



## Builders' Association of India, Mumbai Centre

(All India Association of Civil Engineering Construction Contractors and Builders)

*cordially invites you to a*

*Talk on*

### Stalled Real Estate Projects and their Revival

Friday 28th July, 2023. 7 p.m., Andheri (W), Mumbai

Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority (MahaRERA) has taken up the issue of stalled real estate projects. MahaRERA has involved Self Regulatory Organisation's (SRO) in this exercise. Builders' Association of India (BAI) is a SRO MahaRERA.

According to MahaRERA the stalled projects will be classified as per these five brackets:

- (1) projects whose revival won't impact rights of allottees,
- (2) projects where conciliation may be required between promoters and home buyers,
- (3) projects where promoter requires intervention of the competent authority or banks,
- (4) projects where promoter has vanished and buyers want change of promoter
- (5) project where no solution is possible.

The talk has been arranged to understand MahaRERA's concept.



*Keynote Speaker*

**CA Ramesh Prabhu**  
B. Com., F.C.A., CISA (USA),  
Chairman, Maharashtra Societies  
Welfare Association



*Convenor*

**Shri Anand J. Gupta**  
Chairman, BAI's Housing & RERA  
Committee and Past Chairman,  
BAI Mumbai Centre



*Presided over by*

**Shri Harshad Shah**  
Chairman,  
BAI Mumbai Centre

Participation is by invitation only. For an invitation, please register  
<https://forms.gle/VhCnf7xTpekNmWBo8>

For any clarification, please email [bai.mumbaicentre@gmail.com](mailto:bai.mumbaicentre@gmail.com) or  
WhatsApp +919076337294



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**Builders' Association of India, Mumbai Centre**  
(All India Association of Civil Engineering Construction Contractors and Builders)



# THE FREE PRESS JOURNAL

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**WHO WILL DIRECT ADIVI SESH STARRER DACOIT?**



**A source confirms exclusively to the FPJ that the South superstar won't direct the film**

**EDIT UNPLANNED CITIES FACE NATURE'S FURY**

**SENSEX, NIFTY SCALE NEW LIFETIME HIGHS ON FII BUYING**



**The indices rallied for 3rd day in a row to close at fresh lifetime high levels following buying in banking and oil stocks**



**Nelson Mandela International Day**

## EK AKELA 26 PAR BHARI

**BJP CLAIMS UPPER HAND IN NUMBER GAME**

**BJP NEEDS CRUTCHES, SAYS OPPN**

SANJEEV CHOPRA AND ANANYA SENGUPTA BENGALURU

There is no greater adhesive for a political formulation than a common agenda, but in the case of the Opposition, this agenda has got subsumed by its animosity towards the BJP, which in the case of the Left and the Congress often borders on pathological hatred. So, it was a motley group of rudderless 26 Opposition parties which arrived in Bengaluru on Monday for a two-day brainstorming session with nothing to bind them but the overwhelming desire to defeat the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

But in these days of optics—when agenda means little and ideology even less—the portraits of Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee, Sharad Pawar, Arvind Kejriwal, DMK chief M K Stalin and leaders of the Left made a lovely TV spectacle, reinforcing the political message, "United We Stand."

Hailing the new found unity as "a game changer," Opposition leaders took a swipe at the BJP and its desperate attempts to breathe life into a nondescript NDA which had become a "ghost."

CONTD. ON NATION

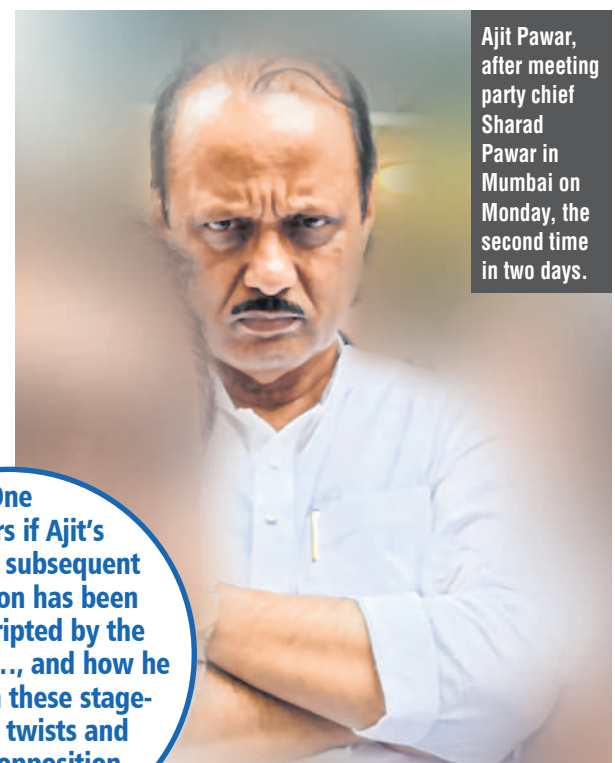
## Chacha-Bhatija reverse swing

S BALAKRISHNAN / MUMBAI

A full-fledged drama is currently being played out between 'kaka' (uncle) and 'putnya' (nephew) in Maharashtra. On July 2, Ajit Pawar revolted against his uncle Sharad Pawar and joined the BJP-Shiv Sena coalition government in Maharashtra taking along with him several MLAs of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). He even moved the Election Commission of India (ECI) with the prayer that he be recognised as the elected president of the 'real' NCP and be allotted the party symbol, a clock.

There was a sense of deja vu because in June 2022, Eknath Shinde had similarly revolted against Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray and joined the BJP with his flock to form the government. He too had moved the ECI for recognition as the real Sena and succeeded.

The one big difference between Ajit's revolt and that of Shinde is that the former has gone back to his uncle, sought his blessings and appealed for



Ajit Pawar, after meeting party chief Sharad Pawar in Mumbai on Monday, the second time in two days.

One wonders if Ajit's revolt and subsequent genuflection has been entirely scripted by the older Pawar..., and how he will explain these stage-managed twists and turns to opposition leaders

unity Shinde did no such thing. Many wonder why Ajit revolted to go to his uncle and speak of party unity. Other rebel MLAs, including senior NCP leader Praful Patel went along with Ajit, calling on Sharad Pawar at the Y B Chavan Centre and sought his guidance. Patel went to the ex-

tenet of saying, "Pawar is our God." He however failed to explain why he and his cohorts revolted against their 'God' in the first place.

The whole episode appears so surreal that one wonders if Ajit's revolt and his subsequent genuflection before his Kaka has been entirely scripted by the older Pawar, in tandem with the BJP.

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### THE FP BULLETIN

#### MOBILE GLITCH: FLIGHT RETURNS

A Delhi-bound Air India flight from Udaipur returned to the bay soon after pushback on Monday due to an issue with the malfunctioning of a mobile phone charger of a passenger, according to officials. The flight AI 470 was delayed by at least an hour and later took off for Delhi, one of the officials said. An airline official said there was a malfunction of the mobile phone charger of a passenger. Further, the airline official said the passenger noticed overheating of the mobile phone and alerted the cabin crew. Subsequently, the aircraft, which had pushed back, returned as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of the passengers. However, an official at the Udaipur airport said there was apparently smoke onboard the aircraft following which it returned after pushback. While the exact sequence of the development could not be immediately ascertained, reports claimed that there was an issue with a power bank of a passenger.

#### CLOUD BURST IN KULLU

At least one person was killed and three others were injured in a cloud burst that occurred near Kayas village in Kullu district around 4am on Monday, the administration said. Earlier, IMD had tweeted that Himachal Pradesh is likely to receive heavy to very heavy showers on Monday. IMD has also issued a moderate to high risk alert predicting flash floods in five districts of Himachal Pradesh till July 17.

#### EUROPE: GETS SET FOR 48.8C

A new fierce heat wave is expected to unleash record-breaking 48.8C temperatures in Europe this week as British tourists across the Mediterranean brace themselves for more unrelenting heat. Tourists have collapsed and fainted in Italy and Greece.



**Sonia may be made president of the front, and Nitish Kumar the convener**  
**Name of front may have word 'India' in it. Tag line will be 'United we stand'.**

- Formal Opposition talks will be held today
- The agenda was finalised over a dinner meeting
- Sharad Pawar will join the meeting today
- Dinner saw Mamata and Sonia seated next to each other

#### Chirag Paswan Back in NDA

Chirag Paswan, the leader of the Lok Janashakti Party, will join the NDA, the BJP announced shortly after his meeting with Amit Shah. "I welcome him to the NDA family," BJP chief JP Nadda declared as the NDA readies to showcase its strength. Chirag, the political heir to Dalit stalwart Ram Vilas Paswan, had walked out of the NDA

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### UNFAZED BY TAINT

## Absconding Customs officer back on the job

**Eyebrows are being raised in the Customs department over the return of the disgraced airport customs superintendent, Neelkamal Chhotalal Singh, who was booked by the Aripada police station for cheating and extortion of Rs 1 crore last month**

DHARMESH THAKKAR / MUMBAI

A hitherto absconding Airport Customs superintendent, booked for extortion by Mumbai Police, has mysteriously rejoined duty in the sensitive narcotics cell at the Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. Eyebrows are being raised in the Customs department over the return of the disgraced Airport Customs superintendent, Neelkamal Chhotalal Singh, who was booked by the Aripada police station for cheating and extortion of Rs 1 crore last month.

The accused, Neelkamal Singh, posted at the sensitive Narcotics Cell Customs Preventive (NCCP) of the Rum-maging and Intelligence Division (R&I) of Mumbai Customs Zone 3, CSMIA, had been absconding for over a month after being named in the police FIR for extortion. His anticipatory bail was re-



jected by the sessions court and Mumbai Police, who visited Airport Customs to question him, were told that the accused was on leave. The extortion case was registered by the GRP in June 2023 and later, transferred to the Aripada police station, based on a complaint by a businessman, Aliasgar Patanwala. The Customs superintendent duo, Neelkamal Singh and Lalit Bilsara, had threatened Patanwala with arrest for GST evasion of Rs 3.5 crore and extorted over Rs 1 crore from him to settle the case.

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## Delhi row may go to Const Bench

FROM OUR BUREAU / NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court indicated on Monday that the Delhi government's challenge to the Ordinance issued by the Centre giving the latter control of services may be referred to a Constitution Bench.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra said, "For the first time, they have used power conferred under clause 7 of Article 239AA to take

**'For the first time, they have used power conferred under clause 7 of Article 239AA to take services outside the purview of Delhi government...In a way, the Constitution has been amended...We have to see, is that permissible? - SC BENCH**

services outside the purview of Delhi government...In a way, the Constitution has been amended...We have to see, is that permissible? We will hear the challenge to the Ordinance by a Constitution

Bench. We have to see, (if) by doing this, can you amend the Constitution?"

In the same hearing, the court also urged both the elected government of Delhi and the Lieutenant Governor

to set aside their political differences and jointly suggest a name for the person who should head the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC).

"Why don't two constitutional functionaries (the Delhi L-G and CM) sit down and make it work? They have to rise above political bickering. We do not want to step into this, we want both sides to arrive at a solution," said the bench, fixing another hearing on July 20.

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## CITY SEES SPATE OF DROWNINGS

STAFF REPORTER / MUMBAI

A 30-year-old man died after drowning in a pond in Bhayandar at around 8.30 pm on Monday. According to fire brigade personnel, the deceased, Amit Ashutosh Das, was a resident of Fatak Road in Bhayandar (West) and the incident took place at Mandli Talao, located on the premises of a community hall building. Das entered the pond for a swim at around 7pm, against the advice of his friends. When he failed to come out after more than an hour, his friends informed the fire brigade.

Fire brigade personnel retrieved Das's body from the pond. The body has been sent for post mortem to the nearby Pandit Bhimsen Joshi Civil Hospital. An accidental death report has been registered at the Bhayandar station. A 17-year-old boy living in Sai Sahakar Society at Lokmanya Nagar, Thane, drowned at Upvan Lake on Monday. The incident took place at around 1.45pm when the teen went swimming with four friends.

Regional Disaster Management Cell chief, Thane, Yasin Tavdi, said, "We received the information at the disaster management cell room at around 2.15pm on Monday about a 17-year-old boy drowning near Ganapati Visarjan Ghat opposite Palaiadevi Temple at Upvan Lake. The boy was identified as Aditya Laxman Pawar and he was a student of 12th standard in Thakur College at Savarkar Nagar."

SEE CITY

## Fire in Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat



A fire broke out in the battery box of a coach of the Vande Bharat train heading from Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal to New Delhi on Monday morning, a senior railway official said. This was the first instance of a fire breaking out in a Vande Bharat Express train. There were 37 passengers in the affected coach and they were shifted to other coaches immediately. No injury was reported to anyone in the incident, the official said. The fire was later doused and repairs were conducted. The train resumed its onward journey after more than three hours, the official said.

IN THE LAST THREE YEARS ALONE, 1,487 OF 1,540 BODIES WERE TRANSPORTED BY THE MUMBAI DIVISION ALONE

## CR prioritises journey of lost lives over parcel revenue

KAMAL MISHRA / MUMBAI

The Central Railway has shown remarkable sensitivity and social responsibility by assisting grieving families in transporting the bodies of their loved ones, with a total of 1,540 cases handled over the past 39 months. Of these cases, 1,487 bodies were transported by the Mumbai division alone, reflecting the significant role played by the railways in fulfilling this crucial humanitarian need.

"When unfortunate incidents such as deaths occur and relatives require transportation of the deceased across longer distances, they often turn to Railways for assistance. The

cost and time constraints associated with road transport for such distances make Railways the preferred mode of conveyance. By choosing rail transport, families can ensure a more efficient and affordable process during these challenging times," said the CR's chief public relations officer, Shivraj Manasपुरe.

"To accommodate such requests, bodies are carried in the SLR (second sitting-cum-luggage rake) coach of express mail trains. These coaches, either the last or the first SLR parcel-carrying coach in the train, can typically accommodate parcels weighing up to four tonnes. However, when a request is received to transport a body, the railway does



**This selfless act of providing affordable and timely transportation for the deceased has resulted in a substantial revenue sacrifice for the railway.**

not load any parcels in that particular SLR compartment, resulting in a loss of revenue equivalent to four tonnes of freight per compartment. This loss amounts to approximately

Rs 30,000 per compartment," he said. Despite the financial implications, the railway places a higher value on fulfilling its social responsibility to assist families in their time of sorrow.

The charges levied by the railway for carrying a body are minimal, ranging from approximately Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 for longer distances between Mumbai and destinations. According to the CR, from April 1, 2020, until now, a total of 1,540 bodies were booked by the railway. Each body was transported using one SLR compartment, at a cost ranging from Rs1,000-Rs1,500 per case, as per distance.

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### TAILPIECE

## PUBG 'lovebirds' in ATS bind

FPJ DESK / GREATER NOIDA

Call it a love story or a spy story or the love story of a spy, who just happens to be a householder with four kids - any which way, it has gone awry. Realising that it needed answers to all these questions, the Uttar Pradesh ATS picked up Pakistani national Seema Haider and her paramour Sachin Meena from their house here on Monday, trying to delve deeper into the motive behind Seema's visa-less entry into India from Nepal, with four children in tow.



Sachin's father and Seema's children have also been picked up. Earlier in the day, it was reported that the couple was missing. Seema Haider, a Pakistani with four children, had en-

tered India via the Nepal border. She claimed to be in love with Sachin Meena, with whom she had come in contact while playing PUBG. The two reportedly tied the knot in Nepal and she has been living with Sachin's family in Noida.

However, they appear to have stirred a hornet's nest, with a section of the media claiming that Seema was an ISI agent. Her previous boyfriend from Pakistan and husband from Saudi Arabia also jumped into the controversy, by giving lengthy interviews to TV channels.

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**Moved:** Proposal for supplementary demands worth ₹41,243.21 cr

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / MUMBAI

The state government moved a proposal for supplementary demands of Rs41,243.21 crore on the first day of the monsoon session of the state legislature on Monday.

Demands worth Rs13,091.21 crore are mandatory demands, while demands worth Rs25,611.38 crore are under planned programme expenditure, and demands worth Rs2,540.62 crore are raised for the grants expected to be received under the schemes sponsored by the Centre. Hence, the absolute load of the demands worth Rs41,243.21 crore is actually Rs35,883.31 crore, the proposal has said.

Some of the major demands are for Rs5,856 crore

- 15th Pay Commission Rs1,398 cr
- Special help in Centre's share of capital expenditure Rs1,200 cr
- Shrawanbal Seva Rajya Nivrutti Yojana Rs1,100 cr
- MSRTC Rs 1,100 cr
- Special allocation for municipal corporation and council areas Rs1,000 cr

towards the state's share in Jal Jeevan Mission general factors and quality control and surveys and Rs4,000 crore for transferring benefits under Namoo Shetkar Mahasanman Nidhi Yojana for farmers.

Demand for Rs3,563.16 crore has been raised to be able to give the arrears of the Seventh Pay Commission for teaching and non-teaching staff of aided schools in the state and that of Rs2,100 crore has been raised to be able to pay the stamp duty on Metro Rail projects.

Among the departments, the Urban Development department has the largest share of these demands with Rs6,224.55 crore, followed by the department of water supply and sanitation (Rs5,873.91 crore), agriculture, animal husbandry and dairy development (Rs5,219.80 crore), school education and sports department (Rs5,121.10 crore) and social justice (Rs4,244.41 crore).

## Futile 2nd visit by Ajit faction, NCP chief firm

While Praful Patel justified the meeting saying that some leaders hadn't met the party chief earlier, Jayant Patil said no change in party stand

ABHIJIT MULYE / MUMBAI

NCP chief Sharad Pawar made it clear, yet again, that he won't go with the BJP after MLAs from his nephew Ajit Pawar's faction met him the second time on Monday. At least 15 MLAs met him at the YB Chavan Centre, expressing their wish for the NCP to remain united. They held a 90-minute discussion with their party supremo but he refused to budge.

NCP leader Praful Patel justified the second meeting, saying that some of the MLAs had not been able to meet Sharad Pawar earlier. He also clarified that he and Ajit Pawar would attend the BJP-led NDA meeting in Delhi on Tuesday (today, July 18). Patel said, "He just heard us and didn't react."

Later in the evening, NCP state unit president Jayant Patil made Sharad Pawar's stand clear at a press conference and said that the question of going with the BJP doesn't arise. Patil said, "Anyone coming to the Y B Chavan Centre can meet Sharad Pawar, but that doesn't mean there is change in the party's stand." Meanwhile, the Shiv Sena



(UBT) and Congress party criticised the Ajit Pawar faction over the meetings. "This is their attempt to garner support," Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve said, while Congress leader Yashomati Thakur said that "a group within the NCP joining the government has not gone down well with anyone and the

repeated attempts to contact the party chief appear to be a measure to reassure supporters."

Earlier in the day, only eight NCP members were seen on the opposition benches and at least 15 were on the treasury benches on the first day of the monsoon session of the state legislature. The NCP

members also stayed away from the demonstrations by opposition legislators on the steps of Vidhan Bhavan before the beginning of the session.

Patil, however, clarified and said that the seating in the house is temporary and would change once the situation becomes clearer.

## CBI books firm in ₹16cr loan default case

Mumbai: The CBI has registered a case against a Nagpur-based company and its directors for allegedly causing a loss of Rs16.85 crore to Union Bank of India. The company is into poultry farming and trading of agro products like paddy, maize, wheat and rice. A written complaint dated June 28 was received by the CBI. The

agency alleged that the firm and other accused persons entered into a criminal conspiracy, committed criminal breach of trust and criminal misconduct from 2011 to 2018 by dishonestly releasing pledged primary security in an illegal manner, and fraudulently diverting credit facilities sanctioned to the company.

## Jalna-Nanded E'way: Pittance for land will bring farmers on streets

Farmers want the govt to pay fair compensation as per the Land Acquisition Act, 2013; demand that project land be registered as horticulture as per the provisions of the Irrigation Act, 1976

ATEEQ SHAIKH / MUMBAI

Over 2000 farmers will protest on July 26 in Mumbai against the state government acquiring their land for a pittance for Jalna-Nanded Expressway.

Comrade Rajan Kshirsagar, the general secretary of Maharashtra Rajya Kisan Sabha, said that the government has done "injustice to Marathwada farmers" by providing 20% lesser compensation than the ready reckoner rate while determining the compensation. "As compared to the Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway, the compensatory payout to Marathwada farmers is even more reduced," he said.

Detailing out the flaws in regulation, he said that the government, to acquire land, is using the Maharashtra Highways Act, 1955, which was drawn from the repressive British Act of 1894.

Around 2,200 hectares of land is to be acquired by the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation to build the 179.85km Jalna-Nanded Expressway. The estimated project cost is Rs14,500 crore and the alignment passes through 87 villages.

"Additionally, for decades after the Maharashtra Highways Act was enacted, the concept of expressways was alien to India. All the roads and highways had democratic participation of the population; right from a bullock cart used by a farmer

**THE PROTEST OVER...**

- 1 Injustice to Marathwada farmers by providing 20% lesser compensation than the ready reckoner rate.
- 2 The state is using the Maharashtra Highways Act, 1955, which was drawn from the repressive British Act of 1894.
- 3 For decades after the Maharashtra Highways Act was enacted, the concept of expressways was alien to India. The state is earning revenue from optic fibre cables, gas pipelines, utilities, tourism, commercial establishments, etc along the expressway.
- 4 Farmers on whose land these facilities are coming up are being given a raw deal.
- 5 The state's policies are anti-farmer and for the benefit of the corporates.

to a cyclist and passenger vehicles, buses and trucks," said Kshirsagar.

He said that only a certain category of population is permitted to use the expressways. "Moreover, the government is earning revenue from optic fibre cables, gas pipelines, other firms for utilities, tourism, commercial establishments, etc. that are laid along the expressway. However, the farmers on whose land these facilities are coming up are being given a raw deal," he added.

The farmers intend to register their protest with Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Public Works Department Minister Dadaji Bhuse on how the gov-

ernment's policies are anti-farmer and for the benefit of the corporates. About 2,000 farmers from the areas of Parbhani, Jalna and Nanded will congregate at Azad Maidan.

Kshirsagar said, "Today, road development is a corporate business and a major income source for private companies. Earlier there was no toll to use a highway, but now it's collected and an outdated law is used to acquire land. We want the government to pay fair compensation to farmers as per the Land Acquisition Act, 2013 and the land under the project be registered as horticulture as per the provisions of the Irrigation Act, 1976."

## Opp seeks Gorhe's ouster, stages walkout

ABHIJIT MULYE / MUMBAI

The opposition staged a boycott in the legislative council after its demand to move a disqualification motion against deputy chairperson Dr Neelam Gorhe was turned down by her. The leaders then called on Governor Ramesh Bais demanding her dismissal.

As the house convened on the first day of the monsoon session on Monday, the opposition members started raising slogans. However, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that the business of the house cannot commence unless the new ministers are introduced.

Peasants and Worker Party leader Jayant Patil then raised the issue regarding Dr Gorhe. "The person who

I'm a democratic person. I should have allowed discussion over the issue had you attended the meeting of group leaders and sought to move a proper motion.

Dr Neelam Gorhe

Their move amounts to anti-party activity and hence a petition would be moved with the legislature secretary to end their membership of the house.

Anil Parab

holds constitutional position loses the party membership. However, the deputy chairperson of the house has switched over from the Shiv Sena (UBT) to the rival Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and hence she needs to resign the constitutional post," Patil said. Upon remarks from treasury benches asking Patil to move court over the issue, Patil said, "That is easier for you."

Dr Gorhe put across her side amidst the sloganeering from opposition benches.

"I'm a democratic person. I should have allowed discussion over the issue had you attended the meeting of group leaders and sought to move a proper motion. But you didn't attend the meeting of group leaders. You didn't discuss anything," she said. She added that the issue can be discussed later so that members from both the sides will be able to speak.

However, the demand for discussion over the issue started growing. She then said that the house would

work according to rule, over which the opposition staged a walkout.

Leader of the Shiv Sena (UBT) in the legislative council, Ambadas Danve, told media persons in the Vidhan Bhavan complex that Gorhe has been "suspended" by the Uddhav Thackeray-led party, which is why she "does not have the right" to remain the council's deputy chairperson. He too met the Governor later.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anil Parab said that the party would move a petition against all the three members of the party who have switched sides in the upper house. "Their move amounts to anti-party activity and hence a petition would be moved with the legislature secretary to end their membership of the house," he said.

## Covid scam: Land in Dahisar acquired at 716% higher cost

KALPESH MHAMUNKAR AND VISHAL SINGH / MUMBAI

The state Special Investigation Team (SIT), constituted under the Economic Offences Wing (EOW), visited the BMC headquarters on Monday and collected information pertaining to the three preliminary enquiries (PEs) opened in the alleged scams in the BMC during the Covid-19 pandemic.

While the first PE pertains to Rs206 crore additional expenses to acquire Dahisar land, the second PE pertains to the alleged corruption of Rs200 crore in the information technology, road and traffic departments and the third is regarding more than 60 works worth Rs5,000 crore in the roads department and five related departments of the civic body. In the first PE, the Dahisar land was originally marked for public amenities in the Development Plan (DP).

The five-member team headed by Deputy Commissioner of Police Sangramsinh Nishandar visited the DP department and collected the files. It also sought clarifi-

cation on information it already has, and met Joint Commissioner (Improvement) Ramesh Pawar, who is also the nodal officer between the BMC and the SIT.

A senior police official said the EOW started the probe by registering three preliminary inquiries (PEs) and action would be taken by registering an FIR if the documents reveal any corruption. He said documents for all PEs are being collected and will be separated and examined, including the signatories. A PE means a fact finding enquiry in the nature of an investigation into any complaint or report, before initiating a regular inquiry.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report on the BMC has noted that land measuring 32,395 sqm acquired at Eksar Village was reserved in the DP to set up public amenities in 1993 and overvalued by 716% due to eight-year delay.

While the proposal was moved in 2011, it was acquired only in 2020. The CAG report also observed that the then civic chief in 2019 opposed the acquisition.

**The SIT under EOW visited the DP dept to collect documents on Monday**

## Filmmaker can issue pvt notice to estranged wife in Pakistan

URVI MAHAJANI / MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday directed Bollywood filmmaker Mushtaq Nadiadwala to issue a private notice via courier to his estranged Pakistani wife in his plea seeking the return of their two minor children from Pakistan. The filmmaker has alleged that they have been taken by his Pakistani wife to the neighbouring country.

Advocate Kuldeep Patil, appearing for Interpol, informed the HC that they have established contact with the

authorities in Islamabad. A report submitted by the Interpol stated that the children are attending school and are happy with their mother. It also mentioned that she had obtained a divorce from the filmmaker through court proceedings.

Beni Chatterji, appearing for Nadiadwala, contended that he should be allowed to interact with their children. However, the bench, after going through the Interpol report, remarked that the wife was granting access and it was the petitioner who had not been in contact.

Chatterji contended that the children were Indian citizens and should be brought back to their father. He claimed that Nadiadwala frequently calls and sends gifts on birthdays. He alleged that the children speak for a few seconds on the phone and are under the influence of the mother. Both the children are minors and cannot apply for passports or opt for citizenship as well, argued Chatterji.

Advocate for the Ministry of External Affairs informed the court that they have sent seven communications to their counterparts in Pakistan, but have not received any reply.

## PVR gets anti-monopoly commission notice

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / MUMBAI

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has issued notices to film exhibitor PVR Inox multiplex chain for alleged discrimination in screening films by small and independent filmmakers to favour only big star cast films. The CCI order was on a petition of former IPS officer turned legal activist YP Singh, alleging bias by the exhibitor controlling majority of the screens in India. The anti-monopoly commission asked PVR to respond in four weeks.

Singh has alleged in his petition that by heavy promotion of low-content formula films, made by big production houses with massive budgets, the true creativity of high-content filmmakers has been

**Ex-IPS officer YP Singh alleges that the exhibitor discriminates against independent filmmakers**

killed. "Even directors who want to make high-content films are constrained to adopt formula films. This is neither good for the industry nor is it healthy for the intellectual growth of our nation," he

said. The former IPS officer is on the verge of completing a film titled 'The Indian Supari Company', based on the legal system. "The essential theme of the film is the creation of a

corporate entity to manipulate the law using investigative agencies," he explained.

He alleged monopolistic entities controlling the exhibition business of screening films while seeking release of

If [someone is] arrested for supplying spurious seeds, it will be a non-bailable and cognisable offence.

As part of a monsoon contingency plan, we are ready for situations like double sowing, crop failure and spurious seed supply that would affect production.

Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis

Kharif sowing is heavily affected due to long intervals between the rains. Farmers are facing the challenge of re-sowing. This is an emergency for farmers.

Farmers have not received any of the relief announced for calamities last year. Plans for distributing seeds and fertilisers for free should have been ready with the government.

CLP leader Balasaheb Thorat

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced at the Legislative Assembly on the first day of the monsoon session on Monday. "If [someone is] arrested

of sowing and supply of bogus seeds. Speaker Rahul Narwekar, however, rejected the motion.

"Kharif sowing is heavily affected due to long intervals

## D-company case: Property of key accused attached

SOMENDRA SHARMA / MUMBAI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has attached the residential property of one of the key accused in a 2022 gangster Dawood Ibrahim's D-Company case, officials said on Monday.

The accused, Arif Abubakar Shaikh alias Arif Bhajjaan, was arrested in the case registered by the NIA on February 3, 2022. Arif's house at Mangal Nagar in Mira Road East, Thane, has now been attached as 'proceeds of terrorism' under section 25 (1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) 1967.

The NIA has already filed a charge sheet against three arrested accused (Arif Bhajjaan, Shabbir Abubakar Shaikh alias Shabbir Takla, and Mohammad Salim Qureshi alias Salim Fruit) and two wanted people (Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar and Shakeel Mohid-

din Shaikh alias Chota Shakeel) under Sections of the UAPA and the Indian Penal Code in the case.

The case pertains to terror / criminal activities of the international terrorist network of D-Company involving Dawood and his associates, including Haji Anees alias Anees Ibrahim Shaikh, Shakeel, Javed Patel alias Javed Chikna and Ibrahim Mushtaq Abdul Razzaq Memon alias Tiger Memon engaged in arms smuggling, narco terrorism, money laundering, circulation of fake Indian currency and unauthorised possession of assets for raising terror funds while working in active collaboration with international terrorist organisations, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Al Qaeda (AQ). This case was registered suo moto by the NIA.

## Prop tax bills delayed as BMC stares at colossal refunds

SHEFALI PARAB-PANDIT / MUMBAI

With the Supreme Court (SC) rejecting its review petition in March this year, the BMC will have to rework the capital values of all properties in Mumbai. It might also have to refund thousands of crores of rupees to taxpayers who have paid property tax from 2010 to 2012 on the basis of the capital value system. This complication has delayed the bills issued to owners in May every year.

The BMC's review petition had challenged

August: Deadline for paying 50% tax

December: Remaining 50%

Owners get three months from the time of receiving the bills to pay tax

After 90 days, BMC sends reminders and notices to defaulters

Penalty 2% in case bills are not paid

Property tax earned last fiscal ₹5,368 cr

₹6,000 crore Expected tax in 2023-24

the Bombay High Court order of 2019 setting aside certain rules for retrospective tax assessment. As per the SC's direction, the BMC has to frame new rules and issue fresh bills to taxpayers. The court has also quashed

the special assessment order and bills raised under the new system from 2010, necessitating a refund or adjustment of the excess amount collected from citizens.

A civic official said that it won't be

possible to refund thousands of crores of rupees so they have requested the state government to make amendments to the BMC Act. The procedure will take at least another month, following which property tax bills can be issued in August, he said. However, the delay has already affected the property tax collection in the last three months. As per data, Rs260 crore of revenue has been earned from property tax from April 1 to July 16 this year. The BMC earned around Rs399 crore in the same period last year.

## Two of tak-tak gang arrested, search on for leader

**Mumbai:** The Sakinaka police have arrested two men belonging to the tak-tak gang for an alleged theft on July 11 and three laptops have been recovered from them. The suspects were arrested from Wajreshwari in Thane. Tak-tak gangs position themselves near car parking areas

and scatter Rs10 notes around a targeted vehicle to distract the driver and steal laptops and valuables from the back seat. The arrested suspects are from Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu. The search for their leader and accomplices is underway.

# Gokhale bridge reopening to be hit again

## Flooding in north impacts fabrication work at a Ambala workshop; partial reopening was planned in October

SHEFALI PARAB-PANDIT / MUMBAI

The already delayed partial opening of Andheri's Gopal Krishna Gokhale bridge, which was pushed to October, seems to extend further. The reason is severe flooding in north India, which has impacted the ongoing fabrication work of the bridge in Ambala. This is yet another roadblock in the construction of the crucial east-west connector. Ear-

lier, a strike at the plant, which is supplying steel for the mega work, had cast a shadow over the project.

The steel supply has just started in full swing and the BMC was on schedule to open one arm of the bridge by Diwali this year. However, nature disrupted the plan as there has been heavy inundation at the Ambala workshop. "It will take three weeks to one month's time to resume the fabrication work.



Hence, there will be some delay in opening one arm of the bridge," said a senior civic official. The work

order for reconstruction has been given to AB Infrabuild Ltd, while the fabrication work is being done by HMM Infra Ltd in Ambala. The fabricated steel structure will be constructed and assembled in the workshop at Ambala and then it will be brought to Andheri. The BMC had purchased 1,270 metric tonnes of steel for the girder weighing about 1,250 tonnes. So far, the Ambala workshop has completed more

than 25% of work on the fabrication of the girder, said a civic source.

As the bridge has been shut, motorists are compelled to either take Andheri subway or Vinayak Gore flyover as alternate routes. However, they are caught between a rock and a hard place as the subway is shut most of the time due to waterlogging during monsoon. Even on Monday, it was closed for the same reason.

## Teen neighbour rapes 24-year-old

AISHWARYA IYER / MUMBAI

A 19-year-old youth was arrested for allegedly raping his 24-year-old neighbour on Saturday. The details of the accused were withheld as it would reveal the victim's identity. According to the police, the woman owns two adjacent houses and one of them is usually locked.

On Saturday afternoon, when she went to clean the second house, the accused sneaked into the room and locked it from inside, said the woman in her police statement. The teen then gagged her mouth and threatened to kill her if she shouted for help. He then raped the woman.

Initially, she was reluctant to approach the police, thinking nobody would believe her as her husband is currently in jail. According to police sources, the victim's spouse was arrested for drug-related offenses under the Maharashtra Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Slumlords, Bootleggers, Drug Offenders and Dangerous Persons Act.

She finally mustered courage and approached the police late Saturday night and lodged a complaint. A first information report against the accused was registered under sections 376 (rape), 452 (House-trespass after preparation for hurt, assault or wrongful restraint), 341 (wrongful restraint), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 504 (intentional insult), and 506 (2) (death threat) of the Indian Penal Code.

The teen was arrested on Sunday morning from his house. He has been remanded to police custody till July 20.

## During NGO session, teen reveals rape by father

AISHWARYA IYER / MUMBAI

During a communication session at an NGO, a 15-year-old girl narrated her ordeal after suffering silently for the two years. The teen alleged that her father repeatedly raped her in this period and even threatened her not to reveal the horrific crime. The accused has been arrested.

It has been learnt that the man allegedly frequently subjected her wife to domestic violence. Concerned about the girl, her relatives sent her to the NGO which offered free education. During a session conducted on July 10, volunteers noticed that the girl remained aloof and subsequently started a discussion with her. The teen then revealed that her father sexually assaulted her when they were alone at home. She said that she kept silent as he had threatened to intensify the assault if she confided in anyone.

## The girl alleged that she was raped over the past two years

After coming to know of the abhorrent crime, the NGO immediately approached the Mankhurd police on Saturday. Cops recorded the girl's statement and subsequently registered a first information report (FIR) against her 40-year-old father. He was arrested the same day from his residence in Lalubhai Compound, Mankhurd.

A case has been filed against the accused under section 354 (assault or criminal force against the woman) of the Indian Penal Code as well as sections 8 (sexual assault), 10 (aggravated sexual assault), and 12 (sexual harassment) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

# Dadysett Agiary reels under sewage water inundation

ASHUTOSH M SHUKLA / MUMBAI

Considered the second oldest fire temple which is visited by eminent Parsis like Tatas, Camas and Darashaws, Dadysett Agiary at D N Road is reeling under the problem of sewage water inundation. Though the problem has persisted since February, it has aggravated in the past two weeks, averred the devotees and management of Dadysett Agiary. The entrance to the temple has become inaccessible as dirty water gets accumulated before the steps, near

wash area, passage and the Holy Well from which water is drawn for rituals.

Expressing concern over potential health problems resulting from sewage water,



one of the trustees said that the recurring problem exists since February. "We complain to the BMC, its people would come, do some work and the problem would get solved, but

for time-being. For the past two weeks, the problem has grown with sewage water oozing out and making the premises very dirty."

A devotee said, "The dirty water has ruined both the front and back entrances. We are unable to access the Holy Well due to the dirty water that surrounds it." Another devotee suspected that the ongoing Metro work near Agiary was the reason behind the problem. The fire temple's drain line that connects with the channel on the main D N Road was blocked for Metro work. This led to water get-

ting accumulating inside instead being flushed out, the person surmises.

Ishant Tale, Utility Manager of L&T that is doing the Metro work at Hutatma Chowk said, "We have been working here for the past three years. The problem was never there. We have pumps to flush out the water but due to a choke in a gutter, it's not getting flushed out. We have also spoken to the BMC."

When contacted, Jaydeep More, Assistant Municipal Commissioner of A Ward, said, "I will send a team to check on the issue."

35.4 mm rainfall recorded at Colaba observatory in last 24 hours

36.4 mm showers reported at Santacruz observatory

Arabian Sea witnessed 4.21 meter high tide

5 incidents of falling branches

3 incidents of wall collapse

Heavy rain forecast for 4 days



Azad Maidan



JVL, Andheri

# Drugs worth ₹73 cr destroyed at Taloja

SOMENDRA SHARMA / MUMBAI

In the virtual presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, drugs worth Rs73 crore were destroyed at Mumbai Waste Management Company Ltd, Taloja, on Monday. Of the total contraband, 161 kg of drugs worth Rs64.36 crore was seized by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad while the Mumbai police impounded the remaining 437 kg of narcotics worth Rs9 crore.

Shah on Monday chaired the regional conference on 'Drugs Smuggling and National Security' in New Delhi. During the event, more than 1,44,000 kg of drugs worth Rs2,416 crore were destroyed in various parts of the country by the Narcotics Control Bureau in coordination with Anti-Narcotics Task Forces of all states.



The destroyed contraband included 6,590 kg seized by NCB's Hyderabad unit, 822 kg and 356 kg by Indore and Jammu units, respectively. Besides, various law enforcement agencies of different states destroyed drugs, including 1,486 kg in Assam, 229 kg in Chandigarh, 25 kg in Goa, 4,277 kg in Gujarat, 2,458 kg in Haryana, 4,069 kg in

Jammu and Kashmir, 1,03,884 kg in Madhya Pradesh, 600 kg in Maharashtra, 1,803 kg in Tripura and 4,049 kg in Uttar Pradesh.

Adhering to the 'zero tolerance' policy against narcotics to create a drugs-free India, all regional units of NCB and ANTFS have collectively destroyed around 8,76,554 kg drugs worth around Rs9,580

crore, which is more than 11 times of the target, from June till July 15. With Monday's destruction exercise, the total quantity of drugs destroyed in one year reached around 10 lakh kg, which has a value of around Rs12,000 crore.

"After the drugs are seized, they are kept at government warehouses. Disposal process is defined in the NDPS Act.

# Owner detects fraud from employee's splurge

VISHAL SINGH / MUMBAI

A 42-year-old woman and her parents have been booked for allegedly cheating her employer and diverting the siphoned funds of more than Rs1 crore to their bank accounts, said the Dadar police. The accused was identified as Dimple Shah, who was working as a chief production manager with garment man-

ufacturer 'Senso Creation' since 2014.

According to the police, the firm also trades with foreign companies and the orders were passed only after Shah's approval. The process involved getting clothes stitched from workers and paying them as per the number of garments produced by them. Being the production incharge, Shah started to in-

flate the invoices submitted by these workers and siphoned off extra money, said the police.

The complainant and owner of 'Senso Creation', Prakash Shah, 49, grew suspicious as Shah splurged on her lifestyle. He then checked the company's balance sheet and discovered that profits don't commensurate with the number of goods manufactured.

# Rat kill drive at civic hospitals: Over 800 eliminated in 15 days

SWAPNIL MISHRA / MUMBAI

In a first, the BMC along with contractual rat killers eliminated more than 800 rats in the past 15 days. These rodents were found inside the hospital premises and its environs. Recently, the civic body started a rat eradication campaign at the civic-run medical facilities after a senior health official spotted rats during his surprise visit to a hospital.

As per the data, more than 2.81 lakh rats have been killed from January till date across 24 wards of the city, which means on an average 1,412 targets were eliminated. If calculated for the fortnight, the count of approx. 800 translated into a daily average of around 54 rats.

The BMC's campaign focused on four major civic-run hospitals and 16 peripheral hospitals. "In the last 15 days, we have killed 821 rats found in the premises of hospitals. Around 17 rat killers,

who are hired on contractual basis, were also part of the odd job," said an official from the pesticide department.

The menace of rats in civic-run hospitals can be gauged from the shocking incident of 2018 when they gnawed the right eye of a

comatose patient at the Jogeshwari Trauma Centre. "During monsoon, it's often seen that rats get inside ground floor wards which house emergency/casualty units, raising concerns over hygiene and chances of leptospirosis. However, we can't use rat poisons as kids are also present in the hospital," said a resident doctor from the Nair Hospital.

Since 2016, more than 60 people have succumbed to leptospirosis in Mumbai. The BMC has 'rat labourers' who work in two shifts. Under the monsoon drive, which begins in March, over 1,000 rats are killed daily across the city.

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## Caretaker siblings held for theft at senior citizen's house

**Mumbai:** The Borivali police have registered an FIR against two house caretakers of a retired senior citizen for theft. The two house helps are siblings and didn't turn up one day. They used to work in two shifts, morning and evening.

They have quit owing to the employer shouting at them. When the owner checked his cupboards later, he found certain valuables worth Rs1.32 lakh missing. The caretakers have been identified as Deepali Sirsat and Pranali Sirsat.

## Clinical drug trial: Ex-JJ dean to face action

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / Mumbai

The five-member committee – which was formed by the Sir Jambhaji Jeejeebhoy (JJ) Hospital administration to probe irregularities in the clinical drug trial – has recommended a disciplinary action against Dr Mukund Tayade. The ex-JJ dean is accused of illegally renting three rooms in the hospital's pharmacology department for the trial.

Moreover, the committee also found Dr Akash Khobragade, the former medical superintendent of St George's Hospital, guilty of negligence and lack of knowledge of clinical trials. He was mentioned as the coordinator in the memorandum of understanding which was signed with the Parshwa Life Sciences Ltd for undertaking the trial.

"The procedure done for the clinical drug trial by Dr Tayade was improper. There was also negligence by the ethics committee. Actions will be taken in accordance with government employee service rules," said an official. Meanwhile, the hospital has also recovered pending dues amounting to Rs70 lakh from the doctors who participated in the trial.

A senior official from the hospital had earlier said that the clinical drug trials involved several departments, including medicine, orthopaedic, ENT, dermatology, surgery, psychiatry, paediatric. However, the entire process was a mess and the ethics committee, which was supposed to keep a check on the trials, failed to do so, the official added.

## Auto driver's body found

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / Mumbai

A man's body was found near Powai Lake at around 8am on Monday. The deceased has been identified as Chandrashekhar Haldankar, 39, an auto-rickshaw driver from Aslfa, Ghatkopar. The body has been sent to Rajawadi Hospital in Ghatkopar for post-mortem. The Powai police have registered an accidental death report.

According to the deceased's relatives, he had been missing for three days. However, they did not file a complaint at any police station. No marks were found on his body and other details will be revealed after the post-mortem. As per sources, the deceased was an alcoholic and suffering from depression.

# BEST's U-turn on double-decker bid

Undertaking blacklists CAUSIS E-Mobility for not delivering a single bus out of 700

KAMAL MISHRA / Mumbai

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) Undertaking, has blacklisted CAUSIS E-Mobility Private Limited for its failure to deliver 700 electric double-decker buses as per the awarded contract. Consequently, it has decided to float a fresh tender for the supply of these buses. The decision was announced by Vijay Singhal, the General Manager of BEST, on Monday.

Under the original tender, BEST had invited bids for the supply of 900 electric double-decker buses in January 2022, out of which 200 were awarded to Switch Mobility and 700 to CAUSIS E-Mobility Private Limited. While Switch Mobility has already commenced sup-



plying the buses, with a dozen double-decker buses already in service, CAUSIS E-Mobility has failed to deliver a single bus to date. Singhal emphasized that the blacklisting of CAUSIS E-

Mobility is aimed at ensuring the timely and efficient provision of buses to the citizens of Mumbai. The decision underscores BEST's commitment to increasing the fleet size, with

plans to introduce approximately 2,500 more buses in a phased manner by March. This will bring the total number of buses in BEST's fleet to 5,500, up from the current 3,100 buses.

In addition to the double-decker buses, BEST has also announced the introduction of new air-conditioned single-decker buses starting in October. Currently, BEST operates around 3100 buses, with passenger congestion being a pressing concern due to the reduced number of buses in service.

"In 2022, a contract for 2,100 single-decker AC buses was awarded by BEST. However, the project was put on hold due to a petition filed by Tata Motors in the Supreme Court, challenging its eligibility. The appellate court subsequently cleared the way for the project, and the supply of the 2,100 buses will commence in October, with the entire fleet expected to be operational by March" said an official.

## Veggie prices continue to soar

Tomato prices hovering around ₹200/kg; shortage to continue for another month

AMIT SRIVASTAVA / Navi Mumbai

If traders at the agriculture produce market committee (APMC) in Vashi are to be believed, there will be no respite from soaring vegetable prices for already more than a month. The price of tomatoes is hovering above Rs100 per kg. In fact, premium quality tomatoes are commanding around Rs200/kg in the retail market.

Mumbai receives most of the vegetables from Nashik, Pune, Kolhapur, Sangli and other places in western Maharashtra. The city also receives vegetables from Gujarat and Karnataka. In most of these places, heavy rainfall is seen intermittently in the last fortnight and thus the supply was impacted.

"Due to heavy rains, crops have been damaged and thus the supply of vegetables has come down sharply. Those farmers who have sown seeds of new crops now will grow in about 1 to 2 months. Only after which there will be an increase in supply and prices will be normalized," said an administrative official from APMC, Vashi.

APMC Vashi is getting around 30% less supply. On July 17, the market received around 430 trucks and tempos laden with vegetables. The normal supply is around 600

### WHY TOMATO PRICE RISES

During April-May, the price of tomatoes crashed and farmers suffered huge losses. A number of videos emerged showing farmers from Nasik, and Pune in Maharashtra dumping their harvested tomatoes. They were offered Rs30 for a crate of 20kg, it means that they could not recover even the transportation costs. A similar situation was seen in other parts of the country due to bumper crops of tomatoes. Finally, farmers stayed away from tomato farming and in fact, there are reports that Kharif sowing is less than 50% than the previous year. It means that there will be no respite in tomato prices in days to come.

vehicles. "The price of some vegetables has doubled including drum stick, flower, okra, and brinjal," said the official. He added that even the price saw up to Rs5 rise to Rs7/kg in the retail. Similarly, the price of green chilli is Rs140/kg. Meanwhile, a shocking video of tomatoes being stolen from a vegetable market in APMC Vashi went viral.

## Narrow escape for 30 as bus gutted in blaze

This is the fifth time a BEST bus has caught fire this year; second incident in the last 24 hours

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / Mumbai



VIJAY GOHIL

In a harrowing incident on Monday, more than 30 passengers had a narrow escape after a BEST bus caught fire in Marol, in Andheri area. The bus, operating on route number 186, was hired by the civic-run transport undertaking from a private contractor on a wet lease.

The fire broke out at approximately 10:45am under Reliance Flyover, according to an official statement. The bus, which had departed from Agarkar Chowk in Andheri East for Vihar Lake in Powai, carried around 35 passengers, including some students.

According to bus driver Mohammad Hussain Shaikh, fire might have been caused by a short circuit.

"Driver promptly asked the passengers to evacuate the bus and attempted to extinguish the flames using the two fire extinguishers onboard, but his efforts were in vain," said an official.

Despite the arrival of a policeman who used an extinguisher from another vehicle, the fire could not be contained. The fire brigade was eventually contact-

ed, but it took approximately 15 minutes for them to arrive at the scene with two fire tenders. By that time, the fire had engulfed the bus completely.

According to the BEST official, the bus driver who has been driving for the airport for the past 11 years and for a private contractor hired by BEST for one-and-a-half years did a good job.

This unfortunate incident marks the fifth time a BEST bus has caught fire since the beginning of 2023 and the second incident since June 16. On June 16, another bus caught fire in the undertaking's Dharavi depot. In response to these incidents, in February, BEST had temporarily taken 400 wet-leased buses off the roads after three fire-related incidents occurred in quick succession.

## One dead, 5 hurt in MSRTC bus crash

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / Mumbai

One person was killed and five others injured in a collision between a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus and a car on Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar Road in Waluj near Aurangabad at 4am on Monday.

The MSRTC Electric Shivai Bus, bearing registration number MH12VF4034 and operating on a contract basis, was traveling from Pune to Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar when

the accident took place. "The car suffered extensive damage, while the bus incurred damages amounting to approximately Rs50,000," said an official. According to preliminary reports, the accident occurred when the car unexpectedly swerved into the left lane at a reduced speed and collided with the bus. The impact caused the car to overturn and veer off the road, coming to rest in a nearby field.

The driver of the car, identified as Syed Javade Syed Hanif,

aged 33 lost his life. The five injured passengers were promptly provided medical assistance and rushed to nearby hospitals for further treatment.

Local authorities from the

Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar police station have taken charge of the investigation into the accident. They are working to determine the exact cause of the collision and any potential contributing factors.

According to transport experts, this unfortunate incident serves as a solemn reminder of the crucial importance of road safety and the need for drivers to exercise caution and strictly adhere to traffic regulations.

## 1.719km road constructed using 'K31' technology

ABHITASH SINGH / Thane

Thane zila parishad (ZP) has constructed a 1.719km road using 'K31' technology in Mainde, Vanchapada and Bijpada areas of Bhiwandi under the scheme of National Gram Swaraj Abhiyan.

The three villages used to experience mud and swamps during the monsoon. The road has been constructed on an experimental basis under the guidance of Thane ZP chief executive officer Manuj Jindal and additional chief executive officer Rupali Satpute.

This road will boost the agricultural and economic development of the rural areas and will help increase the income



of the people.

Jindal said, "The 'K31' technology is an environmentally friendly and more effective road construction technology than the traditional process. The road has been built on an experimental basis

by using the said technology for the first time through ZP." Dattu Gite, executive engineer and head of the construction department, said, "Rs200 lakh funds have been made available for this work. Rs374 lakh would

have been spent to construct a 1.719km long cement concrete road by a conventional method, but using 'K31' technology, Rs200 lakh has been used for road work, which means a saving of approximately Rs174 lakh."

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## Man held for abetting wife's suicide; his kin booked

**Thane:** A 22-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly abetting the suicide of his wife in Ulve area of Navi Mumbai. Based on a complaint, the police arrested the accused after his 19-year-old wife committed suicide

on Sunday, a police official said. The woman's father lodged a complaint alleging that the accused, his mother and brother harassed his daughter for dowry. The duo have been booked as well.

## Relief to Goyals in bank notice

URVI MAHAJANI / Mumbai

In yet another relief to Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal and his wife Anita Goyal, the Bombay High Court on Monday stayed show cause notice issued to them by Canara Bank under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Master Circular on Willful Defaulter. A division bench of Justices Gautam Patel and Neela Gokhale was hearing a plea by the couple challenging the show cause notices, declaring them willful defaulters. Earlier, the HC had stayed similar notices issued to Goyals by the IDBI Bank. Goyal contended that on receiving the show cause notice, he asked Canara Bank to show the list of documents relied on while declaring them willful defaulters. However, they were not given the documents, which Goyals argued as a violation of the principles of natural justice. The plea also added that the order was in derogation of the intent of the RBI Master Circular. Goyal contended in his plea that he was appointed as a non-executive director and his role was to engage in brand building, hunting for talent and best human resources for the company and increasing the presence of the company in the international market. He further said that he was not involved in the day-to-day affairs or executive decisions of Jet Airways.

## 'Stamp duty ₹100 and not ₹1000'

ATEEQ SHAIKH / Mumbai

Independent consumer rights body Mumbai Grahak Panchayat (MGP) has written to Maharashtra Chief Minister highlighting how its latest government resolution on charging Rs1,000 to existing flat owners of self-redevelopment is in direct contravention to a recent court order.

The correspondence highlighted the February 17, 2023 landmark Bombay High Court order wherein it has been detailed that for Permanent Alternate Accommodation Agreements (PAAA) in case of redevelopment projects, not more than Rs100 is to be paid as stamp duty.

The court order reads, "Once the development agreement is stamped, the PAAA cannot be separately assessed to stamp beyond the Rs100 requirement of Section 4 (1) if it relates to and only to rebuilt or reconstructed premises in lieu of the old premises used/occupied by the member, and even if the PAAA includes additional area available free to the member because it is not a purchase or a transfer but is in lieu of the member's old premises. The stamp on the Development Agreement includes the reconstruction of every unit in the society building. The stamp cannot be levied twice." Resolution shows lack of attention to the court orders. It also is a contempt to the court order, said Advocate Shirish Deshpande, Chairman, MGP.

# 17-year-old drowns in Upvan Lake

Accompanied by friends, the class 12 student drowned as he couldn't judge the lake's depth

ABHITASH SINGH / Thane

A 17-year-old boy, who had gone to swim along with his four friends, drowned in Upvan Lake on Monday. A class 12 student, the deceased was identified as Aditya Laxman Pawar, who lived at the Sai Sahakar Society in Lokmanya Nagar. The incident took place at around 1.45 pm while the disaster management cell (DMC) room received a call at around 2.15 pm. Regional DMC chief Yasin Tadvi said, "The teen drowned near Ganapati Visarjan Ghat opposite Palaidevi Temple at Upvan Lake. He along with four others had gone to swim in the lake. Aditya could not gauge its depth and consequently drowned."

The local fire brigade was alerted and the DMC team reached the spot along with one pick-up vehicle, a bus of Thane Disaster Response Force and one fire vehicle. Three boats were also engaged in the search operation. His body was fished out after four hours and subsequently handed over to the Vartak Nagar police.

A case of accidental death report has been filed, said cops.



## THREE TOURISTS DROWN IN PALGHAR

PANKAJ S RAUT / Palghar

Waterfalls and dam overflows have claimed the lives of three tourists in the past two days in Palghar. Four friends from Jogeshwari, including Mashiuddin Khan, had come from Jawhar to enjoy the weather. They reached Kalmandavi waterfall. The waterfall was different from the one they saw on YouTube. The friends despite fear went under the waterfall. Mashiuddin slipped into

the fall and drowned. Police and locals launched a search operation and found the body later that evening. It was the ninth death at the waterfall this year.

A tourist at Dabhosa Waterfall was seen drowning on Sunday, which prompted Devendra Shinde, a junior clerk in Panchayat Samiti Office in Jawhar, to help. Shinde had come to Dabhosa waterfall along with his friends. During the rescue mission, Devendra went missing and

was feared dead.

Rahul Kharat and his wife had come to visit Vandri dam in Ganje Dhekale village in Palghar taluka on July 16. Rahul stepped into the reservoir for a swim but did not gauge the depth properly and drowned.

Locals managed to pull out his body. More than four other tourists were saved from drowning in the dam overflow.

The district administration has taken cognisance of the deaths of tourists.

## Two stuck in dam riverbed rescued



AMIT SRIVASTAVA / Navi Mumbai

Panvel taluka police emerged as a saviour for two people who went into the riverbed of the Gadeshwar (Dehrang) dam in Panvel and got stuck in the stream. Police beat marshal on regular duty noticed them trapped inside the water, and rescued them with the help of rope on Saturday afternoon.

Assistant Police Inspector Milind Fattare and police constable Tukaram Korde, Sandeep Patil, Dhananjay Pathare, and others entered the riverbed and rescued them. The two men rescued were identified as Sohail Khawajuddin Ahmad Sheikh and Manoj Shankar Gangurde. A large number of revellers

flock to waterfalls and rain-water riverbeds during the monsoon every year despite the respective police banning entry to such places and issuing notices.

"Due to the sudden rise in the water level, they were trapped and when they tried to come out, one of them was swept down the stream," said an official from Panvel Taluka police station. However, he added that police officials present immediately brought rope and rescued both of them.

The Panvel taluka police have already imposed section 144 (to curb instances of nuisance) near the dam and riverbed areas and put up a notice board in its jurisdiction to prevent drowning and other fatal incidents.

Section 144 has been imposed near the dam and riverbed areas to prevent drownings

## SLUM DWELLERS

# HC gives 2-week extension to submit undertaking to PMC

Petitioners directed to vacate houses by Sept 30; submit undertaking for same

AMIT SRIVASTAVA / Navi Mumbai

The Bombay High Court has given two weeks extension to slum dwellers of Patel Mohalla and Kachhi Mohalla to submit their undertaking to the Panvel Municipal Corporation (PMC) on humanitarian grounds. However, they have to vacate their houses to pave the way for the construction of around 2,600 homes under Prime Minister Awas Yojana (PMAY).

Earlier, the High Court had ordered slum dwellers to submit undertakings by July 13 to the corporation. However, after the Janhit Kalyankari Society approached the High Court and

sought more time, the court extended the deadline by two weeks.

On June 26, the HC rejected a writ petition filed by two slum dwellers, against the proposed scheme under PMAY by the PMC. As per the court's ruling, the petitioners have been directed to vacate their houses by September 30 and submit an undertaking for the same by July 13.

In 2020, the Central proposed to redevelop six slums in the PMC area under the PMAY's 2015 Housing for All

2022' scheme, which included Valmiki Nagar, Mahakali Nagar, Laxmi Colony, Kutchi Mohalla, Patel Mohalla, Ashok Bagh, and Takka Vasahat.

However, the Public Interest Welfare Society, backed by Kutchi Mohalla and Patel Mohalla, opposed the redevelopment and approached the HC. During the hearing on June 26, the court directed the

slum dwellers to vacate.

If the undertaking is not submitted within the stipulated time, the civic authorities will take appropriate action by vacating the huts, informed deputy civic chief Kailas Gawade.

Under Prime Minister Awas Yojana, the PMC plans to construct 2,600 houses, with the first phase involving the construction of 14 buildings in Patel Mohalla, Kachhi Mohalla, or other locations. PMC had earlier served notices to 939 slum dwellers to vacate the huts, promising Rs4,000 per month as rent for an alternate arrangement of houses. As part of the rehabilitation, the residents of these slums were to receive houses of 30 sq mt. However, the process was delayed after the two slums approached the court.

# Special squads to combat dengue in Mira-Bhayandar

Mosquito breeders in societies to be fined; construction sites ignoring breeding spots will be slapped with stop-work notices

SURESH GOLANI / Mira-Bhayandar

To prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases like malaria and the fatal dengue illness during the monsoon, the Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation (MBMC) has geared up to prosecute those people whose premises are found to be breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Apart from implementing preventive measures like fogging and fumigation, the civic administration has launched a massive publicity campaign, to create awareness among people on dengue and how to control the mosquitoes.

Moreover, 32 dedicated teams comprising multi-purpose workers (MPW) from the local public health centres (PHC) are in combat mode visiting each and every locality. The health department has already issued notices to developers warning

them of action if they fail to implement preventive measures at their on-going under-construction sites in the twin-city. Construction sites found ignoring prospective breeding spots will face action in the form of imposition of stays on building permissions under the provisions of the Maharashtra

Apartment Act, 1949 and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

The civic body has appealed to people to follow precautionary measures such as tightly closing the water tanks with lids, keeping the surroundings clean and hygienic, covering the vent pipes of toilets with filters, carrying out abate treatment

in large water storage containers or tanks and consult a doctor or the nearest PHC immediately if suffering from high-grade fever.

"People should promote clean surroundings and make efforts to ensure water stagnation does not take place," said civic chief Dilip Dhole.

"At present, 11 suspected dengue patients and 8 cases of malaria have been detected in the twin-city," said health in-charge, Dr Nandkishore Lahane. The MBMC has armed itself with 30 tempo equipped with fumigation machines to ensure that sanitation workers can reach a much larger area to make the exercise easy and effective.



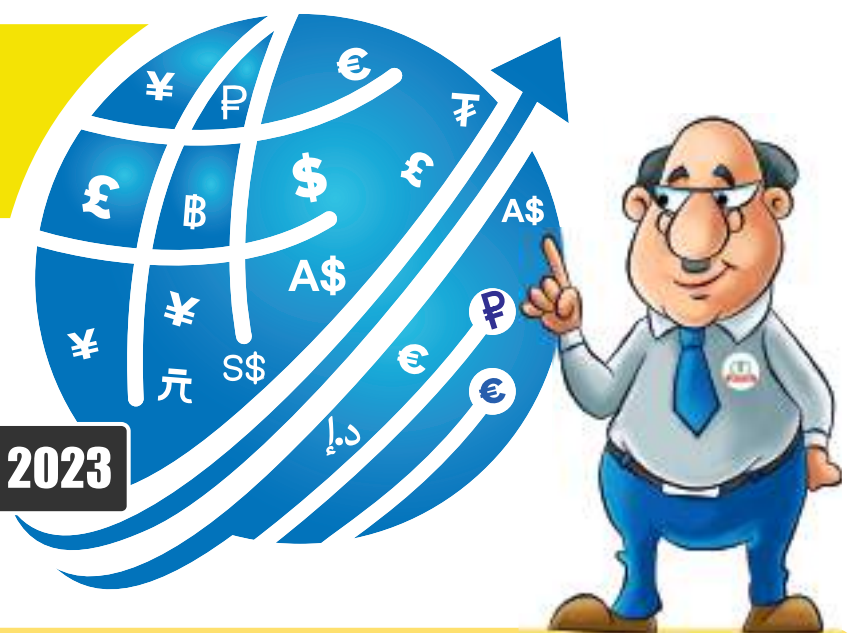
ATTENTION: Foreign bank accounts, assets & income holders

Fill the

FOREIGN ASSET SCHEDULE IN

ITR for AY 2023-24

LAST DATE 31<sup>st</sup> JULY, 2023



Fill the Foreign Asset (FA)/Foreign Source of Income (FSI) Schedule of your ITR if you have foreign bank accounts, assets or income

If you are

- A tax resident of India in the previous year, and
- Own foreign assets or bank accounts, or
- Have earned foreign income during the previous year

Attention

A resident in India must fill foreign asset schedule, for the foreign assets held as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022:

EVEN IF

- you do not have any taxable income or your income falls within basic exemption limit
- Same information is captured in any other schedule (like schedule AL)
- The Foreign Asset is created/acquired from disclosed sources of foreign or domestic income

The Foreign Assets (FA) includes:

- Foreign Bank Accounts
- Foreign Equity and debt
- Financial interest in any Entity/Business
- Immovable property
- Any other capital asset
- Any other foreign assets prescribed in Schedule FA.

Also required, if you have

- Foreign Custodial Account
- Foreign cash value insurance contract or annuity contract
- Account(s) signing authority
- A name as a trustee, beneficiary or settlor in trusts, outside India

Please note:

Failure to disclose a foreign assets/income can attract a penalty of Rs. 10 lakh, under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015

For further assistance, please visit the website of the Income tax Department:

[www.incometax.gov.in](http://www.incometax.gov.in)



For e-filing Scan QR Code



Income Tax Department  
Central Board of Direct Taxes



No water cut in areas coming under Vadgaon WTP

Water supply in areas served by Pune's Vadgaon Water Treatment Plant will remain uninterrupted from July 17 to July 23, 2023. Repair work caused a temporary halt in supply, affecting residents. The affected areas frequently experience water cuts. However, scheduled water cuts will continue in other parts of the city as planned.

# BAVDHAN RESIDENTS DISTRESSED BY DRUNKARDS AND LITTERING IN AREA

GUNWANTI PARASTE

Residents of Bavdhan in Pune are raising concerns over the prevalent littering and irresponsible behaviour in their neighbourhood. They are particularly troubled by the widespread consumption of alcohol in open spaces and the indiscriminate dumping of bottles, which has created a mess and poses threats to safety and hygiene. The residents are urging the authorities to address the issue by increasing police patrolling and initiating prompt cleaning efforts by the Pune Municipal Corporation. They emphasize the need for immediate action to restore a sense of peace and security, especially for women and children.

CS Krishnan, a concerned resident, voiced his concerns, stating, "As residents, we no longer feel safe in our own neighbourhood. People openly consume alcohol in open spaces, and due to a shortage of police manpower, adequate patrolling has not been carried out in Bavdhan. There are approximately six liquor shops in the vicinity, with many located near Bavdhan Tekdi, dark spots, the Shinde Commercial Complex car park, and along NDA-Pashan Road. These areas have now become littered with broken liquor bottles. Moreover, this issue has attracted pigs, which now enter the spaces between Shinde Nagar Lane 3 and Natural Ice Cream on NDA-



Pashan Road. We urgently request the police officials to initiate regular patrolling, as the presence of drunkards has become a menace. Additionally, we urge the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) to promptly clean the area."

Another resident of Bavdhan highlighted the safety concerns, saying, "The hillside in Bavdhan is no longer safe. Certain groups gather in these areas to consume alcohol and subsequently dispose of the bottles in open spaces. This makes it unsafe for us to walk in near the hill regions. Despite regular street cleanings, the number of empty alcohol bottles and beer cans continues to accumulate. The police should conduct thorough



Patrols across the entire area, as people visit the hillsides daily to drink, resulting in an escalating alcohol waste problem." A resident of Bavdhan further

shared the worsening situation during nighttime, stating, "In the evenings, Bavdhan experiences a terrible situation. Every day, numerous individuals congregate to consume alcohol, leaving behind a trail of discarded bottles and cans. This only adds to the existing garbage dump. The authorities have shown little control over the situation. Consequently, various parts of Bavdhan have become unsafe, especially for women and children."

Another resident expressed concerns over the lack of fear among suspicious individuals and their disregard for the police. He shared, "We have repeatedly raised our voices against drinking alcohol in open spaces,

but these individuals neither listen nor care. Moreover, they even threaten us. People are consuming alcohol at the entrance of our building, near parked rickshaws, or inside their cars. The opposite side of Lantana Garden has become an open-air drinking area. After consuming alcohol, they leave the area littered with bottles and plastic glasses. Broken bottles are frequently found on the roads, posing risks to residents. Additionally, these individuals display reckless behaviour while driving under the influence. The presence of broken glass fragments adds further danger. Furthermore, they urinate in public without any regard for passers-by, including women."

The residents of Bavdhan are appealing to the authorities for immediate action to address this escalating issue. They urge the police to enhance patrolling efforts and ensure the safety of the neighbourhood. The Pune Municipal Corporation is also called upon to prioritize the cleanup of the affected areas. Residents said that they hope that these measures will restore peace and security to Bavdhan, making it a safe place for all residents, particularly women and children.

FPJ contacted Pimpri Chinchwad police commissioner Vinay Kumar Choubey for the issue, but he did not respond at the time of publication.

## Math wizard Mangala Narlikar passes away at 80

AGENCIES

Renowned mathematician and scientist, Dr. Mangala Narlikar, wife of noted astrophysicist Dr. Jayant Narlikar, passed away on Monday at her residence in Pune, Maharashtra, after a prolonged battle with cancer. She was 80 years old. Dr. Narlikar had been undergoing treatment for cancer for over a year, according to a family member.



**Born on May 17, 1943, in Mumbai, Dr. Mangala Narlikar excelled in her academic pursuits. She topped the Master's Program in Mathematics at the University of Mumbai in 1964 and conducted research at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research's School of Mathematics for two years. She then pursued teaching at the University of Cambridge until 1969, after which she returned to TIFR as a faculty member until 1980. During this period, she earned her PhD in Mathematics from the University of Mumbai. Dr. Narlikar specialized in various branches of mathematics, including real and complex analysis, analytic geometry, number theory, algebra, and topology. Her research focused on pure mathematics.**

Dr. Mangala Narlikar moved to India from Cambridge, England, along with her husband, and began working at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. She also taught mathematics at the University of Bombay in 1969, the couple relocated to Pune, where Dr. Narlikar joined the mathematics department of the University of Pune (now Savitribai Phule Pune University).

Born on May 17, 1943, in Mumbai, Dr. Mangala Narlikar excelled in her academic pursuits. She topped the MA (Mathematics) program at the University of Mumbai in 1964 and conducted research at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research's School of Mathematics for two years. She then pursued teaching at the University of Cambridge until 1969, after which she returned to TIFR as a faculty member until 1980. During this period, she earned her PhD in Mathematics from the University of Mumbai. Dr. Narlikar specialized in various branches of mathematics, including real and complex analysis, analytic geometry, number theory, algebra, and topology. Her research focused on pure mathematics. Throughout her career, Dr. Mangala Narlikar taught at various institutions such as the University of Mumbai, the University of Pune, and Bhaskaracharya Pratishthana. She delivered lectures in both national and international institutions and authored numerous scholarly research papers on mathematics. Dr. Narlikar also authored two books on the subject and actively advocated for women in science.

Dr. Mangala Narlikar is survived by her husband, Dr. Jayant Narlikar, and their three daughters, Leelavati, Girija, and Geeta. Her mortal remains will be kept at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) in Pune for individuals to pay their respects. Later, her cremation will take place at the Vaikunth crematorium.

### From Kasarwadi to Heilbronn

## PCMC school students head to Germany

STAFF REPORTER

Students from civic-run Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj English Medium School, Kasarwadi, will be attending a two-day youth conference on Sustainable Development Goals in Heilbronn, Germany, from July 19. This marks the first time that students from the Pimpri Chinchwad will participate in an international workshop.

The selected group of 10 students from classes 8 and 9 will have the opportunity to present their work on water conservation and sanitation in front of foreign teachers and students during the ten-day study tour. Over the past two years, the Akanksha Foundation has collaborated with the Municipal School under the Sustainable Development Project designated by the United Nations. The students have been actively involved in various activities focused on water conservation, including creating public awareness, organizing exhibitions, implementing water-saving schemes, and planning cleanliness programs. Their efforts align with the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations.

Parijat Prakash, the Headmaster of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj English Medium School, expressed pride in the students' achievements and highlighted the school's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. The participation of the students at the international level is seen as a beginning, with the hope that other schools will also participate in similar initiatives in the future.

The mother of one of the selected students shared her joy and gratitude for the support provided by the Municipal Corporation and Akanksha Foundation, as her son becomes the first in their family to have an international opportunity.

Commissioner Shekhar Singh praised the students' selection and highlighted the significance of this opportunity for the municipal school students to showcase their talent at the international level. He emphasized the importance of Sustainable Development and expressed the municipal administration's commitment to providing quality facilities and adopting the best educational methods for the children and teachers of municipal schools.



### DIPOTSAV IN PUNE



Dipotsav celebration at Akhil Mhasoba Utsav Mandai Mandal, accompanied by an energetic dhol tasha performance by Swaraj Pathak in Pune.



## Prohibitory orders for supp board exams

STAFF REPORTER

In light of the upcoming Higher Secondary Certificate (Class 12th) and Secondary School Certificate (Class 10th), Supplementary Examinations conducted by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Pune Collector Dr. Rajesh Deshmukh has issued prohibitory orders from 6 am on July 18 to 8 pm on August 8. These orders apply within a 100-meter radius of all secondary and higher secondary examination centres in rural areas of the district.

The imposition of these orders aims to maintain law and order, prevent malpractice at the examination centres, and ensure the smooth conduct of the exams. The orders prohibit the entry of any private individuals, except teachers, officers, and staff associated with the examination, within the examination centre premises and within 100 meters of its vicinity. Gathering of two or more persons within the premises of the examination centre is also prohibited, except for candidates appearing for the exams, authorized examination personnel, police officers, and security staff.



Furthermore, within a 100-meter radius of the examination centres, the use of public telephones, STDs, ISDs, booths, faxes, xerox centres, emails, internet facilities, laptops, mobile phones, media, or any similar means of communication is strictly prohibited. Additionally, mobiles, wireless sets, transistors, radios, calculators, laptops, and similar devices are not allowed to be kept or used inside the examination centre or within 100 meters of its premises. The order emphasizes that individuals who violate these prohibitory orders will be subject to legal action under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. The authorities are taking these measures to ensure a fair and secure examination environment for all candidates and to maintain the integrity of the examination process.

### PMPML's 'Pravasi Divas'

## 37 complaints, 14 feedback notes from commuters

WEB DESK

The Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Limited (PMPML) has introduced the 'Pravasi Divas' initiative to gather complaints and feedback from commuters, with the goal of enhancing public transportation services in the city. During the inaugural 'Pravasi Divas' held at all depots on Friday, PMPML re-

ceived 37 complaints and 14 feedback notes from citizens. To facilitate this process, a designated officer has been assigned to each depot to collect and address the concerns raised by commuters. 'Pravasi Divas' is scheduled to occur on the second and fourth Fridays of every month, from 3 pm to 5 pm, enabling individuals to provide their complaints or feedback directly at the depots.

### Condemned coach catches fire

STAFF REPORTER

A condemned coach experienced caught fire at the Daund railway yard of Central Railway on Monday. However, swift action from railway authorities, aided by nearby water facilities, allowed them to promptly control the situation using fire extinguishers.

Railway officials quickly mobilized their resources and effectively deployed fire extinguishers to combat the flames. Their prompt response resulted in the fire being contained rapidly, preventing any further escalation. "The incident took place today at approximately 4:30 PM. Thankfully, due to the proximity of the condemned coach to a nearby water pipe, which is commonly used for train washing, immediate access to water was available, greatly aiding firefighting efforts," said a CR senior officer.

### LAST WORD

## Tomato Tycoon: Pune farmer earns ₹2.8cr and counting!

AGENCIES

Amid skyrocketing prices of tomatoes across the country, a farmer in Maharashtra's Pune district claimed to have earned more than Rs 2.8 crore by selling tomatoes.

Ishwar Gayakar (36) and his wife, who hails from Pune's Junnar taluka, do not intend to stop at this. The farmer couple has set a target to earn Rs 3.5 crore with a stock of around 4000 crates of tomatoes available with him.

Speaking about his hard work throughout the years, Ishwar Gayakar said, "This is not something I have earned in one day. I have been cultivating tomatoes on my 12-acre farm for the last six-seven years now. I have also incurred losses several times but I have never left my hopes. In 2021, I had made a loss of rupees 18-20 lakhs but I did not stop."

Speaking about his profits, this year, Gayakar said, "This year, I have cultivated tomatoes on 12 acres and, till today, I have sold around 17000



crates priced between Rs 770 to Rs 2311 per crate. So in total, I have earned Rs 2.8 crore till now."

"I still have a stock of around 3000 to 4000 crates of tomatoes at my farm. So if you calculate, my total earnings this year would go up to around Rs 3.5 crore," he added. Gayakar said that his family is happy with his success. Thanking his wife who also works with him at the farm and the blessing of his parents and grandparents, he said, "I feel this success has come to me

because of the blessings of my parents, grandparents and hard work of my wife who works with me in the farm. Everyone in my family is happy with the price we got for our tomatoes." Gayakar shared that he thought that he would get around 30 rupees per kg by selling tomatoes but his fortunes turned this season.

"Before this season, I had in my mind that I would get around 30 rupees per kg for the price of tomatoes, but it turned out to be a

bumper lottery for me this time," he said. Gayakar is farming since 2005. He took over farming from his father and now he works at his farm with his wife. Earlier, they used to cultivate tomatoes on only 1 acre of land. Later with the availability of labour on 12 acres. Other than tomatoes, Gayakar also cultivates onions and flowers in respective seasons.

Earlier, in a relief for consumers, who were forced to go off tomatoes

after their prices went through the roof across the country, the Centre on Sunday reduced the wholesale price of tomatoes from Rs 90 to Rs 80 per kg.

According to an official release, after re-assessing the current situation of the market, the Centre decided to revise the price of tomatoes. The changes in the price will be executed from July 16, Sunday, in Delhi, Noida, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Patna, Muzaffarpur and Arrah through the National Agri-

culture Cooperation Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and the National Consumer Cooperation Federation (NCCF).

It will be expanded to more cities depending upon the prevailing market price at the current locations. The rates of tomatoes were previously revised on July 14 to Rs 90 per kg.

Prices of tomatoes in the retail market remain at an elevated level of up to Rs 250 per kg across major cities due to monsoon rains and the lean season. The price spike can be attributed to multiple factors, such as the heat wave in crucial tomato-growing regions and heavy rainfall, which has disrupted the supply chains. Furthermore, the shorter shelf life of tomatoes has also contributed to the rise. Tomato prices normally shoot up during July-August and October-November periods, which are generally lean production months. Supply disruption caused due to the monsoon has led to a sharp rise in the rates.

MARKET WATCH			
SENSEX	66,589.93	▲	529.03
NIFTY	19,711.45	▲	146.95
USDINR	82.03	▲	0.14
GOLD	59,950.00	▼	50.00
SILVER	76,400.00	▲	0.00

## BIZ BULLETIN

### India, US mutually resolve all trade disputes at WTO

India and the US have mutually resolved all six trade disputes pending at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), in line with the commitment made by the two countries during the US visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month, an official said. The official said that both countries have informed the WTO's dispute settlement body (DSB) about the resolution of all the pending disputes.

### Domestic tractor sales at 8-month high in June

Tractor sales in India rose to an eight-month high of 98,422 units in June, up 4.2% on year, data from the Tractor and Mechanization Association showed. Domestic tractor sales were 82,907 units in May. On a month-on-month basis domestic tractor sales were up 18.7%. Tractor exports continued the downward trend, falling 36.2% on year in June. During the month, 8,198 units of tractors were exported compared to exports of 8,356 units in May.

### FDI inflows at \$5.31 bn in May vs \$8.11 bn year ago

Gross foreign direct investments into India were at \$5.31 bn in May, down from \$8.11 bn a year ago, data released by the Reserve Bank of India today showed. Manufacturing, business services and financial services attracted majority of the FDI inflows in May, while Singapore, the Netherlands and the US were major source countries for FDI during the month, the report said. In April, FDI inflows were at \$6.93 bn.

### Bank of India seeks EoI for ₹720.7 mn NPAs

Bank of India has invited expressions-of-interest from asset reconstruction companies, banks, non-banking financial or financial institutions for the sale of stressed assets of Visa Steel and Sardar Cottons, the bank said in a newspaper notice on Monday. The stressed assets are worth 720.7 mn rupees, of which, Visa Steel has bad assets worth 656.4 mn rupees and Sardar Cottons has bad assets worth 64.3 mn rupees.

### IOC signs LNG deals with Adhoc, TotalEnergies

India's top oil firm IOC has signed deals to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) from UAE's Abu Dhabi Gas Liquefaction Co Ltd and TotalEnergies of France on a long-term basis. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) signed the deals during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to France and the UAE last week.

### Dr Reddy's to acquire 26% stake in SPV O2

Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd has entered agreement with TEQ Green Power XI Pvt Ltd and O2 Power SG Pte Ltd for consumption and supply of renewable energy, according to an exchange filing. Dr Reddy's will acquire 26% stake in the special purpose vehicle O2 Renewable Energy IX Pvt Ltd and 74% will be held by TEQ Green Power XI.

### Vistara to respond to CCI queries by month end

Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan on Monday said the airline will submit its response to the Competition Commission's queries on the proposed merger with Air India by the end of this month and expressed confidence of receiving all regulatory approvals by early next year. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has sought more details on the merger of Vistara with Air India, a deal that was announced in November last year.

### Matrix Gas files papers for initial public offering

Gas aggregator Matrix Gas and Renewables Ltd has filed draft papers to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO). Post the successful completion of the IPO, the company will be listed on NSE Emerge, a platform for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The IPO comprises fresh issue of 56 lakh equity shares with no offer-for-sale (OFS) component, according to the DRHP filed on Saturday with NSE Emerge.

### Platinum files papers for fresh issue of 15.9 mn shrs

Platinum Industries Ltd has filed a draft red herring prospectus with the Sebi for an initial public offering comprising a fresh issue of 15.9 mn shares. Platinum Industries is a Mumbai-based company engaged in manufacturing stabilisers.

### L&T gets new orders in water treatment segment

Larsen and Toubro (L&T) on Monday said it has bagged "large orders" in the water & effluent treatment segment in the domestic market. The work order has been received from the State Water & Sanitation Mission, Uttar Pradesh, to construct a water supply scheme for the Hanumanganj multi-group of villages in the districts of Ballia and Firozabad, L&T said in a statement.

### Jewellery World expo at St Regis Hotel in Mumbai

Jewellery enthusiasts, fashion connoisseurs, and discerning buyers will be enthralled as the prestigious Jewellery World Exhibition at the renowned St Regis Hotel in Mumbai on July 21-23. This highly anticipated event showcases an extraordinary collection of exquisite jewels from around the world. —Agencies

## RBI puts up Innovation Pavilion at G20 FMCBG meeting venue

The Reserve Bank has put up a stall at the venue of third meeting of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors (FMCBG) here, showcasing its recent innovation initiatives relating to pilot on 'Frictionless

Credit' and 'Central Bank Digital Currency'. Set up at Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre, the 'Innovation Pavilion' also features an informative video explaining the various facets of these two initiatives.



## BERNSTEIN REPORT

### India on a roll owing to landmark reforms like GST under PM Modi



PTI / New Delhi

India has risen from being the 10th largest economy in the world in 2014 to the fifth largest now on the back of "landmark" reforms like GST and an unprecedented infrastructure push, Bernstein said in a report on the Modi government's tenure.

The brokerage in a 31-page report titled 'The decade under PM Modi - a deep-dive', hailed landmark reforms, inflation control and financial inclusion and digitisation despite inheriting "a weak economy with several institutions in distress".

"Fortune strikes overnight - for some, it is by luck, and for most, it is led by years of effort. The Indian story is similar, becoming more believable even as the building blocks took over a decade to strengthen," it said.

### Bernstein studied some parameters to assess how India has fared since 2014.

Under Modi, India has seen tremendous progress in several areas.

"The building blocks have been put in place, and although economic growth has been sluggish for several years in the past decade - part of that was unwinding the excesses and strengthening the economy through new reform initiatives.

"The building blocks are clearly in place for a positive India cycle as long as the continuity of policies remains. We remain positive on the broader markets, even as we see room for some moderation in 2HFY24 macro, as we believe that the cycle view will continue to limit downside risks," the report said.

# SENSEX, NIFTY SCALE NEW LIFETIME HIGHS ON FII BUYING, BETTER Q1 SHOW

The indices rallied for 3rd day in a row to close at fresh lifetime high levels following buying in banking and oil stocks

PTI / Mumbai

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty rallied for a third day in a row to close at fresh lifetime high levels on Monday following buying in banking and oil stocks and FII inflows.

Analysts said the first quarter results by Indian companies have been mostly in line with expectations, triggering a rally in local equities despite mixed global cues. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 529.03 points or 0.80 per cent to settle at its new all-time closing high of 66,589.93. During the day, it climbed 595.31 points or 0.90 per cent to hit its lifetime intra-day peak of 66,656.20. As many as 18 Sensex shares closed in the green while 12 declined. The NSE Nifty also soared by 146.95 points or 0.75 per cent to close at a new record high of 19,711.45. During the day, it rallied 167.35 points or 0.85 per cent to its record intra-day high of 19,731.85.

From the Sensex pack, State Bank of India rose the most by 2.82 per cent. Gains in Wipro, Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and IndusInd Bank helped the index close at record levels.

"Despite the mixed performance observed in the Asian market due to China's underwhelming GDP data, the Indian market exhibited resilience, in anticipation of a bumper Q1 result," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geo-



jit Financial Services said.

"The sharp surge in the banking index after a pause in the IT pack reaffirms our bullish view and we are eyeing Nifty to gradually inch towards a new milestone i.e. 20,000 mark," Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.85 per cent and the midcap index advanced 0.29 per cent.

## Petrol, diesel sales fall as monsoon ebbs demand

PTI / New Delhi

India's petrol and diesel consumption fell in the first half of July as fury of monsoon flipped travel plans and reduced the demand in the agri sector, preliminary industry data showed.

Demand for diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, fell 15 per cent to 2.96 million tonnes in July 1-15, compared to the year-ago period.

Consumption of diesel, which had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively, as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat the summer heat, has tapered since the second half of June after the monsoon set in.

Month-on-month sales fell almost 20 per cent, when compared with 3.68 million tonnes of diesel consumed in June 1-15.

### Demand for diesel fell 15% to 2.96 mn tonnes in July 1-15 period

Petrol sales dropped 10.5 per cent to 1.25 million tonnes during the first half of July 2023, when compared with the same period last year. Sales were down 10.8 per cent month-on-month, the data showed.

Both the manufacturing and services sectors in India have been in expansion territory to support oil demand for over one year.

## Global growth uneven with uncertain outlook: Sitharaman

ANI / Ahmedabad

Global economic growth is below its long-run average and remains uneven, with the uncertainty around the outlook remaining high, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday in her opening remarks at the inaugural session of the 3rd Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Gujarat's Gandhinagar.

"Since we last met in April, the global economic growth is below its long-run average and remains uneven further the uncertainty around the outlook remains high and downside risks to the outlook still persist,"



Sitharaman said.

Against that context, in her six-minute remarks, she called for coordinated international efforts to navigate this challenging period and sought conversation on these issues. Quoting one of Mahatma Gandhi's famous lines, "The future depends on what we do in the present," she

said the statement conveys the responsibility they have as the finance ministers and central bank governors of the G20 countries in steering the global economy towards sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth.

Sitharaman and the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, are jointly chairing the meeting.

## Need 7.6% growth for 25 years for developed economy tag: RBI paper

INFORMIST / Mumbai

India's real gross domestic product needs to grow at 7.6% annually over the next 25 years to achieve the per capita income level to become a developed economy, according to a Reserve Bank of India staff paper released on Monday.

The RBI staff paper titled 'India @100' provides an indicative roadmap for India to become a developed country by 2047-48.

The paper does not necessarily reflect the views of the RBI. As per The World Bank's classification of a developed (high-income) country, a country's per capita nominal GDP must be more than \$21,664 to become a high-income country by 2047.

"To achieve this target, the required real GDP CAGR



(compound annual growth rate) for India works out to be 7.6% during 2023-24 to 2047-48," the staff paper said.

Meanwhile, the elevated interest rates are set to buoy the returns from the RBI's foreign investments to the tune of USD 6-8 billion this fiscal, which will help the monetary authority pay higher dividend to the government and also buffer up the forex reserves a la the FY21 fashion, says an overseas brokerage report.

### Apr-Jun BoP surplus improved to \$24.4 bn

India's balance of payments surplus improved significantly in the June quarter to \$24.4 bn from \$5.6 bn in Jan-Mar, according to a Reserve Bank of India staff paper released on Monday. "The overall balance of payments surplus improved strongly in Q1:2023-24, indicating that financial flows comfortably exceeded the current account deficit," said the paper. The paper attributed its views to a host of central bank officials, including Deputy Governor Michael Patra, and said they do not necessarily reflect the views of the RBI.

## Import restrictions on gold jewellery not applicable for SEZ units

PTI / New Delhi

The government has clarified that import restrictions on certain gold jewellery and articles are not applicable for units in the special economic zones (SEZs).

On July 12, the government, through a notification, imposed these restrictions on certain gold jewellery and articles. In a policy circular, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said it has received representations from SEZs units highlighting issues being faced by them due to these restrictions.

Accordingly, it is "clarified" that imports of these products by SEZ units "are outside the purview" of the July 12 notification, the DGFT said.

## ESIC adds 20.23 lakh new members in May

PTI / New Delhi

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has added 20.23 lakh new subscribers in May 2023, according to the latest payroll data.

The provisional payroll data of ESIC reveals that 20.23 lakh new employees have been added in May 2023, a labour ministry statement said.

Around 24,886 new establishments have been registered and brought under the social security umbrella of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation in May 2023, thus ensuring more coverage, it stated.

According to the data, more jobs have been generated for the youth of the nation as out of the

total 20.23 lakh employees added during May 2023, 9.40 lakh employees up to the age group of 25 years constitute the majority of new registrations, which is 47 per cent of the total employees.

### Around 24,886 new establishments have been registered and brought under ESIC in May

Gender-wise analysis of payroll data indicates that the net enrolment of female members has been 3.96 lakh in May 2023.

The data also revealed that a total of 71 transgender employees have got registered under ESI Scheme in May 2023.

## NITI'S EXPORT PREPAREDNESS INDEX 2022

### Tamil Nadu tops list, Gujarat skids to 4th slot

PTI / New Delhi

Tamil Nadu has pipped Maharashtra and Gujarat to emerge as the top state in the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022.

The index is aimed at assessing the readiness of the states in terms of their export potential and performance. Gujarat had topped the chart in the last two rankings. Tamil Nadu with an overall score of 80.89 topped the third edition of rankings. Maharashtra with a score of 78.20 was second while Karnataka (76.36) was third. Gujarat with a score of 73.22 was fourth, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and Kerala in that order in the ranking of coastal states, according to the government think tank's report released on Monday.

Among hilly/Himalayan states, Uttarakhand has ranked at the top position. It is followed by Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram in that order. Haryana (63.65) topped the chart among the landlocked regions. It was followed by Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. In the category of union territories/small states, Goa (51.58) was ranked first. Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep were ranked second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

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## RBI net buys \$7.37 bn in forex market in May

INFORMIST / Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India net bought \$7.37 bn in the foreign exchange market in May, compared with \$7.70 bn bought in April, data on the central bank's website showed. On a gross basis, the central bank did not sell dollars in May compared to the \$700 mn sold in April. RBI bought about \$7.37 bn in May, compared with \$8.40 bn in April. At the end of May, the RBI had net long outstanding forward foreign exchange positions of \$19.23 bn, compared with \$19.93 bn a month ago. In the currency futures segment, net outstanding currency futures were zero at the end of May as the central bank did not buy or sell in this segment.

## Gems, jewellery exports down 39.6% YoY at \$1.53 bn in June

PTI / New Delhi

India's gems and jewellery exports fell 39.6% year-on-year to \$1.53 bn in June, and imports declined 26.1% to \$1.9 bn, according to data from the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

In Apr-Jun, the exports were down 27.5% on year at \$5.54 bn, and imports down 22.8% at \$5.20 bn.

In June, India exported 1.51 mln carats of cut and polished diamonds, compared to 2.12 mln carats exported in the year-ago period. In Apr-Jun, the country exported 4.71 mln carats of the precious stone, down from 6.76

mln carats a year ago. Import of rough diamonds fell to 12.04 mln carats in June from 13.32 mln carats in the same month last year. In Apr-Jun, the imports were at 31.69 mln carats, against 29.7 mln carats in the same period a year ago.

Exports of silver jewellery fell sharply to \$60.43 mln in June from \$324.16 mln a year ago. In Apr-Jun, shipments fell 74.8% on year to \$204.76 mln.

India imported gold bars worth \$93.77 mln in June against \$111.44 mln in the same period last year, the data showed. Gold jewellery imports rose 403.9% on year to \$99.72 mln in June.

## Gilts reverse early losses as US yields and swap rates fall



INFORMIST / New Delhi

Prices of government bonds ended higher on Monday after a weak start, spurred by an intraday fall in US Treasury yields and domestic traders receiving fixed rates in the overnight indexed swap market, dealers said.

The 10-year benchmark 7.26%, 2038 bond closed at 101.26 rupees, or 7.08% yield, against 101.15 rupees, or 7.09% yield, on Friday.

The yield on the 10-year US Treasury note fell 4 basis points to 3.79% by the end of Indian market hours today, as investors in European trade piled up on the fixed income asset following weaker-than-expected GDP data in China. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed China's economy grew 6.3% on year in Apr-Jun compared to 7.3% projected by a Reuters poll.

Even before the move in US Treasury yields, traders speculated an Indian corporate house was receiving fixed rates in the five-year OIS, spurring buys in gilts as well, dealers said. Gilt prices had recovered most of the early losses by 1200 IST on the back of the move in swap rates.

## IN TOP GEAR

# Luxury car market in India poised for record sales in 2023

PTI / New Delhi

Indian luxury car segment is driving towards an all-time high sales this year with the big three, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi, posting record numbers in the first half of 2023.

In the January-June period this year, German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz posted its best-ever half-yearly sales in India at 8,528 units, a growth of 13 per cent over 7,573 units in the year-ago period.

Similarly, compatriot BMW Group also posted record sales of 5,867 units of luxury cars across its BMW and MINI brands during the period, its best half-yearly sales in India.



Another German luxury carmaker, Audi, posted a 97 per cent jump in retail sales in India at 3,474 units in the first half of 2023 as compared to 1,765 units in the January to June period in 2022.

"Our estimate is that in the first six months (of the year) about 21,000 cars have been sold in the luxury space and normally H2 (second half) is better than H1. So, our estimate is that the whole luxury cars segment should be close to about 46,000-47,000 cars this year, which definitely is all-time high," Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillon told PTI.

The previous record was about 40,000 units in 2018, he said, adding after that the luxury segment had suffered in 2019 because of the "economic situation" and from 2020 onwards the pandemic had hampered growth.

"So this is a resurgent year, everybody's growing. Somebody is growing stronger

than the other. That's what reality is and will always be," he added.

Similarly, BMW Group India President Vikram Pawah said, "In the second half also we will break records... It will be even better (than H1) with supplies becoming normal. We'll be having a record year if all things remain constant in the economy. The demand seems strong, the product line-up is strong, further enhanced by the launch of the new X5 and response is strong."

On the reasons behind the robust growth in the luxury segment, he said apart from new launches and models fueling growth, the strong economy of India is playing a key role.

## BIZ BULLETIN

## 15% global minimum tax to come into effect next yr

Global minimum tax of 15 per cent will come into effect from next year and by 2025 almost 90 per cent of MNCs having revenues of more than 750 million euros will be subject to the levy in every country of operation, said OECD in its report to G20. "The implementation of the global minimum tax is now well underway and will come into effect from the beginning of next year," the OECD said.

## Ashok Leyland bags ₹800 cr order from Army

Commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland on Monday said it has bagged orders worth Rs 800 crore from the Indian Army. The contracts awarded also include the procurement of the Field Artillery Tractor (FAT 4x4) and the Gun Towing Vehicle (GTV 6x6), Ashok Leyland said in a statement.

## Styched acquires sneaker startup Flatheads

E-commerce fashion brand Styched has acquired D2C casual sneaker startup Flatheads in an all-equity transaction, the company announced on Monday. While Flatheads will continue offering its existing range of products, Styched will take charge of its operations and hire "aggressively" for strengthening the footwear department within Styched, the statement said.

## SAT upholds SEBI order in NSE co-location case

The Securities Appellate Tribunal on Wednesday affirmed Securities and Exchange Board of India's core charges against broker OPG Securities in its Feb 11, 2021, order in the National Stock Exchange co-location case wherein it had imposed a penalty of 1 mn rupees on the broker and a joint and several penalty 50 mn rupees on the broker and three directors of the brokerage firm. But SAT directed SEBI to reconsider the quantum of penalty in the wake of its earlier ruling in a related case against the broker.

## Tata Elxsi Apr-Jun net profit falls 6.3% on qtr

Tata Elxsi Ltd's net profit for the June quarter fell 6.3% sequentially to 1.89 bn rupees. Revenue from operations for the quarter rose 1.5% to 8.5 bn rupees. On a year-on-year basis, the net profit rose 2.2% and revenue was up 17.1%. The company's other income fell to 222.09 mn rupees from 256.87 mn rupees a quarter ago.

## Proximus Group to acquire 84% stake in Route Mobile, buys 58% for ₹5,922 cr

PTI / New Delhi

Belgium-based Proximus Group, through its subsidiary, will acquire up to 84 per cent stake in enterprise messaging firm Route Mobile.

Proximus Opal, a subsidiary of the Proximus Group, will initially acquire a 57.56 per cent stake in Route Mobile for Rs 5,922.4 crore in an all-cash deal, the enterprise messaging firm said in a regulatory filing. "Proximus Group will acquire 57.56 per cent of the shares in Route Mobile through Proximus Opal, for an initial Rs 59,224 million cash consideration for a price per share of Rs 1,626.40," according to the filing. "The acquisition has triggered an

## HDFC Bank net profit jumps 29% on core income growth, trading gains

PTI / New Delhi

Core income growth and trading gains helped HDFC Bank post a 29 per cent jump in consolidated net profit for the June quarter at Rs 12,370 crore.

On a standalone basis, the largest private sector lender reported a 30 per cent jump in net profit for April-June period at Rs 11,952 crore.

This is one of the fastest profit growths reported by the city-headquartered lender, which recently completed merger of its mortgage financier parent HDFC into itself with effect from July 1 onwards.

A few years ago, it had a multi-quarter run of having a 30 per cent jump in net profits till the slowing economy tempered it to around 20 per cent levels.

HDFC Bank, however, showed a decline in profits when compared to the preceding March quarter.

In the reporting quarter, core Net Interest Income (NII) grew 21 per cent to Rs 23,599



crore, helped by 15.8 per cent advances growth, while the Net Interest Margin expanded to 4.1 per cent on the overall assets.

The other income came at Rs 9,230 crore, but it was the trading gains of Rs 552 crore as against a loss of Rs 1,077 crore in the year-ago period, which helped the bottom line.

Its operating expenses grew 33.9 per cent to Rs 14,057 crore.

The provisions and contingencies for the reporting quarter were at Rs 2,860 crore, as against Rs 3,122 crore in the year-ago period, and also helped the profit growth.

The gross non-performing assets ratio improved to 1.17 per cent when compared to 1.28 per cent in the year-ago period, but was marginally higher when compared with the 1.12 per cent in the preceding March quarter-end.

The share of the low-cost current and saving account deposits stood at 42 per cent as on June 30. Its overall branch strength was 7,860, with 52 per cent of them being in semi-urban and rural areas, and the rest in urban pockets.

From a loan book composition perspective, retail assets accounted for 38 per cent of the Rs 16.29 lakh crore loan book, commercial and rural banking were at 38 per cent and corporate advances were 24 per cent.

HDFC Bank's overall capital adequacy stood at 18.9 per cent as of June 30, 2023 and was well above regulatory requirements.

The overall number of employees grew to 1,81,725 at the end of June.

## Foxconn proposes to set up ₹8,800 cr mfg plant in K'taka

PTI / Bengaluru

Foxconn, a major iPhone assembler for Apple, has proposed to set up a Rs 8,800 crore supplementary plant to that of the unit at Devanahalli Information Technology Investment Region (ITIR) in Karnataka, the state's Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil said on Monday.

The Chief Minister Siddaramaiah chaired a high-level meeting with the delegates of Foxconn Industrial Internet (Fii), headed by its CEO, Brand Cheng, in this regard, he said.

As per the proposal, Fii, a subsidiary of Foxconn (formally known as Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. Ltd), has a plan to invest Rs 8,800 Crore. "This would create 14,000 jobs and the land required for the project is about 100 acres," Patil said.

The delegates of the Fii would be taken to Tumakuru to examine the available land at Japan Industrial Township near the district headquarters town.

## GQG Partners, others buy 5.96% stake in Patanjali Foods; invests over ₹2,400 crore

INFORMIST / Mumbai

Investment management company GQG Partners LLC on Monday announced that it, along with 15 other funds, has acquired 5.96% stake or 21.56 mn shares in Patanjali Foods Ltd through a recent offer for sale.

Earlier, Patanjali Foods Ltd's promoter Patanjali Ayurved Ltd sold 25.34 mn shares, or 7% stake, of the company on Jul 13 and Jul 14 via offer for sale, according to an exchange filing.

With this, the shareholding of the promoter group in Patanjali Foods has come down to 73.82%



from 80.82% earlier, and the company has become compliant with the minimum public shareholding requirements.

The floor price was kept at Rs 1,000 per share but allotment to non-retail investors was done at a share price of Rs 1,103.80.

GQG's investment would, therefore, be worth around Rs 2,400 crore.

The non-retail quota was subscribed over 2 times, while the retail portion saw 3 times bids on Friday.

In the March quarter of FY23, Patanjali Foods reported a 13% YoY growth in standalone net profit at Rs 264 crore while its revenue rose 18% YoY to Rs 7,873 crore. The company has a return on equity (ROE) of 11% and a return on capital employed (ROCE) of 13.4%. The company has a return on assets (ROA) of 7.2% and a manageable debt-to-equity ratio of 0.2.

## Sheela Foam to acquire 94.66% stake in Kurlon Ent for ₹2,035 cr

PTI / New Delhi

Sheela Foam Ltd, the maker of mattress brand Sleepwell, on Monday said it will acquire a 94.66 per cent stake in Kurlon Enterprises Ltd for Rs 2,035 crore.

The company also said it will acquire a 35 per cent stake in online furniture firm House of Kieraya Pvt Ltd for Rs 300 crore. The company's board at its meeting held on July 17, 2023, has approved the acquisition of Kurlon Enterprise Ltd and House of Kieraya Pvt Ltd, Sheela Foam said in a regulatory filing.

"The company is acquiring 94.66 per cent of KEL's (Kurlon Enterprises Ltd) share capital at an equity valuation of Rs 2,150 crore, subject to customary adjustments for net working capital, debt and surplus cash, if any," it said. In a statement, the company said the cost of acquiring 94.66 per cent in KEL is around Rs 2,035 crore.

KEL deals mainly in the manufacture and marketing of foam and coir-based home comfort



products across the 'sit and sleep' categories like mattresses, furniture cushions, pillows and coverings. "With the coming together of Kurl On, Sheela Foam will further cement its leadership position in the modern mattress market. The investment of Furlenco would give it a very strong entry into the branded furniture market, and a much bigger market than its existing market," Sheela Foam Chairman & Managing Director Rahul Gautam said in a statement.

He further said, "With these two within its fold, Sheela Foam is at an inflexion point, where opportunities created by inorganic activity would greatly strengthen the business model and propel a higher level of organic growth".

## Central Bank Q1 profit surges 78% to ₹418 crore

PTI / New Delhi

State-owned Central Bank of India on Monday reported a 78 per cent rise in net profit at Rs 418 crore for the June quarter due to decline in bad loans and increase in interest income.

The Mumbai-based lender had posted a net profit of Rs 235 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income during the quarter under review increased to Rs 8,184 crore from Rs 6,357 crore in FY23, Central Bank of India said in a regulatory filing.

Interest earned by the bank grew to Rs 7,225 crore over Rs 5,527 crore in the June quarter a year ago.

Net Interest Income of the bank increased by 48 per cent to Rs 3,176 crore in Q1 FY24, it said.

The bank's asset quality showed improvement as gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) declined to 4.95 per cent of gross advances by the end of June 2023, from 14.90 per cent as of June 2022.

## India's Warehousing Sector: Onward and Upward



Although often overlooked, the logistics and warehousing segment plays a crucial role in the economy. In India, this sector is experiencing rapid growth and development due to the rise in commercial activities, the expansion of e-commerce, and the advancement of supply chains. The primary function of the logistics and warehousing segment is to facilitate the transportation of products from their origin to the end consumers. In this article, we will delve into the flourishing warehousing sector in India and explore the key factors fueling the growth of the Indian warehousing market. Let's begin.

## What's Happening?

According to a report by IBEF (India Brand Equity Foundation), the Indian warehousing market is projected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.64% from 2022 to 2027, reaching a market size of US \$34.99 billion (approximately Rs 2,872.10 billion). The warehousing sector in India has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, thanks to the introduction of modern warehouse facilities and technology-based solutions. Increasing demand and supply have contributed to the growing momentum of the Indian warehousing industry. Notably, third-party logistics providers and e-commerce ventures are major players in this industry, expanding their presence in tier 2 and 3 cities and playing an increasingly significant role in the secondary marketplace.

## Factors Boosting the Warehousing Market

Several factors are driving the growth of the warehousing market in India. Let's explore some of these key factors:

Teji Mandi (TM Investment Technologies Pvt Ltd) is a SEBI registered Research Analyst (RA). Information in this article should not be construed as investment advice. Please visit www.tejmandi.com to know more.

1. **E-commerce:** The surge in e-commerce has significantly contributed to the expansion of the warehousing segment.

2. **Infrastructure Development:** The government's emphasis on infrastructure development in India has created a favourable environment for the warehousing industry.

3. **Manufacturing Shift:** The shift of international companies' manufacturing focus to India has increased demand for warehouse options and logistics services.

4. **Emergence of Startups:** The market has witnessed the emergence of technology-driven logistics and warehousing startups.

## Investment in the Warehousing Segment

The warehousing segment in India has witnessed significant investment activity in recent years. According to IBEF, the sector has received a total institutional investment of US \$5.4 billion between 2019 and 2022, with a notable 35% share in 2022 alone. Furthermore, a report from CNBC TV18 suggests that India will need to create sufficient supply to meet the demand for 223 million square feet of Grade-A warehousing space over the next three years. To support such a scale of development, an equity investment of \$3.8 billion will be required. This indicates a substantial investment opportunity of \$2.8 billion in the near future, as estimated by CREDAI and Anarock.

## LTI Mindtree Q1 net profit up 4.1% to ₹1,152.3 crore

PTI / New Delhi

LTI Mindtree on Monday posted a 4.1 per cent year-on-year rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 1,152.3 crore in the quarter ended June 30, although the numbers were a tad below market expectations.

The company posted a net profit of Rs 1,106.5 crore in the same period a year ago.

The IT services company reported that its order inflow continued to increase while key verticals like BFSI "performed well".

Born out of the merger of L&T Group companies LTI (Larsen and Toubro Infotech) and Mindtree, the sixth-largest IT services firm also registered a 13.83 per cent rise in revenue from operations to Rs 8,702.1 crore during the reported quarter compared to Rs 7,644.2 crore in the year-ago period.

The company had 723 active clients as of June 30, 2023. During the quarter, its USD 50 million-plus clients increased by 3 to 13.

"During the first quarter of

FY24, LTI Mindtree delivered 8.2 per cent YoY revenue growth in constant currency. Our key verticals BFSI, manufacturing and resources and Hi-Tech, media and entertainment, which make up 75 per cent of our revenues performed well," said Debashis Chatterjee, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of LTI Mindtree, said in a statement.

## The company posted a net profit of ₹1,106.5 cr in the same period a yr ago

He observed that the company's strategic programmes are bearing fruit, which is evident in the upward movement across client buckets.

"The order inflow continued to increase and reached USD 1.41 billion in this quarter. Our operational rigour helped us achieve an EBIT (earnings before interest and tax) of 16.7 per cent and PAT (profit after tax) of 13.2 per cent," Chatterjee added.

## More optimistic about India now than 'in a long time', says WB chief Ajay Banga

PTI / Gandhinagar

World Bank president Ajay Banga on Monday said amid global challenges, he is more optimistic about India and its economy now than he has been "in a long time".

Talking to the media on the sidelines of the third G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting here, the first-ever Indian-American to head the top global financial institution said the world economy is in a difficult place.

Banga (63) showered praises on



India for its digital infrastructure, saying he is a "big fan" of such initiatives taken by the world's fifth

largest economy.

"I am more optimistic about India, as a whole, economically, than I have been for a long time. The fact is that the world economy is in a difficult place. It has outperformed what everybody thought. But it does not mean that it won't be more challenging. The IMF forecast, the World Bank forecast are that the world will get a little challenging over the next year or so," he said at the Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre, where the G20 meeting is being held.

## MTNL to issue ₹25 bn govt-backed bonds this week: Sources

INFORMIST / Mumbai

Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd plans to raise up to 25 bn rupees this week through government-guaranteed bonds maturing in 10 years, several sources in the know told Informist.

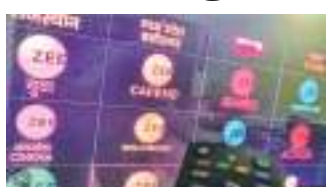
Last week, the public sector telecom company had secured an in-principle approval from the BSE for its government-guaranteed, unsecured, rated, listed bonds aggregating up to 66.61 bn rupees in 2023-24 (Apr-Mar).

## Zee forms interim committee to run ops as Punit Goenka fails to get relief from SAT

PTI / New Delhi

Leading media firm Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) has formed an "interim committee" to run day-to-day operations as its managing director and chief executive Punit Goenka failed to get relief from the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT).

Last week, SAT refused to give any interim relief to Essel Group chairman Subash Chandra and his son Punit Goenka against a Sebi order that barred them from holding the position of director



or key managerial post in any listed company. Following this order, an interim committee has been formed on July 14, which will function under the supervision of the board of ZEEL.

Confirming the development, a ZEEL spokesperson said: "The

Board of ZEEL in a meeting conducted on July 14, 2023, evaluated and discussed all the necessary steps, in light of the interim order passed by the SEBI and the subsequent judgement by SAT.

Meanwhile, The merger of ZEE Entertainment and Sony has reached an advanced stage of completion, and the issues faced by promoters with Sebi should not become a problem for the company, debarred ZEEL MD Punit Goenka has said in a letter to employees, according to sources.

## Reliance Brands to acquire Alia Bhatt promoted kidswear brand Ed-a-Mamma

PTI / New Delhi

Reliance Brands, part of Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), is planning to buy Ed-a-Mamma, a kidswear brand promoted by Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt, according to an industry source. The leading retailer would ultimately acquire the company, which specialises

in providing sustainable clothing options for kids at affordable rates. Talks between Reliance Brands and the kidswear retailer, which mainly sells online are in the final stages, the industry source said.

According to a media report, the deal is estimated to be around Rs 300 crore.

## CBIC clarifies on ITC claims on services provided by Head Office to branches

PTI / New Delhi

The CBIC on Monday issued a clarification with regard to availment of input tax credit (ITC) on services provided by the head office (HO) to its branch office (BO), a move which will benefit multilocal businesses operating in sectors like manufacturing, IT services and transportation.

In respect of the supply of internally generated services by HO to BOs, where full input tax credit (ITC) is available to a BO, the value declared on the invoice by HO to the said BO may be declared as 'Nil', and thereby there would be no need for any tax compliance in such cases.

CBIC said it had received various representations seeking clarification on the issue.

## PM MITRA Park, Amravati expected to attract investment of ₹10,000 cr



Union Minister of Textiles, Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal on Sunday congratulated the state of Maharashtra for being awarded the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park in Amravati. The PM MITRA Textile Park in Amravati is expected to attract an investment of Rs. 10,000 crore and create employment for approximately 300,000 individuals. The grand launch event was graced by Piyush Goyal, and CM of

Maharashtra, Eknath Shinde along with Dy CM of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnis, Minister of State, Government of India, Darshana Jadhav, Minister (Industries), Government of Maharashtra, Uday Samant and Minister (Textiles), Chandrakant Dada Patil. Senior officials from the Ministry of textiles, and from Government of Maharashtra were also present during this event. The government announced the PM MITRA Scheme on January 15 2022, to make the Indian Textile Industry, globally competitive.

## HPCL kickstarts ambitious 5 lakh tree plantation drive

## Aims to achieve net zero, foster sustainability

HPCL, a Maharatna Oil & Gas CPSE, embarked on a transformative mission as it celebrated 49 glorious years on its foundation day by aiming to plant over 5 Lakh trees over the course of a year. To kickstart the mission, HPCL planted over 20,000 trees across the nation on Monday. Its visionary leaders - C&MD, Functional Directors and CVO set the tone by personally participating in this green campaign, symbolizing their unwavering dedication to the cause. During the celebrations at Corporate Headquarters which witnessed participation from over 300 locations of HPCL through hybrid mode, this plantation drive was launched live through participation of various locations.



HPCL has reached a momentous juncture as it completes 49 glorious years and marks the beginning of Golden Jubilee Year. HPCL, throughout its illustrious history, has been a beacon of excellence and a shining example of what a united workforce can achieve. Through this initiative, HPCL's workforce and its various stakeholders strive to significantly contribute in flight against climate change and global warming.

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## CORPORATE GALLERY

### Darshana Jardosh flags off Flying Raneer train with newly converted LHB rake



Minister of State for Railways & Textiles, Darshana Jardosh flagged off the newly converted Linke

Hofmann Busch (LHB) rake of Train No. 12921/12922 Mumbai Central – Surat Flying Raneer Express from Mumbai Central station on 16th July 2023, in a function held at the Station Concourse. Jardosh flagged off this iconic train in the august presence of MP Gopal Shetty and MLA Manisha Chaudhary. MoSR also travelled in this immensely popular train with passengers up to Surat. At Surat station, MLAs Kishorhbhai Kanani (Kumar), Pravinbhai Ghoghari, Kantibhai Balar, Arvind Rana and Manubhai M. Patel will be present to welcome the train.

### SCOPE organises workshop on Woman Leadership Development



Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) organized a Workshop on 'Leadership Development for Women Executives'. The inaugural session was graced by Ms. Arti Ahuja, Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment; Ms. Soma Mondal, Member, PESB; Dr. Vasundhara Upmanyu, Joint Secretary, DPE, Ministry of Finance; Mr. Satoshi Sasaki, Officer-In-Charge, ILO, India; Mr. Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE; Mr. R.K. Tyagi, Director (Operations), POWERGRID and Mr. Ashok Bhat, Program Director. Deliberating on ways women can propel their careers, by transcending with the times and performing multifarious roles, the inaugural session was attended by over 250 participants including senior women employees of PSEs, from across the country.

### Blood Donation Camp organized at Western Railway's Jagjivan Ram Hospital



A mega Blood Donation Camp was organized at Western Railway's Jagjivan Ram Hospital, Mumbai Central on 16th July, 2023 in association with Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishthan. Dr Haffizunissa, Principal

Chief Medical Director (PCMD) of Western Railway inaugurated the Blood Donation Camp. According to a press release issued by Sumit Thakur, Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, many volunteers came forward to donate blood in large numbers. Almost 625 units of blood were collected in this camp, which is the highest in-house Blood Donation till date in Indian Railways hospitals.

### 'Shramdaan & Swachhta Campaign' by IndianOil's Pipelines Head Office



IndianOil's Pipelines Head Office conducted cleanliness drive and Hygiene Kit Distribution Campaign at Sector-15 Metro Station and Police

Chowki in its vicinity, as part of the ongoing Swachhta Pakhwada during July 1-15, 2023. Employees of IndianOil and Delhi Metro enthusiastically participated in the 'Shramdaan' conducted as part of this campaign. The Police officials highly appreciated IndianOil's efforts towards promoting a cleaner and healthier environment for all stakeholders. Senior officials from IndianOil's Pipelines Head Office applauded the efforts of 'Swachhta Warriors' in keeping the city clean and felicitated them with Hygiene Kits.

### PNB launches "Project PNB PALAASH" for environmental sustainability



Punjab National Bank (PNB), nation's leading Public Sector Bank, launches an environmental initiative "PNB Palaash", an eight-month period campaign to embrace sustainability, which shall lead to cost savings and

operational efficiencies through measures such as energy and resource conservation, paper reduction, waste management and streamlined digital processes. Acknowledging the need for integrating sustainability into every aspect of our lives, Atul Kumar Goel, PNB MD & CEO, said, "As a leading Bank in the industry, undertaking environmental friendly initiatives not only aligns with our corporate social responsibility but also presents significant opportunities for business growth."

### Central Railway's Infrastructure works lead to "Zero" accidents and improvement of Safety and Punctuality in train ops



Central Railway's Infrastructure works on elimination of Level Crossing Gates by construction of Road Over Bridges (ROB) and Road Under Bridges (RUB) lead to "ZERO" accidents and improvement of Safety and Punctuality in train

operations\*. Consequential Train Accidents in June-2023 – NIL\* Indicative Train Accidents in June-2023 – NIL\* Train Accident per million train kilometers in June-2023- NIL\* Indian Railways is committed to gradual elimination of Level Crossing Gates to improve Safety and Punctuality in train operations.

### CRWWO conducts Tree Plantation Drive at CSMT Station



The Central Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (CRWWO) took another step towards fostering environmental sustainability and beautification by organizing a tree plantation drive near the garden of Platform No. 18 at the CSMT station on the 13th of July 2023 at 3.30 pm. The tree plantation drive was graced by the presence of President, CRWWO, Shrimati Shobhna Lalwani; Vice-President, CRWWO, Shrimati Niti Singh; Secretary, CRWWO, Shrimati Neeru Arora; Treasurer, CRWWO, Shrimati Priti Shrivastav and several other executive members of CRWWO and were actively engaged in the event, lending their support and setting an example for the community.

### IndianOil launches Phase V of 'Parivartan- Prison to Pride' & Phase II of 'Nayi Disha - Smile for Juvenile'



Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, IndianOil, launched Phase V of 'Parivartan- Prison to Pride' and Phase-II of 'Nayi Disha - Smile for Juvenile' on Monday, in the presence of top international IndianOil sportspersons and prison authorities. Inaugurating the next phases of the unique social stewardship programme,

Chairman, IndianOil, said, "We are extremely proud of this 'beyond business' intervention. Going beyond the physical and mental well-being, it aims for a positive transformation in the lives of prison inmates and juveniles, through sports. Sports, has been successful in instilling discipline, teamwork and perseverance and giving a purpose. In fact, the various global recognitions that we have received so far for this endeavour, strengthen our resolve to push the envelope further to make a tangible impact."

## whispersinthecorridors

Dr Suresh Mehrotra



### ► Cabinet Secretary Gauba and Home Secretary Bhalla to continue?

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba and Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla are superannuating in August. In view of the present scenario it is widely believed that both are not going to get extension for the third time. Top sources, however said that both are going to continue till the next Lok Sabha polls. One can wait and watch.



### ► RPF DG to retire this month

DG Railway Protection Force (RPF) Sanjay Chander is superannuating by this month end. He is 1987 batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre.



### ► It shows the importance of the post of ED

The GoI will not be able to appoint new ED of its choice. Now the new appointment will be done by a committee comprising of PM/CJI & Leader of Opposition. One thing is certain history will be repeated like to CBI Chief and the CVC. Meanwhile the industry honchos have protested to PM about Excessive and Intrusive Roving inquiries by the ED.

### ► 16 candidates in Panel for post of EDs in various PSBs

The Financial Services Institutions Bureau interfaced with 72 candidates from various public sector banks (PSBs) between July 1-15 for the position of Executive Directors (EDs) in PSBs. The Bureau has recommended 16 candidates in the Panel for panel year 2023-24. This panel will be operated in FY 2023-24, subject to availability of vacancies in the panel year 2023-24. The candidates recommended in the Panel in order of merit are: Sanjay Rudra, Lal Singh, Bibhu Prasad Mahapatra, Shiv Bajrang Singh, Ravi Mehra, Rajiv Mishra, Bhavendra Kumar, Brajesh Kumar Singh, Rohit Rishi, Mahendra Dohare, S K Majumdar, Dhanaraj T, Vijaykumar Nivrutti Kamble, Pankaj Dwivedi, Mukul N Dandige and Amit Kumar Srivastava.

### ► Delhi: Now political floods

In Delhi the Yamuna river water has receded substantially, but now political flood has started. AAP, BJP, LG, CM and CS blaming each other for flood and laxity in relief work. CS called the press and gave the details of the relief work and claimed all officers are keeping an eye 24 hrs. CM and his ministers blaming officers for the mess and not responding to their call. CM accused that because of BJP led Haryana govt, the Delhi people faced severe floods. BJP and Congress are on same page in accusing the AAP govt of laxity. The LG said that the bureaucracy is working hard and this is not the time to blame officers.

## OUR PREDICTION CAME TRUE

WHISPERSINTHECORRIDORS.COM

FSIB recommendations expected today  
Result of bank EDs announced late evening on July 15

[WE SAID THIS IN THE MORNING]

FSIB to recommend names for position of EDs in state-owned banks

The Central Services Institutions Bureau (CSIB), the nodal agency for selection of Executive Directors (EDs) in PSBs, has been conducting interviews of candidates for recommending suitable names for general managers (GMs) in public sector banks (PSBs). The last phase of the interviews is being held today and the results are expected by evening.



### ► Now no dynasty- Dalit face Kharge to be PM candidate of opposition?

Insiders say in order to counter the BJP charge of dynasty rule in Congress this time Dalit Congress President Mallikarjuna Kharge may be projected as next Prime Minister of the united opposition.



### ► Indifferent attitude of Jharkhand Government leaves IPS officers in limbo

In Jharkhand, a few officers of two batches were promoted but others of the same batch were left out. According to the information, Mukesh Lunayat, K Vijay Shankar and Manoj Swargiyari of the 2018 batch of the Jharkhand cadre were promoted to the rank of SP but Harvinder Singh of this batch is still working as ASP. Similarly, the government promoted Shubhanshu Jain of the 2019 batch to the rank of SP. But Rishabh Garg, Sumit Kumar Aggarwal and Kapil Chaudhary are still awaiting the promotion. And now the IPS officers are discussing, whether the Government is flouting promotion norms?

### ► Centre's order on OPS: Kerala IAS body to submit representation, Chhattisgarh Association welcomes move

The centre has given one-time option to IAS, IPS and IFS officers to choose Old Pension Scheme (OPS) however when IAS Association of Chhattisgarh has welcomed the move, the IAS Association of Kerala is planning to represent to DoPT for extending the eligibility criteria. All India services officers appointed via the civil services examination in 2003 and 2004, as well as the Indian Forest Service examination in 2003, are considered qualified to benefit. This option may be exercised by the concerned members of service latest by 30th November 2023. Manoj Pingua, the President of IAS Association of Chhattisgarh, while talking to the Whispers In The Corridors welcomed the move. R Prasanna, the General Secretary said 'It will boost the morale of the officers'. The General Secretary of IAS Association of Kerala M G Rajamanickam told Whispers In The Corridors, 'We are planning to represent to DoPT for extending OPS up to 2009 batch'.

— Correctness of this content is the responsibility of the author.  
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### ICSI-WIRC Celebrates Student Month July-2023



#### 17th July – Mock Interview

As a part of Student Month Celebration: July 2023, on 17th July, 2023, ICSI-WIRC conducted Session on "Mock Interview" for the students who are eligible for training and the session was taken by speaker CS Ashita Golwala, Visiting Faculty, Mumbai. Around 35 students attended the session and few students participated in the Mock Interview which was taken by the faculty.

### Tech on 'Heat generating smart cotton textiles' of ICAR-CIRCOT, Mumbai launched



The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) celebrated its 95th Foundation Day on 16 July 2023 at National Agriculture Science Complex, Pusa, New Delhi. Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and

Farmers Welfare was the Chief Guest of the program & attended the meeting virtually. Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Kailash Choudhary, Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Dr. Himanshu Pathak, Director General, ICAR graced the occasion. Rupala inaugurated an exhibition showcasing innovative technologies developed by 113 ICAR research institutes.

# Infra neglect led to Maha's rank 7 in PGI 2.0: Educationists weigh in

PUSHPITA CHATTERJEE / Mumbai

Performance Grading Index 2021-22, an index for evidence-based comprehensive study of the Indian school education system, was announced by the education ministry earlier this month. Maharashtra ranked 7th at Prachesta - 3 while no states were in the top 5 grades.

Dr Sharad Javadekar, Executive President Akhil Bharatiya Samajwadi Shikshan Haq Sabha said, "The state government has neglected issues pertaining to infrastructure and inadequate teaching staff for years. The fact that they are ready to hire 50,000 teachers is an indication that this requirement was unat-

tended for a very long time. Available teachers are sent on other government duties instead of teaching. These fundamental issues need to be addressed for the state to get ahead."

Former state director of education Vasant Kalpande said, "Covid has affected the education momentum adversely and it is only gradually picking up. Also with NEP in action it is quite a lot to cope with along with previously unaddressed issues."

PGI 2.0 intends to enhance educational results and pinpoint intervention areas in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It emphasises quality metrics, incorporates digital projects and teacher education, and



REPRESENTATIVE PIC

uses UDISE+ data for consistency and comparability. PGI 2.0 comprises 73 indicators in two categories, which are further divided into six domains. The highest achievable grade is Daksh, awarded to

those scoring over 940 points out of a total of 1000 with no states ranked in it or in the next 4 ranks (Utkarsh, Ati Uttam, Uttam and Prachesta-1). Punjab and Chandigarh have been ranked Prachesta-2 and Gujarat, Kerala, Maha-

rastra, Delhi, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu (TN) have ranked Prachesta-3. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Rajasthan, Goa, Sikkim, Haryana, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh have been ranked Akanshi-1. Assam, Nagaland, Bihar, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana, Jharkhand, Tripura, Ladakh, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh have ranked Akanshi-2. The lowest grade is Akanshi-3, in which Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Meghalaya have been ranked.

# State seeks time to respond in SC/ST scholarship 'scam'

MUSAB QAZI / Mumbai

The Bombay High Court (HC) has granted the state government more than a month's time to respond to a petition seeking action in an alleged Rs 2,100 crore scam in distributing various scholarships to SC/ST students.

While the state was expected to file its response when the matter came up for hearing on July 12, it asked for more time to do so. Even in the previous hearing on March 3, the state had asked for time to respond. The division bench of Acting Chief Justice Nitin Jamdar and Justice Arif Doctor has now deferred the matter till August 23, as it directed the government to submit its reply through an affidavit.

In 2017, a special investigation team (SIT) had found that as much as Rs 2,100 crore



REPRESENTATIVE PIC/PKABAB

amount allocated under the central government's post-matric scholarship and the state's tuition and exam fee waiver fee schemes was recoverable from educational institutes across Maharashtra between 2010 and 2016. The irregularity came to light, after the three-member probe panel led by former Nagpur Commissioner of Police K Venkatesh, audited around 13.43% institutes receiving scholarships funds from the government's social welfare department and 15.11% of departments getting money from the tribal development department.

The committee had recommended that the government file criminal complaints against 70 institutes, and even suggested a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) or Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) probe.

"We explained the issue in its entirety to the court. We have asked for the implementation of the SIT's recommendations," said Bhushan Raut, counsel for the petitioner Kuldeep Ambekar, a Pune-based activist.

"The officials seem afraid of taking action against these institutes. We demand time-bound action," said Ambekar.

ABHISHEK NAIR / Mumbai

In an exclusive interview with The Free Press Journal, Mumbai, Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JBIMS) Director, Dr Srinivasan Iyengar talked about shift towards Consulting in placements, implementation of NEP, intakes, introduction of courses for professionals, and more. Excerpts from the interview:

**How is JBIMS adhering to NEP guidelines in its course structure?**

Our course structure is customising itself to NEP as instructed. Though NEP will be initiated for management courses by next year, we will still equip ourselves by aligning with the policy now. We have already aligned our MSC programme with NEP. We are only expecting good positive changes through NEP as there are multiple entry exit points and also the

introduction of an academic bank of credits. More sessions and webinars are being conducted now on NEP. The Mumbai University has also become more approachable with matters regarding the same.

**What is JBIMS doing differently from other b-schools, IIMs to attract students?**

Our institute has always been unique. We have never seen anyone as competition. If you see IIMs and other b schools charge anywhere between Rs 15-20 lakhs, while JBIMS is charging only Rs 6 lakhs as fees. Even among the students coming to our institute through CET, 99.9% of the applicants come to JBIMS. We don't have management quotas or donations

and placements are much better. We have also been able to maintain our position as one of the best institutions in Mumbai and Maharashtra.

**What are some of the placement trends you witnessed at JBIMS this year?**

Our highest package this year was between Rs 43-44 lakhs. Many more consulting companies were recruiting more candidates this time around, which includes PwC, KPMG, and more. There has been a considerable shift from Finance to Consulting, and more companies are seeking professionals in data, and analytics. Placement trends are also changing as fintech, on-line retailers are showing in-

terest since everything has become tech-driven. Many banks are also showing up, and are still major recruiters at the institute.

**Is JBIMS still pushing for a separate entrance exam?**

As of now, we will still take to CET instead of instituting our own entrance exam. We consider the CAT score for MSC Finance, while our flagship course in management studies still has CET. We are going to continue with the same.

**Do you think non-IIMs are represented well in national, international rankings?**

NIRF is more accurate than many other rankings. IIMs generally perform well due to better rank, faculty, and

# Expecting more intake in flagship MMS course soon: JBIMS Director Dr Srinivasan Iyengar

infrastructure as the government is also able to provide more help with initiatives and they can also charge more to students. Infrastructure is a key parameter for rankings, with global tieups also being important now.

If you do well in NIRF, then you can go to international rankings. In International Business we teach that before going global, be good domestically so consistent performance in NIRF can help us to get a global ranking among business schools. NEP-enabled collaborations with international universities can help in rankings as well.

**How is JBIMS helping with teacher training across institutions?**

We have done many training programmes since the past year or so. We have trained some 100 bmc school headmasters on leadership and communication skills on the campus. We are teaching them values of leadership, financial acumen, infrastructure, and different as-



JBIMS Director Dr Srinivasan Iyengar

pects of business and management. We brought academicians and experts to the campus and signed an exclusive MOU with BMC. We trained more than a thousand plus bankers last 12 months on leadership skills,

and we have started customized training programmes for corporates which got a wonderful response. A Management Development Programme (MDP) programme has been introduced which saw the

participation of LIC, BARC, Department of Atomic Energy, and the Naval Dockyard. The duration for the programme is 5-10 days depending on the requirement, content, and objectives of the same.

**How would you reflect on your journey at JBIMS over the past two years?**

It has been a wonderful experience at JBIMS. We also increased our intake in a couple of programmes. We have seen Infrastructure upgradation when it comes to classrooms, new lifts, and more. Section 8 alumni association was formed by us which activated national and international alumni chapters. JBIMS has also seen an improved ranking from last year.

Our Phd is also seeing a good response. Institute's brand name also helps with attracting students.

**Have you seen changes in intake this year?**

Compared to last year, this year Master of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has seen an increase from 20 to 30 seats, and in MSc in Finance from 30 to 40. Now we will gradually increase seats in our flagship mms course.

**Standard Chartered Bank**  
Retail Collections, 2nd Floor, 23/25 M.G. Road, Fort Mumbai- 4000 01.  
For further details please contact: Mr. Tirupathi Myakala, Phone: 022-37355093 / 9885667177, Email: Tirupathi.Myakala@sc.com  
Please refer to the link provided on Standard Chartered Bank's secured creditor's website i.e. https://www.sc.com/in/important-information/public-sale-notices-of-properties-under-the-possession-of-bank/

**E-AUCTION NOTICE**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISION TO RULE 6(2) & 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002**

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Standard Chartered Bank, under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 ("the Act"), and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("the Rules") issued a demand notice dated 15th Mar 2022 calling upon the (1) Amity Copper LLP 2) Somnath Dagdu Shinde 3) Kiran Kiran Shinde 4) Manisha Kiran Shinde 5) Subhadra Somnath Shinde resident of Flat No 1203, Artica -A, Lodha Aqua Mahagan Wadi, W.E Highway, Mira Road (East), Thane - 401107 calling upon them to repay the outstanding amount being Rs. 1634212.49/- (Rupees One Crore Sixty Three Lakhs Forty Two Thousand Two Hundred Twelve and Paise Forty Nine Only) with respect to Loan Account No- 51723408 as on 02.03.2022 along with further interest @ 09.20% p. a. w. e. f. 02.03.2022 till actual date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower/Co-Borrower/Director's/Guarantor's having failed to repay the amount, notice was hereby given to the Borrower/Co-Borrower's/Director's/Guarantor's and the public in general that the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Standard Chartered Bank has taken physical possession of the below secured assets as described herein below of the Borrower / Director / guarantors on 10.06.2023 for recovery of the secured debts due to Standard Chartered Bank, Retail Collections, 23/25 M.G. Road Fort Mumbai - 400001 branch by exercising the powers conferred upon him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act, read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Standard Chartered Bank has now decided to put up for E-auction of the immovable properties and bids are invited by way of E-tender on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", AND "WHATSOEVER THERE IS" basis.

Borrower(s) are hereby given this notice under rule 8(6) and 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to pay the outstanding amount mentioned in the table within 15 days from the date of this notice, failing which the auction of secured asset shall take place.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY		
<b>Property No. 1 :-</b> All the piece and parcel of the Flat No.1004, 10th Floor, B-Wing, Building No.2, Pacific, Lodha Aqua CHSL admeasuring about 735 sq.ft along with exclusive right to use 1 car parking space, Near Mahajanwadi, Western Express Highway, Opp Thakur Mall, Mira Road East, Thane-401107		
<b>Property No.2:</b> All the piece and parcel of the Flat No.1203, A - Wing admeasuring 1012 Sq.ft (Carpet) on the Twelfth Floor of Building Artica Known as Lodha Aqua Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd situated at Opp Thakur Mall, Mahajanwadi, Western Express Highway, Mira Road (East), Thane-401107 along with one car parking space no.P1-1269.		
<b>Reserve Price</b>	<b>EMD (10% of Reserve Price)</b>	<b>Bid Amount Incremental</b>
₹. 12259000/- (Property - I)	₹. 1225900/-	₹.100000/-
₹. 15582750/- (Property - II)	₹. 1558275/-	₹.100000/-
Inspection of the Assets	26.07.2023 between 03:00 PM to 5:00 PM	
Last date and time for submitting online Tender & Application Forms	Date: 24.08.2023 Time: 5:00 PM	
Date and Time of E-Auction	The E-Auction will take place through portal www.matxauctions.com (Web address of e-auction provider) on 25.08.2023 between 11:00 A.M to 1:00 P.M with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each till sale is concluded.	
Contact Person & Phone No	Tirupathi Myakala, Authorised officer - 9885667177	

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE E-AUCTION ARE AS UNDER**

- The property can be inspected on 26th Jul 2023 between 03:00 PM and 5:00 PM.
- The Tender / bid form with the terms and conditions can be obtained online from the website http://www.matxauctions.com. The tender form and the terms and conditions would be available on the website from 20th Jul 2023 to 24th Aug 2023 to 5:00 PM. The bid/ tender form complying with all necessary terms shall be submitted along with the proof of EMD amount of ₹. 1225900/- (Rupees Twelve Lacs Twenty Five Thousand Nine Hundred only) for Property - I and ₹. 1558275/- (Rupees Fifteen Lacs Fifty Eight Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Five Only) for Property - II towards the Earnest Money Deposit favoring Standard Chartered Bank Deposit through EFT/NEFT/RTGS transfer in favor of Mortgage Suspense Account No. 42705095742; IFSC: SCBL0036078. The earnest money deposit shall not carry any inter-est. BID form shall be downloaded and duly filled and uploaded to www.matxauctions.com.
- Last date to submit the bid along with Earnest Money Deposit is on or before 5:00 PM, on 24th Aug 2023.
- Along with the bid form the proposed bidder shall also attach his/her identity proof and the proof of residence such as copy of the passport, election commission card, ration card driving license etc. and a copy of the PAN card issued by the Income Tax Department of India.
- Bidders shall hold a valid Digital Signature Certificate issued by competent authority and valid email ID (e-mail ID is necessary for the intending bidder as all the relevant information and allotment of ID & password by M/s Matex Net Pvt Ltd may be conveyed through e-mail).
- On the auction date all the bids so received would be opened and the bid of the highest bidder, provided it is above the reserve price, may be accepted by the bank. In no eventuality would the property be sold below the reserve price. However, the bidders personally present for the auction shall have the right to further enhance their bid price by a minimum sum of Rs 1,00,000/-, and in the event of higher bid price being offered, the Bank shall have the right to accept the same. After each bid, the window for the next bid shall be open for 5 mins within which the next bid can be placed. The Auction time shall be 120 Minutes from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each. In case bid is placed in the last 10 minutes of the closing time of the e-Auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 10 minutes.
- Thereafter, when the Bank confirms the sale, the purchaser will be required to pay deposit of 25% (twenty-five percent) of the sale price, after adjusting the earnest money deposit, immediately with the undersigned. The balance amount of 75% of the purchase price shall be paid by the purchaser to the undersigned on or before the fifteenth day of confirmation of the sale of the said property or such extended period as may be agreed upon in writing by the parties. In default of payment & within the time as mentioned above, the bank shall be at liberty to fore-feit the earnest money deposit and proceed with e-auction of the property. The defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold.
- All the payments shall be made by the purchaser by depositing through EFT/NEFT/RTGS transfer in favour of Mortgage Suspense Account No. 42705095742; IFSC: SCBL0036078
- On receipt of the sale price in full, the bank shall be issuing a sale certificate in favor of the purchaser and would hand over the possession of the property to the purchaser.
- The said immovable property described in the schedule herein below shall remain and be at the sole risk of the purchaser in all respects including loss or damage by fire or theft or other accidents, and other risk from the date of the confirmation of the sale by the undersigned Au-Through Officer. The Purchaser shall not be entitled to annul the sale on any grounds whatsoever.
- EMD of the unsuccessful bidders will be returned through NEFT/RTGS to the Bidder/bank account details provided by them in the bid form and intimated via their email id.
- For all purposes, sale of the said property is strictly on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", AND "WHATSOEVER THERE IS" basis. To the best of the knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer of the bank, no other encumbrances exist on the property.
- All expenses relating to stamp duty, registration charges, transfer charges, taxes, maintenance charges, property tax, electricity and Water charges / TDS and any other charges in respect of the above referred property shall be borne by the successful bidder/purchaser.
- The Authorized officer is not bound to accept the highest offer or any or all offers, and the bank reserves its right to reject any or all bid(s) without assigning any reasons thereof.
- The particulars about the properties specified in the tender document have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Of-ficer and the Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement, or omission in this proclamation. Save and except above, the Bank is not aware of any other encumbrance of the secured asset.
- The prospective bidders can inspect the property on the date and time mentioned as above.

**Statutory 30 days' Notice under Rule 9 (1) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002**

The borrower / Directors of (1) Amity Copper LLP 2) Somnath Dagdu Shinde 3) Kiran Kiran Shinde 4) Manisha Kiran Shinde 5) Subhadra Somnath Shinde are hereby notified to pay the dues as mentioned above along with up-to-date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of e-auction, failing which the Schedule properties will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.

Date: 18/07/2023  
Place: Mumbai

Sd/-  
Authorized Officer  
Standard Chartered Bank

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given under instructions of my client RAJARAM CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETY LTD., bearing Registration No. : BOMW/P/HSG (TC)-2115/85-86 dated 25-04-1986, having address gt Shree Purga Bhavan, Plot No 19, Lokmanya Tilak Nagar, Road No 2, Goregaon (W), Mumbai-400 062, as under :-

That my client is a registered Housing Society and the original Conveyance Deed of this Society is not traceable.

Any person having the original Conveyance Deed of the Society or any other relevant documents of the society, is hereby advised to submit the same to the society within 15 days of the publication of this public notice.

Notice is also issued that any person/persons/institution/financial institution or bank, having any concern or relation regarding the affairs of the society is advised to submit the 'CLAIM', 'OBJECTION', 'SAY', to me within 15 days of publication of this public notice failing which the 'CLAIM', 'OBJECTION' regarding any matter of the society shall not be considered.

Sd/-  
Mr. Ashok Kumar Mathur  
Advocate  
At D/2, Plot No. 28,  
Panhalgarh CHS Ltd.,  
MHADA, Ganesh Nagar,  
(Nilkanth Nagar), Kandivali (W),  
Mumbai-400 067

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Re : Gala No 8 on the ground floor of the building known as 'Arihant Crystal Industrial Estate' situated on the plot of land bearing Survey No 26, Hissa No. B/2 within the limits of Vasai-Virar City Municipal Corporation in the revenue village Gokhivare, Taluka Vasai in the registration sub-district and district of Palghar ("Premises")

Messrs R. K. Enterprises, a partnership firm having its registered office at Shop No 4, New Shanti Nagar Building, Mandeshwar Road, Borivali (West), Mumbai 400092 who have purchased the captioned Premises from M/s Arihant Creator vide Agreement for Sale dated 15th June 2010 registered under No.VASAI-2-09482-2010 with the Joint Sub-registrar Vasai-2 have informed my clients that subject to the charge of HDFC Bank the captioned Premises is free from all encumbrances.

All person or persons having any right title interest claim or demand upon upon against or in respect of the captioned Premises or any part thereof by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, charge, gift, trust, inheritance, possession, lease, lien or otherwise whatsoever are hereby required to inform me in writing supported with the original documents within a period of 14(fourteen) days from the date hereof, failing which it shall ensure that no such claims or demands exist in respect of the captioned Premises or any part thereof, and the same, if any, have been given up and treated as waived abandoned to all intents and purposes. Accordingly, the intended purchase by my clients will be duly completed.

Mumbai, Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023.

PIYUSH BHOGILAL GANGAR  
Advocate High Court  
515, Sir Vithaldas Chambers, 16,  
Mumbai Samachar Marg,  
Mumbai 400001.

**L&T Infra Credit Limited**  
(formerly known as L&T Infra Debt Fund Limited)  
(A Subsidiary of L&T Finance Holdings Limited)

**Registered Office:** Plot No. 177, CTS No. 6970-6971, Vidyanagari Marg CST Road, Kalina, Santacruz (East), Mumbai 400 098  
**CIN:** L67100MH2013PLC241104, T +91 22 6212 5500, F +91 22 6212 5553  
**E-mail ID:** investorgrivances@lts.com **Website:** www.lts.com

**L&T Finance**

**STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

Sr. No.	Particulars	₹ in crore		
		Quarter ended		Year ended
		June 30, 2023	June 30, 2022	March 31, 2023
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
1	Total income from operations	183.95	153.95	685.47
2	Net profit/(loss) for the period/year (before tax, exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	69.35	(19.99)	55.67
3	Net profit/(loss) for the period/year before tax (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	69.35	(19.99)	(181.33)
4	Net profit/(loss) for the period/year after tax (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	51.90	(16.48)	(147.02)
5	Total comprehensive income for the period/year (comprising profit for the period/year (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax))	52.43	(19.21)	(148.94)
6	Paid up equity share capital	571.63	490.18	571.63
7	Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve and capital redemption reserve)	823.29	797.89	770.86
8	Securities Premium Account	272.29	133.83	272.29
9	Net worth	1,394.53	1,287.32	1,342.19
10	Paid up debt capital/outstanding debt	4,930.21	7,361.13	5,347.02
11	Outstanding redeemable preference shares	-	288.28	-
12	Debt equity ratio	3.54	5.72	3.98
13	Earnings per equity share of ₹10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)			
	(i) Basic EPS (₹) (*not annualised)	*0.91	*(0.34)	(2.89)
	(ii) Diluted EPS (₹) (*not annualised)	*0.91	*(0.34)	(2.89)
14	Capital redemption reserve	68.85	33.10	68.85
15	Debtenture redemption reserve	-	-	-
16	Debt service coverage ratio	NA	NA	NA
17	Interest service coverage ratio	NA	NA	NA

**Notes:**

- These financial results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on July 17, 2023. The Statutory Auditor of the Company have carried out a Limited Review of the aforesaid results.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly financial results filed with the National Stock Exchange of India Limited and BSE Limited ("Stock Exchanges") under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarterly financial results are available on the website of the Stock Exchanges i.e. www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com and on the website of the Company i.e. https://www.lts.com/infra-credit.
- For the other items referred in regulation 52 (4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Stock Exchanges and can be accessed on the website of the Stock Exchanges i.e. www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com and on the website of the Company i.e. https://www.lts.com/infra-credit.
- These financial results have been prepared in accordance with the requirement of Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, as amended.
- Previous period/year figures have been regrouped/reclassified to make them comparable with those of current period.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of  
**L&T Infra Credit Limited**  
(formerly known as L&T Infra Debt Fund Limited)

Sd/-  
Rupa Rege Nitsuru  
Whole-time Director  
(DIN: 0750319)

Place: Mumbai  
Date: July 17, 2023



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**JABALPUR:** The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday issued a two-week returnable notice to the state on a petition seeking that the stringent National Security Act (NSA) invoked against a person who allegedly urinated on a

tribal man in Sidhi district be revoked. A division bench of Chief Justice Ravi Malimath and justice Vishal Mishra served notices to the state and the Sidhi collector seeking their reply. The case has been listed for hearing on August 1.



OF POLL POURRI AND PREPAREDNESS

# SPECIAL CHHABBIS... HUM 'AAP' KE HAIN CONG!

FPJ takes a ringside view of the importance, agenda and the essence of the crucial Opposition meeting and what lies in store...

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / New Delhi

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is hosting the two-day conclave of Opposition parties, in a tweet, said, "May the seeds sown in this peaceful garden of harmony (Karnataka) bear the fruit to restore secular, socialist, and democratic values as enshrined in our Constitution."

Notably, the meeting on Tuesday coincides with the NDA meeting convened on July 18 in Delhi, where some new allies are likely to join the ruling BJP-led coalition.

## A 'Game Changer'

Addressing a press briefing, the Congress took a swipe at the ruling BJP saying that Opposition unity would be "a game changer" for the Indian political scenario. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said those who used to talk of defeating the opposition parties alone are now making attempts to breathe new life into the NDA which had become a "ghost".

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary organisation KC Venugopal said people will teach a lesson to those who have heated them with false promises. "That is why we have come here... We are sure that this is going to be a game changer for Indian political scenario and we are happy to see that after the Patna meeting those who were saying that 'we are very comfortable in defeating the entire Opposition alone', have now started meetings, that is the real success of opposition unity," he said.

## HUM SAATH, SAATH HAIN?



### WHO'S IN, WHO'S NOT?

The Bengaluru meeting assumes greater importance than the Patna meeting on June 23 as eight more parties - MDMK, KMDMK, Kerala Cong (M), Kerala Cong (J), RSP, Forward Bloc, Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) - are attending this time.

Besides, the Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) of Krishna Patel and Tamil Nadu's Manithaneeya Makkal Katchi (MMK) led by M H Jawahirullah are likely to join the front.

The AAP, after a lot of deliberation, announced on Sunday that they would be participating in the opposition meet. The change of mind came after the Congress assured that it will oppose the ordinance on Delhi administrative services in Parliament.

TMC's supreme Mamata Banerjee will give the dinner a miss as she underwent microsurgery on her left knee at the SSKM hospital in Kolkata. She will, however, attend Tuesday's meeting.

From the NCP, Sharad Pawar will also skip the dinner but attend the main meeting. The 82-year-old leader will go to Bengaluru tomorrow with his daughter Supriya Sule.

Other top leaders who set to attend the meeting include Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chief Rahul Gandhi, Bihar CM and JDU leader Nitish Kumar, DMK leader and Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin, JMM leader and Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, besides former CMs Uddhav Thackeray and Lalu Prasad.

### THE DINNER DIPLOMACY

A dinner hosted by Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah on Monday would be a precursor to the crucial meeting on Tuesday, the second of such meetings after last month's introductory meeting at Bihar CM Nitish Kumar's residence.

Top leaders of 26 Opposition parties are attending the two-day brainstorming session in Bengaluru from Monday

## RIPPLES

### No PAN-Aadhar linking for J&K residents

**NEW DELHI:** The residents of Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Meghalaya are exempted from linking their PAN card with the Aadhaar card. Others who have been issued a PAN card by July 1, 2017 have to link it with Aadhaar card, paying a fine of Rs 1,000 if not already linked by June 30, 2023. Moreover, as per the Income Tax Act, 1961, even a non-resident is not bound to get an Aadhaar-PAN card linked.

### Infiltration bid foiled at LoC

**JAMMU:** Two terrorists were killed after an infiltration bid was foiled by the Army and police in a joint operation at the Line of Control (LoC) in the Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday. Officials said that alert troops of the Army foiled the major infiltration bid on Monday morning after which searches were mounted by Army and police in Bahadur sector of the LoC.



Badminton player Saina Nehwal poses at a garden during her visit to Kashmir.

-PTI

### Teen gang-raped by 3 minors boys

**RANCHI:** Three boys entered the house of a 14-year-old girl and allegedly gang-raped her while she was alone in Jharkhand's Bokaro. The accused trio are students of classes 5, 7 and 8. The women cops of Bokaro police station area have arrested the three accused and sent them to a juvenile home. An FIR has been registered in this regard on the complaint of the victim's elder sister.

### KGBV schools: 100% attendance must

**LUCKNOW:** The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to implement the 100% attendance rule for both teachers and students at Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) schools. So far, to improve student attendance, the parents and children have been counselled by the teaching staff at KGBV residential schools, but no penal action is taken against the students in that regard.

### 'Moosewala: Pak man provided arms'

**NEW DELHI:** Sources in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) have claimed that a Pakistani arms supplier was involved in the supply of weapons which were used in the murder of Punjabi singer and politician Sidhu Moosewala last year. The Pakistani supplier has been identified as Hamid who currently lives in Dubai.

### Tigress dies of injuries in MP

**BHOPAL:** An adult tigress was reported dead at the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, officials said on Monday. A four to five-year-old tigress was found unconscious in the Manpur buffer zone, following which a forest team brought wildlife veterinarians for her treatment. However, she could not survive. The tigress was injured during mating with male tiger a couple of weeks ago.

### 3 govt staff sacked for 'terror links'

**NEW DELHI:** The government of Jammu and Kashmir has terminated the services of three state employees for allegedly working with Pakistan-backed terror outfits. Sources have told ANI that these officers have been found to be allegedly helping these outfits by providing logistics to terrorists and raising terror finances and funding the secessionist agenda.

## Amartya Sen welcomes Opposition unity moves



Stating that democracy "often demands the sharing of power", Nobel laureate Amartya Sen welcomed the ongoing discussions between non-BJP parties to form a federal front for next year's general elections. Speaking to PTI in an interview at his ancestral residence here during his recent visit to India, the 89-year-old economist also said the central government needed to intervene with greater force to bring peace in Manipur. "I think the fact of the matter is often democracy demands the sharing of power. (But) often, the majority vote did not allow the minority parties to have that force and rather left the minority (in) too precarious (a situation)," Sen said.

## NITISH WILL NOT BE LEADER OF OPPOSITION: KUSHWAHA

**PATNA:** As the opposition parties meet in Bengaluru, Upendra Kushwaha, the president of Rashtriya Lok Janata Dal (RLJD), said Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar will not be the leader of the opposition parties in the Lok Sabha poll 2024. "Nitish Kumar was thinking that Lalu Prasad Yadav would push him in the Patna meeting but he has declared Rahul Gandhi as the groom

(leader) for the 2024 Lok Sabha poll. Hence, there is nothing more left to say. "Nitish Kumar has no scope to become the prime ministerial candidate in the 2024 Lok Sabha poll. Earlier Samrat Chaudhary and Sushil Kumar Modi have also pointed out the same perspective and said that Nitish Kumar has nothing to gain from opposition unity.

## TALKS WITH BJP PREMATURE: JD(S)

**BENGALURU:** Janata Dal (Secular) leader HD Kumaraswamy on Monday termed as "premature" talks of an electoral tie-up between his party and the BJP for the Lok Sabha elections next year.

He also attacked the Congress over the meeting of Opposition leaders here, saying it's trying to project it as a great achievement while the party-ruled Government in Karnataka is not bothered about suicide of farmers. On reports that the JD(S) may join hands with the BJP for the Parliamentary elections, he termed it as "premature". "(Lok Sabha) Elections are still 8-9 months away. Let's see", Kumaraswamy told reporters here.

## Robbers from Kashmir to Kanyakumari coming together: Karnataka BJP MLA

**BENGALURU:** BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, known for issuing controversial statements, said on Monday that 'robbers from Kashmir to Kanyakumari' were coming together and holding an event in Bengaluru.

Speaking to reporters here, Yatnal said the opposition parties have joined together against Prime Minister



Narendra Modi. "The robbers from Kashmir

to Kanyakumari are coming together. They are uniting to defeat PM Modi in the Lok Sabha elections. The families which are out on bail are also coming together in the state. "They know very well that if PM Modi comes to power again, they will surely land up in jail. That is why all robbers are coming together," he said.

## Meeting of opportunists and power-hungry leaders: BJP

**NEW DELHI/KOLKATA:** The BJP on Monday called the opposition parties' meet in Bengaluru a "meeting of opportunists and power-hungry" leaders and said such an alliance will not do any good for the country at present or in the future.

Addressing a press conference, senior BJP leader and former Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad ridiculed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and said he has gone to attend the opposition

parties' meeting in Bengaluru instead of being in the national capital to provide relief to the people affected by flood.

He also hit out at the Congress alleging that it has not said a word on the Kejriwal government's "mismanagement" during the flood situation in Delhi or on the violence during panchayat polls in West Bengal, where the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC is in power. **-Aritra Singha**

## After marathon searches, ED begins questioning TN min

N. CHITHRA / Chennai

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Monday night began questioning Tamil Nadu Higher Education Minister K Ponmudiy in a case after conducting marathon searches at his houses and other premises for 13 hours since 7 am. The Minister headed to the ED's office in Shastrri Bhavan in Chennai from his house past 8 pm after being directed by the agency to appear before it for questioning. ED officials and paramilitary personnel were also seen with him.

### TROUBLE FOR DMK

Ponmudiy, a veteran leader of the DMK from northern Tamil Nadu, is the second minister in the State who has



ED officials take Tamil Nadu minister K Ponmudiy for inquiry

come under the scanner of the ED. Last month, the agency had arrested Minister Senthilbalaji in an alleged money laundering case. Incidentally, on Monday evening, Senthilbalaji, who was convalescing in a private hospital after a bypass surgery, was shift-

ed to the Puzhal Central Prison. Earlier in the day, an ED team landed at Ponmudiy's doorsteps in Saidapet, Chennai, to conduct searches. Simultaneously, teams conducted searches at his home in his native Villupuram district. His son and MP Gowthama

Sigamani was also under the agency's scanner. The team also searched an engineering college managed by family members of the Minister.

### STALIN SPEAK

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, before heading to Bengaluru for the two-day opposition meet, told journalists that the searches by ED was merely an expression of the BJP Government's irritation over the meeting of the opposition parties. He charged that the searches were timed in an attempt to divert attention from the Bengaluru meeting where opposition parties were coming together with the sole objective of dislodging the BJP Government at the Centre in 2024.

## Guj: Three get life imprisonment for spying for Pakistan's ISI

RK MISRA / Ahmedabad

A sessions court here on Monday sentenced three men to life imprisonment on charges of spying and leaking confidential information about India's military bases to Pakistan's spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

The court of the additional sessions judge, Ambalal Patel, rejected the prosecution's appeal for the death sentence, saying the crime committed by the trio doesn't fall under the "rarest of rare" category. The court observed the trio got employment in India but their love and patriotism was

for Pakistan.

It also said that a "person sitting in India and spying for Pakistan as a citizen of India should voluntarily leave the country or the government should search for them and send them to Pakistan".

The court convicted Sirajuddin Ali Fakir (24), Mohammad Ayub (23) and Naushad Ali (23) on charges of criminal conspiracy and waging war against the country under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Official Secrets Act, and the Information Technology Act in the 2012 case.

The trio was handed life imprisonment under sections 121, 121 (A) and 120

(B) of IPC and section 66 (F) of the IT Act, along with 14 years of rigorous imprisonment under section 3 of the Official Secrets Act, and ten years jail under section 123 (Concealing with intent to facilitate design to wage war) of IPC.

All the sentences will run concurrently. The Ahmedabad city crime branch arrested Fakir and Ayub, both residents of Jamalpur locality, on October 14, 2012, for allegedly passing on confidential information related to Army bases in Ahmedabad and the Gandhinagar Army Cantonment to the ISI.

## LESS LES MISÉRABLES

# 13.5 cr people moved out of poverty in 5 yrs: Niti report

PTI / NEW DELHI

As many as 13.5 crore people in five years ended March 2021 moved out of multidimensional poverty, measured by improvement in health, education and standard of living, with Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh registering the fastest reduction, said a Niti Aayog report on Monday. India has registered a significant decline of 9.89 per-

### FASTEST DECLINE

From 32.59% to 19.28% Rural areas

From 8.65% to 5.27% Urban areas



centage points in the number of India's multidimensionally poor from 24.85% in 2015-16 to 14.96% in 2019-2021, according to the second edition of the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

While rural areas witnessed the fastest decline in poverty from 32.59% to 19.28%, urban areas saw a reduction in poverty from 8.65% to 5.27%. "A record 13.5 crore people moved out of multi-

dimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21," said the report 'National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023' released by Suman Bery, Vice-Chairman, Niti Aayog.

The National MPI measures simultaneous deprivations across three equally weighted dimensions of health, education, and standard of living that are represented by 12 SDG-aligned indicators.

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# Cong to ride Baghel crest in C'garh

**RAIPUR:** The newly appointed state president of Congress, Deepak Baij, said the Grand Old Party will fight the elections under the able leadership of CM Bhupesh Baghel. He also challenged the BJP to contest the polls on PM

Modi's face alone. He alleged that the BJP has become faceless as well as issueless. He also made a statement that CM Bhupesh was invincible and the BJP would lose more seats in the Assembly elections. —Avdhesh Mallick



# Assam flood situation worsens

### Nearly 1 lakh people affected

IANS / Guwahati

The flood situation in Assam has worsened in the last few days, with nearly one lakh people affected by the first spell of monsoon floods.

According to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority's (ASDMA) latest bulletin, a total of 98,840 people are still reeling by flood waters in the districts of Biswanath, Chirang, Darang, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Lakhimpur, Majuli, Morigaon, Nagaon,



Villagers travel in a boat through an inundated area after torrential rains, at Mayang village, in Morigaon, Assam, on Monday

Sivasagar, Sonitpur, and Tamulpur. According to the bulletin, with no fresh fatality reported, the death toll stood at seven. The Dikhou and Brahma-

putra rivers are flowing above the danger threshold, according to the ASDMA. The Dikhou in Sivasagar and Brahmaputra in Dhubri, Tezpur and Neamatihat are flowing above danger level.

## One killed, 3 injured in Himachal cloudburst

PTI / Shimla

A cloudburst occurred in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district early Monday morning, leaving a man dead and three others injured, officials said.

The incident was reported around 3:55 am near Kayas village in Kullu, washing away vehicles and blocking a road, according to the state emergency response centre.

The deceased was identified as Badal Sharma, a resident of village Chansari, they

said, adding that two of the injured are in a serious condition.

Local authorities immediately responded to the emergency situation and machinery has been deployed to clear the blockade on the road hampering rescue operations, they said.

Several landslides have been reported in the state as light to heavy rains continued to lash Himachal Pradesh. The Mandi-Pandoh road was again blocked.

## IN THE COURTYARD

### Delhi HC adjourns most cases as lawyers abstain on transfer of Justice Kanth

FPJ BUREAU / New Delhi

The result of Delhi HC Bar Association's call to abstain from work to protest against Justice Gaurang Kanth's transfer to Calcutta High Court was visible on Monday as most of the courtrooms were nearly empty and the High Court had to adjourn most of the cases.

The transfer was recommended by the Supreme

Court Collegium on July 12 and was notified by the Central government on July 15.

The DHCBA said that the transfer will affect the dispensation of justice in the Delhi High Court and, therefore, requested its members to abstain from work.

The result of DHCBA's call was visible on Monday, as most of the courtrooms, which are otherwise packed on a Monday, were nearly

empty. Proxy counsel appeared before the benches and sought adjournments in most cases.

The repeated requests for adjournment without any reason prompted the Division Bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sanjeev Narula to question the proxy counsel on why adjournments were being sought.

### SC seeks EC response on EVMs and VVPATs tallying

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to file a reply within three weeks on a plea by NGO Association of Democratic Reformers seeking to tally the count in the electronic voting machines with the VVPATs. Are we not sometimes oversuspicious, asked a bench comprising Justices Sanjay Khanna and Bela M Trivedi. Advocate Prashant Bhushan representing the NGO contended that sometimes the registered and the vote counts do not match, pointing out that only few VVPATs were being tallied with EVM vote counts and not all.

nine people have been shortlisted for the appointments.

### Bengal MLA files plea in Calcutta High Court

**Kolkata:** All India Secular Front (AISF) legislator from the Bhangar Assembly constituency in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, who is also the lone representative of his party in the Assembly, on Monday filed a petition at the Calcutta High Court accusing the state police of preventing him from entering his own constituency. Siddique's counsel Firdaus Shamim, while filing the petition, has accused the state police of being over-active in the case of his client.

### B'luru bomb blast accused allowed to stay in Kerala

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday allowed former president of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and prime accused in the 2008 Bengaluru serial bomb blast case, Abdul Madani, to move and reside in his hometown in Kerala. A bench of Justices AS Bopanna and MM Sundresh allowed the PDP leader's application on the condition that he will appear at a designated police station in Kollam, Kerala, every 2 weeks.

### SC seeks UP's response on Ansari's bail plea

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday sought Uttar Pradesh Government's response on Mukhtar Ansari's son Umar Ansari plea seeking anticipatory bail in connection with a case relating to property dispute case. A bench of justices AS Bopanna and MM Sundresh asked UP police to file reply on the plea. Umar Ansari has challenged Allahabad High Court's Lucknow bench order dated April 13, 2023, which denied his anticipatory bail. Ansari has sought anticipatory bail in the FIR registered in 2020 in Hazratganj in Lucknow.

### Contempt plea in HC against TMC's Abhishek Banerjee

**Kolkata:** Alleging that TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee made derogatory remarks about the judiciary, a senior advocate on Monday moved the Calcutta High Court seeking suo motu cognisance of his comments and initiation of contempt proceedings against him. Chief Justice TS Sivagananam asked senior advocate Bikash Ranjan Bhat-tacharya to mention the issue before a three-judge bench hearing a suo motu contempt over the alleged locking of Justice Rajasekhara Mantha's courtroom from outside, and pasting of derogatory posters outside his residence in south Kolkata.

### Centre to notify industrial tribunals' appointments: SC

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Centre to appoint nine short-listed candidates as presiding officers of industrial tribunals by August 31, after it was told the names were cleared by a panel headed by an apex court judge recently. A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of Additional Solicitor General Balbir Singh, who appeared for the Centre, that

### Manipur: 1 killed in attack by armed assailants

PTI / Imphal

A person was killed when armed assailants attacked the village defence force of a community at Laimaton Thangbuh village in Kangpokpi district of Manipur, officials said here on Monday.

The incident took place on Sunday morning.

Women and children from the village had been moved out to Churachandpur earlier following ethnic clashes on May 3.

It was guarded by the village defence force only. On Sunday, around 30 people climbed a small hill and attacked the village defence force members. One person was killed in the firing, officials said.

### NSUI holds protest against Dalit girl's gang-rape in Raj

PTI / Jaipur

NSUI activists on Monday held protests against the alleged gang-rape of a Dalit girl in Rajasthan's Jodhpur district and demanded the death penalty for the accused.

The National Students Union of India (NSUI), the Congress' student wing, accused the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-affiliated Akhili Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) of being linked with the accused. The ABVP, however, rejected the allegations.

NSUI activists held protests at the University of Rajasthan in Jaipur and outside the old campus of JNV University in Jodhpur.

"The incident is highly shameful and condemnable.

Those involved in the crime should be given the death penalty," said NSUI leader Ramesh Bhati in Jaipur.

"ABVP workers have polluted education institutions. The BJP talks about beti bacho beti padhao, and a few days ago, the ABVP took out a rally on women safety. Now the involvement of ABVP workers in gang-rape in university campus in Jodhpur came to light," another NSUI leader said.

A 17-year-old Dalit girl, who had eloped with her boyfriend, was allegedly gang-raped by three accused in front of the boyfriend on the hockey ground of old JNV university campus in Jodhpur on Sunday. The accused were arrested hours after the incident.

### 'MIYA MUSLIM' REMARK RS MP Ajit Bhuyan files FIR against Assam CM

IANS / Guwahati

Rajya Sabha MP Ajit Bhuyan has lodged an FIR against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for his remarks against Bangladeshi-origin Muslim settlers ('Miya') in the state.

Bhuyan filed the police complaint against Sarma at the Dispur police station, claiming that the statements made by Sarma amounted to hate speech against a particular community.

The Rajya Sabha MP wrote in the FIR, "Very recently, while talking to the press, Himanta Biswa Sarma asked people from the Upper Assam area to come

to Guwahati and in that event, he would clear Guwahati from Miyas. The statement is available on social media. Such statements on the face of it are intended to create a division among different communities in the state and are clearly prejudicial to national integration."

It is stated that a closer look at the statement would make it clear that the intention was to promote enmity between different groups on the ground of religion and race.

Bhuyan also mentioned Supreme Court orders terming hate speech as a serious offence affecting the social fabric of the nation.

### Bilkis Bano case: SC hears pleas against remissions

FPJ BUREAU / New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday heard a batch of pleas challenging the remissions granted last year to all the 11 convicts in the gang-rape case of Bilkis Bano and murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 post-Godhra Gujarat riots.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Prashant Kumar Mishra noted, in accordance with its May 9 order, notices have been published in local Gujarati and English newspapers against the convicts who could not be served the notices.

The Centre and the Gujarat Government had told the court that they are not filing any plea for review of the Court's march 27 order, ask-

ing for production of the original records with the remission granted to the convicts.

The Gujarat government had raised preliminary objections to the petitions other than one by Bilkis Bano, saying it will have wide ramifications every now and then third parties will approach court in the criminal cases.

The apex court had on March 27 termed Bilkis Bano's gang-rape and the murder of her family members during the riots a "heinous" act, and asked the Gujarat government whether uniform standards, as allowed in other murder cases, were applied while granting remission to the convicts.

### ROW OVER GURBANI BROADCAST SGPC to launch its own YouTube channel on Jul 24

RAJESH MOUDGIL / Chandigarh

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) on Friday announced it would be airing Gurbani recitals from Golden Temple, Amritsar, the holiest Sikh shrine, from its own YouTube channel from July 24.

The SGPC which is known as mini-Parliament of the Sikhs, is a representative body of the Sikhs living across the world and is empowered to appoint clergy.

The SGPC decision holds significance amid the controversy over the broadcast of the same by the PTC, a private channel, a majority of shares of which have reportedly been held by the Badal family, which is at the helm of

affairs of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) as well as has a majority in the general house of the SGPC.

SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhama said the Gurbani would be live on the YouTube channel, which would start from early morning on July 24 and that this arrangement would be in place till the satellite channel of the SGPC was launched. All rights of the Gurbani broadcast would be with the SGPC, he added.

It may be recalled that the SGPC had given the rights to broadcast Gurbani to channels, under which the current agreement was with PTC channel. This also means that SGPC would not be renewing its agreement with PTC.

### Guj MLA Jignesh Mevani appears in Assam court

PTI / Barpeta (Assam)

Gujarat Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani on Monday appeared before a local court in Assam's Barpeta district in a case related to alleged assault of a woman police official while in custody.

Mevani, who had reached Assam on Sunday night, appeared in the court of the chief judicial magistrate, Barpeta. "He came in response to an appearance summons. He could not appear at a previous date due to some reasons," Mevani's advocate Billal Hussain said.

"The date for the first hearing has been fixed for August 5," he added.

## FROM FRONT PAGE

### Ek Akela 26 par bhari

Nadda asserted that just as the NDA is completing three decades, PM Modi is completing 10 years at the Centre. Therefore, Tuesday's meeting will focus on the government's developmental agenda, and PM's schemes and policies. Asked to name the parties who have consented to join the NDA meeting, Nadda wriggled out, saying you will know who all turn up when the meeting takes place. On Tuesday, there will clearly be a show of strength by the ruling alliance and a get-together of the opposition parties. Nadda, however, said there will be representatives from all regions in the alliance and showcase the expanded strength of the NDA, amid strident criticism that the BJP has traditional allies such as the Janata Dal (U), Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena and Akali Dal, the BJP has succeeded in striking a rapport with Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, the Ajit Pawar-led faction of NCP, O P Rajbhar-led SBSP in Uttar Pradesh and Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and Upendra Kushwala-led RSP.

Nadda has sent invitations to various parties to attend the meeting to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior BJP leaders.

At the NDA conclave, AIADMK of Tamil Nadu and Pawan Kalyan's Jan Sena of Andhra Pradesh are sure to be present, besides half a dozen from northeast states. It will be the first such NDA meeting on this scale during the second term of the Modi government, underscoring the imperative need within the ruling party to project its credentials as a lead coalition partner in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls, expected to be held in April-May.

In reply to a question, Nadda said his party is still not clear about whom it will be fighting in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, since there is no clarity about who will be the Opposition leader and what will be its agenda; also there is no guarantee that many of them will be fielding candidates against each other.

Retaliating, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge ridiculed the BJP for combining the "splintered parties" to show off its strength and numbers. Almost half of them have no seat in Parliament, nor will they be able to win any, Kharge said.

### BJP NEEDS CRUTCHES

Recalling PM Modi's rather profound statement in Parliament that he "alone" is enough for all, party chief Mallikarjun Kharge wanted to know then why did he need the support of 30-odd parties.

Talk of unity notwithstanding, reconciling differences among traditional rivals like the CPM and the TMC, or for that matter between the Congress and the TMC, will be a challenging task and determined by the willingness to cede political space to each other.

Arriving for the Opposition meet, CPM leader Sitaram Yechury ruled out an alliance with the TMC in West Bengal; but he added in the same breath that the endeavour is to minimise the division of votes.

While most opposition leaders concede in private that they are stepping into a political minefield, the overweening concern about political vendetta and "a dictatorial government's actions" seems to have put other reservations on the back burner, momentarily, at least. Sources said the Opposition leaders will file up a strategy to defeat the BJP in the next general elections during the two-day session, which will start with a dinner meeting that will be attended by Sonia Gandhi and other top leaders.

### Chacha Bhatija reverse...

Pawar is a keen cricket enthusiast and has mastered the art of the reverse swing. Only July 4, 2023, this paper had said that Sharad Pawar was in the loop vis-a-vis all the developments relating to the revolt by his nephew and his 'band'. This is only being further proved by the 'Operation Mollycoddl' launched by Ajit Pawar & Co. It would not be in the least surprising if uncle and nephew come together in support of the state government (of course, this would be strictly in the interests of Maharashtra and its development.) Now, Sharad Pawar's problem is how he will explain these stage-managed twists and turns to opposition leaders trying to form a pan-India anti-Modi front.

Interestingly, he skipped the first day of their meeting in Bengaluru on Monday. However, his spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said that their leader would be attending Tuesday's session accompanied by his daughter and MP, Supriya Sule.

### Absconding customs...

"We have written to the airport customs for permission to question the accused customs superintendents Neelkamal Singh and Lalit Bilsare. Customs is not cooperating and both the accused have failed to appear for recording their statements," alleged an officer with the Aripada Police station. Mumbai Police has repeatedly sought permission to proceed against the accused customs officers as required by the Maharashtra state 2016 amendments for the investigation of extortion cases.

Senior airport customs officers failed to explain the irregularity in Neelkamal Singh being back on duty despite criminal offences of extortion and cheating being registered against him. According to airport customs officers, the accused customs superintendent is being protected by a senior CBIC member and has managed to get back in action in the sensitive narcotics cell of airport customs.

Mumbai Airport Customs has been plagued with cases of the men in white being arrested for digital extortion rackets run by customs officers threatening to arrest flyers in fake cases of gold smuggling. The digital extortion racket involved customs officers posted at the international terminal of Mumbai Airport, accosting unsuspecting passengers and threatening to book them in smuggling cases for bringing gold and electronic items allowed with prescribed limits and demanding a bribe to settle the case by accepting payments on mobile banking wallets of airport baggage loaders.

### HC protects Russian...

by the local deputy commissioner of police on instructions from the Ministry of Home Affairs. During the last hearing, the HC had asked the woman to make a fresh application before the MHA. Her lawyer, senior advocate VK Rambhadrhan, informed the court on Monday

that they received a communication on July 15, at about 8pm, stating that her application has been rejected.

Rui Rodrigues, appearing for the Union government, said that the order (exit permit) was as per statutory requirements and that the government should be granted time to file an additional affidavit to clear its position on the issue. He also said that there are no special circumstances for granting her an OCI status.

Irked, Justice Patel said: "You are wrong. There are indeed special circumstances. Are you saying to people who are previously married, you will remain in OCI? She is not asking for the continuation of OCI. She has remarried. Now you say this OCI was for another marriage. So now there is no OCI." Rodrigues contended that there had to be a subsistence of a marriage to continue OCI status.

When Rodrigues sought to file an additional affidavit to spell out its stand, Justice Patel said, "Do not spin this. Find a solution. There are indeed special circumstances. She is not asking for the continuation of OCI after the divorce. She has married another Indian citizen."

When the judge emphasised that a nursing mother cannot be separated from her infant, Rodrigues said it was just a "temporary separation".

"We won't allow separation even for a minute," said Justice Patel.

The Russian woman was married to an Indian citizen and had obtained an X1 visa and an OCI card. Later, they got divorced. She had a son before she came to India. After her divorce, she married the petitioner man and they have a minor daughter. In January, she was asked to leave India by March 23. Meanwhile, she applied for OCI status based on her second marriage on March 5. The HC, since March, has granted extension to the woman to stay in India. It has noted earlier that the petition raised questions about spouses of foreign origin of citizens of India, the right to apply for X category visa and OCI cards.

### Delhi row may go to...

At the very outset, the Bench indicated that since the Ordinance was issued by taking recourse to Article 239AA, it will be in the fitness of things if the matter is decided by a constitution bench.

"What they (Centre) have done is that by using power under 239AA (7) they have amended the Constitution to take services out of the Delhi government's control. Is that permissible? I don't think either of the Constitution Bench judgements has covered that," the CJ said, in remarks seen as indicative of the court's intention of referring the matter to a Constitution Bench.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, opposed the observation and said as per Article 239AA(7) (b), a law made by Parliament is not deemed as an amendment to the Constitution.

Article 239AA deals with special provisions with respect to Delhi in the Constitution and sub-article 7 says, "Parliament may, by law, make provisions for giving effect to, or supplementing the provisions contained in the foregoing clauses and for all matters incidental or consequential thereto."

It also says any such law made under the Article "shall not be deemed to be an amendment of this Constitution for the purposes of Article 368, notwithstanding that it contains any provision which amends or has the effect of amending, this Constitution."

The Centre had on May 19 promulgated the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023 to create an authority for transfer and posting of Group-A officers in Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government had termed it a "deception" with the Supreme Court verdict on control of services.

The ordinance, which came a week after the Supreme Court handed over the control of services in Delhi excluding police, public order and land to the elected government, seeks to set up a National Capital Civil Service Authority for transfer of and disciplinary proceedings against Group-A officers from the Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Civil) Services (DANICS) cadre. The chief minister is one of the three members of the Authority, while two others are bureaucrats. The decisions by the Authority are to be taken by a majority and, in the event of a dispute, the matter will be referred to the LG whose decision will be final.

### CR prioritises journey of...

"This selfless act of providing affordable and timely transportation for the deceased has resulted in a substantial revenue sacrifice for the railway. Despite the loss of approximately Rs 4.62 crore in freight revenue due to the non-loading of parcels in the SLR compartments for these cases, the railway's

commitment to its social responsibility remains unwavering," avered a CR official. "Central Railway's compassionate approach in handling these sorrowful moments for their passengers, by charging a nominal fee and sacrificing parcel revenue earnings, demonstrates the organisation's commitment to serving the community and undertaking acts of humanity," he said.

### Transporting the deceased

Interested individuals should reach out to the chief parcel booking supervisor at major stations such as CSMT (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus), Dadar, LTT (Lokmanya Tilak Terminus), Thane, Kalyan, or other major stations on the Central Railway network, with all the necessary details related to the transportation of the deceased person's body, at least four hours before departure of the train. This includes information such as name of the deceased, destination where the body needs to be transported, contact information of the person arranging transport and other relevant details.

Once the booking is confirmed, the concerned party can coordinate with this official to ensure that the body is delivered to the railway station in a suitable condition for transportation. The chief parcel booking supervisor will inform the concerned party about the applicable charges, and the latter will need to pay accordingly.

### PUBG 'lovebirds' in...

Seema and Sachin had been arrested earlier, but were released. The ATS is closely looking into the route Seema took from Nepal to India, not ruling out an espionage angle. Several SIM cards and a broken mobile were recovered from Seema. Investigating agencies are also trying to decode the data from these.

Following the vandalisation of a temple in Pakistan on Saturday, security was beefed up around Seema's house here on Monday. According to sources, Seema's uncle is a subedar in the Pakistan Army and her brother also works in the Pakistani Army.

### Chirag Paswan back...

ahead of the last state election in Bihar over his disagreements with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. While his exit had cut down Kumar's numbers and gave the BJP the upper hand in the state, it left Paswan Junior isolated. Chirag has asked NDA for six seats. A group led by uncle Pashupati Parash has said they will not oppose Chirag's entry into NDA, but they would not welcome him either, media reports said.

IN SHORT >>

Goa tops Export Preparedness Index

PANAJI: In another feather in its cap, Goa emerged as the top small State in the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022. The index is aimed at assessing the readiness of the States in terms of their export potential and performance. Tamil Nadu topped among larger States.

Assembly session begins today

PANAJI: The Monsoon Session of the Goa legislature which is slated to begin from 11 am on Tuesday is set to be a stage for government versus Opposition confrontations in the face of plethora of governance and public issues.

Bike stunt: Father, son arrested

MAPUSA: A dare-devil bike stunt on the main Mapusa road cost a father-son duo dearly as police arrested both on Monday after a video of the stunt went viral on social media.

Sugarcane farmers block highway

SANGUEM: Irked over government's failure to work out a concrete solution to the Sanjivani Sugar Factory and the operation of Ethanol Plant at the Sanjivani Sugar Factory, hundreds of sugarcane farmers went to Sanjivani Sugar Factory and later marched to the highway, causing a road blockade.

SC paves way to raze Siolim hotel

MAPUSA: The Supreme Court paved the way for demolition of a hotel/resort in Siolim built on government land in violation of coastal zone regulations and without obtaining permission from GCZMA.

Thieves target five kiosks in Margao

MARGAO: Miscreants targeted as many as five kiosks in the heart of the commercial capital near the Pick-up stand last night. While the miscreants stole cash from gaddas dealing in mobile handsets and refreshments, they did not steal the goods.

WEATHER >>

Max:	29 C
Min:	24 C
Humidity:	88%
<b>TIDES</b>	
Low:	04.52 17.50
High:	12.09 22.42

# Kala Academy crumbles, slab of open auditorium collapses

GOVT'S TOP COMMAND RUSHES TO SITE ■ STRUCTURAL STABILITY REPORT DID NOT MAKE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS AS CONDITION WAS GOOD, SAYS GAUDE

THE GOAN NETWORK

PANAJI Amidst the incomplete renovation of the Charles Correa masterpiece -- Kala Academy -- an entire slab of the open auditorium collapsed in the late hours of Sunday.

While Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Public Works Minister Nilesh Cabral wasted no time in calling for a thorough investigation, the Opposition picked the opportunity to criticize the government, particularly Minister for Art & Culture Govind Gaude, for the alleged botched repair works.

The incident incidentally occurred on the eve of the monsoon session of the Goa Legislative Assembly and the Opposition echoed demand for Gaude's resignation.

Also the Chairman of Kala Academy, Gaude promptly rushed to the site around midnight and inspected the venue early Monday morning well before this news went viral and followed by VIP visits.

Sawant, who had just supervised the destruction of seized drugs at Kundaim Industrial Estate, reached the premises with PWD Minister Cabral and Principal Chief Engineer Uttam Parsekar in the afternoon.

Sawant ordered a detailed inquiry into the collapse and stated that further details would be provided once the inspection concludes. Cabral added that his department will release a white paper after receiving the report.

While sources claimed that IIT Chennai is likely to be roped in to inspect the col-



ALL FALL DOWN: The entire slab of the open auditorium that collapsed in the late hours of Sunday.

lapsed slab, government records indicate that in 2019, the State had acknowledged the fragile state of the open auditorium.

A structural audit conducted by Goa Engineering College and Mumbai-based consultancy firm Gem Engserv Pvt Ltd reportedly confirmed that the building needed repairs but deemed the open-air slab to be in good condition. However, a report from another agency appointed by the PWD remains unknown.

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Govt excluded us despite support offer: Correa Foundation

PANAJI: Architect Arminio Ribeiro of the Charles Correa Foundation (CCF) has expressed disappointment over the incident but is not shocked by it. The expert criticized the government for excluding the CCF from the project despite their repeated offers of assistance.

read more on [thegoan.net](http://thegoan.net)

CS seeks report, gives PWD 24 hours; IIT-Roorkee appointed to investigate

PANAJI: Chief Secretary Puneet Kumar Goel has called for an investigation into the slab collapse and an explanation from the contractor over the incident.

In a written communiqué to the PWD, Goel also directed appointing an independent agency to ascertain the cause of the incident.

"The Principal Chief Engineer, PWD I hereby directed to investigate and submit a preliminary inquiry report regarding

read more on [thegoan.net](http://thegoan.net)

## Trainee constable in the dock for being part of murder plot

ACCOMPANIED MURDERERS NEAR APNA GHAR ■ CHOSE NOT TO INFORM COPS ABOUT CRIME

THE GOAN NETWORK

PANAJI The training before his official induction into the Goa Police as a constable was nearing completion but 25-year-old Amey Volvoikar made the questionable decision to associate himself with friends having criminal records.

MERCES MURDER

Volvoikar, currently undergoing training at Police Training School (PTS) in Valpoi, stepped out of the campus during the weekend to join his "friends" Vishal Golatkar, Sai Kundaikar alias Cobra, Omkar Chari, Gaurish Gawas, Tushar Kundaikar, and a juvenile.

While Golatkar was killed in a planned murder by mem-

bers of his gang, Volvoikar has been dragged into the case. This could jeopardise his government job, sources said, adding that he could currently face temporary suspension pending investigation.

Reliable sources told The Goan that while the PTS may face scrutiny for permitting trainee/s to leave the campus despite a holiday, Volvoikar, although not directly involved in the killing of Vishal Golatkar, was well aware of the crime. He was allegedly a party to the destruction of evidence alongside the murder accused, yet chose not to inform the police.

"He left the campus on Saturday and was scheduled to return to the PTS on the following morning. However, around 3:30 pm on Sat-

urday, he was found to have accompanied the murderers and conspired with them to destroy evidence near Apna Ghar. Instead of alerting the police about the crime, he became an accomplice in the case," the source disclosed.

It is learnt that Volvoikar was allegedly given permission to leave the campus for some mess-related purchases as funds for these purchases were earlier diverted for other items. The investigation will also inquire about the whereabouts of the money provided to the recruit-constable.

The police will now initiate an inquiry into Volvoikar's locations during his previous exits from the campus, as well as examine his call records.

## Babush rape case: Trial commences as victim girl appears in court

THE GOAN NETWORK

MARGAO Trial in the minor girl rape case allegedly involving Revenue Minister Atanasio 'Babush' Monserrate got underway at the South Goa district and Sessions Court on Monday.

The victim girl, who could not make it to the Special Court on the previous two occasions, made her presence felt before Special Judge Irshad Agha on Monday.

The proceedings were conducted on camera by the Court. Sources pointed out that the victim girl was deposited before the Court on Monday morning and evening. Her examination will continue on Tuesday as well.

The State has been represented by Public Prosecutor V G Costa.

## Ravindra Bhavan cries for attention as ceiling leaks

Buckets placed on floor to collect water

THE GOAN NETWORK

MARGAO When a portion of the Kala Academy came crashing down on Monday, visitors to the Margao Ravindra Bhavan, including students came across buckets dotting on the first floor of the building outside the conference hall.

Realisation later dawned on the students and the visitors that the buckets have been placed on the floor to collect water from the leaking ceiling, indicating that all is not well with the premiere cultural institution in the commercial capital.

Ravindra Bhavan has been known in local art and culture

circles in recent times for all the wrong reasons -- a canteen facility shut down for the last three years, air-conditioning system breakdowns, a cover a concealed lamp falling in the conference room, issues relating to sound et al.

The buckets placed on the first floor, sources said, have been done so that the water seepage from the ceiling does not spread on the entire floor.

Goa Forward Party chief Vijai Sardesai, who was invited as a chief guest for a function at the conference hall on Monday morning, questioned the state of affairs. "Margao is crumbling. Ravindra Bhavan is part of Fatorda. I don't want the situation of neighbouring

Margao to take place in Fatorda. A portion of the Margao urban health centre collapsed over a week ago. Is anyone held accountable for the sorry state of affairs?" he asked.

The state of affairs of Ravindra Bhavan is expected to come into focus at the two-day maintenance scheduled on July 18-19, wherein newly-appointed chairman Rajendra Talak is expected to insist on top priority for the upkeep of the institution.

The chairman is expected to have interactive sessions with various groups using the facility, including triatrists, to find out from them what needs to be done.

## Bondla zoo may soon be in better hands

Goa looking to outsource zoo, wildlife sanctuary management

THE GOAN NETWORK

PANAJI A day after the ban on entry to forest areas caused chaos and left crowds of tourists stranded at Dudhsagar, Forest Minister Vishwajit Rane held a detailed review meeting with officials to explore safety protocols so forests can be made accessible even as the Forest Department mulled outsourcing the management of Bondla zoo.

Rane said he has instructed officials to identify high and medium risk areas in the jurisdiction of the regions coming under the forest department's charge so that lifeguards can be deployed for safety.



"Additionally we will plan more activities and initiatives to attract people and allow them to enjoy the forest's uniqueness during the monsoon season," Rane said.

Meanwhile, the Forest Department is paralling considering to outsource the management of the Bondla zoo and

other wildlife sanctuaries and protected areas to external agencies, Rane said.

"This approach will facilitate proper management and enable us to deliver high-quality services," he said in a tweet after he held a detailed review meeting with forest officials.

## Range forest officer missing

PANAJI: The Ponda and Panaji police have launched a search for a Range Forest Officer who went missing from Miramar on July 11. The missing officer, identified as Dharajit Naik, is posted at Usgao. Police officials stated that, CCTV footage showed Naik parked his car near Foodland, located within the premises of Miramar Residency, before walking towards the beach. He was not accompanied by anyone.

THE GOAN NETWORK

MARGAO Asserting that vendors and shoppers can look forward to a turnaround in the SGPDA retail fish market complex soon, SGPDA Chairman MLA Krishna Salkar on Monday said the Planning Body has set in motion the process of the cleanliness drive by desilting the drains and replacement of damaged bins with new ones.

Saying that the PDA is now liability free in the retail market, he said the PDA has cleared the pending electricity and water dues amounting to lakhs of rupees after taking charge of the planning body. The Chairman said the PDA



SGPDA Chairman Krishna Salkar with PDA staff at the retail market. Santosh Mirajkar

has also laid stress on self-sustainability with the body earning revenue to the tune of Rs 18 lakh each by leasing the PDA grounds for the two feasts fairs.

He also pointed out the market can be maintained clean with the support of the

Margao Municipal Council and the cooperation of the vendors. Salkar promised to start a fresh initiative to replace the ageing lift to cater to the requirement of visitors to the PDA office as well as the general public.

Addressing the media after the completion of the PDA market drain cleaning exercise, Salkar said this is perhaps the first time since the inception of the SGPDA market that the drains have been de-silted. "This is just the beginning in the retail market. These drains were never de-silted in the last 20 years," he said.

He added: "There's a misconception in the minds of the people that the entire area belongs to the PDA. The commercial complex plays host to around 50 offices and around 100 shops. The waste thrown around the market is not generated by the PDA or the market. Unscrupulous people dump the waste, giving a bad look."



# Unplanned cities face nature's fury

The recent flooding in the national capital and other North Indian cities has revealed the lacunae in urban planning in India. The rise in water levels in the Yamuna and the subsequent displacement of hundreds who dwell along the banks of the river is an annual phenomenon in Delhi. Yet nothing has been done to alleviate the situation. This year the unprecedented rainfall that led the Yamuna to rise to a 45-year record was the reason for the spotlight turning to Delhi and its water woes. TV channels showed the devastation caused by the floods in the capital focusing on the lack of planning on issues such as storm water drainage and desilting of drains. The capital's drainage system was built in the Seventies when the population was only 35 lakh. Now the population is over 2 crore but the drainage system remains the same. Rampant urbanisation has led to massive construction along the river banks and destruction of wetlands. Tunnels and flyovers are being built in low-lying areas. Administrators talk proudly of an infrastructure boom but at what cost.

The only use of the gigantic flyovers is that the hundreds displaced by the flooding find shelter under them. The loss of life and property is incalculable, with the displaced facing health and rehabilitation challenges. For many traders, their livelihoods have been destroyed and the road to recovery will be long and arduous. Meanwhile, politicians are busy playing the blame game with the Aam Aadmi Party and BJP crossing swords over release of water from neighbouring Haryana. What is needed is a comprehensive approach to the issue where the many agencies involved in urban governance get together with planners to devise solutions to combat extreme weather phenomena which are here to stay as a result of climate change. The creation of green areas along the river, desilting drains well ahead of the monsoon season and making pavements porous can help. Whether it is landslides in Himachal or flooding in urban areas, faulty planning and excessive construction are the main reasons behind failing to weather climate fluctuations. The Centre and states have to join hands to formulate a national strategy. It is time to restore and reclaim urban water bodies to recharge groundwater reserves and prevent flooding. An ecologically sustainable approach towards urban planning which factors in the challenges posed by climate change is the need of the hour.

## Questions over cheetah project

The death of eight cheetahs in four months at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh has exposed some shortcomings in the project to translocate the big cats from Namibia and South Africa. Though the National Tiger Conservation Authority, the agency under the Union Environment Ministry that is implementing the project, has maintained that all the deaths were due to natural causes, experts have questioned this claim. Veterinary experts have said the deaths were in all probability due to septicaemia caused by maggot infestation in the animals' necks likely caused by the radio collars they were fitted with. The heat, humidity and flies compounded the issue. Altogether 20 cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa were brought to the park to establish a free-ranging population. Subsequently four cubs were also born.

Territorial fights also led to some of the deaths. Namibian experts have pointed out that the size of the cheetahs' habitat at Kuno is small. It has already been witnessed that some of the cats released into the park have strayed outside its boundaries. This could lead to serious man-animal conflict. Recent research suggests that even in prime habitats, cheetah density is around one big cat per 100 sq km. It is clear that while planning the cheetah project, these factors were not taken into consideration. While it is too early to rule on the success or failure of the project what is essential is that complete transparency be maintained over this ambitious relocation of the cheetah which was declared extinct in India nearly 70 years ago. Any attempt to whitewash the truth will be counterproductive. This is a project that has captured international attention. Therefore it is in the best interests of the authorities to be totally upfront about it so that conservationists can learn valuable lessons on relocation and the animals' gradual reintroduction to the wild.

## INDIA 75 YEARS AGO JULY 18, 1948



## RAZAKAR ATTACKS ON HINDUS CONTINUE

Nagpur, July 17. Reports of attacks on innocent Hindus by armed Razakars in the border area between C.P. and Berar and Hyderabad State territory have been received here.

# Belligerent Kejriwal needs to exercise patience

## State of the Union



✦ Ashutosh

Impatience is another name for the Aam Aadmi Party, or rather for its leader Arvind Kejriwal. For him, politics is two-minute noodles. If cooking takes more than two minutes, he gets very restless, and does not know how to deal with it. He loses sleep and starts tweeting in the dead of night or messaging his party colleagues. It is at this moment that he is weak, and if not advised well or if he's exploited by power-hungry leaders around him, he can make the stupidest move to counter his opponent and get trapped in some unseen crisis. His belligerence on the issue of the Delhi ordinance is one such example. AAP might rejoice that it has forced the Congress to support AAP on this issue but the fact is that he has exposed himself on an issue in which the Congress has no other option but to support AAP.

A party which is trying to cobble together all the parties which are opposed to the BJP and the Modi brand of statecraft, in no way, would have taken a different position. But then AAP being AAP, resorted to brinkmanship, issued threats that it would boycott the opposition conclave if the Congress did not offer support.

Kejriwal these days is wrongly advised most of the time. It was wrong for his party to boycott the Opposition leaders' collective press conference in Patna. It was the first Opposition leaders' meet after several months of uncertainties. This was the meeting which was to give a message to the entire nation that the Opposition is honestly trying to come together to stitch

a strong rainbow coalition to counter the might of the BJP and its divisive politics. Till that date, talks were on, but no concrete shape was emerging. There was no certainty that Opposition parties would come together; there were serious apprehensions in many quarters.

It was widely speculated that many of these 'power hungry' politicians who, in order to save their power, or to remain relevant in Indian politics, may come on a platform to oppose the BJP or may switch sides to the BJP. They were branded as 'corrupt' and 'opportunistic' leaders, bereft of any vision or idea for the country, with no imagination to make India great, but were mostly driven by their own passion to save their family run parties and businesses; corruption was the only glue keeping them under one umbrella. This narrative was cleverly woven by the BJP and very ably spread by its supporters in mainline media. If AAP had any sense of history, then it would not have made any effort that sent a wrong signal to the larger audience. It fed into the image of the opposition as a club of squabbling leaders against the cohesive BJP in the collective imagination of the people.

Of course, AAP leaving Patna has not been received well by its friends in the Opposition camp. Many of them, off the record, have shown annoyance. In their opinion, once AAP had made an appeal and attended the meeting, it should have waited for some more time for the Congress's official response. It has emerged that behind the curtains, leaders of both the parties have been meeting and talking; senior members of the Congress had explained to AAP leaders its problem about serious resistance coming from the local units in Delhi and Punjab. But the Congress leadership had given enough hints that sooner or later, it would oppose

the Delhi ordinance if brought in the Rajya Sabha by the Modi Government. Obviously, Kejriwal did not believe what was conveyed to him.

I was not surprised when after the Patna meet AAP issued another threat that it would not attend the Bengaluru conclave if the Congress did not come on board. This again provided fodder to the BJP and its friends to belittle and condemn the Opposition's effort to come together.

For the Congress it was not an easy decision to make as it is pitted against AAP in three states. In Delhi, the Congress lost its ground to AAP and is fighting for its existence. In Punjab AAP is its main opposition, Akali Dal

and the BJP are on the margins. Akali and the BJP are talking to each other to revive their old friendship. Both need each other to survive in the state. The Akali Dal has lost two consecutive elections and today it is a much-discredited party. The patriarch of Akali Dal and legendary leader Prakash Singh Badal is no more and his son Sukhbir Singh Badal is not a popular leader. If the Akali Dal has to be relevant in Punjab politics and carry forward its great legacy from the pre-independence era, then it has to win a few seats in the 2024 elections.

The BJP is also trying to re-invent itself in the state. It has appointed Congress import Sunil Jakhar as the state BJP president. He is popular amongst both Hindu and Sikh communities, but after joining the BJP how much he will help the BJP gain, has to be seen. Since the BJP is talking to the Akali Dal it is apparent that the BJP is not confident of winning seats alone. In 2014 AAP won all the seats in 2014 and 2019. In 2014 AAP was second to BJP on all the seats with 33% votes, and the Congress with 15% was a distant third but in 2019, AAP lost the second spot to the Congress which got 23% votes vis a vis AAP's 18%. In 2019 AAP wanted to have an alliance with the Congress. Talks failed as AAP was not willing to concede more than two seats out of seven. The Congress wanted three. Finally, both lost badly.

Now AAP can claim to be in a better position as it has won the Delhi municipal elections too. But the Congress can argue that the party is in revival mode in the state after Rahul's successful Bharat Jodo Yatra. The Congress can also claim that in national politics, the Congress is seen to be the main challenger to the BJP and in the general elections the Congress will be a preferred choice over AAP. It can cite the 2019 results as proof. The minority votes are definitely inclined towards

the Congress for two reasons. One due to Rahul's Yatra the Congress is seen to be fighting for minority rights and secularism. Two, AAP has been circumspect on the Muslim issue. AAP avoided supporting the Shaheen Bagh agitation, and during the Northeast Delhi riots in which 53 people died, mostly Muslims, it was nowhere seen to be fighting for them despite being in the government in Delhi.

In Gujarat, AAP is an unknown commodity in the parliamentary elections. In the last assembly elections, due to AAP's presence, the BJP won by a record margin. AAP gained at the expense of the Congress. The Congress despite losing consistently to the BJP has been maintaining a respectable 37% and more vote share but because of AAP, the Congress vote share came down drastically to 27%, a huge loss of 14% votes. Even if both the parties were to join hands to fight the BJP, I am not sure it will make much of a dent to the BJP.

There is no denying the fact that AAP is facing the wrath of the central government in Delhi. Every effort is being made to discredit AAP and there is a perception that the Modi government is out to destabilise the AAP government through central agencies and the LG. But Kejriwal is also handicapped by his own personality. He is not known to be a team player. He is good when he plays solo. He does not like to be constrained by any restraints. His temperament is not suitable for alliance politics. And so, one can't be sure how long he will play the Opposition unity game. Nonetheless, it is a welcome sign that finally he has agreed to be in Bengaluru. Meanwhile, let's not forget that patience is not his virtue.

The writer is Editor, SatyaHindi.com, and author of Hindu Rashtra. He tweets at @ashutosh838

# The culture of hierarchy in higher education

## Learning Curve



✦ Vrijendra

A few weeks ago, in his column, Chetan Bhagat wrote about why India is not a land of innovation. Chetan Bhagat suggested five reasons for such a state of affairs: India's hierarchical culture, harping on the past, lack of scientific thinking, copy-paste culture and lack of a free society. Actually, the first, third and fifth reasons reflect different aspects of the first central one: the culture of hierarchy where superiors in power and position at all levels dictate what others below are required to do.

We have always been a hierarchical society. We always confuse obedience with respect. And yet, even as social norms continue to privilege hierarchy, for a long time, somehow, institutions of higher education were supposed to liberate us from this hierarchical order. Education—specifically, higher education—was supposed to be liberating, giving us space, skills and courage to challenge established societal and political norms, practices and beliefs. It was supposed

to inculcate scientific temper in us. In any case, that was the formal, official position. We were expected to read widely, randomly and anything. There were no proscribed books and authors or even films. Even the Emergency of 1975-77, terrible as it was for political freedoms, did not quite disrupt the rhythm of the normal academic life for many of us: of reading, writing, debating. In any case, Indira Gandhi lost power in 1977. And after that, whatever the changes in government, the academic life was largely free, governed much more by its internal dynamics than by political imperatives of the party in power, whether at the centre or in states. Besides, as a student, one was not, generally, afraid. One was not made to feel afraid about asking questions, giving opinions, dissenting. At least, by and large, such was the case in elite, prestigious colleges and universities.

Of course, even then, things could be difficult. About four decades ago, when I joined a degree college in Mumbai as a lecturer, I quickly found out how the college staff room was deeply imbued with the hierarchy of power: for most of your seniors, you were not another, younger colleague; you were a junior to be ordered around. The seniors in power did not seek your opinions, did not worry about your preferences and conveniences. They did not even worry

about your time. You were expected to simply wait on them if they were late. And yes, they would not even say sorry.

Fortunately, those were easier times. I quickly found a job in another, much better college where my immediate boss was a dream boss. But otherwise, in other departments and with our colleagues and friends, in the college, across colleges, I heard again and again about the tyranny of hierarchy: the expectation of obedience: often horrifying consequences of disobedience. A

few lost their jobs often enough because they could not always please the bosses by complying with their (unreasonable) orders. And it worked this way all along the line: you listened to and obeyed your boss; who in turn listened to and obeyed his/her boss and so on.

Sadly, alarmingly, over time, the situation has not improved; it has become frighteningly worse. These days, academic institutions, including prestigious ones, insist on a level of obedience and compliance with the official position that I could not even have imagined: either as a student and later, as a teacher. Further, the scope of this compliance is expanding constantly, both for students and teachers. This is being done through twin processes of centralisation and local autonomy. In centralisation, detailed prescriptive orders come from above from time to time: this particular program/activity has to be done in precisely this manner.

Increasingly, there is also close supervision of all kinds of activities and programs; seminars and discussions, speakers and audiences. On the other hand, the granting of au-

tonomy to an institution or a cluster of institutions—with no democratic norms and practices in place—has, in practice, translated into the tyranny of the local boss. She defines what is to be done, often delivers a monologue about it and, of course, always demands compliance from teachers and students. At both levels, the non-compliance is threatened with consequences, for the institution and/or for the individual.

These processes are further aided by two other developments: the technology of surveillance where CCTVs are installed to monitor all the physical spaces in the institu-

tion, including in many cases, classrooms. The autonomy of a lecture is thus severely compromised while CCTVs are installed in canteens and hostels under the guise of protecting students, specifically women students. As a result, the social, private lives of adult students are constantly under watch. Again, their autonomy as individuals is severely compromised. Then there is the fear of social media. Institutions are now so paranoid and watchful about what might get leaked on social media and cause a public uproar that almost every event is now strictly controlled, monitored and must be approved in advance by the authorities.

In the midst of all this, the liberating potential of higher education has been turned upside down. Institutions of higher education no longer offer spaces to challenge social and political norms and practices, to debate and discuss alternative ideas and to disrupt the official narratives. Instead, increasingly, they have become mirrors of the larger society, reinforcing its prejudices and prescriptions. The culture of hierarchy is the blunt instrument of this transformation.

Vrijendra taught in a Mumbai college for more than 30 years, and has been associated with democratic rights groups in the city

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Blame human folly, not nature

The rapid pace of urbanisation creates dense pockets of affluence that brings in extraordinary demand for housing. This itself may not be faulted if town planners had factored in such growth earlier on a 20-25 year time frame, to lay down the sustaining infrastructure like roads, open spaces and civic utilities. Thus the craze for locations around existing facilities not only blows up the cost of land but also invites an unholy nexus between developers and civic bodies. And in turn rules and sane urban layouts are flouted. Weather patterns are changing for the worse and rainfall is getting more intense. Without an egress for rain water, flooding must

follow. The greater concern should be the resultant plunge in groundwater levels and depleting natural water bodies invaded by housing. More than flooding, reducing sources of fresh water around cities should worry us. Let us see how we go about the planned "smart cities". Should they also go the same way as today's megacities, there can be no redemption then, from blatant human folly. R Narayanan, Navi Mumbai

### In a tomato soup

Sky-high tomato rates in every state is because of lack of cold storage units which requires booking a minimum quantity of 50,000 quintal, the middlemen or the traders who take the bulk of what consumer pay for the crop, and the low number of official government mandis which result in high transportation cost for a farmer. This all together make such a huge production cost

for a marginal farmer that they don't even want to produce such a crop that could lead them to low- or no-profit situations where they are already facing other financial problems. The central government should pay heed to these problems so that we can have tomatoes and the farmers won't be in a soup. Swati Pandey, Ujain

### Shooting for the moon

In the vast space of our universe, where mythology and science come together so often, Chandrayaan-3 shines brightly as a symbol of India's astral hope and exploration. It shows India's strong determination to uncover the moon's mysteries. With careful planning and robust designs, Chandrayaan-3 gets us closer to landing on the moon and discovering its hidden secrets. Chandrayaan-3 is the fruit of decades of labour by the scientific community since the launch of India's space programme in 1962, followed by the creation of ISRO in 1969. Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai

### Hypocrisy of foreign education

The Indian government has faced criticism for promoting pro-Indian nationalism while sending their children to study abroad. This has raised questions regarding their confidence in India's education system. Additionally, concerns have been raised about the affordability of foreign

education on a central minister's salary. Critics argue that this apparent contradiction undermines the government's emphasis on national education and casts doubt on the quality of education in India. The actions of these ministers may be perceived as a lack of faith in the system they are responsible for governing, leading to scepticism among citizens. It is important for the citizens of India to evaluate these actions and hold their elected representatives accountable. Md Imdadullah, Hyderabad

### Maverick mosquitoes

No matter what weapons at our command, they will never be defeated as when they attack, and attack they will. There's no one born to match the mosquito's fierce intrepid skill. As you are forced to sit and scratch To ease the needle pain around the ankles It's no shame to admit defeat that rankles As this disease-carrying pest will give humans no rest For when it comes to the test we will always come second best. Anthony Henriques, Mumbai

Dear reader, We are eager to know your opinions, comments and suggestions. Write to letters@fpj.co.in with the title of the letter in the subject line. Using small mail! Send your letters to The Free Press Journal, Free Press House, Free Press Marg, 215 Nariman Point, Mumbai 400021.



NEW YORK: A 45-year-old Indian-origin man has been sentenced to life without the possibility of parole following his conviction on murder charges for deliberately ramming his car into a vehicle that killed three 16-year-old boys and seriously injured

three other teens after the youngsters played a "doorbell" prank on him in 2020. Anurag Chandra, of California, was in April convicted of three counts of murder, three counts of attempted murder, and a special circumstance allegation of multiple murders.



GLOBAL BULLETIN

Oz: Crocodile Islands listed as protected area

CANBERRA: The Crocodile Islands archipelago was added to the Australian government's network of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) on Monday. This means that local Indigenous groups will receive ongoing funding from the government to deliver management plans for threatened species, marine debris, weeds, feral animals and wildfires, reports Xinhua news agency. The islands are home to 28 threatened species and more than 40 migratory species including whales, dolphins, turtles and thousands of shorebirds.

Poland: Bird flu kills dozens of cats

LONDON: The World Health Organisation said more than two dozen cats have been infected with bird flu across Poland, but no people appeared to have been sickened. In a statement on Monday, the UN health agency said it was the first time so many cats had been reported to have bird flu over such a wide geographical area in a single country, amid an unprecedented global outbreak of the latest version of the H5N1 version of the disease. WHO said that late last month, Polish authorities informed agency officials of the unusual deaths of more than 45 cats in 13 geographical regions of the country. Testing last week found that 29 had H5N1. As of June, the most recent variant of H5N1 has been reported in birds and other animal species in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. Since 2020, WHO said a dozen human cases have been reported.

Building collapse in Cairo kills seven

CAIRO: An apartment building collapsed on Monday in the Egyptian capital of Cairo, leaving at least seven people dead, state-run media said, as rescuers at the scene searched through the rubble. Building collapses are common in Egypt, where shoddy construction and a lack of maintenance are widespread in shantytowns, poor city neighborhoods and rural areas. The state-run MENA news agency reported that rescue teams recovered at least seven bodies from under the rubble of a four-story building in Cairo's neighborhood of Hadaeq el-Qubbah. Four survivors were also recovered and taken to hospital and authorities evacuated a neighboring apartment building, MENA said.

Crimea bridge hit by blast

Russian officials claim it was a Ukrainian attack



Committee investigators work on the Kerch bridge, which was heavily damaged following an attack on Monday

AP / Tallinn

Traffic on the key bridge connecting Crimea to Russia's mainland was halted on Monday after one of its sections was blown up in what Russian officials said was a Ukrainian attack that also killed a married couple and injured their daughter.

Russia's National Anti-Terrorist Committee said that the attack had been staged by the Ukrainian special services and involved two sea drones. Ukrainian officials didn't claim responsibility for the attack, which is the second major strike on the bridge since October, when a truck bomb blew up two of its sections.

Natalia Humeniuk, a spokeswoman for the Ukrainian military's Southern Command, said the explosions on the bridge could be a Russian provocation, but Ukrainian Ukrainians Pravda and RBC Ukraine news outlets said the attack was planned jointly by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the Ukrainian Navy and involved sea drones.

Kyiv didn't initially acknowledge responsibility for October's bombing, but a

senior Ukrainian official did eventually confirm it.

The bridge is a key artery for supplying Crimea, which serves as a major hub for Russia's war in Ukraine. The attack on the bridge comes as Ukrainian forces are trying to press a counteroffensive in several sections of the front line.

Video posted by Crimea 24 online news channel showed a section of the bridge tilted and hanging down, but there was no indication any portion had fallen into the water.

Russia's Belgorov region Gov Vyacheslav Gladkov said the attack killed a married couple from the region and their daughter was hospitalized with serious injuries.

Russian authorities said the attack didn't affect the piers but damaged the decking in a section of one of the two road links. The damage appeared less serious than in October's attack that took months to repair. Rail traffic resumed later Monday morning after being halted for about six hours, and authorities said they were considering plans to use the undamaged road section of the bridge for traffic travelling.

Moscow pulls out of Black Sea grain deal

BREAKTHROUGH ACCORD ENDS

AP / London

Russia said Monday it has halted an unprecedented wartime deal that allows grain to flow from Ukraine to countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia where hunger is a growing threat and high food prices have pushed more people into poverty. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov announced halting the deal in a conference call with reporters, adding that Russia will return to the deal after its demands are met.

"When the part of the Black Sea deal related to Russia is implemented, Russia will immediately return to the implementation of the deal," Peskov said.

It's the end of a breakthrough accord that the United Nations and Turkey brokered last summer to allow food to leave the Black Sea region after Russia invaded its neighbour nearly a year and a half ago.

A separate agreement facilitated the movement of Russian food and fertiliser amid Western sanctions. The warring nations are both major global suppliers of wheat,

barley, sunflower oil and other affordable food products that developing nations rely on. Russia has complained that restrictions on shipping and insurance have hampered its exports of food and fertiliser - also critical to the global food chain.

But analysts and export data say Russia has been shipping record amounts of wheat and its fertilisers also have been flowing.

The agreement was renewed for 60 days in May amid Moscow's pushback. In recent months, the amount of food shipped and number of vessels departing Ukraine have plunged, with Russia accused of limiting additional ships able to participate.

The war in Ukraine sent food commodity prices surging to record highs last year and contributed to a global food crisis also tied to conflict, the lingering effects of the Covid pandemic, droughts and other climate factors. High costs for grain needed for food staples in places like Egypt and Nigeria exacerbated economic challenges and helped push millions more people into poverty or food insecurity.

Govt officials banned from using iPhones

In Russia, government employees are barred from using all Apple devices due to concerns about espionage operations by US intelligence agencies

Russia's Federal Security Service claimed in June it had uncovered 'spying operation by US intelligence agencies using Apple devices'

Apple has denied working with US intelligence services. The tech company said it "has never worked with any government to build a backdoor into any Apple product, and never will"

Heat wave bakes Europe

AP / Rome

Italian health officials intensified heat warnings as southern Europe began a brutally hot week on Monday with temperatures expected to top 40 C - or 104 F - in multiple cities already overburdened by tourists. The health ministry issued 10 recommendations to protect elderly people, the sick and pets from the heat, urging people to stay indoors during the hottest hours, drink at least 1.5 litres (nearly half a gallon) of water a day and refrain from strenuous exercise at peak daylight times.

The culprit was a high-pressure anticyclone dubbed Cerberus, the multi-headed dog that guards gates to the underworld in Greek mythology. Local celebrities went on state-run RAI television to read the recommendations aloud, in hopes of spreading the message.

The third heatwave in a month was expected to affect much of the Mediterranean and last until Wednesday. The mercury in Rome hit 35 C (95 F) just before noon Monday and was forecast to near 40 C (104 F) in the afternoon. Italy's capital city was expected to be even hotter on Tuesday, as were several other cities in particular in Sardinia and Sicily.

Power outages were hitting parts of Rome as electric grids suffered under heavier demand from air conditioners as people

The third heatwave in a month was expected to affect much of the Mediterranean and last until Wednesday

sought relief.

Italian farm lobby Coldiretti, meanwhile, issued an alarm about the plight of domestic and farm animals, noting that cows are producing around 10 per cent less milk as a result of the heat. Elsewhere in Spain, a wildfire that started Saturday on the Canary island of La Palma continued to burn out-of-control Monday, although authorities says weaker winds and cool-

some 4,600 hectares (11,300 acres) of mostly woody hill land and some 20 houses and buildings. More than 4,000 residents were evacuated from their homes on Saturday but were allowed to return as of late Sunday.

Spain's Aemet weather agency said the heat wave this week "will affect a large part of the countries bordering the Mediterranean" with temperatures in some southern areas of Spain exceeding 42 C (107 F). The agency says it expects temperatures to drop sometime Wednesday. Spokesman Rubén del Campo said an anticyclone is pushing a hot mass of air from Africa towards Spain and other Mediterranean countries.



Smoke billowing as a wild fire rages on the Canary Island of La Palma on Sunday

er temperatures in the area are helping firefighters combat it.

The blaze has burned

The agency predicts that with the heat and very dry air, the risk of wildfires will skyrocket.

S Korea: Flooding damages 39 cultural heritage properties

IANS / Seoul

A total of 39 cultural heritage sites in South Korea have suffered damages as heavy downpours pounded the country over the weekend, authorities said on Monday. The Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) said of the 39 sites, 19 are designated as historic sites and natural monuments, while scenic spots and folklore cultural heritage each had five cases, reports Yonhap News Agency.

Two treasures and registered cultural heritage each had two cases, and one national treasure was affected

by heavy rainfall. By region, 12 of them were located in North Gyeongsang province and seven were located in South Chungcheong and South Jeolla, respectively.

For instance, heavy rain washed out land and road to Buseoksa Temple from the Silla Kingdom (57 B.C.-A.D. 935) in Yeongju, 229 km southeast of Seoul, when the city had over 350 mm of rain between July 13-16. Gongsanseong Fortress, a Unesco World Heritage site in Gongju, 162 km south of Seoul, was flooded on July 15 when the nearby Geumgang river overflowed due to a heavy downpour.

US climate envoy John Kerry arrives in Beijing

AP / Beijing

US climate envoy John Kerry was holding talks on Monday with his Chinese counterpart in Beijing as the US seeks to restore contacts amid disputes over trade, Taiwan, human rights and territorial claims. China's official Xinhua News Agency said Kerry was meeting Monday with Xie Zhenhua for the first extensive face-to-face climate discussions between representatives of the world's two worst climate polluters after a nearly yearlong hiatus.

China is the world's largest producer and consumer of coal and has proceeded with building new plants, while at the same time forging ahead with renewables such as solar and wind power. Yet, Congressional Republicans questioning of Kerry ahead of his trip at times broke down into challenging the existence of the scientifically established fact of climate change. The US and the European Union have urged China to adopt more ambitious reduction targets.



South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol (C) walks past piles of fallen trees at a village in Yecheon on Monday

3 Indian-origin Singaporeans to be appointed as nominated MPs in Parl

PTI / Singapore

Three distinguished Indian-origin Singaporeans have been named among the nine people who will be appointed as Nominated Members of Parliament (NMPs) and sworn in next month.

Chairman of the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a council member of the Sin-

gapore Business Federation, Neil Parekh Nilim Rajnikant, Chandradas Usha Ranee, co-founder of Plural Art Magazine and course coordinator at the Nanyang Business School, and lawyer Raj Joshua Thomas are among the nine appointees announced on Monday.

The nine nominated MPs were selected by a Special Select Committee of Parliament, chaired by then-Speaker Tan Chuan-Jin, out of a total of 30 names put up for consideration for NMP positions, The Straits Times

newspaper reported. They will be appointed for a two-and-a-half-year term by President Halimah Yacob on July 24 and sworn in when Parliament sits in August. The 60-year-old Parekh is also the partner and head of Asia, Australia and New Zealand at Tikehau Capital and the chief executive of Pegasus Asia, a special-purpose acquisition company listed on

the Singapore Exchange. He has initiated programmes that focus on helping to increase financial literacy in Singapore. Parekh currently serves as a board director of Elevandi, a set up by the Monetary Authority of Singapore to foster an open dialogue between the public and private sectors to advance FinTech in the digital economy. As a member of the Advisory Council of James Cook University (Singapore), he has initiated programmes that focus on helping to increase financial liter-

acy in Singapore. Parekh has been a Singaporean citizen for 10 years and living here for 17 years.

Meanwhile, Chandradas, 42, who is the first time serving MP and worked as a tax lawyer for 12 years, said she hoped to address issues relating to the promotion and sustainability of the arts sector as a whole.

"This is a multilayered



concern which should be addressed from different perspectives - in terms of legal awareness, financial sustainability, freedom of expression, education and good working conditions for artists and other creatives," The Singapore Daily quoted her as saying. Thomas, 43, is the only one serving his second term as an NMP. He is currently the President of the Security Association Singapore (SAS) and has been involved as a volunteer lawyer under the Law Society's Criminal Legal Aid Scheme.

Israel presses ahead with plan to overhaul courts

AP / Tel Aviv

Israel's governing coalition pushed ahead on Monday with its contentious plan to overhaul the country's judiciary, despite growing opposition from within the country's military and a wave of mass protests expected this week.

A parliamentary committee was preparing a bill that

would limit judicial oversight on some government decisions, legislation that has sparked intensifying criticism from military reservists in elite units, including the air force and cyberwarfare.

Many have warned they will not show up for duty if the overhaul moves ahead. Reservists, who make up the backbone of the country's mostly compulsory military,

played a key role in prompting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to pause the overhaul plan earlier this year.

In response to the legislation, which is expected to go before a final parliamentary vote early next week, a large protest movement is expected to stage a "day of disruption" on Tuesday. These days of mass protest in the past have snarled traffic, choked the

terminal at Israel's main international airport and descended into clashes between police and demonstrators.

The judicial overhaul, advanced by Netanyahu's nationalist and religious government, has deeply divided Israel, plunging it into one of its worst domestic crises and even sparking concern from its most important ally, the US.

Crossword # 839

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Additional crossword clues and solutions.

FPJ - SUDOKU - 41 Level: Very Easy

Sudoku puzzle grid.

WHAT TO DO: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only one correct solution.

YOUR DAY By Vinayak Vishwas Karandikar

Horoscope section with daily advice for various zodiac signs.

Over 50 whales die on beach

AP / London

Over 50 pilot whales have died after they were found washed ashore on a beach in Scotland in the worst mass whale stranding in the area, marine experts said on Monday.

Marine rescuers, the coast guard and police were called to Traigh Mhor beach on the Isle of Lewis in northwest Scotland after receiving reports that dozens of the mammals were in difficulty there early Sunday.

The British Divers Marine Life Rescue found that only 15 of the whales - a mixture of adults and calves - were still alive, and attempted to refloat two of the more active animals that were low down in the water.

But by Sunday afternoon rescue teams decided that the remaining whales should be euthanised on welfare grounds, after considering the shallow beach, rough wave conditions and how long the whales had been out of the water. The charity said the whole pod may have followed a female whale onto the beach when she had problems giving birth.

"Pilot whales are notorious for their strong social bonds, so often when one whale gets into difficulty and strands, the rest follow," it said in a statement.

"A sad outcome for this pod and obviously not the outcome we were all hoping for."

Experts will begin carrying out post-mortem work Monday to determine what caused the whales' death. Andrew Brownlow, from the Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme, said that would be a "monumental task."



## Jamshedpur FC sign Serbian International Alen Stevanovic for two years

**Jamshedpur:** Indian Super League side Jamshedpur FC on Monday announced the signing of Serbian International Alen Stevanovic on a two-year deal ahead of the 2023-24 season. The 32-year-old

playmaker has enjoyed a glittering career so far, starting out with Inter Milan youth team in Italy before being handed his debut in the senior team by current AS Roma head coach, Jose Mourinho.

## SPORTS CAFE

### Stimac urges PM for Asian Games

**New Delhi:** Indian senior football team head coach Igor Stimac on Monday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur to allow the national football team to play in the Asian Games in China this year. This comes amid reports that India will not be sending its football teams to the Asian Games, which will be held in China from September 23 to October 8 this year. India has won two Asian Games gold medals (1951 and 1962) and a bronze medal (1970) in football.

### 'Told my players that it is our trophy'

**New Delhi:** Indian men's assistant football coach Mahesh Gawli said that he was not feeling the pressure after Kuwait took the lead in SAFF Championship final, and told his team during the half-time talk that the "Trophy is ours." India lifted the SAFF Championship by getting better of Kuwait in the penalty shootout at the Sri Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru earlier in July. Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu made the difference for the Blue Colts once again as he saved a crucial penalty kick in the summit clash to help India beat Kuwait 5-4 in the shootout.

### Real Betis sign Marc Roca on loan

**Madrid:** Spanish club Real Betis has signed Marc Roca on loan from Leeds United. Roca is the second signing of the season for the Green and Whites, confirmed by the club on their website. Marc Roca Junque began his professional career in the youth teams at RCD Espanyol. He made his debut with the first team in the 2016/2017 season. After playing more than 100 games in the top division, he signed for Bayern Munich, where he spent two seasons and won the Bundesliga, one Club World Cup and made his debut in the Champions League. In 2022, the new Green and White midfielder signed for Leeds United, where he played 32 games in the past edition of the Premier League.

### Maguire says he is not United captain

**Manchester:** Harry Maguire is no longer captain of Manchester United following talks with manager Erik ten Hag. It was reported earlier this month that Ten Hag was ready to remove Maguire from the role after the England defender's limited appearances under the Dutchman last season. Maguire wrote Sunday on Twitter: "After discussions with the manager today he has informed me he is changing captain. He outlined his reasons to me and whilst I'm personally extremely disappointed, I will continue to give my all every time I wear the shirt. So I wanted to say a massive thank you to the Manchester United fans for all their brilliant support whilst I've been wearing the armband."

### Blasters retain goalkeeper Suresh

**Kochi:** Former Indian Super League runners-up Kerala Blasters on Monday extended their contract with goalkeeper Sachin Suresh for three more years until 2026. The 22-year-old goalkeeper, who marked his first team debut earlier this year in the Super Cup 2023, came through the youth system of the club. Having represented the Reserves, on several instances even as captain, in the Reliance Foundation Development League, the NextGen Cup in the UK, and the Kerala Premier League over the last few years, Sachin has impressed with his consistency, hunger, attitude, and ability.

### Abhinav-Gautami pair bags gold

**New Delhi:** The pair of Abhinav Shaw and Gautami Bhanot won the 10m air rifle mixed team gold on day two of the ISSF World Championship Juniors in Changwon, Korea. The Indian pair defeated the French combination of Oceanne Muller and Romain Auffere 17-13 in the gold-medal match. This was India's third gold of the competition, which took the country to second position in the medals tally, with a silver and two bronze medals to boot. China leads the tally with the same number of gold and bronze as India, but with an additional silver medal.

# Made for each other to this day

Bombay Gymkhana is the only club in the city which promotes budding sports personnel

JOE WILLIAMS / Mumbai

Bombay Gymkhana and Mumbai sports are synonymous with each other as another year of sporting extravaganza will kick off from late next month.

This is the only club in the city which came into existence to promote sports in the city and the legacy is carried forward, according to Aga Raza Hussain, the president of the gymkhana.

"Our prime aim of the gymkhana was to promote sports when it began on June 19, 1875, and the legacy is on and growing year after year," said Hussain, who has been the skipper of the Indian rugby team.

Many events, both sports and cultural are lined up for the coming months and the prime event will be the 90th year of the first Test match



which was played in the country at this very venue.

The Test match was played between India and England in

1933, and the home side was led by CK Nayudu and Jardine led the England of the infamous bodyline tactics.

"This year being the 90th year we are planning to get a representative team from England (MCC) and our own,

the five day bonanza of cricket which will be held between December 15-19,"

**Aga Raza Hussain,**  
President, Bombay Gymkhana



This year being the 90th year we are planning to get a representative team from England (MCC) and our own, the five day bonanza of cricket which will be held between December 15-19,"

# Pune racing from July 21

JOE WILLIAMS / Mumbai

The showdown of the beauty and the beast is all said to unfold, as the 19-day Pune meeting will open the gates at the Poona Race Course from July 21.

While announcing this, the committee of the Royal Western India Turf Club (RWITC), Ltd said they are pleased to announce the start of Pune Meeting 2023 on Friday, 21st July.

It is monsoon time and Pune season, which is run over the monsoon track, is ready to take the beating of the over 800 horses which will be racing during the Pune season.

Two Group one, Group two and Eight Group three races along with multiple sponsored races will be gunning for the whopping Rs 11 crore prize money that will exchange hands.

Over 50 outstation horses will be marshaled by 31 A li-



<b>19</b> Pune Meeting days	<b>₹11cr</b> Total prize money	<b>Over 800</b> Total number of horses
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cense and six B license trainers and would be ridden by 55 A license jockeys besides nine B license jockeys.

Highlights of the season will be the Indian St. Leger (Gr 1), on September 24 while the Pune Derby weekend will be held on October 14 & 15.

Three consecutive race days on 13, 14 & 15 of August, keeping in mind the interest of racing patrons will be there.

"Looking forward with a positive frame of mind, and hopefully everything will pan out good," said trainer Mallesh Narredu.

## Mumbai Radar

### Ex-coach gets award



**Dr P Pramanick,** a former long-serving badminton coach was the proud recipient of the Dr Ajmer Singh Award for Lifetime Achievement in Coaching, during the recent 6th PEFI National Awards



Function at the NDMC Convention Centre, Sansad Marg, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi. Some of the prominent players who benefited from Pramanick's coaching, include National champions **Hufrish Nariman,** Vandana Chiplunkar, Radka Bose, Sudha Bafa, Manik Paranjpe and Ameeta Kulkarni among the women players. The men's players who gained

from Pramanick's guidance were Rajeev Bagga, Pradeep Gandhe, Uday Pawar, Bhushan Akut, Rajeev Kunte, Vikram Singh, Madhur Bexbora, KK Cheema, Sanat Mishra, Ashok Raman (USA) and Sunil Weling (World Airtimes).

### India Rush win

India Rush were on cloud nine as they convincingly defeated Ravens FC by a 9-0 margin in a Women's Super Div match of the Mumbai Football Association (MFA) Yuva President's League – 2022-2023 and played at the Neville D'Souza Ground, Bandra on Monday. The victorious India Rush outfit dominated the proceedings from the outset and scored five goals in the first session and added four in the second period to complete an authoritative win by a huge score line. The highlight of India Rush win was the brilliance of their effective striker Komal Kamble who scored four goals including a hat-trick to lead the charge to victory. Komal's teammates

## India 'A' beat Nepal by nine wickets

PTI / Colombo

Sai Sudharsan and Abhishek Sharma slammed scintillating fifties to complement the efforts of the bowlers as India A qualified for the semifinals with a dominating nine-wicket win over Nepal in their second match of the ACC Men's Emerging Cup here on Monday.

Electing to bat, Nepal were all out for 167 in 39.2 overs with Nishant Sindhu (4/14), Rajvardhan Hangargekar (3/25), Harshit Rana (2/16) and Manav Suthar (1/31) producing breakthroughs at regular intervals.

For Nepal, skipper Rohit Paudel was the top-scorer as he made 65 off 85 balls, while Gulsan Jha made a 30-ball 38 to give some momentum to the innings at the R Premadasa Stadium here on Monday. India got a flying start from its openers.

Ruhani played a good supporting role contributing two goals while Tanvi Karamble, Christina Michael and Priyanka Valles made their presence felt by scoring one goal each to round-off the winning tally. Earlier in another Women's encounter, Rising Sun FA got the better of Rising Star Urban Angels by a comfortable 4-0 margin. Rising Sun's prolific goal-scorer Nitya Nharti who showed good finishing touch by scoring two goals. Consistent goal-scorer Niti Ladha and Saniya Shaikh scored the other two goals to secure the easy victory for Rising Sun and to collect all the three points.



**Pakistan fights back after top-order collapse in 1st Test against Sri Lanka**

**Galle:** Pakistan's middle-order staged a fighting comeback from a shaky start to finish Day 2 of the first test against Sri Lanka on 221-5, trailing by 91 runs on Monday.

After a century by Dhananjaya de Silva helped Sri Lanka post 312 in its first innings, Pakistan slipped to 101-5 in the afternoon session with left-arm spinner Prabath

Jayasuriya claiming three scalps on his happy hunting ground. When it looked the tourists concede a big first-innings lead but Saud Shakeel and Agha Salman pulled them out.



**BIRTH OF A SUPERSTAR**

**Carlos Alcaraz, Wimbledon champion, heralds moment of power shift**

HARIDEV PUSHPARAJ  
Mumbai

Sunday's Wimbledon men's singles final between Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz was hugely significant for two reasons. Firstly, what the moment meant when a 20-year-old Alcaraz played the greatest game of his still very nascent career to beat arguably the Greatest of All Time in men's tennis on the iconic stage of modern tennis. It is an epochal moment

of power shift. Power shift that one has not seen in men's tennis for a while since Djokovic was not beaten in 34 matches at the Centre Court on a trot coming into the Wimbledon final against Alcaraz.

And this power shift is unlike anything world tennis has seen.

The people who saw Boris Becker in Alcaraz don't realise that the former was a 17-year-old rookie coming into his own while winning the 1985 Wimbledon Championships.

Reminiscing about other changing of guard games in history, tennis aficionados would jog their memory back to the epic 2001 Wimbledon fourth round match between Roger Federer and Pete Sampras.

Federer had defeated Sampras but anyone who remembers that game

would know the latter was well past his prime while playing that match. The Swiss had it fairly easy in that game.

Compare that to yesterday's marathon battle and it is World No 1 and defending US Open champion Alcaraz locking horns with the best player ever and someone who is at the peak of his prowess at the moment. This is Djokovic at his prime and in red hot form and this makes Alcaraz's feat even more accomplished and storied.

"I haven't played a player like him ever, to be honest. Roger and Rafa have their own obvious strengths and weaknesses. Carlos is a very complete player. Amazing adapting capabilities that I think are a key for longevity and for a successful career

on all surfaces," said Djokovic, 23-time Grand Slam champion. And for those who feel this is like the end of an era with the defeat of Djokovic, that assessment is way off the mark.

This, in all probability, marks the beginning of a rivalry that will mesmerise tennis lovers in the next few years and is one for the ages.

There are some glorious tussles that are waiting to happen at several Grand Slams and not just the Wimbledon with Alcaraz and Djokovic having a go at each other.

Looking at Alcaraz, all of 20 and World No 1, there is all the trappings of his age but there is composure and maturity never seen before.

"I have to congratulate Novak, it was amazing to play against him. You inspire me a lot. I started playing tennis watching you. Since I was born you were already winning tournaments. You said 36 is the new 26 and you make that happen. It is amazing," said Alcaraz. And talking about how he is on the court, that's something else.

**34:**  
Djokovic's winning streak at Centre Court

**121.3mph:**  
Alcaraz's average first serve speed in the final

**I haven't played a player like him ever, to be honest. Roger and Rafa have their own obvious strengths and weaknesses. Carlos is a very complete player. Amazing adapting capabilities that I think are a key for longevity and for a successful career on all surfaces — Djokovic, 23-time Grand Slam champion**

**TWITTER TRENDING**



@ImTanujSingh  
Good news for India - KL Rahul has started batting practice session.

**QUICK SINGLES**

**England recall Anderson for fourth Test**

**Manchester:** James Anderson is back in England's team for the fourth Ashes test against Australia starting Wednesday in Manchester. The 40-year-old seam bowler, who was rested for the third test in Leeds, returns to the team in place of Ollie Robinson, the England and Wales Cricket Board said Monday. It is the only change to the side that defeated Australia by three wickets at Headingley, a result that cut England's deficit to 2-1 in the five-match series. Anderson's recall comes at Old Trafford, the home ground of the veteran's county side, Lancashire.

**'It's really frustrating as a player'**

**Manchester:** Usman Khawaja has played a key role in ensuring players are not hit as hard in the pocket and potentially saved teams from World Test Championship (WTC) points deductions after he revealed he raised the issue of slow over-rate punishments with the ICC. In a recent interview, Usman Khawaja said, 'It's really frustrating as a player.' The ICC announced amendments to their sanctions for slow over-rates: players will now be fined 5% of their match fee for each over a team is down (previously it was 20%) with the level capped at 50%, reduced from the previous upper limit of their entire match fee.

**'Best series ever in women's game'**

**Southampton:** Despite losing the chance of winning the Women's Ashes after a three-run defeat to Australia in the second ODI at the Ageas Bowl, England captain Heather Knight said the ongoing series has been "the best series there has ever been in the history of the women's game". Vice-captain Nat Sciver-Brunt hit an unbeaten 111, but it was not enough for England to chase down 283 as they finished at 279-7 in their 50 overs. England needed 15 runs from the final over, but Jess Jonassen held her nerve by conceding 11 runs for Australia to retain Women's Ashes.

**'Sciver-Brunt didn't get the support'**

**London:** Former England cricketer Lydia Greenway was full of praise for Nat Sciver-Brunt following her unbeaten 111 in the second Women's Ashes ODI against Australia but believed the vice-captain needed more support from her teammates to take the hosts over the line. Nat smashed an unbeaten 111, her sixth ODI century, laced with 10 fours at the Ageas Bowl. But it wasn't enough to deny Australia a three-run victory and retain the Women's Ashes. She came to the crease when England were 86-2 and saw the hosts being reduced to 144/5.

**Rathour backs Rahane for SA tour**

**The Mumbai batter had a good outing at the WTC final last month**

PTI / ROSEAU (DOMINICA)

Ajinkya Rahane's assured approach in the middle has been the hallmark of his comeback and the Indian team will need him to maintain form when it tours South Africa later this year, said batting coach Vikram Rathour.

Rahane's 89 and 46 was probably the only positive for India in their loss to Australia in the World Test Championship final in London last month.

It was Rahane's first Test in 18 months and following that, he was named vice-captain for the ongoing tour of the West Indies.

However, the 35-year-old got out cheaply in the first Test here and would like to make amends in the second game starting in Port of Spain on July 20.

"He played really well in the WTC final. He has always been a good player. He was dropped because of bad form. When it comes to technique, you constantly work on that but what stood out for me that he was much more calm in his approach. "He was playing late and close to the body. That has been the standout thing since his comeback. He is still batting the same way in the nets. We hope he will do well. Conditions in South Africa, you will need somebody like him to come good,"



**137**  
Runs Rahane scored at the WTC

**18**  
Months making a comeback to Test cricket

said Rathour.

India's next Test series will be in South Africa in December-January.

Rathour was hugely impressed with young Yashasvi Jaiswal's performance in his debut Test. His 171 set up a massive win for India.

"I've been a selector before, so whenever you pick a player you should pick him with the intent that he will play for India for the next 10 years. He definitely has the potential.

**Djokovic rues his missed chances**

**The Serb looked back at the marathon final which he lost in five sets**

AP / Wimbledon

Regrets? Novak Djokovic has two.

There was that tiebreaker pretty early in the Wimbledon final on Sunday when the 36-year-old Serb was one point from taking a two-sets-to-none lead over his 20-year-old opponent, Carlos Alcaraz.

And then there was that missed volley on break point early in the fifth set with all the momentum at that stage going the seven-time Wimbledon champion's way.

"Some regrets," Djokovic said after losing 1-6, 7-6 (6), 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 in a high-energy and highly entertaining championship match on Centre Court.

"I had my chances. I think I could have closed out that sec-



**08**  
Federer's Wimbledon titles

**07**  
Djokovic's titles

ond-set tiebreaker better. But credit to him for fighting and showing some incredible defensive skills, passing shots that got him the break in the fifth.

"He was a deserved winner today, no doubt." Djokovic has been a deserved winner on so

many occasions in the past. Seven times right here at the All England Club, where he was one victory from matching Roger Federer with a men's record eight titles at the grass-court Grand Slam. And 23 times overall at major championships, tied with Ser-

"I had my chances. I think I could have closed out that second-set tiebreaker better. But credit to him for fighting and showing some incredible defensive skills, passing shots that got him the break in the fifth."

- Novak Djokovic, 23-time Grand Slam champion

ena Williams for the most in the Open era, which began in 1968.

Back in 2019, for instance, Federer was going for his ninth Wimbledon title while Djokovic was the defending champion. Federer had two match points in the fifth set, but Djokovic saved them both, forced a tiebreaker at 12-12 and then ran away to claim his fifth championship.

**Carlos, Marketa move up in ranking**

**Spaniard became first teenager to lead the ATP by beating Casper Ruud in 2022 US Open final**

AP / Wimbledon

Carlos Alcaraz held onto No 1 in the ATP rankings on Monday by virtue of his victory over No 2 Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final, and Marketa Vondrousova's first Grand Slam title pushed her all the way up to a career-high No. 10 on the WTA list.

Vondrousova jumped 32 places from No 42 thanks to her 6-4, 6-4 win against Ons Jabeur in Saturday's final at the All England Club.

Vondrousova, a 24-year-old from the Czech Republic, was

the lowest-ranked and first unseeded women's champion at the grass-court major.

Alcaraz's 1-6, 7-6 (6), 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 defeat of Djokovic on Sunday marked the third time in the past four major tournaments that the men's title match determined who would be at No 1.

At last September's US Open, Alcaraz became the first teenager to lead the ATP by beating Casper

Ruud in the final. At January's Australian Open, it was Djokovic - who has spent more weeks atop the rankings than anyone in tennis history - who assured himself of being at No 1 by defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas.

Alcaraz, a Spaniard who turned 20 in May, and Djokovic, a 36-year-old from Serbia, have been trading the highest spot this season. Alcaraz now enters his 29th

week there. "He's proven that he's the best player in the world, no doubt," said Djokovic, who had won four consecutive titles at Wimbledon and was seeking a 24th Grand Slam trophy overall.

Iga Swiatek could have relinquished her 15-month hold on the WTA's No. 1 ranking to No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka at Wimbledon but remained there Monday.

Swiatek lost in the quarterfinals; Sabalenka lost in the semifinals. The top seven slots in the

**10**  
Vondrousova, jumped 32 places from 42

**01**  
No of weeks spent by Alcaraz on top



women's rankings stayed the same Monday, with 2022 Wimbledon winner Elena Rybakina remaining at No. 3, followed by Jessica Pegula, Caroline Garcia, Jabeur and Coco Gauff. Elina Svitolina, who made

it all the way to the semifinals just three months after returning to the tour from maternity leave, rose 49 places from No. 76 to No. 27.

The big mover in the men's rankings was Chris Eubanks, a 27-year-old from Atlanta.

**Sindhu feels US Open impacted her**

**World no.12 made a quarterfinal exit after going down to China's Gao Fang**

PTI / New Delhi

The quarterfinal loss at the US Open has "left a significant emotional impact" on PV Sindhu but the premier Indian shuttler has vowed to finish the season on a high.

Sindhu has looked off colour this season after returning from a five-month long injury layoff following a stress fracture on her ankle. With more than half the year



gone, the former world champion and two-time Olympic medallist is still searching for her first title this season.

The world no 12 made a quarterfinal exit after going down in straight games to China's Gao Fang Jie. "This loss has left a signifi-

cant emotional impact on me, especially considering the challenging and demanding year I've had," Sindhu wrote on her Twitter.

"It's disheartening to experience a disappointing defeat after each successful tournament".

**Archana leads Pune to victory over Goa**

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / Mumbai

World No. 159 **Archana Kamath** shocked Suthasini Sawettabut in an exciting contest as Puneri Paltan Table Tennis beat Goa Challengers 8-7 to register their first victory in the Ultimate Table Tennis, at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, Mahalunge-Balewadi in Pune on Monday.

The Karnataka-based paddler took an early lead as she played accurate forehands to shock World No. 39 Suthasini. Archana did not lose momentum and took the first game

by 11-6 before bringing her A game to the table and winning the second game by 11-8 and the tie for Puneri Paltan Table Tennis. She lost the third game 6-11 but secured victory for her franchise.

The franchise-based league, promoted by Niraj Bajaj and Vita Dani under the auspices of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI), has been a game-changer for Indian table tennis since its inception in 2017.

Goa Challengers' Harmeeet faced Manush in the first match (Men's Singles) of the tie and earned three valuable



team points for his franchise.

Both Gujarat-based paddlers went toe to toe from the beginning of the tie and played with attacking intent

to gather points. The first game went in the favour of Harmeeet 11-10 through a golden point.

The World No. 65 kept his

nerve in the second game despite falling behind Manush early on. Harmeeet reduced the three-point deficit with ease before winning the game by 11-9. The third game was also decided through a golden point where the Goa Challengers' paddler used his swift moments to good effect and registered a win to put his franchise in a comfortable position.

In the second match (Women's Singles) of the tie, Reeth Tennison defeated Hana Matelova by 2-1 to extend Goa Challengers' lead to 5-1.

**UKRAINIAN BOXER FIGHTS ALL ODDS**

**Anna Lysenko has been training in Kyiv under the cloud of war**

AP / Kyiv

In a modest gym in the heart of Kyiv, boxer Anna Lysenko dedicates long hours preparing for next year's Paris Olympics despite the unsettling sounds of explosions booming outside.

Lysenko already has Olympic experience, nearly winning a medal at the Tokyo Games in 2021, but her training routine this time has been disrupted by the war in Ukraine - that started nearly 17 months ago when Russia invaded her country.

In a well-lit, spacious gym with high windows, she often

hears bombs exploding outside as the capital remains a target for the Russian army.

"It's stifling. It probably doesn't allow me to feel at peace, to train and prepare in a measured way," Lysenko said, wearing an orange sports jacket with "Tokyo 2020" on the back, reminiscent of a calmer training routine.

"Constant shelling, or other stresses associated with the situation in the country, always seem to be present." Despite these challenges, the 31-year-old Lysenko refuses to give up on her training. She has already sacrificed almost

10 years of her life for the sport, reaching the quarterfinals in Tokyo but missing out on an Olympic medal after losing to the eventual gold medalist. Knowing the Paris Games may be her last, she perseveres, training six days a week hoping to get better, to get faster, to win.

Her chances of competing in Paris, however, remain uncertain.

Ukrainian athletes have in recent weeks missed world or European championship events in judo, fencing and taekwondo, where Russians and Belarusians were allowed to compete after

being approved as neutral athletes.

Last week, International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach criticized the Ukrainian government for blocking some athletes from qualifying events for the 2024 Games that also included Russians and Belarusians.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said any neutral flag is stained with blood and invited Bach in January to join him in visiting the wrecked city of Bakhmut.

The IOC and Bach shaped the definition of neutrality in March - not publicly support-



**10**  
Years Lysenko has sacrificed for boxing

**8**  
The last eight stage she reached at the Tokyo Olympics

ing the war, nor being contracted to the military since February last year, competing without a flag, anthem or na-

tional colors - that sports governing bodies must decide how or if to apply. "This is very bad," Lysenko

It's stifling. It probably doesn't allow me to feel at peace, to train and prepare in a measured way. Constant shelling, or other stresses associated with the situation in the country, always seem to be present."  
- Anna Lysenko, Ukrainian boxer

said about the neutral flag for Russians and Belarusians.

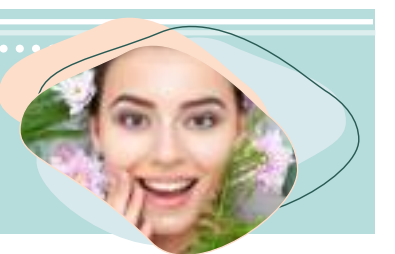
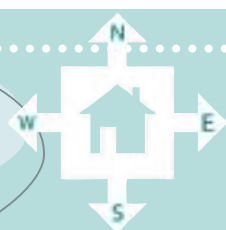
As a Ukrainian athlete, she finds it "very unpleasant" that citizens of Russia will have the opportunity to participate in the Olympics. Despite the neutral flag, she said, the athletes "are citizens of their own country, they represent it." "The IOC took a tough position on Russia within days of the war starting, urging sports bodies to exclude athletes and officials from international events and strip the country of hosting rights.

However, as the Paris Olympics approached, the

IOC moved toward letting some Russians into competition and Bach said excluding athletes based just on their passport would be discrimination and a breach of their human rights.

For Lysenko, such a decision by the IOC means that Ukrainian athletes have to compete in an "unequal battle" with citizens of a country that started a war in her homeland.

"Because there, athletes can train in peace, nobody is shelling them, they don't lose their loved ones, acquaintances, friends".



## Concrete Couture: Latest trends in colored concrete for interiors

SAVITHA B



Interior design is an ever-evolving field that continuously seeks innovative ways to transform spaces into captivating and functional environments. One such design element that has gained significant attention in recent years is colored concrete. Gone are the days when concrete was considered dull and utilitarian; today, it is being harnessed as a powerful tool to enhance the aesthetics of interior spaces. In this article, we will delve into the expert insights on the use of colored concrete in interior design, exploring its versatility, benefits, and applications, while also highlighting the latest trends in the industry.

### A palette of possibilities

Colored concrete offers a vast array of possibilities when it comes to interior design. By adding pigments to the concrete mix, designers can achieve a wide range of hues, from soft pastels to vibrant shades. The ability to customize the color of concrete opens up a world of creative opportunities, allowing designers to seamlessly integrate it into various design styles and achieve specific atmospheres or moods within a space.

### Creating visual interest

Colored concrete serves as a powerful tool for creating visual interest within interior spaces. By incorporating colored concrete elements strategically, designers can introduce focal points, highlight architectural features, or define different zones within a room. The latest trend is to create stunning concrete statement walls, using intricate patterns and designs to make a bold impact.

### Versatility in applications

One of the most significant advantages of colored concrete is its versatility in applications. It can be used for flooring, countertops, wall panels, furniture, and even decorative elements like sculptures. The inherent durability and strength of concrete, coupled with its ability to take on any shape or form, make it an ideal material for both functional and aesthetic purposes. From sleek and contemporary interiors to rustic and industrial spaces, colored concrete can adapt to any design concept.

### Harmonizing with other materials

Colored concrete possesses the unique ability to harmonize with a wide variety of other materials commonly used in interior design. It can seamlessly blend with natural materials like wood or stone, creating a visually striking contrast or a harmonious balance, depending on the desired effect. The latest trend is to combine colored concrete with minimalist design elements, allowing the concrete to be the focal point while other materials serve as complementary accents.

### Sustainability and durability

In addition to its aesthetic appeal, colored concrete also offers sustainable and durable qualities that make it an attractive choice for interior design.

Concrete is an eco-friendly material, as it can be sourced from local suppliers, often incorporating recycled content, and has a long lifespan, reducing the need for frequent replacements. The latest trend is to incorporate sustainability into the design by using eco-friendly concrete dyes and stains, creating environmentally conscious spaces that align with the values of both designers and clients.



NEETA SENACHA

Our lips are not only essential for speech and expression but also play a significant role in enhancing our facial features. Just like our skin, our lips require proper care to maintain their natural beauty and keep them luscious. In this article, we will delve into the world of lip care, exploring the benefits of lip scrub, lip masks, DIY lip balm, and natural remedies that can help us achieve soft, smooth, and irresistibly kissable lips.

### The importance of lip care

The skin on our lips is delicate and thinner than the skin on the rest of our body. It lacks oil glands, which makes it more susceptible to dryness and dehydration. Neglecting lip care can lead to chapped, cracked, and uncomfortable lips. By incorporating a few simple steps into our daily routine, we can maintain the health and beauty of our lips.

### 1 Lip scrub:

Exfoliating the lips with a lip scrub is an excellent way to remove dead skin cells and promote smoother lips. It helps to enhance blood circulation, allowing for better absorption of lip balms and treatments. You can purchase a lip scrub or make your own at home using ingredients like sugar, honey, and coconut oil. Gently massage the scrub onto your lips in circular motions, then rinse off with warm water. Remember to follow up with a moisturizing lip balm.

**Ingredients:** 1 tablespoon granulated sugar, 1 teaspoon honey, 1 teaspoon coconut oil (or olive oil).

**Process:** Mix sugar, honey, and coconut oil in a bowl until a grainy paste forms. Apply a small amount of the lip scrub to your lips. Gently massage in circular motions for one minute. Rinse off with warm water or wipe away with a damp cloth. Pat lips dry, then apply moisturizing lip balm to lock in hydration.



### 2 Lip mask:

Similar to face masks, lip masks provide intense hydration and nourishment to the lips. They help to replenish moisture, restore elasticity, and improve the overall texture of the lips. Look for lip masks with ingredients like hyaluronic acid, shea butter, and vitamins. Apply the lip mask for the recommended duration, allowing the ingredients to penetrate and revitalize your lips. After removing the mask, seal in the goodness with a hydrating lip balm. Here is how you can make a DIY lip mask

**Ingredients:** 1 teaspoon honey, 1 teaspoon shea butter, 1-2 drops of your favorite essential oil (optional).

**Process:** In a microwave-safe bowl, combine honey and shea butter. Add essential oil if desired. Microwave for 20 seconds until shea butter melts. Stir well. Cool slightly. Apply a generous layer of lip mask to lips using fingertips or brush. Leave for 10-15 minutes. Wipe off with damp cloth or rinse. Apply lip balm to seal in hydration.



## Attain luscious lips:

# Master lip care with natural remedies

### 3 DIY lip balm:

Creating your own lip balm allows you to control the ingredients and tailor it to your specific needs. A simple DIY lip balm can be made using natural ingredients such as beeswax, coconut oil, and essential oils. Melt the beeswax and coconut oil together, add a few drops of your preferred essential oil for fragrance, and pour the mixture into lip balm containers. Let it cool and solidify before using. This DIY lip balm will keep your lips moisturized.



### Lip stains

Natural lip stains offer a chemical-free, long-lasting color boost. Derived from plant-based ingredients like berries or beets, they enhance lip beauty with a fresh, effortless look. Packed with antioxidants and pigments, they provide a gentle tint while allowing the lips to breathe. These lightweight formulas offer vibrant shades and nourishing properties, making them an ideal choice for those seeking an organic and eco-friendly beauty routine.



### Natural remedies:

Nature offers an array of remedies to heal and enhance our lips. Here are a few natural options to consider:

**Honey:** Known for its moisturizing and antibacterial properties, honey can help soothe and repair chapped lips. Apply a thin layer of honey to your lips and leave it on for 10-15 minutes before rinsing.

**Aloe Vera:** Aloe vera gel is a natural moisturizer that can alleviate dryness and inflammation. Extract fresh gel from an aloe vera leaf and apply it to your lips. Leave it on for 15 minutes before rinsing or wiping it off gently.

**Cucumber:** The high water content of cucumbers makes them an excellent hydrating agent for the lips. Cut thin slices of cucumber and place them on your lips for 10-15 minutes. This will refresh and hydrate your lips, leaving them soft and supple.

SHIVANGI KARN

## Amazing health benefits of cooking in mustard oil

Mustard oil is among the commonly used oils for culinary and therapeutic purposes. The rich flavour and aroma of the oil are known to enhance the taste of any dish, making them nutritional at the same time with its amazing benefits. Mustard oil is composed of fatty acids like monosaturated fatty acids (59 g), saturated fatty acids (11 g) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (21 g). The oil is widely used for cooking in the northern part of India, Thailand, Bangladesh and some western countries.

In Ayurveda, the amazing benefits of mustard oil for cooking is mentioned tremendously. Due to the high smoking point of this oil, it is ideal for deep frying and heating foods. The versatility of mustard oil is highly praised. Take a look at the benefits of mustard oil for cooking.



### Helps lower the risk of heart diseases

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is among the leading causes of deaths worldwide. Edible oils play an important role in treating and managing CHD. According to a study, mustard oil is packed with monosaturated fatty acids that significantly help lower cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of CHD.

### Has cancer-fighting properties

According to a study, dietary mustard oil containing omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid is very effective to reduce colon cancer in animals compared to dietary fish oil or corn oil. The study also found that the tumour was reduced to 50%.



### Acts as a taste enhancer

Allyl isothiocyanate, a chemical compound found in mustard oil is responsible for the strong and pungent taste of the oil. This is why mustard oil is considered a taste enhancer as it lifts up the taste of every dish in which it is added.

### Inhibits bladder cancer

Mustard oil is known to contain a chemical compound called Allyl isothiocyanate that inhibits the development of bladder cancer by 34.5%. This cancer-preventing agent in mustard oil is also responsible for its pungent smell.

### Helps improve digestion

The antimicrobial property of mustard oil fights off the microorganisms of the digestive system along with killing the bacteria of the teeth. This helps improve the digestion and health of the liver and spleen that helps in producing digestive enzymes.

### Helps reduce body weight

A study says that diacylglycerol rich mustard oil significantly helps reduce the weight of the body. It helps reduce the total cholesterol levels of the body with an increase in HDL cholesterol levels, the good cholesterol of the body.

### Helps to reduce inflammation

Mustard oil is very efficient to treat inflammatory diseases. Adding mustard oil daily in the diet helps activate the sensory nerves of the body. Also, the presence of allyl isothiocyanate in the oil reduces a wide range of inflammation.

CHANDANA RAO

## Never eat these foods after exercising!

Are you someone who exercises regularly? Do you wish to start a workout routine on a regular basis? If yes, then there are certain foods that you must never eat after exercising. As we all know, having a proper exercise routine can go a long way in keeping up our health. It is a proven fact that working out or exercising regularly can minimise the risk of a number of ailments, especially lifestyle disorders like diabetes, obesity, etc. A healthy diet coupled with a regular exercise routine, is what every person needs in order to remain healthy. Exercise can also help treat a number of disorders and their symptoms. In fact, there are a few diseases for which exercise is the main form of treatment! If you want to attain the maximum benefit from your workout and avoid health complications, you need to follow certain diet tips along with exercise. There are a few common foods that we need to consume and there are also a few foods we must totally avoid, after an exercise session. Have a look at some of the foods you must never consume after a workout, here.

### 1 Raw vegetables

Although raw veggies are healthy, you should not eat just that after a workout session. As your body would have lost a lot of nutrients while working out, just raw vegetables will not be able to replenish your body well.

### 2 Sweets

Foods to avoid after exercising include sweets, pastries, etc., as the high amount of sugar in them can stop the fat burning process of your body, minimising the good effects of the workout.

### 3 Spicy foods

Eating spicy chaats or the likes, after a good exercise session can be bad for health, as your body is still in the process of recovery after the workout and spicy foods can slow that process down.

### 4 Steak

While lean meat is a good post-workout food, heavy meat dishes like steak or meat with too much gravy, spices and oil should be avoided after exercising, as it can slow down metabolism.

### 5 Fatty foods

Foods to avoid after exercising are foods rich in unhealthy fats, like fries, chips, samosas, etc. Even just a little amount of fatty foods can cancel out the positive effects of the workout.

### 6 Energy bars

Most energy bars contain a lot of sugar and fat content, so even though they can make you feel energised after a workout, they can create an imbalance in your blood sugar levels.



### Hard-boiled egg whites

The protein from the egg whites is extremely good for your health, as it helps keep your blood sugar stable and hence healthily control the hunger pangs. You can also make egg muffins, which are made by mixing vegetables and egg whites (best if you make some in the evening before-hand and keep it refrigerated).



### Pumpkin seeds

One of the best solutions for midnight hunger pangs is pumpkin seeds. Salty, crunchy and healthy, pumpkin seeds are rich in magnesium which can help promote and improve your sleep quality as well.

While helping you ease your sudden bouts of hunger pangs, these healthy snacks are also beneficial for weight loss. Due to the presence of healthy fat and good fibre content, the snacks are easy to make and tasty to eat.

AMRITHA K

## Healthy snacks for weight loss

Cravings are a man's enemy. I think we can all agree on it. But what if I tell you that you can curb these cravings by eating healthy snacks that are beneficial for your health. When you hear the word 'snacks', naturally our mind thinks 'unhealthy' - but let's change that, shall we! Most of us fail to eat a healthy and complete breakfast in the morning, leading to a tired morning and pre-lunch hours which can make it difficult for you to concentrate on your work or finish that assignment that is due. Consequently, this causes you to develop cravings and mostly end up with you crunching on some chips or gorging down a big burger.

In the same light, most of us have the habit of waking up in the middle of the night and tiptoeing to the kitchen to check the refrigerator for some crackers and chocolates. There are several reasons as to why you feel hungry in the middle of your sleep, with the central one being the modern lifestyle, along with health conditions and medications as well. In this article, we will provide a list of healthy snacks you can have in the morning and in the night, to get rid of your hunger pangs as well as to promote weight loss in the process.

### Cheese and apple slices

Portion controlled cheeses are an ideal mid-morning snack. These contain four grams of fibre and have about 70 calories. You can have it with apples to up your fibre intake. This is one of the best healthy morning snacks.

### Roasted chickpeas

These contain eight grams of protein and six grams of fibre. A bowl of chickpeas can keep your tummy full for at least 5 hours and help healthily ease the hunger pangs. You can keep these at your desk as your go-to snack.

### Strawberries and greek yoghurt

This power-packed combo is packed with 20 grams of satiating protein. The strawberries can provide you with the required amount of fibre to your body and ease your hunger pangs. The combination of yoghurt and strawberry can prevent you from getting hungry until your lunch break.



### Shelled pistachios

These contain six grams of protein and three grams of fibre. Eating shelled pistachios can help control cravings and prevent you from gorging on unhealthy food items. Also, shelled pistachios are one of the best mid-morning snacks for weight loss.

### Low fat cottage cheese and banana

Cottage cheese is an incredible source of protein. It contains about 10 grams in a quarter cup. A small banana can deliver about 10 grams of fibre, hence keeping you full. This is one of the top healthy morning snacks for weight loss. Eating a whole banana can also help ease the hunger pangs most healthily.

### Sprout salad

Sprouts are rich in nutrients, extremely low in calories and fat. You can use moong sprouts which help reduce the blood pressure levels and to help detoxify the blood. You can eat the salad with a dash of lemon, which also helps in burning fat most healthily.

### Raw peanuts

Peanuts are beneficial for your heart health. They are rich in antioxidants and monounsaturated fats which help satisfy your hunger in the healthiest way possible. Consume only a handful of peanuts in a day and not more than that.

### Makhana (Fox Nuts)

Low in cholesterol, fat and sodium, makhana is an ideal snack to satiate your in-between meal hunger pangs. Individuals suffering from high blood pressure, heart diseases and obesity can benefit from this healthy snack.

### Poha

Made from flattened rice, this dish is a good source of healthy carbohydrates. Poha is light on the stomach and can be easily digested, making it the perfect snack for your cravings.

### Granola bar

You need to go for granola bars that are less in sugar and calorie content. These contain seven grams of fibre, six grams of protein, five grams of sugar and are perfect for a morning snack, especially when you miss out on your breakfast.

### Banana with almond butter

Banana is indeed one of the best and healthy snack-foods out there. Dip a small banana in a spoon of unsweetened almond butter and eat when the hunger pangs are playing with your sleep. The healthy calorie combination also helps in promoting sleep.

# ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

**Salman Khan threatens legal action for falsely using his name for film castings**

CJ DESK

**B**ollywood superstar Salman Khan is not just a successful actor but he is also a well-established producer in the Indian film industry with several films under his *Salman Khan Films* banner. However, the actor often finds himself in trouble when people use his name to garner attention without seeking prior permission.

But looks like he has finally decided to take matters into his own hands and put an end to the fiasco.

On Monday, Salman issued a statement threatening to take legal action against those who will be found guilty of using his or his organisation's name falsely. Salman took to his social media handles on Monday to warn people against using his name without his permission.

He shared an official note which read, "This is to clarify that Mr Salman Khan nor *Salman Khan Films* are casting for any film currently. We have not hired any casting agents for any of our future films. Please do not trust any emails or messages received by you for this purpose.

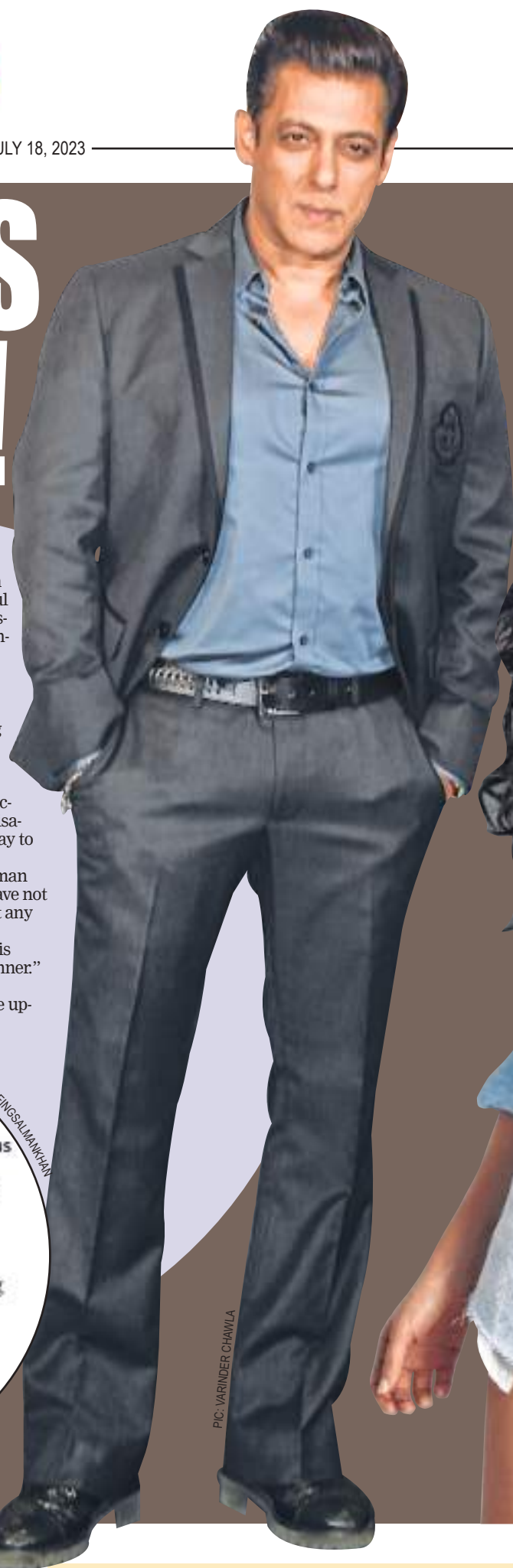
The note further mentioned, "Legal action will be taken if any party is found falsely using Mr Khan's or *SKF*'s name in any unauthorised manner." "Official notice!" Salman wrote, sharing the note.

Salman is all set to return to his blockbuster Tiger franchise with the upcoming film *Tiger 3*. He also has *Kick 2* in the pipeline.

Besides, Salman will be seen joining hands once again with filmmaker Sooraj Barjatya for the film titled *Prem Ki Shaadi*, which is scheduled for a Diwali 2024 release.

"This is to clarify that neither Mr. Salman Khan nor *Salman Khan Films* are casting for any film currently. We have not hired any casting agents for any of our future films. Please do not trust any emails or messages received by you for this purpose. Legal action will be taken if any party is found falsely using Mr. Khan's or *SKF*'s name in any unauthorised manner."

**SKF**  
Salman Khan Films



PICS: INSTAGRAM/KATRINA KAIF

# The wait is over

Katrina Kaif, Vijay Sethupathi's *Merry Christmas* to release on December 15; first look poster out



CJ DESK

**T**he makers of Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathi's *Merry Christmas* shared the first look poster of the film on Monday (July 17). It has also been revealed that the film has been shot in two languages, with different supporting actors.

The Hindi version co-stars Sanjay Kapoor, Vinay Pathak, Pratima Kanan, and Tinnu Anand, while the Tamil version features Radhika Sarathkumar, Shanmugaraja, Kevin Jay Babu, and Rajesh Williams in the same roles.

The film also introduces Pari, a child actor. Ashwini Kalsekar and Radhika Apte are to be seen in cameos.

Touted to be a genre-defying tale, the film is directed by Sriram Raghavan and it is produced by *Tips Films* and *Matchbox Pictures*.

*Merry Christmas* is all set to release worldwide on December 15, 2023.

The film is reportedly a crime thriller that revolves around an eventful day that turns Katrina and Vijay's worlds upside down. The edgy thriller is about an event that takes place on Christmas Eve.



PICS: INSTAGRAM

# Bees saal baad!

Sharman Joshi, Sahil Khan reunite after 20 years for new film

CJ DESK

**S**harman Joshi and Sahil Khan are all set to share screen space once again. The film, whose title will be revealed soon, reunites the two actors after 20 years. Sharman and Sahil first joined hands in 2001 for *Style* and later in 2003 for *Xcuse Me*. Their new venture is all set to roll and will also mark the launch of a new heroine.

To be shot extensively in Abu Dhabi, the film will have four tracks that promise to top the chartbuster list and break all records.

Talking about it, Sharman said, "With the film all ready to roll, I am absolutely excited. The films that Sahil and I did earlier brought

about a lot of appreciation for the chemistry we shared on screen. It was our first commercial hit that was seen by Raju Hirani sir too, who then signed me for *3 Idiots*."

An elated Sahil stated, "The writer and the director Sam Khan and I have known each other for a long time and am absolutely delighted to work under his direction. Also, this film brings Sharman and me together once again. He's a superb actor and a wonderful person to work with."

Writer Milap Zaveri is penning the dialogues and the screenplay of the film.



PIC: KUNAL GUPTA

# EV is the way

Ayushmann Khurrana feels electric vehicles are the future of transportation

CJ DESK

**A**yushmann Khurrana is in favour of electric vehicles. The actor believes that world has started focussing on protecting the environment.

He says, "We are living at a time where we will have to make a conscious choice to switch to sustainable ways of living. I'm glad that authorities are focussing and encouraging people to switch to electric vehicles. We all need to think about this option seriously because the time is critical for all of us to look at means to protect our environment."

Ayushmann adds, "We have to consciously look at using cars more efficiently and electric vehicles could affect a really positive change for the world at large. I think urban transportation will

evolve fairly quickly to embrace electric vehicles, provided the infrastructure is there to support this transformation. I constantly read that plans are being made on this front."

Ayushmann feels the switch to electric vehicles will be inevitable. He explains, "People are being more conscious about the way they live their lives and it is an inevitable reality that everyone will look to preserve the planet so that it stays habitable for future generations. We are all aware of how our actions can aid the environment and I think we are in the age of electric cars being embraced by many"



# Cheering for the champs

Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Aamir Khan, Sonam Kapoor Ahuja and Neena Gupta attend Wimbledon Championship in London

CJ DESK

**S**everal Bollywood celebrities attended the Wimbledon finals at the All-England Club in London on July 16. Aamir Khan was seen posing with his kids during the match. Several pictures of Priyanka

Chopra Jonas with husband Nick Jonas at the sporting event have also gone viral. Sonam Kapoor Ahuja attended the tennis championship with her businessman-husband Anand Ahuja. Veteran actress Neena Gupta was also at the All-England Club with her husband Vivek Mehra.



**Taylor Swift breaks 60-year-old Billboard 200 chart record**



Taylor Swift continues to make her mark in history and the release of *Speak Now* (Taylor's version) has made its debut at number one on the Billboard 200 chart joining three other of her albums in the Top 10. This achievement marked the first time a woman has ever done this in 60 years and only one of three living artists to have ever scored such a feat. The song moved 716,000 album-equivalent units during its first week, according to Billboard. Her other three albums in the Top 10 are *Midnights* (2022) at No. 5, *Lover* (2019) at No. 7 and *Folklore* (2020) at No. 10. Previously, Herb Alpert had four albums in the Top 10 with *Going Places*, *Whipped Cream & Other Delights*, *South of the Border* and *The Lonely Bull*. —IANS

## FRESH OUT OF THE BOX!

Our source confirms new details about Adivi Sesh's *Goodachari 2* and reveals who will direct the actor's film *Dacoit*

LIPIKA VARMA

Adivi Sesh's film *Goodachari* (2018), a spy thriller flick, had rocked at the box office at the time of its release. The South superstar now has *Goodachari 2* in the pipeline. The news from the lanes of Tollywood is that after *Goodachari 2*, Adivi Sesh will be acting and directing in his next film, *Dacoit*. We decided to tap our authentic sources and tried to authenticate this news and find facts.

Speaking exclusively to *The Free Press Journal*, one of the insiders who is close to Adivi Sesh, reveals, "*Goodachari 2* is still in the writing stage. Sesh and Sashi Kiran Tikka's first AD, Vinay Kumar Sirigineedi, is still writing it and will be directing it. This was always an understanding that Sashi will not direct *Goodachari 2*."

Our source further adds, "We are still writing because we always want to come up with a strong script first. Unless we are satisfied with the script, we won't go on the floors. Our ecosystem is such that we put more time on writing and then go on the floors well prepared. Writing itself is a full-time job. Sashi will direct *Goodachari 3* if everything goes well."

Informing a little more about Sashi's next film in the pipeline, our source explains, "Sashi is writing something for himself which is still in the process of writing still. It



### WHO WILL DIRECT DACOIT?

Adivi Sesh-starrer *Dacoit* will be produced by Akkineni Nagarjuna's *Annapurna Studios*. Rumours down South are abuzz that Adivi will be directing *Dacoit*. "I don't think he is going to direct it. He is good at writing scripts. He always feels he is not so good at direction. He always finds a good director for his scripts though," our source reveals.

Our source further adds, "Adivi always feels he is not so good at direction. Shaneil Deo will direct *Dacoit*. He was the cinematographer for *Goodachari*."

will be a suspense film which is being produced with *Mythri Movie Makers*, the producers of *Pushpa*. They are affluent producers in Telugu. It will take time, but Sashi will be directing this one."

About Sashi's association with the script of *Goodachari 2*, our source says, "Sashi is very much associated with the film. He keeps listening to the *Goodachari 2* script. All of them keep in touch, discuss it and keep giving their input and feedback."

Also responding positively about *Dacoit*, our source informs, "Next is *Dacoit*. It has been there, but it's never been told out."

The source concludes, "Also, these names mentioned are all outsiders. There are a few more names. These outsiders have their own ecosystem and have made it not only in the Bollywood industry but have stretched out globally. It's just that they have not yet announced about *Dacoit*."

## Glad to be back

Akshay Oberoi confirms season 3 of his popular OTT courtroom drama series *Illegal*

CJ DESK

Actor Akshay Oberoi has officially announced his involvement in the upcoming third season of the highly acclaimed court drama series, *Illegal*. Akshay is set to reprise his role as a skilled lawyer. The show in its first two seasons have earned a loyal viewership.

Following the resounding success of the first two seasons, *Illegal* has captivated viewers worldwide with its gripping narrative, stellar performances, and thought-provoking themes. The show explores the complexities of the Indian legal system while delving into the personal and professional lives of the characters involved.

Akshay's portrayal of the son of a criminal lawyer in the series has garnered him wide critical acclaim. Expressing his excitement about reprising the character, Akshay shares, "I am thrilled to step into the shoes of my character once again and continue this exhilarating journey with *Illegal*. The opportunity to delve deeper into the complexities of the legal world and explore new dimensions of the character is incredibly fulfilling as an actor."

He adds, "I am looking forward to collaborating with the talented cast and crew in bringing the next chapter of this thrilling series to life."

The third season of the show is set to be filmed in Delhi and Mumbai. Directed by Sahir Raza, it also stars Neha Sharma, Piyush Mishra, Satyadeep Mishra.



## Man of many talents

Actor Angad Bedi set to represent India at an international sprint tournament after his silver medal win earlier this year

CJ DESK

Actor Angad Bedi has made an extraordinary decision to pursue a professional career in sprinting, aiming to represent India in the 400m race at an international level.

Following his remarkable achievement of winning the silver medal in his maiden 400m sprinting tournament in Mumbai, Angad has set his sights on taking the sport to new heights and proudly representing his country.

Angad's passion for athletics and his exceptional athletic prowess have been evident throughout his career. While he has established himself as a versatile actor, Angad has always harboured a deep love for sports, and his recent success in the 400m race has inspired him to embark on this remarkable journey.

With a determination to excel in his newfound athletic endeavour, Angad has been undergoing rigorous and intensive training under the guidance of his coach, Brinston Miranda. Coach Miranda, a seasoned athlete himself, achieved the remarkable feat of securing the 5th rank at the World Masters Games in 2016. Angad's association with Coach Miranda ensures that he receives top-notch training and mentorship to hone his skills and elevate his performance to international standards.

Expressing his enthusiasm about representing India in sprinting, Angad says, "I am honoured and thrilled to have the opportunity to represent my country in the 400m race next year. First I am aiming for Maharashtra State in December then Nationals. The silver medal in my debut sprinting tournament has fueled my determination to pursue this sport at a professional level."

He adds, "With the guidance of my esteemed coach, Brinston Miranda, I am committed to giving my best and making my country proud. I am grateful for the support and encouragement I have received from my family, friends, and fans throughout this incredible journey."

As Angad gears up to compete at the international level, he will continue to train intensively, refining his technique and improving his speed. His journey as a professional sprinter promises to be an inspiration for aspiring athletes and fans alike, showcasing the power of passion and determination in achieving one's dreams.

On the film front Angad's recent release R Balki's directorial *Lust Stories 2* opposite Mrunal Thakur is garnering good reviews across cinephiles. His next release, again under the direction of R Balki, is a sports drama film titled *Ghoomer*. Angad will be seen sharing screen space with Saiyami Kher and Abhishek Bachchan in it.



PIC: INSTAGRAM/ANGADBEDI

### CAUGHT ON CAM

Celebs were snapped as they were out and about in Mumbai



Ranveer Singh nails the airport fashion look

Kiara Advani looks pretty in her cool outfit

Nayanthara looks ravishing in a blue ethnic outfit

Alia Bhatt keeps it simple in a white shirt and blue jeans

Sreejita De oozes oomph in her dress

### TWITTER TREND OF THE DAY

The makers and cast of the Shah Rukh Khan, Nayanthara-starrer *Jawan* released a new poster. It features the 'Lady Superstar' in an action-packed avatar. "Lock..Aim..Fire.. *Jawan* releasing worldwide on 7th September 2023, in Hindi, Tamil & Telugu," she tweeted along with the poster. As soon as fans saw it they couldn't control their excitement. Here's how they reacted:

**Loving the 'Lady Superstar'**

@ArunSuriya K: "Thalivi is back to the fire mood. Waiting for action mood..."

@ishanMadhu96113: "India's king and queen in one frame this will be one of the superb hits of all time! We are waiting to watch it."

@PritomR76323405: "I love you Nayanthara. Best of luck for *Jawan*."

@shakil\_housys: "Superb poster... Fantastic colour grading... Loved it..."

@usmaniqaiser: "She looks so beautiful and dangerous... Just BOOM!"

—CJ DESK

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