




CONG APPOINTS GOGOI AS PARTY'S DEPUTY LEADER IN LS

P5



REVANTH REDDY FACES PROTESTS ON JOB ISSUE

P4



'CONG IS A PARASITIC PARTY, IT WILL SWALLOW WHOEVER IT STANDS ON'

P10



INDIA BEAT ZIMBABWE, SECURE T20I SERIES 4-1

P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky. Light Rain or Thundershower likely to occur. Maximum and minimum temperatures likely to be around 33 °C and 28 °C respectively.

RAINFALL: 1.0 mm
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
 Max. 92 % Min. 72 %
TEMPERATURE
 Max: 32.4 °C (+0.4) Min: 28.3°C (+1.4)
SUN RISES 05:1 hrs
SUN SETS 18:24 hrs
MOON RISES 11:59 hrs
MOON SETS 23:35 hrs

Full Moon on 21 July

THUMBNAILED



People walk on the road amid torrential rains in Kolkata on Sunday.

■ BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Three heavily armed terrorists killed in J&K: At least three heavily armed Pakistani terrorists were killed on Sunday afternoon as the Indian Army foiled an infiltration bid on the LoC in Keran Sector of Kashmir's Kupwara district. A defence spokesman said that weapons and war-like stores have been recovered from the spot. The operation is going on. The Chinar Corps of the Indian Army wrote on X: "03x Terrorists have been eliminated in the ongoing anti-infiltration operation in Keran Sector, alongwith recovery of weapons and other war-like stores."

Trump survives assassination attempt at Pennsylvania rally

Former US president injured in right ear; bystander dead, two injured; shooter also killed



AGENCIES BUTLER, 14 JULY

Former US President Donald Trump was the target of an apparent assassination attempt Saturday at a Pennsylvania rally, days before he was to accept the Republican nomination for a third time.

A barrage of gunfire set off panic, and a bloodied Trump, who said he was shot in the ear, was surrounded by Secret Service and hurried to his SUV as

he pumped his fist in a show of defiance.

Trump's campaign said the presumptive GOP nominee was doing "fine" after the shooting, which he said pierced the upper part of his right ear. "I knew immediately that something was wrong in that I heard a whizzing sound, shots, and immediately felt the bullet ripping through the skin. Much bleeding took place," he wrote on his social media site.

In videos of the incident, Trump is seen touching the right side of his face after

what seemed like the first two shots and dropping to the ground. Secret Service agents threw themselves on him to protect him. When they rose, the agents had him inside the protective shield of their bodies.

The former President appeared to be bleeding on the right side of the face. He raised a fist in the air as he was led away. He was taken to a local medical facility for treatment.

The FBI identified the shooter as Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, of Bethel Park,

Pennsylvania. Secret Service agents fatally shot Crooks, who attacked from an elevated position outside the rally venue at a farm show in Butler, Pennsylvania, the agency said.

One attendee was killed and two spectators were critically injured, authorities said. All were identified as men.

Law enforcement officials later that bomb-making materials were found inside Crooks' vehicle and inside his home.

The attack was the most serious attempt to assassinate a president or presidential candidate since Ronald Reagan was shot in 1981. It drew new attention to concerns about political violence in a deeply polarised USA less than four months before the presidential election.

President Joe Biden, who is running against Mr Trump, was briefed on the incident and spoke to Mr Trump several hours after the shooting, the White House said. "There's no place in America for this type of violence," the president said in public remarks. "It's sick. It's sick."

(More on Page 9)

Modi, Rahul condemn attack on ex-US Prez

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday strongly condemned the attack on former US President Donald Trump, saying that "violence has no place in politics and democracies".

In a post on X, the Prime Minister said: "Deeply concerned by the attack on my friend, former President Donald Trump. Strongly condemn the incident. Violence has no place in politics and democracies. Wish him a speedy recovery." Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also condemned the attack.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi wrote: "I am deeply concerned by the assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump."

After 39 yrs, Puri temple's Ratna Bhandar opened



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE BHUBANESWAR, 14 JULY

The inner chamber of the Ratna Bhandar (treasure trove) of Puri's Jagannath temple was opened on Sunday after being locked for 39 years. An 11-member team, including Justice (retired) Biswanath Rath and the chief administrator of the Jagannath Temple Administration, Arabinda Padhee, broke three locks to gain entry into the chamber.

The inner chamber was last opened in 1985, coincidentally on the same date, 14 July. However, an inventory of valuables was not conducted in 1985; the last inventory was done in 1978.

The 11-member team, after praying to Lord Lokanath, Maa Laxmi, and Goddess Bimala for permission, entered the temple at the auspicious time of 1:28 p.m. and remained until 5:20 p.m. Heavy equipment, cutters, lights, six huge newly made chests and even snake

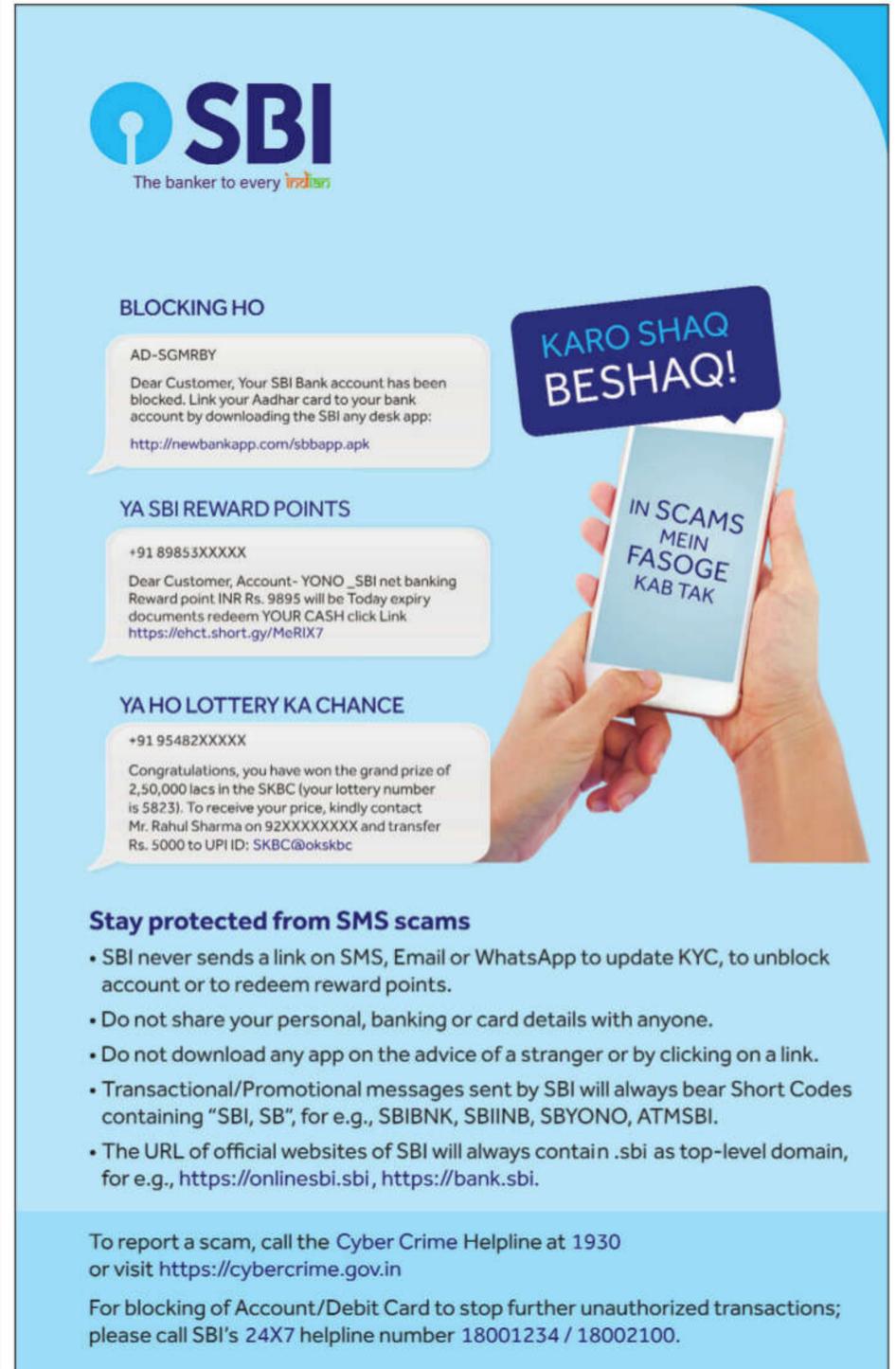
helpline members were kept in readiness. Briefing media persons, Padhee and Justice Rath explained that they first opened the locks of the outer Ratna Bhandar in the presence of Gajapati Maharaja Dibya Singh Deo and others. The valuables in the outer room are used on a day-to-day basis and during festivals and are accessed regularly.

It took considerable time to shift all the valuables from the outer room to a temporary strong room inside the temple, which was then sealed. Following this, the team entered the inner Ratna Bhandar, which had three locks. The keys brought from the treasury did not work, so they broke the locks as per the SOP approved by the state government.

Due to time constraints, the team only inspected the chamber and decided to return. The valuables will be shifted on another date as decided by the committee and government.



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TMC cadre shot dead, another injured in armed attack

The incident took place at a motel near Islampur in North Dinajpur

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SILIGURI, 14 JULY

A Trinamul Congress worker was shot dead while another was wounded in an attack by a group of 10 armed criminals while they were discussing about a tender for local civic projects.

The incident took place at a motel near Islampur in North Dinajpur late yesterday evening.

The victim, identified as Bapi Roy, husband of Islampur Panchayat Samiti member from the Trinamul Congress, was pronounced dead upon arrival at the Islampur Sub Divisional Hospital.

The other victim, Md Sajjad, husband of a local Gram

The victim, identified as Bapi Roy, husband of Islampur Panchayat Samiti member from the Trinamul Congress, was pronounced dead upon arrival at the Islampur Sub Divisional Hospital. The other victim, Md Sajjad, husband of a local Gram Panchayat Pradhan, sustained gunshot wounds and was taken to a private hospital in Siliguri for treatment

Panchayat Pradhan, sustained gunshot wounds and was taken to a private hospital in Siliguri for treatment.

Bapi's relatives took his body to a private hospital in hopes of reviving him.

While Md Sajjad is still being treated, Bapi Roy's body was handed over to police and later brought to North Bengal Medical College and Hospital for post-mortem

as part of the police investigation.

Following the incident, senior police officers arrived at the spot to gather CCTV footage for further investigation. The motel owner and his staff were also detained by the police for questioning in order to obtain more information about them and their involvement in the incident.

Kanhaialal Agarwal, TMC

district president, who visited Islampur hospital last night, stated that nearly 10 miscreants had attacked Bapi Roy at close range.

As of now, no arrests have been made in connection with the incident.

Md Sajjad, the spouse of a Gram Panchayat Pradhan, is currently being treated at a private healthcare facility in Siliguri, informed the media that they were attacked by a group of unknown individuals while discussing tenders for development projects with other members of the Gram Panchayat.

Lipi Biswas Roy, the widow of Bapi who was a member of Islampur Panchayat Samiti, said that her husband had left home after receiving a

phone call. She also revealed that the attackers snatched his phone and gold chain. Although she does not fully understand the motive behind the attack on her husband, she is advocating for a CBI investigation to ensure that those individuals are held accountable.

Sources indicate that Bapi was involved in land and property contracts and would frequently visit this motel. He was previously arrested for illegal liquor trade as well.

Kanhaialal Agarwal, the chairman of Islampur Municipality, dismissed any political motives behind the shooting. The North Dinajpur police are conducting a thorough investigation and considering all possible angles.

Land owners start agitation over land acquisition for coal mine, syndicate's makeshift office torched in Andal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE DURGAPUR, 14 JULY

Members of Krishi Jomi Jiban Jibika Raksha Committee started an agitation against forcible land grabbing by the land mafia and have set on fire a makeshift thatched office of the land syndicate at Dakshinkhanda in Andal Police Station area of West Burdwan district.

The villagers have started agitation against the grabbing of their land and organised a protest rally.

The land sharks have become very active after the Kazi Nazrul Islam Airport has become operational in Andal and have started grabbing land on both sides of the National Highway-19.

On the Andal-Ukhra Road in Dakshinkhanda, there are vast tracts of agricultural land. Ujjwal Pal, one of the agitators, said that during the period 1992 to 2014, Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) has acquired about 30 acres of land for setting up of a colliery with a promise of providing a job to land owners who have at least one acre of land. But so far nobody has received any job from ECL,



he has claimed.

Tapan Mukherjee, another member of the committee, said that recently a private company had proposed to start a coal mine in Madhujore and for that fresh land will be acquired on behalf of the coal company.

But suddenly, in the past few days the land sharks have become very active and has set up a temporary thatched office on agricultural land.

"We demand the coal company should directly negotiate with the land owners and we will not allow any middlemen or land mafia to grab our land," he added.

The villagers are also planning to submit a memorandum to the district administration with their demands.

In the meanwhile some unknown people have torched the temporary makeshift office of the land syndicate, leading to a huge stir in the locality.

BJP general secretary, Abhijit Dutta has questioned why the local administration and BLLRO has remained mum on the issue so far.

"Everybody knows who patronises these organised illegal syndicates," he said.

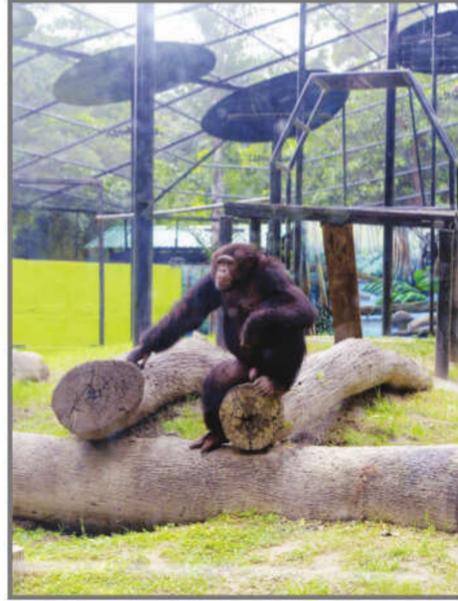
So far neither the coal company nor the local administration has given any statements on this issue. The local TMC has also remained silent on this issue.

Andal Police have also been informed about the of the agitation and the setting on fire of the syndicate office.

CELEBRATING GREEN



Vanmahotsav 2024 was celebrated at Alipore Zoo along with Chimpanzee Day on Sunday. On this occasion Braille signboards were also unveiled for the benefit of visually challenged visitors. Twenty such Braille boards donated by International Eye Foundation have been installed in front of important enclosures in the zoo. The programme was chaired by MoS (Independent Charge) Forest, Birbaha Hansda along with other dignitaries and specially-abled children. ■ SNS



Darjeeling MP raises concerns over alleged illegal leasing of GTA tourism properties

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SILIGURI, 14 JULY

Following Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) leader Bimal Gurung's letter to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Darjeeling MP Raju Bista has expressed concerns about the alleged illegal leasing of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) Tourism properties.

On Sunday, Mr Bista reached out to GTA Principal Secretary Soumya Purkait seeking clarification on the matter. This comes after former Chairman of GTA's Board of Administrators, Binoy Tamang, condemned the

decision to lease out public properties without following proper rules and regulations.

The issue has gained attention in the media as reports have surfaced about the leasing of GTA Tourism properties in Darjeeling More, Siliguri, and along the Sandakphu route to private parties.

These reports have also quoted statements from GTA Chief Executive Anit Thapa stating that all GTA properties will be leased out, raising questions about transparency and legality, Mr Bista said.

In his letter to the GTA Principal Secretary, Mr Bista men-

tioned that as an ex-officio member of the GTA Sabha, he was not informed of any resolutions or votes regarding the leasing of tourism properties.

To clarify the situation, he has sought information on the GTA Sabha's resolution authorising the leasing process, details on any advertisements announcing open tenders for these properties, specifics on how individuals or entities were chosen for these leases, information on financial transactions related to these contracts, and disclosure of any other proposed properties for leasing and how potential lessees were selected.

Modular OT set up in Uttarpara hospital at the initiative of Serampore MP



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE HOOGHLY, 14 JULY

Last Saturday evening, the Serampore MP Mr Kalyan Banerjee inaugurated the newly set up modular operation theater at Mahamaya Shishu o Matri Mangal hospital, a Uttarpara-Kotrung Municipality-run hospital.

On the occasion were present the Uttarpara-Kotrung Municipality chairman Mr Dilip Yadav, doctors and other dignitaries.

From 2009 onwards the Serampore MP's local area development fund has been used to upgrade the hospital with required infrastructure and with most advanced modern medical technology.

During the journey of

progress the hospital was upgraded with CT scan unit, ICCU unit, dialysis unit and centrally air-conditioned patient cabins.

Some extra features which make the new Modular OT different from the Normal OT include continuous removal of contaminated air out of the operation theatre, durable anti-bacterial paint, ease of cleaning and maintenance, permeability of vapour to escape which protects against the growth of yeast and microbes, moisture and thaw resistance, ease of movement and access to instruments and being able to accommodate a number of doctors inside.

The Serampore MP Mr Kalyan Banerjee said: "Our state chief minister Mamata



Banerjee is a symbol of fast development and progress and an inspiration to me. Since 2009 I have been using my MP fund in various development works in my constituency. Much stress has also been given on the development and upgradation of hospitals at par with the latest medical infrastructure and advanced medical technology. Serampore walsh hospital is now considered as the best superspeciality hospital in the district. The Mahamaya Shishu o Matri Mangal hospital now has a Modular OT. From my MP fund 42 lakhs have been used for the purpose. People with low income can now also avail such advanced medical services."

The MP added: "I won't be wrong to say that I am the

first MP who has taken the initiative to set up Modular OT in a civic body run hospital. The people of my constituency appreciate and acknowledge the progress and development work initiated by me. Hence I have been victorious a fourth time as the Serampore MP. I thank them for their love and co-operation, but it is really strange that the opposition never acknowledges the massive ongoing development work in my constituency."

To see that the newly set up Modular OT works properly a chairman-in-council member has been put in charge to ensure smooth functioning of the Modular OT. said Uttarpara-Kotrung Municipality Chairman, Dilip Yadav.

With Rath Yatra, organisers unfold their Puja themes



ASHOK CHATTERJEE KOLKATA, 14 JULY

The day of Rath Yatra is considered auspicious. This day also heralds the beginning of Durga Puja as many organisers indulge in Khunti Puja, planting the first pole for the puja pandal.

This year was no different as two of the pujas in the city, one in central and the other in north Kolkata held their Khunti Puja on Sunday.

The puja committees also unveiled their themes for this year.

At Kanthalbagan in Entally, children dressed up as Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra, ushered in the puja.

The Kanthalbagan Sarbojanin Puja Committee also made a metre-round malpua on the occasion.

The Entally puja saw Blue City being created around the area, in keeping with their theme.

Into their 78th year, the theme for the pujais 'Creation after Destruction'.

The organisers said that creation of this earth is not only through natural process and through human efforts but also with divine intervention. Goddess Durgalent her powers in creating colours and hues on this earth.

"Based on this belief, our Durga idol will also reflect the vibrancy of colours. We will show how the creation of this earth has happened from a bland state, through our theme," said Soumojit Das, jt secretary of the puja committee.

The organisers chose to paint the houses in the vicinity blue because the earth, when viewed from space or the moon, resembles a blue ball.

The organisers, with support from corporate sponsorships, have embarked upon a theme puja as till last year

be tremendous.

In Bongaon Local Part 1, the artist had shown the journey on a local train. Vendors selling their wares, the cacophony of a bogey, the sound of a moving train at high speed were all part of the theme. People, who walked inside the pandal, were transported to a local train.

"We keep innovating. Last year, we had done Barshamongol, the advent of good



they were holding very traditional Durga Puja.

At Jagat Mukherjee Park in Bagbazar, Bongaon Local 2 is the theme.

The committee had recreated Bongaon Local in 2016 and this year it is going to be a sequel of the last time. Minister Sashi Panja was the chief guest at the Khunti Puja.

While in 2016, the puja drew a record crowd, the organisers are hoping this year too, the response would

tidings brought about by the monsoon. This year they are celebrating their 88 years of Puja," said Dwaipayana Roy, jt secretary.

Bhowanipur 75 Palli had interfaith Khuti Puja today, a testament to its commitment for inclusivity and cultural diversity. Subir Das, club secretary, said, "In our 60th year, we are thrilled to introduce the Interfaith Khuti Puja, which exemplifies our dedication to fostering unity."

BSF foils major infiltration attempt across India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal

AGENCIES KOLKATA, 14 JULY

The Border Security Force (BSF) foiled a major infiltration attempt across the India-Bangladesh border, close to the Amudiya border outpost in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district on Saturday night, an official said on Sunday.

A BSF trooper on duty was attacked and had to lob a stun grenade and then fire a round from his service rifle to deter the intruders and send them back.

The BSF has not ruled out the possibility of any of the infiltrators being injured in the firing.

"The jawan spotted 10-15 people moving across the fields towards the Indo-Bangladesh Border Road (IBBR) and alerted his colleagues over the radio. He then moved forward and challenged the mob, ordering them to retreat. Suddenly, 3-4 people, hiding in the field, attacked the jawan with sharp weapons and canes. The jawan realised that he was outnumbered and used the stun



grenade. This did not deter the miscreants who attempted to attack him again. This was when the jawan fired a single round in self-defence," BSF DIG, South Bengal Frontier

and spokesperson A.K. Arya said.

Criminal activities seem to have increased along the India-Bangladesh border over the last several weeks.

On Saturday, infiltration attempts were made close to the Madhupur, Maluapara, Haldarpara, Banpur and Matiyari Border Outposts in the state's Nadia district.

BSF personnel were attacked by cattle smugglers close to the Charamrashi Border Outpost in Murshidabad and the Sasni Border Outpost in Malda, and they had to use stun grenades and fire from Pump Action Guns (non-lethal) as well as regular weapons to fend off the attacks.

The BSF has registered strong protests against such

activities with Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and lodged reports at local police stations.

"In spite of frequent flag meetings with BGB to alert them about frequent attacks and illegal infiltration by Bangladeshi criminals, no concrete action has been taken from their side. This inaction has emboldened the smugglers and criminals. Nevertheless, our jawans are resolute in protecting our borders and ensuring the security of our nation under all circumstances," Arya said.

TENDER

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E-TENDER NOTICE - NIT/11/24/19, Dated 11.07.2024
 On behalf of the president of India. The Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/South East Central Railway, Bilsapur Division invites e-tender for the following items.

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 South East Central Railway @secrail

THUMBNAILS



Xavierians from Durgapur emerged as state champions among boys at the CISCE regional Badminton tournament that ended in Kalimpong on Saturday. SNS

Vehicle hits train: A four-wheeler allegedly entered a level crossing at Khardaha forcibly and hit the Hazarduari Express on Sunday. According to Eastern Railway, this occurred at around 8.40 p.m. when Down Hazarduari Express was approaching Khardaha. According to ER, the gateman of level crossing gate No.9 was closing the level crossing gate, when a four-wheeler entered the level crossing and hit the train. The driver fled from the spot leaving the vehicle on the track. No casualty or injury was reported. SNS

'BJP to observe 21 July as democracy murder day'

LoP Suvendu Adhikari made the announcement from his protest stage near Raj Bhavan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 14 JULY

The BJP is going to observe 21 July as 'democracy murder day', Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, announced from his protest stage near Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

Under the leadership of party chairperson Mamata Banerjee, the Trinamul Congress has been organizing a martyr remembrance ceremony at Esplanade in the city on 21 July every year. This year's Martyrs' Day will be the Trinamul Congress' first major public meeting after its recent victory in 29 seats in the Lok Sabha elections in the state.

The BJP will observe the same day as 'Democracy Murder Day', Mr Adhikari, said from the protest stage in front of the Raj Bhavan on Sunday. Since the announcement of the Lok Sabha election results, the BJP has alleged that their workers have been attacked in post-election violence.



BJP leader and Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari with party leaders stage a protest against the post-poll violence after the byelections in the state, at Raj Bhavan, in Kolkata on Sunday. BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Mr Adhikari is staging a sit-in demonstration with the 'oppressed' in front of the Raj Bhavan over the issue after seeking legal recourse. Ultimately, Calcutta High Court granted him permission to hold the demonstration under special conditions.

Accordingly, today, Sunday, at around 10 a.m., Suvendu Adhikari began his sit-in. He was accompanied by Tapas Roy, and Kaustav Bagchi.

Additionally, several party leaders like Rudranil Ghosh,

Arjun Singh and Asim Sarkar participated in the demonstration. As per the court's directive, 300 party workers joined the sit-in.

However, obtaining permission for the sit-in at this location required considerable effort from the opposition leader. Initially, Kolkata Police did not grant permission for the sit-in due to Section 144 being in effect in front of the Raj Bhavan. Challenging this decision, the opposition leader approached the Calcutta High

Court. His argument was that Abhishek Banerjee had also staged a five-day sit-in in front of the Raj Bhavan last October without any obstruction from the police.

The BJP camp claimed that Suvendu was being denied permission solely because he is a BJP leader.

Eventually, with the court's permission, the sit-in commenced in front of the Raj Bhavan under the specified conditions.

The sit-in by the BJP con-

tinued from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All BJP workers participating in the demonstration carried posters with negative messages about the democratic environment in West Bengal, along with pictures of the persecuted BJP workers.

Meanwhile BJP national IT-in charge and West Bengal co-observer Amit Malviya wrote complaints to the National Commission for Women, against alleged threats by civic volunteers to commit rape on a BJP worker at Bagda.

KMC considering plans to allow sanction to buildings of smaller sizes

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 14 JULY

Aiming to curb illegal constructions in the city, the Kolkata Municipal Corporation has now shifted its lens towards smaller plots. The civic body is working on plans to allow sanction to buildings of smaller sizes while making norms for regularisation of bigger structures more stringent.

After the collapse of a multistorey under-construction building resulting in the death of at least 11 local residents, the municipal corporation has intensified its crackdown on illegal constructions.

The issue was a subject of uproar in the recently held monthly House at the KMC last week when the opposition councillors criticised the civic body authorities over illegal constructions.

Responding to the claims, mayor Firhad Hakim informed that the civic body has passed an amendment in the rules of the KMC norms that will help in curbing illegal constructions.

According to Mr Hakim, the civic body is considering relaxing the mandatory leaving of four feet space around



a building. "In the existing system, four feet space is to be left on two sides and for the back side there are norms of four feet and six feet. If one has a plot of one cottah or two cottahs, after leaving this much of space, how will he construct his house. To resolve this, we are trying to amend the rules to allow leaving less space for smaller plots and more FAR (floor area ratio) for vertical extensions."

According to the mayor, in illegal constructions the quality would be compromised. If such structures are given sanction, the construction would be done as per norms and not illegally.

As informed by Mr Hakim, the proposal has been sent to the state government for approval. Once approved the civic body would notify it.

RAINY PLEASURE



A little boy in a raincoat walks on the road along with his mother after a shower in Kolkata on Sunday evening. BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Fisherman dies after falling from trawler while fishing for hilsa in Bay of Bengal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 14 JULY

The body of a fisherman, who went missing while fishing for hilsa was recovered from Jambudwip in South 24-Parganas yesterday.

Police said that he had gone out to sea to fish for hilsa. It was there that the accident happened.

The fisherman slipped from his trawler and fell into the sea, a little distance from Jambudwip.

He had been missing for the past two days.

According to police sources, the deceased's name is Mohan Majhi, a 55-year-old resident of the Hara area in Kulpi.

He had gone deep into the Bay of Bengal from Jambudwip. While catching hilsa, he slipped and fell from the trawler.

After he was missing for two

days, the Coast Guard conducted a search operation and recovered the fisherman's body from the sea, 70 kilometers away from Fraserganj, on Saturday.

The body was taken to Haldia port.

According to police sources, the body will be handed over to the family after an autopsy on Sunday.

At least 14 fishermen had set out from the Sultanpur fishing port in Diamond Harbour on the FB Baba Loknath trawler to catch hilsa from the sea.

On 11 July, they went deeper from Jambudwip. At that time, one fisherman slipped and fell.

After he went missing, the Fishermen's Association contacted the Coast Guard.

A search operation was launched by air and sea, and subsequently, the body was recovered.

Infosys begins functioning from own offices in New Town

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 14 JULY

IT giant Infosys has started functioning from its offices in New Town from Wednesday.

This was announced by the state IT minister, Babul Supriyo.

He has congratulated Infosys on the occasion and mentioned that it will fulfil the dream of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Mr Supriyo commended all government departments for their effort to make this dream



come true.

The Infosys complex is situated on 50 acres of land.

Miss Banerjee and senior officials of Infosys had laid the foundation stone.

Miss Banerjee had requested the IT professionals from Bengal not to go outside as they will get all the facilities here.

Senior government officials said it would open a new chapter in the field of IT sector. Infosys is said to be planning to hire 5,000 IT professionals soon, which will be extended to 8,000 over a period of time.

The state of the art building has all modern facilities. The firm till now used to run its offices in a rental accommodation and the employees

have started shifting to its new office. Wipro another IT giant has got 50 acres of land to set up its office.

Sector V is the IT hub in the state. The state Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation has allotted 200 acres of land to set up an IT hub like the Silicon Valley. New Town has come up as a major IT hub in Eastern India.

It is a green city with all modern amenities. Many companies with parent organisations in the US are working in New Town.

CCTV surveillance in Burrabazar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 14 JULY

Taking steps to ensure the safety and security of jewellers and merchants in the iconic Burrabazar area, the Burrabazar Jewellers' Association is launching a comprehensive CCTV surveillance project.

Sponsored by KNC Services, a renowned exhibition organiser, this initiative aims to create a secure environment for businesses and individuals in the area.

The CCTV surveillance project will cover a radius of 2 kilometres, with over 64 cameras strategically installed to monitor the area, providing 24/7 coverage to detect and address any suspicious activity or criminal behaviour promptly.

Kranti Nagvekar, founder, KNC Services said: "We at KNC Services are proud to partner with the Burrabazar Jewellers' Association to launch this vital surveillance project. Our aim is to enhance the safety and security of this iconic



marketplace, ensuring a secure environment for traders, customers, and the community. This initiative demonstrates our commitment to social responsibility and our dedication to making a positive impact in the lives of those around us. We believe that this project will serve as a model for other markets and communities, and we are honored to be a part of this noble endeavour."

Vivek Gupta, Trinamul Congress MLA from the

Jorasakho Assembly constituency, was present on the occasion, which was attended by members of the Burrabazar Jewellers' Association, representatives from KNC Services, and other dignitaries. KNC Services also unveiled the 5th edition of the coveted Bengal International Jewellery Show on Sunday, marking another prestigious milestone for the jewellery industry in eastern India.

Mr. Gupta congratulated

the Burrabazar Jewellers' Association for taking this step towards ensuring the safety and security of the market. "The installation of CCTV cameras is a significant initiative that will not only deter criminal activity but also provide a sense of relief to the traders and customers. This is a shining example of the association's commitment to the well-being of the community," he said.

The primary objectives of this project are to enhance the security of the Burrabazar area by preventing criminal activities such as theft, burglary, and vandalism, and to create a safe and secure environment for jewellers, merchants, and customers.

The project aims to facilitate swift action in case of any criminal activity with real-time monitoring and prompt response.

The CCTV surveillance project is expected to have a significant impact on the area, including reduced crime rates, an increased sense of

security among businesses and individuals, enhanced monitoring and response capabilities, and improved overall safety and well-being of the community.

Mr. Ravi Karel, Secretary, Burrabazar Jewellers Association said: "The installation of CCTV cameras at Burrabazar is a long-overdue necessity. For far too long, our market has been vulnerable to criminal activity, and our members have suffered losses. But today, we take a significant step towards securing our livelihoods and our community. This project is a testament to the association's dedication to the welfare of our members and the safety of our customers."

Inspired by
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Mamata Banerjee
Aikyashree
2024-25

A scholarship scheme for the students belonging to notified minority communities (Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Muslim, Parsi and Sikh) of West Bengal.

Online Application starts on 15-07-2024

Criteria for application

- Students intending to apply must be domicile of West Bengal
- Students studying in schools must have the unique ID of "Banglar Siksha"
- Securing 50% marks in previous examination (except for Pre-Matric, Class-I and TSP candidates)
- Students must have bank accounts of their own
- In case of the students under the category of Pre-Matric, bank account either of their parents must be provided
- Annual income ceiling of the family for various scholarships:
Pre-Matric — Rupees 2 lakh
Post-Matric — Rupees 2 lakh
Merit-cum-Means — Rupees 2.5 lakh
TSP — Rupees 2 lakh
SVMCM — Rupees 2.5 lakh

New features of the Scheme

- Students studying in classes II to X and XII, who had applied for Aikyashree Scholarship during the academic year 2023-24, need not apply afresh for renewal.
- Students eligible for renewal will receive confirmation through SMS.
- Only students of pre-matric category who have taken admission in class one or in a new school should apply online. Students who will take admission in class XI also need to apply online.

Last date of application: 30-09-2024

For any query or assistance, please contact: WhatsApp Chatbot No. 8017444111 or <https://wbmdfconline.in/FMS/>

Toll Free no. 1800 120 2130

Apply online at: www.wbmdf.org or www.wbmdfcscholarship.in

West Bengal Minorities' Development and Finance Corporation
(A Statutory Corporation under the Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education Department, Government of West Bengal)

বিদ্যাসূর্য সমগ্র সরকারি পরিবেশে পশ্চিম নিকটবর্তী বাংলা সরকার থেকে যোগাযোগ করুন অথবা
ওয়েবসাইট: www.bsk.wb.gov.in
ইসি: D-1191(18)/2024



Why is Sharad Pawar holding a grudge against the OBC community?

OBC LEADER AND NCP MINISTER CHHAGAN BHUJBAL ASKING HIS FORMER BOSS AND NCP SP CHIEF SHARAD PAWAR

Armstrong's murder accused killed by cops in 'encounter'

The accused was shot dead after allegedly firing at the cops with a pistol in a bid to flee

M C RAJAN CHENNAI, 14 JULY

An accused in the gruesome murder of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Tamil Nadu president K Armstrong was killed in an encounter with the police early on Sunday at suburban Puzhal in north Chennai.

The police said, the accused, Thiruvengadam who was in custody, was shot dead after firing at the cops with a pistol in a bid to flee.

The encounter took place when a police team took him to a hideout along the Madhavaram lakeside to recover the weapons used in the murder of Armstrong.

According to the police, when he threatened them with a recovered pistol and refused to lay down the weapon, the cops fired two rounds in self-defence. Hit by



bullets above the hip, he died on the spot.

Thiruvengadam body was sent to the Stanley Government Medical College Hospital for postmortem.

Meanwhile, the Chennai City Police released a video of the hacking to death of Armstrong on the evening of July 5 at Sembium in north Chennai.

It clearly shows Thiruvengadam with other five assailants, dressed as food delivery agents, assaulting the BSP leader. Thiruvengadam is seen attacking from the back with a machete leaving Armstrong in a pool of blood and two others injured, they flee immediately in two-wheeled.

The encounter took place when a police team took him to a hideout along the Madhavaram lakeside to recover the weapons used in the murder of Armstrong

All the six assailants surrendered late on July 5 night. Later, five more accused were arrested and all eleven were taken into custody by the CB-CID police for questioning.

Thiruvengadam accompanied by a police party to recover the weapons when the encounter took place around 5.30 in the morning.

The police said Thiruvengadam, a notorious rowdy, was facing many criminal cases including the 2015 murder of Thennarasu, a lieu-

tenant of Armstrong.

Opposition parties raised suspicion over the encounter and charged the police with having eliminated the accused to protect the real culprits behind the murder.

"How a murder accused in police custody could be taken without handcuffs. The encounter raises many doubts. The DMK Government should hand over the probe to the CBI as demanded by the family of Armstrong and BSP supremo Mayawati," said AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswamy.

"Is the probe being conducted in a proper manner," asked state BJP President K Annamalai. "There is suspicion that efforts are being made to help the real culprits get away," alleged PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss.

Naam Tamila Katchi Chief Coordinator Seema too echoed the same.

Congress eyes Greater Hyderabad gains as BRS MLAs defect

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 14 JULY



The latest defections by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLAs have come as a shot in the arm for the ruling Congress party in Telangana as it looks to consolidate in Greater Hyderabad, a region where it drew a blank in Assembly elections held in November last year.

Buoyed by the victory in the by-election to the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly seat, the Congress party has succeeded in making three BRS MLAs in Greater Hyderabad defect during the last two weeks.

The Congress, which had already lured Khairatabad MLAD, Nagender and Greater Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijayalaxmi, appears to be making calculated moves to cement its position in the state capital ahead of next year's elections to Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Political analysts say Greater Hyderabad was one region where the Congress desper-

ately needed a foothold and it achieved this with its 'Operation Akarash'.

The grand old party, which wrested power from BRS, had put up an impressive performance in rural Telangana but failed to win even a single seat in Greater Hyderabad, a region which sends 24 MLAs.

Despite suffering huge setbacks in its strongholds, the BRS had maintained its grip on Greater Hyderabad, winning 16 seats, while All India Majlis-E-Itehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) retained all its seven seats. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) held on to its only seat.

There was an apprehension among a section of voters in Greater Hyderabad that a change of guard may impact the development in the region

and this was believed to have prompted them to remain loyal to BRS.

Analysts say voters may have thought that the change of government may impact the business environment and the flow of investment as the KCR-led government claimed to have laid special emphasis on the development of the IT sector and urban infrastructure in and around the city.

In the 2018 elections, the Congress had won two seats (Maheshwaram and LB Nagar) in Greater Hyderabad but both the MLAs later defected to BRS.

Sabitha Indra Reddy, who was rewarded with a Cabinet berth, retained Maheshwaram in the recent elections while D. Sudhir Reddy was re-elected from LB Nagar. They were among over a dozen Congress MLAs who had defected to BRS in 2019.

It's now the Congress' turn to pay back. The ruling party has already succeeded in poaching nine BRS MLAs and more are said to be waiting in the wings.

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh CMs discuss cooperation for progress of states

AGENCIES MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday met his Maharashtra counterpart Eknath Shinde at the latter's official residence 'Varsha', during which they decided to strengthen cooperation for the development of the two states.

TDP chief Naidu and Shiv Sena leader Shinde discussed the political scenario, especially after the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) formed the government for the record third term.

Incidentally, Shiv Sena and TDP are two crucial allies in the NDA.



The Chief Minister's Office said, "Both CMs held detailed discussions on boosting development by increasing cooperation between the two states. They discussed a wide range of issues relating to infrastructure development, interlinking of rivers, allocation of river water and further increas-

ing the cultural cooperation between the two states."

Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Maharashtra Public Works Department Minister Dada Bhuse and Shiv Sena MP and CM Shinde's son Shrikant Shinde also attended the meeting.

Supreme Court to hear on Monday KCR's plea seeking stay on Justice Narasimha Reddy Commission proceedings

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Monday a plea filed by former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) seeking a stay on all further proceedings of the Justice L. Narasimha Reddy Commission constituted by the Congress government to inquire into the power purchase agreements made by the previous BRS government, and the construction of two thermal power plants.

As per the caustic published on the website of the apex court, a bench presided over by CJI DY Chandrachud and comprising Justices JB Par-

diwala and Manoj Misra will take up the matter for hearing on July 15.

Earlier, the Telangana High Court had dismissed in limine (at the threshold) the plea filed by the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) chief seeking directions to declare the appointment of a one-man commission to conduct a judicial enquiry on correctness and propriety of the decisions taken by the then government of Telangana on procurement of power from Chhattisgarh by TS DISCOMS and construction of Bhadradi Thermal Power Plant at Manuguru and Yadadri Thermal Plant at Damacherla by TS GENCO etc as illegal, with-



out jurisdiction, ultra vires the provisions of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 and contrary to the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003.

In its order passed on July 1, a division bench comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Anil Kumar Jukanti rejected the allegation of bias that the Commission was not acting impartially and that it was constituted due to political reasons.

Before the Telangana High Court, the counsel for KCR contended that the Commission was acting contrary to the law, claiming that Justice Narasimha Reddy acted against Supreme Court orders by unilaterally conducting a Press conference to announce details of the inquiry.

The Commission had issued notice to KCR seeking details relating to the power

purchase agreements and the construction of power plants. Since he was busy campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections, he had sought more time to respond.

Even before the former Chief Minister could submit his reply, Justice Narasimha Reddy held a Press conference on June 15 to say that there were irregularities in the power purchase agreements and the construction of power plants.

In his plea, KCR contended that the Enquiry Commission was illegal, arbitrary, contrary to principles of natural justice and violative of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution of India.

Revanth faces protests on job issue

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD, 14 JULY

Seven months after taking over, the Congress government is facing its first big agitation by unemployed youths. The BRS which is rapidly losing ground because of defections by its MLAs, has also mounted a heavy attack on chief minister Revanth Reddy for failing to fulfil the promises made in the party's manifesto over resolving unemployment.

Last night, hundreds of job aspirants from Ashoknagar and Chikkadpally areas came out in protest, demanding the postponement of the District Selection Committee (DSC) for teachers' recruitment and a deferred time table for the Group II and Group III exams of Public Service Commission. They held placards and raised slogans against the chief minister and his party.

The protests were triggered by the comments made by chief minister Revanth Reddy who had cited two or three individuals observing that those who are protesting are not even appearing for the examinations.

He also pointed out nei-



ther the government has changed the syllabus nor the way the exam was being conducted.

Even after the late night protests, the government has stuck to its guns of not postponing exams.

In an attempt to pacify the section of students who are demanding postponement of the teachers' recruitment examination deputy chief minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said: "There will be another DSC notification to be released soon with another 5,000-6,000 vacancies."

However, the BRS has taken up the cudgels on behalf of the protesting students. Accusing Mr Reddy and his government of cheating the unemployed youths BRS working president KT Rama Rao lashed out at Rahul Gandhi and the chief minister who had addressed the unemployed youths before the Assembly elections last year.

Taking to social media platform 'X' he wrote: "Two politically unemployed fraudsters of Congress provoked the Telangana youth against the KCR government by promising them the moon. Thanks to the youth, now those two have cushy jobs. In the last 7 months neither was a single job notification given nor a single job delivered from the 2 lakh jobs promised in the first year of government formation."

Another BRS leader, T Harish Rao, also questioned the move of the Congress government to deal with the protests with a heavy hand. He also wondered why the party which had promised jobs to the youth before elections failed to uphold their promises after coming to power.

"I vehemently oppose your policy of silencing them with fences and restrictions. Candidates should be invited to discussions in a constructive manner, with regard for the lives and future of the unemployed. I urge you to understand their pain and demands and to address them promptly," said Harish Rao in his open letter to the chief minister.

Security stepped up in Hyderabad to prevent further protests by job aspirants

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 14 JULY

Police have stepped up security at the Ashok Nagar crossroads in Hyderabad to prevent any further protest by job aspirants, demanding the postponement of District Selection Committee (DSC) exams and a deferred timetable for Group II and Group III exams.

Heavy police deployment was made in the area where hundreds of job aspirants staged protests throughout the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday.

Several police vehicles were seen patrolling Ashok Nagar, Chikkadpally, and surrounding areas. Police are likely to stop the gathering of protestors by sealing certain roads.

Saturday night's protest had created tension in the area. Holding placards and raising slogans against Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the protestors had demanded the postponement of the exam. The job aspirants squatted on the road and

chanted slogans against the Chief Minister and ruling party. The protest had led to traffic jams in Ashok Nagar, RTC Crossroads, Chikkadpally and surrounding areas.

The aspirants are demanding postponement of the exams citing lack of time for preparation between the exams. The DSC exams for recruitment of teachers in government schools are scheduled from July 18 to August 5 while the Group II exam is scheduled for August 7 and 8. It was at Ashok Nagar that unemployed youth and job aspirants had held a massive protest before the Assembly elections in November last year after the death of a student preparing for a competitive exam, allegedly due to the postponement of exams over a paper leak.

The Congress, the BJP and their affiliated youth and student organisations had supported the protest against then BRS government. This time, the BRS and the BJP are backing the protest against the Congress government.

GREEN THUMBS



A girl holds a Juvara plant as part of a five-day fast festival 'aluna', in Surat on Sunday. ANI

Thiruvananthapuram canal mishap: No trace of missing man even as search crossed 33 hours

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 14 JULY

More than 33 hours after a sanitation worker swept away while cleaning the Amayizhanchan canal in Thiruvananthapuram, search and rescue operations are still continuing.

Around 100 personnel from the state fire and rescue services and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) are engaged in the rescue operations. Two Bandicoot robots, used to clean clogged drains, are also being deployed to remove the large amounts of waste. The feed from the robot's camera revealed a massive pile of plastic and other waste material inside the drain, necessitating the removal of the garbage before continuing the daunting task.

The sanitation worker, Joy (42) from Marayamuttom was swept away at 11 am on Saturday in the waste-filled Amayizhanchan canal when he entered the canal, which passes through the railway property under the rails. Even though other workers accom-



panying him tried to pass him a rope, he could not hold onto it. It is suspected that he got stuck in a garbage pile. It remains unknown whether he was trapped or washed away to another point in the water stretch. The waste pile which formed an obstacle inside the canal has been hindering the search operations.

On Sunday, scuba divers could only access around 40 metres of the 170-metre tunnel underneath the railway tracks. The huge pile of waste and poor lighting hindered the rescue efforts. Efforts were also being made to access the drain from the other side of the canal. During the search on Sunday using a robotic camera inside the tunnel, a foot-like object was found. On verification, the scuba team confirmed that it was not a

human body parts. The authorities have sought the services of the Navy also in the search and safety operations. State Revenue Minister K Rajan informed that the Navy's highly skilled diving team will participate in the search operations. The team will reach the capital from Kochi in the evening.

General Education Minister VSivankutty, Mayor Arya Rajendran, Thiruvananthapuram District Collector Geromic George and other officials are at the site to oversee the rescue efforts.

Opposition leader VD Satheesan blamed the government for the canal mishap, saying that it happened due to the failure of the government in carrying out the pre-monsoon sanitation works in a time-bound manner.

"When the opposition pointed out in the assembly that the government has failed to carry out the pre-monsoon sanitation works, the Local Self Governance Minister ridiculed us. We would like to ask the minister what he was doing all these days," Mr Satheesan told media persons in Kochi.

Delhi hospital shooting: A patient was shot dead in Delhi's Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital on Sunday around 4:20 p.m. Police identified the deceased as Riyazuddin, a resident of Khajuri Khas. ANI

e-Tender Notice

Tender has been floated for 62 nos of schemes under Kazigram Gram Panchayat, Malka vide NIT NO 01 (e)/KGP/2024-25 Date 12.07.24 circulated memo no 163/KGP/24 Dated 12.07.24 intending contractors are requested to visit www.malka.gov.in or office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Proddhan Kazigram Gram Panchayat

India's defence exports record over 30-fold quantum leap

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

India's defence exports have recorded a 30-fold quantum leap over the last 10 years from a mere Rs 686 crore in the financial year 2013-14 to a record Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting the global acceptability of Indian defence products and technologies.

With exports reaching more than 85 countries across Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, India's defence industry has shown its capability of design and development to the world, with around 100 firms exporting defence products at present, a senior official said.

To give a push to defence exports, the Government has taken a number of policy initiatives like 'Make in



India' and rolled out economic reforms over the last 10 years. Export procedures have been simplified and made industry-friendly with end-to-end online export authorisation curtailing delays and bringing Ease of Doing Business, he added.

Further, the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives have helped the country by encouraging indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment in the country, thereby reducing dependence on imports in the long run. A significant

development has been the emergence of the private sector as a supplier of defence equipment with companies such as Larsen & Toubro, Tata Advanced Systems, and Bharat Forge emerging as major players.

Of the total value of production in 2023-24, about 79.2 per cent has been contributed by DPSUs/other PSUs and 20.8 per cent by the private sector. The official data shows that in terms of absolute value, both DPSUs/PSUs and the private sector have recorded steady

growth in defence production. India's export basket of defence products includes missiles, radars, naval systems, helicopters, and surveillance equipment.

India has made substantial progress in the indigenous production of advanced naval systems that also cater to the export market.

Advanced platforms like the INS Vikrant aircraft carrier highlight the achievement in this segment. Fast-attack naval craft, offshore patrol vessels, and various maritime weapon systems are other products that are being exported. The export of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, developed jointly with Russia, has been another major achievement, with countries like the Philippines purchasing the system recently.





There are different situations. In a democracy, the decision lies with the people. The results need to be reviewed

CHHATTISGARH CHIEF MINISTER VISHNU DEO SAI AT A PRESS BRIEF

THUMBNAILS

UP govt acted swiftly to check losses due to floods: The Uttar Pradesh's pre-monsoon preparations have successfully averted major losses from flooding, demonstrating foresight and effective planning. These efforts in highly sensitive areas and sensitive areas have resulted in the relocation of over 11,962 individuals to safer locations in the last 10 days, ultimately saving countless lives during this critical period, said a government spokesman. The Yogi government had initiated flood preparations well ahead of the monsoon's arrival in the state.

J&K youth jumps into Chenab, body found in Pakistan: The body of a youth who reportedly ended his life by jumping into river Chenab in Akhnour area of Jammu district, was recovered in Pakistan. His family sought the Prime Minister's intervention to bring back his body, as per reports. Officials said that a youth named Harash Nagotra went missing on June 11 while his motorcycle was found on the banks of the Chenab in Akhnour.

Cong appoints Gaurav Gogoi as party's Deputy leader in LS

Party appointed eight-time MP Kodikunnil Suresh as chief whip in the Lok Sabha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Congress has appointed Gaurav Gogoi as the party's Deputy Leader in the Lok Sabha, AICC general secretary organisation K C Venugopal announced on Sunday.

The Congress has also appointed eight-time MP from Mavelikara in Kerala, Kodikunnil Suresh as the party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha, while Virudhunagar MP Manickam Tagore and Kishanganj MP Md Jawaid will be the party's whips in the House.

"Hon'ble CPP Chairperson Smt Sonia Gandhi ji has written to the Hon'ble Lok Sabha Speaker informing him about the appointment of the Deputy Leader, Chief Whip, and two Whips for the Congress Party in the Lok Sabha. Deputy Leader - Shri Gaurav Gogoi, Chief Whip - Shri Kodikunnil, and



Whips - Shri Manickam Tagore and Md Jawaid," Venugopal said in a post on X, congratulating the new appointees.

In the post, the Congress General Secretary further said the party will "champion" the public's concerns in the lower house of Parliament.

"Guided by LoP Shri Rahul Gandhi ji, the Congress

and INDIA parties will energetically champion the people's causes in the Lok Sabha," the Alappuzha MP said.

Last month, Rahul Gandhi was appointed Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha by the Congress.

The government on July 6 had announced the dates of the budget session of Parliament which will start on

The Congress General Secretary K C Venugopal said the party will "champion" the public's concerns in the lower house of Parliament in a post on microblogging site X congratulating the new appointees.

July 22 and conclude on August 12.

In a post on X on last Saturday, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said: "Hon'ble President of India, on the recommendation of Government of India, has approved the proposal for summoning of both the Houses of Parliament for the Budget Session, 2024 from 22nd July, 2024 to 12 August, 2024 (Subject to exigencies of Parliamentary Business). Union Budget, 2024-25 will be presented in Lok Sabha on 23 July, 2024."

Media will have big role in making India developed, says PM Modi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the media is not just a mute witness of conditions in the country; media people can play an important role in changing the conditions, and therefore will have a big role in making India developed in the next 25 years.

He was speaking after inaugurating INS Towers, the Indian Newspaper Society Secretariat, in Mumbai. Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar and INS president Rakesh Sharma were present.

The Prime Minister said the media has an important role in creating discourse in the country and making people aware of their duties, and get involved with national campaigns for their benefits to the country.

India at present is passing through such a time-span when its journey in the next 25 years will be important, he said. "In these 25 years, if



India is to become developed, the role of newspapers and journals will be big," he said.

"Media keeps people aware, and makes them know their rights and tells them about their capacity. If people in a country get confidence about their capacity, they climb new heights of success. This is what is happening in India today," he said.

Giving an example, he said, there was a time when leaders used to say digital transactions are not possible for Indians. They said things of modern technology will be difficult to adopt for Indians. But the whole world is today watching Indians' adaptability and capacity.

"Today India is breaking records in digital transactions; India's UPI has increased ease

of living and made financial transfers easy. Indians living in the Gulf are sending remittances and at much cheaper expense. The digital revolution is responsible for this," he said.

The Prime Minister said people in major countries want to learn from India about its digital technology and implementation model. "This big success is not just of the government, the media has an equal role in this and media deserves congratulations for that," Mr Modi said.

The Prime Minister said the media has a natural role in creating discourse, focusing on serious issues. The governments at one time took decisions keeping in view electoral gains or losses while making policies.

"Our government has changed this thinking. Decades back, banks were nationalised, but the reality after that was till 2014, there were 40-50 crore poor in the country who did not have bank accounts," he said. There was a difference between what was said at the time of the nationalization and in what was the scene in 2014.

Emergency was a mistake, it was accepted by Indira Gandhi: P Chidambaram

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP P Chidambaram highlighted that the emergency was a mistake and that it was accepted by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after the Centre led by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), announced to observe June 25 as 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' to mark the 50th anniversary of Emergency.

In an exclusive interview with ANI, P Chidambaram said, "Why is the BJP not going back to the 18th or 17th century? 75 percent of the Indians living today were born after 1975. Emergency was a mistake and it was accepted by Indira Gandhi. We have amended the Constitution so that an emergency cannot be imposed so easily."

He further asked what's the point of debating over the



rights and wrongs of the emergency 50 years later, while stressing that lessons have been learned from the past.

"What is the point of debating the rights and wrongs of the emergency 50 years later? The BJP must forget the past. We have learned the lessons from the past," he said.

Earlier this month, the

central government, led by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), announced to observe 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' to mark the anniversary of the emergency. The decision has triggered a backlash, with opposition parties targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge said in

a post on 'X' on Friday, "In the last 10 years, your government has celebrated 'Constitution Murder Day' every day. You have snatched away the self-respect of every poor and deprived section of the country every moment."

Reacting to the Centre's announcement, the ruling Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh said at

a press conference that the BJP is trying to divert attention from its anti-people policy.

"She has been criticised. Indira Gandhi lost once and she came back to power as the Prime Minister.

So that chapter was just one page of history and years later, the BJP is trying to divert attention from its anti-people policy, disasters and the bad condition of the country, they are trying to play this old card," Ghosh said.

The Emergency of 1975 in India stands as a stark chapter in the nation's history, marked by widespread political turmoil and civil liberties suppression. Declared by then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the Emergency saw the suspension of fundamental rights and the imposition of strict censorship, aiming to quell political dissent and maintain order.

Eyeing Assembly poll, Ajit Pawar discusses seat-sharing with Amit Shah

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Buoyed by the victory of its two candidates in the biennial election to the Maharashtra Legislative Council held on Friday, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and discussed a range of issues including crucial seat-sharing among the MahaYuti partners for the upcoming assembly election, a road map to further strengthen the alliance to take on the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) and the crop loan waiver for farmers.

Confirming Pawar's meeting with Shah, sources from NCP on Sunday said, "It is very clear that MahaYuti will together contest the ensuing assembly election in Maharashtra with full force and strength with a



sole objective of retaining the power. Shah has ruled out the possibility of the BJP going solo or severing links with the NCP or with Shiv Sena. A veteran BJP leader and Union home minister also clarified that the BJP will give due justice to the allies including Shiv Sena and NCP in the seat-sharing with winnability as the leading criteria." The sources added that MahaYuti's victory over nine seats in the state council election has boosted the morale of its party workers, especially after the dismal performance in the Lok Sabha elections.

The timing of Pawar's meeting is crucial as Chief Minister Eknath Shinde had reportedly held a similar meeting with Shah a fortnight ago. Shinde, who will lead the MahaYuti in the upcoming assembly election, has been calling the shots after he won seven of the 15 seats fought in the Lok Sabha elections. Shinde is believed to have conveyed to the BJP that Shiv Sena is keen to contest 100 seats in the Assembly election. Shinde's proposal came after pressures mounted on the BJP from the cadres to not contest less than 150 seats considering its victory on 106 seats in the 2009 assembly elections. Against this backdrop, Pawar's meeting was all the more significant as the NCP has been repeatedly reminding the BJP that it was promised 90 Assembly seats when it joined MahaYuti in July 2022.

Middle class bearing more weight of heavy taxation than corporates: Jairam Ramesh attacks Centre

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh targeted the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre on Sunday, over the recent tax collection data, and said that individuals are paying more tax than companies, and the middle class is bearing the weight of heavy taxation while Rs 2 lakh crore has been put in "pockets of billionaires" due to slashing of corporate taxes.

He highlighted that income tax collection stood at Rs 3.61 lakh crores and gross corporate tax collections were Rs 2.65 lakh crores, from April 1 to July 1, 2024.

Taking to social media platform X, Jairam Ramesh said, "As we head towards the Budget on July 23rd, data has just



been released that gross personal income tax collections amounted to Rs 3.61 lakh crores during April 1-July 1, 2024 while gross corporate tax collections were Rs 2.65 lakh crores. This reconfirms and re-establishes the point we have been making for quite some time--that individuals are paying more tax than companies." The Congress general secretary further highlighted that during former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's tenure, personal income tax was 21 per

cent of total tax collection, while today it has risen to 28 per cent, while corporate tax on companies has fallen from 35 per cent to 26 per cent.

He also criticised the 2019 move of the Centre to reduce corporate tax rates and said that it didn't trigger private investment as was being anticipated, instead private investment has fallen from 35 per cent under UPA rule to under 29 per cent today. "When Dr. Manmohan Singh left office, personal income tax was 21% of total tax collections, while corporate tax was 35%. Today, the share of corporate taxes out of total tax collection has dropped sharply to its lowest level in a decade, at just 26%. Meanwhile, the share of personal income tax in total tax collection has shot up to 28%," Ramesh said.

Muslim Board to challenge Uttarakhand's UCC law, Supreme Court's verdict allowing divorced women to claim maintenance

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Sunday said that they will challenge the Supreme Court latest verdict, allowing divorced women to claim maintenance after the period of "Iddat". The board will also challenge the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) law passed in Uttarakhand.

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board held a working committee meeting today in which various issues were discussed.

Syed Qasim Rasool Ilyas, spokesperson for the board, stated that in the meeting, they have approved eight resolutions.

"The first resolution was about the recent Supreme Court judgement. This deci-



sion conflicts with Sharia law. The resolution states that marriage in Islam is considered a sacred bond. Islam makes every effort to prevent divorce. The Supreme Court's decision claims to be in the "interest of women", but from the perspective of marriage, this decision will become problematic for women. If a man has to provide maintenance even after divorce, why would

he divorce? And if bitterness has developed in the relationship, who will suffer from it? We will consult with the legal committee to work on how this decision can be rolled back," Ilyas said.

The Supreme Court on July 10 ruled that Section 125 Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc) applied to all married women including Muslim married women and they can claim

maintenance from their husbands under these provisions. The top court also echoed that time has come for Indian men to recognise the role and sacrifice of 'homemakers' who are strength and backbone of an Indian family and they must provide financial support to her by having joint accounts and ATMs.

A bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih ruled that Section 125 CrPc, which deals with wife's legal right to maintenance, is applicable to all women and divorced muslim female can claim maintenance from her husband under it.

Speaking on the UCC, Syed Qasim Ilyas said that their legal committee is working on the process to challenge the UCC law in Uttarakhand.

World record tree plantation attempt in MP's Indore



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, 14 JULY

People from all walks of life participated enthusiastically and planted saplings in a bid to plant 11 lakh trees in a day at Indore in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday and create a world record.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also planted a sapling in the drive at the Rewati firing range ground of the Border Security Force (BSF). "Today is a special day, when the people of Indore are going to create a world record by planting 11 lakh saplings," Mr Shah said through social media.

The world record attempt is part of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 5 June to mark World Environment Day. Under the drive, around 140 crore trees would be planted across the country, including 5.5 crore in Madhya Pradesh.

Indore Mayor Pushymitra Bhargava said that seven lakh of the 11 lakh saplings had been planted by afternoon. "Guinness Book Of World Records" Consultant Nischal Barot and a team of more than 300 volunteers were present at Indore using an app for counting the number of trees being planted. Barot said that the actual number of trees planted would be known in a few days.

The previous world record is in the name of Assam, where 9.26 lakh saplings were planted in 24 hours.

IAF launches Kargil 'Vijay Diwas' celebrations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

To commemorate 25 years of Kargil victory, the Indian Air Force is currently celebrating 'Kargil Vijay Diwas Rajat Jayanti' at the Air Force Station Sarsawa, honouring the brave hearts who made the supreme sacrifice for the nation.

The 152 Helicopter Unit, 'The Mighty Armour', of Air Force Station Sarsawa played a key role during Operation Safed Sagar. On 28 May 1999, Sqn Ldr R Pundir, Flt Lt S Muhilan, Sgt PVNR Prasad and Sgt RK Sahu of 152 HU were tasked to fly as 'Nubra' formation for a live strike against enemy positions at Tololing.

After successfully pressing home the attack, their helicopter was hit by an enemy Stinger Missile during the breakout, leading to the loss of four precious lives. For this act of exceptional courage, they



were awarded the Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry), posthumously. Their supreme sacrifice ensured that their names forever remain etched in the annals of history of IAF.

The Ministry of Defence said the IAF has a proud legacy of courage and sacrifice by its gallant air warriors who fought valiantly in the Kargil War, which was indeed a milestone in the history of military aviation. IAF operations in the

Kargil War (Op Safed Sagar) are a testament to IAF's ability to overcome insurmountable challenges posed by the steep gradient and dizzying altitudes of above 16000 ft, that posed unique operational difficulties in targeting the enemy.

The swift technical modifications and training held IAF in good stead in its employment of air power to win this war fought at the highest battlefield of the world. Overall,

IAF flew around 5000 strike missions, 350 reconnaissance/ELINT missions, and around 800 escort flights. The IAF also flew over 2000 helicopter sorties towards casualty evacuations and air transport operations.

On Saturday, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari, laid a wreath along with senior dignitaries, families of brave hearts, veterans and serving IAF officers,

at the Station War Memorial as a tribute to all air warriors who laid down their lives in service of the nation. The CAS felicitated and interacted with the next of kin during the event.

A spectacular air show was organised that included a display by the Akash Ganga Team and aerial displays by Jaguar, Su-30MKI and Rafale fighter aircraft. A 'Missing Man formation' was flown by Mi-17 V5 in memory of the fallen heroes.

A static display of IAF helicopters viz Mi-17 V5, Cheetah, Chinook was also organised along with performances by the Air Warrior Drill Team and the Air Force Band.

The event was witnessed by over 5000 spectators, including school children, residents of Saharanpur area, veterans, civil dignitaries and personnel of Defence Forces establishments from Roorkhee, Dehradun and Ambala.

Nearly 3 lakh devotees perform Amarnath Yatra in 15 days

AGENCIES
JAMMU, 14 JULY

During the last 15 days since it started on June 29, nearly three lakh devotees performed Amarnath Yatra as another batch of 4,889 enthusiastic pilgrims left for Kashmir valley on Sunday.

Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) officials said nearly three lakh devotees had 'Darshan' inside the holy cave during the last 15 days while 4,889 Yatis left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in two escorted convoys for the Valley today morning. Of these, the first escorted convoy carrying 1,896 pilgrims in 78 vehicles left at 3.05 a.m. for north Kashmir's Baltal base camp. Second escorted convoy carrying 2,993 pilgrims in 105 vehicles left at 3.55 a.m. for south Kashmir's Nunwan (Pahalgam) base camp. The cave shrine houses an ice sta-

lagmite structure that wanes and waxes with the phases of the moon. Devotees believe that this ice stalagmite structure symbolises mythical powers of Lord Shiva. The cave is situated at an altitude of 3,888 metres above the sea-level in Kashmir Himalayas. Devotees approach the cave shrine either from the traditional south Kashmir Pahalgam route or the north Kashmir Baltal route. The Pahalgam-Cave shrine axis is 48 km long and it takes Yatis 4-5 days to reach the shrine. The Baltal-Cave shrine axis is 14 Km long and it takes one day for the pilgrims to have 'Darshan' and reach back to the base camp. 4,434 Yatis left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu in two escorted convoys for the Valley on Sunday. This year's Yatra will conclude after 52 days on August 29 coinciding with Shrawan Purnima and Raksha Bandhan.

The Statesman

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Subcontracting Paradox

The informal economy in India, a critical source of livelihood for the vast majority of the workforce, presents a paradoxical challenge. While subcontracting between larger formal enterprises and informal ones has been hailed as a pathway for growth and transition into the formal sector, recent insights reveal a starkly different reality. Subcontracting, in theory, should empower informal enterprises by providing market access, credit, technology transfer, and entrepreneurial development. However, data from 2001 to 2016 shows that less than 30 per cent of informal enterprises engage in such linkages, with a notable decline in urban areas. This raises critical questions about the true efficacy of subcontracting in fostering substantial economic growth and development within the informal sector. The financial dynamics within these subcontracted enterprises further underscore the challenges. Despite the promise of growth, subcontracted enterprises tend to have significantly lower accumulation funds compared to their non-subcontracted counterparts. Over a 15-year period, the disparity has widened, with non-subcontracted enterprises accumulating nearly three times more resources by 2015-16. This stagnation suggests that subcontracting, rather than being a catalyst for growth, may actually be limiting the financial potential of these informal enterprises. One of the key reasons behind this stagnation is the nature of subcontracting relationships. The majority of subcontracted enterprises operate under a traditional 'putting-out' system, where the parent firm controls essential aspects of production while the subcontracted enterprise remains formally independent. These enterprises receive raw materials and design specifications from the parent firm and supply their entire output back to it. This arrangement strips the subcontracted enterprises of autonomy and limits their opportunities for innovation and growth. Such a system not only curtails the potential for these enterprises to evolve but also perpetuates a cycle of dependence and low productivity. The parent firms effectively utilise these subcontracted enterprises as cost-saving appendages, providing minimal technology transfer and keeping the subcontracted units at a subsistence level. This dynamic is particularly detrimental to women-headed and household-based enterprises, which are disproportionately represented in these put-out relationships due to socio-economic constraints. The impact on women-owned enterprises is particularly concerning. Women entrepreneurs in the informal sector, already facing significant barriers to credit and market access, are more likely to enter put-out subcontracting relationships. While these relationships offer assured demand for their products, they also ensure that these enterprises remain at the lowest rung of the economic ladder, with the least potential for growth and transition into the formal sector. This situation calls for a re-evaluation of the role of subcontracting in the informal economy. Rather than being seen as a straightforward pathway to growth, subcontracting must be critically assessed for its potential to perpetuate inequality and dependence. Policy interventions should focus on creating more equitable and dynamic subcontracting relationships that genuinely empower informal enterprises, particularly those led by women. Only then can the informal economy realise its full potential as a driver of inclusive economic growth.

Trade Shift

Nepal's trade dynamics have experienced a notable shift in recent months, reflecting broader economic and geopolitical trends in the region. The latest data reveals that Nepal's imports from China have surged by an impressive 34.8 per cent in the first eleven months of the Himalayan country's current fiscal year, ending mid-June, while imports from India have decreased by 3.1 per cent during the same period. This shift is more than just a statistical anomaly; it signifies a deeper realignment in Nepal's economic orientation and strategic partnerships. The surge in imports from China can be largely attributed to the significant increase in the entry of electric vehicles (EVs) into the Nepalese market. In the current fiscal year, Nepal imported 7,931 EVs worth Nepalese Rs 21.83 billion from China, a substantial jump from 1,269 EVs worth Nepalese Rs 3.75 billion in the same period last year. This rise underscores a growing preference for Chinese technology and products, driven by competitive pricing, advancements in technology, and a strong push from Chinese manufacturers to expand their footprint in South Asia. On the other hand, the decline in imports from India can be linked to the export curbs imposed by India on food products. These restrictions have compelled Nepal to seek alternative suppliers, once again inadvertently boosting Chinese exports. This shift is a reflection of how trade policies and geopolitical decisions can have cascading effects on bilateral trade relationships. While India continues to hold a significant share of Nepal's imports, accounting for 65.5 per cent, the increasing share of China, now at 18.8 per cent, cannot be ignored. This trend suggests that Nepal is diversifying its trade portfolio, reducing its heavy reliance on India, and embracing a more balanced approach to international trade. Such diversification is crucial for Nepal's economic resilience, especially in a region prone to geopolitical tensions and economic volatility. This realignment in trade patterns also reflects the broader strategic interests of Nepal. As a landlocked country, Nepal has long relied on its immediate neighbours for trade and economic support. However, in recent years, there has been a conscious effort by Nepali policymakers to broaden their horizons and engage with a wider array of international partners. The increased imports from China are a testament to this strategy, signaling Nepal's intent to forge stronger economic ties with the world's second-largest economy. Moreover, the rising imports from China could also be seen as part of China's broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to enhance connectivity and economic cooperation across Asia and beyond. By integrating more deeply with the Chinese economy, Nepal stands to benefit from improved infrastructure, increased investment, and enhanced trade opportunities. However, this shift is not without its challenges. Increasing dependence on Chinese imports could expose Nepal to economic risks associated with over-reliance on a single country. At the same time, Indian policy makers and diplomats would be well advised to keep a close watch on trade relations.

Putin in Vietnam ~ II

It was Putin's first trip to Vietnam since 2017. Putin also met with Vietnamese Communist Party General-Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong and Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh. Because the US has been working to strengthen and build partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, including with Vietnam, Hanoi runs the risk of inviting Washington's wrath now. The US and its allies, who treat the Russian leader as a pariah, protested and said he should not have been given a stage on which to defend his role in waging war in Ukraine. How Hanoi is going to balance its ties with Washington and Moscow remains to be seen.



Since no early end to the Ukraine crisis seems to be on the horizon, and the divisions between US allies and other countries are unlikely to go away so soon, Vietnam shall be faced with the difficult task of navigating its foreign policy in order not to unduly provoke either China or Russia by siding with either.

It needs therefore to craft a foreign policy that is both firm and flexible at the same time. It is not a question of "with us or against us" as was the case of the US when it was waging its "war on terror". That strategy cannot be applied in the Southeast Asian context.

Moreover, despite so much of emphasis on Asean centrality, there are a host of issues in which not every member of the bloc are on the same page. Differences do exist; yet Asean has earned the reputation of being one of the most successful regional organisations.

Even in the Ukraine conflict, sharp divisions were visible at the recent peace summit in Switzerland. Hanoi need not unduly worry that its cosiness with Moscow would affect intra-Asean relations.

Hanoi is of course aware that the US with which it is balancing ties was not too pleased that Vietnam welcomed Putin. The core reason for US displeasure against Russia was its military operation in Ukraine.

Washington still continues to stick to its old policy of "with us or against us", which is why the US embassy in Hanoi rebuked the leadership in Vietnam saying that by welcoming Putin, Hanoi was laying a platform for the Russian leader to legitimise the war and allowing him to normalise his atrocities.

However, given the manner in which Hanoi has crafted its foreign policy, it is capable of balancing its relations with all the three major powers - the US, Russia and China - and see that this strategy suits its foreign pol-

icy goals.

Among the major highlights of Putin's Vietnam visit was his call for a "New Security Architecture" for Asia based on not using force and peacefully settling disputes with no room for "closed military-political blocs". Putin signed 11 public agreements and memoranda of understanding with his Vietnamese counterpart To Lam.

Some other deals, details of which were not revealed, were also struck. The agreements centred on energy, education, science and technology. Both sides also agreed to work on a roadmap for a nuclear science and technology centre in Vietnam. All these sectors have come under Western sanctions because of Russia's military operation in Ukraine.

These agreements underlined Moscow's pivot to Asia after the West imposed sanctions over the conflict in Ukraine. Wrapping up his trip, Putin accused the Nato military alliance of creating a security threat for Russia in Asia.

The 11 pacts signed in Hanoi were not on the same level as the landmark mutual defence agreement in North Korea. Understandably, the US was displeased by Hanoi's support to Putin.

Thus it transpired that both nations firmly committed themselves to deepening the comprehensive strategic partnership. In particular, Lam's remarks that Putin has contributed to global "peace, stability, and development" must not have been music to US President Joe Biden's ears. Like India, Vietnam has remained neutral on Putin's intervention in Ukraine.

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Biden quickly dispatched Assistant Secretary of State and former ambassador to Vietnam Daniel Kritenbrink to Hanoi to read its foreign policy closely and also stress Washington's commitments to working with it to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific. Kritenbrink reaffirmed "US support for a strong, independent, resilient, and prosperous Vietnam" during the visit.

The upgraded partnership between the US and Vietnam does not mean that Vietnam will sever ties with Russia or China. Hanoi is capable of the statecraft needed to conduct its foreign policy. Like any sovereign state, Vietnam too has the right to decide on its priorities.

The manner in which Putin was received in Hanoi proved to be a public relations achievement. His triumphal reception in Hanoi marked a counterpoint to Russia's recent setback and salvaged some of the prestige it had lost.

The visit of Indian Prime Minister Modi soon after has

helped restore Putin's global stature. His public relations blitz was helped by Vietnam, unlike North Korea, which has unfriendly relations with the US and its allies.

Unlike North Korea, Vietnam is an important player in the global economy, not some comically evil pariah state like North Korea. Putin has an outstanding International Criminal Court arrest warrant against him over alleged war crimes in Ukraine. He denies the charges. Neither Russia nor Vietnam is a member of the ICC.

In the military ceremony, Putin was embraced by both Lam and Chinh (President and Prime Minister), the kind of greeting reserved for the highest heads of state and rolled out when US President Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Vietnam in 2023.

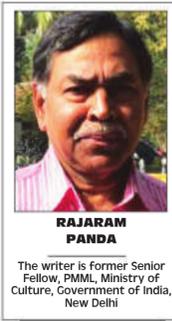
For Vietnam, the US is an important partner now. The two upgraded diplomatic relations in 2023. The US is Vietnam's top export market.

Like India's all-weather friendship with Russia that is time-tested, Vietnam too has a shared history with Russia. Unlike India-Russia relations, Vietnam and Russia have a shared Communist history. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese cadres, including current members of the Politburo have trained in the former Soviet Union.

It transpires therefore that by welcoming Putin, Hanoi was not proving to be anti-Western. It has learnt from history that it is always better to remain neutral on issues that could drift the country into controversy if it takes a position.

Vietnam wants to be friends with everyone, but is against entering into a formal alliance with anyone. Welcoming Putin warmly despite the West's views on Russia does not negatively impact in any way Vietnam's international standing.

(Concluded)



RAJARAM PANDA
The writer is former Senior Fellow, PMMA, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Plunder of resources

SIR, The Perspective article, "Letting our professors just profess ideas" by Abhisek Karmakar (10 July) is apt, timely and thought provoking. Being a professor himself, the author empathizes with the "plunder of human resources in the colleges and universities of the country".

I too empathize with the author. Instead of the job for which a professor is recruited he has to do many such jobs for which (s)he is not qualified or suitable. It is akin to asking a fish to climb a tree. He will get demoralized to such an extent that he will lose all his confidence.

I have experienced in the discipline of Veterinary Science that the curriculum is unrealistic, vast and largely not purposeful. It does not even help one to become a "Jack of all trades master of none", let alone master of one trade.

There is a dearth of good textbooks. Whatever textbooks are available are largely not up to

the mark devoid of summary, glossary and model questions essential for a textbook.

Instead of focusing on teaching-learning and writing textbooks for the changing syllabus, professors are encouraged and forced to do non-teaching jobs, undertake research and carry out extension activities without following the programme planning process, conduct training without evaluation, and so on which do nothing but add to the bio-data for individual promotion and institutional ranking wasting human resources, time and colossal money.

Consequently, the socio-economic status quo is maintained. The professors too lack the spirit and zeal of academicians to a large extent. Filling up annual performance appraisal reports or annual confidential reports and applications for promotion consumes a large amount of time and energy neglecting teaching and learning.

Instead of downloading numerous Apps for registering the beneficiaries of the development programmes (e.g. veterinary surgeon), preparing a number of reports for welfare programmes (e.g. school teacher) it

is high time we let the teachers teach and preach, the professors preach and profess, and the doctors treat and prescribe following the principle of "right man doing the right job" with judicial use of human resources, time and

money. Only then will reinstituting Nalanda, the ancient university, bear fruit, and India will regain its lost glory in the world.

Yours, etc.,
Dr. Samares Kumar Das,
Peren, Nagaland, 13 July.

SET AN EXAMPLE

SIR, Apropos 'Trouble mounts for Trainee IAS officer Pooja Khedkar' (July, 12), the IAS is a prestigious civil service, whose officers are responsible for maintaining law and order, implementing government policies, and delivering public services to the citizens. Towards this end, they are conferred vast powers and privileges, according to their seniority and the post held by them in the expectation that they would use the same to serve the people and the nation and not flaunt the same in a vulgar display.

The charges against Ms. Khedkar are indeed serious. It is alleged that she was in the habit of demanding and using privileges she was not entitled to, such as demanding a separate official car, unauthorisedly using a red beacon light on a private Audi car, removing the nameplate of a senior official at the Pune collectorate when he allowed her to use his ante-chamber as her office, removal of furniture, demanding a VIP number plate etc. She is also alleged to have submitted a fake OBC certificate to clear the civil services exam and a mental illness certificate to claim disability. If as a Junior officer she can commit such acts of irregularities with impunity, one wonders what she may do if allowed to continue in service. The allegations are also reminiscent of similar charges that were made against another IAS probationer V.K. Singh in 1981, when, during a Himalayan trek, he created drunken scenes and threatened fellow officers with a firearm. Though the then government tried to initially let him off with a warning, when the then Director of the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussorie, Mr. P. S. Appu resigned in protest, the probationer's services were terminated, bowing to public pressure. One hopes, the present government, which swears by probity in public life, will act decisively against the lady officer, if the allegations against her are proven right in the ongoing investigations and set an example for other government officials.

Yours, etc., V. Jayaraman, Chennai, 13 July.

A MEMBER OF THE ANN ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Inclusive population data can be a driver of social change

This year's World Population Day's theme, "Embracing the Power of Inclusive Data towards a Resilient and Equitable Future for All," underscores the vital role of data in development. Despite this focus, significant data gaps persist in Bangladesh, including issues related to quality, coverage, and ethics. This is common in many low and middle-income countries (LMICs), although some are now making faster progress towards ensuring comprehensive, high-quality data.

The data gaps in Bangladesh are evident in its inability to provide statistics on many ongoing issues. For instance, the country cannot present its progress on many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, despite being only six years away. According to the Bangladesh government's SDG tracker, only 38 percent of the 248 SDG indicators have comprehensive and reliable data, 31 percent are in progress, and 32 percent are unavailable. Most available data come from government organisations and development partners, often using proxy data to measure progress of indicators. Data availability also varies across specific SDGs, with some issues more prone to data gaps, while better quality data are available for long-standing community-level indicators.

For instance, the country faces ongoing climate-induced disasters affecting health and the environment, but relevant data are mostly lacking or less usable, being based on specific community experiences rather than

The Daily Star

nationwide. While, SDG 3 (health and well-being) has better coverage, with updated data for 64 percent of its 28 indicators, around 33 percent of indicators for SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG15 (life on land) have no data, despite these being major concerns for Bangladesh.

Most data in Bangladesh lack comprehensive respondent characteristics, such as income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, and geographic location, which hinders thorough analysis. Additionally, outdated surveys, like the 2015 Violence Against Women (VAW) survey, are still used to measure progress on SDG 5, despite significant changes in gender equality over the past decade.

It is worth mentioning that other countries have had similar experiences of depending on quite old VAW surveys, which are typically conducted every ten years to capture differences. Bangladesh's reliance on globally representative surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Survey and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, also poses issues.

These surveys' standardised questionnaires and approaches are often not sufficiently adapted to local contexts. While they enable international comparisons, they can produce misleading figures that hinder accurate tracking of Bangladesh's progress. For instance, independent research has identified significant undercounting of unintended pregnancies and overestimation of the poorest socio-economic quintile due to these surveys' failure to account for Bangladesh's unique cultural factors regarding pregnancy intention and living patterns.

The government of Bangladesh collects data primarily through the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and ministry-level initiatives. While BBS produces relatively better data, ministry-level data often have significant limitations and lack interlinkage with related issues.

OCCASIONAL NOTE

FROM a cable published yesterday it will be seen that the British Colonial Office has removed the ban on German missionary effort in so far as concerns the Crown colonies. It is expected, adds the Times message, that this decision will influence the Government of India in considering whether the time has not come to re-admit German missionaries into this country. We are not told why the Government of India should follow the Colonial Office in a decision which, however suitable it may be to the colonies, can have no relevancy to Indian conditions. The political record of the German missionaries in this country is a sinister one. Many of them abused the hospitality of the Government of India by poisoning the minds of their converts against Great Britain, and they were responsible for no little uneasiness in certain localities during the War. For these and cognate offences they were all deported from the country, and few people in India then supposed that the question of their return would come up for at least a generation. The elements of unrest in our midst are sufficiently numerous already to justify hesitation in doing anything that might add to their number, and until Germany herself has shown clear signs of a change of heart, it would be folly to put trust in any professions or promises made on behalf of her missionaries.

NEWS ITEMS

YOUNG WOMEN VOTERS

RESULT OF FRANCHISE PROPOSAL

IF women are allowed to vote on the same terms as men, according to the measure approved this week by Standing Committee A of the House of Commons, every woman who is a British subject, having attained the age of 21, and having the requisite residence or business premises qualification, will be entitled to a vote. Her age is taken to be that on the last day of the qualifying period, which ends either on June 15 or on December 15. The number of women voters would be increased by between 3,500,000 and 5,500,000-about a 25 per cent, addition of the total electorate of 18,000,000. This increase would consist not only of the women between twenty-one and thirty, but also of a certain number of women over thirty who have lacked the qualification hitherto demanded. The census figures for the County of London are interesting in view of the proposed change. Of a total of 2,412,944 the number of women over thirty was 1,134,569. Under the proposed new conditions 436,468 women between twenty-one and thirty would be added to this number, together with a large number of women over thirty who have not hitherto been entitled to vote, making a total of between 1.5 and 2 million over 21.

KALIMPONG MISSION NEED OF CAPITAL FOR INDUSTRIES

Fresh capital being found necessary to carry on and develop the Kalimpong Mission Industries, which were founded by the late Mrs. Graham to encourage the industrial education of the peoples of the Eastern Himalayas and to stimulate cottage industries among them, a limited liability association, named the Kalimpong Mission Industries Association, with a capital of Rs. 75,000, has been formed. The prospectus of the Association sets forth in clear detail the present financial position of the Association and gives a list of its assets in the way of buildings, furniture, fittings, etc. It is accompanied by an attractive illustrated pamphlet stating the underlying motive and principles of the Association and describing the valuable educational work that has been and is being carried on by it. An appeal is made to the public to supply the capital required, and the assurance is given that after paying a dividend of 5 per cent, (cumulative) on the capital, the whole balance of profits will be used for the furtherance of the charitable aims of the Association.

MADAME'S DRESS MASCULINE SERGE SUITS IN PARIS

A Fashion expert writing in the Daily Mail from Paris says the severely plain tailor-made has come with intention to stay! It represents the dominant note of 1924. In the Bois, between nine and eleven, all the best-dressed women are attired in straight, tight suits of masculine simplicity-navy serge, black rep, stone-grey canvas cloth; but in every case the details are notably dainty. And all the smartest women wear a buttonhole of natural flowers-gardenias, carnations, or a cluster of cornflowers. Their coats are very short or quite long-in either case they are straight and tight. For dejeuner, or lunch, the really chic Parisienne often wears one of the new Directoire frocks-straight from neck to hem and fitted to the figure without being tight anywhere. These frocks express the last note of Fashion. The best models of this kind have long tight sleeves and a high collar-or a picturesque throw-over scarf. No belt, no indication of a waistline, just a slight "sack," which is cleverly cut to give unexpected width at the hem.

Time to act for India's polity

DEBASISH BHATTACHARYYA

During the 70th anniversary of the European Parliament in 2022, Professor Ryszard Legutko, a Polish philosopher, politician, and Co-Chair of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group, observed that the European Parliament is merely a quasi-parliament, alienating millions of voters.

In his brief address, he stated: "Madam President, Prime Ministers. Two minutes of truth, of bitter truth. And the bitter truth is that the European Parliament has done a lot of damage in Europe.The Parliament has abandoned the basic function of representing people. Instead, it has become a machine to implement the so-called European project, thus alienating millions of voters."

Professor Legutko concluded his speech with a powerful statement: "Call it what you will. But democracy, it is not. To sum up, the Parliament represents the demos that does not exist, works for a project that ignores reality and law, shuns accountability, turns its back on millions of people, and serves the interest of one political orientation. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Having said that, ladies and gentlemen, I rest my case."

In essence, this critique echoes Mahatma Gandhi's long-standing assertion about 'Politics Without Principle.' The situation of the world's largest democracy is no less concerning, if not worse.

Following the 2024 general elections for the 18th Lok Sabha, the first session of the Lok Sabha and the 264th session of the Rajya Sabha were convened on June 24 and June 27, respectively. The Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die on 2 July, and the Rajya Sabha followed suit the next day.

The sessions were marked by fiery political speeches, passionate debates, and occasional insightful comments, though they rarely rose above petty politics. Amidst the intense debates, chaos, sloganeering, and caricatures, both the lower and upper houses were rife with allegations, counter-allegations, and even counter-counter-allegations. The spectacle of Indian democracy was on full display, with some eloquent and poetic speeches, but visionary and substantive discussions were few and far between. Since all sides accused each other of wrecking the country, there was hardly any fleeting sense of solidarity to

address shared concerns that transcend political borders.

While some observers hailed these parliamentary sessions as a new dawn, the reality is that the challenges for the government have only just begun. It's not only limited to the electoral outcome of the NDA's 292 vs the INDIA bloc's 232. It's also about a government marked by self-aggrandizing pomposity versus a fiercely motivated opposition. The government must now address the country's massive problems with consideration, compelling action, and credibility - an enormous task given the political constraints.

According to the 2024 UNICEF Child Nutrition Report, 40 per cent of children in India suffer from malnutrition. The nation also faces a crisis with two-thirds of its unemployed youth being educated, compounded by inflation, the situation in Manipur, and the NEET examination. Additionally, India grapples with economic disparity, corruption, intolerance, bigotry, and normalized violence.

Our uncritical embrace of politics in many shades of grey often pushes us dangerously apart, truncates conversations, and unravels mutual understanding, despite the potential to accomplish the opposite. This leads to growing inequalities, subversion of trust, demonization of the 'other,' and reluctance to cooperate in addressing India's challenges.

In a country where grabbing power is increasingly the only virtue, and political systems lag behind in credibility, politicians offer politics built around populism, opportunism, and unethical means. The political landscape, rife with opportunism, is not divided between progressive and clean versus corrupt and regressive; instead, it is a matter of more corrupt versus less corrupt and more regressive versus less regressive.

The politics of optics is pervasive. Political speeches and actions often prioritize appearance over substance, seeking attention rather than solutions. Galactic issues get lost in the black hole of politicians' self-image.

In our country, visionaries are rare, and visionary ideas even rarer. Countries that progress are guided by the foresight of each generation's leaders.

Despite this, the country has seen impressive speeches from leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Mahua Moitra, John Brittas, Sudhanshu Trivedi, and Nishikant Dubey.

I found Milind Murli Deora's speech in the Rajya Sabha particularly

fascinating. In nearly 18 minutes, he delivered a rich blend of facts and rational arguments, presenting his ideas concisely and coherently. His speech resonated with aspects of Gita Irawan Wirjawan's address at Harvard University Asia Center. Gita, an Indonesian entrepreneur and educator, is a former Minister of Trade, a visiting scholar at Stanford University, and a fellow at Harvard's Belfer Center.

Deora, in his speech, highlighted the "Four C factors": China, Cities, Computing, and Climate Change, as crucial concerns for India, viewing each as an opportunity. He noted China's trade and trust deficits and urged India to capitalize on the "China +1 policy." Deora advocated for competitive federalism and upskilling the female workforce for sustained growth. He stressed effective city planning to manage urbanization and highlighted the importance of computing, especially AI and data consumption, for India's future. On Climate Change, he saw it as an opportunity for India to lead in green technologies like offshore wind energy and seaweed-based organic fertilizers.

Both Gita and Deora emphasized the importance of developing countries increasing renewable energy production. They discussed strategies that Singapore employed to become a leading economy. Gita pointed out that electrification is a key measure of a nation's development. Many developing countries, like India and Indonesia, have electrification rates of around 1,000 kWh (kilowatt hours) per capita or less. In contrast, developed countries typically exceed 6,000 kWh per capita, with Singapore and the USA ranging from 8,845 to 12,994 kWh per capita (World Bank, 2019).

Our parliament must engage in robust debates and discussions on critical issues to enhance the nation's well-being and effectively serve its citizens. Addressing the challenges our country faces requires progressive action and innovative governance methods through extensive dialogue. Progressive leaders prioritize both current needs and the interests of future generations. Governments reliant on vote-bank strategies often fail to deliver progressive policies. Implementing good policies is challenging because powerful individuals or groups benefiting from the status quo resist necessary reforms, maintaining political equilibrium.

Our country has witnessed a hopeful electoral outcome in the dynamic realm of politics, marking one of India's



most optimistic moments in recent history. However, electoral dynamics often prioritize candidates' "win-ability," sidelining well-educated and talented individuals capable of significant contributions. This trend persists because voters continue to support uneducated and unscrupulous candidates chosen for their "political expediency." Consequently, these MPs often engage more in theatrics like shouting and desk-thumping than in meaningful parliamentary discourse, unlike leaders such as Milind. This reflects a widespread perception in Indian politics that major parties hesitate to nominate candidates who could challenge their internal power dynamics. Instances such as Shashi Tharoor losing the Congress presidential poll, BJP not fielding sitting MP Varun Gandhi, and AAP expelling Yogendra Yadav are examples of qualified candidates being overlooked despite their suitability.

In a democracy, it's said that politics is the quickest way to transform a country. In Frank Herbert's words: "Good governance never depends upon laws, but upon the personal qualities of those who govern. The machinery of government is always subordinate to the will of those who administer that machinery. The most important

element of government, therefore, is the method of choosing leaders."

India urgently needs to establish improved governance, combating inflated claims, political aggression, and pretense. The BJP-led NDA government must prioritize building trust, fostering collaboration, and achieving development goals. This demands a strategic approach tailored to India's specific context, focusing on decisive action. Meanwhile, the opposition faces the formidable task of holding the government accountable for its promises of a robust economy, improved employment and education, and societal progress. They must be prepared to escalate efforts to democratically replace the government if it fails to navigate the country out of crisis.

Finally, the stark reality is clear: both the government and the opposition no longer have the luxury of time; they must act now. Abuse of power, regardless of politics, policy, or party, must be vigilantly guarded against. The Indian people should remain vigilant as they steadfastly pursue their long-awaited aspirations for a decent life. The outcome of this year's parliamentary election offers a glimmer of hope.

(The writer, a former General Manager of the International Centre, Goa, is the author of 'Whispers of an ordinary journey'.)

IT CAME TO MIND | MANISH NANDY

A human aspiration

It will shortly be a year since I moved into a home where I often get to meet several older people. I meet them and sometimes talk at length with some of them. My curiosity about them is easily explained. I know that in due course - that course may be shorter than 'due' - I will be one of them.

Theo, one of the people I have met, put it succinctly, "We are all, of course, aging from the day we are born. But I started noticing at a point that some parts of my body are not functioning as well as they used to. That's the point I felt I had 'aged.'"

Charlotte, who was sitting nearby, added another dimension, "I noticed with my mind rather than the body. I used to teach and, while teaching, I pulled up tons of names and dates as references. I found it harder one day to recall them on the spur of the moment. Soon it became more difficult and, later, nearly impossible."

They both felt diminished. Something had been taken away from them. Something they could do earlier they couldn't do anymore.

That is the painful brunt of aging that first gets our attention. Something about us has diminished. In effect, our world has diminished. Wyatt, a tennis ace, suddenly realized that he was missing too many of his opponents'



Illustration by : Debabrata Chakrabarty

shots because he wasn't seeing those well. He was having his first encounter with AMD, age-related macular degeneration. Dylan fell, broke an ankle, and had to use a wheelchair. It was during therapy that he faced the fact that his fall was not an accident. Age had severely compromised his sense of balance and the wheels would be his means of motion in the future.

Some see less, some walk less. Some can't see at all and some will never walk again. Some don't hear or, with aid, hear poorly. Many lose confidence and stop driving. The net

result is that most of them lose friends. They can't visit them, see them, hear them. A great part of their network that had sustained them through the years is suddenly forfeit. The support system that was once life-sustaining has now suddenly dwindled.

I, who can see and hear, walk and run, had the unique experience of losing vision in an eye for three months thanks to a severely detached retina. I could not drive and could barely walk safely; air travel was forbidden. The suddenness of the deprivation and the cruel changes it forced on my life - I had no idea how crippling monovision was - gave me a foretaste of how disorienting even a less serious disability could be. A couple of disabilities invariably come our way as we pass a few milestones of age. Some among us take it hard and seek refuge, hermit-like. They connect with few and do little, just marking time. That prospect hardly entrances me.

But I am impressed by how durable our spirit can be. I see people around me who are limited in some ways but defy the limitation to live a full life. My resolve to spend more

time on solo meditation when I couldn't see well seems paltry compared to their amazing fungibility. What they can't do in one way, they accomplish in another way. They learn to walk with a cane or a walker. They begin to read by enlarging the typeface on their phone or computer - or use a magnifying glass. They adjust to complex hearing aids.

When they can't drive anymore, they learn to use public transportation better or get smart and use the Uber app on their mobile phone. They acquire friends who drive and reciprocate by doing favours for them. They join or form groups that like to go to theatre or listen to concerts. They assemble in lively book clubs that do not entail travel but let their minds fly far and fast. At the very least, they learn how to use Zoom and Skype, Meet and WeChat, and enlarge their circle of friends beyond their town, even their country.

Others seem brave enough to go beyond that. Miles, who served in Romania when I was there, had long retired as he suffered indifferent health in his sixties. As the influx of war refugees broadened there, he flew to Bucharest defying his doctor's advice, intent to work with a local organization he had known. Everrett,

in better health but in his late seventies, has gone back to his old organization, Save the Children, and is working in the chaotic conditions of Poland, where hundreds of children are arriving daily without a father and some without a mother.

When I expressed my amazement at their daring - their families consider it foolhardiness - Adrian, a new friend in his nineties, told me something intriguing, "Young or old, we all try to do what makes sense to us. I left investment banking to teach; I have a friend who left surgery to start a travel business. We look for meaning. As we get older, careers end, families split, friends get lost. We are still searching for some meaning."

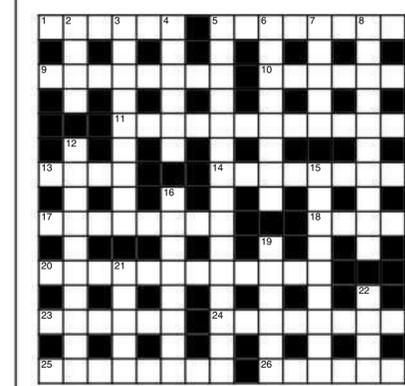
"I do it by working in my church for poor and sick people. Others my age do it by helping their children or grandchildren. Some others find, like your friends, some new kind of work that makes them feel worthy. I guess we are all trying to be worthy humans."

Not a trivial aspiration at all. We are all looking for a meaning. And that meaning is often linked to others around us.

(The writer is a US-based international development advisor and had worked with the World Bank. He can be reached at mnandy@gmail.com)

CROSSWORD

NO-292844



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

AGAINST THE GRAIN
R N W A Y H E
GAUCHE CREDITOR
P A A K B N V
UP IN ARMS APOLLO
A P A L L O U
H PARTY POLITICS
O I O B R N R L
INCONVENIENCE Y
O C T A D S A L A R M I S T
L D C T D O P
L I N I M E N T L A T V I A
O E R I I T R
I N S U R A N C I E B R O K E R

ACROSS

- 1 Snack service, one in wrapper ready for delivery (6)
5 Bangers, nuts and bananas not all there (8)
9 Dog gets my German dish (4,4)
10 Number Two's tax disc sent in (6)
11 A fruit tree's top in country food (12)

- 13 It's put on 24 and 16 (4)
14 They conquer lady's heart in stylish short poem (8)
17 Start with yen lad's saved (6,2)
18 We short-circuited race? (4)
20 Insured flyer flies, not needing manual? (4-8)
23 Province's queen bee regularly wearing silk (6)
24 A fruit now and then gets hard biscuits (8)

- 25 Warmed up, he put away wine bottles (8)
26 Cook cut unimportant piece of game (6)
DOWN
2 Long slice of feta cheese (4)
3 Learned books sustain latest paper supplier (9)
4 Nauseating article turns up in English clubs (6)

- 5 Novice once fed on random microwave meals? (11,4)
6 Charlie avoids habit-forming preservative for one (8)
7 Ford place out of commission (5)
8 About to tour St Petersburg once, start off in reverse (10)
12 Relish top northern booze (5,5)

- 15 Countless flyers imported, all about milk supplier (5,4)
16 Copper's suggested faster route (5,3)
19 Chopped and changed it in East Germany twice (6)
21 Bishop cuts canon's cash in Crimea (5)
22 Started to lose heart and pulse (4)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

THUMBNAILS

Indian realty sector saw over ₹ 5,327 cr investment from domestic investors in April-June: Keeping up with the growth momentum in the Indian real estate industry, the domestic investors pumped in around ₹638 million (more than Rs 5,327 crore) in the real estate sector in the second quarter this year, from ₹127 million in the same period last year. According to data from leading real estate consultant Vestian, institutional investments in the real estate sector surged 96 per cent in the April-June period to ₹3.1 billion, from ₹1.6 billion in the same period last year.

Market outlook: Q1 results, FII inflow, monsoon updates key factors next week

The previous week saw the Nifty and Sensex reaching all-time highs of 24,592.20 and 80,893.51, respectively

AGENCIES MUMBAI, 14 JULY

The Indian equity market experienced one of the best weeks of 2024, with the Nifty and Sensex reaching all-time highs of 24,592.20 and 80,893.51, respectively, before closing at 24,502.15 and 80,519.34. This marked gains of 0.73 per cent for the Nifty and 0.65 per cent for the Sensex. Both benchmark indices extended their winning streak for a sixth consecutive week. It is the first time ever that the nifty closed above 24,500. On the other side, small-cap and mid-cap stocks underperformed compared to large-cap. However, several PSU stocks posted staller gains during last week. The outlook of the market will be guided by several domestic and international factors next week. On the domestic front,

ed their winning streak for a sixth consecutive week. It is the first time ever that the nifty closed above 24,500. On the other side, small-cap and mid-cap stocks underperformed compared to large-cap. However, several PSU stocks posted staller gains during last week. The outlook of the market will be guided by several domestic and international factors next week. On the domestic front,



upcoming budget-related announcements, Q1 Fy25 results, monsoon updates and foreign institutional

investments (FIIs) inflows will catch investors' eyes in the week ahead. On the global front, China will be a significant focus. The country is scheduled to announce its GDP and Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Additionally, there is speculation about a major economic stimulus announcement, which could keep the metal sector in the spotlight. Other global factors to watch include the speech by the US Federal Reserve Chair-

man, US retail sales figures, and macroeconomic data from Japan. These developments are likely to influence market movements and investor sentiment. Vinod Nair, Head of Research of Geojit Financial Services said: "We expect stock-specific moves to gain traction due to the ongoing earnings season; indeed, IT will be in the limelight due to the good start to the earnings and outlook." Arvinder Singh Nanda, Senior Vice President of Mas-

ter Capital Services, said that on the daily chart analysis, Nifty has exhibited a breakout from the psychological resistance level of 24,500, indicating that the bullish trend is likely to continue into the next week. "Despite this positive trend, buying on dips is expected to provide resilience to the market. However, strong upward movements may attract profit booking, making a sustained rally challenging," Nanda added.

Govt proposes amendment in legal metrology rules for all packaged commodities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Keeping in view the growing ambit of the market including both offline and online platforms, the Department of Consumer Affairs is considering an amendment in the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 to establish uniformity for packaged commodities. The revised provision will provide that these Rules shall apply to all packaged commodities sold in bags in retail, except to the packaged commodities meant for industrial consumers or institutional consumers. This revised provision will help in establishing uniform standards/requirements for packaged commodities, promoting consistency and fairness across different brands and products and will help consumers in making informed choices based on complete information. The Department has invit-



ed comments from stakeholders within 15 days, up to July 29. The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 requires for declaration of mandatory information like name and address of the manufacturer/packer/importer, country of origin, common or generic name of the commodity, net quantity, month and year of manufacture, MRP, Unit Sale Price, best before/use by date in case of commodity becoming unfit for human consumption, consumer care details etc on all pre-packaged commodities in the interest of consumers. The rules apply to all pre-packaged commodities except

the following:

- ▶ packages of commodities containing a quantity of more than 25 kilogram or 25 litre;
 - ▶ cement, fertilizer, and agricultural farm produce sold in bags above 50 kilogram; and
 - ▶ packaged commodities meant for industrial consumers or institutional consumers.
- The rules are not applicable for packaged commodities containing a quantity of more than 25 kilogram or 25 litre except cement, fertilizer and agricultural farm produce sold in bags above 50 kilogram because it is presumed that the packaged commodities meant for retail sale are not more than 25 kg. However, it is observed that the packaged commodities above 25 kg are also available in the market for retail sale, which is not as per the intention to make all declarations on pre-packaged commodities meant for retail sale.

Expect retail inflation to remain close to 5 per cent: SBI Research report

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Retail inflation, or the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in India, is expected to remain below or close to 5.0 per cent in the remaining months of 2024-25, except for September, according to SBI Research. India's retail inflation rate increased in June, deviating from the moderation seen in previous months, driven by rising food prices. The year-on-year inflation rate based on the all-India Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 5.08 per cent (provisional) for June 2024. The corresponding inflation rates for rural and urban areas were 5.66 per cent and 4.39 per cent, respectively. Twelve states had inflation rates above India's overall rate of 5.1 per cent in June. Odisha recorded the highest infla-

tion rate at 7.22 per cent, followed by Bihar at 6.37 per cent and Karnataka at 5.98 per cent. "With the monsoon progressing satisfactorily and overall seasonal variations balancing out, we do not expect any significant deviation in the inflation outlook," stated a report from SBI Research authored by Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser at the State Bank of India. Furthermore, with US inflation having declined by 0.1 per cent from May, putting the 12-month rate at 3 per cent, its lowest level in more than three years, there are grounds for a potential Fed rate cut by September, the report noted. "We, therefore, feel the RBI will revisit the policy stance around that time in line with our expectations," the SBI Research report added.

Foreign investors infuse ₹15,352 crore into Indian equities in first half of July

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

In the first half of July, foreign investors infused Rs 15,352 crore into Indian equities driven by the government's commitment to ongoing reforms, low US Federal rates, and strong domestic demand. As per the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of Rs 15,352 crore in equities this till July 12. This came following an inflow of Rs 26,565 crore in equities in June on the back of political stability and a sharp rebound in markets.



In May, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields. Apart from equities, FPIs invested Rs 8,484 crore in the debt market during the period under review pushing

the debt tally to Rs 77,109 crore this year so far. The key characteristic of institutional equity flows into the Indian market is the unpredictable nature of FPI flows compared to the consistent growth of domestic institutional investors (DIIs) including mutual funds' flow. DIIs have been consistent buyers every month in 2024, while FPIs have fluctuated between buying and selling. FPIs sold a cumulative amount of Rs 60,000 crore in January, April, and May but bought Rs 63,200 crore in February, March, and June together.

India's retail digital payments likely to be \$7 trillion by 2030: Report

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

A recent report has said that with digital adoption fast gaining currency, India is likely to see retail digital payments double to \$ 7 trillion by 2030 from the current levels. The study by Kearney and Amazon Pay said that strong adoption of digital payments in online purchases has potentially led to a permanent shift in consumer behaviours, fueling offline adoption as well. In the report titled 'How Urban India Pays', Kearney-Amazon Pay said while 90 per cent of the respondents of the survey preferred digital payments when making online purchases, affluent consumers lead the way with the highest Degree of Digital Payment Usage (DDPU), tend-

ing to use various modes of digital payment for 80 per cent of their transactions. The research was based on an online survey of over 6,000 consumers along with more than 1,000 merchants through offline and online methods across 120 cities with representation from various regions, income groups, city categories, age brackets and genders. "Millennials and Gen X are leading in the adoption of all types of digital payment instruments," it said. "Men and women both use digital payments in about 72 per cent of their transactions, indicating gender parity. India has seen a surge in e-commerce, with the market valued at \$ 75 billion to \$ 80 billion in 2022 and expected to grow at a 21 per cent CAGR

until 2030. "In line with India's digital journey, retail digital payments have grown dramatically over the past five years - from \$ 300 billion in FY18 to \$ 3.6 trillion in FY24. By FY30, they are likely to double to \$ 7 trillion," the report said. "With such dynamic developments, it is no wonder that India is a global frontrunner in the digital payment landscape, accounting for a stellar 46 per cent of the global digital transaction volumes in 2022," it added. The report further highlighted that the digital payments have penetrated small towns, with respondents in these areas highlighting that 65% of their transactions are digital, while respondents in larger cities cited this ratio to be 75%.

NITI Aayog launches hackathon to accelerate zero-emission truck adoption in India

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

NITI Aayog on Sunday announced the launch of a hackathon to accelerate zero-emission truck adoption in India. NITI Aayog, in collaboration with IIM Bangalore, Smart Freight Centre India, CAL-START/Drive to Zero, and WRI India, announced the launch of the NITI GearShift Challenge as part of the e-FAST India initiative. "This pioneering hackathon aims to foster innovative business models

for the adoption of zero-emission trucks (ZETs) in India, addressing the nation's pressing economic and environmental challenges," NITI Aayog said. The NITI GearShift Challenge invites students, transport service practitioners, academics, and researchers to develop innovative business models that address financial, technical, and operational challenges in the adoption of electric trucks. The programme has garnered participation from e-FAST India knowledge partners, financial institutions, and industry forums.



The hackathon will unfold in two rounds. In Round 1, teams will submit their initial business models addressing a specific barrier—technical, operational, or financial—supported by high-level strategies and research. Shortlisted teams in Round 2 will present detailed business models

with an implementation roadmap, backed by both primary and secondary research. These proposals will be mentored by industry leaders to ensure practical and impactful solutions. India's freight sector is vital to the economy, ensuring the smooth delivery of goods to over 1.4 billion people. With road freight accounting for a staggering 55 per cent of India's annual diesel consumption and nearly 40 per cent of CO2 emissions from road transport, there is an urgent need to transition to more sustainable solutions.

The electrification of freight transportation is a key priority, as electric trucks offer a transformative opportunity to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and enhance energy security. The GearShift Challenge marks a pivotal move towards sustainable freight transportation in India. By tapping into the creativity and expertise of participants, the hackathon aims to generate practical solutions that will accelerate the adoption of zero-emission trucks, thereby benefiting both the economy and the environment.

'Delivering AI-powered, tailored solutions, enhancing crop management & sustainability'

RITWIK MUKHERJEE KOLKATA, 14 JULY

He was neither born in the city, nor did he stay here in his early days. But his forefather did. He, nevertheless, always felt connected to the 'city of joy'. And that's why he came back to Kolkata at the peak of his professional career to pad up for his entrepreneurial innings. He set out on a mission to harness the power of Artificial Intelligence and digital through-out the food ecosystem. Envisioning a world where sustainably produced, healthy, affordable food is accessible to all, his company started working on to offer solutions that bring in the power of AI into the food value chain. Kolkata's homegrown company is on an unstoppable mission to develop a range of services and products, in essence, bringing its goals and visions to fruition. He



firmly believes that shortages in food, and providing access to healthy food across the world, are simply hurdles that need to be addressed to get to the next level: a greener, better future. Speaking to The Statesman exclusively, Shantanu Bhattacharya, Managing Director and CEO of Blu Cocoon Digital, explains how he and his entire team are burning midnight oils to usher in a world where lack of food is history, and every person can afford, and easily access good quality food, where wastage is reduced, and operations are carried out in a way that is sensitive and responsible towards the future of this planet.

neering degree, I played a key role in establishing and successfully leading a Manufacturing & Construction business for six years. Observing the evolution of the global business landscape, I realized that Information Technology was poised to be the next major revolution. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive understanding of corporate culture to diversify my expertise, I transitioned from the construction business, handing over its reins to my partner, and ventured into the IT industry. **Q: Which are the areas/verticals you are focusing on now?** A: Agriculture Technology (AgTech): With our flagship product AGRi360, we are enhancing crop management and sustainability. Digital Transformation Services: Offering comprehensive solutions to industries seeking to optimize operations and embrace digital innovation. AI and Machine Learning Solutions: Developing advanced AI-driven tools for various applications, including predictive analytics and process automation. Cloud Migration Services: Helping businesses transition to cloud-based infrastructures for enhanced scalability and efficiency. These areas represent our strategic focus as we continue to innovate and provide impactful solutions across industries. **Q: Is your product/solution patented? Any**

other certification/recognition? A: Patents: An Artificial Intelligence (AI) based computing system for calculating Toxicity Exposure Ratio (TER) in plants. **▶** System and method to differentiate between plant disease and plant mechanical injuries. **▶** Registered Trademark: Our product, AGRi360, is a registered trademark. **▶** Certifications and Recognitions: Emerging Company of 2020 by Indian Achievers' Awards. **▶** Winner of the "Innovation in Environment and Sustainability" award by ASSOCHAM. **▶** Recognized by Great Place to Work @ Institute as a great workplace. **▶** ISO 27001:2022 certified for Information Security Management System. **▶** Jury Special Awards for Leadership in Innovation - Tech Services in SME Inspire Awards. **▶** Finalists at National Startup Awards 2022. **▶** 8th Rural Connect BCC&I Agri Awards 2024 - Agri startup of the year & Technology Adoption Award. **▶** 14th National Manufacturing Conclave - Manufacturing and MSME Excellence Award - MSME of the Year 2023-24. **▶** Named Top 50 Startup Trailblazers 2024. These accolades highlight our commitment to innovation, quality, and sustainability across our products and operations.

TENDER

DHUPGURI MUNICIPALITY e-NIT (Abridged)
e-NIT are invited by the Chairperson, Dhupguri Municipality from Resourceful bona fide outsider for Civil Works under Dhupguri Municipality.

Sl. No.	Tender ID
1	2024_MAD_713771_1
2	2024_MAD_713803_1
3	2024_MAD_713813_1
4	2024_MAD_713827_1
5	2024_MAD_713843_1
6	2024_MAD_713857_1
7	2024_MAD_713867_1

Bid submission end dt.: 29-07-24 at 17 hrs.
Sd/- Chairperson
BOA, Dhupguri Municipality

Classified

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE

It is notified to all concern that my client Satyabrata Chatterjee is absolute owner of a 50% share of entire 1st floor flat no.101, 102 having 2500 SQ.FT. super built up area and one car parking space on the ground floor front side having 130 SQ.FT. covered area lying and situate at mouza-shyamnagar J.L.No. 32/20 (New), 17(Old), R.S. No. 180, Touzi, No. 228/229 comprised in R.S.L.R. Dag no. 2464. Premises no.161 (Municipal Holding No. 155 Dum Dum Park, P.S. Lake Town, P.O. Bangur Avenue, Kolkata - 700055, within the local limits of South Dum Dum Municipality under ward no.28 in the district of North 24 parganas and he got right, title, interest over the said flat & car parking space by dint of inheritance and notarised will done by Harendral Chatterjee. Now my client intend to incorporate his name in the record of South Dum Dum Municipality as a owner thereof. If any person or persons have any right, title, interest over the said property may contact the undersign within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Kripanath Chakraborty
Advocate
High Court, Calcutta
M - 861772957
En No. F-439/426 of 1994

TENDERS

UNIVERSITY OF KALYANI
Notice for E-tender

E-tender for CIVIL WORK is invited against Tender ID No.: 2024_UOK_711941_1. Last date for submission of quotation 31.07.2024 (Estimated Amount 47,73,753/-). For details please visit website www.klyuniv.ac.in (for viewing only) and <http://wbttenders.gov.in> (for viewing & tender submission).

Sd/-
Registrar

CHANGE OF NAME

I, "Shefali Ghosh", mother of Late NK Achintya Kumar Ghosh, resident of Vill. & P.O.: Helan, P.S.: Khanakul, Dist.: Hooghly (W.B.) have changed my name from "Safali Ghosh (D.O.B.: 64 Years)" to "Shefali Ghosh (D.O.B.: 21-10-1929)" vide Affidavit No. 2036 dated 09-07-2024 sworn before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Chinsurah Hooghly.

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Murshidabad		7719227747
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		9434474356
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The incident at former President Trump's campaign event in Pennsylvania today is concerning and confronting. There is no place for violence in the democratic process.

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER ANTHONY ALBANESE AFTER THE ATTACK ON DONALD TRUMP

WEATHER

Table with 3 columns: CITY, MAX(°C), MIN(°C). Rows include SINGAPORE, HONG KONG, TOKYO, LONDON, DUBAI, SAN FRANCISCO, NEW YORK, MOSCOW.

S= sunny, CL= clear, H=hazy, R= rainy...

Condemnation of Trump rally shooting crosses party lines

Blame game and calls for probe begin; lawmakers from both parties promise hearings & a comprehensive investigation

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON, 14 JULY

Republican and Democratic leaders, as well as some international friends and foes, expressed shock and relief Saturday night after an apparent assassination attempt at a Donald Trump campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., said there would be hearings to investigate what happened. "We will have Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle and other appropriate officials from (the Department of Homeland Security) and the FBI appear for a hearing before our committees ASAP," Johnson said.

House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Chairman James Comer, R-Ky., said in a statement that there were many questions to be answered. "I have already contacted the Secret Service for a briefing and am also calling on Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle to appear for a hearing. The Oversight Committee will send a formal invitation soon."



Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., suggested on X that the Senate might hold similar hearings. "It's a wonder Donald Trump is alive. Let's call this what it was. An assassination attempt with at least one innocent bystander murdered. The nation needs to know who did this. And why. And we need a full, public investigation by Congress into HOW it happened," Hawley posted.

Notable officials, including former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama,

praised the fast action of the Secret Service and expressed gratitude that the presumptive Republican presidential nominee appeared to be OK.

"As one whose family has been the victim of political violence, I know firsthand that political violence of any kind has no place in our society. I thank God that former President Trump is safe, no matter what the radical left throws at him," Trump Jr. said in a statement.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on X:

"Sara and I were shocked by the apparent attack on President Trump. We pray for his safety and speedy recovery."

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, who has an adversarial relationship with Trump, said during a campaign event broadcast on state television that he wished Trump a speedy recovery: "May God bless the people of the United States and give them peace and tranquility. We have been adversaries, but I wish President Trump health and long life, and I repudiate that attack."

Obama, Trump's immediate predecessor in the White House, shared the views of others who have held the presidency, writing on social media: "There is absolutely no place for political violence in our democracy. Although we don't yet know exactly what happened, we should all be relieved that former President Trump wasn't seriously hurt, and use this moment to recommit ourselves to civility and respect in our politics. Michelle and I are wishing him a quick recovery."

President Joe Biden said: "There's no place in America for this type of violence. It's sick. It's sick."

US Secret Service is investigating how gunman who injured Trump was able to get so close

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON, 14 JULY

The U.S. Secret Service is investigating how a gunman armed with an AR-style rifle was able to get close enough to shoot and injure former President Donald Trump at a rally Saturday in Pennsylvania, a monumental failure of one of the agency's core duties.

The gunman, who was killed by Secret Service personnel, fired multiple shots at the stage from an "elevated position outside of the rally venue," the agency said.

An Associated Press analysis of more than a dozen videos and photos taken at the Trump rally, as well as satellite imagery of the site, shows the shooter was able to get astonishingly close to the stage where the former president was speaking. A video posted to social media and geolocated by the AP shows the body of a man wearing gray camouflage lying motionless on the roof of a manufacturing plant just north of the Butler Farm Show grounds, where Trump's rally was held.

The roof was less than 150 meters (yards) from where Trump was speaking, a distance from which a decent marksman could reasonably hit a human-sized target. For reference, 150 meters is a distance at which U.S. Army recruits must hit a scaled human-sized silhouette to qualify with the M16 assault rifle in basic training.



The FBI early Sunday identified the shooter as Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

The Secret Service didn't have anybody at a late-night news conference where FBI and Pennsylvania State Police officials briefed reporters on the shooting investigation. FBI Special Agent in Charge Kevin Rojek said it was "surprising" that the gunman was able to fire at the stage before he was killed.

Members of the Secret Service's counter sniper team and counter assault team were at the rally, according to two law enforcement officials. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss details of the investigation.

One dead, two missing in floods in Philippines: At least one person died and two others were missing after floods hit parts of the southern Philippines over the weekend, a government agency monitoring disasters said on Sunday. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said that the lone fatality was due to drowning, reported in Davao Occidental province on Friday. The two missing people were reportedly swept away by a strong current while crossing a river in Bukidnon province, reported Xinhua news agency. The agency said the flooding affected nearly 39,000 people in four regions. Around 10,000 displaced villagers of the affected population have stayed in evacuation centres while waiting for the flood to subside. The agency recorded at least eight landslides triggered by incessant rains in the Davao region and Zamboanga Peninsula.

Israeli strike in southern Gaza targeting Hamas military commander kills at least 90 people

AGENCIES GAZA STRIP, 14 JULY

Israel said it targeted Hamas' shadowy military commander in a massive strike Saturday in the crowded southern Gaza Strip that killed at least 90 people including children, according to local health officials. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said "there still isn't absolute certainty" that Mohammed Deif and a second Hamas commander, Rafa Salama, were killed.



Hamas rejected the claim that Deif was in the area, saying "these false claims are merely a cover-up for the scale of the horrific massacre." The strike took place in an area Israel's military had designated as safe for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

Deif and Hamas' top officials in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, are believed by Israel to be the chief architects of the Oct. 7 attack that killed some 1,200 people in southern Israel and triggered the Israel-Hamas war. Not seen in public for years, Deif has long topped Israel's most-wanted list and is believed to have escaped multiple Israeli assassination attempts. On Oct. 7,

said Israel will not end the war until Hamas' military capabilities are destroyed. Deif's death would be a significant step in that direction.

All Hamas leaders are marked for death and "we will reach them all," Netanyahu said. He added that no hostages had been nearby when the strike occurred, without explaining how he knew that.

Deif's killing could also encourage Hamas to harden its positions in talks. He has been in hiding for more than two decades and is believed to be paralyzed. One of the only known images of him is a 30-year-old ID photo released by Israel. Even in Gaza, only a handful of people would recognize him.

Saturday's attack was one of the war's deadliest. The Gaza Health Ministry reported 90

dead and at least 300 others injured. Associated Press journalists counted over 40 bodies at overwhelmed Nasser Hospital nearby. Witnesses described an attack that included several strikes.

"A number of victims are still under the rubble and on the roads, and ambulance and civil defense crews are unable to reach them," the Health Ministry said.

The Israeli military asserted that "additional terrorists hid among civilians" and described the location as surrounded by trees and several buildings. An Israeli official said the strike hit a fenced area of Khan Younis that was run by Hamas, saying it was not a tent complex but an operational compound. The official described the strike as precise. The army said the compound belonged to Salama.

Treason and espionage cases are rising in Russia since the war in Ukraine began

AGENCIES TALLINN, 14 JULY

When Maksim Kolker's phone rang at 6 a.m., and the voice on the other end said his father had been arrested, he thought it was a scam to extort money. A day earlier, he had taken his father, prominent Russian physicist Dmitry Kolker, to the hospital in his native Novosibirsk, when his advanced pancreatic cancer had suddenly worsened.

The phone kept ringing and Kolker kept hanging up until finally his father called to confirm the grim news. The elder Kolker had been charged with treason, the family later learned, a crime that is probed and prosecuted in absolute secrecy in Russia and punished with long prison terms.

Treason cases have been rare in Russia in the last 30 years,



with a handful annually. But since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, they have skyrocketed, along with espionage prosecutions, ensnaring citizens and foreigners alike, regardless of their politics.

That has brought comparisons to the show trials under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin in the 1930s.

The more recent victims range from Kremlin critics and independent journalists to veteran scientists working with countries that Moscow considers friendly.

These cases stand out from the crackdown on dissent that has reached unprecedented levels under President Vladimir

Putin. They are investigated almost exclusively by the powerful Federal Security Service, or FSB, with specific charges and evidence not always revealed.

The accused are often held in strict isolation in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo Prison, tried behind closed doors, and almost always convicted, with long prison sentences.

In 2022, Putin urged the security services to "harshly suppress the actions of foreign intelligence services, promptly identify traitors, spies and saboteurs." The First Department, a rights group that specializes in such prosecutions and takes its name from a division of the security service, counted over 100 known treason cases in 2023, lawyer Evgeny Smirnov told The Associated Press. He added there probably were another 100 that nobody knows about.

A Pakistani court acquits ex-PM Khan but supporters' hopes of his release are dashed

AGENCIES ISLAMABAD, 14 JULY

A Pakistani court on Saturday overturned the convictions and seven-year sentences of former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife, but officials quickly moved to prevent his release from prison.

The acquittal in a case relating to the legality of the couple's 2018 marriage seemed to have removed the last hurdle in the way of Khan's release, nearly a year after he was jailed, and his followers had started gathering near the prison where he was being held in the garrison city of Rawalpindi to greet him on his release.

But shortly after the court's ruling, Khan was arrested yet again, in connection to riots last year, his party said. It

added that it believed Khan's wife, Bushra Bibi, was also being arrested again, in a lingering corruption case.

Authorities have registered multiple cases against Khan since 2022 when he was ousted from power through a vote of no-confidence in the parliament. Khan has been embroiled in more than 150 legal cases, including inciting violence, since his initial arrest in May 2023.

Earlier this month, the United Nations human rights working group called for Khan's immediate release, saying he had been detained "arbitrarily in violation of international laws."

Saturday's acquittal relates to Khan's marriage to Bibi, his third wife. She was previously married to a man who claimed that they divorced in November 2017, less than

three months before she married Khan. Islamic law, as upheld by Pakistan, requires a three-month waiting period before a new marriage.

Bibi had said they divorced in August 2017 and the couple insisted during the trial that they did not violate the waiting period.

Following Khan's arrest in May 2023, Khan's supporters attacked military and government buildings in various parts of the country and torched a building housing state-run Radio Pakistan.

The violence subsided only when Khan was released by the Supreme Court. However, he was again arrested in early August 2023 after a court handed him a three-year jail sentence for corruption.

Iran's new president vows balance with all countries but warns US his country won't be pressured

AGENCIES TEHRAN, 14 JULY

Iran's newly elected president said his government will create "balance in relations with all countries" in line with national interests and the prerequisites for peace but stressed to the United States that his country "will not respond to pressure."

Masoud Pezeshkian penned "My Message To The New World" in the country's state-owned Tehran Times late Friday, praising the latest presidential election that "demonstrated remarkable stability" and vowing to uphold "promises I made during my campaign."

Pezeshkian, a 69-year-old heart surgeon and longtime lawmaker, bested hard-liner former nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili to clinch July 5's

runoff election to replace President Ebrahim Raisi, who was killed in a helicopter crash in May.

He said in his message his administration would "prioritize strengthening relations with our neighbors" and urged Arab countries to use "all diplomatic levers" to push for a lasting cease-fire in the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip that started Oct. 7.

Iran has long supported the militant group Hamas, and Pezeshkian on Wednesday expressed his all-out support of "the Plastesian resistance" in a message to the group's chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Pezeshkian, in the letter Friday, hailed his country's relations with Russia and China which "consistently stood by us during challenging times." He said Moscow was "a valued strategically" and his gov-



ernment would expand bilateral cooperation. He also expressed willingness to "support initiatives aimed at" achieving peace between Russia and Ukraine in the ongoing war that entered its third year.

The president also said he looked forward to furthering cooperation with Beijing and applauded it for brokering a deal to normal-

ize relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia after seven years of diplomatic tensions.

Pezeshkian said he looks forward to engaging in constructive dialogue with European countries "based on principles of mutual respect" despite a relationship that has known "its ups and downs."

In May 2018, the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan

of Action — a nuclear agreement that also included Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. Since then, Western powers have accused the Islamic Republic of expanding its nuclear program and enriching uranium to an unprecedented 60% level, near-weapons-grade levels.

The U.S. has issued severe, mainly economic, sanctions against Iran.

China under Xi Jinping -- worse than ever?

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Xi Jinping assumed the presidency of China in March 2013, succeeding Hu Jintao as the primary leader of both the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the People's Republic of China.

Over the subsequent 12 years, Xi has navigated China through a tumultuous period, significantly altering the global perception of the nation.

Although China is an authoritarian state, it had established mechanisms to prevent the concentration of unchecked power in a single individual, a response to the challenges encountered under

Mao Zedong's leadership. These mechanisms included a maximum two-term limit for presidents and a system of checks and balances within the Party's upper echelons.

Presidents would typically begin grooming their successors as their terms concluded. However, these practices have been consistently ignored in Xi Jinping's case. He amended the party's constitution to extend his tenure beyond two terms, appointed loyalists to key positions and emerged as the most powerful leader in Communist Chinese history (even Mao faced resistance from civil war-era military generals). Reflecting on these developments, it is



crucial to consider how Xi Jinping's decade-long rule has impacted China. The starting of failures. When Xi Jinping assumed the role of General Secretary of the Communist Party of China and President of the country, it was during the period of China's 'peaceful rise'; that the nation was thriving economically and emerging as a global manufacturing hub.

Liberal internationalists believed that as market forces penetrated China, democracy would inevitably follow. However, a realist perspective of international relations ultimately prevailed. The China that Xi Jinping inherited was flourishing and becoming a constructive global force. Upon taking office, he began to use this development and the rise of China as instruments for asserting dominance. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) serves as a prime example; it was China's first major international infrastructure project, launched in 2013 to establish a multimodal network of infrastructure projects across various countries.

Strong efforts required to release demographic dividend as Africa's population crosses 1.5 bn: UNECA

AGENCIES ADDIS ABABA, 14 JULY

As Africa's population crosses the 1.5 billion mark and the demographic window is opening, social policy experts at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) stressed that getting the dividend requires more time and stronger efforts.

The latest call followed the publication of the World Population Prospects and Forecast that was released by the United Nations on World Population Day, which is annually observed on July 11,



Xinhua news agency reported on Saturday.

Noting that the world's population has witnessed tremendous growth in the last six decades, in which the global population was around three billion in 1960, the report indicated that in just two decades (by 1982), it had surpassed five billion and since November 2022 there are more than eight billion people in the world.

NATIONAL COMPANY LAW APPELLATE TRIBUNAL APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi invites online applications on portal namely https://aptrbmembermca.gov.in from Indian Nationals for 02 posts of Judicial Members in the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), a quasi-judicial body established under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013. The number of vacancies are tentative and may decrease or increase without prior notice. The Member shall be paid a salary of Rupees two lakh twenty-five thousand per month plus other allowances as admissible.

Eligible and willing persons are advised to submit their application online. The candidates who had earlier applied need not to apply again. Applications may be submitted online from 15-07-2024 at 10-00 A.M. Last Date for submitting online application is 11-08-2024 at 5-30 P.M. Detailed advertisement may be seen on the portal namely https://aptrbmembermca.gov.in website of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (www.mca.gov.in), DoP&T's website (https://dopt.gov.in) and National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's website (www.nclat.gov.in). Instruction for filling up of application are available on the portal https://aptrbmembermca.gov.in

Print out of the application forms after final submission on online portal duly completed, and signed along with copies of uploaded documents, and through proper channel, wherever applicable, must reach by 5-30 P.M. of 23-08-2024 to Shri Hemant Kumar, Under Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Room No 526, A 'Wing', 5th floor, Shastri Bhawan, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001. CBC 07101/11/0003/2425

CRPF soldier killed, 3 cops injured in Manipur's Jiribam ambush

The CRPF troopers were inside a patrol SUV when the suspected insurgents opened fire

AGENCIES IMPHAL, 14 JULY

A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan was killed and three other security personnel got injured when suspected militants ambushed a joint patrol party with the state police in Manipur's Jiribam district on Sunday, police said.

The three injured include a CRPF jawan and two Manipur police personnel.

A police official in Imphal said that the joint patrol party came under heavy fire from the hilltop by suspected militants at Mornbung village of Jiribam district bordering Assam.

The CRPF troopers were inside a patrol SUV when the



suspected insurgents opened fire, the police official said, adding that the vehicle was later found with bullet holes and its windshield shattered.

The security personnel retaliated and the militants took shelter in the forest of the mountainous terrain.

A combing operation is now going on and addi-

tional forces have rushed to the areas.

The injured security personnel were quickly evacuated and are currently under medical treatment in the government hospital.

Sunday's incident was the second militant attack on the security forces in Manipur in five weeks.

On June 10, suspected militants attacked the advance security convoy of Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in the state's Kangpokpi district and a security personnel was injured in the attack, as per reports.

The advance security convoy was on its way to the trouble-torn Jiribam district on June 10 ahead of the Chief Minister's scheduled visit

to the state's bordering district with Assam which recently witnessed violence, as per reports.

The advance convoy was attacked near Kotlen village on the Imphal-Jiribam National Highway (NH-37).

Jiribam witnessed a wave of violence after the killing of 59-year-old farmer Soibam Saratkumar Singh on June 6.

The Jiribam violence led to around 900 tribals belonging to the Kuki and Hmar communities taking shelter at the homes of relatives and friends in two villages in the Cachar district of southern Assam, while around 1,000 people, mostly belonging to the Meitei community, are now sheltered in seven relief camps in Jiribam.

Congress is a parasitic party, it will swallow whoever it stands on: Nadda

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

BJP National President JP Nadda said that history is witness as to which party has strangled the Constitution.

"Congress has toppled elected governments 90 times. In the ten years of Modi's government, President's Rule has been imposed only in Jammu by removing the government. Congress party wants to give reservation on the basis of religion. Congress is a party that kills the Constitution," he said.

Addressing the UP BJP state working committee meeting here on Sunday, the BJP president said that where Congress has contested elections alone, its strike rate is just 26 per cent and where it is with someone, its strike rate is 50 per cent.

"This party has become a parasite and it wants to gain power by standing with the support of the other party. Today Congress is a party standing on the strength of regional parties and regional parties should understand this," he said.

He pointed out that the total of seats won by the Indian alliance in the Lok Sabha elections is still less than the tally of the BJP alone.

Mr Nadda said that BJP is the party of today as well as the party of the future. "We should understand that the responsibility on our shoulders is not seasonal. This responsibility is always and constantly on our shoulders," he said.

He said that the people of India have supported BJP for the third consecutive time, so it means that they have given this mandate for a special work. "We do politics all over India. There is no corner of the country



where BJP is not present. BJP has reached this position on the strength of its workers while workers are most important for the party," he added.

Mr Nadda said that all parties should understand that Ram temple was not an election issue for the BJP, rather, it is the party's ideology. Even when BJP had only two seats, it used to do politics on issues and even today it does politics on issues only.

In a political resolution adopted at the meeting, the state unit of the BJP noted that due to the false propaganda of the opposition, the party had less success in the elections and issues like reservation, money to women, Constitutional change made the difference.

The resolution further stated that the BJP is committed to OBC and SC reservation. It also noted that when the SP comes to power, it shows its true character, SP has always opposed reservation and Dr B R Ambedkar. The meeting also noted the need for greater unity and to strengthen the party.

It was also resolved that there should not be any hindrance in government recruitments or examinations. Cleanliness and transparency are necessary, and the party is committed to impartially investigate the incident of paper leak and punish the culprits.

'If Cong came to power, it might ban the word Hindu'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has cautioned the people that if Congress comes to power, it might clamp a ban on uttering the word "Hindu".

Calling Congress "Bhashmasura" (a mythological character with the power to burn up anyone and reduce to ashes), the saffron party warned its ally Samajwadi Party that it would soon be eliminated.

In the political resolution issued on the occasion, the BJP attributed the setback in the Lok Sabha polls to confusion created by the Opposition among the voters even though the party performed very well by grabbing 41% of the vote share.

The resolution reads: "Swami Vivekananda, the inspiration for the youth, had once said that we should say with pride that we are Hindus. But recently, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi said that the people who call themselves Hindus indulge in violence, spreading lies and hatred 24 hours a day. His statement is an insult to the entire Hindu community of India and the Hindu society is hurt. No one has ever dared to communally describe the majority Hindus of the country as anarchists and violent people in the sacred temple of Lok Sabha so far".

UP govt to spend ₹950 cr to develop world-class infrastructure in Defence Corridor

AGENCIES LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is developing world-class infrastructure in the state's Defence Industrial Corridor.

The government is investing Rs 950 crore in this project, which includes the construction of high-quality roads, electricity, water, sewer, and security systems.

The Defence Industrial Corridor consists of six nodes, with the allocated funds designated for five of them.

According to Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) officials, projects worth approximately Rs 187 crore have been



completed so far, while works exceeding Rs 537 crore are currently underway.

The UPEIDA has allocated Rs 941.19 crore for infrastructure development in the Aligarh, Kanpur, Jhansi, Lucknow and Chitrakoot nodes.

Jhansi is receiving the largest investment, with projects totalling over Rs 517 crore.

Completed works in Jhansi exceed Rs 102 crore, whereas ongoing projects are worth more than Rs 376 crore, and over Rs 37 crore is reserved for future projects.

In Aligarh, over Rs 122 crore is being invested, with completed works exceeding Rs 37 crore and ongoing works worth over Rs 61 crore. Tenders for projects worth more than Rs 13 crore have been issued, and approximately Rs 10 crore is reserved for upcoming projects.

In Kanpur, over Rs 62 crore is allocated, with more than Rs 32 crore of works completed, over Rs 16 crore under construction, and tenders for works worth more than Rs 13 crore issued.

India needs economic growth that is relatable to every individual: Dhankhar

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

India has made significant economic growth in the last 10 years, and as per Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, now "we need economic growth that is relatable to every individual."

Speaking at a cyber security conference organised by the Global Counter Terrorism Council (GCTC) in the national capital, the Vice President said that "from slot number 11, we are at number 5, ahead of the UK, France, Canada, Brazil." He noted that in a matter of time, India will also be ahead of Japan and Germany. However, we now need

"economic growth that is relatable to every individual," he said.

Dhankhar informed about the "banking inclusion of 500 million people" and that the country "accounts for nearly 50 per cent of global transactions."

He also called for ramping up cyber security. Further, he noted that the government is focussing on commercialisation of 6G. He also called on educational institutions, and people to brace up to live with and to get training in disruptive technologies like the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, blockchain, and machine learning, which is here to stay.

Amid row, Assam's Tinsukia promises to reinstall Mahatma statue

AGENCIES GUWAHATI, 14 JULY

Amidst huge controversies after the removal of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi for the construction of a clock tower in Assam's Doomdooma town in Tinsukia, the district administration decided that a new seven-feet tall statue of the father of the nation would be installed in the town.

The controversy began after a social media post last week by Mahatma Gandhi's great-grandson Tushar Gandhi.

Tagging a newspaper clipping, Tushar Gandhi in his post on the X said: "Not surprising that the BJP government in Assam decided to

replace Babu's statue with a clock tower.

Their slavish colonial hangover persists."

Earlier, the Tinsukia district administration said that the statue was removed as part of the Doom Doom's makeover project which included building a clock tower and replacing the old statue with another statue.

Congress leaders and workers led by former Doomdooma MLA and party leader Durga Bhumij strongly protested the move. When the contractor of the project began the work recently, Bhumij along with party workers arrived at the site and strongly opposed the removal of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

"The BJP never paid due



respect to Gandhiji. Instead, it always gave respect to Nathuram Godse," the Congress leader had said.

"At a time when Gandhiji's statue was set up in as many as 80 countries around the world, the Board is going to build

a clock tower by removing the statue of the Father of the Nation," the Congress leader had told the media.

An official of the Tinsukia district administration on Sunday said that the Mahatma Gandhi statue was installed at Gandhi Chowk in Doomdooma town around the year 1958.

"Since 1958, the statue had undergone a lot of wear and tear and damage. However, it appears that no scheme was undertaken for its restoration or replacement.

Owing to this, a plan was undertaken to replace the existing 5 feet 8-inch Mahatma Gandhi statue with a new 7 feet tall statue under the scheme Installation of a new Mahatma Gandhi statue at Gandhi Chowk, Doomdooma' under the 15th Finance Commission Grant of Doomdooma Municipal Board," the official told the media.

He said on February 15, a public meeting involving various organisations of Doomdooma town was held and the details of the two schemes mentioned and discussed with the public clearly and transparently and members present in the meeting agreed to the implementation of the two schemes. After the huge controversy, Doomdooma BJP MLA Rupesh Gowla assured them that a new and taller statue of Mahatma Gandhi would be erected at the same site.

"The old statue was in a dilapidated condition and the new one would be installed within six months, along with beautification of the site," Gowla had told the media.

Lakhimpur MP Pradan Baruah laid the foundation

for Doom Doom's development project on March 7.

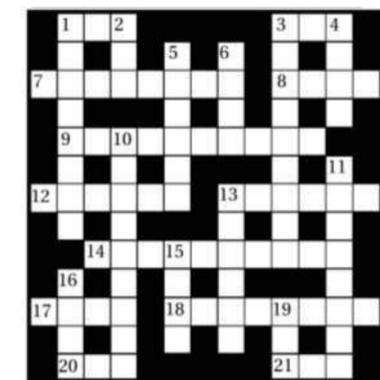
District administration officials said that the site of construction was cleared on July 3 and the existing statue of Mahatma Gandhi was lifted on July 5 to prevent any damage due to the construction work.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, reacting to a post of Tushar Gandhi, on Friday said on X: "I am not aware of this decision taken by the district administration. Let me verify the facts. Assam owes much to Mahatma Gandhi."

"He stood firmly with Bharat Ratna Gopinath Bordoloi when the Congress party led by Nehru wanted to include Assam in Pakistan under the Grouping Plan," Sarma had said.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS
 1 Man (informal) (3)
 3 Performed (a task) (3)
 7 Property loan agreement (8)
 8 Green cormorant (4)
 9 Questionable (10)
 12 Armed forces (6)
 13 Abrupt (6)
 14 Calm and unemotional (10)
 17 Series of novels (4)
 18 Casino employee (8)
 20 Slippery fish (3)
 21 Appropriate (3)

DOWN
 1 List of terms (8)
 2 Still (3)
 3 Remove a load from (9)
 4 Transaction (4)
 5 Morning prayer service (6)
 6 Abominable snowman (4)
 10 Bat defensively (9)
 11 Tie (4,4)
 13 Follow secretly (6)
 15 Small nail (4)
 16 Tote (4)
 19 Small vegetable (3)

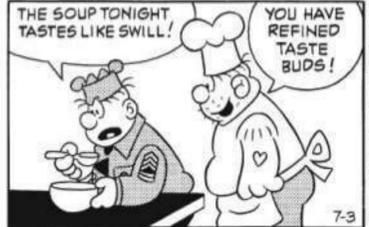
SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS
 1 Skunk
 4 Ape
 7 Lewd
 8 Assorted
 9 Steak tartare

DOWN
 11 Steps
 12 Undress
 13 Knackered
 14 Axs
 15 Strut
 16 Decree
 19 Appen-idge

12 Errata
 14 Twisted
 16 Hyena
 17 Straw
 19 Elf

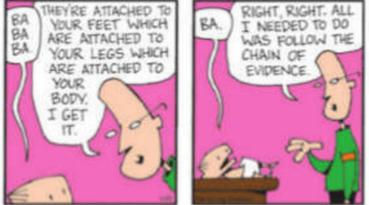
BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovalski



NEED TO KNOW

Ambulance
 FD Block Association (Amb) 9830452536, 9830181286
 Happy Calcuttans 24400160
 City Point Nurses Centre 2567-4113, 9831142623
 People's Relief Committee 2280-4943/9444

24 hrs Medical Oxygen Delivery
 BOC India Ltd. 9831277777

Blood Banks
 Ashok Laboratory 24720333
 Central Blood Bank 23510619

Life Care 2284-6940
 Peoples Blood Bank 2455-5164/5557
 RK Mission Seva Pratishthan 2475-3636/39

Police/Fire
 Lalbazar (Police Control Room) 22143230
 S. P. (North 24-Pgns) 25423005
 S. P. (South 24-Pgns) 2479-3333/1311
 Bhawani Bhawan 24791761/9, 24791933
 Fire Service Station Salt Lake: 2357-5293;

Howrah 2666-8111; Behala 2497-6285

Civic Services
 Kolkata Municipal Corporation: 2286-1000
 Water: 2543-1602

Calcutta Telephones
 Changed Number Announcement 1951,1952,1953

Taxi Refusal
 SMS 575756: Complaint and registration

Police Toll Free No. 1073
 Transport Deptt. No. 6451-6718

CESC Fault Reporting
 1912 and 4403-1912

Trains
 Howrah Station Old Complex 1331/1332 (Auto Telephone Numbers), 1310, 2638
 7412/3542/2581 (manual).
 Sealdah: 2350-3535/3537
 Shalimar Station: 2668-1121,
 Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway: 139.

SCRABBLE BRAND



PAR SCORE 100-110
 by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
 TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

LETTERS
 E T A M I N S
 N E V A T I O N
 O V A T I O N
 A S S U A G E

LETTER VALUES
 1 point: E, T, A, M, I, N, S
 4 points: N, E, V, A, T, I, O, N
 4 points: O, V, A, T, I, O, N
 4 points: A, S, S, U, A, G, E

PAR SCORE 100-110
 AKA'S TOTAL: 240

INSTRUCTIONS
 Make a 2 to 4 letter word from the letters in each row, using scoring directions at right. Blank used no point value. All valid words are in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary/Merriam-Webster and OWS Official Scrabble Words/Chambers. AKA's solution: 10/20/12

SUDOKU



Difficulty Level *****

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that no row, no column and no 3x3 box contains the same number. The difficulty level increases through the week.

Addressing perennial flood menace in Assam

NAVA THAKURIA

During our school days, a common essay was memorised by most of the students to write in the examination, and it was related to the perennial floods in Assam. Shockingly, even after four decades, the situation remains almost the same, and the annual natural disaster continues to create havoc among the people of Assam and its neighbouring localities, where hundreds of thousands of residents lose seasonal crops, private and public properties, and often their family members. Sometimes, river bank erosion takes away their cultivable land, making them more vulnerable to the annual crisis. Thousands of families also face permanent displacement from their ancestors' villages, which virtually makes them people from nowhere. In the post-flood period too, various vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria strike the villagers and put them in more trouble.

Mitigating a natural disaster often emerges as a major challenge for the human race, and the perennial flood in Assam continues to be a matter of serious concern for the region and the nation as a whole. Often, government schemes are announced and also implemented accordingly, but that hardly works. Once we talked about controlling the flood (so the flood control department existed), and now we admit we have to adopt ways to live with the flood. Strict measures to prevent erosion, even after the inundation of vast areas, may emerge as a focal point for discussion and the formulation of pragmatic policies. Continuous factual reporting by the mainstream media can enhance government agencies ability to help the affected villagers get adequate relief and rehabilitation

on time. After all, flooding not only affects people economically, but it can change the course of their lives for many families forever.

The second wave of floods, embracing the incessant rainfall, hit over 2.7 million people (out of 33 million population) in 30 districts of Assam, where more than 3,500 villages were submerged by the flood water for many days. Thousands of families in the districts of Dhubri, Cachar, Golaghat, Darrang, Goalpara, Lakhimpur, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Biswanath, Charaideo, Chirang, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Kamrup & Kamrup (metropolitan), Karbi Anglong, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Kokrajhar, Majuli, Morigaon, Nagaon, Hojai, Nalbari, Sivasagar, Sonitpur, Tamulpur, Tinsukia, Udalguri, etc. had taken shelter in 700 relief camps set up by the administration.

According to the state disaster management authority, the deluge claimed nearly 100 lives across Assam. The muddy flood water from Brahmaputra, Barak, Kushiyara, Subansiri, Burhi Dihing, Dikhou, Disang, Dhanisiri, Jia-Bharali, Puthimari, Kopili, Beki, Dhaleswari, Pagladiya, Burhadiya, etc. rivers inundated more than 63,000 hectares of crop area, and it devastated 10,50,000 domestic animals and poultry in the state. The disaster also damaged a number of embankments, roads, bridges, buildings, and other infrastructure.

Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in central India also went under flood water from the swollen Brahmaputra River, and no less than 174 wild animals, including 10 rhinos and 144 deer, died due to drowning and other causes. The park authority also successfully rescued 133 animals, including two rhino calves, during the flood, and 116 animals were already



released after necessary treatments. The field director, Sonali Ghosh, informed the media that most of the forest camps (out of 233) inside the park went under flood water for many days.

The safe habitat for the largest population of single-horn rhinoceros in the world eventually experiences flooding every year, and as the core 430-square-kilometre area goes under the water, the animals take refuge in the highlands erected inside it. Many animals also crossed National Highway 715 on its southern border to climb the hilly areas of Karbi Anglong. While crossing the highway, some precious animals are killed by the speeding vehicles, and hence the authorities instruct the drivers to maintain the safe speed limit to avoid any unwanted incidents.

Often, the vehicles are escorted by forest officials while crossing the park

to prevent accidents with the fleeing animals. The Unesco World Heritage Site, which gives shelter to more than 2,600 one-horned rhinos along with Asiatic elephants, water buffalo, tigers, etc., faced a major flood in 2017, when over 350 animals died due to drowning and colliding with moving vehicles on the highway. Manas National Park and Orang National Park also faced the fury of the flood, even though no major wildlife destruction was reported from those forest reserves.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured full cooperation with the state government to deal with the natural disaster. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also called Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to reassure all possible support from the Centre. Union ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Pabitra Margherita also assessed the flood situation in various parts of Assam and assured the people that

both the governments in New Delhi and Dispur are looking for a permanent solution to the region's recurring flood problem. Assam governor Gulab Chand Kataria also visited some flood-ridden areas and took stock of the situation.

CM Sarma personally visited a number of flood-devastated areas to review the ground situation and interact with the displaced families. He also directed the state ministers, legislators, and concerned officials to monitor the situation closely and take necessary actions as and when needed. State ministers Pijush Hazarika, Bimal Bora, Ranaj Pegu, Jayanta Mallaburuah, Jogen Mahan, Atul Bora, Keshav Shah also called Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to reassure all possible support from the Centre. Union ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Pabitra Margherita also assessed the flood situation in various parts of Assam and assured the people that

livestock feed, etc. to address the post-flood diseases.

A large part of Guwahati, precisely the bowl-shaped lowland, also witnessed flash floods for several days. Continued rescue operations were done by the National Disaster Response Force, the State Disaster Response Force, and army personnel in various parts of the state. Amidst the chaos, a minor boy was swept away in the Bamunimaidan area of Guwahati by the current of flood water, and his body was recovered three days later from a drain in the Rajgarh locality. The victim, identified as Avinash Sarkar (8), was returning home to Noonmati locality with his father during the evening hours amidst rains when he fell on a roadside drain. His parents identified the body at the Gauhati Medical College Hospital mortuary, and the last rites were performed accordingly.

Besides Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram experienced relentless rains and subsequent floods. Heavy rains swollen the Manipur rivers like Imphal, Thoubal, Nambul, Iril, etc. and submerged a large area of arable land and residential localities. Needless to mention, even if the flood cannot be mitigated fully, the devastating impact can be minimised with proper and timely policies. New Delhi should discuss with upper-riparian countries like Bhutan and Tibet (China) receiving timely alerts about unusually high rainfall and other hydroelectric activities in their places. It's also time for the government to redefine the flood adaptation measures so that they can also bring some positive outcomes for the common people in the coming days.

The writer is a Guwahati-based special representative of The Statesman

Growing up in the north-east: A whimsical journey through childhood

SHREYASH NAIR

Beginning from the chicken's neck and extending east till Arunachal Pradesh in the east, a piece of heaven is located in the north-east of India. This part of India, with its lush green forests, picturesque valleys and magnificent mountains, is always ready to cast a spell on you. Though I was born in Guwahati, I remained blissfully unaware of the enthralling culture and landscape of the north-east. This apathy melted away only a decade later, after my arrival on this planet, when my family came to know that we would soon be leaving for Manipur's capital, Imphal. My father, who works with the Central government, had been posted to Digaru in Assam before. But since I was born there, I was too young to have the seeds of recollection sown in me about that place.

At first, going to Manipur seemed mundane, but this was soon to be proven wrong. On the flight to Manipur, as the pilot skillfully manoeuvred the big bird in the skies to land, the mystique and majestic Loktak Lake caught our eye. As the plane prepared to land, we could see the scattered floating island called Phumdis. This was only one of the many surprises waiting for us in this part of the country. After experiencing the dry and humid climate of mainland India for quite some

time, the tranquil and cool weather was something I was overjoyed to soak in. The drive from the airport to our new house was again something truly remarkable. I devoured everything with my eyes. It was the first time I saw ducks playing mischievously in green water, vast tracts of vegetation and rice fields, and the majestic mountains at the horizon.

There at our new house, I was greeted by hens and proud roosters, which was followed by the arrival of a duck duo. Throughout my stay in Manipur, the chickens and the ducks were my inseparable companions. The biggest of all the ducks was named Donald. He was the leader of the pack and was frequently engaged in confused struggles with the chickens. The chickens and the ducks fought like gladiators for their share of rice. A year later, to the surprise of the chickens and the ducks, an exotic turkey trio arrived. The turkeys were unlike anything I had ever seen. During mealtime, the turkeys were the fastest at gobbling up rice, ready to fight valiantly for each grain. All this hurried munching and chomping made those three birds the largest of all the birds in our house. As for Donald, he was now faced with stiff competition from three monstrous oddities. Another characteristic of the turkeys was their hyperactivity. They would respond to the bell of my cycle with a bizarre trumpet-like sound and play football with me, hitting the ball with the force of their whole body. To exhibit their superiority

and power over the other members of the feathered household, they began toppling pots, stealing food, and refusing to go inside the coop during the night. Unfortunately for Donald, he was unable to overthrow the oppressive 'turkey regime'. Keeping the turkeys as permanent guests was obviously not sustainable. The turkeys were soon taken by a wildlife protection organisation. Donald had recaptured his monopoly over his once-lost power.

Manipuri food was another thing that came as a revelation to me. During one of the feasts held at the campus, I took a bite out of what seemed to me to be a chutney. This, I came to know, was a delicacy named 'eromba'. As I placed some of the eromba in my mouth, I felt something hard on my palate, which was different from the otherwise soft texture of the eromba. I took the mysterious entity out of the palm of my hand and suddenly found myself looking at a small fish's head, threat-

ening to come alive at any moment. Over time, I became accustomed to the food of Manipur. Yet another thing about the north-east is its love for music and sports. My parents figured that this was a golden opportunity for me to learn music. On the contrary, I was reluctant to go. Sliding my fingers over sharp metal strings was not something I was excited to do. After being faced with some mild rebuke, it was finally decided that I would go accompanied by my father's old guitar.

To cut a long story short, it has been six years since that day, and I still play the guitar each and every day. Inside the campus of the school was a badminton court. In the beginning, I could barely hold the racket properly. Nevertheless, my friends and I began playing regularly every evening. Slowly, we improved at the game, and soon it became an obsession. It was uncomfortable and irritating to stay at home during the evening. During rainy days, we would think of ways to reach the court. But badminton was not the only thing that we

mud, passing the ball with our legs to each other. Then I would come back home and take a soothing bath in warm water. Each day was the same. I would hastily finish my lunch by two in the afternoon, grab my bicycle, and be out for the day till seven or eight in the evening. But our time in Manipur was limited.

After three years in Manipur, it was time to go to another north-eastern state capital, Shillong. During our early days in Shillong, I would spend most of the time reading. Eventually, we decided to go and try out tourist hotspots like Cherrapunji and Dawki. All these destinations were truly remarkable. Even the route and journey to these places are extraordinary. You get to see high peaks and deep valleys, along with clouds that look as if they fell from the sky. In contrast to these places, here in the heart of Shillong was the Police Bazaar, overflowing with a sea of people. I was amazed when I saw this place for the first time. Wherever your eyes travel, there are vendors and shops. There are numerous small lanes and streets and surprises at each turn. Whatever you want and whatever you need, you will be able to get here. I also went on a school trip to the Mawphlang sacred forest, where you are not allowed to take anything from the forest. When we came outside the forest, we were greeted by a light drizzle—not something to panic about. Sometime later, while I was running to get my spot on a group photo, I overlooked the slippery soil. And suddenly I found myself mud-clad top to bottom with mud in my blazer, and my white shirt turned brown—definitely something to worry about. Another place that is a must for everyone to go to is Laitlum Canyon. When you reach there, you are received by clouds. You can see the magnificence of the deep valley and the cloud-clad mountains. While I have never set foot outside India, I reckon why they call Meghalaya the Abode of Clouds, or indeed the Scotland of the East. For a brief period of time in Shillong, I devoted much of my time to table tennis. Hitting a small ball with a small racket was very pleasurable to me. So much so that I joined a coaching academy at the Laban Sports Club in Shillong. For the state championship, the members of our academy had to go to Tura in Garo Hills. This was also the first time that I was on my own, going to another place without my parents. We left early in the morning from our academy. We travelled in an overcrowded bus with the

bags and suitcases thrown in the back, and by the time it was afternoon when we were near Assam's border, the sun was beating down mercilessly. Coming from Shillong, I was wearing the thickest jacket I could find in my cupboard. This journey made me realise that I was indeed living in a paradise in Shillong.

And then suddenly, another twist in the journey occurred as the bus's engine failed. Thus, we found ourselves stuck in the middle of nowhere. As one after the other, the elders put their engineering skills to the test, the students inside, were being cooked. We remained in this position for around two hours. And then, after much contemplation and debate, it was decided that another bus would be called. We could finally escape the scorching sun. At around three, we stopped at one of the many roadside dhabs. We were taking the route to Tura via Assam. The dhaba was full, and we had to share tables with strangers. If this was not enough, we had to see the people in front of us gobbling their food, spreading the rice from their plate in each direction. The food there did not win my heart, but the oil in it was certainly capable of stopping it. We finally reached our destination at night, where we stayed in a hostel. The next day, the only thing left to do was to reach the stadium. For this, we had to accomplish the mammoth task of booking an autorickshaw and venturing into it. None of us were experienced hagglers. Nevertheless, we stopped an auto, stuffed ourselves in it, and started for the stadium. Through the application of collective bargaining, we could negotiate a lower price and get an elephantine profit of 5 rupees.

During our stay in Shillong, we also went to Nagaland during the Hornbill festival and were pleasantly taken back by the vibrant colours, mouth-watering food, and hospitable people. Another time, we also went to my birthplace, Digaru, from where we travelled to Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, where we rode the slow-moving broad back of an elephant named Migoras and saw majestic rhinos from a very close range. For the past few months, I have been preparing for my All India Secondary Board Examinations. But now that they are over, I have ample time to write what you are reading now. And I am glad that you have read to the end. Take it from me: as someone who has been born here in the North East and spent most of time on earth in this beautiful paradise, the valiant tribes, the hospitable people, the magnificent views, the landscape, a kaleidoscope of music and vibrant culture beckon you, always ready to cast a spell on you.

The writer is an eleventh-standard student at Army Public School, Shillong



'MANPREET SINGH LOVES PLAYING FOR THE NATION'

Indian hockey player Manpreet Singh's wife Illi Saddique pulled back the curtain on the life of the charismatic midfielder, delving into the highs and lows of his career. "Delighted. We are super proud, super excited, and super stoked to see him play his fourth Olympics. Seeing him do what he loves and what he is meant to do makes the family very happy and delighted. When I speak to his mother, we always say that the journey from playing his first game, his first tournament, to going on to play his fourth Olympics is something we never imagined. But he keeps proving himself, and he loves playing for the nation," Illi said in the latest episode of 'Hockey Te Charcha, Familia,' a unique series launched by hockey India ahead of the Olympic Games.



For more updates www.thestatesman.com

5th T20I: India beat Zimbabwe by 42 runs to secure T20I series 4-1

A fine four-wicket spell by Mukesh Kumar and half-century by Sanju Samson were the highlights

AGENCIES

HARARE, 14 JULY

A fine four-wicket spell by Mukesh Kumar and half-century by Sanju Samson were the highlights as India defeated Zimbabwe by 42 runs in the fifth and final T20I at Harare to secure the series on Sunday. India has won the series 4-1.

In the run chase of 168 runs, India was off to a fine start as pacer Mukesh Kumar clean bowled Wessly Madhevera for a duck. Zimbabwe was 1/1 in 0.3 overs.

Brian Bennett and Tadinawanashe Marumani tried to put India under pressure, getting three boundaries in Tushar Deshpande's over. However, before the threat could increase, Mukesh ended it, with the ball getting top edge of Bennett's bat and reaching Shivam Dube at third man. Bennett was gone for 10 in eight balls. Zimbabwe was 15/2 in 2.3 overs.

In the later half of the powerplay, Marumani joined with Dion Myers and targeted Mukesh and spinner Ravi Bishnoi. Zimbabwe ended the powerplay on high, with three boundaries against Bishnoi and 16 runs from the over. At the end of six overs, Zimbabwe was 47/2, with Marumani (22*) and Myers (12*) unbeaten.

Zimbabwe reached the



50-run mark in 6.4 overs.

The 44-run stand between Marumani and Myers ended with Washington Sundar trapping Marumani leg-before-wicket for 27 in 24 balls, with five fours. Zimbabwe was 59/3 in 8.2 overs.

Skipper Sikandar Raza was at the crease and halfway through the innings, Zimbabwe was 69/3, with Raza (2*) and Myers (25*) unbeaten.

The partnership between Myers and Raza was yet another short one, as Dube got Myers' wicket with assistance from Abhishek Sharma for 34 in 32 balls, with four boundaries and a six. Zimbabwe was 85/4 in 12.4 overs. Dube just could not be kept

out of action as he ran out Raza for just eight and got the wicket of Jonathan Campbell for four runs in quick succession, reducing Zimbabwe to 90/6 in 14.4 overs.

The all-rounders were enjoying a feast on a tough Harare surface as Abhishek Sharma cleaned up wicket-keeper-batter Clive Madande for just one run, with Sanju Samson taking a fine catch. Zimbabwe was 94/7 in 15.1 overs.

Faraz Akram and Brandon Mavuta helped Zimbabwe put up some fight, helping them cross the 100-run mark in 16.2 overs. Akram targeted Tushar Deshpande with some fine hits. Deshpande got Mavuta for just four runs. Zimbabwe was 120/8 in 17.5 overs.

In the penultimate over, Mukesh got a dangerous Faraz caught behind by Samson for 27 in 13 balls, essentially sealing the game. Zimbabwe was 123/9 in 18.2 overs. He also removed Richard Ngarva for a duck, getting his fourth wicket. Zimbabwe was all out for 125 in 18.3 overs, losing by 42 runs.

Mukesh (4/22) was the pick of the bowlers for India. Dube also delivered a fine spell of 2/25. Abhishek, Washington and Tushar also got a wicket each.

Earlier, a fine half-century by Sanju Samson and a

quickfire cameo by Shivam Dube powered India to a modest 167/6 in their 20 overs in the fifth and final T20I of the series against Zimbabwe at Harare on Sunday. India needs to defend 168 runs in order to win the series 4-1.

Abhishek Sharma joined the skipper, Shubman Gill, at the crease. The pair eased off some pressure by taking down Faraz Akram with two fours and a six in the third over. But in the next over, pacer Blessing Muzarabani removed Abhishek for 14 in 11 balls, with a four and six.

Wicketkeeper Clive Madande took a fine catch. India was 38/2 in 3.5 overs.

In the very next over, India landed in a big trouble as skipper Gill lost his wicket to Richard Ngarva for 13 in 14 balls, with Raza plucking a catch at mid-on. India was 40/3 in five overs. At the end of six overs of powerplay, India was 44/3, with Sanju Samson (3*) and Riyan Parag (1*) unbeaten.

Samson-Parag, teammates from Rajasthan Royals (RR) in the Indian Premier League (IPL), continued with their fine chemistry displayed in the league, this time in Indian colours.

They took India to the halfway point of the inning without much attacking, besides a six each from both.

At the end of 10 overs, India was 75/3, with Samson (19*) and Parag (14*) unbeaten.

In the 12th over, Samson relieved some pressure by hitting Brandon Mavuta for two sixes and getting 15 runs off the over. The duo stitched their half-century partnership in 40 balls.

India reached the 100-run mark in 12.4 overs.

Mavuta got the scalp of Parag for 22 in 24 balls, with a six after the batter mistimed a slog which landed in the hands of Ngarva at long-off. The 65-run partnership was over. India was 105/3 in 14.2 overs.

At the end of 15 overs, India was 113/4, with Shivam Dube (8*) and Samson (40*) unbeaten.

Samson reached his second T20I half-century in 39 balls, with four sixes.

At the start of final over, Dube was run out by Raza and Faraz for a 12-ball 26, with two fours and two sixes. India was 153/6 in 19.1 overs. However, Rinku was able to end India's inning on a high with six and four by leg bytes on the final two balls. India ended their innings at 167/6, with Rinku (11*) and Washington Sundar (1*) unbeaten.

Muzarabani (2/19) was the pick of the bowlers for Zimbabwe. Ngarva, Raza, and Mavuta also got a wicket each.



Saneeth, Tasnim clinch singles titles in VV Natu Memorial tournament

AGENCIES

PUNE, 14 JULY



Karnataka's Saneeth DS and Gujarat's Tasnim Mir registered comfortable victories over their respective opponents to clinch the men's and women's singles titles in the VV Natu Memorial All India Senior Ranking badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Third seed Saneeth ended the dream run of qualifier Tushar Suveer 21-15, 21-12 in a 44-minute clash of two Karnataka players in the men's final after Tasnim had got the better of Devika, who won the last ranking meet in Bengaluru, 21-16, 21-13.

While the youngsters ruled the singles categories, the experienced Aarthi Sara Sunil showed that she was still a force to reckon with as she teamed up with VS Varshini to clinch the women's doubles crown.

The top seeds came from a game down to beat Karnataka's former national champions Shikha Gautam and Ashwini Bhat K 17-21, 22-20, 21-18 in 53 minutes.

2nd Hockey India Sub Junior Men & Women North Zone Championship set to begin in UP

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The 2nd Hockey India Sub Junior Men and Women North Zone Championship 2024 is set to start in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, on July 15. The finals will take place on July 22.

The member units participating in the 2nd Hockey India Sub Junior Men North Zone Championship 2024 are Hockey Haryana, Hockey Chandigarh, and Hockey Uttarakhand in Pool A, while Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Hockey Punjab, Delhi Hockey, and Hockey Jammu and Kashmir are in Pool B, as per an official release by Hockey India.

Meanwhile, the member units participating in the 2nd Hockey India Sub Junior Women North Zone Championship 2024 are Hockey Haryana, Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Hockey Punjab, Hockey Himachal, Hockey Chandigarh, and Hockey Uttarakhand.

Hockey Punjab and Hockey Jammu and Kashmir will get the event underway in the Sub Junior Men's category in Uttar Pradesh tomorrow, followed by matches between



Uttar Pradesh Hockey and Delhi Hockey. In the Sub Junior Women's category, Hockey Haryana will face Hockey Chandigarh, followed by a clash between Hockey Punjab and Hockey Himachal. The last match of the day will see Uttar Pradesh Hockey play against Hockey Uttarakhand.

"Uttar Pradesh has a rich history of hockey. I am sure that through this Championship, we will see exciting action and impressive performances by our young players. I am looking forward to the matches," said Hockey

India President Dilip Tirkey said as quoted by the release.

Hockey India Secretary General Bhola Nath Singh said, "The 2nd Hockey India Sub Junior Men and Women North Zone Championship 2024 is a platform for all the young players to showcase their skills and impress the selectors.

Through this, we aim to identify players and give them proper guidance and support. I would like to wish all the teams participating the best of luck and hope to see some exciting matches in the tournament."

Former Pakistan cricketer Billy Ibadulla passes away at 88

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Former Pakistan all-rounder Billy Ibadulla passed away on Friday at the age of 88. The former cricketer played four Tests between 1964 and 1967 and was the first Pakistan batter to score a century on his Test debut.

He made his Test debut in 1964 against Australia in Karachi and played a 166-run knock in the first inning.

Ibadulla was also part of a 249-run opening partnership with his fellow debutant and wicketkeeper, Abdul Kadir.

It remains the highest partnership between two debutants for any wicket in Test cricket.

Ibadulla appeared in only three more Tests, where his best score was 32. He bagged one wicket with his offbreak.

He was more prolific in first-class cricket, scoring 17,078 runs at 27.28 and picking up 462 wickets at 30.96.

Of his 417 first-class outings, 377 were for Warwickshire, for whom he played for more than a decade.

India Champions defeat Pakistan Champions to clinch World Championship of Legends 2024

AGENCIES

EDGBASTON, 14 JULY

In a pulsating finale of the World Championship of Legends 2024, India Champions emerged victorious by defeating arch-rivals Pakistan Champions by five wickets here at Edgbaston on Saturday (July 13).

The Yuvraj Singh-led side showcased their dominance in the competition and secured the coveted title in a match that went down to the wire as two teams fought hard.

Pakistan Champions, opting to bat first after winning the toss, posted a competitive total of 156 for 6 in their 20 overs.

Kamran Akmal (24 off 19) and Maqsood (21 off 12) gave



the team a solid start, but regular wickets kept the scoring in check.

The standout performer was Shoaib Malik, who scored a crucial 41 off 23 balls, anchoring the innings. Captain Younis Khan failed to make a mark as he was clean bowled by Irfan Pathan for 7. The middle-order collapsed and Misbah-ul-Haq was retired hurt after a brisk 18, late contributions from Sohail Tanvir (19* off 9)

ensured Pakistan reached a respectable score. Indian bowlers, led by Anureet Singh who clinched three wickets with support from Vinay Kumar, Pawan Negi and Irfan Pathan (one wicket each) were instrumental in containing Pakistan's batting lineup.

In response, India Champions started their run chase with intent. Despite losing Robin Uthappa (10) early, Ambati Rayudu's explosive 50 off 30 balls set the foundation for the chase for the Men in Blue.

Suresh Raina too departed cheaply for 4 in the same over, helping Pakistan make a comeback. But a strong partnership between Rayudu and Gurkeerat Singh Maan (34 off 33)

kept India on track.

Rayudu and Mann also departed in a space of 10 runs but the momentum stayed firmly in India's favour with Yusuf Pathan's blistering 30 off 16 balls before the latter was dismissed in the penultimate over.

With captain Yuvraj Singh (15*) and Irfan Pathan (5*) at the crease, India sealed the win, finishing at 159 for 5 in 19.1 overs, much to the delight of their fans.

Pakistan's bowlers, despite their best efforts, couldn't halt India's march towards the target. Aamer Yamin was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3-0-29-2, supported by Sohail Tanvir and Sohail Khan, who took one wicket each.



THE STATESMAN AWARDS FOR RURAL REPORTING

In 1973; The Statesman instituted three prizes for excellence in rural reporting to encourage a better awareness of the social, political and economic challenges taking place in our villages

Three prizes are now ₹ 15,000 ; ₹ 10,000 and ₹ 7,500

We invite journalists to send in their investigative articles and reports concerning rural India, in English or any regional language (with or without translations into English), and published during 2023 in any newspaper or periodical in the country. Entries will be evaluated on the criteria of social relevance, factual accuracy, professional dedication and stylistic merit.

The competition is open to Indian journalists. All entries should be marked "Rural Reporting" and sent in the form of original clippings (photocopies will not be accepted) clearly showing the date and name of the publication to the address given below.



THE CUSHROW IRANI PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

The C R Irani Foundation, a not-for-profit body involved in improvement of journalistic standards, in 2011 set up an annual prize of ₹ 25,000 for environmental reporting. We invite journalists to send in their investigative articles and reports concerning the environment in English or any regional language (with or without translations in English), and published during 2023 in any newspaper or periodical in the country. Entries will be on the basis of content, accuracy, professional standards and quality of research. The competition is open to Indian journalists. All entries should be marked "Environmental Reporting" and sent in the form of original clippings (photocopies will not be accepted) clearly showing the date and name of the publication to the address given below.



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IMPORTANT

Journalists wishing to submit the same report(s) for both prizes are requested to send separate entries. Last Date for the 2023 awards is 10 August 2024

For any query please write to prasantob57@gmail.com