



'LET'S UPHOLD PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE, DISCUSSION, DEBATE'

SENSEX 80,502.08

BIDEN STAFF KNEW OF HIS DECISION ONE MINUTE BEFORE THE PUBLIC DID

P5

SC CONFIRMS BAIL OF ASHISH MISHRA

P9

FITNESS CONCERNS WORKED AGAINST PANDYA

P10

P12



BRENT CRUDE (IN \$) 79.59

WEATHER

Light to moderate Rain / thundershower very likely to occur. Maximum & Minimum Temperature most likely to be around 31°C & 27°C respectively.

RAINFALL: 034.2 mm
RELATIVE HUMIDITY
Max. 97% Min. 88%
TEMPERATURE
Max: 30.8 °C (-1.2) Min: 26.5 °C
SUN RISES 05:04 hrs
SUN SETS 18:22 hrs
MOON RISES 19:27 hrs
MOON SETS 05:39 hrs
New Moon on 04 August

THUMBNAILS



King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck receives a warm welcome on his arrival at Vadodra Airport, on Monday.

INS Brahmaputra severely damaged in fire: An Indian Navy warship which was undergoing maintenance at the naval dockyard in Mumbai caught fire today. The navy said a junior sailor is missing and rescue teams are looking for him. All other personnel have been accounted for, the navy said.

Economy likely to grow at 6.5-7 per cent in FY25

Govt needs to generate nearly 78.5 lakh jobs annually to cater the rising workforce

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

The Economic Survey 2023-24 tabled by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament on Monday said the Indian economy is on a strong wicket and stable footing, demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges.

"High economic growth in FY24 came on the heels of growth rates of 9.7% and 7%, in the previous two financial years."

The Survey said that the headline inflation rate is largely under control, although the inflation rate of some specific food items is elevated. The trade deficit was lower in FY24 than in FY23, and the current account deficit for the year is around 0.7% of GDP.

However, it said that the Indian economy needs to generate an average of nearly 78.5 lakh jobs annually until 2030 in the non-farm sector to cater to the rising workforce.

"For the recovery to be sustained, there has to be heavy lifting on the domestic front because the environment has become extraordinarily difficult to reach agreements on key global issues such as trade, investment and cli-



The Economic Survey highlights the prevailing strengths of our economy and also showcases the outcomes of the various reforms our Government has brought. It also identifies areas for further growth and progress as we move towards building a Viksit Bharat.

NARENDRA MODI
PRIME MINISTER



mate," the Survey read.

"Public investment has sustained capital formation in the last several years even as the private sector shed its balance sheet blues and began investing in FY22. Now, it has to receive the baton from the public sector and sustain the investment momentum in the economy. The signs are encouraging," said the Survey.

The Economic Survey 2023-24 said that the inflationary pressures stoked by global troubles, supply chain disruptions, and vagaries of monsoons have been deftly managed by administrative and monetary policy responses. As a result, after averaging 6.7% in FY23,

retail inflation declined to 5.4% in FY24.

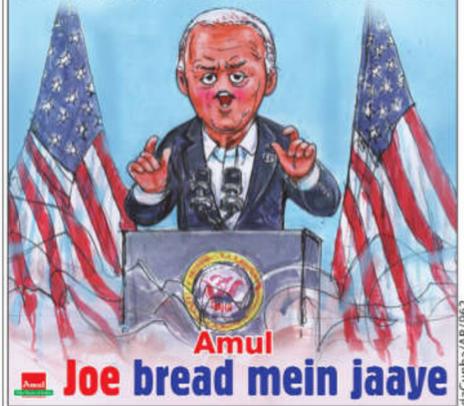
It said the decrease in retail inflation in FY24 was driven by a fall in core inflation - both goods and services. Core services inflation eased to a nine-year low in FY24; at the same time, core goods inflation also declined to a four-year low.

Food inflation has been a global concern over the past two years. Within India, the agriculture sector faced challenges due to extreme weather events, depleted reservoirs, and crop damage, which impacted farm output and food prices. Consequently, food inflation stood at 6.6 per cent in

FY23 and increased to 7.5 per cent in FY24, according to the Survey.

Going forward, the RBI projects inflation to fall to 4.5 per cent in FY25 and 4.1 per cent in FY26, assuming normal monsoon and no external or policy shocks. Similarly, the IMF forecasts inflation of 4.6 per cent in 2024 and 4.2 per cent in 2025 for India, it added. The fiscal balances of the general government have improved progressively despite expansionary public investment. Tax compliance gains driven by procedural reforms, expenditure restraint, and increasing digitalisation helped India achieve this fine balance.

Bidai for Biden



Amul Joe bread mein jaaye

Mr Pradhan said it was unfortunate Mr Gandhi had said that the country's examination system is not trustworthy, "I condemn it." The UPA government, he said, had brought three Bills including the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Examination Bill in 2010 to reform the educational system and the Bills were deferred.

Opp demands Pradhan's resignation over NEET, stages walk-out

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

As Parliament commenced its monsoon session on Monday, the Opposition clashed with the government on the NEET examination paper leak issue in the Lok Sabha and staged a walk-out over Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's replies during the Question Hour.

Reacting to the Minister's statements, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi said it is obvious to the whole country there is a serious problem in the examination system; not just in NEET, but in all major examinations. The Minister does not seem to appreciate the current crisis, he said.

Millions of students are convinced the Indian examination system was not trustworthy, he said. "This is what is at stake here. Millions believe that if you are rich you can buy the system. This is a systemic issue, and what exactly is the government doing to fix the issue at the systemic level," he said.

Mr Pradhan said it was unfortunate Mr Gandhi had said that the country's examination system is not trustworthy, "I condemn it." The UPA government, he said, had brought three Bills including the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Examination Bill in 2010 to reform the educational system and the Bills were deferred.

The NDA government, he said, has shown courage to get a Bill enacted on the unfair practices issue. The UPA government had brought the Bill to reform the examination system, and why was it withdrawn. Was it done under pressure from private institutions, he asked.

The entire Opposition, dissatisfied with the Education Minister's answers, walked out of the House.

SC stays nameplate orders for eateries issued by UP, Uttarakhand state govts

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday by an interim order stalled the enforcing of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh government's orders asking the owners of the shops selling eateries, all along the Kanwar Yatra route, to display the names of the owners of such shops including those operating from pavements.

Issuing notice to the Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh governments where Kanwar Yatra takes place, a bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice S.V.N. Bhatti said that police cannot force shopkeepers to display their names and they can only be asked to display food items being sold.

"Until the returnable date, having regard to the discussion, we deem it appropriate to pass an interim order prohibiting the enforcement of the above directives. In other words, the food sellers... hawk-



names outside shops during the Kanwar Yatra season. Police had said that the decision was in the interest of law and order.

As the hearing started, the bench asked whether any formal order had been passed to enforce such direction.

Senior advocate Chandur Uday Singh, appearing for the Association for Protection of Civil Rights, said that while the authorities were claiming it was being voluntarily done, the directive was being enforced.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who was representing Mahua Moitra, Kanwar Yatras have been happening for decades and people of all religions including Muslims, Christians and Buddhists help them on their way. The top court was moved by the petitions including Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra, Association for Protection of Civil Rights, and Delhi University Professor Apoorvanand along with senior journalist and activist Aakar Patel.

The Centre on Monday virtually ruled out giving special status to Bihar which is one of the key demands of the Janata Dal (United) which is a key constituent of the NDA government, drawing sharp reaction from the RJD which has demanded the resignation of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over the issue.

The RJD in a post on X in Hindi, slammed the BJP-JD(U) alliance and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar have given the Bihar 'special state' toy.

It further said that Nitish Kumar bowed down to the BJP and lowered demand from special state to special package but that was also refused.

The RJD has also demanded that Bihar CM Nitish Kumar failing to get special category status.

Earlier, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Minister of

Govt not considering granting special status to Bihar; RJD demands Nitish's resignation

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said the Special Category Status for plan assistance was granted in the past by the National Development Council (NDC) to some states that were characterised by a number of features necessitating special consideration.

These features included: hilly and difficult terrain; low population density and/or sizeable share of population; strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries; economic and infrastructural backwardness; and non viable nature of state finances.

The decision was taken based on an integrated consideration of the factors mentioned above and the peculiar situation of a state.

"Earlier, the request of Bihar for Special Category Status was considered by an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) which submitted its Report on 30 March, 2012. The IMG came to the finding that based on existing NDC criteria, the

case for Special Category Status for Bihar is not made out," Mr Chaudhary said.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Giriraj Singh said the Government has not dismissed the request.

Other formats. "I think they've shown what they can deliver in the big stage, whether it was the T20 World Cup or 50-over World Cup. One thing I can be very clear of, both those guys have a lot of cricket left in them. And more importantly with Champions Trophy and a big tour of Australia coming up, there won't be any shortage of motivation. If they can keep their fitness, the 2027 World Cup as well," Gambhir said.

Confirming the appointments of Abhishek Nayyar and Dutchman Ryan Ten Doeschate as assistant coaches, Gambhir said the rest of the support staff will be finalised after the Sri Lanka tour. Meanwhile, T Dilip (fielding coach) and Sairaj Bahutule (interim bowling coach) have accompanied the team.

Trust, freedom, success: Gambhir reiterates philosophy for 'happy dressing room'

TRIDIB BAPARNASH
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

Two-time World Cup-winning former India opener Gautam Gambhir on Monday acknowledged that he has "big shoes to fill" as he readies himself for a new role as the head coach of a highly successful Indian team that made the finals of a world event in each of the three formats before winning the T20 crown under his predecessor Rahul Dravid.

Addressing the media for the first time after assuming charge, Gambhir reiterated his mantra of a "happy dressing room" by backing his players and giving them the "freedom" as he believes that the "best relationship is one built on trust."

"It is very simple. It is



important to give players freedom - that's what I believe in - and not have a relationship of a head coach and a player. The best relationship is one built on trust. The most important thing is they'll always have my backing. I don't complicate too many things. I am taking over a very, very successful team - India are T20

world champions, have been runners-up in the World Test Championship and the 50-overs World Cup," he said.

The forthcoming brief white-ball series against Sri Lanka, starting July 27, will be Gambhir's first assignment as a full time coach. He has previously served as a mentor in the Indian Premier League

(IPL), with both Lucknow Super Giants and the reigning champions Kolkata Knight Riders. Dismissing any pre-meditated timeline of the Test and ODI careers of India's most decorated duo of the current lot - Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, Gambhir said the veterans can be a possibility for the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Both Rohit and Kohli had announced their retirements from the T20 format after the triumphant World Cup campaign last month, and now with the shortest format behind them, the focus has shifted to their continuity in the other two formats. Stressing on expecting the duo to be available for matches in both formats going forward, Gambhir felt that both Rohit and Virat still have a lot to offer in the

Public Notice

Special Drive by the State Government

To ensure security of citizens, as per amended Motor Vehicles Rules, all vehicles registered in West Bengal now must have HSRP (High Security Registration Plate) fitted:

Registration No. of vehicles ending with	Last date to install HSRP
One & Two (1 & 2)	15.08.2024
Three & Four (3 & 4)	15.08.2024
Five & Six (5 & 6)	15.09.2024
Seven & Eight (7 & 8)	15.10.2024
Nine & Zero (9 & 0)	15.11.2024

Registered owners of vehicles are requested to contact -

1. Manufacturer / Dealer of concerned vehicles; or
2. Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturer (SIAM) [www.siam.in]; or
3. Concerned RTO/ARTO.



Transport Department, Government of West Bengal

Mamata set to meet Durga Puja organisers on Tuesday

There are 43,000 Durga Puja organizers across state, govt had given Rs 70,000 to each committee last year

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee will meet Durga Committee organizers at the Netaji Indoor Stadium tomorrow.

There are 43,000 Durga Puja organizers across the state and the state government had given Rs 70,000 to each Durga Puja committee last year.

Besides the chief minister and her cabinet colleagues, the state chief secretary, home secretary, commissioner of police and director general of police will attend the meeting. Senior officials of the fire and emergency services



department, Kolkata Municipal Corporation will attend the meeting.

In a bid to save Ganga from pollution, the idol structures are immediately lifted after immersion. The ghats, where immersions are done

are illuminated and the KMC provides facilities needed for smooth immersion.

Durga Puja has received the Intangible Heritage Tag by UNESCO.

Over the past few years, the state government has organ-

ized the Puja Carnival both in Kolkata and districts where the best Puja organizers take part in a procession on the way to immersing the idol in river Hooghly.

The carnival on Red Road is a unique event where the Durga Puja clubs present cultural shows on Red Road while accompanying the idol.

Representatives from different high commissions, dignitaries, businessmen are invited to attend the carnival. Many foreign tourists come to the city during the Durga Puja and to attend the carnival, a colourful event.

The carnival in the districts has become popular and business worth Rs 1,000 crore took place during the Pujas

last year. Most of the community Pujas follow a theme and artists give expression to the themes along with their teams. Most of the team members are budding artists studying in various art colleges.

Miss Banerjee will hold the meeting tomorrow to ensure smooth and trouble-free Durga Puja. Adequate policemen are deployed to maintain law and order and traffic. Miss Banerjee has said over and over again not to fall into the trap of those who are trying to disturb society.

Like every year, the chief minister will also inaugurate some important Pujas in the city and will inaugurate some Pujas in the districts virtually.

To meet rising demand another CNG refilling station soon

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

Motorists struggling in queues for refilling CNG in their vehicles are likely to get some relief soon. A CNG station is expected to be functional in the next two to three months that would help in easing some pressure on them.

As informed by transport minister Snehasis Chakraborty, the department is working with the Bengal Gas Company Limited for setting up another CNG refilling station at Galsi. The project was getting hindered because of land hurdles.

According to the minister, the land identified for it is a small one, around 250 to 300 metres, but there were obstructions.

"After discussion with all stakeholders, we have been able to solve the hindrance



and work has started at the site," informed Mr Chakraborty.

Elaborating on the reasons for the crisis of clean fuel, the minister reiterated, "The city requires around 51 tonne of CNG per day. Of the total demand, the Bengal Gas Company presently, is supplying around 16 tonne, which is about one third of the requirement because of which the crisis was going on."

With the work at the site in Galsi getting started, the minister hoped that the situation would be normalized

in the next two three months after the refilling station becomes operational.

The minister was speaking on the sidelines of a meeting with the online app-cab operators and bike taxi operators this evening.

Among various demands, the operators have demanded immediate steps to unblock the drivers' IDs at the earliest. The department is said to have asked the aggregators to unblock the IDs that were earlier barred from work without any justifications, within the next few days.

Strike by traders may push up potato prices

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

With a section of potato traders having struck work since Saturday, fear of price escalation of the essential vegetable is likely from tomorrow.

Supply of potatoes has allegedly dwindled in many areas due to the strike by Progressive Traders' Association.

According to Progressive Traders' Association, the attempt to augment supply of potatoes from cold storages on the directive of the chief minister to bring down prices in the open market had run into trouble after the cease-work by a section of the traders at border areas.

Lalu Mukherjee, secretary of the association of potato traders said that about 80,000 traders had joined the cease-work. A similar situation was witnessed in 2014, when transport of potatoes had been blocked at border areas but this time no such directive was there, alleged Mr Mukherjee.

The traders association said that the chief minister had not advised them against



blocking alleged transportation of potatoes but asked for strict surveillance.

The chief minister had asked the officers concerned for release of potatoes from cold storages in the state to deal with the alleged artificial crisis in potato supplies.

The state Pragatishil Aloo Babsayi samity has called a strike protesting against the stopping of potato-loaded lorries at the Bengal border, thus cutting off transportation of potatoes from West Bengal to neighbouring states of Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand.

Mr Mukherjee added unless the lorries at the state border are allowed to cross over to neighbouring states, potatoes in the cold storages cannot be unloaded for sorting and repacking. Hence, the supply of potatoes in the wholesale and retail markets

may be badly affected. Taking advantage of the short supply of potatoes, a section of potato traders may again jack up the prices of the potatoes in the wholesale and retail markets.

"We are not in favour of dragging the strike. We want prompt action from the concerned state government department to resolve the problem at the border, where the potato-laden lorries are being stalled," he said.

In East Burdwan, nearly 1 lakh packets of potatoes are disbursed from the cold storage everyday. On Monday, a meagre 1,200 packets were allowed to be brought out of Sati Ma storage, Asia's second largest cold storage for family consumption of the farmers. A town distributor Rameswar Saw of Burdwan said today, "Everyday, I procure 50 packets from the cold storage and supply to the retailers in the town, which was restrained by the association today. If the strike isn't withdrawn tomorrow, retail markets would have to suffer badly."

CLOUDY



Clouds hover the Vidyasagar Setu in Kolkata on Monday. ■BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Fake lottery racket with Delhi-Bengal link busted in Asansol; 2 held

KOLKATA, 22 JULY

West Bengal Police busted a multi-crore fake lottery racket involving operators from the state and New Delhi and arrested two people.

A senior officer of the Asansol-Durgapur Police Commissionerate in West Burdwan District on Monday said the cops also seized sacks full of fake lottery tickets of the face-value of Rs 1 crore. "On Sunday evening, our cops were informed by their sources that a huge consignment of fake lottery tickets had arrived somewhere in Asansol and attempts were being made to transfer them elsewhere.

"Accordingly, our teams started checking various vehicles at the main exit points of Asansol. Finally late on Sunday night an auto rickshaw was intercepted by our officers and nine sacks full of these counterfeit lottery tickets were seized," said the Commissionerate official.

The police have arrested two persons in this connection and both will be presented at a District Court in Asansol on Monday.

Sources said that the arrested duo admitted that the fake lottery tickets were brought from New Delhi and were supposed to be circulated in the local markets in West Bengal. The Commissionerate official said that the fake tickets were identical to the genuine ones and it would be impossible for common people to be able to identify them as counterfeits. "Had they been able to circulate the tickets in the local markets, several people would have been duped of their hard-earned money," he said.

Sources said that a number of rackets of fake lottery tickets were running in the Asansol belt for quite some time. However, those rackets mainly originated from neighbouring Jharkhand and this was the first time that a New Delhi-Bengal nexus had surfaced.

21 Bangladeshi students return to India for safety



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SILIGURI, 22 JULY

A group of 21 students from Bangladesh, who had originally travelled to India and Nepal for education purposes, have recently returned to India in order to protect themselves from the ongoing protests. These students had previously returned home to spend their holidays, but have now come back through three immigration check posts, located in north Bengal, according to official sources.

As of now, a total of 1,121 students have come back from Bangladesh, including 616 from India, 428 from Nepal, 54 from Bhutan, 21 from Bangladesh itself, and 2 from the Maldives.

It is worth mentioning that the Border Security Force, through the North Bengal Frontier, effectively monitors three check posts: Changrabandha in Cooch Behar, Fulbari in Jalpaiguri near Siliguri, and Hili in South Dinajpur.

The returning students expressed appreciation for



the Border Security Force's efforts to ensure convenience and safety during their evacuation.

Based on students' accounts, both citizens of Bangladesh and India agree that today's circumstances were relatively improved compared to the past five days following the Supreme Court's ruling in Bangladesh. "The situation escalated and became uncontrollable for multiple reasons. The youth were offended by the Prime Minister's labelling of the protesters as 'Pakistani' supporters in regards to the quota issue for those involved in the Liberation War for Bangladesh's independence. Additionally, the involvement of police and army in suppressing the movement further fuelled tensions. Lastly, members of

Awami League's student organization hindered and assaulted protestors for political reasons."

Following an examination of the risk due to the current state of affairs in Bangladesh on 20 July, with guidance from Suryakant Sharma, inspector general of BSF North Bengal Frontier and assistance from Brigadier Rajiv Gautam, Retd, deputy inspector general at Sector Headquarters Jalpaiguri, the 151 Battalion, 98 Battalion, and 61 Battalion BSF, under Jalpaiguri, Siliguri and Raiganj Sector have deployed additional personnel at immigration check post and land customs stations and passenger security check centres in Changrabandha, Fulbari and Hili. These measures were taken following the turmoil in Bangladesh, a senior

BSF official said.

"The ongoing protest against government job reservations in Bangladesh has become more concerning as it has caused thousands of students from India, Nepal, and Bhutan to return home. To ensure their safety, the ICP has efficiently evacuated the students," the BSF official said, adding, "The Border Security Force has also taken necessary steps to enhance security along the India-Bangladesh border and maintain a constant watch to prevent criminal and anti-national activities. Additionally, measures such as deploying additional personnel and establishing extra security check centres in Changrabandha have been implemented to avoid any delays for returning students."

Uttam Kumar film festival from Wednesday

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

Shilpi Sangsad will organize Uttam Kumar film festival at Nandan from 24 July, the death anniversary of the matinee idol.

Uttam Kumar had set up Shilpi Sangsad to assist poor technicians and those associated with the Bengali film industry. Uttam Kumar died on 24 July, 1980, more than four decades ago but his craze has not diminished over the ages.

The film festival will start on 24 July and end on 7 August. Two film shows will be held at 3 pm and 6 pm. Tickets are priced at Rs 40, Rs 50 and Rs 60.

The festival will start with *Shrey Chhattar* acted by Uttam Kumar and Suchitra Sen at 3 pm at Nandan-I. At 6 pm, *Sabar Uparey* will be screened.

The other films that will be screened include *Mouchak*, *Mon Niye*, *Antony Firingee*, *Sadananda Mela*, *Raikamal Sathihara*, *Chouringhee*, *Surya Toron*.

The other films that will be screened are *Utrayan*, *Andha Atit*, *Jiban Trishna*, *Prithibi Amarey Chay*, *Rajkumari*, *Kokhono Megh*, *Abak*



Prithibi, *Suno Bara Nari*, *Priyo Bandhobi*, *Putra Bodhu*, *Raj Kaniya*, *Jadi Janem*, *Abhayer Biye*, *Sesh Anka*, *Shyamali*, *Upahar*, *Jiban Mrityu*, *Ekti Rat*, *Sei Chokh* and *Thana Theke Aschi*.

Uttam Kumar fell sick while shooting *Ogo Badhu Sundari*.

He had a massive heart attack on 24 July night. He was taken to a private nursing home where he died some time later.

Uttam Kumar had acted in two of Satyajit Ray's films, *Nayak* and *Chiriyakhana* where he played the role of detective *Byomkesh Bakshi*. He had also acted in some Hindi films like *Chotisi Mulakat*, *Kitab*, *Anand Ashram* and *Kitab*.

Guv warns two Trinamul MLAs of fiscal penalty on attending Assembly session

AGENCIES KOLKATA, 22 JULY

The office of West Bengal Governor, CV Ananda Bose, on Monday, shot off letters to the two new Trinamul Congress legislators Sayantika Banerjee and Reyat Houssen Sarkar cautioning them of financial penalties if they take part in the proceedings of the House.

After taking oath administered by Speaker Biman Bandopadhyay, the two MLAs reached the Assembly prem-



ises to participate in the Monsoon Session that started from Monday.

However, they received emails from the office of the Governor asking them to clarify who had administered their oath.

The notice reminded the two MLAs that as the oath was administered by the Speak-

er instead of the Deputy Speaker of the House who had been nominated by Governor Bose to do so, the oath is unconstitutional.

Article 193 of the Indian Constitution gives the power to the Governor to impose a financial penalty on the two MLAs if they participate in the proceedings or even occupy the chair allotted on the floor of the House, without the approval of the constitutional head of the state.

"If a person sits or votes as a member of the Legislative

Assembly or the Legislative Council of a State before he has complied with the requirements of Article 188, or when he knows that he is not qualified or that he is disqualified for membership thereof, or that he is prohibited from so doing by the provisions of any law made by Parliament or the Legislature of the State, he shall be liable in respect of each day on which he so sits or votes to a penalty of five hundred rupees to be recovered as a debt due to the State," reads Article 193.

SUDDEN DOWNPOUR



Rain in Kolkata on Monday. ■MOUL MONDAL

THUMBNAILS



Students of Aliah University take part in a rally in solidarity with protesting students of Bangladesh in Kolkata on Monday. ■ MOUL MONDAL

Student drowns in Chhattisgarh: Koustab Sadhu (23), a resident of Hooghly Gurap, Khajurdaha, Milki gram panchayat, pursuing physics honours from Chhattisgarh's Guru Ghasidas University, drowned in a dam on Sunday. He had gone with friends to visit Ratanpur Dam 30 km away from Bilaspur to celebrate a friend. His body was recovered later. He did not know swimming. The mother of the deceased, Soma Das, said, "I had warned my son not to step into the dam since he did not know how to swim. I suspect foul play and demand an investigation." The parents have set off to Chhattisgarh to bring back the body. ■ SNS

Constable death: A traffic constable, Krishna Chandra Mallick (55), died after a bike accident. He was posted at Chandannagar Commissionerate. After his duty hours at Uttarpara on Sunday, around 10 pm, he set off on his motorcycle towards his residence at Dadpur in Polba. His bike skidded at Sugandha near Getu Football ground, Delhi Road highway. He was thrown off his bike and received serious head injuries. He was rushed to Chinsurah Imambara Hospital, where the doctors declared him brought-dead. ■ SNS

Maitree Express : Following the ongoing unrest in the neighbouring country, the 13108/13110 Kolkata - Dhaka Maitree Express is to remain cancelled till 24 July. As informed by the ER, the full ticket fare would be refunded by the Railways only at the special ticket counters in Kolkata while no refund would be allowed for lost or misplaced tickets, also, for foreign tourists, the full ticket fare would be refunded during the PRS working hours while no TDR would be issued. ■ SNS

CII sensitize industries on disruptive marketing strategies

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

CII hosted sessions on "Disruptive Marketing Strategies" recently in Kolkata. This initiative targeted mainly the entrepreneurs in West Bengal, second-largest MSME hub of the country. The focus was on equipping them with innovative marketing approaches to enhance customer satisfaction and reduce purchase barriers.

Dr Andrew Fleming, British deputy high commissioner east & northeast India highlighted the significant investment potential for British stakeholders in India.

This was supported by the fact that UK exports have seen a notable 15 per cent annual increase, reaching £18 billion in 2022. He also emphasized the importance of addressing food cost concerns, farmer well-being, and carbon emissions.

Subash Balar, chairman, vice-president, marketing, ITC Limited, emphasized the importance of two key aspects i.e. understanding the "need gap" and exploring "consumer insights." Additionally, he discussed the concept of "tentpole communication" to effectively reach the target audience.

Newly-elected 4 MLAs to take oath today

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee may join the Assembly session on Tuesday

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

The newly-elected four MLAs will take their oath tomorrow, announced Speaker Biman Banerjee.

Sources at Legislative Assembly said no positive response regarding the oath-taking ceremony was received from the Raj Bhavan even today. Therefore, following the tradition of the Legislative Assembly, Mukutmani Adhikari, MLA of Ranaghat South, Krishna Kalyani, MLA of Raiganj, Supti Pandey, MLA of Manikata and Madhuparna Thakur, MLA of Bagdah, will take their oath on Tuesday.

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee may join the Assembly session tomorrow. There had been a tussle between the Legislative Assembly and the Raj Bhavan regarding the oath-taking of MLAs Sayantika Banerjee and Reyat Hosain Sarkar.

There was also a concern



that there might be complications regarding the oath-taking of the winning Trinamul candidates in the second phase of the Bengal Assembly by-elections. In this context, the session of the Legislative Assembly began on Monday.

On the very first day of the session, the Speaker announced the schedule for the four MLAs' oath-taking.

The by-election results were announced on 13 July. The Legislative Assembly secretariat had sent a letter to the Raj Bhavan to administer

Biman administered their oath. The second question from the Raj Bhavan was regarding the session of the Assembly. The Governor inquired why the Assembly session was being 'adjourned' repeatedly instead of being 'prorogued'.

Generally, after the prorogation of the Assembly session, the Raj Bhavan issues a 'notification' to call the Session again. However, if the session is adjourned, it can be resumed at any time without the approval of the Raj Bhavan. Earlier in February, the Assembly session was adjourned, and later it was reconvened for a day for the oath-taking of Sayantika and then adjourned again.

Following the Raj Bhavan's letter, it was anticipated that there might be complications regarding the oath-taking of Mukutmani and others. In this context, the Speaker announced that the four MLAs would take their oath on Tuesday.

TMC to move motions on NEET, 3 criminal laws during Assembly's Monsoon Session

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

The ruling Trinamul Congress will move two special motions on the floor of the West Bengal Assembly this week during the Monsoon Session.

The first motion will be for scrapping of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) and the second will be on the three new criminal laws introduced in India, confirmed the Assembly Speaker.

The decision to move these two special motions was taken at the Business Advisory Committee of the state Assembly on Monday, when the Monsoon Session resumed.

However, as per convention, on the first day the session was adjourned after obituary mention. The Speaker said that the motion demanding scrapping of NEET and restora-



tion of the previous system of individual state governments conducting such examinations, will be moved on the floor of the House on Tuesday and there will be debates on the matter on Wednesday.

Similarly, another motion on the three criminal laws in the country will be moved by the Treasury Bench on Friday and debates on the matter will be conducted on next Monday.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has already sent a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 24 raising the same demand on scrapping of NEET examination. She had also written to the Prime Minister objecting to the implementation of the three new criminal laws without proper groundwork and preparation.

Erosion crisis at Gangasagar: Kapil Muni's approach road partially washed away

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

A high tide during the full moon on Sunday swept away the concrete path near Kapil Muni's temple in Sagar Island. Several temporary shops were also damaged and a significant landslide occurred on the beach. Heavy rains in South 24-Parganas for the past few days had been battering the island.

From beach II to beach III, directly opposite to Kapil Muni temple in Gangasagar, the condition is precarious. Numerous natural disasters have eroded this area multiple times.

As a result, the distance from the temple to the beach has now been reduced to approximately 450 metres. According to sources from the South 24-Parganas district administration, the state government has been planning for almost five years to prevent erosion.



In 2023, before the Gangasagar Mela started, the irrigation department had carried out a tetrapod-based project in front of the temple at a cost of about Rs 16 crore to prevent erosion.

However, the sea consumed it before the year ended. In 2024, before the Gangasagar Mela, another pilot project was undertaken by the irrigation department to prevent erosion near the temple premises, but it also failed.

Due to the poor condition of bathing ghats 1 and 2 on

roads 1 to 5. Recently, due to erosion, these trees have also been swallowed by the sea.

According to administration sources, in 2019, the Gangasagar-Bakkhali Development Board and the state urban department jointly started working to prevent erosion in Gangasagar.

Mackintosh Burn was asked to prepare a plan to prevent erosion. After consulting various agencies, the state approached IIT Chennai. The architects at IIT Chennai planned how to address the erosion problem in Gangasagar. The Kolkata Port Trust also assisted in the survey of the erosion-prone area. A report was prepared on how the underwater soil was being eroded.

About Rs 141 crore were allocated for this project. It was decided that the state would provide Rs 67 crores, while the rest would be provided by the central government.

The Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority was allocated the work for the project.

However, the work has not yet started. Sundarban Development minister Bankim Hazra said, "The draft to prevent erosion is ready. But permission from the Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ) from the central government is not being obtained. The central government is also unwilling to provide funds for this project. Hence, there are problems starting the work. Without the help of the central government, it is not possible for the state government to start this work alone with Rs 141 crores at this time."

A senior South 24-Parganas district official said, "The survey conducted by IIT Chennai is under review for quick implementation. A high-level committee will visit the area on 26 July to decide on measures to prevent erosion."

MBBS with MD, ayah, chowkidar in same ₹ 12k salary bracket

SUBHENDU MAITI
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

It sounds absurd initially but it happened officially. An MBBS doctor preferably with postgraduate (PG) degree like MD or DNB in paediatric medicine, an ayah and a chowkidar are in a uniformed bracket of monthly salary Rs 12,000 each.

A notification issued by the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), under Social Welfare Section (SWC) in the office of the district magistrate (DM) of Darjeeling district showed that a registered MBBS candidate with PG degree like MD or DNB in paediatric medicine will get the same monthly salary what an ayah and a chowkidar belong to group D category enjoy.

The notification issued on 11 July has triggered controversy in the medical fraternity for showing 'disrespect' to a doctor by offering such a paltry amount as salary.

"We are very sorry for this and will give a corrigendum rectifying the salary for the post of the doctor, a part-time portfolio with once-in-a-week work schedule," Dr Preeti Goyal, DM of Darjeeling, told The Statesman on Monday.

According to the notification, one manager/coordinator, one social worker-cum-early childhood educator, one nurse, one doctor, six ayahs and one chowkidar will be recruited on temporary and contractual basis in the Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) at Matigara Children home for Girls in Siliguri for implementation of Mission Vatsalya, a central government scheme aiming to provide holistic care and protection to children in difficult circumstance across the country.

The last date of submitting applications, according to the notification, is 30 July. Candidates aged between 24 and

The notification issued on 11 July has triggered controversy in the medical fraternity for showing 'disrespect' to a doctor by offering such a paltry amount as salary

40 years for the post of doctor must be a registered MBBS pass-out with 'other preferred qualification' like DNB or MD in paediatrics without any professional working experience while for the post of the ayah the applicants must be Madhyamik qualified.

For the chowkidar portfolio candidates must be Class VIII qualifiers, aged between 21 and 40 year.

The notification also stated that there would be no relaxation in academic qualifications, working experience, age limits and contractual salary for all the posts belonging to unreserved category.

The salary for the post of nurse, with minimum qualification like either Higher Secondary or diploma in GNM (general nursing and midwifery) course with professional experience of two years will also get same salary Rs 12,000 while it is Rs 23,170 for a manager/coordinator, who has done PG in psychology or social work with diploma in computer application from a recognized institute.

Doctors attached with both government and private healthcare facilities have strongly criticized the notification and expressed concern with the mode of treatment given to a registered physician. A senior orthopaedic surgeon, requesting anonymity, said, "Yes, I have also learnt about the notification issued by the office of the DM, Darjeeling. The notification has totally disrespected the entire medical fraternity by keeping a doctor in the same bracket as of an ayah and a chowkidar in terms of their monthly salary."

Speakers harp on self analysis at youth camp

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

A youth camp to develop internal power and self management for preservation of nature was organized by the Chandannagar Barasat Gate Cultural Association on Saturday. It was held in the hall of Sri Ramakrishna Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo Nilay.

The camp was inaugurated by Arindam Singha Roy, CEO of Bauria Jute Mill and president of the Association. In his inaugural speech, Mr Singha Roy pointed out that in addition to the skill development, moral training should be imparted to the youth for their all-round development.

Professor Debashis Sarkar, principal of Chandernagore College said the social values are changing very fast and one should be equipped enough

to combat the situation. There should be a blend between the past and the present for preservation of environment. Unless the youths become aware of themselves, society cannot move forward.

Bhaskar Mukherjee, a well-known teacher said the youths should do self analysis and should not be swayed by the trend prevailing in the society blindly.

Biswajit Ganguly (retd) IAS, conducted the programme. There was interaction between the students and the speakers. Some students asked what should they do if they come across someone who has met with an accident when parents advice to stay away, apprehending trouble as an aftermath.

It may be recalled that the association had held a conference of the parents, the first of its kind.

HERITAGE ART



A painting exhibition inside the heritage tram of Kolkata at Esplanade on Monday. ■ SNS

Shravani Mela starts on Guru Purnima day



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HOOGHLY, 22 JULY

A month-long Shrivani Mela today started on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima at the centuries old historic Shiva temple at Tarakeswar in West Bengal and Baba Baidyanath Dham at Deoghar.

Even though thousands of TMC workers from different districts of west Bengal proceeded to attend the 21 July Martyrs' Day at Dharmatala in Kolkata, many devotees from neighbouring states have started their onward journey towards Tarakeswar



Shiva temple and Baba Baidyanath Dham. In the holy month of Shravana, lakhs of devotees with-



in the state and also from the neighbouring states, visit Tarakeswar Shiva temple to offer holy Ganges water to lord Shiva, seeking the divine blessing. Nearly 30 lakh devotees visit the Shiva temple at Tarakeswar during the month.

The priest and temple working committee member Sayan Ganguly said, "This year, in the Shravana month, devotees will get four Mondays and five Sundays to offer holy Ganges water to lord Shiva. The temple authorities said they are well prepared to manage the massive inflow of devotees.

On the other hand, 'Jharkhand Pravesh Dwar' to Baba Baidyanath Dham was inaugurated on the first day of Shrivani Mela by neighbouring state ministers Mithilesh Thakur and Deepika Pande Singh to welcome the devotees.

The ministers also announced that a Rs 900-crore project has been taken up by the Jharkhand government to set up a special Baba Baidyanath Dham corridor for the Shrivani Mela devotees, ensuring free movement of devotees, providing them civic and basic amenities.

Seminar highlights Indian value system

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 22 JULY

The department of philosophy, New Alipore College organized a daylong international seminar on Saturday on the Indian philosophical system from the ancient period to modern times and how these systems help people to meet contemporary challenges.

The seminar was held with the financial assistance of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR). It was held in a blended mode. There were five resource persons and approximately 35 paper presenters across different states of India and abroad.

Professor Jaydeep Sarangi, principal of the college presented the relevance of this seminar and its academic importance in today's world.

He expounded the importance of understanding the notions of Indian values in the holistic academic sphere and



University and the present director of the Centre for Comparative Religion and Culture, NCE Bengal gave the keynote address. She highlighted the philosophical significance of the theme of the seminar.

The conceptual and critical intricacies of the two concepts idealistic and pragmatic were amply clear in her deliberation.

She briefly traversed the history of the Indian value system from the Vedic age Mahabharata, Dharmashastra to contemporary Indian philosophy.

Not only textual and contextual deliberations, practical and social aspects of this theme like war, non-violence and day-to-day problems of our daily life were the chief themes of her lecture.

Value system and related philosophical problems enshrined in orthodox and heterodox philosophical systems were highlighted in her lecture.

Professor Indrani Sanyal, former professor of Jadavpur



Those who do not have a permanent house will be provided one through the PM-CM Awas Yojana. Those who need medical treatment will receive complete medical care. Lack of funds will not obstruct their treatment

YOGI ADITYANATH
UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

SC asks IIT Delhi panel to give opinion on vexed Physics question

SC also asked the NTA to release on its website centre-wise results after redacting personal info

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY



The Supreme Court on Monday asked IIT Delhi to form an expert panel to give its opinion on the decision of the National Testing Agency (NTA) to treat two options as the correct answers to a Physics question in the NEET-UG examination.

A bench, headed by CJ.D.Y. Chandrachud, said: "We request the Director of IIT Delhi to constitute a team of three experts of the subject concerned. The expert team is requested to formulate its opinion on the correct option and to remit its opinion to the registrar of this court by 12 noon on July 23."

The bench, also comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, directed that a copy of its order may be forwarded on Monday itself to the Director, IIT Delhi for expeditious action.

In the batch of petitions alleging irregularities in the conduct of the NEET-UG exam, petitioners questioned

the award of grace marks in respect of a contentious Physics question, adding that as many as 44 candidates were able to secure full marks on account of the ambiguous question. They contended that the NTA's decision to award compensatory marks contradicts its own instruction asking students to follow the latest NCERT textbook. The

matter will be taken up for further hearing on Tuesday. In the previous hearing, the apex court had sought a copy of the report of Bihar Police and its Economic Offences Unit (EOU) in relation to the NEET question paper leak case.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta undertook that he will place on record the copy of

the report filed by Patna police as well as the report filed by EOU of Bihar Police.

The NEET question paper leak case was cracked by Patna police on May 5, the day of the examination and an FIR was registered at the city's Shastri Nagar Police Station. The case was later transferred to the EOU of Bihar Police for investigation. On June 23,

the Centre decided to transfer the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The SC also asked the NTA to release on its website centre-wise results after redacting personal information, including the roll number of the candidates.

During the hearing, the apex court had asked the petitioners to illustrate that the leak was so systematic that the exam must be cancelled in its entirety and conducted afresh. It reiterated that if tainted cases cannot be segregated from untainted ones, the entire examination has to go.

Earlier, the top court had directed the NTA to make full disclosure regarding the nature of the paper leak, the places where leaks took place, and the lag of time between the occurrence of the leak and the conduct of the examination. It also asked the CBI to file a status report indicating the status of the investigation and the material collected during the course of the probe.

Let's uphold principles of 'dialogue', 'discussion', 'debate': Dhankhar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY



Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday expressed confidence that the Upper House of Parliament will expectedly lead the nation by example to calibrate the political path forward marked by moderation of discourse pledging to serve the nation rising above partisan interests.

"Undeniably there is a need to lower the temperature in our polity. This House must reflect the highest standards of sanctity, propriety and protocol of Parliamentary traditions that will be motivational for legislatures in the largest democracy and outside as well. World is looking up to us; let us live up to that expectation," Dhankhar said in his opening remarks at the 265th Session of Rajya Sabha.

He said this session - the 265th Session of Rajya Sabha marks a significant moment with the consideration of the maiden Budget by the newly elected government, now serving its third consecutive term, after over six decades, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Addressing Members of the Rajya Sabha, Dhankhar said,

"I have every hope that the proceedings of the House will be marked by enriching and informed debates, optimally utilising the time for national benefit."

"Let us uphold the principles of 'Dialogue, Discussion, Deliberation, and Debate', fostering an environment conducive to robust parliamentary discourse and set an example before the nation," he said.

"I seek to draw your attention to another important and concerning aspect - many a time, Members' communications to the Chairman find way to public domain and sometimes even before the same reach the addressee. This inappropriate practice of garnering public attention is at best avoided," Dhankhar

said. "There is nothing beyond Bharat which we cannot achieve. Let us dedicate ourselves to ever keep Nation First, relegating partisan interests. No better place than this temple of democracy to begin. Let us all commit to act in together for the welfare of our people," he said.

The Monsoon Session of Parliament commenced on Monday with the key highlight being tabling of the Union Budget on July 23.

The session will have 19 sittings scheduled in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha till August 12.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey in Parliament on Monday.

HM Amit Shah's verbal assault on Pawar-Thackeray evokes strong reactions from MVA, NCP

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, 22 JULY

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's strong attack on Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) President Sharad Pawar and Shiv Sena (UBT) President Uddhav Thackeray evoked sharp reactions from the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) as well as the ruling ally Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

At a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) meeting in Pune on Sunday, the Home Minister unleashed a verbal assault on Pawar Sr. and Thackeray that left political circles shocked and mystified.

Kicking off the BJP's campaign for the October 2024 Assembly elections, Amit Shah termed Sharad Pawar as 'the biggest fountainhead of corruption' and Thackeray as 'the chief of Aurangzeb Fan Club'.

Hitting back, NCP (SP) Working President Supriya Sule said that the statements were 'laughable' as it is the same BJP regime which had honoured Sharad Pawar with the Padma Vibhushan (2017).

"For the BJP, without taking the names of Sharad Pawar or Uddhav Thackeray, their speeches don't make headlines... They don't see that the government had honoured him with the Padma Vibhushan," said Sule, taking a swipe.

Sule pointed out how the Home Minister was seen with another leader Ashok Chavan, whom the BJP used to label as corrupt, "but now 90 per cent of the people in the BJP are there because of its washing machine."

SS (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said that Amit Shah and the BJP have lost the right to call others corrupt when it has admitted the tainted leaders



of all other parties, misusing the central investigation agencies.

"Amit Shah is the perfect example of what a Home Minister should not be and we feel

ashamed that he is holding the post. The BJP has not yet digested its defeat in the Lok Sabha elections and they make such wild statements against others," said Raut sharply.

NCP (SP) National Spokesperson Clyde Crasto said while Amit Shah accused the Opposition of allegedly institutionalising corruption, "it's actually the BJP which legit-

imised corruption in the country."

"The truth is BJP has legitimised corruption. They accuse political leaders of graft but once they join the BJP, they all get a clean chit... This is how they are condoning corruption," said Crasto.

SS (UBT) Deputy Leader Sushma Andhare said Shah's comments reveal clearly, "That for BJP, the biggest challenge in Maharashtra is Uddhav Thackeray."

"However, we don't give credence to someone who has a stamp of disgrace (externed) on his persona. They cannot make their speeches heard without uttering 'Thackeray-Pawar,'" said Andhare sarcastically.

On the other side, the ruling MahaYuti ally NCP appeared to be in turmoil with different notes emanating from Shah's comments.

On Sunday, Ajit Pawar said that, "Pawar Saheb is like a God to me", but when categorically asked for his views, he retorted with 'no comments, no comments' to the media persons.

While NCP Minister Dhananjay Munde supported Amit Shah saying, "he will not speak without some truth in it," his party's Pimpri (in Maval Lok Sabha) MLA Anna D. Bansode said that the "comments were not proper coming from a person like Shah."

"Sharad Pawar is like our Guru and he is one of the tallest leaders in the country, people have the highest regard for him and such criticism must stop," urged Bansode.

Another ruling NCP ex-MLA Vilas V. Lande has shot off a letter to the BJP slamming the comments and pointed out that in his entire life, Sharad Pawar has never faced a sin-

gle blot of corruption.

Ruling MahaYuti ally and Prahar Janshakti Party chief Omprakash B. Kadu, alias Bachchu Kadu mocked the government saying, "If this is what Amit Shah speaks of Sharad Pawar, then people will want to know what is Ajit Pawar."

Taking umbrage, Raut said that Home Minister Amit Shah called Thackeray as the "chief" of the Aurangzeb Fan Club, "But we were not part of the Jinnah club... We never went to visit Jinnah's grave in Pakistan or go to celebrate Nawaz Sharif's birthday there."

"There's nothing wrong in taking the side of nationalist Muslims in the country. They have contributed a lot and many were sacrificed during the Independence movement. They (BJP) just want to create communal problems," said Raut.

TENDER

e-Tender Notice

Doulatnagar Gram Panchayat invites sealed bids for eligible bidders for NIT No. 01(e)/DNGP/2024-25 Ref Memo No-103/DNGP/2024 dt. 20.07.2024. Period of downloading bidding documents from the e-procurement portal From: 22.07.2024 (From 9.00 Hrs) to 29.07.2024 (Up to 9.00 Hrs) Deadline for receiving of Bids online: 29.07.2024 (Up to 9.00 Hrs) Time and Date and place for opening of Technical Bids online: 31.07.2024 (At 9.30 Hrs) Time and Date and place for opening of Financial Bids online: 31.07.2024 (At 13.00 Hrs) more Details Doulatnagar Gram Panchayat Office.

MORE TENDER ADS ON PAGE 4 & PAGE 9

e-Tender Notice

NIT E No 1/A-II GP/24 Date 15/07/2034
NIT E No 2/A-II GP/24 Date 15/07/2034
NIT E No 3/A-II GP/24 Date 15/07/2034
NIT E No 4/A-II GP/24 Date 15/07/2034
Date of Financial Bid Opening 02/08/2024

Sd/- Pradhan
Alipur-II Gram Panchayat
Kaliachak-I, Malda

GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited for NIT No. 06/POSTDLP/UD/SE/RRNMU/MALDA/2024-25 (3rd Call) OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RRNMU, MALDA ZONE Date: 22-07-2024 (For 1 No. road work under WBSRDA, Uttar Dinajpur Division) & NIT No. -07/RIDFXXX/UD/SE/RRNMU/MALDA/2024-25 (1st Call) OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RRNMU, MALDA ZONE, Date: 19-07-2024 (For 1 No. road work under WBSRDA, Uttar Dinajpur Division), Bid submission start date: 23-07-2024 at 11:00 hrs., Last date of bid submission: 14-08-2024 at 16:00 hrs., Date of Pre-bid meeting: 02-08-2024 at 13:00 hrs. for NIT No.-07/RIDFXXX/UD/SE/RRNMU/MALDA/2024-25 (1st Call) & Date of Technical Bid opening: 16-08-2024 at 16:00 hrs. Please visit the website: www.wbtenders.gov.in & www.prd.gov.in for detailed tender notice and all necessary information.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer
RRNMU, Malda Circle, P&RD Deptt.
Govt. of West Bengal

TENDER NOTICE

Percentage rate / Item rate tender / quotation are hereby invited from experienced Suppliers / Contractors / Agencies by the undersigned vide 1) NIT No.-e-04/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 47/BGP/2024, Dated: 15-07-2024, 2) NIT No.-e-05/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 48/BGP/2024, Dated: 15-07-2024, 3) NIT No.-e-06/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 49/BGP/2024, Dated: 15-07-2024 4) NIT No.-e-07/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 50/BGP/2024, Dated: 15-07-2024 5) NIT No.-08/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 64/BGP/2024, Dated: 19-07-2024, 6) NIT No.-09/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 66/BGP/2024, Dated: 19-07-2024, 7) NIT No.-10/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 67/BGP/2024, Dated: 19-07-2024 8) NIT No.-11/BGP/2024-25 & Memo No. 68/BGP/2024, Dated: 19-07-2024 by the undersigned. For SI. No. 1 to 4 other details are available to the WBG TENDER website. For SI. No. 5 to 8 other details are available to the Office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Pradhan
Binodpur Gram Panchayat Sattari
English Bazar, Malda

Two women buried in gravel in MP following land dispute: In a freak incident, gravel was dumped on two women protesting against the construction of a road in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh as a result of a land dispute, police said on Monday. SNS

Lalu Prasad Yadav slams Nitish Kumar over poor law & order in Bihar

PATNA, 22 JULY

RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav on Monday criticised the Nitish Kumar government for the deteriorating law and order situation in Bihar.

Lalu Prasad Yadav blamed the "double engine" government for the current state of affairs, highlighting concerns over safety and governance.

He criticised the Nitish Kumar government for its inability to control the increasing incidents of crime in Bihar. "Incidents like murder, rape, gang rape, and loot are regularly taking place in Bihar, and Nitish Kumar's government is failing to control the situation. The criminals are fearless in Bihar," Lalu Prasad Yadav said.

Former Chief Minister Rabri Devi has also criticised the Bihar government for the poor law and order situation in the state.

"The Mafia Raj is going on in the state. The Nitish Kumar government has no control over the criminals in Bihar," the former Chief Minister said. AGENCIES

IAS probationer Puja Khedkar's mother Manorama sent to 14-day judicial custody

AGENCIES
PUNE, 22 JULY

Pune court on Monday sent Manorama Khedkar, the mother of IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, to 14 days of judicial custody in the case relating to threatening a farmer.

She allegedly threatened a person with a gun over a land dispute in June last year. Manorama was arrested on Thursday for allegedly threatening a person with a gun over a land dispute in June last year.

Manorama was arrested from a lodge in Raigad district, where she was hiding, and produced before a judicial magistrate. The prosecution alleged that Manorama, along with her husband and three others, threatened the complainant with a gun and added Section 307, stating that she put a gun to the complainant's head and was about to pull the trigger.

Earlier, the Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) sealed a company named ThermoVerita linked to Manorama Khedkar, mother of IAS Puja Khedkar located in Pune due to an alleged tax default of Rs 2.77 lakh.

This development comes amidst controversy surrounding probationary IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, who had utilized the company's address to obtain a disability certificate from YCM Hospital Pimpri Chinchwad.

"The property tax for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 for ThermoVerita India Pvt. Ltd has been pending for the last two years. Additionally, the current year's outstanding dues are also unpaid," said Shekhar Singh, Commissioner of PCMC.

Insider-outsider rift to the fore in BJP with MP minister threatening to quit with MP wife

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, 22 JULY

The rift between the BJP leaders and those who joined the party after defecting Congress in the Dr. Mohan Yadav Government in Madhya Pradesh came to the fore on Monday when Nagar Singh Chouhan threatened to resign from his ministerial post.

The threat from the senior tribal leader and cabinet minister for forests and scheduled caste welfare came after Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav withdrew the Forest Department from his cabinet portfolio on Sunday and handed it to newly inducted Cabinet Minister Ramniwas Rawat who joined the party after quitting the Congress.

Nagar Singh Chouhan also threatened that his wife, Anita Singh Chouhan, who is a BJP Lok Sabha

member from the Ratlam seat in MP, would also resign from the party if the BJP organizational leadership does not take their side.

"My voice was not heard. I will talk to the leaders of the organisation before taking the next step. If I feel I should not stay on the post, I would resign along with my wife Anita," Chouhan told some media persons.

He said he is a tribal leader and the tribal community constitutes 23 per cent of the population of MP. He lamented that the Forest Department, associated directly with tribals, was taken away from him and given to a leader who came from Congress. "I don't think this is good for me and the dedicated BJP workers," Chouhan averred.

Ramniwas Rawat, a former Congress MLA, was sworn in as a cabinet minister on July 8.

member from the Ratlam seat in MP, would also resign from the party if the BJP organizational leadership does not take their side.

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Ramniwas Rawat, a former Congress MLA, was sworn in as a cabinet minister on July 8.

Maratha community students can now submit caste validity certificates within 6 months

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, 22 JULY

Amid the fresh agitation launched by the pro-Maratha reservation activist Manoj Jarange Patil, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Monday announced that the students, especially from the Maratha community, can submit the caste validity certificates within six months.

The Chief Minister said that the students admitted to various educational institutions for engineering, medical and professional courses for the academic year 2024-25 can now submit the caste validity certificates within six months from the date of application.

Lalu Prasad Yadav slams Nitish Kumar over poor law & order: RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav on Monday criticised the Nitish Kumar government for the deteriorating law and order situation in Bihar. AGENCIES

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
15, Netaji Subhas Road (5th Floor)
KOLKATA - 700001

EMPANELMENT OF TAILORS/TAILORING FIRMS

Applications for empanelment are invited from reputed Tailors/Tailoring Firms at Kolkata and adjoining areas having good experience for bulk stitching of liveries (Summer and Winter) for the Bank's staff. Interested firms may download the Application Form from the Bank's website at 'www.rbi.org.in' under the link 'Tenders' or contact the Manager (Personnel), Human Resource Management Department, 5th Floor, Reserve Bank of India, Kolkata between 10.00 AM and 02.00 PM on any working day & on 23.08.2024 up to 14.00 hrs. Date of Opening of Application Box: 23.08.2024 at 14.30 hrs. Notice Board location & website particulars where complete details (including application format and terms & conditions) can be seen: Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager's Office, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, DRM Building, Room No. 44, Kaizer Street, Kolkata-700014. Date of Submission of Application: From 02.08.2024 to 22.08.2024 from 11.00 hrs. to 16.00 hrs. on every working day & on 23.08.2024 up to 14.00 hrs. Date of Opening of Application Box: 23.08.2024 at 14.30 hrs. Notice Board location & website particulars where complete details (including application format and terms & conditions) can be seen: Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager's Office, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, DRM Building, Room No. 44, Kolkata-700014 and www.er.indianrailways.gov.in.

By Order
Regional Director

Engagement of Halt Contractor at Bahirgachhi Halt station over Sealdah Division

Notice No.: CW/388/Halt/Bahirgachhi (BHGH) Dated: 22.07.2024

Applications in prescribed format are invited from eligible persons of Nadia district of West Bengal, for engagement of Halt Contractor for selling of tickets on prescribed commission basis for 05 (five) years at Bahirgachhi Halt (BHGH) station situated between Aranghata & Bagula stations under Sealdah Division. Amount of Security Money to be deposited by the selected candidate before taking charge of halt station: ₹ 2,000 (in the form of FDR in favour of FA&CAO/ER/KKK). Place of Submission of Application: Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager's Office, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, DRM Building, Room No. 44, Kaizer Street, Kolkata-700014. Date of Submission of Application: From 02.08.2024 to 22.08.2024 from 11.00 hrs. to 16.00 hrs. on every working day & on 23.08.2024 up to 14.00 hrs. Date of Opening of Application Box: 23.08.2024 at 14.30 hrs. Notice Board location & website particulars where complete details (including application format and terms & conditions) can be seen: Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager's Office, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, DRM Building, Room No. 44, Kolkata-700014 and www.er.indianrailways.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager, Sealdah

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Farming Sector Distress: Alarm Bells Are Ringing

Food security is a central element development agenda across the world, whose importance cannot be understated and underemphasized. Traditionally, agriculture has two primary responsibilities in the growth process – supply food, raw materials and earn foreign exchange through exports. Due to its dependence on highly volatile natural factors, like weather conditions, and very complex institutional factors, the agriculture sector operates under a higher degree of uncertainty and consequently in a high risk environment. In this context, it requires greater support from the government for its advancement. Main objective of this article is to communicate that the agriculture sector in Bhutan is faced with a serious existential crisis, which in turn, will adversely affect food security, and will exacerbate pressure on already scarce foreign exchange reserves.

The agriculture sector in Bhutan started to recover and grow faster since 2009 after a long term deceleration starting from early 1990s. This growth story lost its momentum since 2017 and the sector receded into a very steep decline. Total sown area declined by 57% from 204,728 acres in 2017 to 89,490 acres in 2023, which translates into a loss of about 11,500 acres of the sown area each year. Increasingly a larger portion of cultivable land is left fallow. Without a parallel productivity growth, decline in the sown area leads to fall in production. This is exactly what happened in the agriculture sec-

tor. Output of all the cereals has declined steeply since 2017. Paddy production has declined by 53%, while the production of maize, wheat, barley, buckwheat, and millet has declined by 70-80% each. Further, the yield (measured as production kg per acre) of all the cereals has declined since 2017. This means that technological breakthroughs have not been successful in supporting productivity growth. Fall in the production of cereals has not been accompanied by rise in production of cash crops, this is a major source of worry. Production of vegetables declined by 61%, potato declined by 34%, spices, pulses and oilseeds declined within the range of 50-70%. Production of fruits also declined by 22% (refer table 1). Decline in the agricultural production across the range of products is a cause of serious concern and it should not be neglected. There are some small projects related to high value crops which have been sighted as success stories, yet they have little relevance unless their success is replicated on a larger scale.

To add to the woes, production of all the major livestock products (milk, butter, cheese, honey and eggs), except meat, has also declined since 2017. An issue, which has a long term implication, is the declining population of livestock in Bhutan (refer table 2). Declining population of livestock will adversely affect mixed farming and will have adverse effect on the availability of food. Declining agricultural production has also exacerbated pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Agriculture exports have declined from Nu 2.85 billion in 2017 to Nu 2.5 billion 2023, while agricultural imports have increased from Nu 7.8 billion in 2017 to Nu 13.3 billion in 2023. Clearly, the sector is not performing any of its role – supply food and raw materials and generate net export revenue.

The sector has not received adequate investment despite efforts to scale up the investment through public investment and priority lending. Agricultural infrastructure, especially irrigation, is not sufficient. According to the National Irrigation Master Plan 2016, only 64,000 acres of 200,000 acres of arable land was under assured irrigation. Stories of water shortage faced by farmers are aplenty in BBS news bulletins. I also heard that water has started to become a source of discord among the farmers.

R.I.P. Panchsheel

In 1954 under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership, Panchsheel was codified in international relations in the treaty between India and China; it also figured in the Preamble to the Constitution of China



When after a year, India's external affairs minister S. Jaishankar met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on 4 July 2024 for a formal discussion on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, he said there is a "need to redouble efforts to achieve complete disengagement" in eastern Ladakh. While the Indian minister underlined the border issue as a singular focus, wanting resolution to issues along the Line of Actual Control, ensuring peace and stability, his emphasis was on the newly-minted principles of "mutual respect, mutual sensitivity, and mutual interests".

Not to be outdone foreign minister Wang Yi, and a high-ranking member of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Political Bureau, brought to centre-stage the 70th anniversary of the Panchsheel principles of peaceful coexistence, acknowledging the historic principles formulated in 1954. It was India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of the world which was rooted in the term 'Panchsheel', five virtues or principles. At the SCO Summit, India made no mention of the 70th anniversary of Panchsheel.

While the Chinese commune did not contradict the Indian statement, it indicated that there was no common meeting ground with Beijing. China reaffirmed that the border issue should proceed on a parallel track to the resumption of ties. "We must adhere to positive thinking, on the one hand properly handle and control the situation in the border area, on the other hand actively resume normal exchanges, promote each other, and move towards each other," it stated.

Readers may not be aware of the Buddhist origins of Panchsheel which found mention in China's statement: the virtues it refers to are good conduct, abstinence from killing living beings, good character, behaviour and adherence to truth.

For Nehru it denoted sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, and peaceful coexistence of every kind, political, ideological, military and economic between nation-states. He acknowledged the Buddhist roots of Panchsheel, especially in the post-World War II era when the disasters of war and atomic age were rampant. Seventy years ago, in 1954 Panchsheel was codified in international relations in the treaty between India and China; it also figured in the Preamble to the

Constitution of China.

Foreign minister Wang can now be credited with bringing Panchsheel once again to the global diplomacy chessboard. Even though Nehru's relations with China and its Communist leadership were fraught with paradoxes, controversies and the brutality of invasion, there is no doubt that Indo-Chinese relations in times of peace and war, through the 1950s and 1960s, were the centre-point of the entire world.

Observed Dr S Gopal, Nehru's finest biographer in Volume 2 of the three-volume biography, "Nehru, as a committed socialist, had expressed his faith, admiration and friendship with China. At the same time, he had advocated an attitude of 'cautious friendliness' towards China."

The diplomatic evolution of Panchsheel may be traced in Nehru's words: "It should be made manifestly a friendly approach, and there should be no support of the enemies of China or formation of any bloc which could be regarded as anti-Chinese or anti-communist."

On 25 October 1950, Nehru wrote to KM Panikkar, Ambassador to China, that he did not expect armed attack on India by China from Tibet, but he did not rule out infiltration by groups or even occupation of disputed areas. Nehru's attitude from the outset was that the frontier was firm, well-known and beyond dispute.

In Parliamentary debates on 20 November 1950, Prime Minister Nehru said, "Tibet is contiguous to India from the region of Ladakh to the boundary of Nepal and from Bhutan to the Irrawaddy/Salween divide in Assam. The frontier from Bhutan eastwards has been clearly defined by the McMahon Line which was fixed by the Simla Convention of 1914. The frontier from Ladakh to Nepal is defined chiefly by long usage and custom... Our maps show that the McMahon Line is our boundary and that is our boundary – map or no map. That fact remains and we stand by that boundary, and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary."

The issue of frontier modification and intrusions became dominant in 1953 and on 5 March 1953, Nehru noted, "China

should be in no doubt that any modification of or intrusion across the frontiers would be unacceptable to India and India should be strong enough to prevent this... No major challenge to these frontiers is likely in the near future. If we are alert, no challenge will take place within a reasonable time and possibly even later."

At the height of the Korean crisis on 23 January 1951, Prime Minister Nehru wrote to Chou En-lai (later written as Zhou Enlai), "... nor is it wise to try to humiliate other countries. We in India and China have suffered enough humiliation in the past and have resented it and fought against it. We should follow a different course and try to secure a stable peace through a peaceful and co-operative approach. This would be no sign of weakness but of strength and confidence in ourselves." Now seven decades later, the world of diplomacy is acknowledging the India-China treaty, signed in April 1954, a historic milestone in Prime Minister Nehru's international relations.

It provided for the withdrawal of all Indian influence from Tibet. Nehru had no regret about this, for it embarrassed him to lay claim to the succession of an imperial power which had pushed its way into Tibet. Anxious to make the agreement purely non-political, the Chinese at first resisted mention of the Five Principles or Panchsheel, which they themselves had elaborated, but ultimately agreed to it as a concession.

A map in People's China, on too small a scale to permit precision, showed the boundary with India as a settled one, and roughly followed the alignment as depicted on Indian maps from Kashmir to Bhutan. Even in the eastern sector, while the delineation was unclear, no large territorial claims were made. Nehru saw in this map further justification for not raising the border issue with China.

Through June-July 1954, India and China continued to raise high the platforms of their friendship. On 25 June 1954, Chou En-lai, the Chinese Premier, arrived in New Delhi for talks with Nehru. Three days later on 28 June, a communiqué was issued by the Prime Ministers of India and China, outlining Five

Principles or Panchsheel for the regulation of relations between nations. It was on 13 July that Prime Minister Nehru urged the inclusion of China in the United Nations, a sign of his growing solidarity and friendship with China.

In the years 1953 to 1955, Nehru's faith and loyalty towards the Chinese seemed unshakable. These were the 'Hindi Chini bhai bhai' years. On 31 July 1954, the Indo-China Truce Commission met in New Delhi. On 14 October a two-year trade agreement between India and China was signed. Under the trade agreement signed in Delhi, India would export 19 lakh pounds of Virginia tobacco to China and import 90 tons of raw silk from the latter annually. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on 31 March 1955, Nehru described Panchsheel as Asia's challenge to the world: "The Asian-African conference at Bandung would throw this challenge, in all its baldness and straightness, and every country."

While the Non-Alignment Movement remains Nehru's major contribution to global politics and international relations, the philosophy behind the movement was Panchsheel. It was evident in the Bandung Conference from 22-23 April 1955 when Nehru demonstrated the importance of Asia and Africa in the world. He initiated NAM along President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, President Sukarno of Indonesia, President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and President Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia.

In his speech, Nehru elaborated with some impatience on the meaning and virtues of non-alignment for the countries of Asia and Africa. "Nato might have advantages for Western Europe, but to the rest of the world it assumed the face of colonialism... For the newly free and underdeveloped countries, potential strength lay not in piling up arms, but in industrial progress and the fostering of a spirit of self-reliance. Peace might well come through strength, but not, for the Bandung countries, through military strength or alliances."

From the India-China treaty of 1954 to the Bandung Conference when Prime Minister Nehru held forth to the comity of nations, to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in 2024, global diplomacy has indeed come a long way. Panchsheel principles, whether hailed, ignored or buried, remain a credible part of India's contemporary history.



RAJU MANSUKHANI
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Allies must speak up

SIR, This refers to the report, "Union MoS opposes UP govt's order for name display of Kanwar Yatra route" (22 July).

Though maintaining the sanctity of the pilgrims' faith and ensuring peaceful movement of kanwariyas have been officially cited as reasons for the move, there is an unmistakable intention to single out the minority

Muslim community.

The onus is on the state government concerned to deploy an adequate number of police personnel along the route so that clashes or disturbances can be averted.

Marking out shops run by Muslims will only fuel communal disharmony and no way guarantee that there will be no con-

frontation between kanwariyas and vendors/passersby.

The polarisation playbook did not do the trick for the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha polls in UP. Finding itself on a weak wicket after the electoral reversal, the BJP seems desperate to win over disenchanted Hindu voters.

Among the allies of the NDA, the JD (U), the RLD and the LJP have made protesting noises. But they, given their numbers are critical to the NDA's survival, need to do more and take up the cudgels on behalf of harmony.

The role of NDA's allies, after all, is paramount in keeping the BJP's signature majoritarian instincts in check. But will they stand up and be counted?

Yours, etc., S S Paul, Nadia, 22 July.

IN THE BLACK

SIR, Reliance is a past master in the art of advertising. Its Jio secured IPL broadcasting rights for five years at roughly Rs 5000 crore per year. It recoups the entire investment through advertising for its clients, at nearly Rs 2 lacs per second of TV time. By airing it free on its own channel, it has been securing an embedded viewership and to boot, adds revenue via the ensuing data demand.

Now, Reliance has done even better by turning into an advertiser. Of all the things, it has leveraged a family wedding. For a reported spread of Rs 5000 crore on the episodes of this gala, it could assemble a bevy of top-racket cricketers, sportsmen, super star cast and politicians around the globe, at no cost. TV studios were happy to air it for their TRPs, to cover free of cost, the pre-wedding celebration, the main event and perhaps the post wedding show as well. The return from this advertising blitzkrieg was a \$10 billion boost to the family fortunes and 8 per cent jump in stock price, just in the past one month. The icing on the cake, Jio has upped the subscription for its 48 crore users. Even a modest Rs 50 per month raise can neutralise this wedding cost, in just two months. This is an object lesson even for the best marketing gurus.

Yours, etc., R.Narayanan, Navi Mumbai, 21 July.



OCCASIONAL NOTE

GONDOLAS have held their own on the canals of Venice since time immemorial. Written references to these picturesque conveyances have been traced as far back as 1094, but it is evident that boats must have furnished the sole means of local communication since the days when the first fisher-folk or refugees settled on the lagoon islands. The city would be unthinkable without its gondolas, but although it is not likely that they will ever be entirely supplanted, they are now menaced with formidable competition from motor-launches. The gondoliers have protested against the innovation and have carried their demonstration to the length of wrecking a landing-stage. Had they been content with the procession of three hundred gondolas which went down the Grand Canal to the Venetian Town Hall, there need have been no qualification to public sympathy with their cause, for the idea of "tuff-tuffs" on the romantic water-ways is enough to make the very stones of Venice cry out. Still, the gondoliers survived the introduction of "omnibus steamers" more than forty years ago, and even if they cannot vie with motor-launches in speed, they may be able to win on their merits in other respects. For who with any sense of the fitness of things would be seen in a motor-launch in Venice?

NEWS ITEMS

NATIONALIST SONGS

PROPOSED INTRODUCTION IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT) AT the last meeting of the Coimbatore Municipal Council the question of introducing Tamil Nationalist songs by Subramania Bharati into the elementary schools controlled by the municipality again came up for discussion.

In the early part of this year one of the councillors proposed that the teaching of these songs should be made compulsory in municipal elementary schools for boys. The District Educational Officer, whose advice was sought, was distinctly of opinion that the songs were of a "highly nationalist type" and should not be introduced into elementary schools, the pupils of which were all of a tender age.

Against the considered opinion of the Educational Officer the council have resolved to ask the Municipal Educational Sub-committee to select portions of the Tamil poet's songs to be taught in schools under the municipality.

FILM ARRESTS

GERMAN ANTI-FRENCH PROPAGANDA?

(TIMES SPECIAL SERVICE.) MEMBERS of a German film company who were directing yesterday the taking of a film in a park at Versailles were arrested by the French police.

It is believed, says the Times Paris correspondent, that the French police seized the film because they considered that it was intended for the purpose of anti-French propaganda.

BOOK-MARKERS

NOVEL, FASTENER AND NEEDS NO ADJUSTMENT

A VERY useful book-marker is made in silver, with a clip which fastens on to the back cover of the book. Once fixed, it works right though the pages and needs no further adjustment. Another book-marker is designed to fit on the corner of any sized page. This marker is also a paper cutter, and is made in silver with, a raised-initial at the top.

Book-markers and letter-openers combined are seen in several styles. Some have shamrock, white heather, or a lady-bird worked in coloured enamel; others have a reading glass at the top in place of any decoration; and others again have an initial. Reading glasses, both round and square, are also seen in tortoiseshell. A library table set, comprising a full-sized paper knife, scissors, and letter-opener is shown in tortoiseshell with silver mounts, enclosed in a morocco case.

Blotting dabbers and letter scales of tortoiseshell mounted in silver are now to be seen in the shops, as are silver blotting dabbers and paperweights combined. The latest luxury is a little silver and glass bottle for damping envelopes and stamps.

Dealing with Imran keeps Pakistan busy

HARSHA KAKAR

Pakistan's information minister, Atta Tarar, recently announced that the government planned to permanently ban Imran Khan's political party, PTI, claiming it was "a direct threat to the fabric of our nation." He also announced that the government would "seek Article 6 (high treason) proceedings against its founder Imran Khan, ex-president Dr Arif Alvi, and former National Assembly deputy speaker Qasim Suri."

Though, subsequently deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar mentioned that this is still under consideration, the government appears intent on taking these steps. It is feared that initiating such an action would result in large scale riots, as Imran remains the most popular leader within Pakistan.

Official reasons for this decision include foreign funding for the PTI, rioting by his supporters post Imran's arrest in May last year, the cipher case (breaking the Official Secrets Act) as also lobbying in the US to block IMF loans and push anti-election resolutions. Imran has already been acquitted on some of these issues.

If processed, it would divide political parties and initiate a confrontation between the government and the Supreme Court, as the final judgement would be delivered by the courts. Interestingly, this step appears to have been initiated once the military-political leadership realized that its attempts of tying Imran in knots through multiple legal cases are failing. Support of political allies will remain crucial throughout the process.

A similar discussion occurred in July 2022, involving Imran Khan, then president Arif Alvi, speaker as also deputy speaker of the Senate for their attempts to thwart the no-confidence motion. It was subsequently dropped.

Every time the politico-military leadership has attempted to sideline Imran, it has failed. Imran's party's symbol was withdrawn just prior to



elections, compelling his candidates to fight as independents, yet they won maximum seats, resulting in rigging of elections to reduce their numbers. Their victorious candidates were compelled to ally with a small inconsequential political group (Sunni Ittehad Council).

There is outright animosity between the current army and political leadership, on the one hand, and Imran Khan on the other. The army chief, General Asim Munir, was removed from his appointment as Director General of the ISI (Pakistan's famed military intelligence agency) on the orders of Imran Khan, as he had unearthed corruption on the part of Imran's current wife. Imran denies these allegations.

Munir's was the shortest tenure, in Pakistan's history, of just eight months, as DG ISI. It was his anti-Imran stance which ensured his elevation as chief. He has faced Imran's outbursts during his anti-army rantings in public rallies. The insult to the army during the riots last year was a blot on his leadership.

The Sharifs have their own grudge against Imran. His treatment of Nawaz when he was in prison as also accusing the family of corruption, during his Prime Ministership and after his removal has made them wary of his return. His popularity is another cause for concern.

Imran's refusal to follow Nawaz's footsteps and leave the country has added to his persona. Further, there is his determination not to commence talks with either the political or military hierarchy. For the current politico-military leadership, there is a fear that in case Imran returns to power, he would seek revenge.

Further, his popularity would enable him to clip the wings of the army, reducing its ability to dominate internal politics, a major concern. Imran's image as an honest leader has not been dented even by the magnitude of court cases he currently faces. On the contrary, it has grown. With judgements slowly turning in his favour, there appear to be limited options, except taking the extreme step.

Pro-Imran court judgements are the result of growing differences between the judiciary and the army. The latest was the apex court's decision to overrule the election commission and allocate reserved seats to Imran's PTI. The government will appeal but is unlikely to succeed.

This decision conveys that despite its symbol being blocked and members aligning with another political party, the court recognizes the PTI as a legitimate group. Fearing Imran's public support, he is re-arrested in a new case every time the courts dismiss a case or grant him bail.

There have been reports of the army-controlled ISI attempting to pressurize the judiciary for favourable judgements. These are now in public domain as also officially reported by high court judges to the Supreme Court, but to no avail. Current pro-Imran decisions by courts is the judiciary hitting back at the establishment and projecting an independent streak.

The US too has criticized the government's announcement with its

spokesperson mentioning, "banning of a political party is something that would be of great concern to us." The Pakistan establishment is considering this option out of fear and at a very crucial time in the country's history.

Its western provinces are on fire, impacting its investments from China, while critical discussions are in progress with the IMF for a fresh loan of USD 7 billion. One major demand of the IMF has been internal political stability. Resurgence of internal violence and instability could add to difficulties and even delay disbursement of funds.

However, for the current Pakistani military-political leadership it is a matter of survival. Despite being behind bars for almost a year, Imran has refused to bend. He remains openly defiant, posing a challenge. Charges of treason, which are being considered, carry a death or at best a life sentence. The fact is that a ban, and treason charges, will have to be ratified by the Supreme Court, which is currently displaying an independent streak, for which the army is responsible.

One major benefit for the establishment is that once these charges are brought, release on bail is unlikely. In case this alone leads to violence, it could open doors for another period of justified martial law. In case it does not, it enables moving on to the next stage, which is Imran's trial.

For India, nothing could be better. The current military-political leadership is jointly pushing the country towards anarchy and turmoil only due to fear of Imran. The battle within the establishment, judiciary and executive, is bound to intensify. Pakistan will be too busy fighting public disturbances and insurgencies to be bothered about anything else. It being mired in its own mess is the best India can desire.

(The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.)

A return to 'smoke-filled' rooms?

PHILIP KLINKNER

Now that Joe Biden has dropped out of the 2024 presidential race and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to be the nominee, it will ultimately be up to Democratic National Convention delegates to formally select a new nominee for their party. This will mark the first time in over 50 years that a major party nominee was selected outside of the democratic process of primaries and caucuses.

Many Democrats had already begun discussing how to replace Biden. They worried that having the convention delegates, the majority of whom were pledged at first to Biden, select the nominee would appear undemocratic and illegitimate.

The Republican Speaker of the House has claimed that having the convention replace Biden would be "wrong" and "unlawful." Others have conjured up the image of the return of the "smoke-filled room." This term was coined in 1920 when Republican party leaders gathered in secret in Chicago's Blackstone Hotel and agreed to nominate Warren G. Harding, a previously obscure and undistinguished U.S. senator from Ohio, for the presidency. He won that year, becoming a terrible president.

The tradition of picking a nominee through primaries and caucuses – and not through what is called the "convention system" – is relatively recent. In 1968, after President Lyndon B. Johnson announced he would not run for re-election, his vice president, Hubert Humphrey, was able to secure the Democratic nomination despite not entering any primaries or caucuses. Humphrey won because he had the backing of party leaders like Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, and these party leaders controlled the vast majority of the delegates.



Many Democrats saw this process as fundamentally undemocratic, so the party instituted a series of reforms that opened up the process by requiring delegates to be selected in primaries or caucuses that gave ordinary party members the opportunity to make that choice. The Republican Party quickly followed suit, and since 1972 both parties have nominated candidates in this way.

Some Democrats are worried that a new nominee, selected by the convention, will, like Humphrey, lack legitimacy since she or he will have secured the nomination without direct input from Democratic voters around the country.

In response, they've suggested what's being called a "blitz primary" in which Democratic voters will decide on a nominee after a series of televised candidate town halls hosted by politicians and celebrities like Barack Obama and Michelle Obama, Bill and Hillary Clinton, Oprah Winfrey and Taylor Swift.

From the perspective of a scholar who studies political parties and elections, this proposal seems like wishful thinking since there's no mechanism for setting up a workable election process in such a short period of time. The usual process of primaries and caucuses takes months, if not years, of preparation.

While many associate the convention system with less than impressive nominees, like Harding, the record isn't that bad.

At the very first convention, held by the National Republicans – ancestors of today's Republican Party – party leaders and insiders nominated Henry Clay for president. Although Clay lost to Andrew Jackson the following year, he is considered one of the greatest politicians of the 19th century.

The convention system in both parties went on to nominate Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy, all of whom were elected president. Of course, conventions also nominated lesser figures like Horatio Seymour, Alton Parker and John W. Davis.

But who's to say that the current system has done any better to produce electable candidates?

Yes, there's Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama, but there have also been less successful candidates like George McGovern, and weaker presidents like Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush.

Furthermore, had the old system been in place this year, there's a chance that the Democrats might have avoided their current predicament.

To the extent that Democratic Party leaders were aware of Biden's decline, they might have been able to ease him out in favour of a better candidate – if they had been in control of the nominating process. In fact, party

leaders in previous decades often knew more about the candidates than the public at large and could exercise veto power over anyone they thought had serious vulnerabilities.

For example, in 1952, U.S. Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee came into the Democratic National Convention the clear favourite in party-member polls. He also won the most primaries and had the most delegates.

Party leaders, however, had serious reservations about Kefauver since they considered him too much of a maverick who might alienate key Democratic constituencies. The party bosses also knew that Kefauver had problems with alcohol and extramarital affairs.

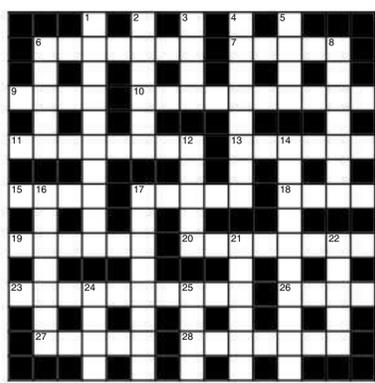
As a result, party leaders coalesced around Illinois Gov. Adlai Stevenson, who was not even a candidate before the convention started. Stevenson ran a losing but respectable race against the immensely popular and probably unbeatable Dwight D. Eisenhower. In addition, Stevenson's eloquence and intelligence inspired a generation of Democratic Party activists. Not bad for a last-minute convention choice.

With Biden's withdrawal, it remains to be seen if the new Democratic nominee will be a strong candidate or, if elected, a good president. But there's no reason to think that this year's unusual path to the nomination will have any effect on those outcomes.

(The writer is James S. Sherman Professor of Government, Hamilton College. This article was published on www.theconversation.com)

CROSSWORD

NO-292852



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

DISCUS INCENSED
OTRGOUC E
VENUSIANS CLIMB
EGAUH H F U
CRAW OCCUPATION
OPUHP R K
TROUNCE SHINTO
ERD SHB
METEOR CATSEYE
AROA S X T
CHASTISING AFAR
ILAWC I I A
DRINK ETERNALLY
IEELLC EA
CONTROLS VIASSAL

ACROSS

- 6 Take in Indian spices and wine (7)
7 Landowner involved in tactical air defence (5)
9 American poet has time to pen final letter (4)
10 River creature with weapon creates unnecessary panic (5,5)
11 Underwear thief in Kansas (8)
13 Used to be part of the LGBT community, which is quite spicy (6)

- 15 Furniture store with department covering Kelvin's proposal (4)
17 Religious measure accepted by artist leaving America (5)
18 Air defence space in port (4)
19 The French native set exercise (6)
20 Presumably released from incarceration and did very well (8)
23 Lear boasts about old navigational aids (10)
26 Heartlessly declaims traitors (4)
27 Periodically admits actor into dance (5)

- 28 Intern in NI town welcoming English rector (7)

Down

- 1 Get Castro in a tizzy introducing American items of clothing (10)
2 Fliers briefly split lottery (6)
3 Elkie's singer quietly leaves nobleman (4)
4 Type of marble style in corridor (8)
5 Register for work (4)
6 Look to incorporate zone for mast (5)

- 8 Hardy expert supports Durham (7)
12 Special border plant (5)
14 Details of money everyone found in career (5,5)
16 Spoken to without notice to be prepared (7)
17 Courageous person follows criminal group into nerve centre (8)
21 Graduate invested in Funds for African fortress (6)
22 Go in with some Aberdeen Terriers (5)
24 Busy bee ignored hazard (4)
25 Report of grain in island (4)

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



THUMBNAILS

Newly elected President and Vice-President of The Institute of Cost Accountants of India: The Institute of Cost Accountants of India is a statutory body set up under an Act of Parliament under the administrative control of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India. The Institute is headquartered in Kolkata having four Regional Councils at Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, 116 Chapters in India and 11 Overseas Centers. The Institute is the largest Cost & Management Accounting body in the world, having approximately 5,00,000 students and 1,00,000 qualified CMA's either in practice or in employment all over the globe. The Institute is a founder member of International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants (CAPA) and South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA). The Institute has conducted the election of President and Vice-President of the Institute on July 22, 2024 at New Delhi. CMA Bibhuti Bhushan Nayak has been elected unanimously as the President and CMA. TCA Srinivasa Prasad has been elected unanimously as the Vice-President of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India for the year 2024-25.

Financial Results for the quarter/ half year of UCO Bank: Total Business grew by 11.46 per cent to Rs.461408 crore on y-o-y, wherein Gross Advances increased by 17.64 per cent to Rs. 193253 crore on y-o-y & Total Deposits grown by 7.39 per cent on y-o-y to Rs.268155 crore. Operating Profit for the quarter ended 30.06.2024 stood at Rs.1321 crore showing an increase of 9.81 per cent on y-o-y basis.

Réal Juice expands portfolio: Réal announced the expansion of its portfolio with the launch of the new 'Réal Fizzin Drink', goodness of fruits combined with fun fizz. Dabur also announced the signing of Bollywood youth icon Sidharth Malhotra as the brand's face. A new campaign, highlighting the amazing taste and goodness of Réal Fizzin available in 5 yummy flavours, featuring actor Sidharth Malhotra, is also being launched. In the campaign, Sidharth Malhotra talks about how Réal Fizzin offers the goodness of fruit with the fun of fizz.

State-of-the-art office space: Interio has executed the office space for the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) in the WTC Tower at Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi. The project spans across an impressive 42,000 sqft and showcases Godrej Interio's expertise in delivering cutting-edge interior solutions.

Economic Survey puts annual rate of agriculture sector growth at 4.18 per cent

Recommends farm sector policies aligned more with a 'demand-driven food system' that is more nutritious and aligned with nature's resource endowments

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

The Economic Survey 2024 said that the Indian agriculture sector has registered an average annual growth rate of 4.18% at constant prices over the last five years and as per provisional estimates for 2023-24, the growth rate of the agriculture sector stood at 1.4%.



This has reduced the percentage share of imported edible oil, from 63.2% in 2015-16 to 57.3% in 2022-23, despite rising domestic demand and consumption patterns, it added.

Gross Capital Formation (GCF) grows: The Economic Survey further stated that the Gross Capital Formation (GCF) of the agriculture sector grew at the rate of 19.04% in 2022-23, and the GCF as a percentage of GVA rose from 17.7% in 2021-22 to 19.9% in 2022-23, suggesting an increase in investment in agriculture.

The average annual growth in GCF from 2016-17 to 2022-23 was 9.70%.

In terms of agricultural infrastructure, the Economic Survey shows that as of 30th April 2024, 48357 projects were sanctioned for storage infrastructure with ₹4570 Crore released as subsidy, and 20878

aligned with Nature's resource endowments, suggests the Survey.

The first recommendation is not banning futures or options at the first sign of price spikes. The intelligent regulatory design of such markets can obviate the need for bureaucratic interference in the futures market for agricultural commodities, adds the Survey.

The second recommendation by the Survey talks about invoking export bans only under exceptional circumstances and allowing domestic consumers to substitute, especially if the agricultural commodities in question are not essential consumption items such as foodgrains.

"Farmers should be allowed to benefit from higher international prices", states the Survey.

As the third step, the Survey talks about re-examining the inflation-targeting framework.

The fourth recommendation talks about the need for increasing the Total Net Irrigated Area. It highlights the need for better water utilisation farming practices and technologies like drip and fertigation.

The fifth and final suggestion by the Survey is about making farming consistent with climate considerations.

External sector shows resilience amid geopolitical headwinds: Economic Survey

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

The share of India's services exports in world services exports has risen remarkably from 0.5 per cent in 1993 to 4.3 per cent in 2022, according to the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament on Monday by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

India's external sector remained strong amidst ongoing geopolitical headwinds with services exports continuing to perform well. The overall trade deficit reduced from \$121.6 billion in FY23 to \$78.1 billion in FY24.

The survey says India is now the seventh-largest services-exporting country globally, rising phenomenally from its 24th position in 2001.

Amongst services exports, software/IT services and business services exports have increased. This was supported by India's emerging as a hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). The country ranks 2nd in the world in telecommunication, computer, and information services exports, 6th in personal, cultural, and recreational services exports,



and 8th in other business services exports.

The growth in Global Capability Centres (GCCs) is reflected in the services BoP, with 'Other Business Services' being the second-largest contributor in services exports in FY24 with a share of 26%. In 2012, about 760 GCCs were operating out of India, and as of March 2023, India houses over 1,600 GCCs.

India performed well in merchandise trade despite a lowering in global demand with exports crossing \$776 billion and imports reaching \$898 billion in FY23. With this, merchandise trade deficit narrowed to \$238.3 billion in FY24 compared to \$264.9 billion in the previous year.

There was a slowdown in India's major exporting partners (especially the EU, whose real GDP grew barely by 0.6 per cent in 2023, compared to 3.6 per cent growth in 2024), along with the lagged impact of monetary tightening carried out by many countries to control rising inflation.

The survey notes that the adverse trade environment in 2023 is expected to ease somewhat this year and the next, boosting goods trade in 2024 and 2025. World merchandise trade volume is expected to grow at 2.6 per cent and 3.3 per cent in 2024 and 2025, respectively, as demand for traded goods rebounds.

India's exports of engineering goods, electronic goods, and drugs & pharmaceuticals increased in FY24 on a YoY basis. India's share in world electronics exports also improved. India maintained a strong foothold in the drugs and pharmaceuticals sector.

Worst seems to be over, feels Economic Survey 24-25

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

The worst seems to be over for the Indian economy. At least that's what the Economic Survey-2024-25 feels. The Indian economy recovered swiftly from the pandemic, with its real GDP in FY24 being 20 per cent higher than the pre-COVID, FY20 levels. This meant a CAGR of 4.6 per cent from FY20, despite a 5.8 per cent decline in FY21 inflicted by the pandemic. Analysis in the survey shows that the current GDP level is close to the pre-pandemic trajectory in Q4 FY24. During the decade ending FY20, India grew at an average annual rate of 6.6 per cent, more or less reflecting the long-run growth prospects of the economy. This is the background against which we can see the prospects for FY25, the Economic Survey tabled on the floor of the Parliament by the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, pointed out.

IMF projects the global economy to grow at 3.2 per cent in 2024, with risks being broadly balanced. The average annual global growth was 3.7 per cent during the decade ending FY20. Inflationary pressures have moderated in most economies with declining global commodity prices and easing of supply chain pressures. However, core inflation remains sticky and driven by high service inflation.



Many central banks have hinted at the peaking of the interest rate hike cycle. The ECB has already cut the policy rate, while the Fed has hinted at reducing the rate in 2024. If the services inflation across economies moderates faster, that may allow central banks to bring forward the monetary policy easing cycle earlier than currently anticipated. A likely reduction in policy rates by central banks of AEs, especially the Fed, will open the space for central banks of EMs to follow the lead, bringing down the cost of capital, the survey hoped.

The Economic Survey said that domestic growth drivers have supported economic growth in FY24 despite uncertain global economic performance. Improved balance sheets will help the private sector cater to strong investment demand. A note of caution is warranted here. Private capital formation after good growth in the last three years

may turn slightly more cautious because of fears of cheaper imports from countries that have excess capacity. While merchandise exports are likely to increase with improving growth prospects in AEs, services exports are also likely to witness a further uptick. A normal rainfall forecast by the India Meteorological Department and the satisfactory spread of the southwest monsoon thus far are likely to improve agriculture sector performance and support the revival of rural demand. However, the monsoon season still has some ways to go. Structural reforms such as the GST and the IBC have also matured and are delivering envisaged results. Considering these factors, the Survey conservatively projects a real GDP growth of 6.5-7 per cent, with risks evenly balanced, cognizant of the fact that the market expectations are on the higher side," says Economic Survey 2023-24.

Realty players demand removal of capital gain tax on real estate

RITWIK MUKHERJEE KOLKATA, 22 JULY

With the first full term budget of the Modi 3.0 government barely 24 hours away and the Economic Survey having been tabled on the floor of the Parliament, different sectors aired different expectations from the Union Budget 24-25.

Hailing the comprehensive Economic Survey 2024 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Prashant Sharma, President, NAREDCO Maharashtra, said that the survey aptly highlighted significant strides in infrastructure development, which is crucial for sustained economic growth. The focus on enhancing urban infrastructure, particularly in Tier II and Tier III cities, aligns perfectly with the real estate sector's goals of promoting balanced regional development and addressing urban migration challenges. The survey's insights on sustainable and green construction practices resonate with our commitment to environmentally responsible development.

The survey also highlighted a pivotal shift in the economic landscape with healthier corporate and bank balance sheets poised to bolster private investment. This positive trajectory is mirrored in the residential real estate market, where we are witnessing a significant uptick in household sector capital formation.



Moreover, the projected economic growth and improvement in consumer confidence will positively impact the housing market, encouraging more homebuyers to invest in real estate. We are optimistic that the policies and initiatives outlined in the Economic Survey will pave the way for a robust and resilient real estate sector, contributing significantly to the nation's economic prosperity, he said.

"Positive and development centric interim budget highlighting commitment to infrastructure as a key driver of economic growth, coupled with the emphasis on modernization and indigenization, laid the foundations for fostering growth and resilience in the economy. The interim budget laid a roadmap for sustainable development by 2047 with the theme of 'Viksit Bharat'. As we await the upcoming union budget, we are optimistic that it shall be akin to the interim budget auguring growth and development. We continue to seek an industry status for the real estate sector, which would represent a

significant stride on the infrastructure front by the government. This move would enable developers to lower borrowing costs and pass on the benefits to the customers. As key stakeholders in the sector, one of our primary expectations is a reduction on GST rates on construction materials to enhance affordability and make home-buying more accessible. We expect policies that will promote financial inclusivity and incentivisation, such as reforms in taxation and financial accessibility. Additionally, optimising the process of land acquisition and registration of properties to make it more transparent and efficient, further encouraging development and investment in the sector. We are hopeful that the budget will positively contribute to the real estate sector's mission of inclusive growth, sustainable development, and job creation in the coming years," said Sharma.

Shalya Gupta, CEO, PHF Leasing Limited, on his parts, hoped that the budget would be in sync with the people aspirations from the Gov-

ernment's unprecedented third term win. The focus, he felt, will be on strengthening the existing policy framework, focus on ease of business and put in the building blocks for a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047.

"Liquidity is a challenge faced by the NBFC segment since public deposits and ECBs have been restricted and there is an appeal to the Government to ensure that systems are put in place for creating a refinancing body for the segment, so that the goal of financial inclusion of all can be met. The Government should also incentivise the NBFC segment for investment in tech, focus on serving the underserved communities and meet the final goal of easier access to credit by all. In the eMobility space, we hope that Government enlarges the scope of Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME 2), to include smaller players too in the segment. eRickshaws and eLoaders have transformed the Informal Public Transportation Systems in the rural and urban spaces. Today, we are witnessing a massive growth in the number of e-rickshaws, but not all of these are registered, especially those used for intra-business purposes. The Government should make EV registration and insurance a mandatory requirement. Lowering the registration cost as a policy will promote more people opting for registration," said Gupta.

Classified

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Bishnupriya Acharya, W/o. Late Gir Prasad Acharya, R/o. 25/H/3, Canal East Road, Kolkata-700054, declare that Bishnupriya Acharya and Acharya Piu is the same and one identical person vide affidavit before 1st Class Judicial Magistrate, Barrackpore dated: 19-02-2015.

I, RAJIB DEY, S/o. Krishna Dey of Mominpur, P.S.: Ashokenagar-743222, my wife Anwesha Sarkar shall from now be known as Anwesha Dey from 18-07-24, SI. No. 5253 vide affidavit at Barasat, 1st Class Executive Magistrate Court, North 24 Parganas.

I, Taniya Patra, W/o. Manabendra Patra of Vill. & P.O.: Baidyanathpur, P.S.: Bagnan, Dist.: Howrah, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Tania Patra as declared before the Notary Public Uluberia Court, Dist.: Howrah, State: West Bengal vide Affidavit No. AJUL 378, dated: 15-07-2024. Taniya Patra and Tania Patra both are same and one identical lady.

I, ABDUL MAHMUD, S/o. Late Md. Sadeque, residing at 24A, Ekbalpore Lane, Kolkata-700023 shall henceforth be known as Abul Mahmud as declared before the First Class Judicial Magistrate, Alipore Court, 24 Pgs (S), W.B. vide Affidavit No. 44934, dated: 20-07-2024. Abul Mahmud and Abul Mahmud both are same and one identical person.

I, BILKIS Rana, W/o. Abul Mahmud, residing at 24A, Ekbalpore Lane, Kolkata-700023 shall henceforth be known as Bilquis Rana as declared before the First Class Judicial Magistrate, Alipore Court, 24 Pgs(S), W.B. vide Affidavit No. 44935, dated: 20-07-2024. Bilkis Rana and Bilquis Rana both are same and one identical person.

SITUATION VACANT

BASANTIKA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
APPROVED BY NCTE & AFFILIATED TO WBBPE & BSAEU ESTD : 2014

RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Applications are invited for the Post of **Principal and Assistant Professor in Perspective Education or Foundation Course, Life Science, Health & Physical Education For B.Ed. Section** Qualification As per NCTE norm, application within 7 days.

Venue and date of interview shall be informed to shortlisted candidates

Send Bio-data to e-mail or by Post : bceganpur@gmail.com Contact: 9153894739 / 9564103707

Address : Ganpur, Md. Bazar, Birbhum, Pin - 731216, WB

TENDERS

SPL-202407-0029 - Saraswati Press Ltd. invites offer through e-tender to ascertain the rate for RCC Road. For more details please visit: www.wbtenders.gov.in & www.saraswatypress.com

IN MEMORIAM

We pay our respectful homage to Late Shri Hiralal Chowhan for being an ideal father & founder of Hiralal Chowhan & Co. We may have lost you on July 23, 1989, but you have

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Readers are requested to make appropriate enquiries and seek appropriate advice before sending money, incurring any expenses, acting on medical recommendations or entering into any commitment in relation to any advertisement published in this publication. The Statesman Group doesn't vouch any claim made by the advertisers of products and services. The printer, publisher, Editor and owners of The Statesman Group publications shall not be held liable for any consequences, in the event such claims are not honoured by the advertisers. For any loss incurred, the onus lies entirely with advertisers and not with the publication.

HDFC BANK
HDFC Bank Limited
Branch: 4, Mangoe Lane, 5th Floor, Surendra Mohan Ghosh Sarani, Kolkata-700001.
Tel: (033)-6608-6234 CIN L65920MH1994PLC080618 Website: www.hdfcbank.com

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

Whereas the Authorised Officer of **HDFC Bank Limited** (erstwhile HDFC Limited having amalgamated with HDFC Bank Limited by virtue of a Scheme of Amalgamation approved by Hon'ble NCLT-Mumbai vide order dated 17th March 2023) (**HDFC**), under the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("said Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices under Section 13 (2) of the said Act, calling upon the following borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) to pay the amounts mentioned against their respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices, within 60 days from the date of the said Notice(s), incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. till the date of payment and / or realisation.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower (s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s)	Outstanding Dues	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Property (ies) / Secured Asset (s)
1.	Borrower : Mr. Sandip Agarwal Co-Borrower : Mr. Sandip Goyal Mrs. Shivangi Agarwal Scandia Properties Pvt. Ltd. Karan Export India Private Limited	Rs. 1,91,12,373/- as on 31.03.2024	30.04.2024	19.07.2024 (Symbolic Possession)	The property being Unit No.: 402, admeasuring 1456 sq. ft. (135.26 sq. mtrs) approx., on the 4th Floor of the building known as "Lords", constructed upon land admeasuring 01 bigha 07 cottahs 13 chittaks 39 sq. ft. more or less, situated at premises No.: 7/1, Lord Sinha Road, Holding No.: 45, within the limits of Block: 19 of South Division of Kolkata, P.S.: Shakespear Sarani, Kolkata: 700071, alongwith the undivided proportionate share of the land and construction thereon present and in future (the said property). The premises is butted and bounded as follows: On the North: Premises No.: 8, Lord Sinha Road, On the South: AJC Bose Road, On the East: Premises No.: 1, AJC Bose Road, On the West: Partly by premises No.: 7, Lord Sinha Road and partly by Lord Sinha Road.

*With further interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. incurred till the date of payment and / or realisation.

However, since the borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) mentioned hereinabove have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) mentioned hereinabove in particular and to the public in general that the Authorised Officer of HDFC has taken symbolic possession of the immovable property (ies) / secured asset(s) described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him/him under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned above.

The borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) mentioned hereinabove in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid Immovable Property(ies) / Secured Asset(s) and any dealings with the said Immovable Property (ies) / Secured Asset(s) will be subject to the mortgage of HDFC. Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) attention is/are invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured asset(s).

Copies of the Panchanama and Inventory made are available with the undersigned, and the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) is / are requested to collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.

Place : Kolkata
Date : 23.07.2024

For HDFC Bank Limited
Sd/- HIRAK KUMAR PARAI
Authorised Officer

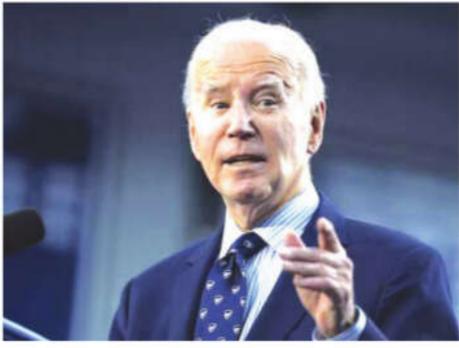
Regd. Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai - 400013

Biden staff knew of his decision one minute before the public did

He spoke multiple times with Vice President Kamala Harris, whom he would endorse

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON, 22 JULY

At 1:45 p.m. Sunday, President Joe Biden's senior staff was notified that he was stepping away from the 2024 race.



lady with him as he talked it through with a small circle of people who have been with him for decades.

They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to talk about private discussions.

It wasn't until Saturday evening that Biden began to come to the conclusion that he would not run for reelection.

deputy chief of staff Annie Tomasini, and Anthony Bernal, senior adviser to the first lady.

By Sunday, his decision crystallized. He spoke multiple times with Vice President Kamala Harris, whom he would endorse.

250,000 stimulant tablets seized in Myanmar: Myanmar police seized 250,000 stimulant tablets in eastern Myanmar's Shan State, according to the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) on Monday.

US and Japan to hold security talks on July 28: Foreign and defence ministers from Japan and the US will hold security talks in Japan on July 28 in an effort to push forward what Biden called a historic upgrade in the alliance, reported Xinhua news agency.

Form No. 3 See Regulation-15 (1)(a)/16(3) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL KOLKATA (DRT 3) 8th Floor, Jeevan Sudha Building, 42-C, Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700 071

Form IV (See sub-rule (2A) of rule 5) Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993

FORM NO. NCLT-3A Advertisement detailing petition (see rule 35) BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, KOLKATA BENCH, KOLKATA

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Anupama Bera, daughter of Parash Chandra Bera, of Villi-Chhotoudaypur, PO-Ballygachindapur, PS-Patashpur, PO-Arghol, 721456, who has been missing since 07.06.2024 from residence, Patashpur, Purba Medinipur, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-16 years, Complexion-Fair, Height-153 cms., Wearing- Yellow Frock, Leggings, Language-Bengali.

NOTICE OF PETITION A petition under section 232 of the Companies Act, 2013, for Sanctioning the Scheme of Amalgamation of SUNYOUT CONSULTANCY PRIVATE LIMITED (PAN: AAJCS6855L) and TOUCHSTONE TRADERS PRIVATE LIMITED (PAN: AADCT0633L) (hereinafter referred to as the 'TRANSFEROR COMPANIES') with VEGAN SALES PRIVATE LIMITED (PAN: AAACV6969C) (hereinafter referred to as the 'TRANSFeree COMPANY'), was presented by AISHA AMIN, Advocate, B-192, 404 Sukhobhadr Complex Shapoorji New Town, Kolkata-700135.

To, (1) Rajesh Sadhukhan, son of Late Tapan Kumar Sadhukhan, residing at Village- Gabbaria, P.O. Dosalina, P.S. Bishnupur, South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743503, proprietor of M/s Rajesh Oil Industries, situated at Village- Raghobpur, P.O. Napaigunge, P.S. Bishnupur, District- South 24 Parganas, Pin-700103

WHEREAS OA/870/2015 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 13/05/2024, WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 16,99,812.96 (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Two and Paise Ninety Six only) as on 31.12.2013.

Table with 4 columns: REF No., Name of Project, Bid Submission Start Date, Last Date of Bid Submission. Includes project details for West Bengal Forest Development Corporation Limited.

TENDER GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PURULIA ZILLA PARISHAD, PURULIA Notice Inviting Tender E Tender Notice No. e-NIT No.-12 of 2024-2025, Memo No. 62 / DE / PBZP, dated: 18-07-2024.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR. 2nd corrigendum to bid identification No. Tender Online RCK-18 / 24 invited by this office vide Letter No. 2226 Dt. 28-06-2024.

Table with 4 columns: Procurement Officer, Bid Identification No., Availability of Tender on-line for bidding, Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification. Includes details for Chief Construction Engineer Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PURULIA ZILLA PARISHAD, PURULIA Notice Inviting Tender E Tender Notice No. e-NIT No.-11 of 2024-2025, Memo No. 61 / DE / PBZP, dated: 18-07-2024.

EASTERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING E-AUCTION E-Auction Notice No. COM/PUB/HWH/RDNI/LOCO, dated : 19.07.2024. E-Auction is invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, 4th Floor, Lat Yatri Niwas Building, near Howrah station.

Recruitment Panel for the Post of DATA ENTRY OPERATOR under SBM(G), ALIPURDUAR ZILLA PARISHAD EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION NO. 2930 / H&S / APDZP, DATE: 22-12-2023. Table with columns: NAME OF CANDIDATE, ROLL NO., POSITION.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of an Unknown Deadbody, of PO-Bandel, 712123, found on 22.06.2024 from 38119 UP Main Line at Bandel RS under Bandel GRPS, Description of this Deadbody is: Age-55 years, Height-168 cms., Sex: Male, Wearing- Yellow Brown Printed Half Hata Shirt, Maroon Colour Track Suit.

SILIGURI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-Tender Notice 01 (one) No. e-Tender Notice vide NIT-10 / WBMAD / SMC / PW / 24-25, dt. 11-07-2024 is / are hereby invited from reliable resourceful bona fide, eligible contractors.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Rama Pramanik, Daughter of Gour Pramanik, of Villi-Uttar Arya, PO-Hatthuba, PS-Habra, 743263, who has been missing since 26.05.2024 from residence, Habra, Barasat Police District, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-17 years, Complexion-Sallow, Height-153 cms., Wearing- Frock Black Leggings Pant, Language-Bengali.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR. e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE 1. Name of the work : Repair/Maintenance of Rural Roads Constructed under PMGSY works in the Dist. of Kendrapara-Jajpur.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of an Unknown Deadbody, of PO-Bandel, 712123, found on 22.06.2024 from 38119 UP Main Line at Bandel RS under Bandel GRPS.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Kiran Howladar, Daughter of Laxmikanta Howladar, Spouse's Name: Monarjan Howladar of Villi+PO-Gourdash Srikrishnapur, PS-Jibantala, 743364, who has been missing since 24.06.2024 from residence, Jibantala, Barui, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-40 years, Complexion-Wheatish, Height- 138 cms., Wearing- Red Saree, Language-Bengali, Identification Mark-Right Hand Finger Cur.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Shambhunath Mondal, Son of Lt. Bijoykrishna Mondal, of Villi+PO-Krishnachandrapur, PS-Mathurapur, 743354, who has been missing since 06.07.2024 from residence, Mathurapur, Sundarban Police District, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-75 years, Complexion-Fair, Height- 191 cms., Wearing- White Punjabi, Dhuti, Language-Bengali, Identification Nature-Mentally Disbalance.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Kamala Kanta Mishra, Son of Durgapada Mishra, of Villi+PO-Rangarh, PS-Lalgurha, 721128, who has been missing since 06.12.2023 from residence, Lalgurha, Jhargram, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-42 years, Complexion-Fair, Height- 160 cms., Wearing- Full Sleeve Black and White Shirt and Green Muffler, Black Pant, Language-Bengali.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Rama Pramanik, Daughter of Gour Pramanik, of Villi-Uttar Arya, PO-Hatthuba, PS-Habra, 743263, who has been missing since 26.05.2024 from residence, Habra, Barasat Police District, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-17 years, Complexion-Sallow, Height-153 cms., Wearing- Frock Black Leggings Pant, Language-Bengali.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Shambhunath Mondal, Son of Lt. Bijoykrishna Mondal, of Villi+PO-Krishnachandrapur, PS-Mathurapur, 743354, who has been missing since 06.07.2024 from residence, Mathurapur, Sundarban Police District, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-75 years, Complexion-Fair, Height- 191 cms., Wearing- White Punjabi, Dhuti, Language-Bengali, Identification Nature-Mentally Disbalance.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Md Ritan Ali, Son of Lt. Abdul Basir, of Villi+PO-Kadamtali, PS-Pukhuria, 732102, who has been missing since 21.06.2022 from residence, Pukhuria, Malda, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-24 years, Complexion-Fair, Height- 168 cms., Language-Bengali, Please inform whereabouts of the missing person, to the Spl. Supdt. of Police, C.I.D. (W.B.), Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.

INFORMATION WANTED This is the photograph of Rama Pramanik, Daughter of Gour Pramanik, of Villi-Uttar Arya, PO-Hatthuba, PS-Habra, 743263, who has been missing since 26.05.2024 from residence, Habra, Barasat Police District, W.B., Description of this missing person is: Age-17 years, Complexion-Sallow, Height-153 cms., Wearing- Frock Black Leggings Pant, Language-Bengali.

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পিতা-মাতা/অভিভাবকের অনুসন্ধানের জন্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পিতা-মাতা/অভিভাবকের অনুসন্ধানের জন্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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শিশুর বিবরণ নাম: অজনা ঐ তুলি বয়স: ১৩ বছর, লিঙ্গ: ঙী, প্রাপ্তির দিন: ০৩.০৬.২০২৪, বর্তমান অধিকার: অশা ভবন স্টোর সি. ডব্লিউ. এস.এন. গার্লস হোম, কাওজাজা, বেতবেড়িয়া, বিষ্ণুপুর, দক্ষিণ ২৪ পরগনা, উচ্চতা: ৪'-১০", গায়ের রং: গোলাপি, খানা ও তারিখ সহ জি.ডি.ই নম্বর: খানা: স্টিলপ্লাজ; জি.ডি.ই নম্বর: ২১১৪; তারিখ: ০১.০৫.২০২৪। যোগাযোগের বিশদ বিবরণ: ডি.সি.পি.ইউ, কলকাতা, তিকানা: শূভা বিল্ডিং (সেন্টম এল), ডি. এফ.-৯, সেক্টর - ১, স্টেট লেক, কলকাতা-৭০০০৬৪ আইসিএ-ডি২২০৬(৩)/২০২৪

শিশুর বিবরণ নাম: শ্বা ভাগত বয়স: ১১ বছর, লিঙ্গ: ঙী, প্রাপ্তির দিন: ১১.০৬.২০২৪, বর্তমান অধিকার: অশা ভবন স্টোর সি. ডব্লিউ. এস.এন. গার্লস হোম, কাওজাজা, বেতবেড়িয়া, বিষ্ণুপুর, দক্ষিণ ২৪ পরগনা, উচ্চতা: ৪'-৯", গায়ের রং: ফর্সা, পরনের পোশাক: লাল হাটী, খানা ও তারিখ সহ জি.ডি.ই নম্বর: খানা: শিরালদহ জি.আর.পি.এফ.; জি.ডি.ই নম্বর: ৩০০; তারিখ: ০৬.০৬.২০২৪। যোগাযোগের বিশদ বিবরণ: ডি.সি.পি.ইউ, কলকাতা, তিকানা: শূভা বিল্ডিং (সেন্টম এল), ডি. এফ.-৯, সেক্টর - ১, স্টেট লেক, কলকাতা-৭০০০৬৪ আইসিএ-ডি২২০৬(৩)/২০২৪

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SC confirms bail of Ashish Mishra in Lakhimpur Kheri violence case

A bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan also granted bail to farmers in the case

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday granted bail to Ashish Mishra - the prime accused in mowing down of the four farmers at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh in October 2021, who were agitating against the, now repealed, three farm laws intended to corporatise the agriculture and its produce. In all eight people lost their lives including mowing down of the four farmers.

Granting bail to Ashish Mishra - son of former Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Mishra - a bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan also granted bail to farmers in the



case and directed the trial court to expedite the hearing.

"We direct the trial court to fix the schedule, keeping in view the other time-bound or urgent matters that are pending but prioritising the pending subject," the bench ordered.

Ashish Mishra was grant-

ed interim bail by the top court on January 25, 2023, as it noted that the trial in the case is unlikely to conclude early. Since then, the interim bail has been extended from time to time.

On September 26, 2023, the Supreme Court permitted Ashish Mishra to visit Delhi to take care of his ail-

ing mother with conditions not to interact with the media on the issues relating to Lakhimpur Kheri violence and other matters.

Mishra was first arrested in the case on October 9, 2021. He walked out of jail on February 15, 2022, after the Allahabad High Court had granted him bail.

In October 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, that erupted following the mowing down of the four farmers, eight people lost their lives including four farmers who were mowed down.

Granting interim 8-week bail to Ashish Mishra, which was extended from time to time, the bench in its order had said, "We are conscious of grave allegations levelled against the petitioner (Ashish

Mishra) but we must also acknowledge that principle of procedural fairness requires these allegations to be proved in the trial proceedings. In the present case charges have been framed, and the petitioner is in custody for more than a year. In view of the large volume of oral and documentary evidence... trial cannot be expected to conclude that early."

On December 6, 2023, an Uttar Pradesh court had framed charges against 14 persons including Mishra. Mishra has been charged with a number of offences including murder, attempt to murder, rioting and criminal conspiracy. The trial had begun on December 16, 2023.

Naveen Patnaik leads opposition

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 22 JULY

Naveen Patnaik, in his new role as Leader of the Opposition, led a protest walkout on the first day of the Assembly session, raising the assault of a government employee by the Governor's son and the subsequent police inaction.

As Governor Raghubar Das commenced his customary address to the Assembly on Monday, Naveen Patnaik stood up to speak.

Although much of what he said was inaudible, the entire BJD party marched out of the House, boycotting the Governor's speech. The Congress members also staged a walkout after raising slogans on the same issue.

Outside the Assembly, Patnaik expressed his dismay: "My party and I are disappointed and surprised to find that the present government



has taken no action against the Governor's son, who assaulted a government officer. We are deeply shocked by this. Law and order seem to have broken down in our state. When I was in government, Ministers, MLAs, and senior government servants who broke the law were held accountable. The state government must act according to the law. This is why my party marched out of the Assembly."

Patnaik's assertive actions in his new role took many by surprise.

BJD chief whip Pramila Mallick alleged that Patnaik's microphone was muted during his speech, calling it undemocratic and stating that she had filed a written complaint with the Speaker.

Responding to Patnaik's statement, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said, "The district collector of Puri has been asked to probe the alleged assault case involving the Governor's son. He will submit his report within 15 days, and the government will take necessary action. The BJD should be patient."

It is noted that Baikuntha Pradhan, a staff member deputed to the Raj Bhawan in Puri during the Rath Yatra, alleged that the Governor's son, Lalit, and his friends assaulted him on 7 July. Pradhan verbally informed the secretary to the Governor and subsequently lodged a police complaint.

Himanta Sarma discusses Assam flood situation with PM Modi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss critical issues facing the state, including the ongoing flood situation and various developmental initiatives.

The Prime Minister's Office confirmed the meeting through a post on X. It said, "Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma, met Prime Minister @narendramodi."

During their interaction, CM Sarma expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to seek the Prime Minister's blessings and guidance.

He provided a detailed briefing on the severe flood situation that has been affect-



ing Assam and outlined the state government's efforts to mitigate the challenges faced by the residents.

"Had the absolute privilege of seeking the blessings and guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi Ji today. During our meeting, I briefed him on the flood situation in Assam and updated him on the various efforts underway to mitigate the challenges faced by our people. I also discussed the sta-

tus of ongoing developmental works. On behalf of the people of Assam, I once again extended our heartfelt congratulations as he embarks on a historic third term," CM Sarma posted on X.

The discussion also included an update on the progress of several developmental projects in Assam.

CM Sarma emphasized the importance of continued support from the central government to ensure timely completion and effective implementation of these initiatives.

Prime Minister Modi, who is serving his third consecutive term, reiterated the central government's commitment to assisting Assam in overcoming its challenges.

BSP opposes lifting of ban on govt employees attending RSS events

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, 22 JULY

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati has termed lifting ban on government employees joining RSS function is an appeasement move without any national interest. She has demanded withdrawal of such an order.

In a couple of tweet on Monday on social media X, Mayawati wrote, "The Centre's decision to lift the 58-year-old ban on government employees visiting RSS shakhas is beyond the national interest and a politically motivated decision to appease the Sangh, so that after the Lok Sabha elections, there will be intense conflict between



the two regarding government policies and their arrogant attitudes."

"It is necessary for the government employees to work impartially in the public interest and welfare within the ambit of the Constitution and law, whereas the activities of the RSS, which have been banned many times, have not only been quite political but also electoral for a particular party. In such a situation, this decision is unfair and should be immediately reversed," she said.

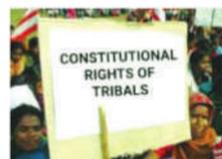
Northeast tribal councils urge govt to table Constitutional Amendment Bill

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHILLONG, JULY 22

Leaders from 10 autonomous tribal councils in the Northeast have resolved to push the NDA government to table the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 2019, during the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament.

The bill aims to amend the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to provide stronger provisions for the protection and preservation of the tribes' rich culture and traditions in the northeastern states.

At a meeting in New Delhi, chaired by Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance Chairman Pradyot Manikya



Deb Barma, representatives of the tribal councils decided to urge the government to present the bill in Parliament.

The councils involved include the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council, Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council, Garo Hills Autonomous District Council, Bodo Territorial Council, Tripura Territorial Council, Karbi Anglong Autonomous

Council, Dima Hasao Autonomous Council, and the three ADCs of Mizoram: Lai Autonomous District Council, Chakma Autonomous District Council, and Mara Autonomous District Council.

Many Chief Executive Members (CEMs) of the autonomous district councils highlighted that the BJP, in its election manifesto, had promised to table the amendment bill within 100 days of returning to power.

The proposed amendment is seen as a crucial step towards ensuring the protection and preservation of the unique cultural heritage and traditions of the tribes in the northeastern region.

Moidams of Assam nominated for UNESCO World Heritage tag

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, 22 JULY

The historic 'moidams' of Assam are on the brink of global acclaim following their recent nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the announcement, expressing immense pride in India's heritage.

"This is India's 43rd World Heritage Site and the first in Northeast India to receive Cultural World Heritage status," PM Modi stated, underscoring the significance of this recognition.

The moidams, ancient burial mounds of the Ahom Dynasty, are celebrated for their unique cultural and historical value.

The nomination has



received strong backing from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which has endorsed the Moidams, further elevating their status on the global stage.

ICOMOS is a prestigious body dedicated to the conservation and protection of cultural heritage sites worldwide.

PM Modi highlighted the profound cultural importance

of the Moidams, noting that their inclusion on the World Heritage List would not only spotlight Assam's rich heritage but also enhance efforts to preserve these historic sites.

"The recognition of the Moidams will not only bring international attention to Assam's rich cultural heritage but also foster greater appreciation and preservation of

these historic sites," Modi stated.

The Moidams, located in Charaideo, are the royal burial grounds of the Ahom kings and queens. The Ahom Dynasty, which ruled Assam for nearly 600 years, left an indelible mark on the region's history, culture, and architecture. These burial mounds are not only a testament to the dynasty's legacy but also serve as a significant part of India's archaeological heritage.

The nomination of the Moidams has the potential to attract global tourists and researchers, thereby boosting local tourism and economy. It also places Assam on the global cultural map, drawing attention to the state's unique historical narratives and architectural marvels.

Maternal mortality rate declines, women beneficiaries in PMJAY spike: Survey

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

Over the past few years, healthcare has become more affordable and accessible for the general public, as noted by the National Health Accounts (NHA) estimates, states the Economic Survey 2023-2024.

The Survey highlights that the latest NHA estimates for FY20 show an increase in the share of Government Health Expenditure (GHE) in the total GDP as well as the share of GHE in Total Health Expenditure (THE).

The Economic Survey underscores improvements in key health indicators

such as Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), declining from 39 per 1000 live births in 2013 to 28 per 1000 live births in 2020, and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) declining from 167 per lakh live births in 2014 to 97 per lakh live births in 2020.

Further, the Economic Survey points out that over the years, the share of primary healthcare expenditure has increased from 51.3% of GHE in FY15 to 55.9% of GHE in FY20.

The share of primary and secondary care in the GHE rose from 73.2% in FY15 to 85.5% in FY20.

On the other hand, the share of primary and secondary care in private health

expenditure has declined from 83.0% to 73.7% during the same period, which the Survey attributes to rising tertiary disease burden and utilization of Government facilities for primary healthcare.

It noted a significant increase in the social security expenditure on health, which grew from 5.7% in FY15 to 9.3% in FY20.

There was also a decline in out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) as a percentage of Total Health Expenditure (THE) between FY15 and FY20.

Further, is highlighted key initiatives and schemes of the Government to ensure 'Quality Healthcare for All'.

Gauhati HC convicts 32 people in APSC cash-for-job scam

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, 22 JULY

The Gauhati High Court on Monday convicted 32 people, including kingpin Rakesh Paul, in connection with a cash-for-job scam.

The court found the defendants guilty in the Agriculture Development Officer (ADO) recruitment scam, which has been under intense scrutiny due to the high-profile nature of the accused and the extensive corruption involved in the selection process for ADO positions advertised in 2013.

The case saw 32 out of 44 accused individuals convicted.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

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20	21				22
23					

ACROSS

- Fingerprint pattern (5)
- Ground wheat (5)
- Frozen water (3)
- Winter sport (3,6)
- Irish county (5)
- Dependable (7)
- Confident (4-7)
- Release from blame (7)
- Hindu deity (5)
- Police vehicle (6,3)
- Transgress (3)
- Bird of prey (5)
- English county (5)

DOWN

- Flight of fancy (6)
- Short jokes (3-6)
- Made redundant (4,3)
- Plant life (5)
- Tree (3)
- Beat (6)
- Tenacity (11)
- Poverty (9)
- Rapid rise (7)
- Taste (6)
- Mathematical array (6)
- At large (5)
- Pull (3)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Boat
- Tin (Bought in)
- Grimace
- Alone
- Arena
- Treadle

DOWN

- Low-spirited
- Isthmus
- Scare
- Shawl
- Exclude
- Tilt
- Melt

OUTLET

- Beggar
- Abide
- Tawdler
- Niece
- Harass
- Westminster
- Fare

INSECT

- Insect
- Defect
- Inset
- Mule
- Azure

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker

I CAN'T FIND MY BALL ANYWHERE. FORGET IT

WAIT A MINUTE!

ISN'T THIS WHERE YOU LOST YOUR BALL LAST WEEK?

RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson

I TOLD TANGLEFOOT TO DIGGISE HIMSELF AS A TREE AND GPY ON THE PALEFACES

IT DIDN'T WORK, CHIEF!

SOMEHOW THEY BECAME SUSPICIOUS

DADDY DAZE/John Kovalski

GUESS WHAT YOUR DRAWING IS?

UH... A SNAKE?

OH... IT'S A SNOWFLAKE.

HUH...

I GUESS I WAS THROWN OFF BY THE SNOWFLAKE DEVOURING A SMALL RODENT.

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
Lalibazar (Police Control Room) 221-43230
S. P. (North 24-Pgrs) 25423005
S.P. (South 24-Pgrs) 2479-3333/1311
Bhawan 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), 1316, 2638
7412/3542/2581 (manual), Sealdah: 2350-3535/3537
Shalimar Station: 2668-1121, Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway: 139.

SCRABBLE® G R A M S

Y L U F R I L
E P E L M B I
E A B C S N E
H S E D S C S

PAR SCORE 75-85
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

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SUDOKU

Concepts: SudoKu By Dave Green

		2			5			
	1		4			7		
					3	2	6	
5	8	4			2			
3								1
		7				5	9	8
2	6	8						
	4			9				3
					5			

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.

If you are a school or college student who has a poem, essay or other fiction or nonfiction pieces which you would like to share with The Statesman's readers please write in with your submission to readers@thestatesmangroup.com. Don't forget to mention your name, the name of your school, your class and your phone number. Please write "C&C" in the subject field. Publication is at the discretion of the editors.

What is the role of chatbots and virtual assistants in education?

RAHUL PRATAP SINGH KAURAV

In the swiftly evolving landscape of education, the integration of technology has catalysed transformative changes, pushing the boundaries of traditional pedagogy and opening new avenues for learning. From pre-primary schools to prestigious universities, the education sector has embraced digital advancements, making it a vanguard of technological adoption. Among these innovations, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants have emerged as key players, fundamentally altering the dynamics of student-academic interaction and enriching the learning experience with unprecedented levels of personalisation and accessibility.

Personalised support through AI
One of the most significant contributions of chatbots and virtual assistants is their ability to offer personalised support, a stark contrast to the 'one-size-fits-all' approach prevalent in traditional educational models. For example, Duolingo's chatbot feature allows language learners to practice conversations in a simulated environment, adjusting the difficulty level based on the user's proficiency. This individualised approach ensures that learners are neither overwhelmed nor under-challenged, promoting optimal learning outcomes.

Byju's is an Indian online tutoring company that uses chatbots to provide personalised learning experiences to its students. The chatbots can answer students' questions, provide feedback on their work, and help them track their progress.

Similarly, Georgia Tech's 'Jill Watson', a virtual TA built on IBM's Watson platform, addresses student queries in online forums, demonstrating how AI can provide scalable, personalised assistance without compromising the quality of education. These examples underscore the potential of AI tools to tailor educational content and inter-

actions to each student's unique needs, enhancing engagement and facilitating a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Instant access to information
Chatbots and virtual assistants also excel in providing instant access to information, thereby streamlining administrative tasks and enhancing the educational experience. The University of Adelaide's chatbot offers an illustrative case, assisting prospective and current students with course-related queries, enrolment processes, and administrative information, available 24/7. This immediate access to information empowers students to make informed decisions and fosters an environment where administrative hurdles do not impede academic progress.

Enhanced learning experience
Beyond administrative support, chatbots and virtual assistants play a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience.



experience by making it more engaging and interactive. For instance, the QuizBot, an educational tool developed by researchers, engages students in quiz-based learning activities, enhancing knowledge retention and making learning a more active and enjoyable process. This shift towards a more dynamic and responsive learning environment encourages students to take an active role in their education, fostering a culture of curiosity and continuous learning.

Hello English is a mobile app that uses chatbots to help users learn English. The app offers a variety of lessons and exercises, and the chatbots can provide personalised feedback and support.

Chatbots and virtual assistance: The future of education
The integration of chatbots and virtual assistants in education represents a paradigm shift towards a more



accessible, personalised, and engaging learning experience. As these technologies continue to evolve, their potential to transform the educational landscape becomes increasingly evident. By automating routine tasks, providing instant access to information, and customising the learning experience, chatbots and virtual assistants not only make education more efficient but also more effective and inclusive.

The role of chatbots and virtual assistants in education extends beyond mere technological novelty; they are integral to the future of educational practices. As we witness their increasingly sophisticated applications within the sector, it becomes clear that these AI-driven tools hold the key to unlocking new pedagogical possibilities, making learning not just a task but a journey of discovery and engagement. The future of education, therefore, lies in harnessing the full potential of these technologies to create a learning environment that is not only informative but transformative.

University of Strathclyde offers course on MChem chemistry with drug discovery

The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, is inviting applications for its MChem chemistry with drug discovery course starting in September 2024. The only course of its kind in Scotland, it trains a new generation of biologically and pharmaceutically aware chemistry graduates whose mission is to invent better, safer drugs to fight and cure disease. The course is taught in partnership with the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences and is designed in consultation with the major UK drug manufacturers.

In this course, students will study core chemistry classes blended with specialist courses on disease targets, the design of selectively acting prototype drugs, synthetic and mimetic strategies in producing drug prototypes, and the refinement of promising compounds.

Graduates of this course have excellent opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry, as well as all the usual careers open to a professionally accredited chemist.

Students can study at a European university for one year of their degree. They can also spend their placement year abroad. It's possible to switch between the other

MChem courses and also the following shorter BSc degrees within the first three years:

BSc (Hons) chemistry
BSc (Hons) forensic and analytical chemistry

BSc (Hons) chemistry with drug discovery
Students will attend classes in chemistry and mathematics, and physics or biology at an introductory or advanced level. They'll also attend specialist classes on use and abuse of drugs in society and pharmaceutical sciences and drug development.

In later years, students will study subjects including fundamental inorganic, organic and biological and physical chemistry with an increase in laboratory work.

In year four, students will undertake a paid 12-month industrial placement, normally in the pharmaceutical industry.

In year five, students will specialise in the areas and applications that interest them most and undertake a research project.

Students will complete a research project in one of the university's specialist research laboratories in their final year, where they'll work with full-time researchers

on real chemistry challenges.

Work placement - Students will undertake a paid 12-month placement in the pharmaceutical industry, either in the UK or abroad.

Research and knowledge exchange placements within the department's 'Chemistry Clinic' are also available.

The Strathclyde chemistry industrial placement scheme is one of the longest-running in the UK, and more than 70 students are placed with companies each year.

Eligibility - 70-75 per cent in all subjects taken at level 12 and the same at level 10. Marks should be particularly strong in the proposed area of study. English language minimum score of IELTS 6.0 (with no component below 5.5).

Fee - International students 2024 -25 annual fee is £25,250.

Scholarships - Scholarships of between £5,000 - £7,000 are available to new international students joining an under-

graduate degree in the faculty of science in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Deadline - 31 July, 2024.



Students' Space

Vivacious Vocabulary
UBIQUITOUS
Adjective
Pronunciation: you-bi-kwuh-tuhs
Meaning: Being present everywhere at once
Example: His ubiquitous influence was felt by all the family
Synonyms: Ever-present, all-over, present everywhere

VALEDICTORY
Noun
Pronunciation: Va-luh-dik-tr-ee
Meaning: A farewell oration
Example: He received a very warm valedictory for his long career
Synonyms: Farewell, leaving, parting, departing

WAMBLE
Verb
Pronunciation: Wam-ble
Meaning: To feel nauseous
Example: My stomach wambles at the very thought of it
Synonyms: To turn, to twist, to move unsteadily

Compiled by GRACE ANDREW

The evil face of love

"Country roads, take me home..." The man in his early thirties sang merrily as he decided to close his shop early. He owned 'The Meat Centre', everyone's favourite meat shop in town. The shop had become his responsibility when he was a teen, due to his father's death, forcing him into the family business. Initially disliking inheriting the meat shop because he didn't want to confine himself to these four walls, he took over for his dear mother's sake.

"Ah, done for the day. Good to go." While drying his hands and preparing to switch off all the lights, he heard the sound of breaking glass from the windowpane. Startled, he cautiously approached, holding his favourite knife close to his chest. Surprisingly, he saw a small pebble wrapped in white cloth on the floor. Upon closer inspection, he noticed the cloth was bloodied and had writing on it. Rather than being frightened, the sight widened his smile. He even took a moment to savour the smell of fresh blood before promptly closing the shop and heading towards an alley a few blocks away. Upon arrival, he called out, "I've received your message, love. You can come out now." Just as he finished speaking, he felt a slight sting on his cheekbone as a small pocket knife cut him, drawing blood. Chuckling to himself, he understood that his 'love's' love language was physical touch, so he didn't mind the minor injury. Patiently, he waited, knowing exactly who would emerge from her hiding place.

A small, petite figure cautiously approached and embraced him. "I missed you," she whispered, her voice sweeter than sugar and softer than feathers. The man smiled and wrapped his arms around her. "You never fail to surprise me with your grand entrances," he remarked fondly, gently teasing her as she held onto him tightly. After a few moments, she released him, her eyes welling up as she noticed the cut she had caused. Wiping away a drop of blood from his cheek, she whispered, "I'm sorry." The man sighed affectionately, unaffected by the pain. Knowing the best way to cheer her up, he took her hand and whispered, "Would you like to see how I cut meat for the shop, love? I know it's your favourite thing to watch." Her eyes sparkled brighter than stars as a small smile formed on her face. It was her favourite part of the day. She nodded eagerly. The man couldn't help but laugh softly at her reaction. Soon, they stood before a dark room. Inside, the air was filled with wails, the clinking of iron chains, and traces of bloody foam. The man glanced at the petite figure beside him. Her eyes were brighter than before, and she appeared more relaxed. He sighed to himself, whispering softly, "Anything for love".

PROKRITI PATRA, Class 10

Key trends shaping business education in 2024

DEEPAK CHAKRABORTI

New technology, shifting consumer preferences, and an increased emphasis on ethics and sustainability will all cause business education to undergo radical transformation by the year 2024. Innovations like this affect classroom practices, lesson plans, and course content. The proliferation of digital resources has improved education and produced more competent workers for tech-driven companies, all because of information and communication technology developments. Digitalisation and technology integration are terms used to describe this. Online technologies that tailor courses to each student's unique needs and achievements have made data science and analytics standards at business schools. There has been a change toward sustainability in corporate operations due to the increased significance of CSR and the SDGs. Classes in ecological leadership, sustainable finance, and environmentally conscious advertising are all necessary. Ethical company leadership has become more important in light of the corporate catastrophes of the last decade. Business schools emphasise corporate responsibility, ethics, and governance to prepare students for the

difficult moral decisions they will face on the job.

Globalisation has made cross-cultural competence an absolute need for today's business leaders. Business schools actively promote global thinking and cross-cultural competence among their students via opportunities for international alliances, dual degrees, and collaborative research. The growing importance of innovation to the economy is reflected in the fact that business schools are placing more emphasis on entrepreneurship. Students may get assistance, connections, and resources to develop their business ideas in start-up labs and incubators. The goal of the many new design thinking and creative problem-solving courses offered by business schools is to foster in their students an attitude of constant experimentation, critical thinking, and the ability to learn from their mistakes.

Lifelong learning is gradually displacing traditional, one-time schooling as the preferred method of education, and micro-credentials and modular learning are gaining popularity. Digital technology and platforms have enabled high-quality remote teaching, leading to an increase in the popularity of online and hybrid learning methodologies as a result of COVID-19. To meet the need for business leaders

with data analysis and interpretation skills, schools of business are introducing data literacy and analytics courses. With the rise of data analytics, business intelligence, and big data courses, students in business school are more equipped to make decisions, identify patterns, and drive strategic initiatives using advanced analytical tools. Bringing together theory and practice, real-time data, and dynamic case studies enhances management education.

Human-centred leadership styles and emotional intelligence training are increasingly prioritised in today's complex corporate world. Business schools focus on student welfare and wellness initiatives to enhance mental and physical health.

Students engage in real-world problem-solving through team projects, business simulations, and challenges while gaining valuable experience through partnerships and internships in the business sector. Diversity, equality, and inclusion are increasingly recognised in business curricula, with initiatives involving faculty and students, scholarships for underrepresented groups, and inclusive teaching. By 2024, business education will undergo significant transformation due to technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and increased emphasis on ethics and sus-

tainability. By adapting to these changes, business schools can better prepare

students for leadership roles in modern society.

The writer is the Director of Jaipuria Institute of Management, Indore.





'ROOT COULD EVENTUALLY OVERTAKE SACHIN'
Former captain Michael Vaughan has lauded Joe Root for being a special batter and has predicted that he could overtake Sachin Tendulkar's record for most runs by a batter in the history of men's Test cricket. On Sunday, Root smashed 122 off 178 balls, his 32nd Test hundred, during England's 241-run win over the West Indies at Nottingham to take an unsailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. Root, who now has 11,940 Test runs, has also become the eighth-highest run-getter in Test cricket, going past the likes of Sri Lanka's Mahela Jayawardene (11,814) and the West Indies' Shivnarine Chanderpaul (11,867).

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

Fitness concerns worked against Pandya's elevation to T20I captaincy

Suryakumar Yadav was recently named the T20I skipper ahead of Pandya, who was the vice-captain of the T20 World Cup-winning side



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

BCCI's chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar on Monday pointed out that frequent injury breakdowns, and fitness concerns went against Hardik Pandya's elevation as India's next T20I skipper but stressed that he remains to be an integral part of the outfit.

Suryakumar Yadav was recently named the T20I skipper ahead of Pandya, who was the vice-captain of the T20 World Cup-winning side. The selectors also handed the vice-captaincy to Shubman Gill. Elaborating on the process of selecting the captain, Agarkar said that the selectors believed that "the captain should be on the park".

"Why Surya was made the captain, because he is one of the deserving candidates. He's been around the group over the last

year, we get feedback from the dressing room a lot. (He has a) good cricket brain, and (is) one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar said.

"One of the main issues [discussed] was that you want a captain who's likely to play all the games. We think he is a deserving candidate and hopefully we'll see over time how he develops into the role," he added.

Since the start of 2022, Hardik has featured in only 46 of the 79 T20Is India played. He suffered an ankle injury during the ODI World Cup in India last year, and was out of action till the start of IPL 2024. After a below-par IPL, Hardik roared back into form in the T20 World Cup, signing off with 144 runs at a strike rate of 151.57 and 11 wickets at an average of 17.36.

Agarkar explained that the decision to not burden him with captaincy will allow the team management to manage his

workload better as he felt that Pandya is still an invaluable player for the national team.

"As far as Hardik is concerned, he is still a very important player. And that's what we want him to be, those skillsets are hard to find. Fitness has been something that he's struggled with. As selectors, it becomes difficult then. The thought behind it was that we want someone (as captain) who is likely to be available more."

"We also feel we can manage Hardik better, we've seen what he can do with the bat and ball in the World Cup. We speak to every player, about whether their role has changed. And yeah we've spoken to him..."

Agarkar also made it clear that Suryakumar Yadav is solely being looked at as a T20I player for India after the return of KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant in the 50-over format.

Shubman being groomed

as next captain
Agarkar revealed that there's a thought among the selectors that going forward Shubman Gill could take charge of the team, and thus he has been made the vice-captain of the side. The Punjab opener recently led a second-string India side to a 4-1 win against Zimbabwe, and while his place in the Test and ODI sides are certain, he could also be the preferred opener in T20Is post Rohit's retirement.

"Shubman is the guy, we feel. He's a three-format player, seems to show a lot more qualities over the last year or so that we hear from the dressing room. That's why we want to have somebody who can learn from the senior guys - Surya in this instance and Rohit, who is still around," Agarkar explained.

"(Shubman) has shown some decent leadership qualities, and we want to try him to get experiences. There are no guarantees but at this point, that's

the thought," he added.

Samson - unfortunate to miss out of ODIs
Despite scoring a century in his last ODI - against South Africa, Sanju Samson found himself out of the ODI side against Sri Lanka, as the selectors recalled KL Rahul as the first-choice keeper after a successful World Cup last year, and Rishabh Pant named as the back-up gloveman.

Agarkar said that Samson was unfortunate to have missed out but the selectors wanted to test Rishabh for the first time in 50 overs ever since his return from the car crash in December 2022.

"Before his unfortunate (car) accident, (Rishabh) has been a key player for us. KL has been terrific in one-day cricket and had a great World Cup. Unfortunately, someone had to miss out, and in this instance, it was Sanju. These guys will have to keep getting runs and per-

forming otherwise you know there is a quality player waiting. With a big Test season coming up, we feel these two will have a huge role to play. To get Rishabh playing 50 overs will be a step forward, hopefully he'll build on what he's done so far," the former India pacer explained.

Jadeja not dropped
Agarkar also cleared the air on the future of Ravindra Jadeja, who announced his retirement from T20Is along with Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli right after the T20 World Cup win in Barbados, last month. The chief selector said that Jadeja "was not dropped" from the ODI set-up, but was left out to give opportunities to Axar Patel.

"It would have been really pointless to take both him and Axar for this short series. We know what Jaddu has done. He's had a terrific World Cup. All options are open. But there was (a chance that only) one of them would have played all three

games if we had taken both," Agarkar said.

There's also a second school of thought as far as Jadeja is concerned. India are scheduled to play 10 Tests - five at home and five in Australia - from September 2023 to January 2024, and they are looking to keep Jadeja, who is 35 and has missed a number of matches with injury over the last three years, as fresh as possible for those matches.

"There's a big Test season coming up where he's likely to feature in a lot of the Tests. I don't think three games would have mattered. So, no, (he is) not at all dropped," Agarkar made it clear.

Shami's return for Bangladesh series?
The chairman of selectors also gave an update on Mohammed Shami, who has been recuperating from an ankle surgery and is out of action ever since the ODI

World Cup. "He has started to bowl. The first Test (against Bangladesh) is September 19. That was always the goal (him making a comeback by that time). Whether he can make it back to the squad by that time, I'll have to speak with the guys at the NCA."

Test players in Duleep Trophy
Keeping in sync with the BCCI's diktat of international players playing domestic cricket when not on India duty, Agarkar said some of India's Test players are likely to play the first Duleep Trophy game this season. The Duleep Trophy will be held between September 5 and 22 in Anantpur.

"We haven't discussed with Gautam yet - it's not always easy - but there will certainly be enough players out of that squad that are likely to play the first (Duleep Trophy) game at least," he said.

Tokyo bronze medallist India goalkeeper Sreejesh to retire after Paris Games

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JULY

Former India hockey captain PR Sreejesh on Monday announced his retirement and stated that the upcoming Paris Olympics will be his last international outing. The 36-year-old goalkeeper announced his decision in a series of social media posts, where he talked about his journey.

"As I prepare for my last dance in Paris, I look back with immense pride and forward with hope. This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I am forever grateful for the love and support from my family, teammates, coaches, fans and Hockey India. Thank you for believing in me," expressed PR Sreejesh.

A veteran of 328 International caps, three Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and World Cups, Sreejesh will be playing his fourth Olympic Games. Having made his debut at the 2010 World Cup, Sreejesh has been part of various memorable wins for India, which includes



Gold in 2014 Asian Games, Bronze medal in Jakarta-Palembang, joint winning team of the Asian Champions Trophy in 2018, Gold medal winning team of 2019 FIH Men's Series Finals in Bhubaneswar and Silver medal winning team at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Sreejesh was one of the architects of India's historic bronze medal win at the Tokyo 2020 Games. He was instrumental in India's third-place finish at the FIH Hockey Pro League 2021/22.

Sreejesh was awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award in 2021 and is only the second sportsperson from India to win the award of World Games Athlete of the Year 2021. He has also won back-to-back FIH Goalkeeper of the Year awards in 2021 and

2022, respectively. Last year, he stood tall in India's gold medal-winning campaign at the Asian Games that sealed the team's berth for Paris 2024.

Continuing his series of social media posts, the veteran goalkeeper expressed his gratitude to his teammates for supporting him throughout the journey.

"My teammates have stood beside me through the tough and arduous times. We all want to give our absolute best here in Paris and certainly, the desire is to change the colour of our medal," he said.

Terming Sreejesh an inspiration, India captain Harmanpreet Singh said that the team will dedicate their campaign in Paris 2024 to the legendary goalkeeper.

"Paris 2024 will indeed be a special tournament. We have decided to dedicate our campaign to the legend PR Sreejesh. He has been an inspiration for all of us and I still remember his mentorship in the 2016 Junior World Cup when we lifted the title. It was the beginning of many of our careers in International

hockey and he has shaped each one of our careers in his own way. We want to 'Win it for Sreejesh' and we are all the more encouraged to stand on the podium once again."

Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey also congratulated the stalwart on his stellar career and urged global hockey fans to rally behind the team in their attempt to stand on the podium once again.

"Sreejesh was hardly 18 or 19-years-old when I first saw him in the Indian camp and if I recall right, he made his international debut when I was captaining the Indian team. He is a very special player and my heart fills with joy and gratitude for his exemplary contribution to Indian hockey," Tirkey said in a fond recollection.

"This outing in Paris will certainly be a special one for the team and I believe Sreejesh's decision will only encourage the team further to stand on the podium yet again and make it truly special not just for Sreejesh but for the entire hockey fraternity. I wish him and the team the very best," he added.

Paris Olympics: Strangely subdued

SS RAMASWAMY
PARIS, 22 JULY

If one had expected Paris, the City of Light, to be dressed up like a bridesmaid eagerly awaiting the launch of the 2024 Olympic Games, he or she will be mistaken.

After landing in this fashion capital of the world and casting his eyes wide to see any signs of Paris welcoming the top sportspersons of the world this morning, I could hardly see indications that the Games were just round the corner.

There were some volunteers at the airport to welcome what is called the Olympic family, including the accredited journalists, but otherwise there were hardly any banners announcing the conduct of the Greatest Show on Earth.

Things can and should



change once the Games are declared open on July 26.

But for the present the French public seems to be a little bit disinterested about the Summer Olympics which is being hosted by Paris, after 100 years, for the third time.

Talks are also afoot among the locals that a sizeable num-

ber of Parisians have already gone out of the city for the duration of the Games.

Another reason touted for this outward lack of enthusiasm for the Games is the political uncertainty in the nation that held a snap general election just recently.

A grand opening ceremony

has been planned on the Seine river coursing through the city and just might whip up the much needed enthusiasm among the general public.

Meanwhile shuttler Lakshya Sen, paddler Sharath Kamal, woman archer Deepika Kumari and tennis veteran Rohan Bopanna are among 49 Indian participants who have checked into the Games village.

The break up according to Indian Olympic contingent sources are six archers, one shuttler, the 19 strong men's hockey squad, a solitary rower, two swimmers, eight paddlers and two tennis players.

More athletes are expected this evening, star shuttler and medal hope PV Sindhu among them.

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.

THE AWARDS COMMITTEE

THE STATESMAN LIMITED
STATESMAN HOUSE,
4 CHOWRINGHEE SQUARE,
KOLKATA 700 001.

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