

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

15 June, 2024 | Saturday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:107 | Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

₹ 3

## Malla Reddy and son-in-law booked for land grab attempt

Hyderabad: The Petbasheerabad police booked a case against the former Minister and MLA Ch Malla Reddy and his son-in-law Marri Rajasekhara Reddy, who is also a MLA, for allegedly trying to grab land of a software employee.

Earlier, based on a complaint lodged by one S. Srinivas Reddy, the police registered the case against Malla Reddy, Rajasekhara Reddy and others for allegedly grabbing 32 guntas of land and trying to demolish structures in it. Police said a case and counter case was booked against both parties in the issue.

## Inter student run over by RTC bus in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: In a tragic incident, an intermediate student died after she was run over by a Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) bus at Yousufguda here on Friday. The incident occurred when the victim, Mehreen (16), who was studying intermediate first year at a private junior college in Yousufguda, was proceeding to her college in the bus. According to the police, Mehreen accidentally slipped and came under the front wheel of the bus. "The bus driver who missed to notice that she had fallen did not stop the vehicle and moved it. As a result, she was run over by it. She suffered grievous bleeding injuries and died on the spot," said a police official.

## PM Modi holds talks with Zelenskyy, Macron, Sunak on the sidelines of G7 Summit in Italy



Bari (Italy), GNS News Agency, June 14

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, French President Emmanuel Macron and his British counterpart Rishi Sunak on the sidelines of G7 Summit in Italy's Apulia region. It is learnt that Ukraine's Zelenskyy briefed Modi on various aspects of the Russia-

Ukraine conflict. Modi had met Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the previous G7 summit in Hiroshima in May last year as well. India has been maintaining that the conflict in Ukraine must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. Modi and French President Macron discussed ways to further strengthen the strategic partnership, including in areas of defence, nuclear and space, and

exchanged views on key global and regional issues. The two leaders met in the southern resort town of Italy. "Taking Strategic Partnership to new levels! PM @narendramodi met President @EmmanuelMacron of France on the sidelines of the 50th G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted on X. "The two leaders discussed ways to fur-

ther strengthen the partnership including in areas of defence, nuclear, space, education, climate action, digital public infrastructure, critical technologies, connectivity and culture. They also exchanged views on key global and regional issues," he wrote.

It is Prime Minister Modi's first foreign trip after assuming office for a third time this month. The two leaders last met in January when the French President

visited India to attend the 75th Republic Day of India. PM Modi's meeting with his British counterpart Sunak followed his talks with French President Macron. The two leaders greeted each other with a warm hug as they met on the sidelines of the 50th G7 Summit at the luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia in Apulia. Modi reaffirmed his commitment to further strengthen the India-UK strategic partnership in the third term of the NDA government and reviewed the progress made in the ongoing FTA negotiations. "It was a delight to meet PM @RishiSunak in Italy. I reiterated my commitment to further strengthen the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the third term of the NDA Government," Modi posted on X soon after their meeting. "There is great scope to deepen ties in sectors like semiconductors, technology and trade. We also talked about further cementing ties in the defence sector," Modi wrote. The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs Randhir Jaiswal described the meeting between the two leaders as "fruitful." "The two lead-

ers took stock of bilateral relations in areas of defence and security, trade and economic collaboration, critical and high technology sectors and people to people connect. They discussed implementation of Roadmap 2030 and progress made in ongoing FTA negotiations," Jaiswal posted on X. Sunak and Modi last met in person at the G20 Summit in New Delhi last September, when they had agreed to accelerate the FTA talks with the hope of signing off before India's general election. However, the trade talks are now expected to resume only after a new UK government is elected on July 4. The India-UK FTA negotiations, which opened in January 2022, are aimed at significantly enhancing bilateral trade - currently worth around 38.1 billion pounds a year as per official statistics from earlier this year. Modi is attending the summit on the invitation of Italian President Giorgio Meloni and will address an Outreach session on Artificial Intelligence, Energy, Africa and the Mediterranean alongside leaders of other invited countries and Pope Francis.

## Pawan Kalyan named Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM as Chandrababu Naidu allocates portfolios for ministers



GNS News Agency, June 14

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has allocated ministries to his 24 Cabinet colleagues on June 14, 2024. The JanaSena Party (JSP) chief Pawan Kalyan has been made Deputy Chief Minister besides allocation of Panchayat Raj, Rural Development & Rural Water Supply, Environment, Forest, Science & Technology ministries. Congratulations to @PawanKalyan Garu on becoming the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. I congratulate all my colleagues in the cabinet on being assigned their portfolios. Together, we have taken a solemn oath to serve the people of Andhra Pradesh. While Mr. Naidu has retained General Administration, Public Enterprises and all other portfolios which were not allocated to ministers, the Telugu Desam Party national general secretary Nara Lokesh was allocated Human Resources Development, IT, Electronics and Communications and Real Time Governance. Nadendla Manohar, the JSP Political Affairs Committee chairman, was given Food and Civil Supplies & Urban Development. The other JSP minister, Kandula Durgesh, has got Tourism, Culture & Cinematography. BJP's Satya Kumar Yadav was allocated Health, Family Welfare & Medical Education.

The TDP, JSP and BJP forged an alliance in the State with the sole objective of overthrowing the ruling YSR Congress Party led by its chief and former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. Mr. Pawan Kalyan played a key role in making the TDP led NDA (TDP-JSP-BJP Alliance) in Andhra Pradesh a reality. In the seat sharing agreement, the JSP contested 21 Assembly and 2 Lok Sabha seats and won in all segments. The TDP has won 135 Assembly and 16 Lok Sabha seats. The BJP won eight Assembly and three Lok Sabha segments in the State. The YSRCP was reduced to 11 Assembly and 4 LS seats, a drastic dip from its 151 Assembly and 22 LS seats in 2019 polls. The TDP AP State president Kinjarapu Atchannaaidu was given Agriculture, Co-operation, Marketing, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development & Fisheries. The Information & Public Relations and Housing ministries were allocated to Kolu Parthasarathy. Ministry of Home Affairs & Disaster Management has been allocated to Anita Vangalapudi, while Finance, Planning, Commercial Taxes and Legislative Affairs was given to Payyavula Kesav. Municipal Administration and Urban Development was given to Ponguru Narayana. The Ministry of Water Resources and Development was allocated to Dr. Nimmala Ramanaidu.

## MK Stalin vows to end NEET 'scam', says education should be accessible to all



GNS News Agency, June 14

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK leader MK Stalin on Friday emphasised that it is their responsibility to end what he referred to as the NEET scam. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK leader MK Stalin on Friday asserted that they have to put an end to what he terms the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) scam.

Speaking at an event hosted by the Department of School Education at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai, MK Stalin reaffirmed the government's commitment to uphold educational integrity. Alongside this declaration, the event witnessed commendations for academic excellence and significant infrastructure developments within the state's educational sector. Addressing a captive audience at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai, chief minister MK Stalin reiterated the Tamil Nadu government's staunch opposition to the NEET, labelling it as a detrimental irregularity in the educational landscape. "Education is the only asset that no one can steal from you. But even in that, there are scams like NEET. That's why we are strongly objecting to it. Tamil Nadu was the first to say that NEET is fraudulent. Now the entire country has started to say it. We will put an end to it. It's our responsibility. Society, financial condition or political situation should not be an obstacle for students in their education. That's the principle of this Dravidian government," said MK Stalin. Further, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan today said that the central government is committed to protecting the interests of NEET examinees. In a post on the microblogging site X, Dharmendra Pradhan said "I want to assure the students that all their concerns will be addressed with fairness and equity. No student will be at a disadvantage and no child's career will be at jeopardy."

Central govt. is committed to protect the interests of NEET examinees. I want to assure the students that all their concerns will be addressed with fairness and equity. No student will be at a disadvantage and no child's career will be at jeopardy. On Thursday, the Supreme Court was informed that the Centre has decided to revoke the grace marks granted to 1,563 students in the NEET-UG 2024. This move seeks to ensure fairness in the competitive examination process. A retest is scheduled for June 23, and the National Testing Agency (NTA) has assured that the results will be released by June 30.

## SC issues notice to Centre, National Testing Agency on plea for CBI probe

GNS News Agency, June 14

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has issued notice to the National Testing Agency (NTA) and Centre on a batch of petitions raising concerns about paper leaks and seeking a CBI investigation into the alleged instances of paper leaks in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2024 exam on May 5. A vacation Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta sought a response from the NTA within two weeks and tagged the cases with earlier petitions raising similar issues, which were listed on July 8.

Aspirants have raised the issue of leakage of the question papers, awarding compensatory marks and anomalies in the question of NEET 2024. Several petitions were filed in the apex court seeking direction to recall NEET-UG 2024 results and to conduct the examination afresh, alleging paper leakage and malpractices in the test held on May 5. The NEET-UG exam, adminis-



tered by the NTA, is the entry point for admission to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH, and other relevant programmes in both public and private educational establishments nationwide.

## Will be good if Yediyurappa appears before CID soon, says K'taka Minister



GNS News Agency, June 14

Bengaluru: Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said with a non-bailable arrest warrant against him in a POCSO case, it will be "good" if former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa comes back to Bengaluru soon and appears before the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which is probing it. According to reports, the veteran BJP leader has gone to an "undisclosed" location in New Delhi. "Warrant has been issued, he will be brought and information will be gathered from him, and further action will be taken in accordance with law," Parameshwara said. On Yediyurappa's whereabouts, Parameshwara said he is said to have gone to Delhi and has informed that he will be back on June 17. "Now that a warrant has been issued, it is good if he comes back soon," he said. A Bengaluru court on Thurs-

day issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against Yediyurappa in the case registered against him under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act on March 14. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the CID had moved the First Fast Track Court seeking an arrest warrant against him since he failed to appear for questioning on Wednesday. Yediyurappa had sought time to join the probe. When asked about the BJP alleging "vendetta politics" on the part of the ruling Congress, Parameshwara said: "They have to say such things, what else can they say?"

Answering a question as to why the police was "silent" for three months and all of a sudden is now acting on the case after the Lok Sabha election polls are over, the Minister said: "Investigation was on, FSL reports had to come. Procedurally what has to be done is being done, because he (Yediyurappa) is a senior leader, a VIP. So after proper verification they (police) are going ahead because if anything is wrong it will come on them." Asked about "reports" that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had allegedly instructed for Yediyurappa's arrest during his recent visit to Bengaluru, Parameshwara rejected them and said: "No, why will he (Rahul) involve himself in this? There is no use in simply cooking up a story. It is a local issue.... there is no pressure from anyone."

Meanwhile, hitting out at the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government, the Karnataka BJP said following the "humiliating defeat" in the Lok Sabha elections, Congress leaders have become busy plotting various conspiracies against the BJP. "Congress, resentful towards the BJP, is now attempting to arrest our respected leader, Yediyurappa ji, based on a complaint from a mentally unstable woman."

## Revanth Reddy overwhelms over school girls using Free Bus Travel Scheme, tweet goes viral

GNS News Agency, June 14

A tweet by Telangana CM Revanth Reddy showcasing the benefits of the free bus travel scheme for schoolgirls has gone viral. The CM posted a photo of girls studying at Magdumir Zilla Parishad High School in Nangunur Mandal, Siddipet District happily displaying their Aadhaar cards. In the tweet, he expressed his happiness at seeing the girls availing the free bus travel scheme introduced by the public government.

The girls in the photo were seen holding their Aadhaar cards and thanking the government for providing them with free bus transportation to school. CM Revanth Reddy mentioned that he was pleased to see how the scheme has made it easier for girls to access education without any financial burden. His tweet praising the Congress government's initiative received widespread attention on social media. In addition to this, the Telangana government has announced another positive development for women in the state.

Under the Mahila Shakti scheme, CS Shanti Kumari has given approval for the establishment of 'Mahila Shakti - Canteen Services'. This initiative aims to empower women's associations by setting up special canteens at various locations such as head offices, collectorates, tourist areas, temples, bus stands, and industrial areas. The decision to establish 'Mahila Shakti - Canteen Services' comes as part of the Chief Minister's directive to strengthen women's associations financially. The government has studied the success of similar initiatives like Anna Canteens in Kerala and Didi Ka Rasoi in Bengal before implementing this new service.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Gender gap

THE World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index has ranked India 129th out of 146 nations on the list. The data reflects a troubling reality in stark contrast to the India growth story. The methodology of arriving at the conclusions may be open to debate, but numbers don't lie. It would be prudent to heed the larger message. As the results of the Lok Sabha elections have shown, the distress on the ground is real. Continuity in the governance model is all very well, but the developmental strategies need comprehensive evaluation, with rebooting of policies and plans, if required. Change is visible, but it is skewed and too slow.

According to the report, India's economic parity score has been on an upward trend for the past four years. That said, in the economic parity and opportunity sub-index, it finds itself at the 142nd position, one of the lowest globally. India is ranked 120th on wage equality or similar work. Women in India on an average earn

Rs 39.8 for every Rs 100 that men earn. The country maintains its 142nd slot on the health and survival index. A notable positive is India's high ranking on gender parity in secondary education enrolment. Ranked 55th in the parameter of political empowerment of women, it is 10th on parity in the number of years with female and male heads of state over the last 50 years. The women's reservation legislation could be a transformative moment, provided the political leadership accords the issue the seriousness it deserves.

Globally, 68.5 per cent of the gender gap has been closed, says the report. Achieving full gender parity will take 134 years more, equivalent to five generations. This is India's century, we are constantly reminded. No excuse would suffice.

## Water levels dip in Punjab, Rajasthan dams compared to normal storage: CWC



GNS News Agency, June 14

Ahead of the rains in the northern region, the dams in Punjab and Rajasthan have recorded less water than the normal storage during this time, while in Himachal Pradesh it's a little surplus than the normal, according to a Central Water Commission (CWC) report. The northern region includes Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan. The CWC monitors the northern region's 10 reservoirs, collectively possessing a total live storage capacity of 19.663 billion cubic meters (BCM).

As of the reservoir storage monitoring conducted on June 6, the cumulative live storage in these reservoirs stood at 5.888 BCM, equivalent to 30% of their total live storage capacity. Comparatively the storage levels were higher at 39% in the corresponding period during the previous year, while the normal storage during this period typically reaches 31% of the live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Consequently, the current year's storage levels indicate a decrease both in comparison to the previous year and the normal storage levels during the corresponding period, underscoring potential concerns about water availability.

According to the CWC report, the current reservoir level in Punjab's Thein Dam is at 506.77 metres against 527.91 metres full reservoir level (FRL). The dam has 0.964 BCM current live storage against the live capacity of 2.344 BCM which is 41% of the live capacity at FRL against 52% of live capacity at FRL last year and 51% of the normal storage by this time. Live storage means the status of water currently in the dam, while the current live storage means the volume of water stored between the full reservoir level and the minimum pool level. It is also called useful storage as it assumes the supply of water for a specific period to meet the water demand. Live storage capacity is below the FRL. It is the volume of water between the outlet works and the spillway crest. Outlet works serve to regulate water impounded by a dam, while spillway is a structure used to provide the controlled release of water downstream from a dam. The spillway crest is the highest elevation of the floor of the spillway. In Rajasthan there are six dams, including Mahi Bajaj Sagar, Jhakam, Rana Pratap Sagar, Bilaspur, Jawai Dam, and Jaisamand. Here too all the dams are showing a low water storage than the normal and last year, barring Rana Pratap Sagar which has live storage more than than the normal but less than the last year.

According to the CWC report, Jaisamand dam is witnessing 24% live storage against the 57% live storage last year and 36% of the normal live storage by this time. Bilaspur dam is having 29% storage this year against 59% last year and 41% of the normal storage, Jhakam dam is having 17% of the live storage against 25% last year and 26% of the normal storage, Jawai dam is having 12% of the live storage against 21% last year and 13% of the normal storage. Mahi Bajaj dam is having 30% of the current storage against 31% last year and 31% of the normal storage. Rana Pratap Sagar is the only dam in Rajasthan which has 39% of the live storage against 35% of the normal storage, but it is quite less than last year's live storage which was 77% during this time. Meanwhile, in Himachal Pradesh, Bhakra dam, Pong dam and Kol dam witnessed a little surplus than the normal storage but less than last year's storage except in Bhakra dam. Bhakra dam is showing 30% of the live storage against 24% last year and 28% of the normal live storage, Pong dam is witnessing 25% of the live storage against 38% last year and 26% of the normal storage, while Kol dam has 48% of the live storage against 52% last year and 31% of the normal storage.

## Delhi L-G assures help over water shortage issue; asks Atishi, Saurabh to avoid blame game



GNS News Agency, June 14

Lieutenant Governor (L-G) V K Saxena on Monday met Delhi ministers Atishi and Saurabh Bharadwaj and assured them that he will take up the water supply matter with the Haryana government. He advised them not to indulge in "blame game" and resolve issues amicably. The ruling AAP dispensation has accused the BJP-ruled Haryana of stopping Delhi's share of water for the past several days as the national capital is passing through a severe water crisis amid unprecedented summer heat. After meeting, Atishi said the L-G assured them that he would talk to the Haryana government to ensure that the national capital's share of 1,050 cusecs water is released in the Munak canal. In a statement, the L-G office said Saxena assured the ministers that he will take up the matter of supply with the government of Haryana and request them to give extra water on humanitarian grounds. Saxena also advised the ministers to avoid blame game and prevent wastage of water, it said. "The L-G advised the ministers to not get into pointless blame game and resolve the issue amicably with the neighbouring states. He pointed out that even if Haryana were to give additional water above its allocated share, Delhi did not have enough water treatment plants (WTPs) and capacity to treat the water and supply to the people of Delhi," the statement said.

He underlined that if the wastage of the water to the tune of 25 per cent in Munak canal due to lack of repairs and theft, and 54 per cent unaccounted water which includes 40 per cent leakages and theft in the city itself are plugged, the water crisis in Delhi will automatically be resolved to a large extent, it said. The Delhi government has during the past fortnight repeatedly accused Haryana of not releasing the national capital's share of water.

Atishi said, "The water level in the Wazirabad barrage has gone down and less water is coming from the Munak canal. We have requested the Lt Governor to talk to the Haryana government about releasing more water in the Munak canal. "Seven treatment plants of Delhi depend on the Munak canal for water. The Lt Governor has assured us that he would talk to the Haryana government," she said. Atishi said they also spoke to Saxena about the vacant posts in the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). "The DJB CEO also holds charge of two other critical departments — GST and public works department. He (Saxena) has assured us that he will appoint an officer who will

solely hold the charge of DJB CEO. "Apart from that, there is no member (finance) or member (drainage) in the DJB. We have raised the issue in the last six months with the Lt Governor but the appointments have not been made," the senior AAP leader said.

"He (Saxena) has assured us that he will address the issue within one or two days," Atishi added. Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar and DJB CEO A Anbarasu were also present in the meeting. It was brought to the notice of the LG and the ministers that a team of Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) officials, along with senior officials from the Delhi and Haryana governments inspected supply of water at the head of Munak Canal in Delhi on Sunday evening. The team had found the water supply from Haryana to be sufficient, the LG office statement claimed. Atishi, however, claimed that 137 cusecs of water released by Himachal Pradesh according to a Supreme Court order has yet not reached Delhi. According to the inspection report of the team officials, Haryana on Sunday had released 2,289 cusecs of water in Munak and the quantity of water released from Munak to Kakori for supply exclusively to Delhi was 1,161.084 cusecs against the quota of 1,050 cusecs of water.

However, water received from Munak Canal at Bawana in Delhi was 960.78 cusec, amounting to a loss of 200 cusecs, that is 18 per cent on that date. These losses should be less than 5 per cent according to the accepted norms, the statement said. This water loss has also been highlighted by the UYRB in its meeting held on June 5 where the representatives of both Delhi and Haryana were present. The meeting flagged this huge water loss calling for "urgent action is needed for Delhi sub-branch to bring down the losses which is around 25 per cent", it said. Munak Canal is the main source from where Delhi gets water from Haryana for supply to seven out of Delhi's nine WTPs. During transit, a huge quantity of water is lost and stolen due to non-maintenance of the Munak Canal during its course in Delhi, it said.

This happens because of leakages due to non-repair of lining of the Canal as also theft by tankers, which were seen to be unauthorisedly lifting water during the inspection also, it said. In the meeting, the L-G also shared photographs with the ministers where tankers were lined up along Munak Canal in Delhi and lifting water illegally. However, it was also informed that during the current heat wave conditions, water received at Munak during May stood at an average 948 cusecs and in June till now at an average 870 MGD, the statement said. The L-G also asked the minister to ascertain from Himachal Pradesh government if it was actually releasing 137 cusecs of water for Delhi. The issue of 54 per cent unaccounted water and 40 per cent leakage in Delhi due to theft and unrepaired pipelines was again flagged by the LG and it was agreed by the minister that a concrete plan of action for addressing this issue will soon be prepared by the DJB, it said. The LG also assured that the issue of shortage of staff at DJB and additional burden on the CEO (DJB) will be addressed suitably at the earliest, it added.

## Firing outside Salman Khan's house: Bombay HC orders removal of actor's name from plea seeking CBI probe in accused's custodial death



GNS News Agency, June 14

The Bombay High Court on Monday ordered the removal of the name of Bollywood actor Salman Khan from a plea seeking a CBI probe into the custodial death of an accused in the firing case outside Khan's Mumbai home. A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Shyam C Chandak was informed by the lawyer appearing for Rita Devi, mother of deceased accused Anuj Thapan, that there is no pleading against Khan in the petition and no relief has been sought against him. Accordingly, the bench directed the petitioner to remove Khan's name as party respondent from the petition.

"What is the point of making a person who is supposed to be the victim a party respondent? We see no

reason why Khan should continue to be in this plea. He is not a necessary party. You are concerned with the death of your son, the court will look into that. By adding Khan, you are digressing from the core issue," the Court remarked. Thapan was lodged at a crime branch lock-up in the Mumbai police headquarters. On May 1, the police said Thapan died by suicide in the bathroom of the lock-up. In her plea, Rita Devi said that despite a custodial death having occurred, the police had not registered an FIR. She requested that an FIR be registered and the CBI should inquire into the case. Khan was one of the respondents in the plea.

A vacation bench of the high court had directed the Mumbai police to file a status report on the ongoing probe into Thapan's death. This order was issued after the prosecution informed the Court that the investigation into the death had been transferred to the Crime Investigation Department and a magisterial inquiry had also been initiated. The HC on May 22 had also expressed displeasure over an "incomplete" autopsy or post-mortem report submitted in connection with the custodial death. On Monday, the prosecutor informed the Court that the magistrate had summoned Thapan's mother to record her statement which she received belatedly. The Court asked the magistrate to issue a fresh summons and ensure that the same is served upon the mother well in time to enable her to appear. The HC will hear the plea after six weeks.

## Mumbai Coastal Road northbound arm to be opened today: What commuters can expect in terms of travel time

GNS News Agency, June 14

The new northbound arm will offer drivers seamless connectivity between Marine Drive and Haji Ali. The new northbound arm will offer drivers seamless connectivity between Marine Drive and Haji Ali. The Maharashtra Chief Minister will inaugurate the first phase of the northbound arm of the Mumbai Coastal Road—from Worli to Marine Drive—on Monday, and motorists will be able to access the road from Tuesday onwards. The high-speed corridor, also called Dharamveer Swaraj Rakshak Chhatrapati Sambhaji Marg, currently caters to southbound commuters between Worli and Marine Drive only. The new northbound arm will offer drivers seamless connectivity between Marine Drive and Haji Ali. The travel distance will be covered within five to seven minutes, which currently takes at least 45 minutes during peak hours. Motorists can access the coastal road from Marine Drive. They will first enter a 2-km undersea tunnel that extends to Priyadarshini Park. After exiting the tunnel, motorists can leave the road by turning towards Breach Candy or

Bhulabhai Desai Road using the vehicular interchange at Amarsons Garden. When travelling towards Haji Ali, motorists can continue on the road and switch to the mainland using the vehicular interchange at Haji Ali traffic junction. From there, they can travel towards Mahalaxmi, Worli, or the Bandra Worli Sea Link (BWSL) via the usual Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan road.

Unlike the southbound arm, which is currently operational, the northern side will provide motorists with an unhindered view of the Arabian Sea. There will also be pedestrian walkways and sitting areas on the seaside. However, these works are currently underway and will be entirely completed by the end of this year. According to civic officials, the northbound arm will be operational for 6.25 km, while the remaining 4 km will be opened during the final phase in October-November this year. Meanwhile, the southbound stretch is open for 8 km between Bindoo Madhav Thackeray Chowk in Worli and Marine Drive in South Mumbai. The coastal road will only be open between 7 am and 11 pm on weekdays.

## Ahead of Manipur CM's visit to tense Jiribam, attack on police convoy leaves one wounded



GNS News Agency, June 14

Suspected Kuki militants ambushed a police convoy enroute to Jiribam Monday morning, leaving one police personnel injured, police said. The incident came ahead of Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's planned visit to the district, which has been witnessing escalated tensions since last week.

According to the police, the attack on the advance guard sent to prepare for the CM's visit took place along National Highway 37, the key road that connects Imphal and Jiribam, around 10:40 am. The site of the attack, T. Lajiang village — which lies about 26 km away from Imphal — comes under the Kuki-Zomi dominated Kangpokpi district. The wounded policeman was identified as Moirangthem Ajesh (32) from Bishnupur district. He received a bullet injury on his right shoulder and has been evacuated to a hospital in Imphal, police said.

Until last week, Jiribam had been relatively peaceful while ethnic conflict raged on in the rest of Manipur since May 3 last year. Bordering Assam's Cachar district, it has a mixed population of Meiteis, Kuki-Zos, Bengalis, Muslims and Nagas. The latest round of tensions began on June 6, when the body of a Meitei man, Soibam Saratkumar Singh, was found with injury marks. The arson that followed saw houses of both Hmar-Mizos — a tribe that comes under the larger Zo umbrella — and Meiteis being burnt. Two police outposts and a forest beat office — were also set on fire. Hundreds of people are taking refuge in temporary relief camps since the latest round of tensions erupted and a large contingent of police and central security forces have been deployed in the district to keep the situation under control. A combined team of state forces and Assam Rifles has launched a search operation in and around the site of the Monday attack.

## Approval of 2 crore PM Awaas Gramin houses with more assistance

GNS News Agency, June 14

As part of its first 100-day agenda, the newly formed NDA government is likely to approve 2 crore additional houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) with higher assistance per beneficiary, The has learnt. Each beneficiary gets funds up to Rs 1.2 lakh in the plains and Rs 1.30 lakh in hilly states, difficult areas, and tribal and backward districts under the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). It is also learnt that the Centre may increase the assistance provided to the beneficiary under the PMAY-G by about 50 per cent.

Sources said the Centre may increase the cost of construction of the PMAY-G house from existing Rs 1.20 to Rs 1.8 lakh in the plains and Rs 1.30 lakh to Rs 2 lakh in hilly areas. These additional 2 crore houses will be over and above the 2.95 crore houses sanctioned under the PMAY-G since its inception in 2016. Of these 2.95 crore, 2.61 crore houses have been built under the PMAY-G till date. The Centre and states share expenses in the ratio of 60:40 in case of plain areas, and in the ratio of 90:10 for North Eastern States, two Himalayan states, 1 U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir. The Centre bears 100 per cent cost in case of other Union Territories including the UT of Ladakh. Presenting the Interim Budget for 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced that 2 crore more houses will be built under the PMAY-G in the next five years. In her Budget Speech 2024-25, Sitharaman said that despite the challenges due to Covid-19, implementation of PMAY-G continued and the Government was close to achieving the target of 3 crore houses. "Two crore more houses will be taken up in the next five years to meet the requirement arising from increase in the number of families," she announced, presenting the Union Budget (Interim) 2024-25. In all, the Finance Minister has allocated Rs 54,500.14 crore for PMAY-G for financial year 2024-25, which is almost equal to the last fiscal's budgetary allocation of Rs 54,487.00 crore.

## US Ambassador's visit boosts morale of foundation working for LGBTQ community

GNS News Agency, June 14

LGBTQ people participate in a Pride March organised by Qutcast, NHRDN Mist Foundation and other organisations at JM road on Sunday in Pune. Express Photo By Pavan Khengre On May 20, when US Ambassador Eric Garcetti visited Pune, one of his stops was in Lohegaon, where he visited the office of MIST LGBTQ Foundation, an organisation working with US Agency for International Development (USAID) for more than three years. Working in the fields of inclusive access to comprehensive health services for the LGBTQ+ community, MIST recently completed 13 years in Pune and organized the second Pune Pride March along with other groups on Sunday. Asked about their decision to support MIST, the US Embassy in an email said USAID has supported the foundation to develop two social enterprises, Queer Bazaar and Stories Café. "USAID provides technical support to diversify revenue models and ensure long-term sustainability for the organization and its vital services. This partnership underscores USAID's commitment to inclusive development and human rights for all LGBTQ+ individuals, recognizing that every diverse identity contributes to societal transformation," the email read.



## Maldives PM Muizzu's presence at inauguration signals possible reset in ties

GNS News Agency, June 14

NEW DELHI: Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu's presence at the inauguration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third term and his meetings with Indian leaders is being seen by observers as signs of a possible reset of bilateral relations that had dipped to a fresh low. Muizzu, who has taken a range of steps to ramp up ties with China in areas ranging from defence to trade after winning last year's presidential election on the back of an "India Out" campaign, was among leaders of seven countries from the neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region invited to Modi's swearing-in ceremony on Sunday. This was his first visit to India since becoming president last November. His decision to accept the invitation to the ceremony was significant and reflects the Maldivian government's desire to engage with the Indian side, people familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity. The people also pointed to Modi's brief meeting with Muizzu following the swearing-in ceremony and his meeting with Union minister S Jaishankar on Monday morning. One of the people cited above said, "Like every sovereign country, the Maldives has every right to develop its relations with other countries. But they must be clear about where they want to take ties with India." Ahead of his departure for India, Muizzu said last week that he looked forward to working with Modi to strengthen relations with India and noted that bilateral ties are "heading in the positive direction, as would be demonstrated by this visit". During a meeting with Maldivian foreign minister Moosa Zameer in New Delhi last month, Jaishankar had said "mutual interests and reciprocal sensitivity" should form the basis of ties between the two countries.

The people cited above said no structured bilateral meetings between Modi and the visiting leaders were planned because of the prime minister's domestic travel plans. Following the swearing-in ceremony on Sunday,

Modi met the visiting leaders in a group at Rashtrapati Bhavan. He also held separate, brief one-on-one meetings with all of them, though the people said there were no substantive discussions at these interactions. Images of the banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday night showed Muizzu seated next to Modi. On Monday, Jaishankar met Muizzu, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth, Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Seychelles vice president Ahmed Afif and discussed bilateral ties and ways to take forward cooperation in the region.

After the meeting with Muizzu, Jaishankar, who is set to return to the external affairs ministry, said in a post on X: "Delighted to call on President Dr Mohamed Muizzu of Maldives today in New Delhi. Look forward to India and Maldives working together closely." In a similar post after his meeting with Hasina, Jaishankar said the "India-Bangladesh Maitri [friendship] continues to advance". A Bangladeshi official described the meeting as unstructured and said the two sides reviewed the overall relationship. Following his meeting with Wickremesinghe, Jaishankar said on X: "Recognized the steady progress in India-Sri Lanka relations. While thanking the leaders for participating in the swearing-in ceremony, Modi reaffirmed India's commitment to its 'Neighbourhood First' policy and 'SAGAR' vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region, according to a statement from the external affairs ministry. Modi said in his third term, India will "continue to work for the peace, progress and prosperity of the region in close partnership with the countries, even as it pursues its goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047". In this context, he sought deeper people-to-people ties and connectivity in the region.

## Supreme Court raps Delhi govt, says "don't take us for granted"

GNS News Agency, June 14

New Delhi: Do not take us for granted, the Supreme Court on Monday said, slamming the Delhi government for not rectifying defects in its plea seeking a direction to Haryana to release the surplus water provided by Himachal Pradesh to the national capital to mitigate its water crisis. A vacation Bench of Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice Prasanna B Varale noted that affidavits are not being accepted in the registry due to the defect in the petition filed by the Delhi government. "Why have you not cured the defect? We will dismiss the petition. On the last date also this was pointed out and you did not remove the defect. Don't take the court proceedings for granted, however important your case may be."

"Never take us for granted. Filings are not being accepted. You straightaway hand over a series of documents in court and then you say you are suffering a deficit of water and pass an order today itself. You are raising all grounds of urgency and sitting leisurely. Let everything come on record. We will take it the day after tomorrow," the Bench said while adjourning the matter to June 12. The top court said it wants to read the files before the matter is heard as there are so many things being reported in the newspaper. "If we don't read the files at our residential office we will be impressed by whatever the newspapers are reporting. That is not good for any of the parties," the Bench said.

At the outset, senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for Haryana, submitted the reply filed by the state government. The apex court asked Divan why did he file the reply now. Divan replied that since the defects in the Delhi government's plea have not been rectified, pre-filing of the reply was not permitted by the registry. The top court then rebuked the Delhi government. The counsel for the Delhi government submitted that defects have been removed.

The acute shortage of drinking water has become an "existential problem" in Delhi, the top court had earlier



observed and directed the Himachal Pradesh government to release 137 cusecs of surplus water to the national capital on Friday and Haryana to facilitate its flow. The apex court had also said there should be no politics over water. It had noted that the Himachal Pradesh government was willing to release 137 cusecs of surplus water available with it for Delhi. One cusec (cubic foot per second) is equal to 28.317 litres of liquid flow every second.

Considering the urgency of the matter, the apex court had directed Himachal Pradesh to release the water on June 7 with prior intimation to Haryana. It had said the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) shall measure the excess water which comes to Hathnikund for its onward supply to Wazirabad and Delhi. While hearing the matter on June 3, the apex court had asked for an emergent meeting of the UYRB on June 5 to address the issue. The UYRB was set up in 1995 with one of its main functions to regulate the allocation of available flows amongst the beneficiary States and also monitor and review the progress of all projects up to and including the Okhla barrage in Delhi. The beneficiary States include Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.

## "A message of brotherhood:" Odisha's first Muslim woman MLA on her poll victory from Barbati-Cuttack seat

GNS News Agency, June 14

Studied in a Missionary school and an alumnus of IIM Bangalore, Sofia Firdous who scripted history by becoming the first Muslim woman MLA of Odisha said her victory has sent a message of brotherhood to the entire country. Firdous, who also takes part in Durga Puja, said she was born in a Muslim family but was raised among the people of Cuttack, who are mostly Hindus. "Date mein Cricket, late mein Cricket! Catch the game anytime, anywhere on Cricket. Find out how Congress candidate Firdous won the Barabati-Cuttack Assembly seat defeating her nearest candidate Purna Chandra Mahapatra of the BJP by 8,001 votes. Speaking to PTI, Firdous said the people of Cuttack believe in "brotherhood" and they proved that religion has no place when the matter is about development. "Religion for me is nothing other than a medium of worship to the Supreme Power, the Unseen Force. I believe spirituality is essential for all -- Hindus, Muslims, Christians and any other community. It (spirituality) keeps oneself united and gives strength," she said. The 32-year-old MLA said she has close friends among Hindus who never see her as different from them.

"In my childhood, I offered prayer in school, participated in Durga Puja in my locality, and enjoyed all the festivals of different religions as Cuttack in the city of brotherhood," said Firdous, an engineering graduate. On becoming the first Muslim woman MLA of Odisha, Firdous said, "First of all, I am a proud Odia and Indian. People have voted for me as I am a daughter of Cuttack. It is a coincidence that I am Muslim and it had not happened before." "Over 140 women have been elected to the Odisha assembly in nearly 90 years of its history, but there was no Muslim among them." The tag of being the first Muslim woman MLA of Odisha came automatically. Thank God for all that. I am happy," she said.

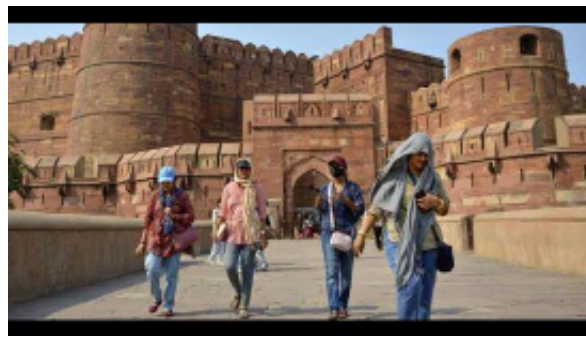
Firdous, who also heads a real-estate firm set up by her father, said her ideal politician is Nandini Satpathy who was the chief minister of a Congress government in Odisha between 1972 and 1976. "I joined politics despite her engineering and management background, Firdous said she was made for politics as her



father Mohammed Moquim is a "popular Congress leader" whose entanglement in a legal case forced her to enter this field "so early". Her father Mohammed Moquim was elected from the same Assembly seat in the 2019 election. He could not contest in the 2024 polls after being convicted in the Odisha Rural Housing and Development Corporation Limited (ORHDC) loan irregularities case. "As my father was entangled in a legal case and he could not fight elections this time, I had to enter into electoral politics. I had never thought to come to politics so early. I contested the 2024 elections in order to retain my father's legacy and complete his work in the Barabati-Cuttack assembly segment," she said.

The young Congress leader said she had campaigned for her father in the 2019 elections and also looked after his poll management previously. "The people of my constituency have elected me keeping a view on my father's work during the last five years and my profile. They trusted their daughter and I will stand by them in all situations," Firdous said. Asked about her father's conviction ahead of the elections, Firdous said, "My father has been targeted for political reasons. The people of Odisha have shown the BJD government its place in this election." BJD, which has been in power in the state for 24 years, was defeated by the BJP in the elections. In the constituency of Firdous, the BJD came third after Congress and BJP.

## Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions likely in Northwest, East India this week



GNS News Agency, June 14

Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions are likely in Northwest and East India during the next five days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said. There is likely to be a gradual rise in maximum temperatures by 2-3°C in Northwest and Central India during this period. There have been several heat spells in East, Northwest, and Peninsular India in April and May. Heatwave conditions are likely in pockets of Jammu division, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, and Odisha during the next 5 days; Himachal Pradesh from June 12 to 14; Uttarakhand from June 11 to 14; Rajasthan on June 12 and 13; Madhya Pradesh from June 12 to 14, IMD said in its bulletin on Monday. Heatwave conditions are also likely in parts of Gangetic West Bengal until June 13. Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions were expected in isolated pockets from June 10 to 12 and in parts of Bihar from June 10 to 12. They were likely in parts of Uttar Pradesh until June 14.

IMD director general M Mohapatra said the fresh spell of heatwave is expected mainly due to an anticyclone which is causing subsidence of hot air over north-west India. Skymet Weather vice president (climate and meteorology) Mahesh Palawat said there was an anticy-

clone over western parts of Pakistan, which is causing subsidence of warm air. "The wind direction over NW [northwest] India has changed to northwesterly which means dry, hot winds will be blowing at least for one week. These winds will also cause warming over East India including Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab among others."

Palawat said relief was expected in East India only when the monsoon progresses and there is rainfall in Bihar and Gangetic West Bengal. "Monsoon is expected to progress over these regions after June 14." Heatwave to severe conditions prevailed on Sunday in pockets of Bihar, and isolated parts of Gangetic West Bengal. Maximum temperatures were in the range of 42-45°C in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, North Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, and Gujarat. These are above normal by 2-4°C. On Sunday, Prayagraj recorded the highest maximum temperature of 45.9°C. Monsoon advanced into more parts of the North Arabian Sea and Maharashtra on Monday. The Northern Limit of the monsoon was over Dahanu, Nasik, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Nizamabad, Sukma, Malkangiri, Vizianagaram, and Islampur. Conditions were favourable for further advance of the monsoon into more parts of the North Arabian Sea, South Gujarat, and Maharashtra during the next two days, IMD said. Since June 1, there has been 4% excess rain across the country, 34% deficiency in North India, 27% in East and North-east India, 10% in Central India, and 84% excess rain in the South Peninsular region. Temperatures in Eastern and Peninsular India smashed records in April, exposing people to extremely humid heat for weeks amid polling for the 2024 general elections. The harrowing heat in the month across large parts of the country was brought on in part due to the climate crisis, scientists said. It was the warmest April in Eastern and Northeastern India in terms of night temperatures since records began in 1901 and the third warmest in mean temperatures.

## Gujarat BJP to get new chief following Patil's induction into Union Cabinet

GNS News Agency, June 14

Gujarat's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is set for a leadership change following C R Patil's induction into the Union Cabinet. Patil's term as the state BJP chief was extended ahead of this summer's Lok Sabha elections. People aware of the matter said Patil's successor will be named within a month and is likely to be from the Other Backward Class (OBC) community as the party seeks to regain the lost ground. Congress's Geniben Thakor from the Thakor OBC community managed to win a Lok Sabha seat in Gujarat. In the 2014 and 2019 elections, BJP won all 26 Lok Sabha seats in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state.

3.6 Crore Indians visited in a single day choosing us as India's undisputed platform for General Election Results. Explore the latest updates here! OBC leaders Jagdish Vishwakarma, who is also a state minister, and Purnesh Modi, a three-time assembly member are seen to be front-runners to replace Patil. Purnesh Modi's defection suit led to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's con-



viction last year. Devusinh Chauhan, the Member of Parliament from Kheda who was a minister in the previous Narendra Modi government, was also being considered for the post of Gujarat BJP president. A BJP functionary said the Central leadership will take the final decision in consultation with the state government.

## 'Have to start war with Pak if...': Union minister says Reasi terror attack was 'deliberate'

GNS News Agency, June 14

A day after a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district claimed nine lives, Union minister Ramdas Athawale said that it was a "deliberately carried out" attack to spark fear on the same day when Narendra Modi took oath as the Prime Minister of India for the third consecutive term. Athawale was also sworn in as part of the Modi 3.0 cabinet. While speaking on the terror attack in the Reasi district, Athawale claimed that terrorism has ended in the Jammu and Kashmir region. He asserted that if such incidents keep on persisting, the country will have to start a war against Pakistan. "I believe terrorism has ended in the region of J&K. This attack was carried out deliberately, just to create fear as PM Narendra Modi forms the government for the third time. But, if such incidents keep happening then we have to start a war with Pakistan... A lot of terrorists enter India through PoK," the union minister told ANI. On June 9, a terror attack in the Reasi region of Jammu and Kashmir left nine people dead and 41 injured. Terrorists opened fire at the 53-seater bus carrying pilgrims near Teryath village in the Poni area when it was en route from Shiv Khori temple to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine at Katra. The bus plunged into the deep gorge following the attack. Soon after the attack,



anti-Pakistan protests broke out across the Jammu region, including Katra, Doda town and Kathua district, calling for increased security measures to prevent such incidents. Protestors accused Pakistan for carrying out attacks in the region, and demanded strict action by the Centre against the neighbouring country. Jammu and Kashmir L-G Manoj Sinha announced an ex-gratia amount of ₹10 lakh for the families of those who lost their lives in the terror attack. ₹50,000 will be given to those who got injured in the attack.

## CISF constable might have been angry over Kangana's previous remarks, says Punjab CM

GNS News Agency, June 14

Chandigarh, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Monday that the CISF woman constable, who allegedly slapped actor Kangana Ranaut, might have been angry over the BJP MP-elect's previous statements on the farmers' stir. Mann also ticked off Kangana over her remarks on "terrorism". However, he said this incident should not have happened. 3.6 Crore Indians visited in a single day choosing us as India's undisputed platform for General Election Results. Explore the latest updates here! It was the Punjab chief minister's first reaction to CISF woman constable Kulwinder Kaur allegedly slapping Kangana at the Chandigarh airport last week. Kaur was apparently upset with Kangana's stance on the farmers' protests. Replying to a question on the slapping incident, Mann said, "Look, that was anger. She had earlier spoken like this. Somewhere, there was anger in the heart of that woman. It should not have happened like this," the Aam Aadmi Party leader said. In an obvious reference to Kangana, Mann said whether one is a film actor or an MP, it is wrong to say that entire Punjab is a terrorist state and there is terrorism in the state. He recalled the contribution of Punjab in the country's freedom struggle and also said it feeds the nation. "On every issue, you say that they are terrorists and separat-

ists. If farmers hold protests, they are called terrorists. It is wrong," said Mann. Kangana, in a video message hours after the incident last week, had said she was hit in the face and abused by the constable during a security check at the Chandigarh airport, the ugly fracas breaking out two days after she was elected to the Lok Sabha from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh. In the statement titled "Shocking rise in terror and violence in Punjab" posted on X after she landed in Delhi following the incident on Thursday, Ranaut said she was safe and fine. The constable, Ranaut had said, came towards her from the side. "She hit me in the face and started abusing me. I asked her why she did it and she said she supports the farmer protests." I am safe but my concern is that terrorism and extremism are increasing in Punjab... How do we handle that?" Ranaut had said. Another video doing the rounds on social media showed the agitated constable talking to people presumably after the incident. "Kangana made a statement that the farmers were protesting in Delhi because they were paid ₹100 or ₹200. At the time, my mother was one of the protesters," she said in the purported video. Kaur's brother Sher Singh Mahiwal is an organising secretary of the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee in Kapurthala. The Mohali Police has booked Kaur under Indian Penal Code sections 323 and 341. Both are bail-able offences.



## NCP(SP)'s Sharad Pawar tells party workers they will return to power in Assembly polls



GNS News Agency, June 14

Sharad Pawar told his party workers to be ready for the Maharashtra Assembly elections this year and claimed the power of the state will be in their hands. Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Monday exhorted his party workers to be ready for the Maharashtra Assembly elections scheduled later this year claiming that they will return to power in the State. Pawar along with his daughter and MP from Baramati Supriya Sule and other party leaders attended the NCP-SCP Foundation Day program in Pune. "Today I just want to say that in last 25 years, we tried to spread out ideologies which will take the part ahead... since elections are nearby it is our collective responsibility to work towards the aim to work so that the power of the state will be in your hands after poll results," Pawar said while addressing workers of the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) as the party celebrated its 25th foundation day at its office in Pune. "Country is going through very different situation these days... if you see the election results mandate is not with Modi mandate and number of their MPs has reduced. They got help from Bihar and TDP... For last five years, they ran the government as per their wish. They did not hear to anyone whatever they said that used to become policy this was the situation of them. Power was centralised now the

situation has changed now power will not be centralised people has become very smart now, said Pawar.

Supriya Sule who was also present at the event said, "Pawar saheb has spoken with Sonia Gandhi and Uddhav Thackeray and said we will give strong fight in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha election." Sule also extended her wishes to the newly appointed ministers from Maharashtra in PM Modi's cabinet. "I want them to work for the development of Maharashtra," Sule said. Pawar formed the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in 1999 after breaking away from the Congress. Last July following a political turmoil in NCP, the party split into two after Ajit Pawar and some other MLAs joined the Shiv Sena-BJP government in the State. However, the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar faction) managed to retain their political ground as part of the 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' (MVA) alliance during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The alliance won 30 out of the state's 48 Lok Sabha seats- NCP (SP) bagged 8 seats while the Congress won 13 seats and the Shiv Sena (UBT) notched up nine seats in Maharashtra. The 'Mahayuti' alliance witnessed a setback, bagging merely 17 out of 48 Lok Sabha seats in the state. The BJP won 9 seats and the Shiv Sena (Shinde faction) won eight seats and the NCP are allies in the 'Mahayuti' alliance. This story has been published from a wire agency feed without modifications to the text. Only the headline has been changed. Senior leadership has evolved to encompass a holistic view of people, products, and processes. Today, leaders must be deeply involved in financial, operational, strategic, and human aspects of decision-making. They face tighter deadlines, industry-wide disruptions, and shifting consumer preferences while managing remote-working teams and navigating rapid technological advancements. This demands agility, foresight, and a multifaceted approach to leadership. The Senior Management Programme from Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode, has been developed to help leaders develop renewed leadership skills and succeed in today's volatile markets.

## Kerala govt rejects opposition demand to register corruption case into liquor policy row



GNS News Agency, June 14

The Left government in Kerala on Monday rejected the opposition Congress-led UDF's demand to register a case under the Prevention of Corruption Act into the allegations with regard to the "amendment" of the state's liquor policy. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan rejected the opposition's demand in the state Assembly which met here for the first time after the Lok Sabha polls. An agitated opposition later raised slogans against the LDF government and showed placards as a mark of protest by standing in front of the podium of Speaker A N Shamseer.

Though the UDF, under Leader of the Opposition V D Satheesan, urged the CPI (M)-led regime to register a corruption case in connection with the issue, Vijayan said a police probe was already underway. He accused the opposition of raising a fabricated argument and trying to create the impression that something (illegal) was happening in the state.

"The State Excise Minister himself had lodged a complaint with the Director General of Police as soon as he came across false news related to the state's liquor policy," he said. An investigation is going on over the complaint, and appropriate action would be taken against

whatever crimes had been committed, he said. Vijayan asked whether the attempt by the opposition was to create hurdles in the ongoing police probe. However, Satheesan questioned the CM's claim and asked what outcome could be expected in a police probe being carried out based on a complaint lodged by the Excise Minister, who is an accused in the alleged scam. "So, a case should be registered under the Prohibition of Corruption Act on the allegations. The opposition will not compromise on the matter and will hold strong agitations inside and outside the House raising the issue," the LoP added.

The opposition later boycotted the House proceedings and walked out, continuing to raise slogans against the government and demanding the resignation of the Excise and Tourism ministers. For over a month, the Congress has been raising corruption charges against the Vijayan government over its liquor policy and has been alleging that it was planning to amend it by accepting bribes from bar owners. They had pointed out that the matter was discussed during a recent meeting convened by the Chief Secretary and a stakeholders' meeting organised by the Tourism Director, the charge which had been denied by both the officials later. While the Congress-led UDF has accused the LDF government of taking bribes from bar owners to favour them, the Left claims it has not yet held any deliberations over the liquor policy. The issue of the purported withdrawal of the 'dry day' policy snowballed into a controversy after an audio clip said to be of a bar association member allegedly asking other members to pay money for a 'favourable liquor policy' was aired on TV channels. The UDF came out with allegations that the Left government sought Rs 20 crore from bar owners to make a policy favourable to them and demanded the resignation of Excise Minister M B Rajesh.

## Firing outside Salman Khan's house: Bombay HC orders removal of actor's name from plea seeking CBI probe in accused's custodial death

GNS News Agency, June 14

The Bombay High Court on Monday ordered the removal of the name of Bollywood actor Salman Khan from a plea seeking a CBI probe into the custodial death of an accused in the firing case outside Khan's Mumbai home. A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Shyam C Chandak was informed by the lawyer appearing for Rita Devi, mother of deceased accused Anuj Thapan, that there is no pleading against Khan in the petition and no relief has been sought against him.

"What is the point of making a person who is supposed to be the victim a party respondent? We see no reason why Khan should continue to be in this plea. He is not a necessary party. You are concerned with the death of your son, the court will look into that. By adding Khan, you are digressing from the core issue," the Court remarked. Thapan was lodged at a crime branch lock-up in the Mumbai police headquarters. On May 1, the police said Thapan died by suicide in the bathroom of the lock-up. In her plea, Rita Devi said that despite a custodial death having occurred, the police had not registered an FIR. She requested that an FIR be registered and the CBI should inquire into the case. Khan was one of the respondents in the plea. A vacation bench of the high court had directed the Mumbai police to file a status report on the ongoing probe into Thapan's death. This order was



issued after the prosecution informed the Court that the investigation into the death had been transferred to the Crime Investigation Department and a magisterial inquiry had also been initiated. The HC on May 22 had also expressed displeasure over an "incomplete" autopsy or post-mortem report submitted in connection with the custodial death. On Monday, the prosecutor informed the Court that the magistrate had summoned Thapan's mother to record her statement which she received belatedly. The Court asked the magistrate to issue a fresh summons and ensure that the same is served upon the mother well in time to enable her to appear. The HC will hear the plea after six weeks.

## Delhi court fixes June 18 for Engineer Rashid's interim bail plea to take oath as MP



GNS News Agency, June 14

A Delhi court has fixed June 18 to hear arguments on an application filed by Engineer Rashid, arrested in a 2016 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case, seeking interim bail to take oath as an MP after the recently concluded general elections. Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated J-K former chief minister Omar Abdullah from the Baramulla constituency in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Rashid contested as an Independent candidate to defeat the National Conference (NC) vice president. Additional Sessions Judge

Chander Jit Singh fixed the matter for June 18 after the NIA sought time to file reply to Rashid's application. The NIA further submitted on June 7 that the notification for the oath of newly elected members of Parliament of Lok Sabha was not published yet. The judge adjourned the matter, adding that if the notification for the ceremony comes before the next date, the accused may move the court with a plea to expedite the matter. Rashid had moved the court seeking interim bail, or custody parole in the alternative, to take oath and perform his parliamentary functions. He has been in jail since 2019 after he was charged by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention), 1967 Act (UAPA) in the alleged terror funding case. He is lodged in Tihar jail at present.

The former MLA's name cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who the NIA had arrested for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the valley. The NIA had filed a charge sheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, in the case. Malik was awarded life imprisonment by a trial court in 2022 after he pleaded guilty to the charges.

## Baby elephant, rejected by mom, taken to 'feeding camp' in Tamil Nadu

GNS News Agency, June 14

Nilgiris: Days after a baby elephant was rejected by its mother, the jumbo was taken to an 'elephant feeding camp' at the Mudumalai National Park in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, on Sunday. In the camp, the officials of the Forest Department Dr Rajesh and Dr Sukumar examined the health of the baby elephant. Upon monitoring, it seemed healthy and weighed around 150 kilograms. It was then fed lactose milk. Reportedly, the elephant calf was separated from its mother in the Marudamalai forest area, near Thondamuthur in the Coimbatore district.

The incident occurred on May 30, when the ailing mother elephant was found lying on the ground with a distressed three-month-old male calf next to her. The rest

of the herd were present in nearby forests.

Acting promptly, a team of forest officials lifted the mother with the help of a crane and took her for three days long treatment. After her health improved, she was released into the forest. After this incident, the team found that the elephant calf was stranded in the forest area and took him to the foothills of Marudamalai, in an attempt to find his mother and reunite them. The officials of the Forest Department spotted the mother and attempted to lead the calf towards his mother but she rejected the calf and ran away. Speaking with ANI, the Forest veterinarian Dr. Sukumar said, "On May 30, we received information about an ailing female elephant lying down in the Mudumalai forest range in Coimbatore, with the baby standing next to her."

## How timely alert from bank helped cops unearth 3-layered cyber fraud ring with Dubai nexus

GNS News Agency, June 14

A prompt tip-off from officials at a private sector bank proved pivotal, as the Pimpri Chinchwad police's cybercrime cell recently unearthed a sophisticated cyber fraud operation. Thirteen suspects, all in their 20s—operating across three layers and working as cyber foot soldiers by international criminals in Dubai—have been arrested in connection with a network of 50 bank accounts that saw Rs 20 crore move in just two months. These accounts served as conduits for funds pilfered by international kingpins from unsuspecting victims of online frauds.

How did the investigation begin?

A team from the Pimpri Chinchwad police cybercrime cell was investigating an online task fraud case registered at the Dehu Road police station. When the team was investigating the bank accounts linked to the frauds, the investigation team received input from the manager of a private sector bank about suspicious activity in close to three dozen accounts opened over the last two months.

As later turned out, these accounts were in the name of labourers and farmers and had seen unusual activity totalling multiple crores of rupees. As the investigation team started digging into the transactions of these accounts, they realised they were looking at 'rented' accounts used for receiving funds siphoned from cybercrime victims. In the probe conducted over the last week, the investigation team unearthed the network of 50 bank accounts that were flagged in at least 16 cybercrimes registered in Maharashtra.

An officer from Pimpri Chinchwad police said, "We have made arrests from what we believe are three layers of the racket with their fourth and above layers operating from abroad, in this case, Dubai. The modus operandi of this racket is like any other cybercrime operation, more or less." The officer added, "In the case of this specific operation, the first layer is of the people in whose name the accounts were opened. They were receiving a fixed monthly amount or a minuscule percentage of the transactions. These people were told that their accounts were being used for gaming or share trading purposes and received large sums for letting the next layer operators handle their bank accounts. The next layer is of those who helped these people open bank accounts and maintained them." They also received their share of the money from the operation. The officer said the third layer connected the lower two layers to the masterminds in Dubai. "Our investigation indicates that the money was ultimately being used to buy cryptocurrency, which was then deposited into the digital wallets of the operators



based in Dubai. We have apprehended six individuals from the first layer, five from the second layer, and two, including a 23-year-old engineer, from the third layer. We hope to make more arrests from each layer," the officer stated. "While our probe began with a case of online task fraud, we have reasons to believe that these accounts have received money from other types of frauds, including online share trading frauds and drugs in parcel scams. A large chunk of victims of these cases are well-educated professionals." The investigation team consisted of Senior Inspector Vaibhav Shingare, Assistant Inspector Praveen Swami and Sub Inspectors Sagar Poman, Nitin Gaikwad and Ravindra Panhale, along with constabulary staff.

What are online task frauds?

Since January 2023, Pune citizens have reported many online tasks. In arguably the biggest such case so far with the City Police, a 69-year-old retired Colonel from the Indian Army was cheated of Rs 2.4 crore in May and June last year in an online task fraud. In these task frauds, the victims initially receive messages offering money for performing tasks such as liking videos and giving online reviews to businesses such as hotels. They are initially paid small amounts to win their trust. For example, Rs 100 per like to Rs 1,000 per review, etc. Later, they are told that they have been "chosen" for a "higher level" task and asked to pay a fee to receive 'prepaid tasks' that will get them higher amounts as returns. For a 'prepaid task' for which the victims pay Rs 1,000, they get Rs 1,500 in return. The fraudsters start increasing the fee while dangling the lure of higher returns. Finally, when the promised returns fail to materialise, the victims realise they are being cheated.

## NCP(SP)'s Sharad Pawar tells party workers they will return to power in Assembly polls

GNS News Agency, June 14

Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Monday exhorted his party workers to be ready for the Maharashtra Assembly elections scheduled later this year claiming that they will return to power in the State.

Pawar along with his daughter and MP from Baramati Supriya Sule and other party leaders attended the NCP-SCP Foundation Day program in Pune. "Today I just want to say that in last 25 years, we tried to spread out ideologies which will take the part ahead... since elections are nearby it is our collective responsibility to work towards the aim to work so that the power of the state will be in your hands after poll results," Pawar said while addressing workers of the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) as the party celebrated its 25th foundation day at its office in Pune. Further hitting out at the BJP-led NDA government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Pawar referring to Lok Sabha polls results claimed that PM Modi does not have the mandate. "Country is going through very different situation these days... if you see the election results mandate is not with Modi mandate and number of their MPs has reduced. They got help from Bihar and TDP... For last five years, they ran the government as per their wish. They did not hear to anyone whatever they said that used to become policy this was the situation of them. Power was centralised now the situation has changed now power will not be centralised people has become very smart now, said Pawar. Supriya Sule who was also present at the event said, "Pawar saheb has spoken with Sonia Gandhi and Uddhav Thackeray and said we will



give strong fight in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha election. "Sule also extended her wishes to the newly appointed ministers from Maharashtra in PM Modi's cabinet. "I want them to work for the development of Maharashtra," Sule said. Pawar formed the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in 1999 after breaking away from the Congress. Last July following a political turmoil in NCP, the party split into two after Ajit Pawar and some other MLAs joined the Shiv Sena-BJP government in the State. However, the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar faction) managed to retain their political ground as part of the 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' (MVA) alliance during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The alliance won 30 out of the state's 48 Lok Sabha seats- NCP (SP) bagged 8 seats while the Congress won 13 seats and the Shiv Sena (UBT) notched up nine seats in Maharashtra.



## Italy's PM Meloni comes out on top in EU vote, strengthening her hand



ROME, GNS News Agency, June 14 - Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's arch-conservative Brothers of Italy group won the most votes in the European parliamentary election over the weekend, boosting her standing both at home and abroad. With almost all ballots counted, Brothers of Italy won 28.8% of the vote, more than four times what it took in the last European Union election in 2019, and exceeding the 26% it secured in the 2022 national ballot, when it rose to power. "I am proud that Italy will present itself to the G7, to Europe with the strongest government of all. This is something that has not happened in the past but is happening today, it is a satisfaction and also a great responsibility," Meloni said early on Monday from the party's headquarters. The opposition centre-left Democratic Party came in second with 24% of the vote, while another opposition group, the 5-Star Movement, was third with 9.9% - its worst showing at a countrywide level since its creation in 2009.

The EU ballot indicated that Meloni's ruling coalition, made up of parties that stretch from the centre-right to the far right of the political spectrum, saw its support climb to more than 47% from just under 43% in 2022. "The results weren't at all given, it is a resounding achievement and shows that all the parties of the majority have been able to grow together," Meloni said later in the morning on RTL 102.5 Radio. "It's a spur for (the government) to move forward. Italians are giving us a loud and clear message to go ahead with our work ... and if possible

with greater determination." Forza Italia, founded by the late Silvio Berlusconi, was in fourth place with 9.7% of the vote, surpassing the anti-immigrant League, which had 9.1%, a disappointment for leader Matteo Salvini, who has pushed his party hard right, antagonising its old guard. Underscoring tensions in the League, party founder Umberto Bossi voted for Forza Italia this time around, his allies told Italian media this weekend, sending a jolt through the group. Meloni's party traces its roots back to a neo-fascist group, and her 2022 victory set the tone for far-right gains across Europe, including in the latest EU ballot, which has seen the continent swing right. However, Meloni has moderated her image on the international stage, dropping her previous anti-EU rhetoric and presenting herself as a bridge between the mainstream centre-right and her own national conservative camp, which was previously shunned.

Her strong showing on Sunday came in stark contrast to setbacks suffered by French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, whose parties were routed. Speaking on radio, Meloni said, however, it was still too early to say whether she would back a second term for centre-right European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Her group of lawmakers might prove decisive should Meloni decide to back von der Leyen, potentially giving Rome leverage over the new EU executive. "What we need is a Europe that will listen to citizens, that will look more to the centre-right and has more pragmatic and less ideological policies," Meloni said, adding that, given the results, Italy would necessarily have a fundamental role. Sunday also represented a big success for Meloni's main opponent - Elly Schlein, who took charge of the centre-left PD party in 2023 and had struggled to impose her will on the old guard. The PD won 19% of the vote in 2022 and Schlein was anxious to improve on that. The hard left Green and Left Alliance won around 6.7%, meaning that its candidate, Ilaria Salis, an Italian activist detained in Hungary for more than a year for allegedly assaulting far-right militants, is now an EU lawmaker. The one disappointment for all parties was the turnout, which was just below 50%, initial data suggested, a record low in a country that has had historically strong voter participation.

## Eyeing showdown with Hezbollah, Israel presses shadow campaign in Syria

AMMAN GNS News Agency, June 14, - Israel has intensified covert strikes in Syria against weapons sites, supply routes and Iranian-linked commanders, seven regional officials and diplomats said, ahead of a threatened full-scale assault on Tehran's key ally Hezbollah in Lebanon.

A June 2 air raid that killed 18 people, including an adviser with Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, targeted a clandestine, fortified weapons site near Aleppo, three of the sources said. In May, an air strike hit a convoy of trucks headed to Lebanon carrying missile parts and another raid killed Hezbollah operatives, four said. Israel has for years struck militant groups backed by arch-foe Iran in Syria and elsewhere, in a low-level campaign that burst into open confrontation after Israel and Palestinian group Hamas - another Iranian ally - went to war in Gaza on Oct. 7. Israel has since killed dozens of Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) and Hezbollah officers in Syria, from just two last year before the Oct. 7 attack, according to a tally by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a think tank. The battle hit fever pitch in April when Israel bombed the Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing the top IRGC commander for operations in the Levant. In retaliation, Iran fired some 300 missiles and drones at Israel, almost all of which were shot down. Israel then attacked Iranian territory with drones. This direct confrontation, a first for the two countries, stopped there. Israel also briefly reduced the number of strikes it was carrying out against Iranian proxies, said Selin Uysal, a French diplomat seconded to the Washington Institute, citing the tally, which counted publicly-known attacks in the weeks immediately before and after. "There was a slowdown" after the face-off in April, she said. "But they are picking up again because of suspected Iranian weapons transfers to Lebanon. There is a kinetic effort in Syria and Lebanon to disrupt the supply chain between Iran and Hezbollah," interviewed three Syrian officials, an Israeli government official and three Western diplomats about Israel's Syria campaign. The officials asked not to be named to talk freely about sensitive matters. The Syrian officials gave previously unreported details of the targets of Israeli strikes around the cities of Aleppo and Homs in recent months, including the June 2 attack.

All those interviewed said Israel's moves suggested it was gearing up for a full-scale war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, which borders Syria, that could begin when Israel dials down its campaign in Gaza. "The statements of our leaders have been clear that escalation could be imminent in Lebanon," the Israeli government official said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last week that his country was prepared for "very strong action" at its frontier with Lebanon, where it has been fighting a so-far limited battle with Hezbollah since Oct. 8. War in Lebanon is not inevitable. Israel has also indicated openness to diplomatic efforts being brokered by Washington and France. The Israeli government official said the campaign in Syria was also aimed at weakening Hezbollah and thus discouraging it from a war with Israel. The Israeli government and military did not respond to questions for this article. Israel rarely publicly acknowledges targeted killings overseas and has not commented on the recent strikes in Syria. A senior Israeli official said last year Israel was determined to prevent Syria becoming part of a new front. The IRGC and a Syrian government spokesperson did not respond. Hezbollah declined to comment. Syria, a longtime Iranian ally, became the key conduit for Tehran's arms supplies to Hezbollah after Iran deployed military personnel and thousands of allied paramilitaries from around 2013 to help President Bashar al-Assad during his country's ongoing civil war. Some weapons parts are smuggled into Syria while others are assembled there, the three Syrian officials said. Israel's Syria campaign aims to make sure Hezbollah, Iran's most loyal ally and the linchpin of Tehran's projection of regional power through militant proxies, is as weak as possible before any kind of fight begins, the Syrian officials and Israeli official said. The June 2 killing of Saeed Abyar, described by Iranian state media as an IRGC adviser, showed Israel's reach in taking out key personnel and targeting equipment even when Iran has tried new methods of protecting weapons and parts bound for Hezbollah, the Syrian officials said, including moving the manufac-



ture of weapons to more hidden or fortified locations.

Abyar was visiting a manufacturing plant for missiles for Hezbollah that was hidden inside a stone quarry east of the city of Aleppo when he was hit, the Syrian officials said. "The facility was in an area designed to be hard to find and hard to hit," said one of the officials, an intelligence officer. Iran blamed Sunday's strike on Israel and the head of the IRGC has vowed to retaliate. The officials said the strike killed 17 other people, including Iran-aligned militiamen. It was the first targeting of an IRGC official since Israel bombed the Iranian consulate, they said. But it is not the only attack it has carried out since then. An air strike near the Syrian city of Homs on May 29 targeted a vehicle carrying parts for guided missiles from Syria to Lebanon, the Syrian intelligence officer said. Another strike on May 20 targeted members of Hezbollah, the officer said. Before the Iran consulate attack, a series of air strikes in late March around Aleppo hit warehouses storing high explosives for missile warheads, the officer said. Other attacks have targeted Syrian air defence systems that had in recent years given Hezbollah and Iranian military personnel some security to operate, including Russian-made Pantsir air defence systems, mobile missile launchers that the Syrian military uses, a Syrian military official said. Other strikes had targeted early-warning radar systems, the official said. "In some cases Israel is hitting even before we install our equipment," the official said. The Israeli government official said Israel's targets were advanced anti-aircraft weapons, heavy rockets and precision-guidance systems for missiles.

### ISRAEL TIPPING THE BALANCE?

The number of Israeli attacks in Syria jumped dramatically after Oct. 7, when Israel and Hamas went to war. "The frequency has doubled," said the Washington Institute's Uysal. Israel carried out 50 air strikes in Syria in the six months after the Gaza war began, she said. "These included attacks on Aleppo airport, the Nairab military airport, Damascus airport, and the Mezzeh military airport, which are key in weapon transfers. Weapons caches were also among the targets." The strikes have included the killing of some 20 IRGC officials and more than 30 Hezbollah commanders, Uysal said. Between January and October of 2023, two IRGC officials and no Hezbollah commanders were killed by Israeli strikes in Syria, Uysal said. "The attacks in Syria certainly stop arms and ammunition deliveries and damage the ability of Hezbollah or Iran to organise," said Lior Akerman of Reichman University, a former Brigadier-General in Israel's domestic security service.

Iran sends limited numbers of advisers to Syria, such as the senior IRGC officials killed in the consulate bombing. Hezbollah has deployed thousands of fighters there. Hezbollah official Nawaf Musawi told the Iran-aligned Al Mayadeen TV channel in March that the group was opening new ammunition depots "and getting more precision missiles and better quality weapons by land, sea and air." Farzan Sabet, a senior researcher at the Geneva Graduate Institute who specialises in Iranian foreign policy, said attacks on Israel by Hezbollah and Iran's allies in Iraq and Yemen during the Gaza war had taken a toll on Israel. "But it has killed many more Hezbollah operatives and senior figures including IRGC personnel in Syria, so on balance it's a bigger loss" for Iran's allies, Sabet said.

## EU's von der Leyen seeks centrist allies after far-right election gains



BRUSSELS, GNS News Agency, June 14: European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen began trying to piece together a coalition on Monday after the far right surged in a European Parliament election, spurring French President Emmanuel Macron to call a snap national vote. A rightward shift inside the European Parliament may make it tougher to pass new legislation to respond to security challenges, the impact of climate change or industrial competition from China and the United States.

Von der Leyen, the German president of the European Union's powerful executive body, emerged strengthened from the four-day election across 27 countries that concluded on Sunday, as her centre-right European People's Party (EPP) gained seats. But to secure a second five-year term, von der Leyen needs the support of a majority of the EU's national leaders and a working majority in the European Parliament. On Monday gave the main parties that backed von der Leyen last time - the EPP, socialists and liberals - a total of 402 seats in the 720-member chamber. But that is widely regarded in Brussels as too tight a majority for comfort. So von der Leyen may also reach out to the Greens, who suffered heavy losses, and Italy's nationalist Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, with whom she has worked closely. Late on Sunday night, von der Leyen said she would start by trying to rebuild the parliamentary bedrock of her last term. "I have been working on building a broad majority of pro-European forces. And this is why, as of tomorrow, we will be reaching out to the big political families that we have formed the platform with," she told reporters in Brussels. Von der Leyen indicated she would talk to others after those initial consultations, keeping her options open.

She said she aims to work with those who are "pro-European, pro-Ukraine and pro-rule of law" - a description that she has made clear she thinks applies to Meloni's Brothers of Italy but not to some other far-right parties. However, the socialists, liberals and Greens have all declared they will not work with the far right, making von der Leyen's coalition-building efforts extremely delicate. Meloni also kept her options open on Monday, saying it was too early to decide on a second term for von der Leyen. Nationalist, populist and EU-sceptical parties are on course to win about a quarter of seats in the EU assembly. Political analysts attribute the overall shift to the right to rising costs of living, concerns about migra-

tion and the cost of the green transition as well as the war in Ukraine - worries that nationalist and populist parties have seized upon. However, exactly how much clout these parties will wield will depend on their ability to overcome differences. They are currently split between two political families, and some parties and lawmakers for now stand outside these groupings. The provisional results showed the EPP winning 185 seats, with socialists on 137 and liberals on 80.

MACRON, SCHOLZ BRUISED The repercussions of the vote were felt far beyond Brussels. In France, the far-right National Rally of Marine Le Pen won more than 31% of the vote, trouncing Macron's centrist Renaissance party - which scored just 14.6% - and prompting him to call a snap national parliamentary election. In Germany, the far-right Alternative for Germany took second place with 15.9% of the vote - ahead of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats, who garnered 13.9% in their worst-ever result. Meloni, by contrast, was boosted as her party came first in Italy with more than 28% of the vote. In Poland, Prime Minister Donald Tusk's centrist Civic Coalition, a member of the EPP, came first. In Spain as well, the centre-right People's Party, also part of the EPP, came out on top, outperforming Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez. The European Parliament co-decides with the EU's national governments on laws proposed by the European Commission to govern the bloc of 450 million people.

Reporting by Philip Blenkinsop, Kate Abnett, Jan Strupczewski, Sudip Kar-Gupta in Brussels, Belen Carreno, Graham Keeley in Madrid, Gus Trompiz, Manuel Ausloos, Michel Rose, Tassilo Hummel in Paris, Francois Murphy in Vienna, Sarah Marsh and Thomas Escritt in Berlin, Stephanie Van den Berg in the Netherlands; editing by Mark Heinrich. Andrew Gray is Reuters' European Affairs Editor. Based in Brussels, he covers NATO and the European Union and leads a pan-European team of reporters focused on diplomacy, defence and security. A journalist for almost 30 years, he has previously been based in the UK, Germany, Geneva, the Balkans, West Africa and Washington, where he reported on the Pentagon. He covered the Iraq war in 2003 and contributed a chapter to a Reuters book on the conflict. He has also worked at Politico Europe as a senior editor and podcast host, served as the main editor for a fellowship programme for journalists from the Balkans, and contributed to the BBC's From Our Own Correspondent radio show. Jan is the Deputy Bureau Chief for France and Benelux, running the Reuters office in Brussels. He has been covering European Union policy, focusing on economics, since 2005 after a five year assignment in Stockholm where he covered tech and telecoms stocks, the central bank and general news. Jan joined Reuters in 1993 in Warsaw from the main Polish TV news programme "Wiadomosci", where he was a reporter and anchor for the morning news edition. Jan won the Reuters Journalist of the Year award in 2007 in the Scoop of the Year category, a second time in 2010 for his coverage of the euro zone sovereign debt crisis and for the third time in 2011, this time as part of the Brussels team, for the Story of the Year. A Polish national, Jan graduated from Warsaw University with a Master's in English literature. He is a keen sailor, photographer and bushcraft enthusiast.

## North Korea leader's sister warns of new response against South Korean loudspeakers, leaflets

GNS News Agency, June 14

SEOUL - The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned of a new response against South Korea if the South continued with loudspeaker broadcasts and allowing leaflet balloon flights amid simmering tensions.

"If the ROK simultaneously carries out the leaflet scattering and loudspeaker broadcasting provocation over the border, it will undoubtedly witness the new counteraction of the DPRK," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement late on Sunday carried by state news agency KCNA, using the official names of South and North Korea. South Korea resumed loudspeaker broadcasts directed at North Korea on Sunday, its military said, following through on a warning that it would do so if Pyongyang kept sending balloons carrying trash into the South.

Signs that North Korea was installing its own loudspeakers have been detected, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, adding that South Korea does not plan to operate its loudspeakers on Monday. North Korea on Saturday launched about 330 balloons with trash attached; about 80 of them landed over the border, South Korea's military said. On Monday South Korea said a further 310 balloons had been launched, with about 50 landing in the South. "This is a prelude to a very dangerous situation," said Kim, a vice department director in the ruling Workers' Party, referring to the South's loudspeaker broadcasts. Kim said North Korea had sent 1,400 balloons over the border from the night of June 8 to the dawn of June 9. Pyongyang started sending balloons carrying trash and fertilizer, including possible manure, across the border in May, calling it retaliation for anti-North leaflets flown by South Korean activists as part of a propaganda campaign. "Seoul does not want military tension at the inter-Korean border, and Pyongyang does not want outside information threatening the legitimacy of the Kim regime," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "For both sides, 'escalating to deescalate' is a risky proposition." The U.S.-led United Nations Command (UNC), which oversees the armistice that established the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas as fighting ended in the 1950-1953 Korean War, has said it is conducting an investigation into the balloons, including the reports of possible decal matter and other waste products. Item 1 of 3 South Korean soldiers walk past a military facility (Green box) where loudspeakers dismantled in 2018 used to be, near the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas in Paju, South Korea.

[1/3] South Korean soldiers walk past a military facility (Green box) where loudspeakers dismantled in 2018 used to be, near the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas in Paju, South Korea. "We'd hope that everyone would come to the table to resolve their issues," said U.S. Army Colonel Isaac Taylor, a spokesman for UNC. South Korea's broadcasts include world news and information about democratic and capitalist society, with a mix of popular K-pop music. The sound is believed to travel more than 20 kilometres (12.4 miles) into North Korea, though some analysts say their actual reach is much less. Steve Tharp, a retired U.S. Army officer who spent years working along the DMZ, said loudspeaker broadcasts from both sides sounded day and night when



he deployed as infantry in the 1980s. "The loudspeakers carry farther at night," he noted. "First couple nights were eerie, then it became the background noise of your life after a while." Later, as a public affairs officer in 2015, Tharp said he helped review messages being broadcast by the South Koreans, who are part of a combined command with U.S. troops. North Korea has in some cases fired weapons at the balloons and speakers. South Korea stopped the broadcasts under an agreement signed by the two Korea's leaders in 2018 but tensions have increased since then as Pyongyang pushed ahead with weapons development.

North Korean troops have been seen clearing trees and building fences within the DMZ in recent weeks. Taylor said that UNC does not assess that the intent of the work is to enable a "disparate" military buildup in the border zone, which would be a violation of the armistice. He noted that since North Korea's recent declaration that unification with the South is no longer a goal, it has pursued measures to "harden" its boundaries.

## Tensions rise as North Korea sends 300 more trash balloons over South

Pyeonggang: North Korea floated over 300 more waste-loaded balloons into South Korea, as tensions between the two countries continue to mount, 'Al Jazeera' reported citing Seoul's military on Monday. This comes after Kim Jong Un's influential sister, Kim Yo Jong warned Seoul to halt propaganda broadcasts across their tense border. She warned that the loudspeaker broadcasts risked provoking a "crisis of confrontation." "This is a prelude to a very dangerous situation," Kim said in a statement carried by state media on Sunday.

The latest balloons carried only scrap paper and plastic, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said, unlike previous batches that carried unsanitary material such as manure, toilet paper and cigarette butts. Military officials said they did not detect any balloons floating in the air as of 8:30 am (local time).



## Mutual fund assets close in on 60 trillion rupees milestone in May



Investors continued to favour small and mid-cap funds, based on data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). These net equity mutual fund inflows are the highest recorded since April 2019, when AMFI began reporting monthly mutual fund flows in their current format. Domestic equity mutual funds have consistently seen net inflows each month since February 2021, amounting to 5.58 trillion rupees. This figure surpasses net foreign inflows during the same period. The Nifty50 index has risen about 55% over the past 39 months, supported by these mutual fund inflows. Despite some concerns over high valuations, small-cap funds saw inflows rise by 23.4% to 2,725 crore rupees in May. Mid-cap funds also experienced an increase, with inflows up by 45.3% to 2,606 crore rupees while large-cap funds saw their inflows nearly double to 663 crore rupees.

"Over the last year, small- and mid-cap categories attracted significant inflows due to their growth potential. Stress tests have indicated that there is no liquidity stress in the two categories, comforting investors and spurring continuous allocation," said Feroze Azeez, deputy chief executive at Anand Rathi Wealth. The Nifty50 index fell by 0.33%, and the small-cap index dropped by 1.85% in May, while the mid-cap index saw an increase of 1.65%. At the same time, investments in systematic investment plans (SIPs) reached an all-time high of 20,904 crore rupees for the month. Sectoral and thematic fund inflows also hit a record, amounting to 19,213 crore rupees in May, driven by a strong interest in New Fund Offers (NFOs).

## Inflows into equity mutual funds touch record high of Rs 34,697 cr in May



Net inflows into equity mutual funds almost doubled to touch a record high of Rs 34,697 crore in May, as compared to Rs 18,917.09 crore in April, the latest data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed. The surge in flows into equity schemes in May was led by higher inflows into sectoral/ thematic funds.

In May, the systematic investment plan's (SIP) contribution touched an all-time high of Rs 20,904 crore, compared to Rs 20,371.47 crore in April. Net assets under management (AUM) of the mutual fund industry stood at Rs 58.91 lakh crore in May, compared to Rs 57.26 lakh crore in April. The net AUM of equity mutual funds as of the end of May 31, 2024, reached an all-time high of Rs 25.39 lakh crore, compared to Rs 24.74 lakh crore in April. According to AMFI Chief Executive Venkat Chalasani, the contribution of equity schemes to the overall AUM of the mutual fund industry has grown from 23 per cent in April 2019 to 43 per cent in May 2024, which is near the global average of 46 per cent.

Commenting on the numbers, Manish Mehta, National Head – Sales, Marketing & Digital Business, Kotak Mahindra AMC, said record inflows in equity schemes were aided by NFO (new fund offer) listings and investors taking advantage of volatility to add equity schemes to their investments through SIPs as well as lump sum.

Among the equity-oriented schemes, sectoral/thematic funds received the highest amount of inflows at Rs 19,213.43 crore, followed by 3,155.07 crore in flexi cap funds. The net AUM of sectoral/thematic funds stood at Rs 3.37 lakh crore and that of flexi cap funds was at Rs 3.72 lakh crore. In May, large-cap funds received Rs 663.09 crore of inflows compared to Rs 357.56 crore in the previous month. Inflows into mid-cap and small-cap

funds stood at Rs 2,605.70 crore and Rs 2,724.67 crore respectively in May, compared to Rs 1,793.07 crore and Rs 2,208.7 crore, respectively in April. Inflows into debt-oriented mutual funds moderated to Rs 42,294.99 crore in May, compared to inflows of Rs 1.89 lakh crore in April. Liquid funds witnessed flows of Rs 25,873.38 crore and money market funds saw inflows of Rs 8,271.75 crore.

Inflows into overnight funds and ultra short duration funds were Rs 6,644.63 crore and Rs 1,646.88 crore respectively. Net assets under management of debt-oriented mutual fund schemes increased to Rs 15.11 lakh crore as of May 31, 2024, compared to Rs 14.58 lakh crore in April. Net inflows into hybrid schemes declined to Rs 17,990.67 crore in May, from Rs 19,862.94 crore in April. Gold exchange-traded fund (ETF) saw net inflows of Rs 827.43 crore as against outflows of Rs 395.69 crore in April. In May, the SIP AUM increased to Rs 11.52 lakh crore compared to Rs 11.26 lakh crore in the previous month.

cially concerning the social and psychological effects of growing up without a biological father. Additionally, it is critical to preserve the deceased's autonomy and reproductive rights, which presents challenges in situations where explicit consent is absent. The Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) guidelines have led to an increase in PSR instances; yet, the ethical reasons against PSR, including concerns about potential exploitation and the welfare of the child, show the complicated issues surrounding this treatment.

Why bananas? Dr Sukhvinder Singh Saggi, director minimal access, GI and bariatric surgery, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi shared that there are trillions of good gut bacteria in our intestines, playing a vital role in immunity, digestion, mental health, endocrine function, and many cancers. Good bacteria are essential for our well-being. Certain foods actively promote the growth of beneficial bacteria, contributing to overall health. One such is banana," said Dr Saggi.

## 'Economic cycle will hold on house-building activities, urbanisation': Anand Shah and Anish Tawakley



Anish Tawakley, Co-Chief Investment Officer (Equity) and Anand Shah, Head (Portfolio Management Services (PMS) and Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)), IICI Prudential Asset Management Company expect continuity in policy under the new government. They believe that as long as the macroeconomic cycle is managed well, there will be stability. In an interview to Hitesh Vyas and Sandeep Singh, Tawakley and Shah said urbanisation and home-building activities are two most important factors that would ensure growth of the Indian economy. Edited Excerpts:

How do you see the market reaction on election results day?

The market on that day was disappointed and worried that there would be big changes in policies. Later, as it became clear that it would still be the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, with Prime Minister as Narendra Modi, the market became comfortable. That is a plausible explanation. But in daily market movement, you can always have plausible explanations and also scepticism about the plausible explanation.

As fund managers, does a coalition government worry you in the medium to long term?

We invest from a top-down perspective in which we take a view of economic cycles, and these cycles are of three to five years. An economic cycle is that in a slump period, you have spare capacity and in a boom period there is a tight capacity utilisation. As you go from a slump to a boom period, profitability increases and volume improves.

There is another way to do top-down investing, which is to take structural calls... there has been a fundamental transformation in public sector units (PSUs) and everything is very different from what it was in the past. That is a valid way to invest but I don't do that. I am only taking a cyclical view of the economy... that the economy is recovering. I am also positive about manufacturing but I feel it is part of the normal growth. If I had taken any such fundamental or structural calls, I would have had to evaluate if they would be sustained or not. I don't think any changes because of the electoral outcome. The economy is recovering. In the next 2-3 years, the economic recovery depends on how fast we build houses and urban infrastructure. As long as these get built, I don't think there will be any change in the next 2-3 years' economic forecast. In an economic recovery, overall monetary and fiscal policies should be counter-cyclical. You could argue that spending could increase. That is pro-cyclical but then it should be offset by tighter monetary policy. So, as long as fiscal and monetary policies work in tandem in a counter-cyclical manner, I am okay. But if fiscal and monetary policies become loose, I would change my stance because then we would be in the 2011 and 2013 kind of situation when both the policies were loose.

How do you see the functioning of the new government?

The electoral outcome has been very significant. I think on an immediate basis, there will not be any changes. Here, at least, we are talking about continuity of policy and the same government. So, we don't see any change as far as the direction of the economy is concerned.

Do you think the government will focus more on economic reforms and improving fundamentals?

Our economy is in decent shape. I am not praying for big bang reforms. If something happens, it will be good and if nothing happens, it will also be okay. The economic cycle has to be managed well. If fiscal policy is not as counter-cyclical as I would like it to be, I would want monetary policy to be more counter-cyclical. As long as the management of the macroeconomic cycle is fine, there will be stability. Whether we grow at 6.5 per cent or 7.1 per cent, it really doesn't matter. It (growth) should neither be (-) 2 per cent in one year nor 2 per cent in a year. Those are the disturbances that really hurt.

Macroeconomic stability was the hallmark over the last decade and as of now, nobody believes it is getting disturbed. The current mandate is for the NDA, which means political stability will also not be disturbed. The

key from here on is that with macroeconomic and political stability, would businesses start growing capacity? If this happens, it will create jobs in urban India. Urbanisation is something which is needed for prosperity and then there is a transfer of wealth to rural India. You will then see spending in the rural areas and the rural consumption will rise. Without the transfer of people from rural to urban areas, it is very difficult to get the rural spending going.

We are basically looking at economic stability. We are not in anticipation of big bang reforms. We are saying as long as the (economic) cycle is managed well, it is okay. We don't think people will stop building houses or stop buying houses. We don't think people who have already committed to setting up cement or steel plants will not set up these plants. Earlier, we had a long slump because our real estate market stopped functioning. Prices rose to a level where affordability became a problem and then prices did not correct. There was no real estate activity and therefore economic activity was low. The root cause of a prolonged slump was a lack of urbanisation and home-building activities. When the economic recovery started 2.5 to 3 years back, it was because of a correction in house prices. People started buying houses and interest rates were cut to the point where mortgages became affordable. As long as urbanisation and home building activities continue, the economic cycle will hold. I find that house prices are shooting up and volumes are not there anymore then that tells me there is a disruption in that market, and it would worry me. The volume of house-building activities is the most important variable. I track four variables – cement consumption, home, power and automobile sales.

How do you see India's valuation?

We publish an equity valuation index every month. There are three zones – green, yellow and red. If the valuation is in the green zone, you are buying the market so cheap that you will make money even if the economy doesn't do well. If it is in the red zone, you are buying so expensive that even if the economy does well, you won't make much of the money. Right now, we are at the top of the yellow zone, which means that if the economy does well and you stay invested for three years, returns will be fine. The overall market valuation is heavily influenced by the large caps. In the small and mid-cap market, we think the risk-return trade-off is not good. Some mid-cap is where the excessive valuation is seen. There are companies which are regarded as god's gift to mankind but are fairly weak.

Is there a valuation concern around the overall small or mid-cap segment or just in specific sectors?

Both can be true. If any small-cap manager says that he has all 50 multi-baggers in his portfolio, they are only in his fantasy. When I invest in small-cap companies, I do not imagine that every small-cap company in my portfolio is going to be a super multi-bagger. That doesn't happen. In most industries, market leaders remain market leaders as long as they do sensible things. It is only when a market leader makes a mess of his business, that somebody else can displace him. So, this kind of fundamental disruption where a new person replaces the market leader is very rare. Also, new industry creation is very rare. Heterogeneity is also there in the small and mid-cap companies because there are many more industries so the opportunities for stock picking will always exist much more in the mid and small-cap segment.

Do you see private sector capex picking up?

I think it has already happened. What is private capex? Key private sector capex includes home building and adding cement, power and steel capacity. I am not saying that I am disappointed with private sector capex. It has come. It is very healthy. A lot of private sector capex will be home building. We always tend to think of capex only in the corporate sector. All consumer goods demand depends on the size of the house.

Why are FIIs pulling out money from India?

The one big variable is the cost of money. It is not that India is a standout, they would have pulled out money from the other emerging markets also over the period when the interest rates have gone up. There would have been a shift of money from equity to fixed income also. I believe that as and when we get the first sign that the US rates have peaked and they might look at cutting interest rates, we will see one bout of money coming into India.

How do you see the interest rate cycle moving?

Our economy is strong enough and I don't see a need for major cuts. Even the US economy is also very strong. In India, the housing market is continuing to do well despite the rates. At this point, I don't see any sign of the economy needing cuts. Rates have to be cut when you feel demand is weakening to a point where there will be excess capacity. We are not there.

## Can you get sick if you exercise too much in summer?

Summer's scorching temperatures can be a double-edged sword for fitness enthusiasts. While staying active is crucial for overall health, pushing yourself too hard in the heat can lead to illness. We asked Dr Rajeev Gupta, Director of Internal Medicine at CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, how to stay safe and get the most out of your summer workouts.

Can overexertion make you sick in summer?

The answer is a resounding yes, according to Dr Gupta. Excessive exercise in summer heat can lead to dehydration, a major risk factor for heat-related illnesses like heat stroke. When you sweat profusely during exercise, your body loses essential fluids and electrolytes, he said. This can cause dizziness, fatigue, muscle cramps, and even impair your cognitive function. In severe cases, dehydration can lead to heat stroke, a life-threatening condition characterised by high body temperature, confusion, and seizures. Weather: Heatwave in Gurugram Studies have even shown a link between excessive physical activity and increased cardiovascular mortality during hot weather, he added.

The risk factors extend beyond dehydration. Overexertion in hot weather can worsen existing cardiovascular and kidney problems, and for individuals with asthma, exercise-induced bronchoconstriction can be exacerbated, according to Dr Gupta. Studies have even shown a link between excessive physical activity and increased cardiovascular mortality during hot weather, he added. So, how can you stay active and healthy with-



out succumbing to summer's heat? Here are Dr Gupta's key recommendations:

Shorter, Moderated Workouts: Aim for 30-45 minute exercise sessions, especially if exercising outdoors. This helps manage your body temperature and reduces the risk of dehydration. Embrace the Early Bird: Schedule your workouts for the cooler morning hours when the sun's intensity is lower. This allows your body to regulate its temperature more efficiently. Hydration is Key: Drink plenty of water before, during, and after your workout. Aim to replace fluids lost through sweat to prevent dehydration. Choose Your Exercises Wisely: Opt for isotonic exercises like brisk walking, jogging, swimming, cycling, or skipping rope. These activities promote cardiovascular health while keeping you cool with moderate exertion. Leave the Powerlifting for Later:

## Woman gave birth to husband's baby 15 months after he died! Find out how



cially concerning the social and psychological effects of growing up without a biological father. Additionally, it is critical to preserve the deceased's autonomy and reproductive rights, which presents challenges in situations where explicit consent is absent. The Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) guidelines have led to an increase in PSR instances; yet, the ethical reasons against PSR, including concerns about potential exploitation and the welfare of the child, show the complicated issues surrounding this treatment.

Why bananas? Dr Sukhvinder Singh Saggi, director minimal access, GI and bariatric surgery, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi shared that there are trillions of good gut bacteria in our intestines, playing a vital role in immunity, digestion, mental health, endocrine function, and many cancers. Good bacteria are essential for our well-being. Certain foods actively promote the growth of beneficial bacteria, contributing to overall health. One such is banana," said Dr Saggi.

Why bananas? Dr Sukhvinder Singh Saggi, director minimal access, GI and bariatric surgery, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi shared that there are trillions of good gut bacteria in our intestines, playing a vital role in immunity, digestion, mental health, endocrine function, and many cancers. Good bacteria are essential for our well-being. Certain foods actively promote the growth of beneficial bacteria, contributing to overall health. One such is banana," said Dr Saggi.

Why bananas? Dr Sukhvinder Singh Saggi, director minimal access, GI and bariatric surgery, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi shared that there are trillions of good gut bacteria in our intestines, playing a vital role in immunity, digestion, mental health, endocrine function, and many cancers. Good bacteria are essential for our well-being. Certain foods actively promote the growth of beneficial bacteria, contributing to overall health. One such is banana," said Dr Saggi.

Ellidy Pullin, an Australian model, defied tragedy by welcoming a baby with her late husband Alex "Chumpy" Pullin, an Olympic snowboarder, 15 months after his sudden passing in 2020. The couple, together for nearly a decade, had been trying to conceive when Alex tragically died at 32 while spearfishing. Speaking on a podcast, 31-year-old Ellidy said, "It was a normal day, we woke up like any other day – the sun was shining, it was a beautiful day," she recalls. "I saw him that morning — he's the happiest, fittest person — and he just never came home that day."

The decorated Winter Olympian tragically lost his life while spearfishing due to a shallow-water blackout, a condition that can occur when breath-holding for extended periods underwater. Determined to fulfil their dream of parenthood, Ellidy, 31, explored the option of posthumous sperm retrieval with the support of loved ones.

According to Dr Priyanka Suhag, Consultant, Dept of Obstetrics & Gynaecology at the CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, post-death sperm retrieval, as the name suggests, involves removing sperm from deceased or brain-dead males. "This procedure needs to be carried out 24-36 hours after death to ensure sperm viability. Many techniques are used, including aspiration with a needle, electroejaculation—a method that stimulates ejaculation—and surgical retrieval from the epididymis or testicles," she explained.

The sperm is cryopreserved, or frozen, for later use after it has been recovered. The most common method of achieving conception using PSR sperm is in vitro fertilization (IVF), in which the sperm fertilizes an egg in a lab environment. Ellidy also went through the same procedure and began IVF treatment six months later. She went through two IVF treatments before giving birth to Minnie Alex Pullin in October 2021. Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), a specialized type of IVF, is injecting a single sperm directly into an egg. This advanced reproductive technology enabled the woman to fulfill her wish of having her late husband's child, Dr Suhag said. Recent years have seen a rise in the use of this technology, primarily due to changes in Indian societal norms and advances in reproductive technology, said Dr Suhag. The ethical value of PSR is still debatable, though.

"Consent, as well as the rights and welfare of all people concerned, are fundamental issues in ethical arguments. Presumptive consent without explicit approval creates serious ethical difficulties, yet presumptive consent from the deceased—either documented or inferred from discussions—is essential," she said. Another crucial concern is the welfare of the child born via PSR, espe-



## The 'arrogant, defiant, rebellious' Malayalam superstar who never hesitated to play his age and won hearts with his fiery dialogue delivery



With his left hand holding one end of his mundu (dhoti) behind his back, seemingly drunk, and smoking a beedi, Appu walks towards his house. Right before entering, he tosses away the stick. On the verandah sits his father, the velichappad (oracle) of the local temple (PJ Antony), who looks at Appu with pity. "Where were you all this time?" he asks. Appu, without meeting his father's eyes, replies, "What's the benefit of just sitting here?" and steps into the house. At a time when most film actors resorted to over-the-top and loud performances, sans subtlety, Edappal Ponnankuzhi Veetil Parameswaran Sukumaran Nair made his cinematic debut through this scene in celebrated author MT Vasudevan Nair's first directorial venture *Nirmalyam* (1973), now considered a classic. Despite the small role, he grabbed many eyeballs, thanks to his brilliant portrayal of a rebellious, unemployed young man vexed with the system and his living conditions. Thus, the film served as a stepping stone for Sukumaran, who later became one of the leading superstars in Malayalam cinema, and his impact is still felt in the industry, albeit indirectly, even 27 years after his passing.

One of the factors that made the superstar trio — Sukumaran, Jayan, and Soman — of Malayalam cinema in the '70s different was that all three of them were ambitious young men who left their secure jobs to pursue acting and found success. While Soman had a career in the Indian Air Force, Jayan served many years in the Indian Navy prior to joining cinema. After completing his master's degree in English literature with a gold medal, Sukumaran, who would have turned 76 on June 10 had he been alive, worked as a college lecturer before venturing into cinema. Eventually, the three became the pillars of the industry. Sukumaran, sukumaran nair, sukumaran actor, Sukumaran movies, sukumaran movies list, sukumaran family, sukumaran death age, sukumaran death date, sukumaran old movies, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Indrajith Sukumaran, Mallika Sukumaran Actor Sukumaran was a superstar in Malayalam cinema in the '70s.

A man of letters with a penchant for literature and sharp political stances that aligned with leftist ideologies, Sukumaran was a no-nonsense person. Unlike others, he did not rush into acting in numerous films after *Nirmalyam*. He waited for the right opportunities, which soon came his way. However, not all of them managed to explore his untapped potential to the fullest. Nonetheless, his performance in *Uttarayanam* raised many eyebrows, particularly due to his brilliant dialogue delivery and ease of speaking English. The year 1977 marked a turning point in his career, as he began receiving more substantial roles, with directors taking full advantage of his exceptional dialogue rendition and unique pronunciation of words. His performance as Dr Venu in *Sankhupushpam* earned Sukumaran significant acclaim. Here, too, his dialogue delivery stood out. While others resorted to the conventional exaggerated style, Sukumaran's delivery was different — natural, to be precise. *Sankhupushpam* marked a major shift in his career, leading to a significant upward trend. The following years saw Sukumaran appearing in a plethora of films, winning the hearts of moviegoers with each of his performances. As much as his serious nature helped his career, it also typecast him as the angry young man of Malayalam cinema, with most of his roles fitting this mould. Though the archetype did catapult him to the position of a superstar in no time, it also attempted to enchain him as an actor. "The main factor that made Sukumaran stand out was his fiery dialogue delivery. It reached a point where fans would be satisfied only if his character was given four additional strong, punchy dialogues, along with space for him to perform. Knowing this, scriptwriters ensured to slip long dialogues into Sukumaran's mouth," producer C Karunakaran wrote in *Mathrubhumi* in 2022, on the occasion of the actor's death anniversary on June 16. Sukumaran, sukumaran nair, sukumaran actor, Sukumaran movies, sukumaran movies list, sukumaran family, sukumaran death age, sukumaran death date, sukumaran old movies, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Indrajith Sukumaran, Mallika Sukumaran Sukumaran with film star Prem Nazir in the movie *Anguram*. (Express archive photo)

As if well aware of this, Sukumaran soon started breaking free from his persona, stepping out of his comfort zone to explore comedy and romance, while also developing a distinctive over-the-top style which later became iconic. Unlike many others, his style wasn't theatrical; instead, he enhanced his own mannerisms, combining them with uniquely paced dialogue delivery and gestures that were both hilarious and crooked. While giving his fans goosebumps with his explosive performances in movies such as *Angakkuri*, *Angaadi*, *Chaakara*, *Ahimsa*, *Koilakkam*, and *Sphodanam*, which all played a key role in cementing his status as a superstar, Sukumaran also took on romantic dramas like *Kochu Kochu Thettukal*, *Mochanam*, and *Ishtamanu Pakshe*, showcasing his versatility. This was further exemplified by his intense portrayal of characters undergoing extreme emotional rollercoasters, as seen in *Manasa Vacha Karmana*, and his effortless handling of comedy in movies like *Kurukkante Kalyanam* and *Kinnaram*. During the peak of his stardom, he also took on outright villainous characters in movies such as *Thuramukham* and *Kazhukan*, further highlighting that he did not belong to the league of conventional superstars. He also won the Kerala State Film Award for Best Actor for his performance in *MT's Bandhanam* (1978). "Arrogant, defiant, and rebellious" were some of the terms people of his era usually used to define Sukumaran. Indeed, he was all three, but his arrogance and defiance were rooted in his refusal to conform to norms and submit to the powerful. In an episode of *Safari TV's Smrithi*, screenwriter John Paul recalled Sukumaran saying, "I am arrogant, yes. I feel pity for the actions of many people around me. If they can take pride in their contemptible behaviour, I certainly have the right to hold my head high and stand with arrogance, knowing that I don't belong to their league. At the same

time, I am more than happy to bow my head in reverence before the exceptional works of legends like Sophocles, Shakespeare, Kalidasa, and others who came before me. I have nothing but respect for those who earned their recognition solely through their merit." Paul further noted that while Sukumaran approached and accepted significant and exceptional works with great respect, he did not hesitate to take on mediocre films for money, fully aware that they offered him nothing but that, highlighting his awareness of his skills and sharp practical knowledge. "Even when he was ostracised by the industry, opposed, and attacked, Sukumaran always held his head high. Even when he was wrong, he was the first to realise it, before anyone else." Sukumaran vs AMMA battle that resulted in an unannounced ban against him

His unyielding nature was so strong that Sukumaran even had run-ins with the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (A.M.M.A). Calling him a "gentle lion," screenwriter Kaloor Dennis noted in *Manorama Online* that in the association's first year, Sukumaran filed a case against A.M.M.A alleging that "its selection process was faulty," which resulted in an unannounced ban against him in the organisation. "When things started getting out of hand, there was a meeting chaired by different film organisations. Sukumaran came amidst a lot of drama and refused to apologise for filing a case against AMMA. Not just that, he also gave a strong speech in English against the workings of AMMA and left," Dennis recounted, adding that the matter was, however, resolved later. Despite his "arrogance" making him some enemies, there was also a faction that admired his defiance, which ultimately led to his appointment as chairman of the Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC). However, with the rise of Mohanlal and Mammootty as the next generation of superstars, coupled with Sukumaran's unwavering nature, the film industry gradually began to sideline him, leading to a decline in his leading roles. Nevertheless, Sukumaran, being the sharp man he was, quickly adapted and enthusiastically embraced supporting roles, paving the way for new actors. Even when assigned to smaller roles, he made sure his performances were memorable and impactful. And he did this effortlessly. From Advocate Jayachandran in *Aavanazhi* and Sahadevan in *Padayani* to Chief Minister KG Ramachandran in *August 1* and Paul Kalloukkan in *Unnikrishnante Adyathe Christmas*, Sukumaran outshone almost all other actors in these projects, with each of his characters becoming iconic. Playing his age came naturally to Sukumaran, a feat that even today's superstars often avoid. Not only did he gracefully accept such roles, but he also expanded his repertoire to include more villainous and comedic characters. While ensuring that his crooked and greedy cop roles of *DySP Devadas* in *The CBI* franchise and *SP Nambiar* in *Adhipan* earned significant and rightful disdain, thanks to the brilliant ways he brought out the grey shades in them, Sukumaran also won hearts with his stellar portrayal of the adorable local goon *Uppukandam Kora* in *Kottayam Kunjachan*. His antagonistic roles in *Pingami* and *CID Unnikrishnan B.A. B.Ed.* also captivated audiences, as his performances deviated significantly from the typical villain template. Sukumaran, sukumaran nair, sukumaran actor, Sukumaran movies, sukumaran movies list, sukumaran family, sukumaran death age, sukumaran death date, sukumaran old movies, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Indrajith Sukumaran, Mallika Sukumaran Sukumaran with actor Balan K Nair in *Kilippattu*. (Express archive photo)

The superstar who turned a college student at the peak of his career but cinema was just one of his many passions and Sukumaran time and again proved this. John Paul recalled that Sukumaran, after winning hundreds of hearts with his many performances, enrolled himself in a college and took an LLB degree while continuing his career as an actor. While reaping gold from cinema, he also did not hesitate to give back to the medium, not just in his capacity as KSFDC chairman. He bankrolled two movies, *Irakal* and *Padayani*, with the first one, helmed by ace filmmaker KG George, receiving acclaim as one of the greatest films to have ever come out of Malayalam. Nonetheless, Sukumaran's principles extended beyond the film industry. In his personal life too, he maintained absolute dignity and did what he believed was right. In 1978, amid much clamour and judgements from many, Sukumaran married the love of his life, Mallika Pillai, who was, at that time, separated from her then-

## Laapataa Ladies' Nitashi Goel says Amitabh Bachchan sat on his knees, read lines with her: 'Dadaji, nanaji jaise lag rahe the'

Nitashi Goel's breakout performance as in *Kiran Rao's Laapataa Ladies* has brought her both instant fame and love. The 16-year-old, who plays Phool Kumari in the film, recently received the IMDb Breakout Star STARMeter Award, and has earlier acted in TV shows and films such as *Peshwa Bajirao*, *Thapki Pyar Ki*, *Karmaphal Daata Shani*, *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story*, *Indu Sarkar*, *Inside Edge* and *Posham Pa*, as a child artiste. The teenage actor, over the years, has worked with some of the biggest celebrities from Bollywood. Recalling an incident where she had the opportunity to work with Amitabh Bachchan, the Madaan actor reminisced how humble Big B was around her and other children on the sets of an ad film they collaborated on.

"When I first came to Mumbai, my first ever ad film which I featured in, was with Amitabh Bachchan sir. Of course, there were other kids, too, but there was also a sequence which featured just him and me. So he came up to me and said, 'Chalo hum lines rehearse karte hain,' Nitashi shared during a recent appearance on *The Ranveer Show*. The young actor then narrated the knelt down and read lines with her. "Woh apne ghoonpon pe baith gaye aur mere saath lines padhne large (Amitabh Bachchan sir knelt and rehearsed the lines with me). I was seated on a chair. He wanted our heights to be the same while going through our lines. I thought he was extremely humble," she shared. What also took Nitashi by surprise was that after a long day of the shoot the senior actor, despite being tired, didn't forget to spend time with child actors post pack-up.

## Vijay Sethupathi: 'Am I a star only if have a six-pack? Aren't we all heroes to our families without it?'



Time and again, Vijay Sethupathi gets asked about him being simple and rustic as opposed to many film stars, who maintain a certain level of fitness. He was asked about the same at a press meet of Maharaja at Hyderabad. The actor quipped, "I keep getting asked this everywhere. I am not as simple as you all say. I don't know what else I have to do. According to me, being handsome or smart has nothing to do with physical appearance."

When asked about many stars having six-packs.

## Panchayat's Pankaj Jha aka Vidhayak says he never spoke against Pankaj Tripathi, Anurag Kashyap: 'They are my friends'

Pankaj Jha, an actor with a career spanning over two decades, is recently winning hearts for his character of Vidhayak in *Panchayat 3*. His dialogues "Go kabutar, kabutar go", and "Gaal nahi toh ghazal suniyeega" is all over the internet. While the actor, who is also an artist who loves to paint, a poet and the author of the book "Agyaat Se Gyaat Tak", is making headlines for his witty performance, he also came in the spotlight for a few statements he allegedly made against actor Pankaj Tripathi and filmmaker Anurag Kashyap. It was reported that the actor in one of his interviews called Anurag Kashyap "liar and spineless", while slammed Pankaj Tripathi for "glamorising" his struggle. However, in a recent conversation with *indianexpress.com*, the Gulal and Mithila Makhaan actor revealed that he never mentioned Tripathi's name and his statements were twisted by publications for some "masala".

Pankaj Jha, who is a follower of Osho, told *indianexpress.com*, "I never mentioned the name of any Tripathi in any of my interviews so far. You can go listen to all of my interviews, you will know I haven't mentioned anybody's name at all. This is very childish thing to do. Why will I go talk all this to anybody? Media always needs masala, I never said anything such, they just made it up. Becoming an actor is not the ultimate achievement. Just like how every actor wants to become a big star, similarly several journalists are also running behind fame. They make up stories to gain attention and recognition." He added, "This news makes no sense. He (Pankaj Tripathi) is a very good friend of mine. We have worked together in films. He is my junior after all. He came much later, I have been in films for a very long time. Similarly, Anurag Kashyap is my friend. He is like a brother to me. We have worked together in films *Gulal* and *Back Friday*. Why will I go around talking ill about them?" "All these news of me calling him spineless are all things twisted and made up. I don't have a control on who will write what, they keep making up stories for their own benefit. Journalists are trusted with a lot of responsibilities, they are expected to inform us with good news, news that can educate, inform, not twist statements for masala," said the Monsoon Wedding actor.

"According to me, a journalist is who translates the news just as it is, without tweaking it for personal benefits. In the old days, my grandfather used to look for a trusted person to carry his message to a person in another village. It is a very responsible job, this person was trusted with a crucial information and was respected for

Sethupathi said, "How many of us here have a six-pack? Let me get the number. Aren't you all heroes at your homes? Aren't you heroes to your wife and kids?" He added, "I am not against it. Suppose, if there is a project where I have to do it, then I will. The filmmakers should give me time for it. But the story should convince you to do that. Just to have a six-pack, I can't do it." Vijay Sethupathi also revealed that he is not against acting in a masala film. "Everything is fine by me. Being an actor, I have to justify the story if I like it. I can't say this is right and this is wrong. I also love to do films with songs with beautiful heroines and I have done it also. They haven't worked. Maybe, my calculations were wrong. I don't have anything against commercial films if I get a good film and a director who has it in him to execute it, I will do it." Only recently, Sethupathi revealed that he will not be acting in an antagonist role because of bad experiences. "Many are bringing me normal villain roles, and they want me to hear the script before saying 'No'. I don't have time to listen to all of them. That's why I stopped listening to such scripts." Vijay Sethupathi will be seen as a barber in *Maharaja*. Directed by Nithilan Swaminathan, the film has Abhirami and Anurag Kashyap in important roles.



carrying the exact message and not making things up in between. And that's how it should be. Let them makeup stories and headlines, I am unbothered," said Pankaj who hails from Bihar's Saharsa. In an interview to *Digital Commentary*, Pankaj was asked about the time when he lost the role of Sultan in *Gangs Of Wasseypur* to Pankaj Tripathi. The interviewer asked, "Do you think this involved any internal politics?", to which Pankaj Jha replied, "I stay unbothered of the politics. If I will be affected by the politics then it will be the victory of the person who is doing the politics. Why will I let that happen? People who do politics are cowards."

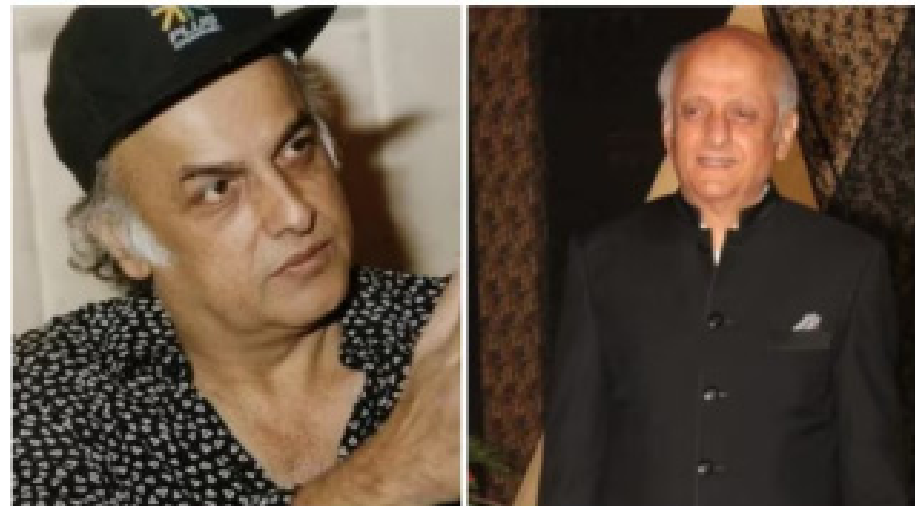
He was next questioned about his bonding with Anurag Kashyap and still missing the role despite having worked with him in *Gulal* and *Black Friday*. To this, Pankaj said, "We are director-maker actors. If a film makes someone an actor, it also makes a director. But in this industry, we have so many cowards and spineless people who can't even keep their opinion before others. Eventually, you understand that directors too are suffering without jobs." Bringing the conversation back to missing his role in *Gangs of Wasseypur*, Pankaj said, "I had gone to Patna for two days for a shoot. During that time, I received a message from Mukesh Chhabra who called me for the role. I told him, 'I will take two days.' By the time I returned, I was told someone else was given that role. At situations like this, especially when you are friends with the people involved, you develop some expectations. At that time, I wasn't aware of the world so much. They must have been upset with me. During the same time, I met a journalist from Patna, because we were from the same place, I ended up talking to him. Later, he published things on his own. But, nothing was true. I still love Anurag Kashyap. I have no complaints."

## 'We were never a family, never united': Niece Ssmilly Suri opens on Mahesh-Mukesh Bhatt spat, reveals she starved and lived on Rs 2 in bank account

Actor Ssmilly Suri, who is related to filmmakers Mahesh Bhatt and Mukesh Bhatt, recently opened up about their spat and how it didn't affect her as they were 'never a family' in her eyes. She also discussed facing financial difficulties due to a lack of work, revealing that she survived on just coffee and bananas and sometimes went hungry as her savings got exhausted.

Speaking to Siddharth Kannan about the infamous spat between Mahesh and Mukesh Bhatt, she said, "It didn't affect me. I was myself an outsider so these things don't affect me. These things were bound to happen. We were never united. It's sad but I don't think we ever were a family. A lot of families go through this. Sibling rivalry and all that but everything is very hidden. Ghar ki baat ghar mein rahne chahiye (Family matters should stay inside the house)."

For 30 years, Mukesh, along with his brother Mahesh, produced films under the production



house, Vishesh Films. However, owing to differences between the brothers, Mukesh officially took over Vishesh Films in 2021. While Mahesh stepped down from the company, Vishesh Films was controlled and run by Mukesh and his children, Sakshi Bhatt and Vishesh Bhatt.

Opening up about facing financial strains, she shared, "I have lived with Rs 2 in the bank. When I went to Singapore to train for pole dancing, I had to buy that pole and it was

\$1000. There were times when I had no money. I was calculating that if I don't eat for four days, I might be able to buy the pole. So, I did that." She added, "A lot of times even in Mumbai during Covid, I had exhausted my savings. I had enough food for my dogs but not for myself. So, I would survive on coffee and have one banana at the end of the day and sleep. This was the time I lost a lot of weight. Mohit (brother, filmmaker Mohit Suri) got very upset and he

transferred some money. There have been days when I have starved. There also have been times when I have gone to the langar and eaten. There is this self-respect that comes into play when you have been treated badly." Ssmilly Suri, who is the sister of Mohit Suri and cousin of Alia Bhatt and Pooja Bhatt, made her Bollywood debut in Mahesh Bhatt's *Kalyug*, which was a box office success. However, the success of her debut film didn't result in more film offers for her.



## Babar Azam's Pakistan will need favour from Team India to qualify for T20 World Cup Super 8 stage



After Pakistan's narrow six-run defeat against India at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, New York on Sunday, the 2022 runners-up, on the brink of a group-stage exit. As things stand, Pakistan are currently in fourth place in Group A with two more games in their hands and to qualify for the Super 8 stage, they would not only need to win their remaining two fixtures against Canada and Ireland by a big margin but will also have to hope that India must thump the USA, and then Ireland to beat the co-hosts of the tournament.

India had defeated Ireland by eight wickets in its opening game at the same ground and leads Group A with four points and a better net run rate than the US team, which also has four points from its wins over Canada and Pakistan. Shaheen and Babar Azam Pakistan's Babar Azam celebrates with Shaheen Shah Afridi after taking the wicket of India's Rishabh Pant. Only two teams from each of the four groups advance to the second stage. So Pakistan needs to win its remaining games against Canada and Ireland and also hope the results of other group games go in its favour to progress to the Super 8s. This is not the first time they have started a big tournament poorly. If history is anything to go by, the calculators are out, and Pakistan's hope are hanging by a thread.

## PCB chief says 'minor surgery' not enough for Babar Azam-led side, board will go for a 'major surgery'

GNS News Agency, June 14

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi didn't mince his words while criticising Babar Azam-led side's six-run loss against arch-rivals India in the T20 World Cup. "It seemed initially that a minor surgery would suffice but following the extremely poor performance against India, it is clear that a major surgery is necessary," Naqvi was quoted as saying by the multiple Pakistani media outlets. "Our performance is at its lowest. Improving the team's performance is our biggest challenge."

Chasing 120-run target, Pakistan could only muster 113 for 7 in New York on Sunday. "It is very disappointing the way we lost to the USA and now this loss to India. We need to now start looking at players beyond those in the team right now," he said. Festive offer India vs Pakistan T20 World Cup India's Virat Kohli, left, walks off the field after losing his wicket during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York, Sunday, June 9, 2024. (AP Photo/Adam Hunger) Naqvi, who took over as chairman in January and later also became the interior minister in the government, made it clear that the PCB had done everything to facilitate the players. "Why the team is not performing is



something everyone is asking. The World Cup is still on. But obviously we will sit down and take a look at everything." The PCB Chairman suggested the board will now be focusing on to build a string team for the Champions Trophy, which Pakistan is schedule to host next year. "We need to prepare the team for the Champions Trophy & it is time to give new talent sitting on the sidelines a chance," he said. Pakistan's rest two matches are against Canada and Ireland. They will have to win the match by heavy margin with the hope that the results of other games will also go their way.

## Ravi Shastri to Rishabh Pant: 'I had tears in my eyes when I read about your accident'

GNS News Agency, June 14

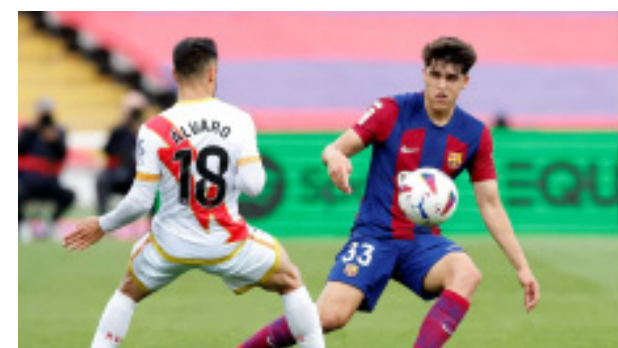
Ravi Shastri was welcomed with a loud cheer in the dressing room after fielding coach T Dilip announced that former India coach will hand out the best fielding award to Rishabh Pant, who plucked three crucial catches and scored a valuable 42 off 31 balls. The moment Ravi Shastri entered the room Team India's vice-captain Hardik Pandya said: "Do line bolna hoga (You have to give a small speech)." Shastri acknowledged and said: "I will."

"I had tears in my eyes when I read about his accident," Shastri said while pointing towards Pant. "It was even worse when I saw him in the hospital. For him to comeback from there and be back in the A zone and playing one of the biggest game India vs Pakistan was so heartwarming," he continued. Rishabh Pant Rishabh Pant takes a catch against Pakistan. (X | Rishabh Pant) Former India coach also lauded Pant's wicketkeeping skills during India's six-run win over Pakistan in New York on Sunday. "Your batting, everybody knew what you are capable of, the X factor you have but your wicketkeeping and the range of movement that you have got so quickly back after the operation is a tribute to how much you have worked hard. "Not just for yourself, it's an inspiration to millions around the globe that from adversity from the jaws of death you can snatch a win as well. Well done,



fantastic keep up the good work and keep going." After bowling India out for 119 in 19 overs, Pakistan was restricted to 113-7 in 20 overs in the low-scoring thriller. "It was a typical India-Pakistan game, where the pendulum swung from one side to other. Its a game that put everyone on the edge not just in the dug out or in the dressing room. In the end it is the team that seizes the big moment, hold their nerves they come out on top," said Shastri. India will take on tournament's co-host USA on Wednesday, while Pakistan will lock horns against Canada on Tuesday.

## Spain announces 26-member squad, Pau Cubarsi, Aleix Garcia left out



GNS News Agency, June 14

Spain announced their final 26-man Euro 2024 squad in a press release on Friday. The European Championship will be held in Germany, beginning on June 14. Spain manager Luis de la Fuente did not name Barcelona's 17-year-old defender Pau Cubarsi, as well as midfielders Marcos Llorente and Aleix Garcia, in his 26-man squad for the European Championship. Cubarsi's consistency and ability to play the ball out of the back made him one of La Liga's standout players this season. However, he was unable to secure his place at Euro 2024, as De la Fuente chose to continue with a more experienced set of center-backs in Robin Le

Normand, Nacho Fernandez, Aymeric Laporte, and Dani Vivian. Ayoze Perez, a former Newcastle United and Leicester City forward who scored and assisted on his international debut at the age of 30 against Andorra on Wednesday, was one of the surprise names in a group of eight attackers heading to Germany. The second surprise was Barcelona's 21-year-old midfielder Fermin Lopez, who made his debut on Wednesday and came off the bench to provide an assist and instill the same excitement in Spain. He was one of the few bright spots in Barcelona's disastrous 2023-24 season, which ended without a trophy. He will join clubmate Pedri, who has been dealing with nagging muscular injuries, and Rodri, who helped City win a record fourth consecutive Premier League title, in a strong midfield trio. Spain, the UEFA Nations League champions from last year, will face Northern Ireland in their final warm-up game on Saturday before beginning their Euros campaign against Croatia in Group B on June 15. They will also face Italy and Albania. Defenders: Dani Carvajal (Real Madrid), Jesus Navas (Sevilla), Aymeric Laporte (Al-Nassr), Nacho Fernandez (Real Madrid), Robin Le Normand (Real Sociedad), Dani Vivian (Athletic Bilbao), Alex Grimaldo (Bayer Leverkusen), Marc Cucurella (Chelsea). Midfielders: Rodrigo (Manchester City), Martin Zubimendi (Real Sociedad), Fabian Ruiz (Paris St Germain), Mikel Merino (Real Sociedad), Pedri (Barcelona).

## 'There is no substance in this team': Mudassar Nazar slams Babar Azam-led Pakistan after their six-run loss against India



GNS News Agency, June 14

Making a scathing attack on Babar Azam-led Pakistan after their six-run loss against India in the ongoing T20 World Cup at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York on Sunday. And so after bowling India out for 119 in 19 overs, Pakistan was restricted to 113 for 7 in 20 overs in the low-scoring thriller. India's six-run win put Pakistan, the 2022 runners-up, on the brink of a group-stage exit. "Better team won. Pakistan came very close because of the nature of the pitch," says Mudassar Nazar on the show 'Caught Behind'.

Nazar lauded team India's spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who returned with the match figures of 3 for 14. Chasing a seemingly meager target of 120, Pakistan was cruising at 80-3 after 14 overs before Bumrah cannoned a ball into the stumps to dismiss Pakistan's top-scorer Mohammad Rizwan for 31. He added the wicket of Iftikhar Ahmed off the last ball of a terrific spell. India vs Pakistan Jasprit Bumrah T20 World Cup India's Jasprit Bumrah, left, celebrates with teammates the dismissal of Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan, right on ground, during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York, Sunday, June 9, 2024. (AP Photo/Adam Hunger) "Jasprit Bumrah was the difference and Pakistan was lucky that he didn't bowl with the new ball," he said.

## Real Madrid will not take part in the Club World Cup: Manager Carlo Ancelotti

GNS News Agency, June 14

Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti has claimed that his side won't be taking part in the revamped Club World Cup as he feels FIFA has undervalued the compensation they would receive for being part of the competition. The new look Club World Cup is expected to take place at the end of the season in the United States. The competition is set to feature 32 teams with Europe's top 12 being invited. Real Madrid, who were recently crowned as the new Champions League winners, will, however, not take up the invite according to Ancelotti. In an interview with Italian daily Il Giornale, the Madrid boss said FIFA can forget about having Los Blancos play in the tournament. Ancelotti claimed that one single Real Madrid game is worth 20 million, the prize offered to them. Ancelotti said like Madrid, many other clubs will also decline the offer. "FIFA can forget it, footballers and clubs will not participate in that tournament," Ancelotti told Italian daily Il Giornale in an interview published on Monday to coincide with his 65th birthday. "A single Real Madrid match is worth 20 million and FIFA wants to give us that amount for the whole cup. Negative. Like us, other clubs will refuse the invitation."

With the European competitions expanded to 36 teams next season, the Club World Cup has come under scrutiny for saturating the football season.

I keep my passion Ancelotti admitted that there is a



lot of pressure on managers at the moment, which also saw Jurgen Klopp step away from Liverpool. However, the Italian said he gets through by keeping his passion alive. "I see nothing particularly new, this has always been our job but the case of (former Liverpool manager Jurgen) Klopp is significant. T

he pressure continues, the burden of responsibility becomes too heavy, obsession takes over," he said. "I keep my passion, that's how I live the match, the game, my job; I've always carried this balance with me. I've overcome moments that weren't always positive; after my experience with Everton I was off the radar, they thought I was finished, I was old."

## Mohammad Rizwan has no game awareness, Babar Azam and Shaheen Shah Afridi are not on talking terms: Wasim Akram

GNS News Agency, June 14

Wasim Akram Former cricketers Wasim Akram of Pakistan, right, and Navjot Singh Sidhu of India walk in the ground ahead of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York. (AP Photo/Adam Hunger) Wasim Akram has lashed out at Pakistan senior cricketers for not having "game awareness" after their T20 World Cup loss against Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York. "They have been playing cricket for 10 years, and I can't teach them. Rizwan has no game awareness," Akram said on Star Sports after the match. Chasing a seemingly meager target of 120, Pakistan was cruising at 80-3 after 14 overs before Bumrah cannoned a ball into the stumps to dismiss Pakistan's top-scorer Mohammad Rizwan for 31.

India vs Pakistan Jasprit Bumrah T20 World Cup India's Jasprit Bumrah, left, celebrates with teammates the dismissal of Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan, right on ground, during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York, Sunday, June 9, 2024. (AP Photo/Adam Hunger) "He should have known that Bumrah was given the ball to take wickets and that the wise thing would have been to play his deliveries cautiously. But Rizwan went for a big shot and lost his wicket," he said. Akram on Iftikhar Ahmed and Fakhar Zaman After bowling India out for 119 in 19 overs, Pakistan was restricted to 113-7 in 20 overs in the low-scoring thriller. India's six-run win put Pakistan, the 2022 runners-up, on the brink of a group-stage exit. Festive offer India's Jasprit Bumrah, right, celebrates the dismissal of Pakistan's Iftikhar Ahmed, left, during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York India's Jasprit Bumrah,



right, celebrates the dismissal of Pakistan's Iftikhar Ahmed, left, during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York. "Iftikhar Ahmed knows one shot on the leg side. He has been a part of the team for years but doesn't know how to bat," said Akram. "I can't go and tell about the game awareness Fakhar Zaman. Pakistani players think that if they don't perform well, the coaches will be sacked, and nothing will happen to them. It is time to keep the coaches and change the entire team." Akram on Babar and Shaheen

Wasim Akram also revealed Babar Azam and Shaheen Shah Afridi are not on talking terms since the change of captaincy. Shaheen and Babar Azam Pakistan's Babar Azam celebrates with Shaheen Shah Afridi after taking the wicket of India's Rishabh Pant (Reuters) "There are players who don't want to talk to each other. This is international cricket, and you play for your country. Make these players sit at home," he said. It was the second-lowest total ever successfully defended at the men's T20 World Cup. It was the lowest total India had ever defended in a full T20 international and helped extend its mark to 7-1 in T20Is against Pakistan.