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BC Commission expedites Caste Census action plan preparations

Hyderabad: In the wake of the State government planning to hold the Caste Census in the State in July, Telangana State Commission for Backward Classes has expedited the process of finalising methodology, modalities and questionnaire for this purpose. On Monday, the commission held a meeting with experts, sociologists, caste leaders, peoples' organisations and NGOs to prepare the modalities to conduct the Census. According to Commission chairman Vakulabharanam Krishna Mohan Rao, the expert team suggested that the Census modalities should include socio-economic, educational, employability, political and scientific aspects to make it authentic and error free.

Secunderabad Division RPF seizes drugs worth Rs 2.7 crore so far in 2024

Hyderabad: The Railway Protection Force (RPF), Secunderabad Division has achieved a significant milestone in its ongoing efforts to combat transportation of narcotics through Indian Railway. T

his year until now, under 'Operation Narcos', as many as 1,084 kgs of narcotic substances worth Rs 2.7 crore were seized in 37 incidents by the RPF personnel. During the same period, RPF officials arrested 36 persons on charges of smuggling drugs, registering nearly 770 per cent in seizure quantity compared to the corresponding month of previous year.

Modi Government 3.0 holds first Cabinet meet; clears 3 crore houses for poor under PM Awas Yojana

New Delhi, GNS News Agency, June 10

The first Union Cabinet meeting of the ruling NDA's third term on Monday approved assistance to construct three crore rural and urban houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). The government has been implementing Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana since 2015-16 to provide assistance to the eligible rural and urban households for construction of houses with basic amenities. Under PMAY, a total of 4.21 Crore houses have been completed for the eligible poor families under the housing schemes in the last 10 years. All the houses constructed under PMAY are



provided with the other basic amenities such as household toilets, LPG connection, electricity connection, functional household tap connection through convergence with

other schemes of the Central Government and state governments. "It has been decided in the Cabinet meeting today to provide assistance to 3 crore additional rural and urban

households for the construction of houses, to meet the housing requirements arising out of the increase in the number of eligible families," Cabinet sources said.

Plea in Supreme Court seeks cancellation of NEET-UG 2024 exam

GNS News Agency, June 10

New Delhi: A PIL has been filed before the Supreme Court seeking cancellation of the NEET-UG 2024 examination. The plea seeks directions for the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the "malpractices and fraud involved" in the NEET examination held on May 5 and a stay on counselling till the investigations on the paper leak are completed.

The PIL filed by two members of an organisation working for the assistance and benefit of the students said that the news of the NEET exam paper leak has shaken to the core as many of the meritorious students lost the opportunity to become future medical practitioners. "The petitioners are filing the present petition with the sole purpose of providing justice to the aggrieved students who with the support of their respective family members had put in their entire time, hard-earned money and energy along with the hard work and dedication in preparing for NEET Exam 2024 and have been denied a level playing field," it said.

The plea added that some students have secured 718 and 719 marks which are statically not possible and the entire exercise conduct of the exam is without any



rationale and the same is arbitrary and done with mala fide intention to grant entry to the students through backdoor.

Further, it said that 67 students scored 720 out of 720 marks out of which eight students were from the same examination centre, raising serious doubts regarding the examination conducted by the NTA. Recently, the apex court denied a stay on the declaration of the result of the NEET-UG examination but issued a notice to NTA and others in a similar matter.

Former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna remanded in judicial custody till June 24



GNS News Agency, June 10

A special court in Bengaluru remanded former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna in 14-day judicial custody in the first of three sexual assault cases against him on Monday. He will be lodged in the Bengaluru Central Prison till June 24. Earlier on Monday, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the Karnataka government produced Prajwal Revanna before the special court. The SIT did not seek further custody in the first of the three cases.

The SIT may later seek custody in the second case of sexual assault against the former MP. Prajwal Revanna has sought anticipatory bail in the two other cases and the matter is being heard by a special court. The SIT had taken custody of Prajwal Revanna for six days soon after his arrival from Germany on May 31. The police remand was extended by four days to June 10. On Saturday, Prajwal Revanna was taken to Hassan district for mahazar (crime scene mapping) by the SIT. Last Friday, Prajwal Revanna's mother Bhavani Revanna, accused of kidnapping a woman allegedly sexually assaulted by her son, was granted bail by the Karnataka High Court. Later, she appeared before the investigating officials and was questioned in connection with the case. The SIT case against bail for Prajwal Revanna's father and JD(S) MLA H D Revanna in the rape victim kidnapping case has also been adjourned till June 14, while H D Revanna's petition to cancel the case against him is slated to be heard on June 21.

ABVP demands CBI probe, calls inquiry led by National Testing Agency chief unfair

GNS News Agency, June 10

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, the RSS's student wing, on Monday demanded a CBI inquiry into the marks inflation controversy over the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for undergraduate medical admission.

"In the ongoing issue of NEET 2024 results, questions arise on the credibility of the NTA. ABVP leaders are protesting nationally demanding a CBI probe into the entire issue. The probe being conducted by the NTA (National Testing Agency) chairman with a four-member panel will not be accepted, as the needle of suspicion is pointed towards the NTA. How funny it is that they are carrying out a probe! It is not fair," ABVP national general secretary Yagyavalkya Shukla said in Gujarat's Surat city, where the organisation's three-day national executive meeting ended on Sunday. A controversy erupted as a record number of candidates cleared NEET with full marks after the NTA awarded compensatory extra marks for lost exam time and a flaw in a question in physics.

Pakistan PM sends 'felicitations' to Prime Minister Modi; Nawaz Sharif says let's replace hate with hope

GNS News Agency, June 10

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday sent "felicitations" to Narendra Modi on taking oath as the Prime Minister of India for the third consecutive time. In a short message on X, Shehbaz wrote, "Felicitations to Narendra Modi on taking oath as Prime Minister of India."



Prime Minister Modi and his Council of Ministers took oath in a historic ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in Delhi on Sunday. While dozens of global leaders have sent congratulatory messages, Pakistan PM's message to his Indian counterpart holds quite a significance considering the tense relationship between the neighbouring nations during the past two terms of the Modi government. "PM Shehbaz's felicitation message shows clearly the rift that persists between the two countries. The message didn't show any sign

of warmth or express hopes of working towards normalisation of relations between the two countries. Instead, it seemed more like a forced formality that the premier had to undertake," said senior political analyst Javed Siddique. It should also be noted that PM Modi did not extend an invitation to Pakistan to participate in the swearing-in ceremony like he did in 2014 when then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was invited. Interestingly, a vast difference is also seen in the messages sent to PM Modi on Monday by PM Shehbaz Sharif and by his elder brother Nawaz Sharif,

lion people of South Asia," he posted on X. While PM Shehbaz enjoys a close relationship with the country's powerful establishment currently running a coalition government, his elder brother is seen as a leader who refuses to fall in line with the country's military.

Having failed to secure a majority to form the government after the general polls held in February this year, Nawaz Sharif is managing party politics through his daughter and Chief Minister of Punjab province, Maryam Nawaz Sharif. PM Modi's close relations with Nawaz Sharif also became evident when he made a surprise visit to Lahore in 2015 on the latter's invitation and even spent time at Sharif's Jati Umra residence. Analysts feel that considering the stance taken by the BJP-led NDA during campaigning over the past few weeks, it is unlikely that the relationship between the two countries will improve during the third term of the Modi government.

the President of the country's ruling party, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). In his message to the Indian PM, Nawaz Sharif congratulated him on assuming office for the third consecutive time and expressed hope of "replacing hate with hope" for better future progress of the two nations.

"My warm felicitations to Modi Ji on assuming office for the third time. Your party's success in recent elections reflects the confidence of the people in your leadership. Let us replace hate with hope and seize the opportunity to shape the destiny of the two bil-

SKM leader Prem Singh Tamang sworn in as chief minister of Sikkim



GNS News Agency, June 10

Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya administered the oath of office and secrecy to Prem Singh Tamang and his Council of Ministers during the swearing-in ceremony at Paljor Stadium. Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) won 31 out of the 32 seats, thus sweeping the assembly polls in the Himalayan state while the opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) was confined to a lone seat. Tamang described the party's victory as a 'record' as the state reportedly witnessed the most peaceful election of Sikkim and thanked all who favoured the party's return to power. "In 5 years, we will fulfil all the announcements that we made at the time of the elections. I would like to thank all my workers, they worked hard. I would also like to thank the public. This is the most peaceful election of Sikkim, this is a record," he said. Tamang won the elec-

tions from the Rhenock Assembly seat defeating SDF's Som Nath Poudyal by over 7,396 votes.

The polling for 32 assembly seats in Sikkim was held on April 19 in the first phase simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections.

Reasi bus terror attack: Four from Rajasthan, three from U.P. among nine victims

GNS News Agency, June 10

Authorities on Monday identified the nine victims of the deadly terror attack on a bus carrying pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district. Among the victims are four natives of Rajasthan, including a two-year-old boy, and three from Uttar Pradesh.

Ten people with gunshot wounds are among the 41 pilgrims — mostly from Uttar Pradesh — undergoing treatment in three hospitals of Jammu and Reasi districts, officials said.

Terrorists opened fire at the bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi district around 6.10 p.m. on Sunday, killing nine and injuring several.

Rahul, Priyanka to reach Raebareli on June 11 to thank voters



GNS News Agency, June 10

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi will address an event in Raebareli on Tuesday to thank the voters. Raebareli (UP): Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi will address an event in Raebareli on Tuesday to thank the voters. The event was initially to be held in Amethi but the venue has now been shifted to Raebareli, said party sources. The event to thank the voters will be held on the Bhumau Guest House premises in Raebareli on Tuesday, said the Congress' Amethi District unit chief Pradeep Singhal. Also Read - FairPoint: Will Rahul Gandhi take the plunge and be Leader of Opposition ADVERTISEMENT He added that the venue was changed to avoid scorching heatwave conditions. Singhal said that along with Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, newly-elected Amethi MP Kishori Lal Sharma will also be present in this programme. In the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections, Rahul Gandhi defeated UP minister Dinesh Pratap Singh in the Raebareli constituency while the Congress' Kishori Lal Sharma wrested the Amethi seat from former Union Minister Smriti Irani.

SC tells AAP to vacate Rouse Avenue office by Aug 10

GNS News Agency, June 10

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday extended by nearly two months the June 15 deadline given to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to vacate its office at Rouse Avenue in the national capital. The top court had on March 4 directed the party to vacate its office by June 15 after noting that the plot was allotted to the Delhi High Court for expanding judicial infrastructure. A vacation Bench, comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta, took note of the submissions of senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the AAP and others, and extended the deadline till August 10, saying it was the last opportunity and that the party will have to hand over the vacant possession of the building at 206, Rouse Avenue here by then. The premises were allotted in 2020 to the Delhi High Court for creating infrastructure for the district judiciary in the national capital. At the outset, Singhvi urged the Bench that the deadline be extended. Lawyer K Parmeshwar, appointed as amicus curiae to assist the apex court in the matter, said there was a shortage of 90 courtrooms for judicial officers. "We (the High Court) are in dire conditions and now we may have to rent premises to accommodate the newly recruited judicial officers, who are undergoing training presently," he said. Parmeshwar said the AAP wanted someplace in central Delhi and they are being offered land at some other place in the city. "The premises in question had to be vacated by June 15, 2024. The premises were already allotted to the Delhi High Court in 2020. The expansion of judicial infrastructure is stultified and the cost of expansion is also a factor. This application is for an extension of time till August 10, 2024," Parmeshwar.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Long-delayed justice

IN a significant verdict on Friday, a CBI court in Mohali sentenced former Punjab Police DIG Dilbagh Singh to seven years of rigorous imprisonment and ex-SP Gurbachan Singh to life imprisonment for their roles in the 1993 fake encounter killing of Gulshan Kumar, a fruit vendor. This case, a chilling reminder of the dark days of unbridled police brutality in Punjab, highlights the systemic lapses that had plagued the state. Extrajudicial killings, illegal detentions and staged encounters had become distressingly common. The details of this case are harrowing. On June 22, 1993, Gulshan, along with his father and brothers, was abducted by a police team led by Dilbagh and Gurbachan. While the others were released, Gulshan was kept in legal custody for a month before being killed in a staged encounter. His body was cremated as 'unclaimed', a common practice then to cover up extrajudicial killings. The case, initially overlooked, was taken up by the CBI in 1995 on the Supreme Court's directive, culminating in the conviction nearly three decades later.

The law has at last been catching up with rogue cops. In September 2023, three ex-officers received the life sentence for the 1992 fake encounter killing of three youths. A year before that, a retired sub-inspector was sentenced to 10 years in another fake encounter of 1992. These cases reveal a pattern of grave misconduct and long-overdue comeuppance.

The delivery of justice underscores the resilience of the victims' families amid numerous challenges, including the death of several accused during the trial and witness attrition. This is crucial for restoring faith in the rule of law and can serve as a deterrent against abuse of power.

24 Muslim candidates win LS seats this time, two less than 2019 polls

GNS News Agency, June 10

As many as 24 Muslim candidates across the country have won the Lok Sabha elections and they include former cricketer Yusuf Pathan of the Trinamool Congress from Bahrampur in West Bengal and Congress' Rakibul Hussain from Dhubri in Assam. However, the community's presence in the 18th Lok Sabha has reduced marginally from 26 last time but is higher than the 2014 tally when 23 Muslim candidates were elected to the lower house of Parliament. As many as 78 Muslims were in the fray in the Lok Sabha elections this year, a significant drop from the last polls when 115 Muslim candidates were fielded by various parties. Among the Muslim candidates who won this time, Rakibul Hussain's victory in Dhubri was significant in terms of the winning margin. The Congress candidate secured 14.71 lakh votes and defeated his nearest rival Mohammad Badruddin Ajmal by one of the highest margins of about 10 lakh votes. On the other hand, first-time contender Yusuf Pathan beat Congress leader in the Lok Sabha and six-time MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury by 85,022 votes in his Baharampur bastion in West Bengal. Congress candidate from Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur, Imran Masood, won by a margin of 64,542 votes while Iqra Choudhary, a 29-year-old Samajwadi Party candidate from Kairana, secured victory over BJP's Pradeep Kumar by 69,116 votes. Afzal Ansari, the incumbent MP from Ghazipur and the younger brother of gangster-politician Mukhtar Ansari, retained the seat by bagging 5.3 lakh votes while 28-year-old Iqra Choudhary won the Kairana seat by a margin of over 69,000 votes. Samajwadi Party's Mohibullah won the Rampur seat by securing 4,81,503 votes, while Zia Ur Rehman won in Sambhal by a margin of 1.2 lakh votes. AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi retained his Hyderabad seat by a margin of 3,38,087 votes over his nearest rival BJP's Madhavi Latha Kompella. In Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference's Srinagar candidate Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, a prominent Shia leader, secured 3,56,866 votes and won by a margin of 1.88 lakh votes against his nearest rival PDP's Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra. Mian Altaf Ahmad of the National Conference won in Anantnag-Rajouri by 2,81,794 votes against former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti. In Ladakh, Independent candidate Mohammad Haneefa secured a victory by a margin of 27,862 votes while another Independent candidate Abdul Rashid Sheikh won Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla seat by bagging 4.7 lakh votes. In Bihar, Congress' Tariq Anwar won the Katihar seat after a close contest with JD(U) candidate Dulal Chandra Goswami. Anwar won by a margin of 49,863 votes. Congress now has the highest number of seven Muslim MPs, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has five, and the SP has four. The Indian Union Muslim League has three MPs -- T Mohammad Bashir from Malappuram, M P Abdurasmad Samdani from Ponnani, Kerala and K Navaskani from Tamil Nadu's Ramanathapuram.

Dip Ghosh's oblique statement sparks speculations on inner-party factions in Bengal BJP

GNS News Agency, June 10

At a time when fissures within the BJP West Bengal unit have started to show in the wake of the party's 'disappointing' performance in the parliamentary polls in the state, a suggestive statement from veteran leader Diip Ghosh sparked speculations on whether the 'old-versus-new' debate is about to get reignited. Quoting former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Ghosh on Thursday posted on X: "Keep one thing in mind, even one old Karyakarta of the party should not be neglected. If necessary, let ten new Karyarkartas get separated. Because the old workers are the guarantee of our victory. Trusting new Karyarkartas too quickly is not advisable." The tweet came in the wake of Ghosh's shocking defeat from the Bardhaman-Durgapur seat in the hands of TMC's Kirti Azad by nearly 1.38 lakh votes. While the BJP had publicly proclaimed its target of winning 30 Lok Sabha constituencies or more from Bengal this time, it had to ultimately settle for 12 seats, six less than its 2019 tally.

Bribe in EMIs! Corrupt Gujarat babus 'with a heart' now accepting bribe in installments



GNS News Agency, June 10

In a peculiar yet concerning trend, corrupt Gujarat government officials are now offering citizens the option of paying bribes in installments, akin to the structure of bank loans. This practice, termed 'empathetically corrupt,' has surfaced as a purportedly 'considerate' approach to ease the financial burden on individuals coerced into offering bribes, a TOI report stated. Consider the following instances: In March of this year, a staggering bribe of Rs 21 lakh was demanded from an individual embroiled in an SGST bogus billing scam. To mitigate the financial strain, the amount was divided into nine EMIs of Rs 2 lakh each, along with one payment of Rs 1 lakh.

Similarly, on April 4, a deputy sarpanch and taluka panchayat member in Surat demanded an Rs 85,000 bribe for a farming-related favor. Sensing the financial constraints of the villager, the accused proposed an EMI plan -- an upfront payment of Rs 35,000, followed by three equal installments for the balance. More recently, two policemen absconded with a Rs 4 lakh bribe they had extorted from a resident of Sabarkantha. This sum constituted only the initial installment of the total Rs 10 lakh demanded. Reports from the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) indicate a surge in such incidents, with ten cases already reported this year alone. According to a senior ACB officer, corrupt officials exploit individuals either facing legal scrutiny or seeking government assistance, demanding exorbitant bribes. With victims often financially strained and vulnerable, paying the entire bribe upfront becomes untenable.

"Corrupt officials are unwilling to forgo the opportunity to enrich themselves swiftly," the officer told TOI. Consequently, they devised the installment scheme to ensure compliance. Shamsher Singh, Director of ACB, Gujarat, and DGP (law and order), noted that the bureau has only been able to investigate cases where victims have reported after making initial payments. In a recent case, a CID (crime) inspector demanded a Rs 50,000 bribe for the release of seized articles, including laptops and computers, splitting the sum into five installments of Rs 10,000 each. Similarly, a Class II officer with the Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board facilitated a contractor's pending invoices for Rs 1.20 lakh by structuring the bribe into four payments of Rs 30,000.

Controversy erupts after Omar shares news article on Engineer Rashid's win



GNS News Agency, June 10

A controversy erupted after National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah on Thursday posted a news article on a social media platform that suggested Engineer Rashid's win in the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat will empower "secessionists". The row broke out after a private television news agency attributed the excerpts of the article shared by the NC leader to him. It triggered reactions from mainstream politicians in Jammu and Kashmir, including PDP's Waheed Para. Abdullah was defeated by Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as 'Engineer Rashid', who is jailed under the UAPA, by more than two lakh votes in the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections. The National Conference (NC) leader had conceded defeat and congratulated Rashid on his win. "The 'big loser' tag certainly hurts but it's an election, you win some you lose some and life goes on," Abdullah posted on X on Thursday, a day after attending an INDIA bloc meeting in Delhi. This reaction was after some news articles referred to him and others as the "big losers" of the Lok Sabha polls.

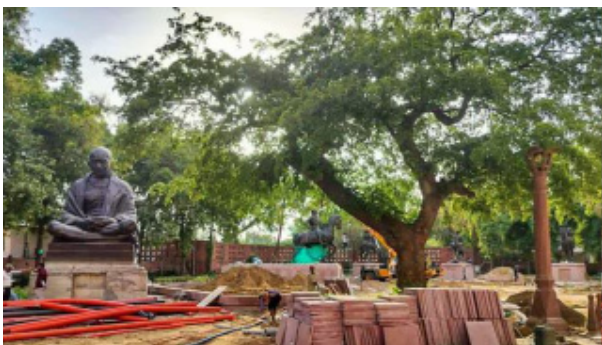
Recalling the his school's song, the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said on X, "...I sang (this) as part of my school song for years, still holds true today." "Never give in is our motto; strive till the set of sun; And we learn it's truth; In the days of youth on the long Hodson run; For though your heart seems bursting; Up Sergeant Tilly's hill; THOUGH YOU MAY NOT WIN; YOU'LL YET COME IN; if you stick it still," he posted. According to the Lawrence School Sanawar's website, the song was written by Henry Bickersteth Durrant, Bishop of Lahore, and

set to the music by Bandmaster A Swann between the 1923 and 1925. Its official title was 'The Best School of All'.

Taking a dig at Abdullah for sharing the news article, PDP youth president Para posted on X, "Extremely disappointed with @OmarAbdullah's regressive stance, echoing the divisive politics of 1987, and dubbing a democratic expression as an 'Islamist wave'." "His family's history with the Muslim Conference clashes with calls for the exclusion of PDP, Er Rashid, and JEL, and will put Kashmir into perpetual conflict with the State. A more prudent approach, akin to @MehboobaMufti's plea for Er Rashid's release, would have been acknowledgment of mandate." Para posted on X. In a quick reply, Abdullah said he had himself been an advocate for the release of not only Engineer Rashid but the thousands of others who were languishing in jails. "Waheed I don't normally get into any back and forth conversations here but this time I'll make an exception. I spent my entire campaign talking about Engineer's release and unlike his campaign I talked about the release of the 1000s detained since 2019," he said. "The articles I've put here are not my views but they are a point of view. I may agree with parts, disagree with parts but they are an opinion. As for Rashid's release, it's a matter for the courts as it is in all such cases," Abdullah said.

"I didn't agree with Rashid's detention in the first place and I don't agree with it now but that's neither here nor there because it shouldn't be just about one man but about the 1000s in jail, including the anonymous ones outside Jammu and Kashmir," he said. People's Conference president Sajad Gani Lone, who barely managed to save his security deposit in the Lok Sabha polls in the Baramulla seat, has gone on a sabbatical for a "few days". "I will be away for a few days. Taking a break to step back, pause and reflect. Winning and losing is part of life. A setback, Yes, but should it allow us to lose sight of our larger goal -- the empowerment of our people, their dignity, development and making their voices heard -- No! Elections were merely a vehicle towards this larger goal, never an end in itself," Lone posted on X. He said the electoral setback will only reinvigorate his party and strengthen their commitment and conviction towards realizing the collective goals.

Gandhi, Ambedkar, Shivaji statues shifted within Parliament premises, Congress slams move



GNS News Agency, June 10

Statues of Mahatma Gandhi, B R Ambedkar and Chhatrapati Shivaji, among others, have been relocated within the Parliament premises as part of a landscaping exercise, a move that drew sharp criticism from the Congress on Thursday. The statues of tribal leader Birsa Munda and Maharana Pratap have also been shifted to a lawn between old Parliament building and the Parliament library. All statues are now in the same place.

Reacting to the development, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on X, "Statues of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Mahatma Gandhi, and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar have just been removed from their places of prominence in front of the Parliament House. This is atrocious." Attacking the BJP, Congress's media and publicity department head Pawan Khera said when Maharashtra voters did not vote for BJP, the statues of Shivaji and Ambedkar were removed from their original place in Parliament. When they did not get clean sweep in Gujarat, they removed the statue of Mahatma Gandhi from its original place in Parliament, he said. "Just think, if they had been given 400 seats, would they have spared the Constitution?" Khera said in a post in Hindi on X. The Parliament premises will sport a new look when the 18th Lok Sabha convenes for its maiden session in June as work is underway to integrate the entire complex, comprising four different buildings. As part of the redevelopment

ment of external areas, the statues of national icons, including those of Gandhi, Shivaji and Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, were to be moved to a lawn near Gate No 5 of the old Parliament building, which has been named as Samvidhan Sadan. This would pave the way for the creation of a vast lawn in front of the Gaja Dwar, which is used by the President and the Prime Minister to enter into the new Parliament building. The lawn can also be used for official ceremonies such as the President's address to the joint sitting of Parliament, usually during the Budget Session.

Trinamool Congress claims 3 BJP MPs in touch with them, party denies

GNS News Agency, June 10

The Trinamool Congress has claimed that three BJP MPs in Bengal are in touch with the party, according to sources. The development came two days after Mamata Banerjee-led ruling side, defying exit poll predictions, maintained its hold over the Bengal fortress. However, the BJP has dismissed the Trinamool's claims and termed them as "fake", sources added. Bengal, which voted in all seven phases of the Lok Sabha elections, were expected to incline towards the BJP. In most of their rallies in the eastern state, Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had in fact, predicted the saffron side would get 35 Lok Sabha seats in the state. Most pollsters predicted massive gains for the BJP in Bengal, including India Today-Axis My India that forecast 26-31 seats for the BJP and between 11 and 14 for the Trinamool Congress. However, the Trinamool Congress crumbled the exit poll projections and limited the Modi-Shah wave. Mamata Banerjee's side won 29 seats, bettering its 2019 tally when the Trinamool Congress won 22 constituencies.

Karnataka Minister resigns after allegations in illegal money transfer case



GNS News Agency, June 10

Karnataka ST Welfare Minister B Nagendra resigned on Thursday after his name cropped up in an illegal money transfer issue that came to light after a state government employee in Shivamogga died by suicide. Chandrashekharan P, accounts superintendent of the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd, died by suicide on May 26, leaving behind a death note. The note revealed the unauthorised transfer of Rs 187 crore belonging to the state-run Corporation from its bank account, and from that, Rs 88.62 crore was illegally moved to various accounts allegedly belonging to "well-known" IT companies and a Hyderabad-based cooperative bank.

Chandrasekharan named his superiors and the Minister in the death note, and it also pointed out that he was 'harassed' by his colleagues who allegedly used him for "misappropriation of funds for personal gains", police said. Earlier, Nagendra met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. "Not wanting to embarrass the party, he (Nagendra) voluntarily came forward and has resigned. We did not ask him to resign. We had a discussion with him," Shivakumar said as quoted by news agency PTI. Shivakumar also said that Nagendra was ready for any probe, including by the CBI.

The suicide has led to a political row in the state with the BJP targeting the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government. Karnataka BJP chief BY Vijayendra alleged that Congress leaders were indulging in corruption under the guise of working for Dalits and tribal communities. Earlier, the police had filed an FIR against three government officials for abetment of suicide (IPC Section 306). Further investigation into the case is underway.

Whoever forms govt at Centre, keep space for dialogue open: Rakesh Tikait



"'Andolan' (protest) arises when there are problems in the country. We want that whoever forms the government, they should keep space for talks open," Tikait, who is BKU spokesperson, told reporters in Muzaffarnagar.

GNS News Agency, June 10

Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait on Thursday said whoever forms the new government at the Centre, they should keep space for dialogue with farmers open. Tikait's remarks came as the BJP-led NDA is set to form the next government. "'Andolan' (protest) arises when there are problems in the country. We want that whoever forms the government, they should keep space for talks open," Tikait, who is BKU spokesperson, told reporters in Muzaffarnagar. The BKU is part of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of farmer unions which had led the 2020-21 protest against the Narendra Modi government, leading to withdrawal of three contentious agri-marketing laws. Now, several farmer unions have been demanding a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops. Tikait said the last government did not talk to farmers after January 22, 2021. "There have been no talks (with farmer groups) in 2022 and 2023, and now it is 2024," he added.

On the BJP falling short of a majority in the Lok Sabha on its own, Tikait claimed, "We had already told you that BJP leaders were defeating their candidates (in UP)...they wanted that their party should come to power but their MPs should lose so they would get the ticket in future. This was everyone's planning." The influential farmer leader took a swipe at several BJP ministers, including Sanjeev Balyan who contested from Muzaffarnagar and Ajay Mishra 'Teni' (Kheri seat). Both the BJP leaders lost the Lok Sabha polls. "Victory and loss are part and parcel of elections. There was trouble in the whole country, and the public punishes but without saying anything. The public works silently," Tikait said. Asked if he saw Modi becoming the prime minister for a third time in a row, Tikait said he was not an astrologer to make such a prediction.

On Bihar Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) chief Nitish Kumar's key role in central government formation, Tikait said, "Nitish Kumar will go wherever he gets benefit. It is not a crime to rob the 'robbers'. He will also negotiate his deal well." Results for elections to 543 Lok Sabha seats were announced on June 4. The BJP emerged as the largest party with victory on 240 seats followed by the Congress with 99 seats and the Samajwadi Party with 37 seats. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP's seats were reduced to 33 this time from 62 in 2019 and 71 in 2014 out of the total 80 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

Calangute village in Goa plans to collect entry tax from tourists



GNS News Agency, June 10

The village panchayat of Calangute in North Goa has decided to make it mandatory for tourists to show the proof of hotel reservation or pay tax for entry into its limits. Calangute is a popular tourist destination in Goa known for its beach. Talking to PTI on Thursday, Calangute

sarpanch Joseph Sequeira said on Thursday that the village panchayat is scheduled to hold a meeting on Friday, wherein it plans to adopt a resolution making it mandatory for tourists arriving there either to show a hotel reservation receipt or pay tax at the entry points.

"The panchayat would adopt the resolution and forward it to the district collector in Panaji for further action. Once approved, its implementation will happen from the next tourist season (starting in October)," he said. "The panchayat decided to take the step after realising that groups of tourists, packed in jeeps, buses and other vehicles arrive at the beach, litter it and just go away without bothering to clean the place," he said. The decision to impose entry tax was taken in order to maintain cleanliness and decency and reduce the traffic issues faced by the local residents, Sequeira said. "We want our village to be clean so that we can attract quality tourists," he said. Sequeira said these restrictions will only be meant for tourists and not the locals. He gave the example of Mahabaleswar town in Maharashtra, which collects entry tax from tourists. "We will do it on lines of Mahabaleswar Municipal Council," he said.

Odisha govt reassures public amid confusion over Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana continuity

GNS News Agency, June 10

The Odisha government on Thursday assured that Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) cardholders will continue to receive treatment amid allegations that some private hospitals were denying cashless services to beneficiaries during the transition period. The confusion arose following the BJP's announcement that it would implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme and replace BSKY once it forms the state government. As the BJP was poised to take power in Odisha, some hospitals reportedly began refusing to honour BSKY benefits to patients, sources claimed.

Chief secretary P K Jena reassured that BSKY cardholders will continue to receive treatment at empaneled hospitals. According to available data, on June 4, empaneled hospitals booked treatment packages for over 5,800 patients, and on June 5, treatment packages were booked for more than 5,389 patients.

"The MoUs on BSKY signed with empaneled hospitals remain in force," Jena said, adding that the government has instructed all empaneled hospitals to continue providing treatment as usual. "The health and family welfare department has clarified that the BSKY scheme remains active with approved budgetary support. Hospitals are to ensure that patients do not face any difficulty or disruption in availing services," an official statement said. Jena said people being denied treatment at any hospital under BSKY can register their complaints by



calling the health department's helpline 104. He underscored that hospitals found violating government orders will face strict consequences. Meanwhile, Governor Raghuraj Das expressed deep concern over media reports regarding the confusion over BSKY health cards and that beneficiaries are being deprived of health services. Das has asked Jena to take appropriate steps immediately so that no confusion regarding BSKY arises and beneficiaries get uninterrupted healthcare services. Sources said some private hospitals fear that the scheme may be discontinued and their dues may not be cleared due to the change in government.

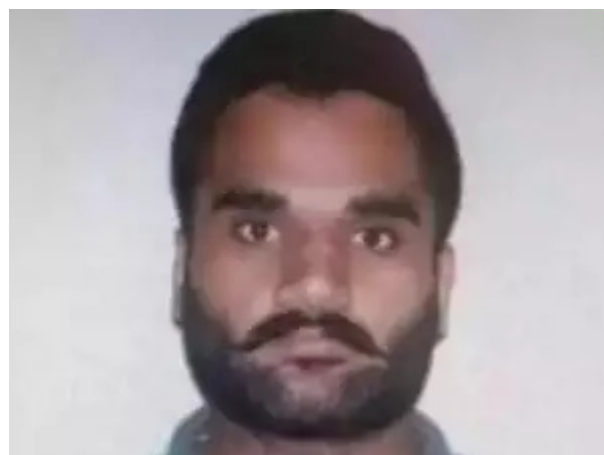
NIA searches multiple locations in Punjab linked with aides of Canada-based terrorist Goldy Brar

GNS News Agency, June 10

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches at locations linked to Canada-based terrorist Goldy Brar in Punjab, probing an "extortion and firing case." Nine locations were searched, and information on Brar and his gang is sought from the public. Brar is implicated in various crimes, including the murder of Sidhu Moosewala. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday conducted searches at various locations linked to the associates of Canada-based terrorist Goldy Brar in Punjab as part of its probe in an "extortion and firing case". The anti-terror agency also sought people's help for information about Satinderjit Singh alias Goldy Brar and his gang, according to an official statement. A total of nine locations associated with Brar and his aides were searched by the NIA teams in connection with an extortion and firing case registered in Chandigarh, it said.

The searches come a day after the NIA filed a charge sheet against Brar and 11 others for their alleged involvement in the killing of Karni Sena chief Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi last year in Jaipur. The NIA has also released telephone numbers, where people can share information about the terrorist and his associates or details of any threat calls they might have received from the gang. The information can be shared on landline number 0172-2682901 or mobile number 7743002947 (for Telegram/ WhatsApp), the statement issued by the NIA said. The crackdown on Thursday was part of NIA's investigations into a case pertaining to demand for extortion money and firing of gunshots at the residence of a victim in Chandigarh. The case was originally registered by the local police on January 20 this year and the NIA took over the probe on March 18.

"Today's searches covered the districts of Mohali, Patiala, Hoshiarpur and Fatehgarh Sahib, as part of the NIA's sustained crackdown on individual terrorists engaged in criminal-terrorist activities in India. Incriminating material, including digital devices, have been seized,"



the probe agency said. Investigations so far have revealed that Brar, along with one Goldy of Rajpura (Punjab), had hatched a criminal conspiracy to generate funds by demanding extortion money from businessmen of Punjab, Chandigarh and surrounding areas, the NIA said. They were also providing arms and ammunition to members of terrorist gangs formed by Brar, the statement said. "They were additionally involved in smuggling and sale of narcotics and channelisation of the proceeds from these sales," it said. As per NIA investigations, Brar and his associates, based abroad, were continuously recruiting vulnerable youth into their gangs, using them for identification of extortion targets, firing in front of houses of those targets who refuse to pay the extortion money, and inducing them in sale and purchase of narcotics, weapon smuggling etc. Brar, also known to be a key member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, had claimed responsibility for the murder of popular Punjabi singer Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, popularly known as Sidhu Moosewala, on May 29, 2022.

since the season began on June 1, the IMD says. The monsoon will advance further across India in the next few days but could weaken from next week, another weather official said. "The monsoon will take a pause for few days," the official added. "Except for the west coast, most of the other regions will receive less rain," the official added. Farmers need to wait for proper moisture levels in the soil before sowing summer crops and should not sow them in a hurry, the official said.

Both officials sought anonymity because they were not authorised to brief the media. The lifeblood of the nearly \$3.5-trillion economy, the monsoon brings nearly 70% of the rain India needs to water farms and refill reservoirs and aquifers. In the absence of irrigation, nearly half the farmland in the world's second-biggest producer of rice, wheat and sugar depends on the annual rains that usually run from June to September.

Solar power and EV policy on priority list of Delhi govt once MCC is lifted



GNS News Agency, June 10

With the conclusion of the country's largest electoral activity and the impending lifting of the Model Code of Conduct, various pending government initiatives and projects in Delhi are poised to gain momentum, as per Tol reports. Among the numerous initiatives of the Delhi government, the mohalla bus service scheme and the second edition of policies regarding electric vehicles and solar power await approval. As the biggest electoral activity is the country is over and the Model Code of Conduct is to be lifted soon, several pending government initiatives and projects in Delhi are now expected to move forward, reported Tol. Among many initiatives of Delhi government, mohalla bus service scheme and the second edition of the policies on electric vehicles and solar power are awaiting approval. Additionally, road development work at 341 locations under the Dilli Gramoday Abhiyan, redevelopment of New Delhi Municipal Council's Shivaji Stadium bus terminal, repair work at Kama Market opposite New Delhi Railway Station and the opening of a 3km cycle track in Nehru Park are among work that is pending. Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government had announced the Delhi Solar Policy, 2023, that aims to help consumers with monthly electricity usage exceeding 400 units to achieve zero bills through the installation of rooftop solar plants. The government is expected to soon launch a portal to assist interested indi-

viduals in installing rooftop panels on their homes, reported Tol quoting an official.

Additionally, government is also expected to expedite work on a revised policy to promote electric vehicles, which will include attractive subsidy features. The Delhi government has completed talks with two companies to operate app-based premium buses equipped with air conditioning, reclining seats and WiFi. "The state govt was waiting for the elections to be over to roll out the scheme and now the right time has come," said the official. Repair and maintenance on cards of Delhi government:

Once the election code is lifted, the Public Works Department (PWD) plans to prioritise projects such as flyover maintenance, starting with the one at Sarita Vihar before moving on to others. Minor projects like maintenance of buildings and waterproofing of courts and hospitals are also pending, Tol's reported added further. Earlier this year, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi proposed various projects to the Delhi Development Authority regarding roads, drainage systems and streetlights in villages under the Dilli Gramoday Abhiyan. The majority of these works were recommended in villages in Najafgarh and Narela and in the south and west zones. According to PWD officials, they will follow up with the traffic police to obtain approval for the Sarita Vihar flyover repair work, and once this is acquired, will begin the work of replacing the extension joints. "DDA has sanctioned 349 projects costing Rs 407.1 crore and, till March 11, tenders had been floated for 344 of them," an MCD official revealed to Tol. "After that, due to MCC imposition, the process for inviting agencies to implement the projects was put on hold except for eight of them. Now that the elections are over, we hope to speed up the work in the villages," the official added. Revamp of the decades-old Kama Market is also on the list, including painting the 73-year-old clock tower and the entrance of the complex. "In March, we approved the project to restore and revamp the market to its original glory. While some basic work was initiated, restoration of the façade and parking area can begin only once MCC is lifted," said an official. The maintenance of Mandi Road and the decongestion of the Mehrauli-Gurgaon Road is also expected to gain momentum and, in addition, PWD will now resume work on the pending proposal for land acquisition.

Extensive campaigns indicate Arvind Kejriwal not suffering from life-threatening ailment: Delhi court

GNS News Agency, June 10

The extensive campaigning tours and related events undertaken by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal indicate that he does not appear to be suffering from any serious or "life threatening" ailment, a Delhi court has held while denying him interim bail. In yet another setback to Kejriwal, the court on Wednesday dismissed his application for interim bail on medical grounds in the money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam, as reported by the PTI. "The extensive campaigning tours and related meetings/events undertaken by Arvind Kejriwal as highlighted during the course of arguments indicate that he does not appear to be suffering from any serious or 'life threatening' ailment so as to entitle him to the benefit," Special Judge Kaveri Baweja said.

In the order, the judge further held that grant of interim bail for conducting tests in order to determine if high ketone levels or the stated weight loss could have caused Diabetic Ketoacidosis "stands on an even weaker footing than a medical ground". "Apparently, as per the Applicant himself, he seeks interim bail for 'diagnosis' of an anticipated ailment which, cannot be said to be a valid ground for the relief prayed for, particularly when this concern can be addressed while the Applicant is in custody... There appears to be no reason as to why such diagnostic tests of the Applicant cannot be got conducted while he is in custody," the judge said. The judge, however, directed the Tihar jail authorities to take care of his medical needs in judicial custody.

"Since the health concerns of the accused must be addressed immediately, the Medical Board of AIIMS, which was directed to be constituted vide order dated April 22, 2024 of this court, is hereby directed to be revived and/or re-constituted, if deemed fit by the Director, AIIMS, New Delhi, having regard to the nature of ailments the Applicant is stated to be suffering from," the judge said. The Medical Board shall, besides complying with the earlier order dated April 22, also examine the applicant and prescribe such diagnostic tests as deemed appropriate within three days, the judge said. "The jail authorities shall ensure that the prescribed recommended tests/evaluations of the applicant are conducted without any delay. Upon receipt of the Test Reports, the Medical Board shall prescribe the further necessary treatment as may be required and the Jail Authorities shall ensure that the treatment so prescribed by the Medical Board is provided to the Applicant forthwith, under intimation to this court," the judge said. During the hearing on Saturday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had opposed the application, saying he campaigned throughout the Lok Sabha elections but "now when he has to surrender, he suddenly claims to be ill".

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener surrendered on Sunday at the Tihar jail as the tenure of his interim bail granted by the Supreme Court expired on June 1. The case relates to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22. The judge had observed that the application was for the grant of interim bail on medical grounds and not for the extension of the interim bail granted by the Supreme Court. The top court had on May 10 granted 21-day interim bail to the chief minister to enable him to campaign during the Lok Sabha polls. It had directed him to surrender on June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll got over.

Kejriwal campaigned in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi and Maharashtra after being released on interim bail. During the hearing of his application, Kejriwal's counsel told the court that he was ill and needed treatment. The ED's counsel opposed the application, citing his campaign during the Lok Sabha polls and his "sudden" claim about being ill. Seeking the relief, Kejriwal's counsel told the court that despite his ill health, the AAP leader campaigned because that was the purpose for which the interim bail was granted by the Supreme Court. "Stress due to the campaign increased his sugar level. Today, when I (Kejriwal) go back to jail without tests being done, I am



subjecting myself to risks. This is only to ensure the fact that the treatment given to me is in conformity to the ailment I have. I am not asking for interim bail for two months or three months. What is the prejudice that it will cause to them?" the counsel said. The court has, meanwhile, sought the ED's response by June 7 on Kejriwal's another application seeking regular bail in the case.

Be prepared to beat the heat: Health ministry to states

GNS News Agency, June 10

The government Thursday asked all states and union territories to immediately implement the health action plan to ensure safety of people amid rising temperatures that are triggering intense heatwaves across the country. In a virtual meeting chaired by director general of health services in the health ministry Dr Atul Goel, the government asked states and UTs to assess preparedness of healthcare facilities in all districts, check availability of ambulances and set up dedicated heat stroke rooms at all healthcare facilities as part of the plan. It also directed the states to ensure that people are forewarned about the heatwave forecasts issued by India Meteorological Department (IMD). Besides, the health ministry asked the states for sensitisation and capacity building of medical officers and healthcare staff on heat-related illness symptoms, case identification, clinical management, emergency cooling and surveillance reporting. It also directed the states to have in place appropriate fire prevention measures, such as proper storage of flammable materials and regular and optimal preventive maintenance of electrical circuits and systems. "Providing staff training on fire safety protocols, evacuation procedures, and use of fire-fighting equipment," the ministry said in a statement, listing detailed measures and steps to be undertaken by states. "Installation and optimum maintenance of fire detection and suppression systems, including smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, and sprinklers." The state health departments were also advised to issue advisory and guidelines on strengthening the health system's preparedness for heat-related illnesses and for conducting regular mock emergency drills "without compromise". Health officials were also told to establish an emergency response plan with SOPs for evacuating patients, staff, and visitors in the event of a fire, it said. The ministry had in May, and before that in March, asked the states to take proactive measures to prevent incidents caused by extreme heat and to take all preventive measures in respect to fire safety. As per the forecast issued by IMD on May 27, above-normal monthly maximum temperatures are likely in June over most parts of the country, except in parts of southern peninsular India, where normal to below normal temperatures are most likely.

AIADMK blames Annamalai for the party's exit from BJP-led NDA alliance



GNS News Agency, June 10

After the DMK-led INDIA alliance secured a clear majority in the Lok Sabha polls in Tamil Nadu, the principal opposition party, AIADMK, blamed the BJP's state chief, K Annamalai, on Thursday for the party's decision to part ways with the NDA. In a press briefing, AIADMK leader SP Velumani said that if it weren't for him, the party, in alliance with the NDA, would have won 35 seats.

Highlighting AIADMK's performance in the polls, Velumani said that the party was successful in increasing its vote share from 19.39 per cent in 2019 to 20.3 per cent in 2024. He claimed that the party severed ties with the NDA due to Annamalai's alleged insults to the legacies of Anna and Jayalalithaa.

Slamming Annamalai, he stated, "Earlier, we were in alliance with the BJP under the leadership of Tamilisai Soundararajan and later, L Murugan. However, after Annamalai assumed power, he continued to criticize our leaders, including Amma, Anna, and our leader, Edapadi K. Palanisamy, despite our alliance. Annamalai's actions led to our decision to exit the alliance. If the alliance had continued, we would have secured 35 seats." In contrast to the last election, where the AIADMK was able to secure one constituency, the party faced defeat in all 39 Lok Sabha seats this time. Once a dominant force, the Dravidian party has now been pushed to third position in 12 key constituencies, with the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coming in second place behind the DMK. The BJP secured the second position in nine of these seats.

Why 'Naya Kashmir' chose jailed Engineer Rashid over Omar Abdullah

GNS News Agency, June 10

June 4 was a day that two former Chief Ministers of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti would like to forget in a hurry. While Omar Abdullah, the National Conference (NC) Vice President, lost from the Baramulla constituency, People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti lost from Anantnag in the Lok Sabha elections. In what is being termed as a big upset in North Kashmir, independent candidate Abdul Rashid, popularly known as 'Engineer Rashid', turned into a 'giant killer' by trouncing Omar Abdullah by a whopping 2 lakh votes.

What makes the debacle worse for Abdullah is that Rashid fought the election from Delhi's high security Tihar jail, where he is incarcerated under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Rashid was arrested after the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. Political observers say Engineer Rashid's victory in many ways is the victory of Indian democracy. He filed his nomination papers while in jail, and his family was uncertain about whether he would be allowed to contest. But since he is only an accused and not proven guilty yet, the Election Commission accepted his nomination. From there started his fairytale electoral journey.

With no money, no organisational structure, and no election strategy, Rashid's son Abrar Ahmed started his road shows with the help of some friends. Within days, this unique campaign started attracting large crowds, the sympathy factor seemed to help him connect with the masses. From kids to youth, and even the elderly joined his road shows. "I started with 20 supporters, the intent was to meet people and make them understand our cause. When I saw people joining us in big numbers, especially the youth who even came barefoot to be with us, I realised we could win. This dream campaign that was visualised without any money, big party or election strategy, can come true. Today is the day of people's victory," says an overjoyed Abrar Ahmed, who ran a historic campaign for his father in a matter of two weeks, taking North Kashmir by storm.

According to political observers, this is a rare case of an organic campaign for a jailed leader, where the masses lent their support in the hope that a victory for Rashid would get him out of jail. The sympathy wave for Engineer Rashid drowned the campaigns of heavyweights like Omar Abdullah and Sajjad Gani Lone of the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference. Abrar Ahmed's campaign for his jailed father is also a case study of how to overcome big money, proper election strategy, robust social media teams, and past electoral experience of two big rivals. What also worked for Engineer Rashid was the ability of his campaign to wake up the boycott bastion



that till date had been influenced by the separatist ideology of boycotting the democratic process. This segment of voters too came out in support of Rashid, as they felt that he was being punished for his "unwavering commitment to uphold the dignity of the people". Post Article 370 abrogation, while every political party in Kashmir that claimed to be fighting for its restoration seemed to have surrendered and moved on, Engineer Rashid was seen as a Lone Ranger who was being punished for not compromising on his principles.

While this dramatic script was unfolding in North Kashmir, South and Central Kashmir witnessed the conventional electoral battle between two old rivals, the NC and the PDP. The PDP had a lot more at stake as far as the Anantnag parliamentary segment was concerned, not just because its party chief Mehbooba Mufti was in the fray, but also due to delimitation of the constituency. It was no more the erstwhile South Kashmir seat, considered a PDP bastion. It had been redrawn, with Poonch and Rajouri merged with Anantnag. So the equations had changed, and the NC strategy to field a strong Gujjar leader, Mian Altaf Ahmed, who also enjoyed a spiritual connect with the community, was a masterstroke. The Gujjar vote consolidated for the National Conference, as Poonch and Rajouri have a sizeable Gujjar vote bank. This, along with a low voter turnout in the traditional pro-PDP zones of Anantnag and Kulgam, ensured Mehbooba Mufti had very little elbow room to re-strategise or turn the tide. Indeed, Mehbooba's loss in Anantnag is being seen as another body blow to the party, which is a pale shadow of its erstwhile self. "I thank the people for their overwhelming support. It's a people's victory. I will try my best to work for the people. Mehbooba ji is like my sister, but in elections win and loss are destined," said Mian Altaf after his victory from the Anantnag seat. For Kashmir, this general election was historic in many ways – as an all-time high voter turnout, with a majority of first-time voters casting their ballot for change. People reposed their faith in democracy, while expressing the hope that Jammu and Kashmir would see Assembly elections soon.

Judges reflect sense of continuity of values amid elections: CJI Chandrachud at Oxford Union Society

GNS News Agency, June 10

While elections lie at the core of India's constitutional democracy, judges reflect a sense of continuity of constitutional values that protect the system, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has said. Addressing the Oxford Union Society on June 5, on the topic of the humanising role adjudicators can play in society, the senior-most judge of India's apex court highlighted the role of technology in injecting greater transparency into the judicial system.

Acknowledging some of the "unfair" criticism aimed at judges on social media, the Chief Justice asserted that the overall impact of technology is to help the judiciary reach out to a wider section of society. "Elections lie at the core of constitutional democracy... judges are not elected in India and for a reason; judges reflect a sense of continuity of conditions, a continuity of constitutional values," he said in response to a question on the general elections, the results of which were declared earlier in the day. "The judiciary has a vital role to play in a democracy, which is that we reflect a sense of tradition and we also reflect a sense of what the future of a good society should be," Chief Justice Chandrachud said. Asked about political and societal pressures he may have faced while handing down judgments, the Chief Justice stated that he has never faced a "sense of political pressure from the powers that be" in his 24 years as a judge. "We live lives which are relatively isolated from the political arm of the government... but obviously judges have to be conversant with the impact of their decisions on the polity at large. That's not political pressure but an understanding by the court of the likely impact of a decision," he said.

Chief Justice Chandrachud, who took questions from the student audience members, was asked about the Supreme Court's Special Marriage Act judgment that ruled against legalising same-sex marriage in India last year. "I'm not here to defend the judgment because, as a judge, I believe once a judgment is delivered, it becomes the property of not just the nation but global humanity. The Special Marriage Act was a law enacted by Parliament... which contemplates a marriage in a heterosexual

relationship," he said, going on to share that he was in the minority in that case in a certain specific aspect as he was in favour of recognising civil unions for same-sex couples "until such time as Parliament stepped in".

"Three of my colleagues didn't agree with us because they felt even the recognition of same-sex unions was beyond the purview of the court... What happens in courts in modern democracies is not really to be looked at in terms of the substantive outcomes of the case. The court is involved in a continuous process of dialogue, not only with the litigating parties but a dialogue with civil society," he said. This was the main motivation behind his decision to livestream important constitutional cases, he added.

"We need to take the process of justice and the administration of law to the homes and the hearts of people," he said. As an independent, student-led society with a membership primarily drawn from the University of Oxford, the Oxford Union Society, commonly referred to as the Oxford Union, dates back to 1823 as one of the world's leading debating societies created to uphold the principles of free speech. In his keynote address, Chief Justice Chandrachud spoke at length about the judiciary as an instrument of justice that brings order and certainty and combats the dehumanising effects in society through a humanising approach towards adjudication.

"Technological intervention has humanised the process for the parties and the administrative staff of our courts. It is my duty, however, to place a small caveat: I'm not a proponent of the complete automation of procedures. Since I believe that the absence of the human mind will remove the human element from the process," he noted. "It is important that we understand and value the pros and cons of technological usage to ensure a humanised mechanism of justice. Artificial Intelligence is replete with unique possibilities for the future. We must also ensure that we impose guardrails to control Artificial Intelligence itself and not shift the process of communication from a judge to a robot," Chief Justice Chandrachud added.

With U.P. at the centre of the 2024 LS poll results, new book details how the BJP averted the removal of Yogi in 2021



GNS News Agency, June 10

When Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal stepped out of jail on bail during the Lok Sabha campaign, his claim that Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath was in danger of losing his post like several other BJP CMs created more than a few ripples across the political firmament. Journalist Shyamal Yadav's new book, *At the Heart of Power: The Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh*, now throws light on how Mr. Adityanath was indeed in danger of being replaced, back in 2021. The book, published by Rupa Publications, is an account of the lives and tenures of 21 CMs of India's most politically significant State. In the chapter about the current CM, Mr. Yadav writes that, in May and June of 2021, several meetings were organised both in Delhi and Lucknow to discuss whether Mr.

Adityanath was to be removed from the post or not. There had been demands from BJP leaders and workers in the State to remove him for a variety of reasons, including the alienation of the Brahmin community, claims that the CM was being aloof from the party organisation, and frequent paper leaks in government recruitment exams.

There was also talk, Mr. Yadav writes, of frequent tussles between Mr. Adityanath and his deputy, Keshav Prasad Maurya. "Amid his ongoing tussle with deputy CM Maurya, after intervention from some RSS leaders, he made a surprise visit to Maurya's residence on June 22nd, 2021 in an attempt to mend fences. Before Yogi Adityanath could be convinced about the change of leadership, the BJP assessed that if he was removed, the party would suffer," writes Mr. Yadav.

The matter was finally settled when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in Lucknow for a government event, met with the Chief Minister at the city's Raj Bhawan. After the meeting on November 21, 2021, Mr. Adityanath tweeted a picture of the pair, with Mr. Modi's hand on his shoulder, accompanied by a poem which, translated into English, reads thus: "We have started a journey with a commitment, sacrificing our body and mind, to bring a sunrise; have to go high above the sky and make a new India." The BJP's current predicament in U.P. has brought this incident into sharp relief, and Mr. Adityanath is likely to be part of the State's political future for a long time to come.

Health Ministry reworks protocol as India's TB elimination drive plateaus

GNS News Agency, June 10

India's goal to achieve rapid decline in the burden of tuberculosis (TB) morbidity and mortality, while working towards the elimination of TB in the country by 2025, has plateaued, a senior Health Ministry official said. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is looking at reworking the protocol, the official added, specifically TB medication and its duration, to reboot the TB-free initiative with zero deaths, disease, and poverty resulting from the disease. According to the Health Ministry, India has been engaged in TB control activities for more than 50 years, yet the disease continues to be the country's severe health crisis. TB kills an estimated 480,000 Indians every year or over 1,400 patients every day. Additionally, the country also has more than a million 'missing' TB cases annually, which are not notified. Most remain either undiagnosed, or unaccountably and inadequately diagnosed and treated in the private sector.

"We are sure that this tragic loss of life, and continued suffering and poverty, needs to end. There are several new technologies which help in early detection and we are also better prepared to address TB. We now have advanced and effective interventions and technologies for diagnosis, treatment and care of TB," the official said. India has mandated the notification of all TB cases, and has integrated TB programmes with general health services under the National Health Mission. Alongside, there has been an expansion of diagnostic services, service expansion in programmatic management of drug-resistant TB (PMDT), single-window service for TB-HIV cases, national drug resistance surveillance, and the revision of partnership guidelines.

The Health Ministry, however, maintains there is a need to recognise that more needs to be done to drastically reduce the incidence of TB in India. It added that although India has managed to scale up basic TB services in the public health system, treating more than 10



million TB patients under the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP), the rate of decline is too slow to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and 2035 End TB targets. "New, comprehensively-deployed interventions are required to hasten the rate of decline of incidence of TB many fold, to more than 10-15% annually. The requirements for moving towards TB elimination have been integrated into the four strategic pillars of 'Detect – Treat – Prevent – Build' (DTPB)," the Ministry said in its report on the National Strategic Plan for TB Elimination 2017-2025. A paper titled 'Progress and challenges in achieving tuberculosis elimination in India by 2025: A systematic review and meta-analysis' notes that India, in particular, faces a daunting challenge in its fight against TB. With an estimated 2.64 million cases in 2021, India accounts for about 25% of the world's TB burden. The mortality rate, excluding HIV co-infected individuals, was approximately 450,000 in the same year, highlighting the severe impact of TB on the country's public health landscape. The complexity of TB in India is further exacerbated by factors such as drug resistance, co-infections with HIV, socio-economic challenges, and disparities in healthcare access. In response, the Indian government ambitiously aimed to eliminate TB by 2025.

At least 93% of Lok Sabha poll winners are crorepatitis: ADR analysis

GNS News Agency, June 10

A staggering 93% of the candidates who won the 2024 Lok Sabha elections are crorepatitis, up from 88% in 2019, according to an analysis by poll rights body Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR). The top three wealthiest candidates are TDP's Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani from Andhra Pradesh's Guntur constituency with assets worth ₹5,705 crore, BJP's Konda Vishweshwar Reddy from Telangana's Chevella with total assets amounting to ₹4,568 crore and BJP's Naveen Jindal from Haryana's Kurukshetra with assets worth ₹1,241 crore. According to the analysis, 227 (95%) of the BJP's 240 winning candidates, 92 (93%) of the Congress' 99, 21 (95%) of the DMK's 22, 27 (93%) of the TMC's 29 and 34 (92%) of the Samajwadi Party's 37 candidates have declared assets worth more than ₹1 crore. All winning candidates of the AAP (3), the JDU (12) and the TDP (16) are crorepatitis, ADR data showed.

The analysis also delves into candidates' chances of winning based on their financial backgrounds. It found that the probability of a crorepati candidate clinching victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections stood at 19.6%, compared to a meagre 0.7% for candidates with assets less than a crore. The analysis also provides a breakdown of wealth distribution among the winning candidates. While 19% of the candidates fall within the bracket of ₹5 to 10 crore, 32% hold assets ranging between ₹1 and 5 crore.

Only about 1% of the winning candidates have assets worth less than ₹20 lakh. Among major parties, the average assets per winning candidate vary significantly. The TDP leads with an average of ₹442.26 crore per winner, followed by the BJP with ₹50.04 crore, the DMK with ₹31.22 crore, the Congress with ₹22.93 crore, TMC with ₹17.98 crore and SP with ₹15.24 crore. The analysis also highlights disparities within the financial profiles of winning candidates. While some boast of substantial assets, others have relatively low worth. For instance, BJP's Jyotirmay Singh Mahato from West Bengal's Purulia has declared assets totalling a mere ₹5 lakh. Similarly, TMC's Mitali Bag from West Bengal's Arambag holds assets worth ₹7 lakh. Assets of SP's Priya Saroj from Uttar Pradesh's Machhlishahr are valued at ₹11 lakh. In addition, the analysis identifies candidates with high liabilities. TDP's Pemmasani tops the list with liabilities exceeding ₹1,038 crore. DMK's S. Jagathrathakan



from Tamil Nadu's Arakkonam has liabilities worth ₹649 crore and TDP's Prabhakar Reddy Vemireddy from Andhra Pradesh's Nellore has liabilities worth ₹197 crore.

Villagers protest against Maoists

GNS News Agency, June 10

Mulugu: Family members of Yellandula Yesu, who was killed in a landmine explosion suspected to have been planted by Maoists in the Kongala hills forest under Wajedu mandal of the district on June 3, took out a rally along with the villagers against Maoists on the highway passing through Jagannadhapuram village on Wednesday. They demanded that the government do justice to them. A large number of people took part in the rally.

They carried banners such as "Is Maoist movement to kill innocent people". Yesu, along with three villagers from Jagannadhapuram village, had ventured into the forest to collect firewood. As they were busy collecting firewood, Yesu stepped on a landmine, resulting in an explosion. He died on the spot. The other three escaped unhurt. Police defuse landmine. Meanwhile, a police team defused a landmine planted by the Maoists near Chelimeela village under Venkatapuram police station limits in the district. According to reports, the local people noticed a landmine planted on a mud road near Chelimeela village and informed the police.

Israeli strike on Gaza school kills 30 people



GNS News Agency, June 10

An Israeli strike early Thursday on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians in central Gaza killed more than 30 people, including 23 women and children, according to local health officials. The strike came after the military said it was launching new air and ground operations in central Gaza and an international medical group reported soaring casualties. The latest operations appear to mark a widening of Israel's nearly eight-month offensive, launched after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah received at least 30 bodies from the strike on the school and another six from a separate strike on a home, according to hospital records and an Associated Press reporter at the hospital. Hamas-run media had earlier reported a higher toll from the strike on the school. The Israeli military said its fighter jets struck the school run by the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, known by the acronym UNRWA. The Israeli military claimed, without immediately offering evidence, that Hamas and the Islamic Jihad used the school as cover for their operations.

UNRWA schools across Gaza have functioned as shelters since the start of the war, which has displaced most of the territory's population of 2.3 million Palestinians. "Before the strike, a number of steps were taken to reduce the risk of harming uninvolved civilians during the strike, including conducting aerial surveillance, and additional intelligence information," the Israeli military said. Both strikes occurred in Nuseirat, one of several built-up refugee camps in Gaza dating back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled or were driven from their homes in what became the new state.

The latest war began with Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into Israel, in which militants killed some 1,200 people and took another 250 hostage. Israel's offensive has killed at least 36,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between fighters and civilians in its figures. The United States has thrown its weight behind a phased cease-fire and hostage release outlined by President Joe Biden last week. But Israel says it won't end the war without destroying Hamas, while the militant group is demanding a lasting cease-fire and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces.

The military said Wednesday that forces were operating "both above and below ground" in eastern parts of Deir al-Balah and the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza. It said the operation began with airstrikes on militant infrastructure, after which troops began a "targeted daylight operation" in both areas. Doctors Without Borders said at least 70 bodies and 300 wounded people, mostly women and children, were brought to a hospital in central Gaza on Tuesday and Wednesday after a wave of Israeli strikes. The international charity said Wednesday in a post on X that Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital is struggling to treat "a huge influx of patients, many of them arriving with severe burns, shrapnel wounds, fractures, and other traumatic injuries." Gaza's health system has nearly collapsed through almost eight months of war. The hospital, which was treating some 700 wounded and sick people before the latest strikes, said Wednesday that one of its two electrical generators had stopped working, threatening its ability to keep operating ventilators and incubators for premature babies. Israel has routinely launched airstrikes in all parts of Gaza since the start of the war and has carried out massive ground operations in the territory's two largest cities, Gaza City and Khan Younis, that left much of them in ruins. The military waged an offensive earlier this year for several weeks in Bureij and several other nearby refugee camps in central Gaza. Troops pulled out of the Jabaliya camp in northern Gaza last Friday after weeks of fighting caused widespread destruction. First responders have recovered the bodies of 360 people, mostly women and children, killed during the battles. Israel sent troops into Rafah last month in what it said was a limited incursion, but those forces are now operating in central parts of Gaza's southern-most city. More than 1 million people have fled Rafah since the start of the operation, with many heading toward central Gaza.

What's at stake in the European Parliament election this week



GNS News Agency, June 10

Nearly 400 million European Union citizens can go to the polls over the coming days to elect members of the European Parliament, or MEPs, in one of the biggest global democratic events. Far-right parties are seeking to gain more power amid a rise in the cost of living and farmers' discontent, while the wars in Gaza and Ukraine stay on the minds of voters. One of the biggest questions is whether European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will remain in charge as the public face of the EU. EU elections are held every five years across the 27-member bloc. This year marks the 10th parliamentary election since the first polls in 1979, and the first after Brexit. The vote takes place from June 6-9. Initial results can only be revealed on the evening of June 9, once polling stations have closed in all member countries. The voting is done by direct universal suffrage in a single ballot. The number of members elected in each country depends on the size of the population. It ranges from six for Malta, Luxembourg and Cyprus to 96 for Germany. In 2019, Europeans elected 751 lawmakers. Following the United Kingdom's departure from the EU in 2020, the number of MEPs fell to 705 with some of the 73 seats previously held by British MEPs redistributed to other member states.

After the election, the European Parliament will have 15 additional members, bringing the total to 720. Twelve countries will get extra MEPs. National political parties contest elections, but once they are elected, most of the lawmakers then join transnational political groups. People under 18 are allowed to vote in some countries. In Belgium, a law adopted in 2022 lowered the minimum voting age to 16. Germany, Malta and Austria permit 16-year-olds to vote. In Greece, the youngest voting age is 17. In all other member states, it's 18. A minimum age is also required to stand for election — from 18 in most countries to 25 in Italy and Greece. European Union elections usually don't bring a huge turnout, but there was a clear upturn in public interest in the 2019 election. At 50.7%, the turnout was eight points higher than in 2014 after steadily falling since 1979, when it reached 62%. In April, the latest edition of the European Parliament's Eurobarometer highlighted a surge of interest in the upcoming election. Around 71% of Europeans said they are likely to cast a ballot.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is at the forefront of citizens' minds, with defence and security seen as key campaign issues. At a national level, the EU's defence and security was mentioned first in nine countries. The economy, jobs, poverty and social exclusion, public health, climate change and the future of Europe are also featuring prominently as issues. The European Parliament is the only EU institution to be elected by European citizens. It's a real counterpower to the powerful EU's executive arm, the European Commission.

The parliament doesn't have the initiative to propose legislation, but its powers are expanding. It is now competent on a range of topics, voting on laws relating to climate, banking rules, agriculture, fisheries, security or justice. The legislature also votes on the EU budget, which is crucial to the implementation of European policies, including, for instance, aid delivered to Ukraine. Lawmakers are also a key element of the check and balances system since they need to approve the nomination of all EU commissioners, who are the equivalent of ministers. It can also force the whole commission to resign with a vote of a two-third majority. With 176 seats out of 705 as of the end of the last plenary session in April, the center-right European People's Party is the largest political group in the European Parliament. Ms. Von der Leyen is from the EPP and hopes to remain at the helm of the EU's executive arm after the election. The second-largest group is the S&D, the political group of the center-left Party of European Socialists, which currently holds 139 seats. The pro-business liberal and pro-European Renew group holds 102 seats ahead of an alliance made up of green and regionalist political parties that holds 72 seats. Two groups with far-right parties, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) and Identity and Democracy (ID), could be headed to becoming the third- and fourth-largest political groups at the European Parliament. The two groups have many divergences and it's unclear to what extent they could team up to affect the EU's agenda, especially the EU's efforts to support Ukraine against Russia in the war. The EPP and S&D are expected to remain stable. Pro-business liberals and greens could take a hit after they made big gains in the previous election. Once the weight of each political force is determined, MEPs will elect their president at the first plenary session, from July 16-19. Then, most likely in September after weeks of negotiations, they will nominate the president of the European Commission, following a proposal made by the member states.

In 2019, Ms. von der Leyen won a narrow majority (383 votes in favor, 327 against, 22 abstentions) to become the first woman to head the institution. Parliamentarians will also hear from the European commissioners before approving them in a single vote. Ms. Von der Leyen has a good chance to be appointed for another term, but she needs to secure the support of enough leaders. She has also antagonized many lawmakers by suggesting she could work with the hard right depending on the outcome of the elections.

Putin warns that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets

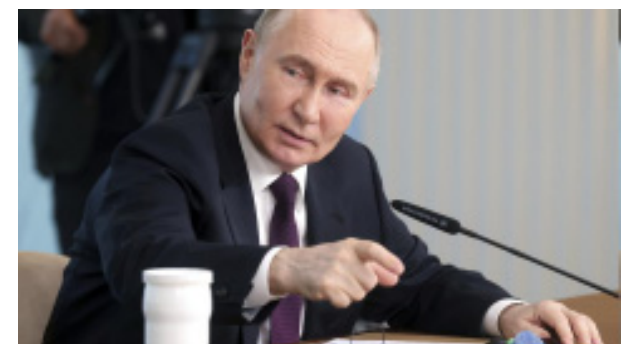
GNS News Agency, June 10

President Vladimir Putin warned on June 5 that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets in response to NATO allies allowing Ukraine to use their arms to attack Russian territory. Mr. Putin also reaffirmed Moscow's readiness to use nuclear weapons if it sees a threat to its sovereignty. The recent actions by the West will further undermine international security and could lead to "very serious problems," he said, taking questions from international journalists — something that has become extremely rare since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine. "That would mark their direct involvement in the war against the Russian Federation, and we reserve the right to act the same way," Mr. Putin added.

The United States and Germany recently authorized Ukraine to hit some targets on Russian soil with the long-range weapons they are supplying to Kyiv. On Wednesday, a Western official and a U.S. senator said Ukraine has used U.S. weapons to strike inside Russia under newly approved guidance from President Joe Biden that allows American arms to be used for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city. The official was not authorized to comment publicly on the sensitive matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Putin claimed that using some Western-supplied weapons involves military personnel of those countries controlling the missiles and selecting targets, and therefore he said Moscow could take "asymmetrical" steps elsewhere in the world. The U.S. military said it does not control the missiles it provides to Ukraine or the targets. "If they consider it possible to deliver such weapons to the combat zone to launch strikes on our territory and create problems for us, why don't we have the right to supply weapons of the same type to some regions of the world where they can be used to launch strikes on sensitive facilities of the countries that do it to Russia?" he said. "We will think about it," he told the journalists on the sidelines of the annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. Asked whether Russia could resort to using nuclear arms, Putin said the conditions for utilizing that arsenal are clearly spelled out in Moscow's security doctrine. "For some reason, they believe in the West that Russia will never use it," he said.

"Look at what is written there," he said of Russia's nuclear doctrine. "If somebody's actions threaten our sovereignty and territorial integrity, we consider it possible to use all means at our disposal." Even Russia's battlefield nuclear weapons are much more powerful than what the U.S. used against Japan in World War II, Putin said. Speaking to senior news leaders of international news agencies, including The Associated Press, for more than three hours, Putin also said nothing will change in terms of Russia-U.S. relations regardless of whether Biden or Donald Trump wins the American presidential election in November. "We will work with any president the American people elect," Putin said. "I say absolutely sincerely, I wouldn't say that we believe that after the election something will change on the Russian track in the American politics," he added. "We don't think so. We think nothing that serious will happen." Mr. Putin also said Trump's felony conviction at his hush money trial last week was the result of "the use of the court system as part of the internal political struggle." The Russian leader faced questions on various topics, although the more than two years of fighting in Ukraine dominated the session. Mr.



President Vladimir Putin is warning that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets elsewhere in the world in response to NATO allies allowing Ukraine to launch attacks on Russian territory

Putin claimed the West had opportunities to end the fighting in Ukraine but did not act on them, citing a letter he once supposedly wrote to Biden that said hostilities could end in two or three months if Washington stopped supplying Kyiv with weapons.

Asked about Russian military losses, Mr. Putin said that no country would reveal that information during hostilities but claimed without providing details that Ukraine's casualties are five times greater than Russia's. He also said Ukraine has more than 1,300 Russian troops in captivity, while more than 6,400 Ukrainian soldiers are being held in Russia. The claims could not be independently verified and some Western estimates put Russia's losses much higher than Ukraine's.

Asked by AP about the case of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, Putin said the U.S. is "taking energetic steps" to secure his release. Gershkovich was jailed over a year ago while on a reporting trip and charged with espionage. The journalist, his employer and the U.S. have denied the allegations, and Washington has declared him to be wrongfully detained. Mr. Putin said that any such releases "aren't decided via mass media" but through a "discreet, calm and professional approach." "And they certainly should be decided only on the basis of reciprocity," he added, an allusion to a potential prisoner swap. Mr. Putin has used the St. Petersburg forum as a showcase for touting Russia's development and seeking investors. The meeting with journalists took place in Gazprom's new global headquarters, a needle-shaped 81-story skyscraper overlooking the Gulf of Finland. While meetings with journalists were part of previous sessions, he has not taken questions from Western journalists at the St. Petersburg event since sending troops to Ukraine. Last year, journalists from countries that Russia regards as unfriendly — including the U.S., the U.K. and the European Union — were not invited, and Western officials and investors also steered clear of the session after wide-ranging sanctions were imposed on Moscow over Ukraine.

Trump election interference case paused in Georgia during challenge to prosecutor

GNS News Agency, June 10

A Georgia appeals court on Wednesday paused the criminal case accusing former U.S. president Donald Trump of seeking to subvert the 2020 election while it considers his bid to disqualify lead prosecutor Fani Willis, a court order showed. The order prevents the sprawling case against Mr. Trump and 14 co-defendants from moving toward trial while Mr. Trump appeals a judge's ruling allowing Willis, the Fulton County district attorney, to remain on the case.

It is another indication that the case, one of four facing Mr. Trump as he seeks to unseat President Joe Biden and return to the White House, will not go to trial before the November 5 election. A New York jury last week found Mr. Trump guilty of trying to cover up a hush money payment to a porn star, a verdict that Mr. Trump has vowed to appeal. The two federal cases against him, for trying to overturn his defeat and mishandling classified documents after leaving office, have also been bogged down by legal challenges. In the Georgia case, Mr. Trump and eight co-defendants are seeking to disqualify Willis' office over allegations that a romantic relationship with a former top deputy posed a conflict of interest.

Prosecutors have also signaled they will appeal a prior ruling that tossed out some criminal counts in the



indictment. Fulton County Judge Scott McAfee, who is overseeing the case, previously signaled he would address some pre-trial legal issues during the appeal, but Wednesday's order prevents him from taking any action.

The appeal is likely to take several months to resolve. The court earlier this week scheduled oral argument in October. Trump and the 14 co-defendants have pleaded not guilty to racketeering and other charges stemming from what prosecutors allege was a scheme to overturn Trump's narrow defeat in Georgia in the 2020 election.

UNICEF finds 90% of Gaza's children lack food needed for proper growth



GNS News Agency, June 10

UNICEF said on June 6 that nine out of 10 children in Gaza could not eat nutrients from enough food groups to ensure their healthy growth and development. "In the Gaza Strip, months of hostilities and restrictions on humanitarian aid have collapsed the food and health systems, resulting in catastrophic consequences for children and their families," UNICEF said.

It said that five sets of data collected between December 2023 and April 2024 had found that 9 out of 10 children in the Gaza Strip, which has been pounded by an Israeli offensive since last October, are suffering from severe food poverty, meaning that they are surviving on two or fewer food groups per day. "This is evidence of the horrific impact the conflict and restrictions are having on families' ability to meet children's food needs — and the speed at which it places children at risk of life-threatening malnutrition," UNICEF said. Israel says it puts no limit on humanitarian supplies for civilians in Gaza and has blamed the United Nations for slow deliveries, saying its operations are inefficient. But with pockets of famine emerging in Gaza, with some children dying from malnutrition and dehydration, even Israel's staunchest allies have increased pressure on it to do more to let in food.

In order to meet the minimum dietary diversity for healthy development, children must consume foods from at least five of the eight food groups defined by a dietary diversity score used by UNICEF and World Health Orga-

nization (WHO). These include breastmilk, eggs, dairy products, and meat, poultry and fish, among other groups. UNICEF said that globally, 27% of children are living in severe child food poverty in early childhood, which amounts to 181 million children under the age of 5. Israel's ground and air campaign was triggered when Hamas stormed southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing around 1,200 people and seizing 253 more as hostages, according to Israeli tallies. The offensive has killed more than 36,500 people in Gaza, according to health authorities in the Hamas-run enclave.

1.6 mn people worldwide fall ill daily due to eating contaminated food: WHO

GNS News Agency, June 10

New Delhi: A 1.6 million people, including 40 per cent of children under 5, worldwide fall ill due to the consumption of unsafe food, said Saima Wazed, WHO Regional Director on Thursday, ahead of World Food Safety Day. World Food Safety Day, marked annually on June 7, was established by the UN General Assembly in 2018 to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats associated with unsafe food. The theme this year is "Prepare for the unexpected." Every day, approximately 1.6 million people worldwide fall ill due to the consumption of unsafe food, said Saima, WHO Regional Director for South East Asia. Of these 40 per cent are children under 5, already at a higher risk of malnutrition and mortality due to unsafe food, she added. Saima said that unsafe food leads to reduced productivity and raises medical costs resulting from foodborne illnesses that amount to an estimated annual loss of \$110 billion, in low- and middle-income countries.

India offers USD 500 billion investment opportunities in clean energy, other sectors by 2030



India offers huge investment opportunities worth over USD 500 billion, particularly in clean energy value chain including renewables, green hydrogen and EV, by 2030, the commerce ministry said. This was stated by Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal, who is in Singapore for the two-day meet of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Clean Economy Investor Forum. The meeting, which started on Wednesday, brought together the region's top investors, clean economy companies, and start-ups to mobilise investments into sustainable infrastructure, climate technology, and renewable energy projects. The 14-member IPEF bloc was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region on May 23, 2022, in Tokyo. Together, they account for 40 per cent of the world's economic output and 28 per cent of trade.

The framework is structured around four pillars relating to trade, supply chains, clean economy and fair economy. India has joined all the pillars except the trade.

Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the US, and Vietnam are members of the bloc. Barthwal, during the inaugural IPEF Clean Economy Investor Forum, acknowledged the forum as a unique platform that brought global investors, policy makers, and academia under one roof, which would be instrumental in advancing sustainable infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific Region. The secretary while addressing the forum underlined the huge investment opportunities that "India offers of more than USD 500 billion, particularly in the clean energy value chain including renewables, green hydrogen and EV and its infrastructure transition, by 2030". Barthwal also highlighted key reforms around ease of doing business in India to improve business environment over the last decade. During the two-day event, more than 300 participants from financial institutions, multilateral development banks, venture capital funds, project owners, entrepreneurs and government agencies from IPEF partners actively participated under the sustainable infrastructure and climate tech engagement tracks.

In the sustainable infrastructure track, after the screening, "four companies (ReNew Power, Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd, Indusbridge Capital Advisors LLP, Founder,

SEIP, and Powerica Ltd) from India were shortlisted for pitching their concepts on energy transition, transport and logistics, and waste management/waste to energy to global investors," the ministry said. Similarly in the climate tech track, 10 Indian startups and companies (BluSmart, Recykal, LOHUM, Sea6 Energy, EVage Ventures, Kabira Mobility, Batx Energies, Newtrace and Alt Mobility, IgenErgi, Inc.) were selected to pitch their innovative ideas, technologies and solutions that contribute to mitigating or adapting to climate change.

Further, the ministry said that the forum resulted in USD 23 billion investment opportunities for sustainable infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific. The coalition estimates that its members, taken together, have over USD 25 billion in capital that can be deployed in Indo-Pacific emerging market infrastructure investments in the coming years. DFC's (Development Finance Corporation) Board has also approved an equity investment as part of the USD 900 million Eversource Climate Investment Partners-II fund, which will provide capital, management, and expertise to innovative companies using new and existing capabilities to address climate change in India and Southeast Asia. It added that the IPEF partners and the Private Infrastructure Development Group announced the operational launch of the IPEF Catalytic Capital Fund, which would deploy concessional financing, technical assistance, and capacity-building support to expand the pipeline of quality, resilient, and inclusive clean economy infrastructure projects in emerging and upper-middle income economies, for instance, projects in development include a renewable energy platform in India. The fund's founding supporters include Australia, Japan, Korea, and the US, which plan to provide USD 33 million in initial grant to catalyse up to USD 3.3 billion in private investment. "A coalition of investors, including Singapore's Temasek and GIC, have committed to injecting USD 25 billion in infrastructure investments in emerging markets that are part of an economic alliance between the US and several Asia-Pacific countries," it added. The event also witnessed signing of an offtake agreement between Sembcorp Green Hydrogen India, Kyushu Electric and Sojitz for production and export of 200 KTPA (kilotonne per annum) green ammonia from India to Japan. The programme was attended by ministers from Singapore and Japan and Barthwal. The agreement aims to increase production and export of 200 KTPA green ammonia in Phase-I (total 800 KTPA in 4 phases) at Tuticorin Port in India and export to Japan. The project proposed above would further the objective of the National Green Hydrogen Mission implemented by India towards making the country as global hub for production and export of green hydrogen and its derivatives. During an interaction with Indian companies and startups, Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce and India's Chief Negotiator for IPEF Rajesh Agrawal said the forum provides an opportunity for Indian companies and startups to seek funding and collaborate with global investors.

BJP's vote share shrinks in most states with low growth rates in per capita income

food inflation, Lok Sabha Election Results 2024, Lok Sabha Elections 2024, Consumer Food Price Index, Indian express news, current affairs. The Modi government has taken a host of measures to control food inflation in last couple of years. The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP's) vote share in the 2024 general election contracted in most of the states and union territories (UTs) that had relatively low rates of growth in per capita income since the previous Lok Sabha polls in 2019, shows an analysis of Election Commission of India (ECI) data and per capita net state domestic product (NSDP) data from states. NSDP per capita is taken as the per capita income of a state and is counted among states' key economic indicators.

Of the 12 states and UTs where per capita NSDP grew by a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of up to 2 per cent, and where the BJP contested in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections, the party's vote share shrunk in nine. These nine states and UTs include Bihar, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur, and Chandigarh. Kerala, Sikkim, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands were the outliers to the trend.

For the purpose of this analysis, the CAGR of per capita NSDP was divided in three segments: low (up to 2 per cent), medium (2.1-4.0 per cent), and high (over 4 per cent). Among all states and UTs, the overall range of per capita NSDP CAGR ranged up to 6.1 per cent. CAGR was considered over absolute growth as per capita NSDP data for some states was not updated for 2023-24 (FY24) and was available either till FY23 or FY22. The base year for the comparison was taken as FY19. A few UTs that do not maintain per capita NSDP data were not considered.

bjp, Lok Sabha Election Results 2024, Lok Sabha Elections 2024, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Election Commission, per capita net state domestic product, per capita income, Indian express business, business news, business articles, business news stories. While the data



does suggest a correlation between per capita state income and the BJP's vote share among most of the low-growth states, the trend is not as stark when it comes to states and UTs in the middle- and high-growth segments. It is worth noting that like most economic indicators, per capita incomes and their growth rates vary across states and are contingent upon a number of factors and conditions. Also, election outcomes depend on a host of factors — many of which are not directly linked to the economy — and their various permutations and combinations.

Among the nine states with a per capita NSDP growth rate of over 4 per cent, the BJP registered an expansion in vote share from 2019 levels in five — Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu. Four states — Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Arunachal Pradesh, saw a contraction in the BJP's vote share despite a relatively high rate of growth in their per capita incomes. Similarly, the BJP's vote share expanded in five of the nine states and UTs with per capita NSDP growth rate of 2.1 per cent to 4 per cent. These five states included Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana, Tripura, and Mizoram. The four where the BJP saw a decline in vote share were Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir.

Tier-II cities continue to witness consistent growth in hiring activities: Report

Hiring in tier-II cities showed consistent growth trends compared to metropolitan areas during May, mainly led by cities such as Kochi, Coimbatore, and Jaipur, which have emerged as key hiring locations, a report said on Wednesday. "It is remarkable to note the flourishing performance of tier-II cities in terms of hiring, outpacing their metropolitan counterparts. These cities have showcased consistent upward trends, particularly driven by the Production and Manufacturing sector, where we are witnessing a surge in recruitment," foundit (previously Monster APAC & ME), a Quess company, CEO Sekhar Garisa said, quoting the foundit Insights Tracker (fit).

He said, this can be attributed to several factors, including infrastructural development, favourable government policies, and a burgeoning talent pool eager to contribute to India's industrial landscape. "It's evident that tier-II cities are becoming increasingly attractive hubs for businesses seeking expansion opportunities and tapping into diverse talent pools for sustainable growth," he added.

The report revealed that with cities such as Kochi,

Coimbatore, and Jaipur dedicating resources to infrastructure development initiatives, and enhancing connectivity, transportation, and other amenities, corporate firms are bound to be attracted here for their business expansions. In terms of the metro cities, Kolkata and Delhi/NCR stand out as leading hiring hubs on a year-on-year basis, it stated. While tier-II cities have outperformed metro cities on a year-on-year basis, metros have witnessed a significant upswing in hiring in the last few months, it said. According to the tracker, tier-II cities are seeing stronger growth rates in sectors such as production and manufacturing (29 per cent), IT software and services (17 per cent), real estate (8 per cent), and education (8 per cent), where recruiters are seeking diverse talent with specialised skill sets. Metro cities have shown an affinity for hiring from IT software and services and advertising, public relations segment, due to the uptick in the demand for IT service providers and digitalisation, signalling a recovery from the layoffs and reduced bench strength, the report added.

Storing cooking near the stove and other common mistakes you may be unknowingly making



affecting overall health," said Chahal.

"Cooking oils should never be transferred into special containers or pourers because it allows oxygen to degrade the oil. Oxygen and moisture reduce the quality of the oil causing rancidity. It's best to keep cooking oils in the containers it comes in, and buy only what you'll use within 1-2 months." "I used to think buying in bulk was best but I never finished my 5L bottle of oil within 2 months, so the heat, light, oxygen, and moisture made the oil rancid. These 4 variables affect the composition of the oil, causing long-term negative effects on our health," mentioned Bhutani.

Recently, we informed you about the importance of using the right cooking oils, the pros and cons of consuming palm oil, the new dietary guidelines issued by the Indian Council of Medical Research, and also the harmful effects of having fake oils. Taking this series a step further, today we are here to inform you about the correct way to store cooking oils. According to Chef Divya Bhutani, the practice of keeping oils near the stove for easy access could well be landing us in trouble with numerous health issues, including cancer. "Avoid storing your oils right by the stove. I used to do this before I researched how the heat from the gas accelerates the oxidation process, turning the oil rancid," said Bhutani in an Instagram post. She added that oxidation produces free radicals that are very harmful to the body, and cause cancer.

Explaining the phenomenon, Rashi Chahal, dietician, La Femme Hospital said that due to their high fat content, cooking oils start deteriorating as soon as one opens the pack due to oxidation. "It is a chemical reaction in which atmospheric oxygen attacks triglyceride molecules' fatty acid chains," said Chahal, adding that one should use a proper container for storing oil and keep the lid tightly sealed to prevent oxidation (the interaction of oil with oxygen in the air). Chahal pointed out that rancid oils can cause digestive distress and are also associated with diseases related to free radicals. "These toxic compounds can deplete our vitamins B and E negatively,

Just like all other products, it is best to "always check the expiration date of your oils". "Generally, extra virgin olive oil can be kept for up to 6 months after opening. It generally has a very long shelf life but storage conditions can change the oil's shelf life significantly," said Bhutani. One should purchase oils in dark green bottles to reduce UV light exposure to the oil and reduce the effects of oxidation. It's best to store oils in a cool dark place, like a cupboard. It's ok if you've transferred your oils in special containers or pourers already. Just use it up within the expiration date and throw away any unused oil in the bin. Agreeing, Chahal added that light accelerates fatty acid oxidation. "It can cause a significant loss of antioxidants in polyunsaturated oils. Try and store them in dark-coloured bottles to prevent light from entering the bottle, which can degrade the quality of oil," said Chahal. "Try and use glass bottles when storing for longer periods as plastic can leach chemicals over time, stressed Chahal. "This can affect overall taste. Don't store in iron and copper bottles either as they interact with oils and make them unsafe for consumption," said Chahal. "Some cooking oils are best stored at room temperature. But certain oils like truffle oil, avocado oil, corn oil, safflower oil, and chilli oils are "best stored in the refrigerator to improve their shelf life", said Chahal. "Use heat-resistant oil for high-temperature cooking" Label the containers with dates to keep track of when were these bottles opened and also know how long can you store them.

Employee claims she was 'ethnically humiliated' at workplace: 'Ek chammaat maareng, Bihar pahuch jaogi'

The harsh realities of workplace discrimination have once again come into the spotlight with a viral LinkedIn post from a woman who hails from Bihar. In a harrowing account, Hyderabad-based employee Nitika Kumari claims to have been subjected to "ethnic humiliation" by colleagues, with the shocking threat of being "slapped so hard" if she didn't comply.

She recalled, "There have been quite a few incidents that happened during the last one year which I neglected thinking 'Isn't this what corporate life feels like?' I neglected everything to the point where it became unbearable for me and made me go through some serious mental health issues and panic attacks." She added, "The most recent incident that I would like to share with you all is when I was ethnically humiliated by one of my colleagues. The incident happened on 22 April 2024 when I was subjected to ethnically insensitive remarks by my colleague. The exact words which were used by him are 'EK CHAMMAAT MAARENG, BIHAR PAHUCH JAOGI' which means — I will slap you so hard, you will go back to Bihar (sic)." Despite raising concerns with the HR department, her pleas for intervention allegedly fell on deaf ears. This disturbing incident underscores the profound mental and emotional toll that discrimination can have on employees, eroding their sense of safety, dignity, and overall well-being within the professional environment.

Gurleen Baruah, organisational psychologist and executive coach at That Culture Thing, explains, "It's important to understand the underlying reasons for ethnic discrimination. This often stems from an 'us vs. them' mentality, which creates divisions and tribalism, fuelled by insecurity and deep-seated biases. People on the receiving end of such discrimination bear the brunt of these attitudes." How individuals react to ethnic discrimination varies based on their personality, genetic makeup, and general approach to stress and challenges, she says. "Com-



How does workplace discrimination affect a person's emotional and mental health? Expert elucidates

ments and actions rooted in discrimination can severely damage a person's self-esteem, causing them to feel unwarranted shame. This can intensify the 'us vs. them' mindset, making the affected individuals view others as adversaries and widening the social gap. "Strategies that are effective in addressing the mental and emotional toll of discrimination Baruah reveals that while discrimination can occur in any workplace, it is often not a 100% accurate reflection of the organisation's policies and ways of working. "Most organisations have strict anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. Unfortunately, since this is a people issue, such incidents may still occur." Therefore, it's crucial for organisations to be vigilant and proactive. They should design and communicate robust Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies, and regularly train employees on how unconscious biases and comments can contribute to harassment and perpetuate an 'us vs. them' mentality.

The organisational culture plays a critical role here, Baruah asserts. "If an employee reports an incident to leadership or HR, the response and actions taken are crucial. How the organisation mitigates the issue, whether the appro-

appropriate actions are taken, and whether the complainant feels heard and supported are all vital aspects. "workplace, discrimination How individuals react to ethnic discrimination varies based on their personality, genetic makeup, and general approach to stress and challenges.

It is imperative for leadership and HR to take corrective actions guided by ethics and morality, according to her. Additionally, organisations should foster a supportive environment by offering resources such as counselling services, employee support groups, and workshops on emotional resilience. Encouraging open communication and creating safe spaces for employees to express their concerns without fear of retaliation are also effective strategies.

Best practices for employers to proactively create a supportive and inclusive work environment Employees can proactively create a supportive and inclusive work environment that not only prevents discrimination but also promotes the mental health and well-being of all employees by implementing the following best practices, as stated by Baruah: Psychological safety training: Conduct training sessions focused on psychological safety,

helping employees feel safe to take risks, express their ideas, and voice concerns without fear of negative consequences. Hire experts to deliver these kinds of sessions from outside. Unconscious bias training: Implement regular unconscious bias training to help employees recognize and mitigate their biases. This can reduce discriminatory behaviour and foster a more inclusive culture. Case studies and communication: Design and share case studies that highlight instances of discrimination and how they were effectively addressed within the organisation. Communicating these examples can reinforce the company's commitment to handling such issues properly and transparently. Open door policies: Encourage open door policies where employees feel comfortable approaching management or HR with their concerns. This helps in creating an environment where issues can be addressed promptly and effectively. Counselling and mental health support: Provide access to counselling services and mental health resources. Offering Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) can support employees dealing with stress, anxiety, or trauma related to workplace discrimination.

Siddharth to star in Miss You, Madhavan says 'My dear bro Sid picks up a love story after ages'



its first look poster. The poster was revealed by R Madhavan and Sivakartheeyan. Sharing the poster, Madhavan wrote, "After the multiple Award-winning #Chithha my dear bro Sid picks up a love story on the way after ages." He added, "Roses are red, violets are blue. Sid's next romance film is 'Miss you'. We know you've all missed him too (sic)." Looks like Siddharth, who once played the heartthrob in Telugu films, is returning to the romance genre with Miss You. The film makes the Tamil debut of Ashika Ranganath, who has made a mark in the Kannada film industry. Directed by debutant Nirmal Kumar, Miss You promises to explore themes of love, loss, and longing, wrapped in a storyline that resonates with the audience. Produced by 7 Miles Per Second, the film features an ensemble cast including Karunakaran, Bala Saravanan, and Lollu Sabha Maran. Siddharth is also slated to appear in Kamal Haasan's much-anticipated Indian 2, directed by Shankar, which is scheduled to hit theatres on July 12.

Actor-producer Siddharth is set to grace the silver screen once again after Chiththa, a gut-wrenching film about child abuse. Siddharth seems to have chosen a light-hearted subject for his next film. Or that's what the poster and title of the movie suggests. The film has been titled Miss You. Co-starring Ashika Ranganath, the movie has already begun to generate buzz with the release of

Kangana Ranaut is headed to Delhi after Mandi win: 'On my way to Parliament...'



Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut recently won the Mandi Lok Sabha seat, beating Congress' Vikramaditya Singh by over 74000 votes. The 37-year-old on Thursday took to her social media handle to share glimpses of her new political journey. The Queen star shared a series of photos on her Instagram Stories to show her fans that she was en route to Parliament. Dressed in a fuchsia sari and blouse, Kangana looks radiant in the pictures. In one of the photos, she is seen hugging her mother, Aasha Ranaut, as she departs for Delhi. "On my way to Parliament. Mandi ki sasand (the Member of Parliament from Mandi)," she captioned one of the photos. Kangana also shared a selfie and wrote, "Delhi calling."

departure to Mumbai is concerned, this (Himachal Pradesh) is my 'janmabhoomi' and I will continue to serve people here... So, I am not going anywhere. Perhaps, someone else will have to pack their bags and leave. I am not going anywhere," Kangana said. In March, after BJP announced Kangana Ranaut's candidature for the Lok Sabha elections, the Katti Batti actor thanked the party for choosing her. "My beloved Bharat and Bhartiya Janta's party, Bharatiya Janta party (BJP) has always had my unconditional support, today the national leadership of BJP has announced me as their Lok Sabha candidate from my birthplace Himachal Pradesh, Mandi (constituency). I abide by the high command's decision on contesting the Lok Sabha polls. I feel honoured and elated to officially join the party. I look forward to being a worthy karyakarta and a reliable public servant. Thanks.. (sic)" read her post.

Following her win, Kangana Ranaut, during an interview with ANI, expressed her willingness to continue serving the people of her constituency. "Mandi has not taken kindly to the insults for daughters. As far as my

Bad Boys Ride or Die review: A fun ride that taps into Will Smith and Martin Lawrence's camaraderie



If the intention of this summer entertainer is to repackage what the audience has loved about this two-decade-old franchise and add some extra thrill to it, then the fourth instalment of this buddy cop comedy-action does that quite well. Bad Boys: Ride or Die takes you back to Miami as detectives Mike Lowrey (Will Smith) and Marcus Burnett (Martin Lawrence) find themselves tackling yet another tough challenge — corruption within the Miami Police Department and their late captain being falsely accused of having ties with drug cartels.

following his killing, is framed for being involved in a cartel's money laundering scheme. Lowrey and Burnett work on uncovering the truth even as they soon find themselves on the run along with Mike's imprisoned son Armando (Jacob Scipio). Apart from the police, Miami gangsters too are running after them for the \$5 million bounty announced for capturing their dead or alive.

This is Will Smith's return to the big screen after he famously slapped Chris Rock during the Oscar ceremony in 2022. This role gives him the chance to once again showcase his talent as a complete entertainer as the movie packs several comic, emotional and action scenes. It is also an opportunity to revive one of his much-loved characters. But the scene-stealer is Martin Lawrence with his goofiness and zany dialogues. While Smith appears jaded at times, Lawrence's comic timing seems to be at its best. Overall, the duo prove that even though they are nearly 20 years older since they first appeared as buddy cops, they are still high on energy and have retained their charming on-screen camaraderie.

Designed to be a roller-coaster of emotions, Bad Boys: Ride or Die opens with the wedding of Mike and Christine (Melanie Liburd). This is disrupted with Marcus having a heart attack. Marcus gets out of danger with his wit and humour intact. He also has a new belief that he can't die. That lends itself to some hilarious sequences as Marcus almost dances through a busy Miami crossing amidst speeding vehicles. They swing into action soon after as their friend Captain Howard (Joe Pantoliano),

The director duo Adil El Arbi and Bilal Fallah steer the narrative deftly as Miami's finest "bad boys" become the most wanted men. They bank on the nostalgia that's associated with the genre. Even though the film does not have many nail-biting moments, it offers the comfort of familiarity as the 'same of more' becomes the film's USP. Not every gag works (some of the words have also been beeped out for the Indian audience), but the cop comedy underlines that the aging stars still have it in them as they go all gun blazing.

Kareena Kapoor dances to Yeh Ishq Haaye, Nagada Nagada at an event in Abu Dhabi.



Kareena Kapoor surprised her fans in Abu Dhabi by dancing to her popular song "Yeh Ishq Haaye" from her hit 2007 film Jab We Met. The actor, who attended an event at Al Wahba Mall, was spotted in a beautiful blush pink tulle sari by Manish Malhotra. It was adorned with delicate mokhte pearls arranged in a Kashmiri leaf pattern. Now, a video of the Bollywood star dancing to the popular Jab We Met song is going viral. Apart from "Yeh Ishq Haaye", Kareena also danced to "Nagada Nagada," another song from the Imtiaz Ali directorial, also starring Shahid Kapoor in the lead role.

still enjoys a huge fan following. Back in 2023, there were rumours that the much-awaited sequel is in the making, marking the reunion of actors Kareena and Shahid Kapoor. However, talking about the same, Imtiaz Ali told Times Now, "If it's happening, I don't know."

Jab We Met is one of the highest-grossing films of Kareena. It enjoys a cult following with many manifesting a sequel to the movie. Her character Geet from the film

In another interview with News18 Showsha, Imtiaz said, "Why have a sequel to Jab We Met (laughs)?" If people want to continue enjoying the film, they can watch the first one! There must be a story and a reason to make Jab We Met 2. But let us see if it happens. Never say never." On the work front, Kareena Kapoor was recently seen in the film Crew, also starring Tabu and Kriti Sanon. The film, reportedly made on a budget of Rs 75 crore, went on to collect over Rs 151.35 crore globally, according to Sacnilk.

'Anurag Kashyap danced on top of a table after seeing the final cut of Aamir,' recalls Rajeev Khandelwal: 'No one willing to back a TV actor'



Rajeev Khandelwal was one of the most popular actors on television when he decided to move to films but a decade and a half ago, the lines drawn between film and television actors were not as blurry as they are now. Rajeev ultimately got his chance to make his film debut in the movie Aamir. In a recent interview, Rajeev recalled how Anurag Kashyap took the film to various producers who were not willing to back a "TV actor" but it was Anurag and Vikas Bahl, who had complete faith in the project and Rajeev's capabilities.

said that most people involved in the making of this film were first timers and recalled what he felt just before the film's release. "Anurag danced on top of a table after seeing the final cut," he shared and added that the film industry reacted "very favourably" to the film. Rajeev Khandelwal was a popular name on television because of the Ekta Kapoor television show Kahiin to Hoga that started airing in 2003. After the Balaji Telefilms show, Rajeev appeared in TV shows like Left Right Left and Time Bomb 9/11. Rajeev was last seen in the Emraan Hashmi web series Showtime.

In a chat with Zoom, Rajeev shared that when he got script of the film, he was just taken by it and "wondered why no so-called 'star' is doing it". He shared that Anurag, who was backing the project directed by Raj Kumar Gupta, could not gather enough producers for the film as most producers were not interested in betting on a "popular TV actor". "Anurag Kashyap went from one producer to another but they weren't willing to back a popular 'TV actor' till he met Vikas Bahl," he shared.

Rajeev Khandelwal said that he did a few workshops with director Raj Kumar Gupta and actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui. "Nawazuddin Siddiqui bhai was assigned to me for all the physical workshops which we did on the backroads of Lokhandwala," he shared. Rajeev

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan actor and wrote, "Woah."

On June 5, Alaya F took to her Instagram handle to share the video. In the caption she wrote, "Felt unstoppable, might delete later, my journey with balancing on this ball has been so rewarding! Persistence really is an incredible thing! Mehnat ka phal." Previously, Alaya had taken to her Instagram Stories to show her most painful fall, warning her fans to not try this without the presence of a professional and crash mat. Sharing a video on her Insta story, the actor wrote, "My most painful fall yet. (This is why it's important to NOT try this at home without trained supervision and crash mats)." Alaya's video received lots of love from her fans. To thank them, she shared yet another Insta story and wrote, "Thank you for all the pyaar you guys have shown this video. Every fall was worth it. Hahaha."

Alaya F, who made her acting debut with Saif Ali Khan starrer Jawaani Jaaneman, had previously revealed about being both fat-shamed and skinny-shamed. She told India Today, "Growing up I was a healthy kid, I was overweight, and I was fat-shamed all the time." She added, "It's only now when I have dropped all the weight because I believe in self-care and do my workouts that I look a certain way. But, even then, despite losing all the weight now, I have people skinny-shaming me. There's literally no end to this because I have been fat-shamed and skinny-shamed."

Alaya F's balancing workout garners appreciation from Priyanka Chopra: 'This is all the motivation I needed...'



Alaya F, who often shares her fitness videos on social media, recently shared a video compilation of her attempt to master the balancing workout on a stability ball. The video showed the actor's journey from the time where she was struggling to balance to how she mastered the skill and balanced herself with weights in her hand. The video has now caught the attention of many from the film industry, one of them being the global star Priyanka Chopra. The Citadel actor appreciated Alaya's efforts by dropping a clapping emoji in the comments section of her post. Expressing her happiness, Alaya was quick to reply and wrote, "Priyanka Chopra, OMG this is all the motivation I needed! Thank you!" Stars like Saiyami Kher too took to the comment section to appreciate the

JSK first look poster: Suresh Gopi turns lawyer in this legal thriller that asserts 'truth shall always prevail'



Two days after winning as an MP from the Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency in Kerala, becoming the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) first parliamentarian from the state, Malayalam actor Suresh Gopi has unveiled the first look poster of his upcoming movie, Janaki v/s State of Kerala (JSK). Touted as a legal thriller, JSK is directed by Pravin Narayanan and also stars Anupama Parameswaran in a key role.

accompanying by the tagline, "Truth shall always prevail." Although the movie's production wrapped up in November 2023 after a year-long shoot, there hasn't been much news about JSK. In

June last year, on the occasion of Suresh Gopi's birthday, the filmmakers released a teaser, cashing in on his star power and powerful dialogue delivery. The promo begins with a reporter questioning him

about his decision to represent the accused in a high-profile case against a girl. Calmly, he responds, "I know what I am doing and will continue doing so." Bankrolled by J Phanindra Kumar and Raafi Mathirra,

WWE superstar Drew McIntyre talks about his world title match and home crowd advantage ahead of Glasgow clash



GNS News Agency, June 10

WWE Clash At The Castle 2024: After dropping the World Heavyweight Championship at WrestleMania, courtesy of an attack from CM Punk and Damien Priest's Money in the Bank cash-in, former WWE Champion Drew McIntyre is all set to vie for the same title at WWE Clash at the Castle in OVO Hydro Arena in Glasgow, Scotland on Saturday, June 15 (June 16 in India). In an exclusive interview to indianexpress.com, Drew shared his thoughts on his bitter-sweet moment at WrestleMania 40. Excerpts below.

Q: How important is your match for the WWE World Heavyweight Championship at WWE Clash at the Castle 2024?

Drew: It might be the biggest match of my whole career. My first world title win was at the height of the pandemic, with nobody there, the second world title win was very much the same in the Thunder Dome. Looking into the last Clash of the Castle, it was perfect. It was in Wales, it was in the UK where I'm from, and it was perfect until it wasn't perfect when Solo Sikoa debuted to cost me the title and ruin that moment, and this time we get a redo. We get a redo not just in Wales, not just in the UK, but specifically in Scotland, where I'm from where I never imagined it would be a big state WWE PLE with myself in the main event for the world titles.

Q: How important is the result of a match when you are fighting in front of your home crowd, and how different is the Drew McIntyre from 2022 Clash at the Castle from the Drew McIntyre we are seeing right now?

Drew: A few dozen of my friends and family are going to be there as the clash is taking place in Scotland. I've missed some of my buddy's weddings and stuff because I've been so focused on this career. This is a chance to get us all together and a chance to celebrate hopefully, and I present the world title and say, I'm sorry, I've been gone chasing this title, and hey I did it, and know your son, your brother or your uncle, your friend, is the finally World Heavyweight Champion. The difference this time is that I don't take it for granted. I have to be ready for anything, and I have to be willing to do anything to get the job done.

Q: What is Drew McIntyre's contingency plan for the 'Judgement Day'?

Drew: I've made it clear to them the best I could and

in every form I could. This isn't just about anyone; this is about a person from Scotland going for the big one. This is about all the fans coming together, all the Scots Rangers fans, the Celtic fans, and the Heart fans; it doesn't matter who you support. Everybody comes together on that night. We're all Scottish. We're all rooting for one of our own to win the World Title, and if you try to get involved in that, so it's only security guards, you're gonna get both.

Q: The Euro Championship is about to begin, and your home country Scotland is also a part of it. How far do you think Scotland will go this season?

Drew: It's pretty exciting that the Euro starts on Friday, before the Clash in the Castle. We're Scottish, we're always optimistic as hell. I do feel that we've got a great chance, and I genuinely believe this can be the first time we go through the group stages because we've never been through the group stages in the Euro or the World Cup ever. So, I'm feeling good, we at least get through into the group stages.

Q: You have now won world titles at WrestleMania twice. First at the height of the pandemic in front of an empty crowd and second at WrestleMania 40, one of the biggest PLE WWE has ever produced. How tough was it to recover when your moment of glory was taken away from you?

Drew: First of all, I can't stand the Money in the Bank briefcase. I understand the point is to cash it in to win the title, but I've lost my last two world titles because of that stupid briefcase. But yeah, WrestleMania wasn't ideal. I said I was going to win the title, I was going to celebrate it with my friends, my family and my wife, and then I was going to rub the title in CM Punk's face. I can't stand him. We have a history that people just do not know about yet. He hurt me personally and professionally when I was younger. Drew McIntyre as the WWE World Champion. (Source_ WWE) Drew McIntyre as the WWE World Champion. (Source_ WWE)

Q: Who would you like to face in a title match first if you manage to win the WWE World Heavyweight Championship at Clash at the Castle?

Drew: I am so focused on winning back the title that I really have not given any thought to the future. However, as was the case when I was the World Heavyweight Champion for the first time, I will take on all comers. Like if you earn the right to fight for the title, you're gonna get yourself a title opportunity. I see some people coming up with a lot of hunger and a lot of potential as well. One particular person of interest is Bron Breaker; he has been tearing through the competition, but at the same time, he's got to learn how to harness the anger in the right direction. I'm sure I'll see him down the line. We got a roster of very talented people and a few people injured. I'm sure they'll be returning very soon on Raw and SmackDown. We're already on fire right now. The company is quite hot, and once the injured people return, we are gonna go even to the next level again. It's crazy how popular WWE is right now.

Irfan Pathan criticizes IND vs IRE surface: 'If we had a pitch like this in India, a match would never be played there again for very long time'

GNS News Agency, June 10

The Nassau County International Cricket Stadium pitch in which India faced Ireland has come under fierce criticism with former cricketers Irfan Pathan and Micheal Vaughan categorizing it as unsafe. "Look, we definitely want to promote cricket in America, but this pitch is not safe for players. If we had a pitch like this in India, a match would never be played there again for a very long time. This pitch is definitely not good. I mean, we are talking about the World Cup here, not even a bilateral series," Pathan said on Star Sports as quoted by PTI.

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma was hit flush on right bicep by a delivery from Ireland bowler Josh Little on Wednesday, which suddenly took off from length. Rohit had to retire hurt after scoring a 50 and at halfway stage in second innings but is expected to not miss any time out. "Trying to sell the game in the states is great .. love it .. but for players to have to play on this sub standard surface in New York is unacceptable .. You work so hard to make it to the WC then have to play on this," former England player Vaughan tweeted. Trying to sell the game in the states is great .. love it .. but for players to



have to play on this sub standard surface in New York is unacceptable .. You work so hard to make it to the WC then have to play on this. "Yeah, just a little sore (the arm). I said it at the toss as well. Quite unsure of what to expect from the pitch. Not aware on what it is to play like on a pitch that's five months old," Rohit said at the presentation ceremony after India defeated Ireland. "I don't think the wicket settled down even when we batted second. There was enough for the bowlers," he added.

Ahead of Sunil Chhetri's final match for India, Real Madrid and Croatian legend Luka Modric has a message



GNS News Agency, June 10

Real Madrid's Champions League winner and Croatian football captain Luka Modric had a heartwarming message for the Indian football captain Sunil Chhetri ahead of his last international game on Thursday. Modric, who recently won his sixth UEFA Champions League title with Real Madrid, was all praise for Chhetri ahead of his final appearance for India. "Hi Sunil, I want to say congratulations and wish you all the best in your last game for the national team. You are a legend of this game. To

your teammates, I hope you make his last game memorable. Good luck and win it for your captain," Modric said in a video that was shared by Indian head coach Igor Stimac on his social media. "Thank you Luka. We will do everything in our power to make our country and our captain proud," Stimac, himself a Croatian, wrote in caption.

Chhetri, 39, is set to play his final game for India – a FIFA World Cup qualifier against Kuwait in Kolkata – on Thursday. Such are the stakes that a win will virtually seal a third round qualification for India – a feat they haven't previously achieved. "This can change the future of Indian football. Although I'm a foreigner in this country but I feel more like an Indian," Stimac said at the pre-match press conference on Wednesday. Reacting to his skipper calling it a day, Stimac had said, "Of course as a coach I'm sad that Sunil is leaving us. I'm still not sure if I'm going to send him another call, if I feel we need him and he plays well for Bengaluru FC. I'm still thinking about it." With all the attention around him before the fixture, Chhetri called for caution given the high stakes. "I am trying really hard to not think about this game like this. It's not about me and my last game. It's about us and Kuwait," he said pre-match.

On Adhir upset, Yusuf Pathan says 'felt same tension' before 2007 India-Pak final



GNS News Agency, June 10

"I had felt the same tension before the 2007 India-Pakistan World T20 final in South Africa. That helped and I knew that I could handle it," Pathan, the cricketer turned TMC politician, told The Indian Express while driving to Kolkata to meet his party chief Mamata Banerjee. The two similar days in the 41-year-old's storied life both ended in famous wins.

In 2007, M S Dhoni's young team, in which the all-rounder played a key role, went on to win the inaugural World T20 title against all expectations. Seventeen years later, on Tuesday, Pathan once again proved to be a giant killer, polling 5,24,516 votes to defeat the Congress party's most vocal MP Chowdhury by 85,022 votes. A day after the triumph, the Baroda resident, who was labelled during the 2024 Lok Sabha election campaign by his rivals as an "outsider", appeared to be settling in the new role as a people's representative. "Nervousness on a big day is not new. But as time passes, things start getting normal. It is like when I walk out to bat on debut... the more you stay at the crease, the more things get normal. As counting went along, things started easing. I was confident that people would vote for me, the rallies I did, the love I got was amazing," Pathan said.

'Pathan in Parliament' could now possibly be the title of the latest chapter of the endearing fairytale about the son of a muezzin who worked and stayed at Baroda's famous Jama Masjid. To raise the family that had two budding cricketers – Yusuf and his younger brother Irfan – Pathan Sr also sold 'ittar' outside the masjid, worked at a chemical factory and, at times, even drove an auto-rickshaw. Irfan, too, played for the country and the two brothers together have three World titles. Yusuf was also

part of the 2011 World Cup winning team. After playing 57 ODIs and 22 T20Is, Pathan retired in 2022. An animal lover – he keeps birds, rabbits and horses at this farm house – he seemed to be at peace. But four months ago, he got an unexpected call from the TMC. Baharampur's 52-per cent Muslim voters and the role that Pathan played in Kolkata Knight Riders' two IPL titles were said to be the reasons for the approach. The brothers then held a long discussion among themselves even as the family "was reluctant". But then, trusting his instincts, Pathan decided to take the plunge. "One day, suddenly, I don't know why, I said 'Let's do it, we didn't go asking for this. This opportunity has come to us, so let us take it'. Through this, we can help people and in case we have to go to Bengal, what is the problem," Pathan recalled.

He isn't the only former cricketer to have won on a TMC ticket from Bengal this time. Kirti Azad, the 1983 World Cup winner, too caused a major upset. He won the Bardhaman-Durgapur seat by 1.38 lakh votes, pushing former West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh to second spot. Now Azad, a four-time MP after his earlier wins from Darbhanga in Bihar, has some advice for Pathan. "You have to work hard as you did on a cricket field. When you are a cricketer, people will flock to see you at stadiums or even when you are in the team bus but here, you have to go meet people, understand their problems and solve them. Yusuf is a giantkiller and there will be a lot of expectations from him. If he comes up to me, I can guide him and let him know that if you work selflessly then nobody can beat you," Azad said.

Pathan, too, has a plan in place and some learnings. "I never thought I would become an MP. Destiny took me to Bengal. I was born in Gujarat and now God has sent me here to do some work. Yeh duniya alag hai, galiyaan alag hai (This world is different, these streets are different), but my motto is clear, to work for the public," he said. The campaign did take Pathan to streets he hadn't ventured. He talks about bike rides in the interiors of his rural constituency, and recalls one interaction that he will never forget. "A woman ran towards me and handed me Rs 1,000 that was tied in a knot of her saree. Initially, I didn't understand why she was giving me the money. She said she got Rs 1,000 every month from the Mamata government as part of a scheme. This time, she wanted to give it to me for my campaign. She requested, 'Idhar accha kaam karna' (Do good work here). I had tears in my eyes," he said.

1983 World Cup winner Kirti Azad reflects on defeating BJP heavyweight Dilip Ghosh

GNS News Agency, June 10

A day after defeating BJP heavyweight Dilip Ghosh by a margin of 1.38 lakh votes in Bardhaman-Durgapur, 1983 World Cup winner Kirti Azad – representing the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) – said that him being a World Cup winner does strike a chord with the voters though the famous win at Lord's came over 40 years ago. "There is a resonance because of being part of the World Cup squad. It was the first time an Indian team had won a cricket World Cup and people do keep that in mind. There you played for the country, here you are playing for your party and playing for your manifesto," Another former India cricketer Yusuf Pathan, also representing TMC, also turned out to be a giant-killer in West Bengal defeating Congress veteran Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury for the Baharampur seat. The TMC won 29 of the 42 seats in West Bengal because of the promises fulfilled by chief minister Mamata Banerjee, Azad said. "Whatever Didi promised, she has delivered. The way the government has worked in Bengal... from the birth of a child to the death of a man, there is something for the poor, whereas it was empty rhetoric from the BJP and the prime minister," Azad said. Bardhaman-Durgapur, as a Lok Sabha constituency, came into existence in 2009 after a delimitation exercise and in 2019 the seat was won by BJP's SS Ahluwalia. The TMC won the seat in 2014, while it



had gone to the CPI(M) in 2009.

Talking about issues on which the election was fought in Bardhaman-Durgapur, Azad said: "Basically, these are central government issues related to PSUs. Many of them have shut down and the incumbent SS Ahluwalia had promised things but never fulfilled them. So there were problems galore. People are very angry with that. The larger message to the BJP is that false promises will not work here," Azad said. Azad, now a four-time MP, had won from Darbhanga three times on a BJP ticket, with back-to-back wins in 2009 and 2014. He then moved to the Congress. Azad failed to win from Dhanbad in 2019 on a Congress ticket. He joined the TMC in 2021.

Rohit Sharma reaches new milestone in international cricket at T20 World Cup against Ireland



GNS News Agency, June 10

India captain Rohit Sharma hit another milestone during India's 2024 World Cup opener against Ireland on Wednesday in New York. Finishing with four fours

and three sixes in his innings of 52, Rohit became the first batter to hit 600 sixes in international cricket. Rohit's tally has been constructed from a total of 499 games across formats. Behind him in the all-time list are Chris Gayle (553 maximums), Shahid Afridi (553), Brendon McCullum (478), and Martin Guptill (398).

The Indian skipper's innings was cut short after he was forced to retire hurt at 52 after coping a blow on his shoulder. In the 9th over of India's chase, Rohit took a hit on the shoulder off a Joshua Little delivery. While the skipper didn't walk off the field immediately, he was declared retired hurt a couple overs later as India seemed even closer to an inevitable win in the Group A contest. But before he walked off the field, the Indian captain, lacing back-to-back sixes off Joshua Little, the last of which took him to the 600 mark. Rohit finished as the leading run scorer as India chased down the total of 97 with eight wickets in hand and 46 balls to spare.

Mohammed Siraj wins 'Fielder of the Match' medal

New York: India's star pacer Mohammed Siraj was crowned with the 'Fielder of the Match' medal after Men in Blue hammered Ireland by eight wickets to start their ICC T20 World Cup campaign at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. Siraj was not required to bowl his whole four-over quota as Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah shredded Ireland's batting order. While Hardik took three wickets, Bumrah took two during his three-over performance.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on

Thursday took to X to announce the winner in a video. In the video, the young Indian fan was seen meeting with the Men in Blue players and he went on to award the 'Fielder of the Match' medal to Siraj, who accepted it with a warm hug with the supporter in an adorable fashion. Siraj was magical with the ball as the 30-year-old pacer went on to bag one wicket in three overs, conceding 13 runs. The pacer also ended well-set batter Gareth Delany's stay at the crease with his excellent fielding efforts in the 16th over of the game.