upon receiv-

ing a report of a possible robbery, officers swiftly responded to the scene. Authorities determined that the victim of the robbery was a member of the Secret Service, and it was reported that his belongings were forcibly taken at gunpoint during the altercation.

Pannun murder plot: Accused pleads 'not guilty'

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

Indian national Nikhil Gupta, suspected by the US of involvement in an unsuccessful plot to kill the India-designated pro-Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun on American soil pleaded not guilty on Monday (local time)

at a federal court in the US.

Gupta arrived at the Manhattan Federal Courthouse in New York City at 12:30 PM (local time) and has pleaded not guilty in court. Gupta was extradited to the US from the Czech Republic on Friday.

While speaking to reporters, Gupta's US-based lawyer, attorney Jeffrey Chabrowe said

that they would file a bail application at a later date, meaning Gupta will continue to be detained for now.

During the 20-minute hearing, Chabrowe stressed the conditions of Gupta's detention that he had not been provided with a vegetarian meal since he arrived at a Brooklyn detention facility on Friday.

DILJIT DOSANJH BRINGS BHANGRA BEATS TO JIMMY FALLON'S 'THE TONIGHT SHOW'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a historic moment for Indian music on the global stage, Diljit Dosanjh made his debut appearance on 'The Tonight Show' starring Jimmy Fallon, delivering a sensational performance that left audiences mesmerized.

Dosanjh performed his hit songs 'Born To Shine' and 'G.O.A.T.', showcasing his signature blend of energy and charisma. The 'Amar Singh Chamkila' actor ended the performance with "Mai hoon Punjab."

The official YouTube channel of 'The Tonight Show' shared the video where Jimmy Fallon could be seen



introducing Dosanjh with enthusiasm, proclaiming, "You can catch our next guest on his Dil-Luminati World Tour making his US TV debut performing 'Born To Shine' and 'G.O.A.T.' Please welcome the biggest Punjabi artist on the planet, Diljit Dosanjh!"

Dosanjh, dressed in a traditional Punjabi attire featuring an all-white kurta and tehmat, captured hearts with his spirited rendition of Punjabi music on a prestigious international platform.

AJAY DEVGN AND TABU SIZZLE IN THE SONG 'TUU'



LATHA SRINIVASAN
CHENNAI

The trailer of Neeraj Pandey's Aurun Mein Kahan Dum Tha has taken audiences by storm. Presenting his first-ever love story, Neeraj Pandey brings back Ajay Devgn and Tabu's sizzling chemistry to the big screen, showcasing their intense romance alongside the fresh pairing of Shantanu Maheshwari and Saiee Manjrekar.

While the trailer is the talk of the town, the sneak peek of the beautiful melodies in the trailer has increased anticipation to unveil the musical genius crafted by Oscar-winning music composer MM Keeravani and lyricist Manoj Muntashir.

Releasing the first song from the film titled Tuu, the makers showcase the innocence of young romance and the longing of meeting after a long period, all emotions ex-

pressed through the magical song sung by Sukhwinder Singh and Javed Ali.

Talking about the song, writer-director Neeraj Pandey shares, "It's said that there are seven stages of love. 'Tu' is a song that captures the essence of all of these seven in a duration of 4 mins and 11 seconds. It's a song about love and there was a lot of labour involved too. A big shoutout to my partners in crime, composer Kream saab and lyricist Manoj. Another big shoutout to my singers Sukhi pa and Javed. And my sincere thanks to the chorus & all the musicians involved. Enjoy as 'Tu' is for all of You."

Crafting these beautiful tunes for this love saga, Oscar-winning music composer MM Keeravani shares, "Adrenaline rush followed by composed calmness, festive chants followed by admiration of the lover, anticipated climax followed by

DANIEL RADCLIFFE REFLECTS ON CAREER AFTER FIRST TONY AWARD WIN



TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

Daniel Radcliffe, renowned for his iconic portrayal of Harry Potter, has now etched his name in Broadway history with a victory at the Tony Awards 2024.

He clinched his first Tony Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical for his portrayal of Charley Kringas in 'Merrily We Roll Along,' a revival of the 1981 musical by Stephen Sondheim and George Furth, confirmed The Hollywood Reporter.

In a poignant acceptance speech at the David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center in New York, Radcliffe expressed his overwhelming gratitude and joy.

In the winning speech video shared by The Tony Awards' official Instagram page, he said, "I'm gonna just talk fast and try not to cry," adding, "This has been one of the best experiences of my life. It's been unbe-

lievable."

Radcliffe extended his appreciation to his co-stars Jonathan Groff and Lindsay Mendez, as well as the entire cast and crew of 'Merrily We Roll Along.'

He specially thanked his parents, present in the audience, and paid tribute to his father on Father's Day.

"Thank you for playing Sondheim in the car and just loving me," he added warmly.

Acknowledging the support and influence of various mentors and collaborators, Radcliffe credited the Broadway League, American Theatre Wing, director Maria Friedman, and the original creators of the musical, Sondheim and Furth.

His journey from the wizarding world of Harry Potter to Broadway stardom has been marked by significant milestones, including his recent Emmy nomination for portraying Weird Al Yankovic in 'Weird: The Al Yankovic Story.'

PICTURE PERFECT

Bollywood actress Shradha Kapoor along with director Amar Kaushik during the teaser launch of her upcoming movie 'Stree 2', at a cinema hall in Mumbai on Friday. (ANI Photo)



ALKA YAGNIK DIAGNOSED WITH 'RARE' SENSORY HEARING LOSS

LATHA SRINIVASAN
CHENNAI

Veteran playback singer Alka Yagnik recently revealed that she has been diagnosed with a rare sensory neural nerve sensory loss.

Taking to her Instagram account on Monday, Alka explained why she has been absent and mentioned that an unexpected 'major setback' caught her off guard, and she is still trying to cope with it. Sharing a picture of herself, Alka wrote a long note asking for everyone's support and understanding. She also requested people to pray for her as she tries to readjust. The caption of her post read, "To all my fans, friends, followers and well-wishers. A few weeks ago, as I walked



out of a flight, I suddenly felt I was not able to hear anything. Having mustered some courage in the weeks following the episode, I want to break my silence now for all my

friends and well-wishers who have been asking me why I'm missing in action (sic)." "It has been diagnosed by my docs as a rare sensory neural nerve hearing loss, due

to a viral attack... This sudden, major setback has caught me completely unaware. As I attempt to come to terms with it please keep me in your prayers (sic)," she added.

Hrithik, Farhan's 'Lakshya' to be re-released in theatres

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

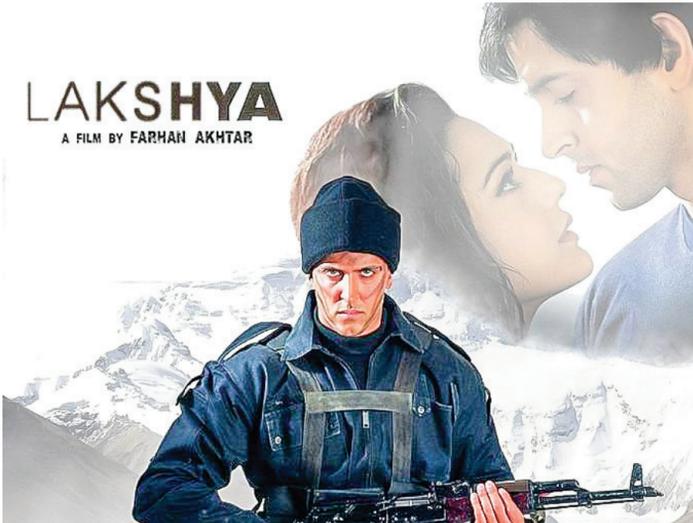
Get ready for a blast of nostalgia as Hrithik Roshan-starrer 'Lakshya' is scheduled to be re-released in theatres.

Marking 20 years of the film, the makers have decided to release the film in cinema halls once again on June 21.

Sharing the update, director Farhan Akhtar on Tuesday took to Instagram and wrote, "A timeless tribute to courage and patriotism. Join us in theatres as we celebrate #20YearsOfLakshya, back in cinemas on 21st June."

Zoya Akhtar, who served as an executive producer for 'Lakshya', also expressed her excitement.

Taking to Instagram Story, Zoya Akhtar dropped the film's poster and wrote, "Working on this title was a life changing experience." Hrithik re-shared Zoya's



post and captioned it as, "True (red heart emoji)."

The story of the Indian romantic war drama revolves around Karan Shergill (played by Hrithik) who has no goals for his future and gets guided by her

girlfriend and a journalist Romila Dutta (played by Preity Zinta). Later, Karan joins the Indian army and becomes focused, disciplined officer cadet and eventually commissions into the Indian Army.

Directed by Farhan Akhtar and produced by Produced by Farhan and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment, the film also starred Amitabh Bachchan, Boman Irani, Preity Zinta and late Om Puri in pivotal roles.

SONAKSHI DROPS PICS WITH HUMA AHEAD OF WEDDING WITH ZAHEER

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Sonakshi Sinha, who has created a buzz following rumours of her expected wedding to actor Zaheer Iqbal, shared glimpses from a party hosted by her friends.

Sonakshi took to her Instagram Stories on Monday to drop several pictures that hinted at a bachelorette party.

In one selfie, the 'Mission Mangal' actress can be seen flaunting her look with Kohl-rimmed eyes, nude lips, and hair tied in a bun.

One of the pictures showed Sonakshi posing with Huma Qureshi. Sonakshi donned a sparkling black outfit while



Huma looked stunning in a black cutout dress.

Meanwhile, Zaheer also enjoyed a night out with his close buddies, sharing cele-

bratory photos. Actor Saqib Saleem, Huma Qureshi's brother, was also part of the festivities.

As per a source close to

Sonakshi, she is expected to tie the knot with actor Zaheer Iqbal on June 23 in Mumbai. Amid the wedding buzz, interestingly, an audio invite of Sonakshi and Zaheer's went viral. In the leaked invite, the duo reportedly confirmed the news of their marriage by saying that they are ready to arrive at 'the moment' which would turn them to be each other's 'definite and official husband and wife.'

The digital invitation is styled like a magazine cover with a headline. The invitation featured a photo of Zaheer and Sonakshi in a snow-covered setting, with Zaheer planting a kiss on Sonakshi's cheek.

BRAIN PICKING



My career is a journey for me, and any journey is incomplete without the struggle.



-YAMI GAUTAM
(Indian Actress)

'MEGALOPOLIS' SET FOR THEATRICAL RELEASE



TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

In a move expected to enthrall cinema enthusiasts, Lionsgate has secured North American distribution rights for Francis Ford Coppola's long-awaited film, 'Megalopolis,' setting its release date for September 27 this year. The announcement, confirmed by The Hollywood Reporter, comes after the film made waves at the Cannes Film Festival last month, stirring anticipation and critical acclaim despite its dramatic journey to completion. 'Megalopolis,' a passion project nurtured over decades by the cinematic maestro Francis Ford Coppola, features Adam Driver in a pivotal role as Cesar Catilina, a visionary determined to transform New York City into a utopian marvel, challenging the established elite in the process.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the film's debut at Cannes was marked by both celebration and intrigue, with an actor appearing on stage to read the dialogue for Driver's charac-

ter, hinting at the immersive experience Coppola aims to deliver to audiences.

Francis Ford Coppola, known for his groundbreaking contributions to cinema with classics like 'Apocalypse Now' and 'The Godfather' series, has invested not only creative energy but also a portion of his personal finances into 'Megalopolis,' a project with a reported budget of USD 120 million.

Adam Fogelson, Lionsgate's film boss, expressed excitement about collaborating with Coppola, emphasizing their shared commitment to daring and visionary storytelling. "At Lionsgate, we strive to be a home for bold and daring artists, and Megalopolis proves there is no one more bold or daring than the maestro, Francis Ford Coppola," Fogelson remarked enthusiastically as per The Hollywood Reporter. In response to the acquisition, Francis Ford Coppola expressed his confidence in Lionsgate's ability to handle 'Megalopolis' with the same dedication and care as they have shown for his previous works.

TRAILER OF URVASHI RAUTELA STARRER 'JAHANGIR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY' OUT NOW



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The makers of 'Jahangir National University' starring Urvashi Rautela, Piyush Mishra, Ravi Kishan, Siddharth Bodke, Vijay Raj, Rashmi Desai, Atul Pandey, and Shivjyoti Rajput, have dropped the trailer of the upcoming film.

The trailer brings out the turmoil within the university campus. Dialogues like "Yaha se seedhe sansad mein..." show student politics and also highlight its dark sides. There are also ideological differences that have been depicted in the trailer, showing the clash of ideologies in a polarised campus.

While talking about the film, director Vinay Sharma, said that he has tried to touch upon issues

that are of national interest and also highlighted that a place of learning cannot serve as a "forum of disputes."

"There are plots to use the nation's most delicate issues as a weapon to split the country. The movie 'Jahangir National University' discusses the idea that a place of learning cannot serve as a forum for disputes. I have no doubt that this movie will spark a national dialogue," he said in a statement.

Written and directed by Vinay Sharma, the film is produced by Pratima Datta. It features an ensemble cast of Urvashi Rautela, Piyush Mishra, Ravi Kishan, Siddharth Bodke, Vijay Raj, Rashmi Desai, Atul Pandey, and Shivjyoti Rajput. The film is scheduled to release in theatres on June 21.

ALL THINGS KONNICHIWA AND TOKYO IN INDIA!

SANJANA CHAWLA

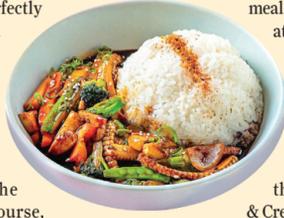
Harajuku Tokyo Cafe, with its locations in Saket, Noida, and Gurugram, offers a delightful fusion of Japanese and Asian cuisine that tantalizes the taste buds. I recently dived into their offerings and the ambience at Harajuku Tokyo Cafe perfectly complements the vibrant and eclectic menu. The decor is modern yet cozy, with pops of color and Japanese-inspired elements that transport you to the bustling streets of Tokyo. The dim lighting and com-

fortable seating create a relaxed and inviting atmosphere, perfect for a casual meal with friends or a romantic dinner. Starting with the drinks, the Strawberry Boba Jasmine Tea was a refreshing and flavorful concoction that perfectly balanced the sweetness of strawberries with the floral notes of jasmine tea. It was a delightful treat for the senses. I had the Chicken Karaage Popcorn for appetisers, which was a crispy and succulent delight, while the Crispy Pepper Vegetables offered a crunchy and

flavorful vegetarian option. The Firecracker Tofu Bao and Firecracker Chicken Bao were bursting with bold flavors and perfectly steamed buns, making them a must-try. For the main course, the Handpulled Flat Noodles in Chilli Oil with vegetables were a spicy and satisfying

dish that left me craving for more. The Chicken Chilli Rice Bowl was a hearty and flavorful option, perfect for those looking for a filling meal. The sushi options at Harajuku Tokyo Cafe were also a highlight. The Asparagus Tempura Roll was a crunchy and delicious roll, while the Spicy Avocado & Cream Cheese Roll offered a creamy and spicy combination that was simply divine. To end the meal on a sweet note,

I had the original, authentic Japanese Cotton Cheesecake. It was a light and fluffy dessert that melted in the mouth, leaving a lingering sweetness that was just right. I had an entire cake and well, I was still craving for more—it was that good! Harajuku Tokyo Cafe offers a culinary journey that is both delicious and immersive. With its diverse menu, flavorful dishes, and inviting ambience, it is a must-visit for anyone looking to experience the best of Japanese and Asian cuisine in a vibrant setting.



CELEBRATE SUSHI DAY IN STYLE WITH THAI NAAM'S NEW MENU LAUNCH

TDG NETWORK

Mumbai, June 2024: Celebrate Sushi Day in style with Thai Naam, Andheri's culinary hotspot, as they unveil their exquisite new sushi menu. This launch offers food enthusiasts a perfect opportunity to tantalize their taste buds with an expansive and artistic sushi selection.

Step away from the ordinary and experience the magic of Thai Naam's first-ever Sushi cart. Skilled chefs will curate personalized sushi selections right before your eyes, transforming your dining experience into an interactive celebration of Sushi Day.

The new menu caters to every palate, featuring vibrant vegetarian and non-vegetarian delights. Indulge in the creamy Avocado Cream Cheese maki, the tempura magic of Vegetable maki, or the textural adventure of Crunchy Mushroom maki. Seafood lovers can savor the succulent Prawn Tempura maki or the luxurious Supar Crunchy



Whether you're a seasoned sushi aficionado or a curious newcomer, Thai Naam offers a welcoming space to indulge, discover, and celebrate Sushi Day in style.

Gather your friends and family and prepare to be swept away by the magic of Sushi at Thai Naam!

Salmon maki. For a unique fusion, try the Chicken Katsu maki, exclusive to Thai Naam, featuring crispy golden-fried chicken, spicy Japanese mayo, and crunchy tanuki flakes.

Every detail of Thai Naam's Sushi menu is meticulously curated to create a symphony of flavors and textures.



THE PERFECT BLEND OF SWEET AND SPICY: DELICIOUS INDIAN SNACKS AND SWEETS

VIKRANTT SINGH

India has a diverse array of flavors in its cuisine, where sweet and spicy blend together. From savory snacks to decent sweets from crunchy bites to sugary treats, Indian cuisine has it all. Let's take a tasty journey through some of the best Indian snacks and sweets that mix sweet and spicy flavors just the right way.

Yummy Snacks:

Indian snacks are like little bursts of happiness. One famous snack is the samosa. It's like a crispy pocket filled with spicy potatoes and peas. They do have fried fruits like raisin, kaju and also chopped peanuts. Dip it in tangy tamarind sauce for a burst of flavor.

Then there are pakoras. They're like crispy veggie nuggets coated in a special flour mix and fried until golden. Crunchy on the outside, soft on the inside, and bursting with flavor!

Ever heard of chaat? It's like a flavor party in your mouth! Pani puri, bhel puri, and sev puri are popular chaat dishes. They mix crunchy bites with spicy sauces and sweet chutneys for a taste sensation that one won't forget.



Delicious Sweets: People are fond of Indian sweets as India has a variety of sweets which is also known as mithai. These delectable treats are often made with a combination of milk, sugar, ghee, and a variety of nuts, resulting in a symphony of rich, indulgent flavors.

One of the most iconic Indian sweets is "gulab jamun," soft and spongy milk dumplings soaked in a fragrant syrup



infused with cardamom and rose water. With its melt-in-your-mouth texture and aromatic flavors, gulab jamun is a favorite at

festivals and celebrations across India. Another beloved sweet is "jalebi," crispy pretzel-shaped pastries dipped in a syrup infused with saffron and cardamom. These golden-hued delights are crispy on the outside, yet soft and syrupy on the inside, making them a delightful indulgence for those with a sweet tooth.

"Barfi" is another popular Indian sweet, made by thickening milk with sugar and ghee and then flavoring it with ingredients like pistachios, almonds, or sa-

fron. These creamy, fudge-like sweets come in a variety of flavors and are often adorned with edible silver foil for an added touch of opulence.

Conclusion: Each bite of Indian snacks and sweets carries a perfectly balanced mix of spicy and sweet flavors, making them genuinely unique. Every meal provides a distinctive experience that honors the diverse range of Indian flavors, whether it's the intense heat of a spicy samosa or the decadent sweetness of a creamy barfi. Enjoying these delectable sweets will allow us to recognize the skillful cooking that has been passed down through the years and to enjoy the complex fusion of spices, textures, and aromas that characterize Indian cuisine. Indian snacks are great as a festive treat or as a street food snack.

The author is the Founder and Managing Director of Bansoori-wala's.

India's Snack Revolution: Emerging Trends and Market Growth Insights for 2024



MR. MANISH AGGARWAL

The consumption of snacks holds significant importance in the global diet landscape. With factors like population growth, rising income levels, and evolving consumer preferences, the snack industry is witnessing unprecedented demand and expansion. According to a recent report by IMARC Group, the Indian snacks market reached Rs 42,694.9 crore in 2023, and is projected to soar to Rs 95,521.8 crore by 2032, showcasing a robust growth rate (CAGR) of 9.08% over the forecast period. Factors driving this growth include

the increasing popularity of convenient food options, heightened implementation of quality standards by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), and the proliferation of e-commerce brands and distribution channels. As consumers continue to seek convenience and variety in their snacking choices, manufacturers are innovating to meet these demands, leading to a dynamic and evolving snack landscape in the years to come.

Exploring New Horizons: Trends that'll Shape the Indian Snacks Market in 2024

The Indian snacks market, a dynamic and essential component of the nation's culinary landscape, embodies India's diverse array of flavors, textures, and ingredients. From the bustling streets adorned with vendors selling savory samosas, spicy chaats, to crisp pakoras, it has long been a source of delight for millions. However, with India's rap-

id urbanization and changing lifestyles leading to an increased demand for convenience, this vibrant market is undergoing a metamorphosis. Within the rich tapestry of India's snacking culture, emerging trends are taking shape, poised to redefine the future of this savory universe.

Rising Demand for Premium Snacks

As disposable incomes soar, Indian consumers are displaying a growing penchant for premium snacks. This trend towards premiumization has spurred the creation of high-quality, gourmet snacks boasting top-tier ingredients and innovative packaging. Often marketed as luxurious indulgences, premium snacks have become sought-after choices for gifting and special occasions.

Fusion of Flavors

Amidst the dynamic landscape of the Indian snack market, a captivating trend is emerging: the fusion of

traditional Indian flavors with international influences. Snack manufacturers are venturing into uncharted territory, infusing exotic ingredients and flavors from around the globe into beloved local snacks. The result? A plethora of tantalizing products that offer a delightful blend of fa-



miliarity and novelty. These culinary creations not only cater to the diverse palates of Indian consumers but also embody the spirit of culinary experimentation and creativity sweeping across the snack industry.

E-Commerce and D2C

The digital revolution has

reshaped the Indian snack market, with e-commerce and direct-to-consumer (D2C) models leading the charge. E-commerce platforms provide brands with vast reach and accessibility, driving snack sales with seamless online shopping experiences. Meanwhile, D2C models empower

brands to forge direct connections with consumers, gathering valuable feedback and driving innovation. As the digital landscape evolves, these models are set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the Indian snack market. Crafting a Snacking Nar-

rative Modern consumers seek more than just sustenance; they crave a story behind their snacks. Brands that showcase the origin of their ingredients, the artistry in their production, or their dedication to social causes are capturing attention. As consumers align their choices with their values, snacks with a compelling narrative are gaining favor in the market.

Tailored Snacking Experiences

With technological strides, snack producers now offer personalized and customized options, allowing consumers to tailor their snacking encounters. Whether adjusting spice levels or concocting bespoke flavor blends, individuals enjoy greater autonomy in their snacking choices. This trend resonates particularly with younger demographics, who value distinct and individualized products.

Nutritious Snack Choices

Amidst a growing emphasis on health and well-being, the Indian snack industry is witnessing a significant shift. Consumers are now actively seeking snacks that not only tantalize their taste buds but also contribute to their overall health objectives. This shift has spurred the rise of healthier snack alternatives, including roasted nuts, baked chips, and gluten-free options. Furthermore, companies are infusing their products with functional ingredients such as quinoa, chia seeds, and kale to appeal to the health-conscious consumer base.

Regional Delicacies in Every Bite

Capitalizing on India's rich culinary heritage, snack manufacturers are delving into the diverse array of regional delicacies. The trend of incorporating traditional snacks from various parts of the country is rapidly gaining traction. Consumers now have the opportunity to indulge in a wide range of

regional delights, from Bikaneri Bhujia to Punjabi Aloo Tikki, all conveniently available in a single snack aisle.

Final Say

The evolving landscape of snacking in India reflects a dynamic interplay of changing consumer preferences, a heightened focus on health, and technological innovations. As traditional favorites make room for innovative creations, snack manufacturers are embracing fusion flavors, personalized options, and regional specialties to cater to diverse tastes. This transformation offers promising opportunities for both consumers seeking novel culinary experiences and snack companies looking to meet evolving demands. With its diverse array of flavors and a relentless drive for innovation, the Indian snack market continues to entice taste buds and propel the industry forward.

The author is the Director, Bikano, Bikanervala Foods Pvt Ltd.

MICRO-LEARNING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS

MR AARUL MALAVIYA

The mental health of students is a critical concern that has gained increasing attention in recent years. Academic pressures, social challenges, and the transition to adulthood can be overwhelming for many students, leading to stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. Traditional approaches to mental health education and support, while valuable, often fail to engage students effectively. Micro-learning, a modern educational strategy that delivers content in small, manageable segments, presents a promising solution for improving the mental health of students. By breaking down

complex topics into smaller, more manageable pieces, microlearning allows students to learn at their own pace and in a way that suits their individual learning style.

Here's how microlearning positively impacts students' mental health:

1. Reduced Cognitive Load: Microlearning breaks down complex subjects into manageable units, making it easier for students to grasp concepts without feeling overwhelmed. Traditional learning often involves long sessions that can lead to cognitive fatigue and stress. In contrast, microlearning sessions are short and focused, allowing students to process information more efficiently. According to a study published



in the Journal of Educational Psychology, students retain more information and experience less cognitive load when learning in shorter, more focused bursts. Research indicates that microlearning can enhance focus and long-term retention by up to 80% compared to traditional learning methods.

2. Increased Engagement and Motivation: Microlearning often incorporates multimedia elements such as videos, quizzes, and interactive content, enhancing engagement and motivation. Engaged students are less likely to experience the boredom and disinterest that can contribute to mental health issues like anxiety and depression, fostering a more positive and stimulating learning environment.

learning often incorporates multimedia elements such as videos, quizzes, and interactive content, enhancing engagement and motivation. Engaged students are less likely to experience the boredom and disinterest that can contribute to mental health issues like anxiety and depression, fostering a more positive and stimulating learning environment.

3. Flexibility and Accessibility: One of the key advantages of microlearning is its remarkable flexibility. Students can access learning materials anytime and anywhere, enabling them to learn at their own pace. This adaptability significantly reduces the pressure associated with rigid schedules and deadlines, creating a more relaxed and stress-free learning environment. The ability to learn in short, focused bursts not only enhances retention and comprehension but also fits seamlessly into diverse lifestyles and commitments. This approach allows students to balance their studies with other responsibilities, ultimately contributing to improved mental well-being

and academic success. **4. Frequent Reinforcement and Feedback:** Microlearning modules often include frequent assessments and feedback, which reinforce learning and provide students with immediate insights into their progress. This regular feedback mechanism helps students stay on track and feel more confident in their abilities, thereby reducing anxiety about their performance and fostering a more supportive learning environment. **5. Enhanced Retention and Application:** Microlearning's bite-sized approach promotes better retention and application of knowledge. When students can easily recall and apply what they've learned, they experience a sense of accomplishment and mastery, which positively impacts their mental health. A study published in the Journal of Applied Psychology reported that bite-sized chunks of content can increase efficiency and transfer of learning by 17% or more. **6. Support for Diverse Learning Styles:** Microlearning caters to different learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic. By offering diverse formats such as videos, infographics, and interactive activities, microlearning ensures that all students can engage with the material in a way that suits them best. This personalized approach helps reduce frustration and enhances the overall learning experience,

contributing to better mental health outcomes. **Final Say** Microlearning offers a practical and effective way to enhance the mental health of students. By reducing cognitive load, increasing engagement, providing flexibility, and offering frequent feedback, microlearning creates a supportive learning environment that can alleviate stress and anxiety. As educational institutions continue to explore innovative methods to support student well-being, microlearning stands out as a valuable tool in promoting mental health and academic success. *The author is the Founder of Zमित.*

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THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL ADVERTISING CAREERS: TRENDS, SKILLS, AND OPPORTUNITIES



MR AARUL MALAVIYA

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF ADVERTISING

Traditional advertising through print, radio, and TV is being overshadowed by the internet, social media, and mobile technology. These new platforms have revolutionised how companies interact with customers, rendering traditional promotional methods obsolete. Digital advertising now encompasses social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, search engines, content marketing, and email campaigns.

TRENDS IN DIGITAL ADVERTISING

1. Programmatic Advertising: Automated systems and algorithms now purchase digital ad space in real time,



allowing precise audience targeting and increased efficiency.

2. Data-Driven Marketing: The ability to collect and analyse vast amounts of data has transformed advertising strategies. Marketers rely heavily on data analytics to understand consumer behaviour, personalise content, and measure campaign effectiveness.

3. Influencer Marketing: Social media influencers can significantly boost brand visibility. Their popularity and trustworthiness enable authentic and engaging promotion through influencer marketing.

4. Video Content: Video remains the most consumed content on the internet. Platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram Reels are

crucial for audience engagement, driving the demand for captivating video content.

5. Interactive and Immersive Experiences: Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) have revolutionised interactive and immersive advertising, offering unique ways for companies to engage with customers.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR FUTURE ADVERTISING PROFESSIONALS

To thrive in this evolving landscape, advertising professionals need a diverse skill set combining creativity with technical expertise.

1. Digital Literacy: Familiarity with digital platforms, including social media management, SEO, SEM, and content management systems, is essential.

2. Data Analysis: Proficiency in data analytics is crucial for informed decision-making, requiring skills in tools like Google Analytics and an understanding of key metrics and KPIs.

3. Content Creation: The ability to create compelling and relevant content across various formats—text, image, video, and interactive media—is vital. Good storytelling and design sensibilities are key.

4. Technical Skills: Expertise in coding languages like HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, as well as marketing automation software, is increasingly important.

5. Creative Thinking: Creativity remains at the heart of advertising. Professionals must generate innovative concepts and think outside the box to create memorable

ads. Opportunities in Digital Advertising

The future of advertising offers numerous exciting opportunities for those equipped with the right skills and mindset.

1. Specialised Roles: As the industry becomes more complex, roles such as data scientists, content strategists, social media managers, and UX/UI designers are in high demand.

2. Freelancing and Remote Work: The digital nature of modern advertising allows for greater flexibility, enabling professionals to find freelancing and remote work opportunities globally.

3. Emerging Technologies: Careers involving AR, VR, AI, and blockchain are on the rise, opening new frontiers for brand-audience interactions.

4. Ethical Marketing: With growing awareness of privacy and data security issues, there's an increasing demand for professionals who can navigate the ethical complexities of digital advertising.

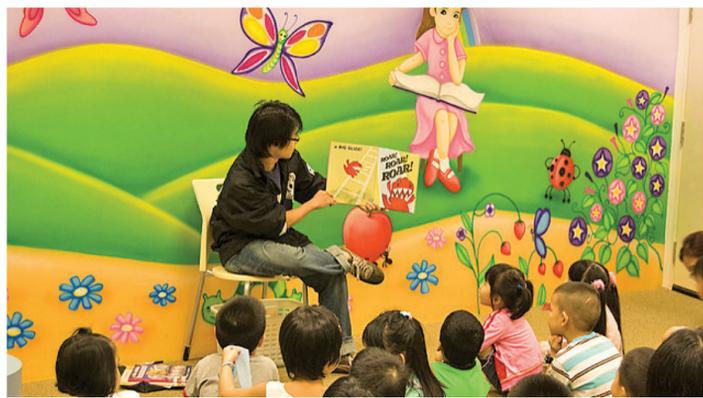
The future of advertising careers lies firmly in the digital realm, where innovation and adaptability are key. As technology advances, advertising professionals must continuously update their skills and embrace new trends. The opportunities are vast for those prepared to navigate this ever-changing landscape, combining creativity with technical acumen to create the next generation of impactful advertising campaigns.

Abhishek Triwari is Global Business Head, NetSetGo Media

PLAY SCHOOL EVOLUTION: TRANSITIONING FROM PLAYGROUNDS TO LEARNING TOOLS IN MODERN EDUCATION

MR AJAY GUPTA

The Indian education system has been going through a significant change lately. With more emphasis on the overall development and nurturing interest in learning, the old style of 'memorising' by heart has become outdated. This ongoing change can be seen particularly in play schools where the traditional technique is evolving to adopt a wider range of learning tools.



PLAY - POWERED BY SCIENCE

This change can't be regarded as a passing phase; it has a scientific backing. It is true that play is a basic human need, essential for cognitive development in children. As per the study conducted by the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child at Harvard University, it has been found that play helps in the growth of all the vital aspects of a child's education. It strengthens the cognitive function, emotional well-being and social skills in children.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY - A TRANSITION

Indian play schools are adopting the concept of learning through play, by including various learning tools in their curriculum. Some of the trending activities are:

STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, STEM)

(SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, TECHNOLOGY,

(science, technology, engineering, and maths) education is earning attention in play schools, and they are also adding an "A" which stands for Arts, making it STEAM education. This method includes interactive tools and games to make children understand the concepts in a fun and involving manner. Activities may include building block towers to make them learn about structures, or finger painting to explore colours.

Sensory Play: This methodology makes children familiar with senses - touch, sight, smell, taste, and hearing. For this purpose, play schools might include sandboxes for tactile exploration, water play spaces for auditory and visual stimulation, and play kitchens to give encouragement to a child's creativity through imaginative role-playing.

Dramatic Play: Playing a role in a drama, dressing up, or doing a puppet

show, all these are forms of dramatic play. These innovative activities enhance creativity, communication skills, and social interaction in children. All these qualities are essential for a proficient education.

Functional Play: Also known as manipulative play, these plays involve hands-on learning tools like blocks, puzzles, and building sets. The method enhances children's problem-solving skills and spatial reasoning.

THE BENEFITS OF MODERN LEARNING TOOLS

Modern learning tools offer numerous benefits, including:

Enhanced Learning: Play-based learning encourages curiosity and exploration in children, helping them retain information better through active engagement and fun.

Holistic Development: These modern tools focus on various developmental

areas - cognitive, social, emotional, and physical.

Individualised Learning: Play allows children to learn at their own pace, catering to different learning styles.

Lifelong Skills: The skills developed through play, like creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration, are crucial for success in all aspects of life.

Modern Play School Education Trends: A Balancing Act

Modern Indian education is undergoing a revolution, offering exciting possibilities through technology and personalised learning approaches. With the ongoing progress, the future of Indian play schools seems to be bright. By incorporating engaging learning tools and developing a love for exploration, play schools are all set to prepare children for a future brimming with possibilities.

The author is the Founder & CEO of Bachpan Play School

SATYA SCHOOL LAUNCHES #BEYONDTHEOBVIOUS INITIATIVE WITH VICKY ROY

MR. VINAY SINGH

Satya School has unveiled its innovative #BeyondTheObvious initiative, partnering with globally renowned photographer Vicky Roy. This summer program aims to unlock the power of visual storytelling, encouraging Satyans to think creatively and develop their storytelling abilities through photography. The initiative seeks to build diverse perspectives by helping students appreciate their surroundings. Manisha Malhotra, Director Principal of Satya School, Gurugram, expressed her excitement about the program. "We are thrilled to launch our #BeyondTheObvious initiative designed to enhance our students' visual storytelling skills. Photography is a powerful medium for expression; this workshop will help students harness their creativity and use the lens to understand unique perspectives and circumstances. If their pictures can make even one individual reflect and make a difference, then the aim has been achieved. Looking #BeyondTheObvious is all about peeling the layers. We are grateful to Vicky Roy for joining us in this endeavor. His experience in photography will undoubtedly inspire our Satyans to explore and communicate themselves in the most profound way. We look forward to the inspiring stories our students will tell through their photographs." The initiative represents a shift from traditional learning methods, highlighting the



impact of visual storytelling in education. Recognizing photography's ability to enhance imagination and shape narratives, Vicky Roy conducted an engaging workshop for the students. He taught key photography techniques and encouraged students to find the extraordinary in the ordinary, creating compelling narratives inspired by their surroundings.

As part of the initiative, a photo competition was launched as a summer vacation assignment, allowing students to showcase their creativity. An esteemed jury, including Director Principal Manisha Malhotra and guest photographer Vicky Roy, will select the top entries for social media sharing. The competition will culminate with the announcement of winners on World Photography Day, August 19, 2024.

Vicky Roy, renowned for his exceptional talent and passion for visual storytelling, expressed his enthusiasm for the collaboration. "It's been a great experience to bring different perspectives to the students at Satya School. This initiative will empower young minds to capture their vision through the lens, enhance

culminated in a meeting with Prince Edward at Buckingham Palace.

About Satya School Spread over a 5-acre campus in Gurugram, Satya School provides an exceptional learning environment with state-of-the-art facilities. The school features contemporary amenities, expansive corri-



their art of communication, and allow their creativity to soar. I believe that by fostering their innate curiosity and guiding them to see the world through a unique lens, we can inspire the next generation of storytellers."

From runaway to renowned photographer, Vicky Roy's journey epitomizes the power of passion and perseverance, inspiring Satya School's holistic approach to education. His debut solo exhibition, "Street Dream" in 2017, supported by the British High Commission, catapulted him onto a global stage. Documenting the World Trade Center's reconstruction and earning Forbes Asia's 30 under 30 in 2016, his acclaim soared. Recognized with the MIT Media Fellowship in 2014, he's conducted guest sessions at Harvard, Facebook, Google, and the World Bank. His remarkable journey

dors, well-equipped science laboratories, a state-of-the-art auditorium, technologically advanced campus, computer and innovation laboratories, smart classrooms, and a comprehensive library. The institution embraces a world-class education system, offering the IB-Primary Years Program for junior school and CBSE for middle and senior school. Prioritizing holistic student development, the school emphasizes both academic excellence and a rich array of co-curricular activities. The school is equipped with world-class sports facilities, including an all-weather swimming pool, squash courts, basketball court, football ground, cricket nets, and a multi-purpose hall for indoor sports like gymnastics, taekwondo, and badminton. To learn more, visit Satya School.

T20 WORLD CUP: WEST INDIES THRASH AFGHANISTAN IN FINAL GROUP GAME

TDG NETWORK
GROS-ISLET

Nicholas Pooran was run out agonisingly short of a maiden T20 World Cup hundred as a rampant West Indies humbled Afghanistan by 104 runs in a clash of unbeaten teams on Monday.

With both sides already into the Super Eights, Pooran smashed 98 off 53 balls in the final group match at the Daren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia to propel the hosts to 218-5 after being put in to bat.

A rattled Afghanistan never recovered from the loss of Rahmanullah Gurbaz in the first over of the reply and were bundled out for 114 off 16.2 overs, seamer Obed McCoy marking his first match of the tournament with best figures of 3-14.

The next phase of the competition, the Super Eights, starts on Wednesday.

"When you get the good



wickets you have to capitalise as batters. When it's your day you have to take it and make the most of it," said Pooran, who thumped six fours and eight sixes in a spectacular innings took him past 2,000 T20I runs.

Coming to the middle in the second over after the demise of Brandon King, Pooran and hometown hero Johnson Charles (43 off 27 balls) accel-

erated at supersonic speed in lifting the total to 92-1 by the sixth over.

It was the highest total ever in the Powerplay overs of a T20 World Cup since the first of the eight editions was played in South Africa in 2007.

That period of relentless carnage included 36 off an over from seamer Azmatullah Omarzai, whose way-

ward bowling in that fourth over of the innings reflected the confused state of the Afghan attack.

But it was Omarzai who ended Pooran's pursuit of the century in the final over of the innings, his direct hit to the striker's end from deep cover leaving the left-hander just short of his ground as he dived to the crease. With all the frontline Afghan bowlers

taking a hammering it was left to Gulbadin Naib to help pull things back with 2-14 off two overs.

"To concede more than 90 runs in the Powerplay, it's pretty hard to come back from that," Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan said.

"I thought we fought hard in the middle overs though to restrict them below 220.

"It's good that this happened at this stage of the tournament because you understand now what has to be the mindset and strategy in a similar situation." West Indies skipper Rovman Powell said their run of four consecutive wins in the group -- extending their overall winning streak to an unprecedented eight matches -- was no fluke.

"It goes to show all the hard work that the boys have put in over the past 12 months is paying off and it's important for us to keep on playing good cricket and keep on improving," he said.

Gautam Gambhir set to be named India coach soon

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Former India opener Gautam Gambhir was on Tuesday interviewed by the BCCI's Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) for the national team's head coach position.

The interview took place over a zoom call with both Gambhir and Malhotra attending it virtually.

"Yes, Gambhir appeared for the interview with the CAC. One round of discussions happened today. There is another round expected tomorrow," a BCCI source told PTI.

Gambhir is believed to be the only candidate who is in contention and the announcement of his name is a mere formality which could happen in the next 48 hours.

The specifics of his interaction with CAC chairman Ashok Malhotra and his colleagues Jatin Paranjpe and Sulakshana Naik were not immediately known.



Both Paranjpe and Naik are based in Mumbai.

The discussion, it is believed, was focussed on the roadmap he has in mind for the next three years, which will feature three ICC tournaments across formats.

There is an Apex Council meeting on Tuesday evening and it is understood that secretary Jay Shah will apprise the members about the coach selection process before the final announcement is made.

The CAC is also interview-

ing a few interested candidates for the North Zone selector's position.

The 42-year-old Gambhir recently guided Kolkata Knight Riders to the IPL trophy as the team's mentor.

Current India coach Rahul Dravid will be stepping down at the end of the team's T20 World Cup campaign in the Americas.

The side is currently in Barbados for the Super 8 matches after remaining unbeaten in the group league stage.

INDIA'S SHOTGUN SQUAD FOR PARIS OLYMPICS ANNOUNCED

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), post a meeting of the national selection committee on Tuesday revealed the Indian shotgun team for the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Senior trap shooter Prithviraj Tondaiman has made the cut in the men's Trap, while Rajeshwari Kumari will take aim in the women's Trap. Anantjeet Singh Naruka will be India's sole men's Skeet shooter while Raiza Dhillon and Maheshwari Chauhan in women's Skeet, complete the five quota places that the Shotgun squad had earned.

Maheshwari and Anantjeet will also feature as the sole Indian pair in the Skeet Mixed Team event, which is making a debut at the Paris Games. Incidentally, all five named will also be competing in their first Olympic Games.

K. Sultan Singh, Secretary General, NRAI, said after the meeting, "There was intense

Incidentally, all five named will also be competing in their first Olympic Games.

competition for places and things could have changed in case some Shooters medalled at the recently concluded Lonato World Cup. But we believe that we have a great Shotgun team, which has won the highest ever spots for India at any Games and certainly a second Olympic medal in the discipline looks a strong possibility."

He also revealed that the name of women's Trap shooter Shreyasi Singh had also been approved by the committee and that the NRAI had written to the ISSF (International Shooting Sport Body) for a quota swap. In this situation, her name could only be published post receiving necessary approvals from the ISSF.

GM Arjun wins Stepan Avagyan Memorial, jumps to career-high 4th spot in live rating

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi delivered yet another domineering performance to clinch the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 crown in Jermuk, Armenia with a round to spare.

The 20-year-old, India's highest-rated chess player, defeated Russian GM Volodar Murzin in 63 moves in the eighth and penultimate round to move to six points with four wins and as many draws.

He now has an unassailable lead of 1.5 points over three players tied for second spot in a strong 10-player field.

The victory also helped Arjun jump to a career-high live rating of No. 4 as he has so far added 9 points from the eight rounds to reach a total of 2779.9 ELO points.

He trails Norway's Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana of USA in live ratings.



Against Murzin, Arjun pounced on his Russian opponent's error in the rook and minor piece endgame and his title was guaranteed once USA's GM Samuel Sevian had to settle for a draw against local GM Manuel Petrosyan.

"This has been a fantastic tournament for me as I have been able to make the most

of my opportunities. These tournaments are never easy as the level of competition

is very high but I am happy with the way I played and clinched my second title of the year," said Arjun.

Arjun, who has been challenging himself to play more open tournaments so as to play a variety of opposition, has been in fine form this year.

He bagged the Menorca Open crown in April, finished second in TePe Sigmans Chess Tournament in May and also finished joint-fifth in the Sharjah Masters Open tournament.

Against Murzin, Arjun pounced on his Russian opponent's error in the rook and minor piece endgame and his title was guaranteed once USA's GM Samuel Sevian had to settle for a draw against local GM Manuel Petrosyan.

In the final round of the tournament, Arjun will face Petrosyan and will be looking to score a win and close the gap over the third placed Caruana (2795.6 ELO points) in the live ratings.

East Bengal rope in David Lalhlansanga on 3-year contract

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

Super Cup champions East Bengal FC on Tuesday announced the signing of rising Indian forward David Lalhlansanga on a three-year contract.

One of the most prolific young strikers in India, David was the top scorer in last year's Calcutta Football League and Durand Cup, and also played a pivotal role in Mohammedan Sporting Club's maiden I-League triumph.

"East Bengal is a big club with millions of fans spread across India. I love playing in front of passionate fans," said David in a statement.

David was named by head coach Igor Stimac in India's last two World Cup Qualifiers squads against Kuwait at home and Qatar away but did not get any minutes.

"I've already spent some time with Mahesh, Nandha and Lalchungnunga in the



India camp. They are very helpful and always motivate me to get better. I want to give my best for this club."

East Bengal head coach Carles Cuadrat said, David is one of our Indian recruits whom we had been trying hard to sign for a long time. He was the leading scorer in the Durand Cup and the CFL, which grabbed my attention. From that moment he became a target for our future plans. I am extremely happy to welcome a gem like him. Hailing from Mizoram, David rose through Aizawl FC's youth ranks before being promoted to Aizawl's first team in the 2019-20 season.

T20 WC: USA vs South Africa Super-8 clash promises to be a historic match

SUNIL YASH KALRA
NEW DELHI

Host United States will face South Africa today in the first Super-8 match of the ICC T20 World Cup 2024. These two teams are going to face each other for the first time in a T-20 international match. The group stage of T20 World Cup 2024 has ended and now the explosive matches of the top 8 teams are about to begin. The Super-8 stage will start from June 19, here 4 teams each are divided into 2 groups. India, Australia, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh are in Group 1. Group 2 consists of England, West Indies, South Africa and America.

This stadium is one of the few grounds that will help every player, be it a batsman, fast bowler, or spinner. Historically, the new ball on Antigua provides some help to the fast bowlers early on. Additionally, as the ball takes hold on the pitch, spinners enjoy bowling at the venue in both innings. Here the captain can choose to bat first after winning the toss. The average score of the first innings on this pitch is 138 runs.

Speaking on India News' special program presented by Ixibat, former Indian cricketer Noel David said, "South Africa has won all its 4 matches in the group

stage and the team will try to maintain the winning streak. Quinton de Kock has not been able to play any big innings so far in the current T20 World Cup. The team will expect a good innings from this wicketkeeper-batsman. Norkhia is in strong form at the moment. He has taken 9 wickets in 4 matches at an average of 7.77 and an economy rate of 4.37. Host America has caused an upset by defeating a strong team like Pakistan in the group stage. In such a situation, the Proteas team would not like to take lightly the American team which is participating in the World Cup for the first time.

America's aggressive batsman Jones has scored 141 runs in 3 innings at an average of 141.00 and strike rate of 160.22. Left-arm fast bowler Netrawalker has taken 4 wickets in 3 matches with an economy rate of 5.20. America has created an upset by defeating a strong team like Pakistan in the group stage. In such a situation, the South African team would not like to take lightly the American team which is participating in the World Cup for the first time."

Sunil Yash Kalra is a women's cricket historian and founder of Indian Sports Fans.

Man City to launch Premier League defence at Chelsea

TDG NETWORK
LONDON

Manchester City will begin their Premier League title defence away to Chelsea on the opening weekend of the new season after the fixture list was published on Tuesday. The match on August 18 will pit Pep Guardiola against his former assistant Enzo Maresca, who was appointed Chelsea boss earlier this

FA Cup winners Manchester United will host the opening game of the campaign when Fulham visit Old Trafford on August 16.

month after guiding Leicester to promotion last term. FA Cup winners Manchester United will host the opening game of the campaign when Fulham visit Old Trafford on August 16. The following day, newly

promoted Ipswich, back in the Premier League for the first time in 22 years, welcome Liverpool's new manager Arne Slot, who has replaced the long-serving Jurgen Klopp. Leicester, back in the top

flight after one season in the Championship and yet to name Maresca's successor, will host Tottenham on August 19. Fabian Hurlzeler's Brighton reign will begin away to Everton while new West Ham boss Julen Lopetegui will welcome Aston Villa. Mikel Arteta's Arsenal, who finished as runners-up behind City for a second straight season, host Wolves.

France edge Austria in Euro 2024 opener

TDG NETWORK
DUSSELDORF (GERMANY)

Maximilian Woeber's own goal was enough to give France a winning start to their Euro 2024 campaign on Monday as they edged Austria 1-0 in their opening game but Kylian Mbappe came off late on with a broken nose.

Woeber diverted Mbappe's cutback into his own net seven minutes before half-time in Dusseldorf to allow the French, one of the leading contenders to win the tournament, to come through a stiff test.

Austria have been much-improved under Ralf Rangnick and they often made life uncomfortable for the 2022 World Cup runners-up, who saw Mbappe leave the field near the end after being hurt in a collision.

He had earlier failed to convert a glorious chance that would have allowed France to win by a wider margin, and sources close to the player confirmed he had broken his nose in the accidental clash with Kevin Danso.

"We had the chance to put the game to bed and it is true that we could have been more precise in attack, but it's very good to start with a victory," said France



coach Didier Deschamps. "It is a good habit to have and we need to try to keep it."

France will be relieved to have emerged victorious after a build-up overshadowed by talk of politics rather than football.

Mbappe and other French players had spent much of their time before the media in recent days answering questions about upcoming elections in the country which could see the far-right National Rally become the biggest party.

Any slip-up here would have led to suggestions their minds had not been fully focused on the competition.

Instead, the result leaves France level on three points in Group D with the Netherlands, who defeated Poland 2-1 in Hamburg on Sunday.

France and the Netherlands meet next in Leipzig on Friday, while Austria

ing to score and missing the decisive penalty in a shoot-out defeat by Switzerland in the last 16.

The new Real Madrid signing will wonder how he did not score in this game, with his first big opportunity arriving inside eight minutes.

Antoine Griezmann and Theo Hernandez combined to release Mbappe, who cut in from the left as he loves to do and shaped to curl a shot into the far corner before instead aiming for the near post.

However, Austria goalkeeper Patrick Pentz was able to make the save.

The Austrians settled into the contest and passed up a wonderful chance of their own to go ahead on 36 minutes.

Skipper Marcel Sabitzer touched down a Michael Gregoritsch cross from the left for Christoph Baumgartner, but he was foiled by goalkeeper Mike Maignan. That proved crucial as France took the lead two minutes later.

Ousmane Dembele gave the ball to Mbappe on the right, and he produced a stepover to get to the byline before his cutback was nodded into the far corner of his own net by the unfortunate Woeber.