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RTA conducts special drives against errant school buses

Hyderabad: With the schools reopening for the academic year, the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) and the Hyderabad Traffic Police have initiated special drives to ensure the safety and compliance of school buses and other vehicles transporting students. These drives started in the early morning at various places including at Secunderabad, Punjagutta, Rajendranagar with special focus on checking vehicle fitness, driver licences, and adherence to traffic rules, including preventing overloading and underage driving.

Demand for fair wages for MGNREGA workers

Mahbubnagar: The Telangana Agricultural Labor Union has demanded to resolve the various problems faced by the MGNREGA workers across Palamuru region and the state.Demanding redressal of their various problems, recently the Association leaders along with many MGNREGA workers from erstwhile Mahabubnagar, visited Hyderabad and met the State Rural Development Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka and gave a list of demands to the minister and urged her to resolve the problems of the wage workers working under the MGNREGA schemes in the rural areas.

Indians among those killed in Kuwait apartment blaze, toll rises to 41



Supreme Court raps Delhi Government over tanker mafia, water wastage



GNS News Agency, June 12

Dubai: Several Indians were feared to be among 41 people killed on Wednesday in a major fire at a building in Kuwait housing workers, according to reports emanating from the Gulf nation.

The fire started in a kitchen in the six-storey building in Mangaf area in Kuwait's southern Ahmadi Governorate in the early hours of Wednesday, officials said. The building reportedly had nearly 160 people living in it, who are workers of the same company. Many workers staying there were reportedly Indians. "In connection with the tragic fire-accident involving Indian workers today, Embassy has put in place an emergency helpline number: +965-65505246. All concerned are requested to connect over this helpline for updates. Embassy remains committed to render all possible assistance," the Indian Embassy in Kuwait said in a post on X. In connection with the tragic fire-accident involving Indian workers today, Embassy has put in place an emergency helpline number: +965-65505246.

All concerned are requested to connect over this helpline for updates. Embassy remains committed to render all possible assistance. https://t.co/RiXrv2oceoIndians constitute 21 per cent (1 million) of the total population of Kuwait and 30 per cent of its workforce (approximately 9 lakhs). "Deeply shocked by the news of the fire incident in Kuwait City. There are reportedly over 40 deaths and over 50 have been hospitalized. Our Ambassador has gone to the camp. We are awaiting further information," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in a post on X. Deeply shocked by the news of the fire incident in Kuwait city.

There are reportedly over 40 deaths and over 50 have been hospitalized. Our Ambassador has gone to the camp. We are awaiting further information."Deepest condolences to the families of those who tragically lost their lives. Wish early and full recovery to those who have been injured. Our Embassy will render the fullest assistance to all concerned in this regard," he added.Kuwait's Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah ordered police to apprehend the owner of the Mangaf building where the fatal blaze occurred Wednesday, the building's janitor, as well as the owner of the company responsible for the workers pending the end of the criminal evidence personnel's examination of the scene, the Kuwait Times reported."What happened today is a result of the greed of the company and building owners," the minister said in a statement as he visited the fire scene.

He said that he gave orders to Kuwait Municipality and the Public Authority for Manpower to launch immediate action to address similar violations where large numbers of workers are crammed into one residential building, and make sure that all safety requirements are in place in order to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Chandrababu Naidu sworn in as Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister

GNS News Agency, June 12

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) national president N. Chandrababu Naidu was sworn in as Chief Minister of residual Andhra Pradesh for the second time.Governor S. Abdul Nazeer administered the oath of office to Mr. Naidu on June 12 at Kesarapalle close to Gannavaram near Vijayawada. This is the fourth time that Mr. Naidu will be serving as Chief Minister in his more than four decades of political career. He served as Chief Minister of combined Andhra Pradesh twice, and this is the second time in residual Andhra Pradesh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Medical and Health Minister and the BJP National president JP Nadda, Union Ministers G. Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay, former Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, matinee idols Rajinikanth and Chiranjeevi, and a host of VVIPs attended the ceremony. The Jana Sena Party (JSP) Chief Pawan Kalyan, and 24 other MLAs from the TDP, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the JSP also took oath as Cabinet ministers of Andhra Pradesh. The total strength of the cabinet including Mr. Naidu is 25, as of now.



Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy released TG TET-2024 results on Wednesday.



GNS News Agency, June 12

85,996 candidates appeared for Paper-1 exam. 57,725 candidates have been qualified. As many as 1,50,491 candidates appeared for the Paper-2 exam.51,443 candidates are qualified.67.13 per cent qualified in Paper-1. 34.18 per cent qualified in Paper-2Results available are at https:// schooledu.telangana.gov.in website.Pass percentage in Paper -1 increased by 30.24 per cent when compared to 2023.Pass percentage in Paper -2 increased by 18.88 per cent as compared to 2023. The Election Commission has not accepted the government decision to reduce the TET application fee due to the enforcement of election code at the time of receiving TET applications. In this context, the state government took decision to provide relief to the applicants. The applicants who are not qualified in TET-2024 can apply for next TET exam without paying the fee.The government also announced the waiver of fee to the candidates, who qualified in TET-2024, to apply for the DSC exam for once, officials said.

Reforms to boost growth and stability will continue, asserts Nirmala Sitharaman after assuming charge as Finance Minister

GNS News Agency, June 12

The Supreme Court on June 12 came down heavily on the Delhi Government over the prevalence of tanker mafia and water wastage in the city, and asked what measures it has taken against them.A vacation Bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Prasanna B. Varale told the Delhi Government that if it can't deal with tanker mafia, it will ask the Delhi Police to take action in the matter.

"Why were false statements made before this court? Water is coming from Himachal Pradesh then where is the water going in Delhi? There is so much spillage, tanker mafias etc., what measures have you taken in this regard."People are suffering, we are seeing visuals on every news channel. What measures have you taken to control water wastage if water scarcity is a recurring problem in summers," the Bench observed orally.Advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for the Delhi Government, said there is action, including massive disconnection of water supplies, so that excess water wastage is stopped. The top court asked the Delhi Government to file a report stating the action taken for the loss of water. The matter will be taken up on Thursday. The top court is hearing a plea filed by the Delhi Government seeking a direction to Haryana to release the surplus water provided by Himachal Pradesh to the national capital to mitigate its water crisis

Senior IAS officer Muddada Ravichandra Appointed as Secretary to AP CM

GNS News Agency, June 12

In a significant development, senior IAS officer Muddada Ravichandra has been appointed as the Secretary to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu



Naidu by the state government. The order was issued by Neerabh Kumar Prasad, the Chief Secretary of the State Government, d i r e c t i n g Ravichandra to

take up the responsibilities of his new role with immediate effect.Ravichandra, who has a wealth of experience in the administrative field, is expected to bring his expertise to the role and work towards the development and progress of the state. His appointment comes at a crucial time for Andhra Pradesh, as it continues to navigate through various challenges and opportunities.

The TDP, JSP and BJP - partners of the National Democratic Alliance

(NDA), fought the Assembly elections 2024 against YSRCP. Except for 11 Assembly seats won by the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), the NDA bagged the remaining seats out of the total 1 75 Assembly constituencies in the State. While the TDP won from 135 Assembly constituencies, the JSP and the BJP won from 21 and 8 Assembly constituencies respectively. Mr. Naidu allocated three berths to the JSP and one to the BJP going by their numbers in the State Assembly. Mr. Naidu adopted a formula to ensure that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners will get their due share in the Cabinet. He selected a minister for each 7 MLAs won by the alliance partner. As the JSP won 21 seats, it got three berths, while the BJP which won from 8 Assembly constituencies got one ministerial

berth. The remaining were earmarked to the TDP. The Chief Minister will allocate the portfolios to his cabinet colleagues shortly. It is widely discussed in political circles that Mr. Kalyan will be made Deputy Chief Minister with a key portfolio. The cine actor turned politician played a key role in stitching an alliance between the TDP and the BJP. Mr. Kalyan continued his efforts to convince the BJP leaders on alliance with the TDP though he received a cold-shouldered response. He, finally, was successful in allying with TDP, JSP and BJP. It helped in a debacle of the YSRCP. Kolusu Parthasarathy, who switched loyalties from the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) to the TDP just before the elections, was taken into the Cabinet.

Only two former ministers, K. Atchannaidu (TDP

Merged 5 panchayats with AP

dated

president) and P

Narayana, in 2014-19 cabi-

net got a chance in the

present cabinet. N. Md

Farooq, a senior minority

politician who was with the

TDP since the formation

and had served as a minis-

ter with various portfolios

earlier, is the lone minority

face in the cabinet. The lone

minister from BJP is Satya

Kumar Yadav, who won

from Dharmavaram As-

sembly constituency. He is

a close aide of former Vice

President M Venkaiah

Naidu and works as Na-

tional Secretary of the BJP.

Mr. Naidu did not induct the

senior leaders and MLAs

such as Gorantla Buchaiah

Chowdary and Dhulipala

Narendra. Even former

ministers like Somireddy

Chandramohan Reddy,

Srinivasulu, Kala Venkat

Rao, Ayyanna Patrudu and

others were not accommo-

Chinna

Kaluva

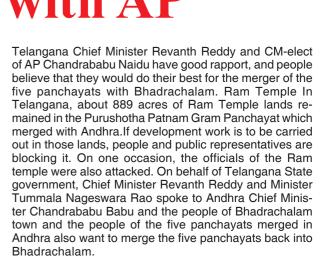
Nimmakayala

Rajappa.

AP

GNS News Agency, June 12

As a part of this, a gazette was published including Kannaigudem, Picchukulpadu, Yetapaka, Gundala and Purushottam Patnam panchayats which were not flooded in Andhra Pradesh. With the decision of the then Central government, along with the residents of Bhadrachalam, the people of the villages of the five panchayats merged with Andhra are also facing serious difficulties. Bhadrachalam town does not even have a place to dump garbage, so garbage is being dumped near the embankment on the banks of the Godavari.Also, the people of the fivepanchayats merged with Andhra have to travel hundreds of kilometres to go to the district government offices. These five panchayats are far away from Alluri Seetaram Raju district centre in Andhra Pradeh and are not seeing any development. The people of these five panchayats are also demanding that their panchayats should be merged with Bhadrachalam. The people of the holy town also desire to see these panchayats back with them. For ten years this matter has been an election issue for all parties. It became a slogan, but there is no record of anyone trying hard. The then Telangana minister Tummala Nageswara Rao discussed the matter with AP CM Chandrababu Naidu. Naidu responded positively but did not take a step forward. In the recent parliamentary elections, candidates from all political parties chose the issue of merger of five panchayats as their agenda. The Congress party also highlighted this in their manifesto and said that if they win, they would get five panchayats in Bhadrachalam.Now again with the formation of Chandrababu Naidu's coalition government in Andhra, hopes have revived among the people.





GNS News Agency, June 12

The NDA government will continue to push the reforms drive initiated after 2014 with an eye on bolstering India's macroeconomic stability and growth, Nirmala Sitharaman asserted on June 12 after taking over the reins of the Ministries of Finance and Corporate Affairs again. After assuming office in the morning, Ms. Sitharaman was briefed by top officials from the two Ministries on ongoing policy issues that need resolution. She said the government is fully committed to ensuring 'ease of living' for citizens and will continue to take steps in this direction, and projected a positive outlook for the economy. "She urged the departments to advance the NDA government's development agenda with renewed vigour and ensure responsive policymaking to achieve the Prime Minister's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat'," the Finance Ministry said in a statement. Ms. Sitharaman thanked Prime Minister Modi for giving her the opportunity to serve the people again under his guidance, and acknowledged the strong leadership and developmentoriented governance in the last 10 years, which have driven transformative changes across various sectors and created a robust and resilient economy."The reforms undertaken since 2014 will continue, which will further provide macroeconomic stability and growth for India," she

INDIAN CHRONICLE

Indian Chronicle English Daily Gaza peace plan

THE US has requested the UN Security Council to upport its proposed Gaza peace deal, signalling a conerted effort to end the ongoing hostilities. President Biden's plan, unveiled on May 31, outlines a process hat begins with Hamas returning all remaining Israeli ostages, followed by Israel's eventual withdrawal from Gaza. This plan, however, faces a web of diplomatic hallenges. Neither Israel nor Hamas has fully endorsed he proposal, reflecting the deep-rooted mistrust and onflicting objectives that have prolonged the conflict The Biden administration's consideration of a separate eal with Hamas, bypassing Israel, underscores the complexity of the situation. This approach, while conroversial, highlights a pragmatic shift towards diplonacy over military action, as the US no longer views lamas as a military threat to Israel. The draft resolution mphasises a ceasefire contingent on ongoing negoiations, with Qatar and Egypt playing crucial roles in ustaining these talks. On Monday, the UN Security Council adopted the plan after Russia chose not to block t, marking a diplomatic victory for Washington. Pres-ure is mounting on Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, vho faces domestic dissent, most notably with the resgnation of former defence chief Benny Gantz from the mergency war cabinet over Netanyahu's handling of he war. Demonstrations by the families of hostages ave amplified the demand for a diplomatic esolution. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's reional tour aims to garner support for the peace deal nd address humanitarian concerns, such as reopenng the Rafah border crossing to aid Gaza. Blinken's nission reflects the broader strategic objective of seuring regional stability and alleviating the humanitaran crisis. The US proposal's success depends on it navigating the intricate political landscape and securment of both Israel and Har

Losing CPI(M) Jadavpur candidate Srijan Bhattacharya pens open letter, says 'will not take a U-turn'



GNS News Agency, June 12

Popular CPI(M) youth face Srijan Bhattacharya Saturday wrote an open letter in the wake of his defeat in the Jadavpur Lok Sabha seat in West Bengal. He came third, behind TMC candidate Sayani Ghosh and BJP nominee Ganguly.Bhattacharya said. "We tried to cre-Dr Anirhan ate an alternative narrative outside the traditional Trinamool-BJP trope by bringing up issues of sustenance throughout this election campaign. The results of the election show that the destructive BJP has declined across the country and the state as well. It is certainly an encouraging development for us. We must now continue to strive to become an alternative force to the TMC.. He then said that they were able to break the Trinamool-BJP binary in the last municipal and panchayat polls but the binary has strengthened again owing to the efforts of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh."We have a lot of work ahead of us. Trinamool-BJP communal binary should be broken again before the '26 (state) polls. We have to go from house to house and talk about life and livelihood," Bhattacharya added. He flagged the issue of political violence and claimed several party workers were targeted during and after the Lok Sabha polls, and added that the "right to self-defence is enshrined in our country's Constitution."The Young Turk also claimed that there were a lot of positives to the election results as well. Bhattacharya said the party's vote share has increased in six of the seven Assembly segments under the Jadavpur Lok Sabha constituency compared with the 2021 Assembly polls. He also thanked Congress workers for their support during the campaign.Notably, the CPI(M) and the Congress made seat adjustments in West Bengal during the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls. Despite the arrangement, the Congress managed to win only one seat and the Left failed to open its account.

VJTI finds deficiency in capacity of hoarding to resist overturning



GNS News Agency, June 12

Hoarding, Ghatkopar hoarding collapse, Mumbai hoarding collapse, Ghatkopar tragedy,It is a crucial calculation in civil engineering in a bid to ensure that a building or any other structure like a hoarding is able to sustain strong forces of nature like an earthquake or gusty winds.The Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute (VJTI), which is inspecting the cause of the Ghatkopar hoarding collapse that killed 17 people on May 13, has found that the structure collapsed owing to inadequacies in the design and deficient construction of the foundation of the erected hoarding.

The interim report, which has been submitted to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the SIT of the Mumbai crime branch, shows that the capacity of the hoarding to resist overturning was three times lower than the capacity of overturning exerted by the strong winds which blew on May 13. Furthermore, following the inspections and tests carried out by the VJTI experts, it was found that the structure had the capacity to withstand wind speeds of only 49.7 kmph (14 m/s) even as the rules mandate all structures to be designed to sustain a wind speed of at least 158.4 kmph (44 m/s). On the day of the collapse, the wind speed in the city had touched 87 kmph.

Citing the codal provisions enlisted in the IS 875-2015 Part III, the institute - which was appointed by the civic body to inspect the cause of the collapse - has said the structure was found deficient in being able to fulfill several rules mandated in the rulebook, ranging from its ability to withstand speed to the capacity of the foundation to resist the overturning. According to the interim report, the capacity of the hoarding's foundation to resist the overturning, which refers to the moment of resistance for overturning, was found to be only 7000 kNm, which was at least three times lower than the overturning moment exerted by the winds on May 13, which stood at 21,000 kNm. At its core, the moment of overturning refers to the moment of energy which has the capacity to disturb an object resulting in its overturning, fall and collapse. It is a crucial calculation in civil engineering in a bid to ensure that a building or any other structure like a hoarding is able to sustain strong forces of nature like an earthguake or gusty winds. A senior official from the BMC told The Indian Express that the final report is expected to be submitted on June 12. The study has been conducted by the structural engineering department of the VJTI, who has said that even as the final report is awaited, the concluding remarks are expected to remain the same. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Mumbai crime branch is probing the hoarding collapse incident.

Mahayuti can sweep Assembly polls with little efforts and enhanced vote share: Devendra Fadnavis

GNS News Agency, June 12

While acknowledging that the political arithmetic went wrong leading to poor score of the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday exuded confidence that a course correction and reworked strategy would help them sweep the Assembly polls in Maharashtra.

Fadnavis was addressing a meeting of BJP MLAs and office-bearers at Vasant Smruti Bhawan in Dadar in Mumbai."Despite winning just nine seats, BJP has taken a decisive lead in 71 Assembly constituencies dotted across the state. Another six seats belong to our associate which makes our total tally 76 seats. Along with our alliance partners Shiv Sena led by CM Eknath Shinde and NCP led by Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, the win in a total 17 Lok Sabha seats translate into 130 Assembly seats. Which means Mahayuti is ahead in 130 out of total 288 seats in Assembly," he said."A little effort to enhance our poll percentage by 3.5 will help us sweep the Assembly polls," he said. "If each of our three constituents add-up 1.5 to 2 per cent, we will be comfortably above our opponents. Even if we look at BJP's vote share, it has dropped by just 1.5 in 2024 compared to 2019 polls," he said.Fadnavis, who had offered to resign, held a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi on Thursday and Friday. He has been advised against rushing resignation. Fadnavis said, "My resignation was not out of disappointment. I wanted to devote full time for party. I am not somebody who runs away from responsibilities or challenges. I am a fighter. Moreover, let us not forget we draw inspiration from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who valiantly fought the mighty Mughal army despite being surrounded from all sides."According to Fadnavis, "Along



gre 0.3 pc. Yet, the difference in seats was huge with MVA bagging 30 and Mahayuti 17. Analysing the vote share and seats won and lost, Fadnavis said, "The consolidation of Muslims and dalits played a crucial factor in determining the electoral outcome in MVA favour. At least in eleven seats certain community (read Muslims) was a factor that led to BJP's loss with a narrow margin, less than three per cent."

Exhorting the BJP cadre to get back to work immediately for Assembly polls, Fadnavis warned the Mahayuti constituents against engaging in blame game for debacle in the polls."I have spoken with CM Eknath Shinde and DyCM Ajit Pawar. I believe we will have to work together," he said. "At this point, it is pointless to hold each other responsible for Lok Sabha performance. Though there was some lack of coordination at grassroots among us, we have also helped each other in winning the seats. Therefore, Mahayuti has to put up a united front in Assembly polls," he added.Fadnavis said, "The anti-Constitution narrative worked in one election. Such false agenda will not work again. Secondly, Maratha reservation was given both the times during the BJP-led coalition (2018 and 2024). To the contrary, those (Congress/NCP-SP) who were against Maratha reservation since 1980 till date have elicited the support from pro-Maratha quota followers. They succeeded in misleading the people. But how long will such lies last," he asked."The propaganda against relocation of industries and projects from Maharashtra was another plank which opponents encashed. But the setback to industries was during MVA government led by CM Uddhav Thackeray. During our government, Maharashtra achieved leadership position. Maharashtra's investment is highest in the country. The neighbouring states Gujarat, Karnataka and Delhi are way below," he added.

Drone scare prompts Pune police to buy anti-drone guns to curb menace



GNS News Agency, June 12

With drones making an appearance in the skies at night causing anxiety among residents, the Pune rural police is submitting a proposal to the Pune district planning committee for the purchase of 'anti drone guns'.

Messages along with photos and videos of drones allegedly flying at night in certain areas of Pune district have gone viral on social media. In a press release, police on Saturday stated that over the last fortnight, drones doing the rounds at night in the eastern parts of Pune district have made residents jittery. It has caused confusion and raised questions among residents, the release stated. To solve the mystery behind these drones, Pune rural police have taken training under experts in bringing down the drones using 'anti drone guns'. Police said this will enable them to take action against these drones flying illegally. Thereupon, a proposal to buy two anti-drone guns from a private company is being submitted to the Pune district planning committee, the release said. Police have appealed to the citizens to avoid believing whatever they hear about the drones and spreading rumours without verifying matters.

Doctor, agent held for illegal sex determination test in Baramati



GNS News Agency, June 12

The Pune rural police have arrested a doctor and an "agent" for allegedly carrying out an illegal sex determination test on a pregnant woman at a village in Baramati.Police have identified the accused persons as Dr Madhukar Chandrakant Shinde (52) of Phaltan in Satara district and Nitin Balasaheb Ghule (34) of Dhekalwadi, Baramati.

Dr Mahesh Jagtap, superintendent at the sub-dis-(FIR) in this case at Malegaon police station on Saturday.As per the FIR, a police team comprising sub inspector Yuvraj Ghodke acted on a tip-off and nabbed Shinde and Ghule in Malad area of Baramati on Friday evening. Police seized a sonography machine from their possession.A prima-facie investigation revealed Shinde and Ghule conducted an illegal sex determination test on a woman at Gofne Wasti in Malegaon in Baramati taluka, around 1.30 pm on Friday. Police have booked the two accused persons under sections of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act.Police have launched a search for the woman on whom the doctors conducted the prenatal sex determination test, which is banned in the country.Assistant police inspector Balaji Bhange is investigating the case.District civil surgeon Nagnath Yempalle told The Indian Express that the doctor was earlier caught in two different cases in Satara and Pune for determining the sex of the foetus. There are court cases against him. However, despite being a gynaecologist, he had blatantly flouted PC PNDT rules and used an unregistered sonography machine in a mobile van where he conducted the sex determination of the foetus.Due to these sex determination practices unfortunately there is an imbalance in the sex ratio to birth ratio."However our PCPNDT Pune Cell is creating awareness and implementing law effectively," advocate Megha Sontale, Pune District Legal Advisor, told The Indian Express.

Case of mistaken identity: Cook killed in BSF firing in J&K

GNS News Agency, June 12

Samba/Jammu: In a case of mistaken identity, a 26year-old man was killed when the Border Security Force (BSF) troops opened fire on observing suspicious movement near a forward post along the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, officials said .The deceased was identified as Vasudeva, a resident of Akhnoor area of Jammu district, who was working as a cook in a company engaged in construction work in the border area, they said."An untoward incident took place at border outpost Regal late on Friday when the BSF personnel, as per preliminary investigation, observed some suspicious movement and on being challenged, the individual apparently got frightened and started running away following which the troops opened fire," Samba Additional Superintendent of Police Surinder Choudhary said.He said the man was critically injured and rushed to hospital but succumbed to his injuries. "Police have taken cognizance of the incident and further investigation is on," the officer said. The body of the deceased was handed over to his family after completion of all formalities, including post-mortem, on Saturday morning, he added.

with retaining the Mahayuti's vote share of 43.6 per cent, we just need 3.5 per cent more to defeat the rival Maha Vikas Aghadi."

r"While we focused on fighting just three parties– Congress, NCP (SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) in the Lok Sabha polls, there was a fourth party aggressively in the field whose plank was reservation. Unfortunately, we overlooked this player or fell short in effectively countering it through planned strategy," he said.Fadnavis was referring to the reservation plank that was raised by activist Manoj Jarange-Patil, complete with poll rallies and the Constitution threat issue that saw dalits/tribals consolidate fearing they would lose Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes reservation.While MVA polled 43.9 pc votes, Mahayuti won 43.6 pc votes. The gap was a mea-

Noted hand surgeon successfully achieves landmark of 30K complex surgeries

GNS News Agency, June 12

Dr Jindal Hand surgeon"There have been several patients with acute hand trauma, birth defects of the hand, suffer from arthritic hands while there are others who have to deal with compression neuropathy in their hands and feet," Dr Jindal recalls.Pune-based noted hand surgeon vividly remembers the first patient he had operated upon way back in 1991. The boy was just 14 and a constricted plaster cast to heal a minor hand injury led to a series of complications including 14 operations."The boy's nerve got cut, paralysing muscles, and even the bone got infected. The rod that was fitted in the forearm led to further complications. I remember for the hand reconstructive surgery, we tabulated the problems in the bones, joints, nerves , skin and tendons. For the bone, a device was custom-made in our own workshop. The skin was imported from the abdominal wall and the tendon came from the inner leg. The nerve was harvested from the outer aspect of the leg," Dr Jindal recalled.

Over the following months, the joints were kept supple through intense tailor-made therapy and the brain signals were activated through dynamic devices. "The sincerity and perseverance of the patient and his parents paid off and the boy could use his hand again," Dr Jindal said adding that now at 47, he is among the top management consultants at a private firm and avidly participates in rock climbing expeditions.Be it dealing with with patients with severe burns or reattaching amputated parts, over the last three decades or so, Dr Jindal has completed a landmark 30,000 complex surgeries."There have been several patients with acute hand trauma, birth defects of the hand, suffer from arthritic hands while there are others who have to deal with compression neuropathy in their hands and feet," Dr Jindal recalls. Having performed over 50 reimplantations of completely severed /



amputated hands, Dr Jindal, a consulting hand surgeon at Ratna Memorial hospital, is actively engaged in conducting charity surgical camps to correct hand deformities. "More than 900 patients have been surgically treated in these camps and children suffering from spasticity due to cerebral palsy and congenital deformity are given priority. Often this group of patients are laborers or from the economically weak section. They lack the money necessary for treatment and medicines," Dr Jindal said. He added that with the support of social organisations such as Rotary International, Lions' Club, Agrawal Club and Rasiklal Manikchand Dhariwal Foundation, camps are conducted to surgically treat the patients."If the hand has a deformity or suffers a serious injury in an accident, then the affected person has to face a number of problems. It was because of this that I chose to develop expertise in hand surgery after obtaining a degree in orthopedics and later taking up further studies in France and Switzerland," Dr Jindal, who also formerly chaired the hand surgery section at the Indian Orthopaedic Association

Goa beaches fall silent with first pre-monsoon showers

GNS News Agency, June 12

Panaji: As Goa has started receiving pre-monsoon showers, the beaches in the State, which are otherwise teeming with tourists and locals alike, are now wearing a deserted look.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday issued an 'orange' alert for Goa, forecasting heavy rains over the next four days. Although the south-west monsoon is yet to arrive in Goa, the coastal state has started witnessing rains since

"This is the best time to be on the beaches. But it is not the right time to swim. One can go up to knee-deep water, but swimming is strictly prohibited," said Pele aka Fransisco Fernandes, a local fisherman from Benaulim beach.

The sea is rough and fishing activities have stopped, he said. "There is an official ban on fishing using motorised vessels from June 1 till July 31. Traditional fishermen are allowed, but for some period, they also stay away from the sea as it is rough," Pele said.









'Old is gold': Dilip Ghosh's cryptic message amid disgruntlement in Bengal BJP



GNS News Agency, June 12

Dilip Ghosh, Dilip ghosh interview, Sandeshkhali issue, false rape cases against TMC leaders, 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Bengal Govt change, indian express newsBJP candidate from Bardhaman -Durgapur constituency Dilip Ghosh during an interview with Indian Express in Burdwan town on May 09, 2024.

After questioning the rationale behind relocating established leaders like him from winnable constituencies to challenging electoral battlegrounds, senior BJP leader Dilip Ghosh on Saturday put out a social media post, sparking speculations of 'old versus new' debate in the party's West Bengal unit. In a cryptic message, Ghosh posted on X, "Old is Gold." Ghosh had earlier said that it was mistake by the party to sideline old guards and the poll debacle was waiting to happen as newcomers and inexperienced leaders were calling the shots. BJP's Lok Sabha tally in the state dipped to 12 in this election from 18 in 2019, when Ghosh was the BJP state president. The saffron party had targeted to win 30 of the 42 seats this time.

Ghosh was defeated at the hands of TMC's Kirti Azad by nearly 1.38 lakh votes in the Bardhaman-Durgapur seatGhosh had earlier said that it was now established that sending him to contest from his old constituency of Medinipur to a fresh one "was a mistake". He was relocated from his winning seat of Medinipur to Bardhaman-Durgapur, a seat where the battle against the TMC was perceptively tough.Ghosh replaced sitting MP SS Ahluwalia in Bardhaman-Durgapur. Ahluwalia, in turn, was moved to Asansol. The party's sitting MLA from Asansol Dakshin seat, Agnimitra Paul, replaced Ghosh in Medinipur.All the three BJP candidates were trounced by their TMC counterparts in the recently concluded elections.On Friday, Ghosh questioned the choices made by the state BJP leadership, particularly in relocating experienced leaders like him and former Union MoS Debasree Choudhury from their constituencies to unfamiliar ones.

Afghani charas worth Rs 16 crore recovered from Dwarka coast

GNS News Agency, June 12

The Gujarat Police on Friday recovered high-quality Afghani charas (produced from live cannabis grown in Afghanistan) worth Rs 16 crore lying abandoned on the coastal area of Devbhumi Dwarka district. The police have intensified patrolling in the 50-kilometre coastal area covering over 10 to 12 villages to find more packets.

According to officials, the Sagar Suraksha Dal team, while patrolling the coastal area of Varala village, found three plastic bags containing 30 packets of some drug, each weighing nearly 1 kilogram. The forensic officials, on examining the packets, found it to be the contraband of high quality weighing 32.05 kg. In April, the Dwarka police had recovered one kilogram of charas worth Rs 52 lakh from the coastal area in Varvala village. "We have registered an offence under different sections of the NDPS act against unknown persons and have started a probe," said Deputy Superintendent of Police Hardik Prajapati.

Prajapati said that after the recovery of the first

packet, the police have become active and intensified patrolling for drugs in the coastal villages up to 50 kilometres covering around 10 to 12 villages in association with Sagar Suraksha Dal teams. "Our teams will also carry out checks in the coastal areas and gather information of suspects involved in such illegal activities. We are also using drone cameras during our surveillance," he coad

Himachal Pradesh govt increases prize money for winners of international sporting events



medal winners in the Olympics, Winter Olympics, and Paralympic Games has been increased from Rs 3 crore to Rs 5 crore. Similarly, silver medal winners will now receive Rs 3 crore instead of Rs 2 crore, and bronze medal winners will receive Rs 2 crore instead of Rs 1 crore."He further said, "The prize money for gold medal winners in the Asian Games and Para Asian Games has been increased from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 4 crore. Silver

Among victims of Uttarakhand trek tragedy, a Google UX researcher, an environmentalist and a social worker from Bengaluru



GNS News Agency, June 12

The nine Bengaluru trekkers who died due to harsh climatic conditions during their Sahastra Tal trek in Uttarakhand on June 4 had several interests apart from trekking and mountaineering. From Covid-19 relief activities to sustainable waste management solutions, the trekkers who were associated with the Karnataka Mountaineering Association (KMA) were known in Bengaluru for various social impact initiatives.Asha Sudhakar was one of Karnataka's oldest women trekkers and a member of the KMA for over three decades. Asha's husband S Sudhakar, the joint secretary of KMA, was the programme coordinator for the fateful Sahastra Tal trek in Uttarakhand. Sudhakar survived the trek.

A former SBI deputy manager, Asha had participated in 12 climbing expeditions in the Himalayas, including Mt Black Peak, Mt Gangotri and Mt Shivling, and Mt Kilimanjaro in South Africa in 2020. She had also completed around 27 high-altitude trekking expeditions in Himachal Pradesh, Leh-Ladakh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Uttarakhand."She is an epitome of courage, will power and hope who embraced a life of adventure," mountaineer, trekker and ultrarunner Ritu Bhatia Gupta said in an Instagram post. "Asha maam was my mentor, my 'go to' person on mountaineering ever since I had the good fortune of trekking with her in Sikkim Goechala Trek in 2021," she added.Asha was conferred with the Dasara Award in 1986 by the Government of Karnataka for her feats in the field of mountaineering. She was also presented the Kalasha Award by the Inner Wheel Club of Bangalore West in 2006. Senior trekker Anita Rangappa was also an active member of the KMA. People in the trekking community recall Rangappa to be an avid trekker with vast experience. "Both Anita maam and Asha maam were avid trekkers. They have done many treks. Age was just a number for them. They were fit and fine, warm and kind people," Ritu Bhatia Gupta said.

Venkatesh Prasad was synonymous with adventure, especially trekking. A computer science engineer from Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Tumkur, he worked as director-delivery assurance at Impelsys in Bengaluru. Prasad also headed the pan-India operations for Samarthanam Trust, an NGO working in the area of empowering people with disabilities."He was active in trekking for many years and definitely not an amateur. He not only went on solo treks he also used to motivate his friends and colleagues to trek. He has organised outbound treks and activities, including a recent Bannerghatta Park peripheral trek for his work colleagues," his colleague Pravir Bagrodia recalled.Prasad was an amiable person, a diligent planner and an avid walker with a target of walking 100 km every month this year. "His notable trait was attention to detail. He used to plan meticulously, including giving written instructions to the participants ahead of the

trekking day," said Bagrodia.

Sujata and Vinayak Mungurwadi, who succumbed to the blizzard on June 4, ironically shared the same birth date, October 3. Alumni of BVB College of Engineering and Technology, Hubballi, they were trustees of the Uttara Karnataka Sneha Loka (UKSL) that brings together people from North Karnataka on an annual basis. While Sujata hailed from Gadag, Vinayak hailed from Hubballi.According to their friends from UKSL, Sujata and Vinayak were a "lively couple" who were self-employed. The couple had been mountaineering for over 10 years but had only ventured into high-altitude treks, including the Himalayas, recently. Sujata was the director of an enterprise and Vinayak, who had over 27 years of experience in the IT and software industry, had founded a startup Commverse.

Their friends from UKSL recalled that Sujata and Vinayak were active in distributing oxygen cylinders and conducting counselling sessions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Just a few weeks back, Sujata reportedly distributed sewing machines to the poor.Padmanabha Krishnamurthy originally hailed from Kumbashi in Udupi district's Kundapura taluk. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter. Krishnamurthy pursued his education in Bengaluru. A chartered accountant, the private company he was employed with sent him to the US where he became a certified public accountant. Upon returning, he continued to work with the same company in Bengaluru. Krishnamurthy had a deep attachment to Kumbashi, his native place, and contributed to the development of the Kumbashi Sri Harihara Temple. He also offered a bronze facial cover to Maladi Sri Nandikeshwara Daiva near Tekkatte. He also had plans to hold a big programme in his village in memory of his father in December 2024.

Chitra Praneeth is an active mountaineer and a pioneer in sustainable development. She was instrumental in setting up the HSR Layout Citizens' Forum which actively engages in sustainable practices (HSR Layout's waste management solution is recognized as the best model in Bengaluru). She has trained corporates, individuals, and residents in waste segregation, vermicomposting, and growing your food, among other sustainable waste management practices. She also actively championed sustainable menstruation.

Sindhu Wakekalam is originally from Palakkad but most of her upbringing was in Bengaluru. According to her cousin Satheesan, Wakekalam, a computer science engineer from Bengaluru, had been a mountaineer and a trekker for the last eight to nine years. An experienced trekker, Wakekalam had explored multiple terrains in the north and south regions of India, including Karnataka, Satheesan said. She specialised in local treks and adventure sports, he added. She was courageous, smart and known to be a good manager, he said. A resident of Hennur in Bengaluru, Wakekalam is survived by her husband and two sons. One of the youngest in the trekking group that went to Sahastra Tal, Padmini Hegde worked with Google in Bengaluru as a user experience (UX) researcher. A Google employee for the last four years, Hegde worked as a senior UX researcher at Flipkart and a principal UX researcher at Peepal Design. A BSc graduate from Christ University, she was also associated with the Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology to undertake 'The Meghalaya Project' which focused on how the state used different types of sustainable design and traditional knowledge that defined their cultural identity.

Mumbai teenager apprehended for raping

GNS News Agency, June 12

Himachal sports, Himachal Pradesh, Himachal government, Himachal Pradesh sports prize money, Himachal Pradesh prize money increased, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu expressed confidence that this initiative will not only boost the morale of athletes but also provide more opportunities for talented players to achieve excellence in sports. (Express Archives)The Himachal Pradesh government on Saturday increased the prize money up to Rs 5 crore for medal winners in various international competitions, including Olympics, Winter Olympics, Paralympics Games, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. A notification in this regard was issued from the office of Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu.

He said, "The state government has significantly increased the prize money for medal winners in various international competitions. The prize money for gold

medal winners will now receive Rs 2.50 crore instead of Rs 30 lakh, and bronze medal winners will receive Rs 1.50 crore instead of Rs 20 lakh. Additionally, athletes who achieve glory in the Commonwealth Games and Para Commonwealth Games will also benefit from the revised prize scheme. In showcasing the state government's commitment to promoting sports activities, the prize money for gold medal winners has been increased from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 3 crore, silver medal winners from Rs 30 lakh to Rs 2 crore, and bronze medal winners from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 1 crore." Sources said, 'The state government decided to increase the prize money for sportspersons bringing medals in international events during the budget passed in March this year. The decision's notification was pending which was issued today. The objective of the state government's new sports policy is to promote and encourage sports excellence. This increase in prize money reflects the state government's commitment to promote sports and recognise the hard work of athletes representing the state at the international level."CM Sukhu expressed confidence that this initiative will not only boost the morale of athletes but also provide more opportunities for talented players to achieve excellence in sports, contributing to the overall development of sports in the state.

IIT Kharagpur ranked nation's 4th best higher educational institute

GNS News Agency, June 12

IIT KharagpurIIT Kharagpur performed well in parameters such as international research network, sustainability, and citations per faculty, a statement by QS World University Rankings 2025 said. The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, has been ranked the fourth best higher educational institutes in India, according to the latest QS World University Rankings 2025, a surge of 49 places from last year.

IIT Kharagpur has secured 222nd position globally and is now the third best Indian Institute of Technology in the country.IIT Kharagpur performed well in parameters such as international research network, sustainability, and citations per faculty, a statement by QS World University Rankings 2025 said.Regarding the incredible achievement, IIT Kharagpur director Prof V K Tewari said, "The institute has upheld the nation's resolve to excel in standards of globalisation with artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing systems and transportation, 5G network, safety engineering and analytics, quality and reliability, affordable healthcare, precision agriculture, food nutrition, and smart infrastructure to contribute towards an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'."IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi also figured among the top 150 higher educational institutes in



the world, while the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) retained the top rank globally for the 13th time.r

While IIT Bombay climbed from 149th spot last year to 118, up by 31 ranks, IIT Delhi improved its rank by 47 points to bag the 150th position. The QS World University Rankings 2025 by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) featured 1,503 universities from around the world and evaluated a total of 5,663 institutions. The rankings aim to project university performance for the next academic year, hence they are named for the following year.

11-year-old girl, sent to juvenile home

GNS News Agency, June 12

The police said the minor accused fled after committing the crime and he was only recently apprehended by the police. Thereafter, he was sent to a juvenile home. The police said the minor accused fled after committing the crime and he was only recently apprehended by the police. Thereafter, he was sent to a juvenile home. A 17-year-old boy was detained for allegedly sexually assaulting an eleven-year-old girl in south Mumbai, police said Saturday. The juvenile accused, who was detained last week, has been lodged in the Dongri Children's Home.According to police, the incident took place on May 23, when the girl was going to a shop after playing at a friend's place. An officer said, "The accused is an elder brother of the girl's friend. On May 23, at around 3.30pm, the juvenile was standing near his house when he saw the 11-year-old girl was heading out. When she told him that she was going to a shop, the juvenile gave her a Rs 20 note and asked her to get a cigarette for him." When the girl refused to get him a cigarette and handed him the money back, the accused grabbed her hand and pulled her inside his house, police said adding that he allegedly sexually assaulted the girl. The girl, who was traumatized by the incident, initially went to her sister and informed her about it.An officer said, "Instead of going home, the two sisters then went to their eldest sister's home. The girl then revealed the ordeal to her eldest sister," an in-



vestigator said. The police said that the 24-year-old woman then brought her eleven-year-old sister to the police station and lodged a complaint.

The minor was initially sent for medical examination after which a case of rape under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 was registered. The primary medical reports confirmed that she was sexually assaulted. The juvenile, who had escaped after the incident, was located near his house later following which a police team detained him. "The juvenile has been lodged in the Dongri Children's Home," said an officer adding, "The victim is currently not in Mumbai and as soon as she comes we will record her statement in front of the magistrate."

Punjab bank employee murdered in broad daylight on her way to office, man arrested

GNS News Agency, June 12

A woman employed in a private bank was murdered in broad daylight during the busy office hours on Saturday morning in Punjab's Mohali, the police said, indicating that it as a crime of passion. The police have arrested the accused who has not been identified till the filing of this report.

The deceased, identified as Baljinder Kaur, 31, resident of Fatehpur Jattan village, near Morinda town, had been working in the bank in Phase-V for the past nine years, the police said.As per preliminary investigation, Baljinder Kaur had come to the office in the morning in an autorickshaw and was walking towards her office when the accused, who was already present there, attacked her multiple times with a sword, injuring her critically.Though the assault took place in a busy area nobody came for the rescue of the woman who was later declared dead at the civil hospital.



The deceased, identified as Baljinder Kaur, 31, resident of Fatehpur Jattan village, near Morinda town, had been working in the bank in Phase-V for the past nine years, the police said.







Ranga Reddy

From dal pakwan to chole bhature, this 75-year-old Sindhi restaurant in Chembur guarantees an indulgent experience



GNS News Agency, June 12

Well-renowned in the area for its dal pakwan, chole bhature, pattice, and a variety of stuffed naan and lassi, the 75-year-old eatery started as a small 6x4 feet stall serving only three items. (photo: express photo)Well-renowned in the area for its dal pakwan, chole bhature, pattice, and a variety of stuffed naan and lassi, the 75year-old eatery started as a small 6x4 feet stall serving only three items. If you're craving the Sindhi delicacy dal pakwan or want to enjoy a plate of chole bhature, a favourite among many North Indians including Virat Kohli, Vig Refreshments in Sindhi Camp, Chembur, could be your next dining spot.

Well-renowned in the area for its dal pakwan, chole bhature, pattice and a variety of stuffed naan and lassi, the 75-year-old eatery started as a small 6×4 feet stall serving only three items.

"My nanaji (maternal grandfather) Sevaram Banjuram started this eatery in 1949, offering three items — pithi puri, dal pakwan and sheera," said Ravi, 53, who co-owns the business with his brother Praveen, 51.Late Sevaram Banjuram, like many others in the area, had migrated from Sindh to Chembur—where camps were built to lodge refugees—during the Partition. Their ethnicity earned the area the name of Sindhi Camp. Many of these migrants started small businesses to sustain themselves and among them was this landmark eatery."In those days, for one anna, you could buy a plate of dal pakwan and get sheera complimentary," recalls Ravi, who learned this tale from his mother who also spent significant years helping her father out at this eatery.When the patriarch passed away, many tried their hand at managing the eatery but none succeeded. His father, Arjundev Arora, who had in the past helped his father-in-law in the business, took over the reins in 1970 after compensating his brother and sister-in-laws. He renamed it to Vig, and slowly introduced chole bhature, pattice, and kulche.

"They all are served with one common dish-chole. Our chole is made from a spice mix that carries about 57 masalas, which my father would hand-pick and we would grind in-house, a practice we follow till date," shared Ravi, who joined his father after his Class 10. "I was weak in Maths so a teacher suggested my dad take me to his shop, hoping that I would learn addition and subtraction. It soon became the obvious choice," he added. Slowly the menu was further expanded to include pulav, pav bhaji, rajma chawal, and a host of other dishes. "We would keep on adding new dishes. Those which were liked by our customers were retained, and those that weren't were discontinued," shared Ravi. The restaurant, which opens at 6 am and shuts at 10 pm, is also a popular breakfast joint. We visited the eatery on a weekday afternoon and it was filled with people of all age groups, most of whom had come in groups of three to five. Talking about his customer base, Ravi shared that while initially it was largely local residents, now customers are coming from nearby areas like Ghatkopar to try their chole bhature.

"In fact, back when RK Studios and other studios were in Chembur, we would cater to a lot of people on the sets including celebrities," he said. When prodded for names of celebrities, he shared that Rajiv Kapoor, Daler Mehndi, Rajkumar Santoshi, Suresh Oberoi, Ajay Devgan's father Veeru Devgan, and Raza Murad have frequented Vig multiple times; some would step inside and eat while others would order from their cars.Chole bhature and chole pattice served at Vig refreshments. Chole bhature and chole Pattice served at Vig refreshments.Going forward, the plan is to offer the same indulgence with comfort, in alignment with which the brothers have recently set up an air-conditioned sitting area on the first floor.Just last month, the restaurant and its owner Arjundev, now 75, were acknowledged by food expert and author Rashmi Uday Singh during the first edition of the Hospitality Hope Awards, for consistently serving quality food at affordable prices.While the dal pakwan's flavour remains predictably consistent while offering the right amount of nostalgia for local residents of Chembur, Vig is also a testament to the ambitions of countless Sindhi migrants who journeyed from afar to build a name for themselves, while staying rooted in their culture and cuisine

Pune as a walled settlement and why Peshwas abandoned plan to enclose the city

GNS News Agency, June 12

With Pune sprawing in every direction today, it is difficult to imagine that there was a time several centuries ago when the city was enclosed in a compound wall. Historical documents talk about a compound wall that was built to safeguard the settlement and its administrators. Although the first such wall was built as early as the 15th century, similar efforts were made later as well during the Peshwa era, only to be abandoned midway.The compound walls or 'Gao Kusu' as they were called locally were in vogue at the time with several prosperous settlements in the Deccan region being enclosed in a compound which had gates that controlled the entry of



Indian judiciary exercises prudence & restraint in interfering with arbitral awards: Justice Kohli



GNS News Agency, June 12

The Indian judiciary exercises prudence and restraint in interfering with arbitral awards and judicial intervention on grounds of patent illegality or public policy ought to be an exceptional measure to be deployed sparingly, Supreme Court judge Justice Hima Kohli has said.She said the Supreme Court of India has helped bolster the country's reputation as a favourable venue for dispute resolution by limiting judicial intervention and respecting arbitral awards."This judicial philosophy complements legislative reforms and signifies India's ambition to become a global hub for arbitration," Justice Kohli said.

She was addressing an event during the London International Disputes Week 2024: "Arbitration in India and the MENA Region: Roadmap to 2030" organised by the International Arbitration & Mediation Centre, Hyderabad in collaboration with King & Spalding LLP.Justice Kohli said it was imperative to recognise that the essence of justice lies not only in honouring and enforcing arbitral awards but also in safeguarding fairness and equity for the stake holders."It must be underscored that judicial intervention on grounds of patent illegality or public policy ought to be an exceptional measure to be deployed sparingly and with utmost caution. The Indian judiciary, guided by the principles of minimal interference, exercises prudence and restraint in interfering with arbitral awards," she said.Justice Kohli said as the landscape of arbitration evolves and new challenges emerge, the Indian judiciary has also adapted and responded to the changing needs of the hour and refined the contours of judicial intervention."As we look ahead to 2030, India's path forward in arbitration necessitates a robust focus on institutional arbitration. To fully realise its potential, India must continue to enhance the operational effectiveness and global reputation of its arbitration institutions," she said.

Justice Kohli said this involves not only improving the infrastructure, but also ensuring that these institutions can boast of experienced and upright arbitrators, supported by efficient administrative frameworks and constantly updated rules. She said by doing so, India can attract more international arbitration matters, which will, in turn, boost investor confidence and contribute to the country's economic growth. Justice Kohli said in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the path forward involves harmonising arbitration practices across different jurisdictions to create a more predictable and investor-friendly environment.

She said regional cooperation and dialogue are essential to achieving this harmonisation. Justice Kohli said both India and the MENA region must embrace technological advancements to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of arbitration. She said the COVID experience has resulted in a paradigm shift towards online dispute resolution mechanisms in the field of arbitration and mediation."Digitisation has improved the efficiency of the arbitration process and helped prevent loss or damage to important records. Availability of digital records also makes enforcement of arbitral awards more efficient and reduces the burden of evidentiary challenges for courts,' Justice Kohli said. She said Indian courts have been quick to readjust to modern times by offering an option of virtual hearings to lawyers and litigants."In the context of arbitration, this commitment ensures that it remains a reliable and preferred method for resolving commercial disputes in the digital era," she said, adding that this digital transformation will also make arbitration more accessible to parties from different geographical locations.Justice Kohli said by strengthening institutional frameworks, harmonising regional practices and embracing technological advancements, India and MENA must ensure that they are well-equipped to handle the complexities of modern commercial disputes."By upholding the principles of fairness, efficiency, and minimal judicial intervention, India and the MENA region can build a robust arbitration ecosystem that meets global standards," she said, adding, "Together, let us work towards a future where arbitration is the cornerstone of dispute resolution".

Naveen Patnaik calls VK Pandian 'person of integrity'; says criticism against him 'unfortunate'

GNS News Agency, June 12

In his first comments on his aide V K Pandian after the shocking defeat in the elections, BJD supremo and former Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday said criticism of Pandian for the party's debacle was "unfortunate" and asserted that he did an "excellent job"."He (Pandian) is a person of integrity and honesty and should be remembered for that," Patnaik said amid widespread resentment among the party leaders and workers, who blamed the bureaucrat-turned-politicians from Tamil Nadu, for the party's poor showing in the elections. The five-term chief minister, however, in the same breath, reiterated that Pandian was not his successor and that the people of Odisha would decide who his successor would be.Patnaik said he gracefully accepted defeat in the recently concluded assembly elections and would continue to serve the people of the state in whichever way possible.



the other hand, bagged 51 seats, while the Congress won 14 constituencies, the CPI (M) one. Three Independent nominees also emerged victorious. The BJD failed to win any of the Lok Sabha seats in the state, with the BJP bagging 20 and the Congress one.

the people.

In the mid-15th century, Pune, as part of the Junnar pargana under the Bahmani kingdom, came to be ruled by an Arab sardar named Qasam Beig Shafat Khan who was locally known as 'Barya Arab' ('barya' likely a corruption of 'bada'). During his time, he took up the construction of a compound wall that enclosed the military portions of the settlement. The Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, published in 1885, gives a detailed description of this structure, the ruins of which could be seen around the city in the 19th century. It also refers to some historical documents to conclude that the wall – built on the lines of other 'Deccan village walls' – was made of mud and bricks on a stone and mud foundation.

The wall was called the Pandhri or white wall and is now called the Juna Kot. It stretched from the younger to the elder Shaikh Salla's tomb along the bank of the Mutha river, leaving both the mosques outside of it. From the elder Shaikh Salla's tomb the wall turned south to the north-east corner of the Mandai, where there was a gate called the Konkan Darvaja. The stone steps which led to this gate remain. From the Mandai the wall passed east along the backs of houses on the north side of Dikshit and Pethe streets to Pethe's cistern. It then turned north and continued almost straight to the younger Shaikh Salla's tomb. Midway between Pethe's cistern and the younger Shaikh Salla's tomb was another gate facing east called Nagar Darvaja. The site of the Nagar gate can still be traced, exactly opposite Lakdi street. The Maruti which belonged to this gate remains," reads the description in the Gazetteer.It says that the wall was in the form of an irregular rectangle, the sides being north 280, south 260, west 130, and east 200 yards and had several bastions and loopholed parapets. "Two small gateways which led to the river on the north have only lately disappeared. Flights of steps leading to the river from these gates remain and are known as Purandhare's Steps and Sapindya Mahadev's or the Twelfth Day Funeral God's Steps. On the south, to the east of Moghe's mansion, was another small gate but neither its site nor its name is known. The remains of the wall may be traced all along its course, and in many places the foundations and plinth are unharmed. The wall, which was about fourteen feet high and four feet broad, rested on a plinth of stone and mud sixteen feet high and six feet broad," reads the description

A map showing the old city wall (orange) and the project taken up by Balaji Bajirao that was abandoned. (Credit Pune The Queen of Deccan) A map showing the old city wall (orange) and the project taken up by Balaji Bajirao that was abandoned. (Credit Pune The Queen of Deccan)As per Pune: The Queen of the Deccan written by Jaymala Diddee and Samita Gupta, the compound wall had enclosed three settlements. "... original villages of Kumbharli, Kasar Ali, and Punewadi were unified within a wall. Inside were housed the garrison, the administrative offices, and government officials. This was named Kasba Pune. Most of the other people – traders, cultivators, village officials and Brahmins – were left outside the

fort," says the book.

In Pune Shahrache Varnan, written by N V Zoshi and published in 1868, there is a mention of another attempt made to construct a city wall - for the expanded Pune of the Peshwa era – that would cover a much larger area. This plan made during the rule of Balaji Bajirao in the mid-18th century did not come to fruition due to an intervention made by Rajaram II, the Satara-based king of the Maratha empire.As per historians, these steps although slightly modified now -that can be seen in Kasba Peht opposite haniwar Wada led to the Konkan Darwaja of Pandhari Kot. (Photo by Atikh Rashid) As per historians, these steps - although slightly modified now -that can be seen in Kasba Peht opposite Shaniwar Wada led to the Konkan Darwaja of Pandhari Kot. (Photo by Atikh Rashid)"Jiwajipant Anna Khasqiwale was supervising the work. When Satarkar Maharaj got to know about the work, he sent an order that the compound should not be constructed. Such a compound is suitable for villages where there is no protector. When you - valiant like lions - are there in the city then why do you want to live like mice by shutting off the outside. Because of this, the work of the compound along the Nagzari remained incomplete and was never taken up again by any of the Peshwas," Zoshi wrote.He further said that the incomplete compound wall could still be seen in his time. "From what remains, one can assume that the planned wall was 10 hands wide. Had the compound wall been built it would have created hindrance to expansion of the city. Besides, it would have confined the airflow and restricted the fresh air to come from outside," wrote Zoshi.James Grant Duff, the British soldier and historian from Scotland, observes in his A History of the Mahrattas that the project may have been abandoned because the Peshwa, on second thoughts, decided that walls might be a danger as their strength might tempt the head of the state to stand a siege in the city instead of retiring to the strong hill fort of Purandar.

Tour operator that undertook Uttarkashi trek, where 9 from Bangalore died, booked

Following the death of nine people on a trek to Uttarakhand's Malla-Silla-Kushkalyan-Sahastratal, the tour operator that took them has been ordered to temporarily suspend commercial trekking activities. It has also been booked for negligence.

In an official statement issued Friday, Uttarkashi administration said that the firm, Himalayan Company View Adventure Company, had prima facie been found negligent in the case and had ignored the safety guidelines issued to ensure trekkers' safety. Speaking to PTI Video, "There has been some criticism of Pandian. This is unfortunate. He joined the party and has not held any post. He did not contest the elections from any constituency. I have always clearly said when asked about my successor that it is not Pandian. I repeat that the people of Odisha will decide my successor.""As an officer, he (Pandian) did an excellent job in different fields in the last 10 years, be it during two cyclones or the COVID-19 pandemic. After this good work, he retired from the bureaucracy and joined the BJD. And contributed largely by doing excellent work. He is a person of integrity and honesty and should be remembered for that," Patnaik said. The BJP stormed to power in Odisha, ending the 24-year rule of the BJD, by winning 78 seats in the 147-member assembly. The Patnaik-led party, on On his health condition, Patnaik said, "I want to say that my health has always been fine and will continue to be so. You have seen that I conducted a hectic campaign last month in the heat. And that should be enough to give a verdict on my health."On the party's defeat in the assembly polls, he said, "I think we have always tried and done an excellent job. We have much to be proud of in our government and the party. In a democracy, you either win or lose.""So having been defeated after a long time, we must always take the verdict of the people gracefully. I have always said that the 4.5 crore people of Odisha are my family. I will continue to serve them in whichever way I can," he said.He expressed deep gratitude to the people of Odisha and said they have showered him with blessings time and again.

Alert after man tries to register Mauritius mission's Rs 200-cr Delhi plot in his name

GNS News Agency, June 12

A plot estimated to be worth Rs 200 crore-plus in Delhi's posh diplomatic enclave of Chanakyapuri, allotted to the Mauritius High Commission decades ago but never used, was almost illegally registered in the name of a man who walked into the New Delhi sub-registrar's office last month. The simply-dressed elderly man, who called himself Tilak Singh, walked into the sub-registrar's office last month, armed with a conveyance deed from the Land and Development Office (L&DO). But something was off — the man didn't dress the part, nor could he give consistent responses to questions posed by officials there.

At 1,354.16 square yards, the plot of land is estimated to be between Rs 200 crore and Rs 300 crore. A similarly-sized property in the Lutyens' Bungalow Zone is on the market for Rs 290 crore, as per the price listed by Sotheby's International Realty. Government sources suspect that getting the conveyance deed registered may have been the first step to sell the land and pocket the proceeds. The deed, dated April 29, bore the signature of a Deputy Land and Development Officer. The subregistrar's officer wrote to this officer on May 17 to verify details of the deed, which is proof of a leasehold property being converted to freehold, and pointed out that all pages of the deed should have been signed and stamped. One of the pages was not. The officer wrote back on May 29, verifying that the deed was indeed genuine and should be registered by the sub-registrar. The deed - for the property number 5, Block 39, Kautilya Marg - would have been registered had officials of the L&DO and the sub-registrar's office not caught on. According to officials, not only was the deed fake, but the verification report by the officer was too. The officer was, in fact, not serving as the Deputy L&DO when the deed was issued. Whether

Tilak Singh was the applicant's real name is not known either, sources say. The L&DO then wrote to all sub-registrars of Delhi on June 3, asking them not to register any conveyance deed apparently issued by the department without taking a no-objection certificate from them."L&DO had not issued the said conveyance deed dated 29.04.2024 and it is a forged/frivolous document. Further, as on 29.04.2024, (the officer) was not serving as Dy Land and Development Officer. Also, as per records of this office, the said property stands in the name of the Mauritius High Commission at Delhi," the L&DO clarified in its note to the sub-registrars. Sources said that while the deed appeared fake, the fake verification report appeared to have been sent via post from the Nirman Bhawan, where the office of the L&DO is located. They added that the involvement of a person/persons from within the office cannot be ruled out. The fake verification report had accurately mentioned the letter number written on the letter sent by the sub-registrar's office to the L&DO, sources said.In its office memo to all sub-registrars, the L&DO asked the New Delhi sub-registrar to initiate legal action against those culpable for submitting the counterfeit deed. The L&DO also informed all subregistrars that it has not issued any new conveyance deeds since December 2022. When contacted, a spokesperson for the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, under which the L&DO functions, said action had been taken in the matter. "The L&DO has replied to the registrar suggesting legal action," the Ministry spokesperson said. The property in question was allotted to the Mauritius High Commission on June 26, 1990, but the High Commission continues to function out of another property on Jesus and Mary Marg, a source said. According to sources, the matter stems from a structural issue - that documents from land-owning agencies like DDA and L&DO are sent via post, leaving them open to delays and potential fraud.









Ranga Reddy

Israel rescues 4 nationals held hostage by Hamas in central Gaza operation



GNS News Agency, June 12

The rescued hostages were abducted by Hamas terrorists on October 7, 2023 from the Supernova music festival near the southern community of Re'im.Four Israeli nationals, held in captivity by Hamas, were rescued by Israel Defence Forces on Saturday from the central Gaza Strip following a special operation, the country's military said. Meanwhile, Hamas officials have claimed that 200 Palestinians were killed in Israeli airstrikes in the same area. It was not immediately clear if the hostage rescue and the Israeli air assault were part of the same operation.

The rescued hostages, identified as Noa Argamani (25), Almog Meir Jan (21), Andrey Kozlov (27), and Shlomi Ziv (40), were abducted by Hamas terrorists on October 7, 2023 from the Supernova music festival near the southern community of Re'im, The Times of Israel reported.

All the four hostages are said to be in good condition and have been transferred to the 'Sheba' Tel-HaShomer Medical Center for further medical examinations."Noa Argamani (25), Almog Meir Jan (21), Andrey Kozlov (27), and Shlomi Ziv (40) were rescued in a special operation by the IDF, ISA and Israel Police from 2 separate locations in the heart of Nuseirat after being kidnapped by Hamas from the Nova music festival," IDF said in a post of X.The Israeli army also vowed to continue with its efforts to "bring the hostages home". An Israeli special forces commander was killed during the operation, a police statement said. According to the report, special forces rescued the hostages after they simultaneously raided two Hamas sites in central Gaza's Nuseirat. At one location, Argamani was rescued, while Meir Jan. Kozlov, and Ziv were at the second location.Argamani, a 25-year-old Chinese-born Israeli citizen, was also abducted from the festival. A video footage, as confirmed by her father Yaakov Argamani on Israel's Channel 12, which went viral on social media, shows her being taken away on a motorbike while she screams, "Don't kill me". Fresh footage shows Argamani reunited with her father, smiling and embracing him aboard a vehicle. This scene was broadcast shortly after news of the rescue operation on Saturday.As the Israel-Hamas war entered its ninth month, the IDF on Friday conducted a strike on a UN-run school in Gaza, killing at least 33 people, news agency AFP reported. The Israeli military said its fighter jets killed nine 'terrorists' in three classrooms where about 30 militants from Hamas and Islamic Jihad had been hiding, the report stated.

Israel rescues four hostages in Gaza; Hamas says 210 Palestinians killed in Israeli assault

GNS News Agency, June 12

JERUSALEM/CAIRO, Israeli forces rescued four hostages held by Hamas since October in a raid in Gaza on Saturday while over 200 Palestinians were killed in airstrikes in the same area, according to Hamas officials, in one of the bloodiest Israeli assaults of the war.It was not immediately clear if the hostage rescue and the Israeli air assault were part of the same operation but both took place in central Gaza's al-Nuseirat, a densely builtup and often embattled area in the eight-month-old war between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian territory's ruling Islamist group.

An Israeli military spokesperson said the hostage rescue operation unfolded under fire in the heart of a residential neighbourhood, where he said Hamas had been hiding captives among Gaza civilians under guard by armed militants.Israeli forces returned fire, including with airstrikes, added the spokesperson, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari. An Israeli special forces commander was killed during the operation, a police statement said.Israel named the rescued hostages as Noa Argamani, 26, Almog Meir Jan, 22, Andrey Kozlov, 27, and Shlomi Ziv, 41. They were taken to hospital for medical checks and were in good health, the military said. They were all kidnapped from the Nova music festival during the deadly raid by Hamas-led Palestinian militants on Israeli towns and villages near Gaza on Oct. 7, which precipitated the devastating war in the Hamas-run enclave.Hamas' raid killed some 1,200 people, according to Israeli authorities, and Israel's subsequent bombardment and invasion of Gaza has killed at least 36,801 Palestinians, according to an updated tally by the territory's health ministry on Saturday.Gunmen took around 250 hostages back to Gaza on Oct. 7. There are 116 now left in the coastal enclave, according to Israeli tallies, including at least 40 whom Israeli authorities have declared dead in absentia. Israeli News 12 broadcast footage of Argamani reunited with her father, smiling and embracing him. Video of Argamani's kidnapping, showing her shouting "Don't kill me!" as she was driven into Gaza on a motorbike, circulated soon after she was taken on Oct. 7.A smiling Argamani was shown speaking by phone to Israeli President Isaac Herzog from hospital surrounded by family and friends, in footage released by the president's office.



many more wounded, after medics and health officials gave earlier tolls of up to 100 dead. There was no immediate confirmation of the highest figure from Gaza's health ministry.Social media footage that Reuters could not immediately verify showed bodies spilling entrails onto bloodstained streets."It was like a horror movie but this was a real massacre. Israeli drones and warplanes fired all night randomly at people's houses and at people who tried to flee the area," said Ziad, 45, a paramedic and resident of Nuseirat, who gave only his first name.The bombardment focused on a local marketplace and the al-Awda mosque, he told Reuters via a messaging app. "To free four people, Israel killed dozens of innocent civilians," he said.

Benny Gantz delays statement after hostage rescue



JERUSALEM, GNS News Agency, June 12- Israel's centrist war cabinet minister Benny Gantz has delayed a statement he was due to give later on Saturday in which he was widely expected to announce his resignation from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's emergency government.Last month, Gantz presented the conservative prime minister with a June 8 deadline to come up with a clear day-after strategy for Gaza, where Israel has been pressing a devastating military offensive against the ruling Palestinian militant group Hamas.

But following news that Israeli forces had rescued four Israeli hostages alive from Gaza, the minister's spokespeople said his statement would be postponed. They did not give a new time for the address, in which political commentators in leading Israeli newspapers said he was expected to announce his resignation. The departure of Gantz's centrist party would not pose an immediate threat to Netanyahu's governing coalition, which controls 64 of parliament's 120 seats, but it could have a serious impact nonetheless.

With Gantz gone, Netanyahu would lose the backing of a centrist bloc that has helped broaden support for the government in Israel and abroad, at a time of increasing diplomatic and domestic pressure eight months into the Gaza war.Netanyahu would have to rely more heavily on the political backing of ultra-nationalist parties, whose leaders angered Washington even before the war and who have since called for a return to a complete Israeli occupation of Gaza.

This would likely increase strains already apparent in relations with the United States and intensify public pressure at home, with the months-long military campaign still not achieving its stated goals - the destruction of Hamas and the return of 120 remaining hostages held in Gaza.Gantz's exit might also indicate limited prospects of success in the latest ceasefire efforts, according to political analysts, who say he would have been more likely to stay on if a deal appeared more probable.Polls have shown Gantz, a former army commander and defence minister, to be the most formidable political rival to Netanyahu, whose image as a security hawk was shattered by the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas on Israel.He joined a unity government soon after Oct. 7, saying he was putting aside political considerations in the national interest.

Biden, Macron to discuss Israel and Ukraine in pomp-filled state visit

PARIS, GNS News Agency, June 12Fresh from commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day, French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed U.S. President Joe Biden in Paris on Saturday for a state visit marked by pomp as well as talks on trade, Israel and Ukraine.The visit began with a ceremony at the iconic Arc de Triomphe, where the leaders paid their respects at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier while a massive French flag hung from the arch fluttered in the breeze above their heads.

Accompanied by their wives, Biden and Macron greeted army veterans who joined senior officials from both countries.Escorted by French guards on horseback, the leaders then drove down the capital's renowned Avenue des Champs-Elysees, en route to the Elysee presidential palace where they will discuss policy issues and attend a dinner.

The two men share a warm relationship despite past tensions over a submarine deal with Australia. Biden hosted Macron for a state visit at the White House in 2022."France is ... our oldest and one of our deepest allies. And this will be an important moment to affirm that alliance and also look to the future and what we have to accomplish together," U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters earlier this week. Sullivan said talks between the two men would touch on Russia's war with Ukraine, Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza, cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, and policy issues ranging from climate change to artificial intelligence to supply chains.White House spokesperson John Kirby said the countries would announce a plan to work together on maritime law enforcement and the U.S. Coast Guard and French navy would discuss increased cooperation.Biden and Macron are also expected to discuss strengthening NATO, and both have pledged their countries' support for Ukraine, though they have not agreed yet on a plan to use frozen Russian assets to help Kiev. A U.S. Treasury official said on Tuesday the United States and its G7 partners were making progress on that.Biden met with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Paris on Friday, apologizing for a months-long delay by the U.S. Congress in approving the latest package of aid, and Zelenskiy ad-



dressed France's National Assembly.During a speech at the American Cemetery in Normandy (Sp) on Thursday, the anniversary of the allied assault against Nazi German occupiers on French beaches in World War Two, Biden called on Western powers to stay the course with Ukraine.Macron and Biden will also confer on the situation in the Middle East.

Biden has been a staunch supporter of Israel, which is pursuing Hamas after it attacked the country in October, but tens of thousands of Palestinian deaths have soured Biden's left-leaning political base on Israel, hurting him as he runs against Republican Donald Trump for re-election in November.Beyond Ukraine, trade issues between the two sides of the Atlantic are likely to loom large. The U.S. Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden signed into law in August 2022, has incensed European officials; they see it as a protectionist move that siphons off investments from EU companies.Macron said during his state visit to Washington in 2022 that the package sidies could "fragment the West" and weaken the post-COVID European recovery at a time Washington is seeking allies against China and both sides confront Russia.He and European allies have won little concessions from Washington since, however, and French officials say their aim for this visit is still to try to "re-synchronise" the U.S. and EU economic agendas.

"Thank you for everything, thank you for this moment," she said."I am so excited to hear your voice, it brings tears to my eyes ... Welcome home," Herzog said.Poland praised the rescue of the hostages and said that one is a dual Israeli-Polish citizen.

A different picture unfolded back in Gaza, where Palestinian health ministry officials and local medics said that an Israeli military assault in Nuseirat had killed scores of people including women and children. The ministry did not say how many of the fatalities were combatants. The Hamas-run government media office in Gaza said later the death toll had risen to at least 210 Palestinians with

Emergency response teams sought to ferry the dead and wounded to hospital in the nearby city of Deir al-Balah but many bodies were still lying in the streets, including around the market district, Ziad and other residents said.Nuseirat, a historic Palestinian refugee camp, has been subjected to heavy Israeli bombing during the war and there has also been fierce ground fighting in its eastern areas. The Gaza war shows no signs of slowing even as Israel's chief ally the United States presses for a ceasefire and a deal that would free the remaining hostages held by Hamas in exchange for releases of Palestinians imprisoned in Israel. The war has destabilised the wider Middle East, drawing in Hamas's main backer Iran and its heavily armed Lebanese ally Hezbollah, which Israeli officials are threatening to go to war with on Israel's northern border.Get the latest news and expert analysis about the state of the global economy withEcon World. Sign up here.Reporting by Maayan Lubell and Ari Rabinovitch in Jerusalem, Nidal al-Mughrabi in Cairo and Nayera Abdallah in Dubai, Karol Bahodal in Warsaw; writing by John Davison; editing by Tomasz Janowski, Alex Richardson and Mark HeinrichA senior correspondent with nearly 25 years' experience covering the Palestinian-Israeli conflict including several wars and the signing of the first historic peace accord between the two sides.

Philippines asserts security independence amid South China Sea tension

GNS News Agency, June 12

MANILA, The Philippines will continue to maintain and supply its outposts in the South China Sea without seeking permission from any other country, the country's national security adviser said. The Philippines national security council said on Saturday it reaffirmed its commitment to uphold its sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the Second Thomas Shoal. "Our operations are conducted within our own territorial waters and exclusive economic zone, and we will not be deterred by foreign interference or intimidation," said National Security Adviser Secretary Eduardo Ano. The Philippine agency issued a statement in response to China's suggestion that the Philippines must first notify Beijing over access.

China's foreign ministry said on Friday it will allow the Philippines to deliver supplies and evacuate personnel if Manila notifies Beijing in advance. Ano described such suggestions as "absurd, nonsense and unacceptable". He added: "We do not and will never need China's approval for any of our activities therein. "But the



Philippines remains open to dialogue and peaceful negotiations to resolve disputes in the entire South China Sea, the council said.The Philippine coastguard on Friday accused its Chinese counterpart of blocking efforts to evacuate a sick member of its armed forces in the South China Sea.It was the latest dispute in a longstanding territorial spat with China, which claims almost all of the South China Sea,

Scandals and missteps slow momentum of Germany's far right

GNS News Agency, June 12

Not long ago, the party, known as AfD, was polling nationally near 25%. With elections approaching for the European Parliament and in three eastern states — its traditional stronghold — the party looked set to achieve its chief goal of moving from the margins to the mainstream.Suddenly, the party's future seems murkier. It is still riding relatively high — the second-most popular party in the country. But recently, as members have been caught up in influence-peddling and spying scandals, secret discussions about deporting immigrants and controversies over ever-extreme statements, the AfD has faced a stiffening backlash, threatening the inroads it had made into the mainstream.

The steady drumbeat of missteps and scandal has forced the party, already officially labeled a "suspected" extremist group by German authorities, to cast aside even some important members and caused fellow far-right parties abroad to shun it."This week that is behind us was not a good week," Alice Weidel, one of the two leaders of the party, said at a campaign stop on May 25. The AfD is feeling the repercussions. Local elections in the eastern state of Thuringia last weekend did not produce the resounding mandate it had hoped for, though it still finished strong.Now, about a week before elections begin for the European Parliament, the party's prospects look a bit shakier. Yet it is still likely to win more seats in both the European Parliament and state elections than before, polls suggest."Some of the people who had already switched to the AfD have had second thoughts," said Manfred Güllner, the head of the Forsa Institute, a political polling agency. "But the radical right-wing core is not going away.'

In perhaps a sign that the AfD camel can carry only so many straws, the party censured its own, pushing its two top candidates for the European Parliament elections from the campaign trail, while not removing them from contention.One, Maximilian Krah, gave a recent interview with The Financial Times and the Italian daily La Repubblica, in which he expressed a belief that not all members of the SS, the Nazi paramilitary force, were necessarily criminals. The other, Petr Bystron, is being investigated for receiving money from Russia.



Krah declined to comment for this article. Bystron did not respond to a request for comment.Even in a party known for roguish members who refuse to fall in line, recent months have been a lot.Before his comments, Krah had already spent weeks in the headlines after his assistant was arrested on suspicion of spying for China, and his own offices were searched, a searing revaluation for a party that presents itself as anticorruption and hypernationalist.

In May, the AfD leader in the state of Thuringia, Björn Höcke, was fined 13,000 euros (about \$14,000) for using a forbidden Nazi slogan in a 2021 speech.But perhaps the most consequential airing of the party's laundry came in January, after it was revealed that AfD members had joined a meeting where the mass deportation of immigrants — including naturalized citizens — was discussed.

The news touched off months of mass protests by millions against the AfD countrywide. Current polls suggest that support for the party nationally has slipped, hovering from 14% to 17%, by some estimates, from a peak of about 23% in December.

In hopes of recapturing momentum, the party faces something of a strategic tightrope, said Benjamin Höhne, a professor at Chemnitz University of Technology.It must appease an extremist core while broadening its appeal among center-right voters if it is ever to extend its reach beyond its regional strongholds and into real power."This is a normalization strategy," Höhne said.









RBI fines SBI, Canara Bank for breach of rules



Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced on Monday that it has imposed penalties on the State Bank of India (SBI) and Canara Bank for non-compliance with banking regulations and RBI directions.The RBI in an order dated February 26 slapped a penalty of Rs 2 crore on State Bank of India for contravention of provisions of the Banking Regulation Act and not complying with the Depositor Education Awareness Fund Scheme.

The RBI said that an examination of the Risk As-

sessment Report/Inspection Report revealed, inter alia, that SBI held shares as pledgee of an amount exceeding 30 per cent of paid-up share capital of certain companies and also failed to credit eligible amount to the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund within the period prescribed in the BR Act.Similarly, the RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 32.30 lakh on Canara Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by the central bank on 'Data Format for Furnishing of Credit Information to Credit Information Companies and other Regulatory Measures'.

The RBI said that an examination of the Risk Assessment Report/Inspection Report and all related correspondences in the case of Canara Bank revealed, inter alia, non-compliance with the aforesaid directions by the bank, to the extent it (i) failed to rectify the rejected data and upload the same with the Credit Information Companies (CICs) within seven days of receipt of such rejection report from the CICs, and (ii) restructured certain accounts which were not standard assets as on March 31, 2021 under the extant directions.

However, RBI also said this action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance of the two banks and is not intended to pro

Obsessing over the weighing scale? 5 things you should worry less about on your weight loss journey



Embarking on a weight loss journey can often feel like navigating a maze of conflicting advice, societal pressures, and personal expectations. Amidst this complexity, there are certain aspects that warrant less worry and more focus on sustainable, holistic approaches to fitness. Here are 5 things you should worry less about on your weight loss journey, according to Simran Khosla, a nutritionist and fitness coach.

1. Your scale weight

While the scale can provide a quantifiable measure of progress, it doesn't reflect overall health or body composition. Fluctuations in weight are natural and can be influenced by various factors such as water retention, muscle gain, and hormonal changes.Khosla emphasised that scale weight is just a number, and not your worth. "Focus more on your energy level, strength, muscle mass, nutritional quality, sleep quality and performance," she

recommended.

2. Complex nutrition advice

Rather than worrying about the complex and extreme nutrition messaging on social media, Khosla advised to keep it simple and listen to your body. "The basics — boring information is most useful," she highlighted.

3. Daily weight fluctuations

The day-to-day weight fluctuations, as per Khosla, are normal and don't define your progress. It's more important to focus on the average weight change per week, she said.

4. Slip-ups

Khosla said that 'failing the plan' or 'slipping up' is part of the process. "Learn and move forward," she noted, adding that paying attention to what you do majority of the time is essential.

5. Comparisons

Comparing your progress to that of others can be demotivating and counterproductive. Each individual's journey is distinct, influenced by factors such as genetics, metabolism, and lifestyle. "Someone else's journey," said Khosla, is not to be worried about. "Your journey is unique, so focus on your own path," she added.By worrying less about arbitrary numbers, extreme measures, and comparison to others, and instead prioritising balanced nutrition, enjoyable exercise, and self-compassion, you can cultivate a sustainable and fulfilling journey towards a healthier lifestyle. "Stay positive and trust the process," the nutritionist concluded.

Oil regulator for opening ATF pipelines at airports

Currently, ATF is transported by road and rail network and only a limited number of airports are linked with pipelines. Even where pipelines are there, they are not on an open access basis which means only the company that has laid it can supply jet fuel to airlines. The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has invited comments from the public and various stakeholders including oil marketing companies (OMCs), airport operators, and airlines operators for development of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) pipelines connecting various greenfield and brownfield existing and upcoming airports in India."Pipelines are the cheapest mode of transport of liquid fuels with road transport being quite costly. And looking at the high share of ATF price in airline costs, provision of the pipeline could bring down the cost of air travel," the regulator said in a notice inviting comments.

While the fuel market is open in the airport premises, in the absence of a common carrier pipeline the objective of this open market cannot be achieved."There are a few other ATF pipelines which are being operated by the OMCs, which also need to be declared as common/contract carriers," the regulator said. "This move will enable other OMCs to utilize these pipelines for transporting their products, fostering competitiveness within the industry".

Further, to ensure security of supply there may be desirability of more than one pipeline supply to major airports. Additionally, existing pipelines need to be declared as common carriers especially due to historical domination of government owned ATF marketing companies so as to allow private marketers get access, it said.This will cater to rising fuel demand of the aviation sector.

Domestic air passenger traffic rose by compounded

annual growth rate of 8.9 per cent between 2012-13 and 2022-23. International passenger traffic grew by a slower 3.1 per cent over the same period. During fiscal year 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023), India saw a 47.1 per cent surge in ATF consumption, correlating with heightened air traffic. The previous year was marred by the pandemic that shut businesses. Transporting ATF by any other means than pipeline, results in logistical inefficiencies, increased expenses, and disruptions in the supply chain, PNGRB said. "The absence of an ATF pipeline exacerbates these issues, hindering the sector's competitiveness and sustainability."PNGRB said it is seeking comments from stakeholders to gather insights for effective development of ATF pipelines across the aviation infrastructure in the country. It asked stakeholders to identify key airports requiring ATF pipeline connectivity, assess potential demand over the next 30 years, identify ATF supply source, evaluate potential routes for pipeline construction and assess the need for single or multiple common/contract carrier ATF pipelines to ensure redundancy and operational reliability. "The views and suggestions received will help PNGRB in initiating suo moto bidding processes or assisting entities in identifying potential projects," the notice said. In recent times, PNGRB has authorized two new ATF pipelines for connecting upcoming greenfield international airports -- one from IndianOil's JNPT terminal to Navi Mumbai international airport and the second from Bharat Petroleum's Piyala terminal to Noida International Airport, Jewar as common/contract carrier pipeline through bidding process.In the past, PNGRB has also declared IndianOil's existing Devangonthi to Devanahalli ATF pipeline for connecting Bangalore airport as a common/contract carrier. Another ATF pipeline from Malkapur to Hyderabad Airport is under bidding process.

Fuel your Fitness: Almonds aid in postexercise recovery and boost performance



New Delhi: A new study found that eating almond reduces feeling of muscle soreness during exercise recovery which translates to improved muscle performance during a vertical jump challenge. These results expand on prior research which looked at how almonds affect muscle recovery after exercise.

In the new research study, published in Frontiers in Nutrition and funded by the Almond Board of California, 25 mildly overweight middle-aged men and women performed a 30-minute downhill treadmill run test after eight weeks of consuming 57g (two ounces) of whole raw almonds daily. The control group ate a calorie-matched (86 g/three ounces) snack of unsalted pretzels. The treadmill test was designed to cause muscle damage to see how almonds affected muscle recovery.

Researchers measured participants' muscle function; blood markers of muscle damage and inflammation; and perceived muscle soreness using a visual scale, before, during, and at three time points after the treadmill test. They also measured markers of cardiometabolic health, body composition, and psycho-social assessments of mood, appetite, and well-being at baseline and after eight weeks of almond snacking.

Participants who ate almonds experienced an almost 25 percent reduction in muscle soreness when performing an explosive power exercise (a vertical jump challenge) over the cumulative 72-hour exercise recovery period. The perceived reduction in soreness translated to better muscle performance during the vertical jump challenge in the almond group versus the control. No significant differences were observed in measures of cardiometabolic health, muscle damage/inflammation, mood state, or appetite for the almond group or the control group.

The study included non-smoking participants who were mildly overweight and occasionally physically active but were not trained athletes. A limitation of this study is that the results are not generalizable to populations with other demographic and health characteristics."Our study suggests that snacking on almonds can be recommended to occasional exercisers as a go-to food to help fitness recovery after strenuous exercise,"• said Dr. Oliver C. Witard, Senior Lecturer in Exercise Metabolism and Nutrition at Kings College London. "Almonds are naturally nutritious with protein, good fats and the antioxidant vitamin E. They can be considered an ideal food for fitness."• One serving of almonds (28 g) has 4 g of plant protein, 13 g of good unsaturated fat and only 1 g of saturated fat.

war in impoverished Sudan

Economy another victim of

Before the Sudanese army and paramilitary fighters turned their guns on each other last year, Ahmed used to sell one of Sudan's main exports: gum arabic, a vital ingredient for global industry.Now he's out of business, and his story encapsulates the broader economic collapse of Sudan during 10 months of war.Since combat between two rival generals began on April 15, Ahmed has been at the fighters' mercy.

"When the war began, I had a stock of gum arabic in a warehouse south of Khartoum that was intended for export," Ahmed told AFP, asking to use only his first name for fear of retaliation."To get it out I had to pay huge sums to the Rapid Support Forces," the paramilitaries commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Daglo who are at war with the Sudanese Armed Forces led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

"I had to pay multiple times in areas under their control, before my cargo got to areas controlled by the government," Ahmed said.But the government — loyal to the army — "then demanded I pay taxes" on the product, an emulsifying agent used in everything from soft drinks to chewing gum.When the trucks finally made it to Port Sudan for export on the Red Sea, "authorities again asked for new taxes, and I had to pay storage fees six times more than before the war", Ahmed said.His gum arabic — like many other Sudanese products — never made it onto a ship. According to Sudan's port authorities, international trade fell 23% last year.The finance ministry, which didn't set a national budget for 2023 or 2024 and

has foregone quarterly reports, recently raised the exchange rate for imports and exports from 650 Sudanese pounds to 950.But that is still far below the currency's real value.With most banks out of service, the only exchange rate that matters to ordinary Sudanese is on the black market, where the dollar currently goes for around 1,200 Sudanese pounds."It's a sign of the destruction of the Sudanese economy," former Sudanese Chamber of Commerce head al-Sadiq Jalal told AFP.To make matters worse, a communications blackout since early February has hampered online transactions — which Sudanese relied on to survive.The war has led industries to cease production. Others were destroyed. Businesses and food stocks have been looted.

The World Bank in September said "widespread destruction of Sudan's economic foundations has set the country's development back by several decades".

The International Monetary Fund has predicted that even after the fighting ends, "years of reconstruction" await the northeast African country.Sudan suffered under a crippled economy for decades and was already one of the world's poorest countries before the war.Under the Islamist-backed regime of strongman Omar al-Bashir, international sanctions throttled development, corruption was rampant, and South Sudan split in 2011 with most of the country's oil production.Bashir's ouster by the military in 2019 following mass protests led to a fragile transition to civilian rule accompanied by signs of economic renewal and international acceptance.

Foreign portfolio investors sell Rs 28,242 cr of equities so far in May

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) sold Rs 28,242 crore, or \$3.38 billion of Indian equities so far in May, making it the highest sell off since January 2023.Heavy selling by overseas investors in May so far is due to the uncertainties related to the ongoing general elections and as FPIs are withdrawing their funds from the Indian market and investing in the Chinese market for valuation comfort.In January last year, FPIs offloaded Rs 28,852 crore of domestic shares, according to data provided by National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL). In the calendar year 2024 (up to May 17) FPIs sold Rs 26,020 crore worth of local shares.

In the cash market, foreign investors sold Rs 35,532 crore through May 17, which was almost matched by DII (domestic institutional investors) buying of Rs 33,973 crore during this period. "The main trigger for the FII selling has been the outperformance of the Hong Kong in-

dex Hang Seng which shot up by 19.33 per cent during the last one month. FIIs are moving money from expensive markets like India to cheap markets like Hong Kong where the PE is around 10 compared to around 20 PE in India," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services. Uncertainty surrounding the election outcome also has contributed to heightened volatility in the Indian market. The recent spike in the fear gauge VIX indicates a high level of uncertainty in the market, he said mark in the current month. "This shift in FPIs' behavior is not a random occurrence. It is a direct response to the ongoing geopolitical crisis in the Middle East, relative valuation discomfort, and the strength of US bond yields," said Vipul Bhowar, Director, Listed Investments, Waterfield Advisors. According to Vijayakumar, going forward, there is likely to be a dramatic change in FPI equity flows in response to election results. Political stability will attract huge inflows

Would you swallow a live fish to cure your asthma? Hyderabad's famous 'fish prasadam' event makes a return this year



Hyderabad's famous fish prasadam, a unique traditional remedy administered annually to thousands of people, is set to make a comeback this year on June 8.

This ancient practice, introduced by the Goud family headed by Bathini Harinath Goud (who passed away last year), claims to provide relief from asthma and other respiratory ailments. The tradition of distributing 'fish prasadam' has been going on for the last 178 years. The Goud family told indianexpress.com earlier, administering a live snakehead murrel fish infused with a herbal paste down the throat of anyone suffering from respiratory ailments, on the day of 'Mrigasira Karthi', for three consecutive years, brings permanent relief. The full recipe for the prasadam is a closely guarded family secret, according to the report, handed down through generations. The family obtained the formula from a sage in 1845, with the understanding that it would be used to benefit society.

Despite its popularity and the hope it offers to many sufferers, the efficacy and safety of fish prasadam remain topics of debate within the medical community. Dr Shivakumar K, MD Respiratory Medicine and senior consultant Pulmonology at Birds Clinic, Bengaluru stresses, "Today, we are in the era of evidence-based medicine. Without proper evidence, it is not advisable to recommend or prescribe such practices. Any claimed treatment should undergo extensive laboratory studies and clinical trials to establish its safety and efficacy before it can be recommended for widespread use."According to Dr Shivakumar, there is no scientific evidence or clinical research that supports the efficacy of fish prasadam in treating or alleviating asthma symptoms. "Asthma is a chronic



respiratory condition characterised by inflammation and narrowing of the airways, and its treatment usually involves inhalers, corticosteroids, and other medications that reduce inflammation and open up the airways," he explains. Several risks and potential side effects are associated with the ingestion of fish prasadam, particularly for asthma patients, Dr Shivakumar states. These are:Allergic Reactions: Some asthma patients may have allergies to seafood, which can trigger severe allergic reactions and exacerbate asthma symptoms. Infection Risk: The method of administering fish prasadam, which involves swallowing a live fish, raises hygiene concerns. The practice of not using gloves and other sanitary measures can lead to the transmission of infections.Gastrointestinal Hazards: Swallowing live fish could potentially cause harm to the gastrointestinal tract, leading to complications such as choking or gastrointestinal distress. Advice for asthma patients considering alternative treatments"As a pulmonologist, I strongly advise asthma patients to adhere to evidence-based medical treatments and to consult with their healthcare providers before considering any alternative remedies," asserts Di Shivakumar. Here are some key points he suggests one should consider instead: Consult Your Doctor: Always discuss any alternative treatments with your healthcare provider to ensure they are safe and will not interfere with your prescribed asthma treatment.Maintain Your Medication: Do not stop using your prescribed asthma medications in favour of unproven treatments. Discontinuing your medication can lead to worsening of your condition and potentially severe asthma attacks.Evaluate Evidence: Seek out treatments that have been scientifically tested and proven to be effective.

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Taha Shah Badussha says he skipped meals at Cannes to focus on networking; recalls bribing watchmen with juice to get meeting with filmmakers



Actor Taha Shah Badussha, who shot to fame with Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut Netflix series Heeramandi, says hustling in the film industry has helped him, and continuing the same hard work even after his breakthrough success is his aim. The actor said that he has been told by many people that he should ease it on the hustle now that he has tasted success, but he doesn't look at it that way.

Taha Shah said that if Heeramandi has taught him anything, it is to keep knocking on every door available and never get complacent with fame. Post the success of the show, Taha had also gone to Cannes. Talking about his experience in the film gala, Taha told Zoom that he was interacting with many people at Cannes, some who didn't know him at all. "When they would find out I had done Heeramandi, they'd say, 'Ye itna bada kaam karke aaya hai, yaha pe kyu ghum raha hai?' Because they think if you become a star, people should come to you. I don't believe that, bro. Why should I cut away the things I did which brought me here?

"I hustle. If you don't say hello to me, I will come and do that. If 100 people know you, 95 will assume that you would have attitude after becoming successful, so they will never approach me with a script. So if you don't find me, I will. I tell my team I want to meet everyone, build my own personal relationship."The actor revealed at Cannes, he was "distributing (his) card like a newcomer." Taha recalled telling people, "'Please call me, get in touch,' I was going to all the stalls, meeting every film commissioner. It is not like they will help me get work tomorrow morning, but you never know. I don't mind missing my sleep or food when it comes to work. When I was at Cannes, I didn't eat. If you have to go for food, you have to take out one and a half to two hours, go out, order a meal, finish and come back. I either eat food or make contacts, I chose the latter. Food I can have later also."

Taha Shah said his style of hustling hard hasn't shifted, and revealed how there was a time he would bribe watchmen of important personalities he wanted to meet. "Earlier, when I would meet people, they would say, 'He is desperate, he doesn't leave you, he is obsessed.' But now, I will do it a thousand times over, because I know what I am doing is right. When I didn't have work, I'd meet the watchmen and say, 'Whenever sir comes, please call me'. I'd buy him a juice, drink or food, I'd pay him back a certain way but request him to please let me know so that I quickly meet people. So why should I stop that? If I want to meet someone, I will try. Of course, now it has become easier to have a meeting, but I have no eqo." he added.

Celebrity photographer tried to sneak into Anant Ambani's fortress-like pre-wedding venue in Jamnagar, says paps incur losses covering outstation events

The paparazzi incurs losses when they cover celebrity weddings and other functions outside Mumbai, said photographer Varinder Chawla. Citing the example of the recent pre-wedding festivities of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant in the town of Jamnagar in Gujarat, he said that his team found it incredibly difficult to find accommodation and transport, but couldn't ignore covering the event because of its high-profile nature.

In an interview with the YouTube channel Hindi Rush, he said that while there is money to be made in the paparazzi business, numbers have been massively inflated online. He did, however, admit that he and his team don't make money when they cover events outside Mumbai. "It wasn't like we were invited to Jamnagar recently. We cover it because we know the entire film industry is going to be there. I went myself, but we couldn't find a single hotel room; the entire town was booked out. Somehow, we managed to get one room and three of us squeezed in together."

He said that they took turns to stake out the local airport, because they knew that's where they'd get the best content. "Local drivers were charging three or four times the normal rate to transport us around the town. At the airport, they gave us badges and had created a special area for the media. But it's not like they invited us inside the venue to cover the wedding. I tried to see if I



could get in, but it was like a fortress," he said with a laugh.He also recalled the challenge actor Aamir Khan had once thrown to the paparazzi community to get pictures from his wedding to Kiran Rao. "It was somewhere around Lonavla, and I remember going out there with some other photographers. We were there for four days, and we wanted to live up to the challenge. But he really had made incredible arrangements to safeguard his privacy.

They'd increased the height of the resort's walls. I tried to convince a waiter to click photos from the wedding, and I remember giving him a cheap Kodak camera. I promised I'd give him Rs 5,000, but it couldn't happen," Rani Mukerji threatened to sue, Ranbir Kapoor-Alia Bhatt invited paparazzi home to request privacy for Raha: Celeb photographer reveals different tactics



Celebrity photographer Varinder Chawla opened up about the different approaches that Bollywood stars have taken in the past to convince the paparazzi community from not taking pictures of their children. He said that while Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt invited them to their home and made a personal request, Rani Mukerji threatened to sue them if they ever stepped out of line.In an interview on the YouTube channel Hindi Rush, he said that the paparazzi community is aware that taking pictures of young children against their will is ethically murky, which is why they've started to avoid doing so. He said that the trend began when the earliest pictures of Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan's son, Taimur, went viral. But in recent years, celebrities have been making requests to photographers to not step over certain lines.

He said, "Rani Mukerji requested us; in fact, she threatened to sue us. Then there's Anushka and Virat, who sweetly asked us not to photograph their daughter; they also sent us gift packages to express their gratitude... Look, we know it's not right. We're careful, out of respect, but also because we're scared of repercussions." Narrating how Ranbir and Alia chose to handle a breach of privacy, and then the birth of their daughter Raha, he said, "They called us home; over 100 of us from the media, after that picture was taken of her from the roof of a nearby building."He continued, "It wasn't the doing of our community. It was some news photographer, we revealed his name as well to them. But they called us home and requested us to be careful. They said that they would share photos themselves when they feel the time is right, because the baby is too young... They have their reasons, and we respect that. They stayed true to their word, and posed with Raha on Christmas." Ranbir and Alia revealed Raha's face to the world at the Kapoors' annual Christmas party last year.

They have since allowed her photographs to be taken on several occasions. Rani and her husband, Aditya Chopra, remain steadfast in protecting the privacy of her daughter, Adira. Appearing on Koffee with Karan, Rani spoke about maintaining Adira's privacy, and said, "I told them 'Please, baby ka photo mat lijiye (don't take the baby's photo) and from that day, they respected that. To this day, they wait until Adira goes into the airport and then they take my pictures," she said. Rani also joked that when she first told the photographers to not take Adira's photos, they got "scared." "They look at my eyes and they get scared," she said with a laugh.

Years after claiming Kangana Ranaut slapped him, Adhyayan Suman condemns assault on BJP MP-elect: 'Should not have happened'

Actor Adhyayan Suman, who was in a relationship with actor and BJP MP-elect Kangana Ranaut several years ago, has come out in her support after she was allegedly slapped at the Chandigarh airport by a CISF constable. Adhyayan, who had a pub-



Shah Rukh Khan's oldest lookalike had no money for food during the pandemic, Salman Khan sent Rs 2,500 plus ration



Rizwan Khan, who has made a name for himself on social media as a lookalike of Shah Rukh Khan, opened up about life as a celebrity impersonator, and recalled the many times that he has worked with SRK himself. Rizwan said that he has played SRK's body double in a handful of films, as he recalled the difficulties that he has experienced because of the gig economy. Appearing on the web show Dumb Biryani, hosted by Arhaan Khan, Rizwan said that none other than Arhaan's uncle, Salman Khan, helped him and several other celebrity lookalikes when things became difficult financially during the pandemic.

He said, "During the pandemic, things became so bad that I had to sell off some of my belongings because I didn't have money for food. My wife was pregnant at the time, and there was no work. We have a union for celebrity lookalikes, through which Salman Khan sent Rs 2,500 to each member, along with ration. I'd like to really thank him for that gesture. And now, by the grace of God, I have a 2 BHK house, and everything that I had to sell during the pandemic I have bought again."

Rizwan, who hails from Kalyan, said that he used work at roadside stalls at one point, but became a fulltime celebrity lookalike after moving to Mumbai. He found work as Shah Rukh's body double on films such as Mohabbatein and Chak De! India, and has also worked with the star on commercials. He said that he has also met SRK once, and that his heart nearly stopped when he got the call late at night. "I was terrified to meet him. I got the call at 2 am and they told me that I have a shoot with Shah Rukh sir. I was stunned... He knows me by name, I've done a lot of ads with him, every member of

his staff knows me."

Recalling an anecdote about playing SRK's body double in Chak De, Rizwan said, "Some shots where he's teaching hockey, that's me, we shot at the Kurla sports club. I remember being called for the job, and it was Ramadan time, so Shah Rukh sir was supposed to arrive a little late. I'd reached earlier in the day, so they told me to get to work. As I went towards the set, all the bodyguards followed me because they mistook me for Shah Rukh sir! I made them all take rounds with me."

Rizwan said that even though there are several lookalikes of Shah Rukh, he was the first one on the block. He is also the only lookalike to have actually worked with SRK himself, he said. "We don't meet each other," he admitted, acknowledging that they'd have nothing to do were it not for Shah Rukh and his stardom. "What does the future hold for somebody in this line of work? We don't know. We take each day as it comes," he said.

lic fallout with Kangana, commented on the incident an event in Mumbai. Recently seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi, Adhyayan said that taking the law into one's hands, no matter how triggered one is, is not the solution.According to Hindustan Times, the actor's father, Shekhar Suman, also condemned the attack. Shekhar said, "Yeh galat hai. It was very wrong and unfortunate. This shouldn't happen with anyone. No one has the right to do this. This is illegal what she has done. She should get punished for this. I understand that she might have some anger or protest in her mind, but the way it was expressed was very wrong. It could also have been said in a decent manner...You can't raise your hand on anyone like this." The nowsuspended CISF constable was caught on cam-

era after the incident, making it known that she was triggered by incendiary comments that Kangana had made about the farmers' protests some years ago.Reacting this father's statement, Adhyayan added, "I completely agree with him. Even if you have a personal grudge, it is very wrong to take it out publicly. This should not have happened."Interestingly, Adhyayan Suman had previously publicly accused Kangana of slapping him at Hrithik Roshan's birthday party. In a revealing interview to DNA, Adhyayan had claimed in 2016 how Kangana had gotten "violent" with him."One moment

she made me feel loved and then in the next, it was like I was a nobody in her life! I was standing at the bar alone when Kangana walked up to me said some actor at the party was trying to grab her a**. I felt protective towards her, but I was at someone's house, and creating a scene would be rude, so I told her, 'Let's go.' She went back to doing her thing. Later, she came and told me let's go right now. I was walking down the stairs with her, when she turned around and slapped me! She said, 'Motherfu***! You are f***** jealous of my success!' The intensity of the slap was so hard I was almost crying.

That was the first time she got violent," Adhyayan had revealed. The Punjab Police on Friday booked and suspended the CISF constable Kulwinder Kaur, a day after she allegedly assaulted Kangana at the Chandigarh airport. While many came out voicing their displeasure over the incident, Kangana took to social media to slam those celebrating the attack. Based on a complaint lodged by the CISF, the Mohali police had registered an FIR against Kulwinder Kaur under Sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 341 (wrongful restraint) of the Indian Penal Code.

Mallika Sherawat accused Ashmit Patel of choking her on the set of Murder, complaint was made to Mahesh Bhatt: 'She knew how to play the game'

Actor Ashmit Patel said that Mallika Sherawat smartly stole the limelight away from both himself and Emraan Hashmi during the promotions of their film Murder. He said that she was keenly aware of how to play the 'PR game', and had a personal publicist years before the concept became commonplace in Bollywood. She also knew exactly what to say, while both he and Emraan were sidelined during the publicity tour.

In an interview with Siddharth Kannan, Ashmit said that he got an inkling of what was going on, and expressed his feelings to producer Mahesh Bhatt. But, he discovered that Bhatt was involved in projecting Mallika as the face of the film. He also recalled an incident on set, when Mallika apparently accused him of choking her during a scene. He said that Bhatt was called, and that he was told to apologise to Mallika. But he said that she was lying, and demanded that the shot be reviewed on the monitor.

He said, "Our characters were in a marriage of convenience. I tried to do some method acting, and tried to keep some distance from Mallika's character. So, when she tried a couple of times to break the ice with me on set, I was a little bit distant. I wasn't trying to be cold, but I wasn't trying to be friendly so that I could keep that tension between us personally, so that it would translate on camera. Maybe she didn't understand that, or maybe I should've told her, or Anurag Basu, the director, to convey this to her ... "Recalling the incident, Ashmit said, 'There was one scene where I had to choke her. I'd asked Naseeruddin Shah once what the correct way to choke someone on camera is, and he'd shared a technique with me where it would look like you're putting in all your power, but not actually harming your co-star. But after the shot was cut, she made a little bit of an issue out of it. Bhatt saab came to speak to me and told me to apologise

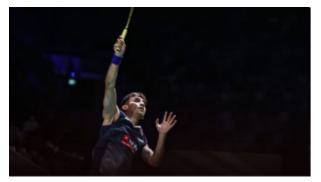


to her. I said, 'But I didn't do anything. Let's go watch the monitor, and if you feel I choked her, I'll apologise. But if not, then she must apologise to me'. I didn't get an apology..."





Indonesia Open badminton: Lakshya Sen falters at the end against Anders Antonsen's determination and delaying tactics to bow out in quarters



GNS News Agency, June 12

Leads of 18-16 and 20-18 in the first game and 16-14 in the second for Lakshya Sen proved inadequate during his Indonesia Open quarterfinal against Anders Antonsen on Friday. The bambi-faced, wily geek from Denmark won the all-important endgames to prevail 24-22, 21-18 with a mix of ultra-focused construction of rallies, with some well-orchestrated delays, ruining Sen's composure.

The Indian, headed to the Olympics, ought to be prepared for all such shenanigans, at Paris, where opponents will crank up the pressure on him in the closing stages if he doesn't proactively push the gears. In trying to stay defensively solid – which he inevitably does – Sen can forget to up the ante to snatch the crunch points. Antonsen, seeded 4th and a Top-5 opponent, was the latest to catch the Indian on his reluctance to attack.Sen, who had beaten the Dane at All England, did little wrong to stay in the hunt. He won his first few points making Antonsen go across the body and opening up yawning gaps on the court. The Indian has a somewhat predictable straight smash, but it was working well because of how he was getting Antonsen to scurry all over.

Sen was equal to the task at the net, and got the better of Antonsen in long rallies going from 13-16 down to leading 18-16. The Indian is fearless at the net, but was mostly getting his length right when he took that lead. His serving, for some reason, went wildly wonky after being called three times for a high service fault, and Antonsen did his wicked bit to sow doubts in the chair umpire. Sen simply turned predictable and hesitant in serving thereafter, veering away from his plans to mix up his serves. But at 18-16, he wasn't in any particular trouble.Antonsen, meanwhile, was keeping up with a deceptive cross-court drop and smash. He puts a lot of wristwork on the cross shot and deceives opponents into thinking it will drop short, but it actually just squirts out as a full-fledged, non-sliced shot. Sen, rarely boggled, was briefly confused by some of these, but still led 20-18.It's here that Antonsen played really boldly, and went for the lines to save two game points. Sen's defence came good when he picked a relentless flurry of 7 smashes to go up 22-21, but couldn't quickly morph into offensive mode, which cost him the opener. At 23-22, Sen injected pace, but even that is a predictable ploy, and Antonsen stayed steadfast to hit through him and take the first.

Sen's round-the-head smashes have somehow disappeared, but it is his reluctance to hit the next gear not just in pace, but in pouncing on the kills that sees him fade out in the endings. In the second game, he once again did all the hard work to reach 16-14. But Antonsen is a wily opponent who does not crack in the endgame in his defence. For his offence, he has the strokes and plenty of utterly made-up reasons to delay in trying to nibble at that lead. His antics and some pretty solid badminton, where his speed at the net stayed equal to his serenity in defence, saw the Dane collect five straight points at this juncture. Sen tends to look unflappable, but he clearly fell short in once again catching up Antonsen's 19-16 lead despite reaching 18-19, as he lapsed into acute cluelessness and passivity, right at the business end of the rallies. He almost played two extra shots each rally, and couldn't summon the kill, sticking to conservative shot selection. It was tough to deny Antonsen the credit of being bolder at the net, and cunning in between points to throw Sen off. But the Indian knew he needed to do more."I'm a bit disappointed with the first game. But towards crucial stages it was good points, not that I could've done something different. But whatever best I could I tried. Even in the second game, I had my chances. He was playing very defensive. Fast on the net. Taking on the net. Better at the net. But still, I managed with my defence. But at crucial stages, I had to maybe attack a bit more, to take the initiative, take a few chances," he told the BWF.Antonsen, meanwhile, has been losing his fair share of endgames, but was up for this one. "I was telling myself towards the very end of the first game that now is my time. I tried to pump confidence in myself. I've lost very close games. Sometimes, margins were not in my favour. But today I kept believing in myself," he told BWF.

A boy from Delhi who has made entire Pakistan 'deewana' (crazy)

GNS News Agency, June 12

Virat Kohli is yet to play a single game in Pakistan. The only time he played there was in 2006 with India's U-19 side. India stopped its cricketing ties with Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai attacks and Kohli has featured in just a handful of internationals against them — 16 ODIs and 10 T20Is. Despite that, Virat Kohli has a massive fan following in Pakistan. "The day Virat plays in Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi or in Multan, only then you guys will understand his craze in Pakistan," former Pakistan captain Azhar Ali tells

'You won't believe but the stadium will be filled with green jerseys, magar peeche naam Babar ya Shaheen ka nahi, Virat ka hoga aur No 18 ke saath (but the name on the backs won't be Babar Azam or Shaheen Shah Afridi, it will Virat Kohli's along with his jersey No 18)," laughs Ali.The 'deewanapan' is perhaps best captured by Azhar Ali's own reaction in the phase when Kohli was out of form. The former Pakistan captain savs not a day went by then when he didn't pray for Kohli's return to form."When he was out of form, I prayed so many times for him. Allah isko aaj run banane do (Please god let him score). I have prayed for Kohli. I don't know why but I did consistently for three years," he laughs. "You will find people, who will criticise Virat's batting but before criticising him at least try and understand what he has done for over 15 years. There was a dip but he bounced back. I have not seen anyone doing that," says Azhar. There have been several occasions during the Pakistan Super League or in Pakistan domestic games where the broadcast has shown fans holding placards with a message for Kohli. In 2019, a motorcyclist in the Pakistani city of Lahore was famously spotted wearing the Pakistan cricket team's replica shirt for the Cricket World Cup with Kohli's name on the back. In the same year when Kohli was going through his lean patch, a fan at a Pakistan-Australia cricket match in Karachi was seen holding a placard with a message: "Dear Virat! whether you score a century, or not you'll always be my hero". "It's not like that Virat is the first one with such a big fan base in Pakistan," says Latif. "If you go back, Dilip Kumar had a massive fan following in Pakistan. Sunil Gavaskar became a cult in Pakistan. Young batsmen were told to copy Gavaskarsaab's technique. Then Amitabh Bachchan's 'angry young man' movies used to get sold out. Then came Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, Shah Rukh Khan, MS Dhoni. When Dhoni came here his long locks became a trend."But Virat's popularity in Pakistan is on par with Dilipsaab, Mr Bachhan and Shah Rukh. Like in India, you guys loved our bowlers - Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Shoaib Akhtar became household names. Here in Pakistan, we adored Gavaskarsaab, Tendulkar, then Dhoni and now Kohli - they are all icons. Yuvraj Singh and Virender Sehwag too have a good fan following in Pakistan."But all said and done, Virat ko le kar deewanapan next level hai." (The mad-craze over him is another level). Ahead of the Asia Cup, co-hosted by Pakistan and Sri Lanka last year, a sand artist Sachaan Baloch, from Gawadar in Balochistan province, sketched a portrait of Virat Kohli. The footage of the artist and his work on beach sands went viral on social media. "I just wanted to show my love and respect to Virat. He is the best," he had then said. Azhar Ali says Kohli is famous among the millennials and Gen Z in Pakistan because of the way he has carried himself over the years and his fitness, passion, and aggression."Virat run kar le aur Pakistan match jeet jaaye ye maine khud suna hai (Virat can score the runs but Pakistan should win, this I have heard myself)," says Ali."First and foremost, he has changed Indian cricket.



You can debate that Sourav Ganguly and MS Dhoni have

Afganistan bowl out New Zealand for 75, secure 84-run upset win



GNS News Agency, June 12

Skipper Rashid Khan and in-form left arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi grabbed four wickets each as Afghanistan stunned New Zealand by a whopping 84 runs in a Group C clash of the T20 World Cup.Chasing a tricky 160 at the Providence Stadium here, the 2021 runners-up were skittled out for 75 with just two batters -- Glen Phillips (18) and Matt Henry (12) managing double digits as they lasted just 15.2 overs.Wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz, fresh from winning the IPL with Kolkata Knight Riders, gave Afghanistan a splendid star in a 56-ball 80 after New Zealand chose to bowl.

The opener smashed five sixes and as many fours as he along with Ibrahim Zadran (41-ball 44; 2x6, 3x4) put on 103 for the first wicket in 14.3 overs.But however they could not finish well as Trent Boult (2/22) and Matt Henry (2/37) restricted them to 159 for six.Afghanistan 159/6; 20 overs (Rahmanullah Gurbaz 80, Ibrahim Zadran 44; Trent Boult 2/22, Matt Henry 2/37) beat New Zealand 75; 15.2 overs (Rashid Khan 4/17, Fazalhaq Farooqi 4/ 17).

| Alcaraz, Zverev battle hard to set up tantalising men's final

GNS News Agency, June 12

Carlos Alcaraz reached his maiden French Open final with a 2-6 6-3 3-6 6-4 6-3 win over Jannik Sinner before Alexander Zverev also recovered from a slow start on Friday to beat Casper Ruud 2-6 6-2 6-4 6-2 and set up a blockbuster clash for the trophy. Third seed Alcaraz was far from his usually brilliant self early in his contest but took full advantage of Australian Open champion Sinner's hand cramps to draw level, before sealing the see-sawing match in a decider after a little over four hours.

Having already captured a Wimbledon and U.S. Open trophy at the age of 21, Spaniard Alcaraz became the youngest man to reach Grand Slam finals on all three of the sport's surfaces and will look to emulate several compatriots by winning Roland Garros."I have a special feeling for this tournament, because I remember when I finished school I'm running to my home just to put the TV on and watch the matches here in the French Open," Alcaraz told reporters."Of course, Rafa Nadal dominated this tournament for 14-15 years. It's unbelievable. I wanted to put my name on that list of the Spanish players who won this tournament... (Juan Carlos) Ferrero, (Carlos) Moya, (Albert) Costa, legends of our sport."If I want to be one of the best players in the world, I have to be a good player in every surface, like Roger (Federer) did, Novak (Djokovic), Rafa, (Andy) Murray. The best players have had success on every surface."

Fourth seed Zverev, competing in his fourth straight semi-final in Paris, finally broke the barrier to become the second German man to reach the Roland Garros title clash in the Open Era and match Michael Stich's feat from 1996.He also banished painful memories of a serious ankle injury in the 2022 semi-final against Nadal, while coming through tough matches this year."To go deep and to win a Grand Slam, you have to go through difficulties and you have to go through a lot of ups and downs," said Zverev, who won the match after Ruud was hampered by a stomach issue."You're not going to win a Grand Slam by winning every match in straight three sets. Some players do, like Roger, Rafa a few times, but nor-

Sunil Chhetri reveals next plan after India retirement: I will be a fan now



mally to win a Grand Slam you have to go through battles You have to come back in tough five-set matches."You have to come back from difficult moments... I'm happy to be in a Grand Slam final and give myself the best chance to win on Sunday."Zverev's win came on a day he agreed a settlement after the mother of his child accused him of physical abuse and a German court closed the case.Ruud rued the fact that his stomach issue had derailed him in what promised to be thrilling clash."It's not something I think is very serious or going to last for a long time, but something that came up in the first set...," he said."Then the last three went quick because Zverev played well, but I wasn't able to play the kind of tennis I like to play with intensity, because I was limited with my stomach."Defeat by Alcaraz was a blow for Sinner, who will rise to number one in the world for the first time on Monday but the 22year-old looked forward to continuing their rivalry although it is not yet at the level of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic."Well, you cannot compare us yet with the other players we had or still have," said Sinner, who trails Alcaraz 4-5 after their latest meeting." If we see the results... when we play against (each other), it's in the semis or final or quarters. Very important matches."I think that's exciting for the game, especially when the head-to-head is quite close. The winner is happy and the loser tries to find a way to beat him the next time.

also played a role. But when it comes to fitness, there is no one like Virat Kohli. He has led by example. He is a role model to all the youths."Now in our part of the world, we have someone who is the most fit athlete. Earlier we used to give examples of athletes from the West. Now Virat has set that bar. The Pakistani youths are fascinated by the sacrifices he has made. You see his interviews where he is talking about how he quit having his favourite food (Chole Bhature) for cricket," he adds.Kohli Pakistan Fans A Virat Kohli fan in Pakistan during the Asia Cup. (X/Johns.)

The former Pakistan skipper feels it is also the passion and aggression in his game that's loved in Pakistan."We admire him for his passion as well. Everyone knows what he can do with the bat. He is someone who has scored runs against every opponent and in their own backyards as well. He dominated the English bowling attack in 2018, not every Asian batter can do that in English conditions."Duniya kehti thi ki Sachin Tendulkar ka record koi nahi tod sakta (People used to Sachin's record will never be broken). This guy has smashed all of Sachin's records in the ODIs. It's unbelievable. In an event, I remember Sachin himself said 'There is a guy sitting in this room who will break my records".""We also seen talented youngsters in Pakistan but they end up becoming lost talents. I don't want to take names but there are plenty. Then you see Virat, most of the cricketers after receiving compliments from Sachin will get relaxed or become complacent. But not Kohli; that comment drove him to make his own name. He has done it," he says.When Virat Kohli was struggling for runs, the Pakistani cricketers across the border rallied behind Virat. Current Pakistan captain Babar Azam had tweeted "This too shall pass. Stay strong." During the 2022 Asia Cup, in a video posted by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), left-arm seamer Shaheen Shah Afridi can be heard saying to Virat "Hum aapke liye dua kar rahe hai ki aap jaldi form me laute "Virat's unbeaten 82 at the MCG against Pakistan in the 2022 T20 World Cup is best remembered for those two sixes he hit against Haris Rauf. The entire Pakistan media went berserk. In A sports show, The Pavillion, host Fakhar-e-Alam called him "an alien among the men." Former Pakistan pacer Aquib Javed would rave about Kohli's first six against Rauf: "No cricketer in the present generation can play that shot". Azhar calls it the best T20 knock of all time. "It will go down as the best T20 knock. I don't think anyone else could have pulled that off. Wo khuda ka banda hai, khuda ne kuch alag baksha hai us bande ko (He is god's gift and god has given him some unreal talent). There are few people who are blessed. Virat Kohli is one of them. We should respect him till the time he is around."I admire him as a complete package and what he has done for cricket for the sub-continent. It's unfortunate that India and Pakistan are not playing bilaterals. You can't even imagine the fan following he

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Sunil Chhetri revealed that he plans to be a fan of the Indian football team after calling time on his 19-yearlong international career on June 6. Chhetri's career faced a not-so-ideal end after India drew 0-0 against Kuwait in their FIFA World Cup Qualifier clash Now former India football team captain Sunil Chhetri has revealed that he plans to remain just a fan of the side after calling time on his 19-year-long international career on June 6. India's 0-0 draw against Kuwait on Thursday at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati stadium in Salt Lake, Kolkata marked a notso-ideal end to Chhetri's iconic and majorly successful India career.

Ending his India career as the side's most-capped and most successful player, Chhetri was graced with a loud standing ovation from the 58,000 fans at the Salt Lake stadium, who would've wanted a better end to the night and also the journey of their Captain Fantastic who bowed out with teary eyes in the grandest of fashion. The India captain was yet again a consistent threat to the Kuwait defence, but the numerous crosses from the rest of the India forwards just could not find the talisman.

Speaking to India Today, Chhetri reflected on how he is planning out his life after retirement, and what kind of an involvement will he have in the future proceedings of the Indian football team.

HOW IS SUNIL CHHETRI TAKING IN RETIRE-MENT?

Q. How has life changed so far after retirement?

Sunil: It hasn't changed much. I am in the same hotel. I see the boys. I didn't feel sad. Probably when I go home to Bangaluru, then I will feel it. I had lunch and dinner with my team. It's amazing to be a part of everyone. All of them are really excited about.

Q. Many former players and legends say there is no one who can put feet in Sunil's shoes.

Sunil: To all the legends I appreciate your words. I gave whatever I have for 19 years. I don't agree with them that there is no one to replace me. I think there are a lot of players who are going to do well. The team is in safe hands. They will do well.

Q. Where is India on the path to playing a World Cup?

Sunil: The main aim is to qualify for the third round of FIFA World Cup qualifiers. The next game is against Qatar, which is very difficult. I wish we could have got 2 more points from it. But now, things are still in our hands, so we need to go well.

Q. You are the fittest player in the team. After retirement, are you planning to change your diet?

Sunil: No, I am a vegetarian. In terms of our team, everyone is fit and everyone is fitter than me. They are all



on a super diet.

Q. What is the retirement plan for you now? To be a coach, TD or else?

Sunil: I will be the fan right now. The rest will see.

Chhetri will continue to play club football with Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super League (ISL), and is yet to decide anything on his complete retirement from football.

Magnus Carlsen, Ju Wenjun win Norway Chess 2024

Stavanger: Magnus Carlsen and Ju Wenjun clinch Norway Chess 2024 titles in both men's and women's category as the final round came to an end.

Magnus Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana drew their classical game, and the winner was decided with an Armageddon tie-breaker. It was Carlsen who got the better of Caruana, and with this win, the Norwegian secured at least a share of first place in the tournament, having to wait for the result of the game between Hikaru Nakamura and Praggnanandhaa R.

Nakamura was in a must-win situation to finish on top, but the game ended in a draw. The 18-year-old chess prodigy Praggnanandhaa then won the tiebreak game, capping off his debut outing at Norway Chess in third place behind Nakamura.

The game between Alireza Firouzja and Ding Liren also ended in a draw, with the former winning the Armageddon.With these results, Carlsen has clinched his sixth Norway Chess title. This is a huge victory for the home country hero, as he had not played many classical tournaments in the recent past.

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