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Degree colleges introduce new BSc Biomedical science programme to enhance employability

Hyderabad: Aiming to enhance employability of students in the healthcare sector, degree colleges have introduced a new BSc Biomedical science programme this year. This new honours programme will be offered by 15 government and private degree colleges in the State and admissions will be through the Degree Online Services Telangana (DOST) 2024. Accordingly, colleges and pharma industry including Reddy's Laboratories, MSN Laboratories, Pharma DEM Solutions and TGCHS on Friday signed an agreement for introduction of the programme.

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy to Attend Congress Working Committee Meeting in Delhi



GNS News Agency, June 7

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy to Attend Congress Working Committee Meeting in Delhi x Highlights Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is set to travel to Delhi to participate in the Congress party's working committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is set to travel to Delhi to participate in the Congress party's working committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Accompanying CM Revanth will be the state's MPs, as well as AICC senior leaders and CWC special invitees Damodara Rajanarsimha and Challa Vamsichand Reddy. The meeting is expected to address key issues concerning the party's strategy and agenda moving forward.

Traffic diversions in place on June 8-9 in view of 'Fish Prasadam' distribution



GNS News Agency, June 7

Hyderabad: In view of the distribution of Fish Prasadam at Exhibition Ground, Nampally, certain traffic restrictions have been placed in the venue vicinity from 12 am on June 8 to 6 am on June 9. Accordingly, people coming in cars from Nampally side have to park vehicles at Gruha Kalpa, Gagan Vihar and Chandra Vihar and proceed on foot towards Exhibition Ground Gate No. 2. Those coming in buses and vans from M.J. Market side will align their vehicles at Gandhi Bhavan stop or Gruha Kalpa bus stop and enter the premises through Gate No. 2.

All VIP car pass holders coming from M.J. Market side will proceed towards Ajantha Gate, Gandhi Bhavan and take left turn towards Gate No. 1 and CWC Gate towards VIP Entry Gate and the VIP car pass holders coming from the Nampally will take "U" turn at Gandhi Bhavan and take left turn towards Gate No. 1 and CWC Gate towards VIP Entry Gate. Likewise, those coming on two-wheelers from M.J. Market will park their vehicles at Manoranjan Complex parking area. Those coming from Nampally will park their vehicles on the road between Gruha Kalpa to BJP Office. Government vehicles, buses and vans will be parked at MAM Girls Junior College, Nampally. The vehicles coming from the M.J. Market side will be diverted towards Abid Road, GPO Nampally. The vehicles of voluntary organisations carrying food materials with valid passes will be allowed from Gate No. 3. General traffic coming from the M.J. Bridge and Begum Bazaar Chatri and towards Nampally will be diverted at Alaska towards Darusalam, Ek Minar etc.

Narendra Modi all praise for Pawan Kalyan, says latter is a storm

GNS News Agency, June 7

Narendra Modi praised Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan for his contributions to the coalition. Speaking to the gathering, Modi stated, "The person sitting here is not just Pawan, he is storm acknowledging Kalyan's role in the success of the alliance in Andhra Pradesh. He emphasized that the victory in AP reflected the aspirations of the people and reaffirmed his commitment to serving the nation for another term as Prime Minister.

The Members of Parliament from the NDA coalition on Friday proposed Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister for a third term. The proposal was formally given approval by leaders such as Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Nitish Kumar, Chandrababu Naidu, and Pawan Kalyan, among others. A unanimous resolution was passed in support of Modi's leadership.

NDA elects Narendra Modi as its leader for third time

GNS News Agency, June 7

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said he would strive to ensure unanimity in all decisions of his next government and asserted that the NDA is an organic alliance committed to the principle of 'nation first'. Chosen by the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance as its leader to become Prime Minister for the third time, Modi also said the NDA government in the next 10 years will focus on good governance, development, quality of life and minimum interference in the lives of common citizens. He said mutual trust was at the core of this alliance and they were committed to the principle of 'sarv pantha sambhava' (all sects are equal). "If we look at it in terms of numbers in the history of coalitions, this is the strongest coalition government," Modi said, asserting the NDA knows it very well to digest victory. "We have never lost. Our conduct following June 4 shows that we know how to digest victory," the Prime Minister said, and attacked opposition parties. "There were efforts to not acknowledge



this very victory, to cast a 'shadow of defeat' on this victory. But all such efforts remained fruitless... Such things 'die very young', and it happened," Modi said at the meeting of the NDA Parliamentary Party. NDA leaders including N Chandrababu Naidu (TDP), Nitish Kumar (JDU), Eknath Shinde (Shiv Sena), Chirag Paswan (LJP-RV), H D Kumaraswamy (JDS), Ajit Pawar (NCP), Anupriya Patel (Apna Dal-S), Pawan Kalyan (Jana Sena) attended the meeting along with newly elected Lok Sabha members from the ruling alliance. Modi congratulated the victorious NDA leaders and said he must salute the lakhs of ground workers who worked to ensure this victory.

"This is the most suc-

cessful alliance in the history of our country. It has completed three successful terms and is now entering its fourth. The NDA is not a grouping of parties that have come together to get power, it is committed to the principle of 'nation first'," he added. Modi said "INDI alliance" parties have already started saying they came together only for the Lok Sabha polls. Such an approach showed their character, hunger for power, he said. "For me the NDA stands for New India, Developed India, Aspirational India," he said. "Our 10 years were just a trailer. We will work much harder and faster for the development of our country. People know that we will deliver," Modi said. The Prime Minister said he had been missing parliamentary debates and

hoped that the Opposition MPs also contribute to nation-building when they come to Parliament. Taking a dig at the Congress, he said the opposition party could not even touch the 100 seats mark, and that their total seats in the last three LS polls were fewer than the BJP's tally in this election alone. "We are glad to note that for the first time, one of our representatives has emerged victorious in Kerala. We have been having a brilliant performance in Arunachal Pradesh. In Sikkim also, we have almost registered a 'clean sweep'. In Andhra Pradesh, it is a historic victory. The way NDA's vote share has increased in Tamil Nadu clearly shows what is in the offing," Modi said. "In the last 10 years, we worked to make the country touch new heights of success.

A common thing that exists amongst all the leadership pillars of NDA is Good Governance," Modi said. "Whenever given the chance to serve, each and every leader of the NDA has ensured Good Governance across Bharat. The NDA has become synonymous with Good Governance," Modi said.

Naidu sends clear message with praise for PM Modi at NDA meet



GNS News Agency, June 7

New Delhi: In what augurs well for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), Telugu Desam Party President, N Chandrababu Naidu, on Friday expressed satisfaction and happiness over the alliance forming the government at the Centre. At the NDA meeting, he showered praise on Narendra Modi while proposing his name on behalf of the TDP for the post of Prime Minister for a third consecutive term. Endorsing the NDA leadership, Naidu repeatedly expressed his happiness over the alliance forming the government. Naidu, whose party won 16 Lok Sabha seats, called the formation of the NDA government a historic moment and exuded confidence that with collective efforts under PM Modi's leadership, India will become a zero-poverty nation. Naidu, who is set to become the chief minister for a fourth time following the landslide victory of the TDP-led alliance in Andhra Pradesh, termed PM Modi a leader with a vision. "He is the right leader at the right time. It's a very good opportunity for India," said Naidu while hoping that under PM Modi's leadership India will become number one or number two in the world. The TDP chief also lauded PM Modi's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. Stating that he has been in politics for the last four decades and seen many

leaders, the 74-year-old claimed that PM Modi was the only leader who made India proud globally. He said during the last 10 years he took significant initiatives and the country witnessed remarkable progress and transformation. Sitting next to PM Modi, Chandrababu Naidu was seen repeatedly thumping the desk when the leaders of the BJP and the NDA partners lavished praise on him. The TDP President was also seen chatting with the Prime Minister during the meeting. Naidu also referred to PM Modi's election campaign in Andhra Pradesh. He said the rallies by the Prime Minister, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, JP Nadda, Nitin Gadkari and other leaders gave confidence to the people that the Centre is with the state. Naidu has already decided to take oath as the Chief Minister after Narendra Modi's swearing-in as the Prime Minister. The TDP leader told his party MPs on Thursday that he would invite the Prime Minister for the swearing-in, likely to be held on June 12. He is likely to stay in the national Capital to attend the Prime Minister's swearing-in, which is likely to take place on June 9. Naidu will also invite Central ministers and top leaders of the BJP and constituents of the NDA to the event. The invitation to PM Modi and other leaders is seen as a strategic move by Naidu to foster a durable alliance with the NDA. Through this gesture, the TDP chief will be signalling his commitment to nurturing a long-term relationship with the ruling coalition. Naidu's swearing-in ceremony is also likely to send a clear message to the Opposition, particularly the INDIA bloc led by Mallikarjun Kharge. The willingness of Naidu to strengthen his association with the NDA could potentially dampen the Opposition's hopes of wooing the TDP chief to their side. Congress chief Kharge's cautious response, hinting at a wait-and-see approach, was, in fact, indicative of the INDIA bloc's strategy to exploit any potential discontent within the NDA camp.

CBI files supplementary charge sheet against BRS leader Kavitha

GNS News Agency, June 7

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday filed a supplementary charge sheet against Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader, K. Kavitha, in connection with a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam. On May 29, the court issued production warrants for Kavitha and co-accused Chanpreet Singh in the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) money laundering probe in the case.

After Kavitha was produced before Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of Rouse Avenue Court on Monday, the judge extended her custody till July 3. Meanwhile, the judge granted bail to three co-accused persons -- Prince, Damodar and Arvind Singh -- who were not arrested but

Timex, Hyderabad-based Kamal Watches unveil special collection

Hyderabad: US-based watchmaker Timex Group commemorated their partnership with their Hyderabad-based partner Kamal Watches (Aparna Mall) through a special edition watches collection from Timex and Guess. Established in 1969 with its inaugural retail outlet at Abids in Hyderabad, Kamal Watch Company has expanded its presence to over 50 stores across eight cities.

The opening of the new store at Aparna Mall reaffirms Kamal Watch Company's dedication to providing its valued customers with the finest selection of timepieces.

MLC bypolls: Congress leads in Telangana



GNS News Agency, June 7

Hyderabad: Congress candidate Chintapandu Naveen alias Teenmaar Mallanna maintained a lead as the counting of votes in the Telangana Legislative Council Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates' Constituency by-election continued for the third consecutive day on Friday. The process of counting second preference votes, which began on Thursday night, continued on Friday. So far 33 candidates have been eliminated from the contest during the counting of second preference votes. In the second preference vote, Teenmaar Mallanna was ahead with 397 votes against his nearest rival Rakesh Reddy of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), who secured 266 votes. BJP candidate Premender Reddy was in third place with 173 votes. Independent candidate Ashok had polled 69 votes. At the end of the counting of first preference votes, the Congress candidate was leading by 18,565 votes. Mallanna polled 1,22,813 votes while Rakesh Reddy secured 1,04,248 votes. Premender Reddy got 43,313 first-preference votes.

Since Mallanna had not secured 50 per cent of the total votes polled, the second preference votes were taken up for counting. Alleging that some discrepancies occurred during the counting of first preference votes in the third round, the BRS candidate urged the Election Commission to ensure smooth conduct of the counting process in a transparent manner. About 2,800 election staff are working in shifts to count 3,36,013 votes at the counting centre in Nalgonda. In the by-election held on May 27, as many as 72.44 per cent of voters had cast their votes. The vacancy arose after Palla Rajeshwar Reddy of BRS resigned following his election to the Assembly from the Jangaon constituency in the Assembly elections held in November 2023. He was elected as MLC in the election held in 2021. Unlike in the recent Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, ballot papers were used in this by-election due to the preferential voting system.

Don't see myself contesting another Lok Sabha poll, says Shashi Tharoor

GNS News Agency, June 7

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Friday said if the next Lok Sabha polls take place five years down the line, he does not see himself contesting another election for the Lower House as he believes that one needs to know when to step aside for the younger blood to come in. In Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha seat, Tharoor beat Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar by 16,077 votes to register his fourth straight victory from the constituency. Asked if this election was his electoral politics swansong, Tharoor told PTI, "Not electoral politics but certainly Lok Sabha. I think I have done my bit and I honestly feel that at some point, we all need to know when to step aside for younger blood to come in and have a crack at it." "The Lok Sabha is certainly a very important institution. I have done my very best for my constituents and I will continue doing so but there are ways of serving in public life without necessarily having to do it that way. I think if the election is five years from hence, I don't really see myself at that stage wanting to have another go at the Lok Sabha," the former Union minister said. Tharoor added that but for now, there are five years to serve and he is determined to do his best for the people he represents during that time. Asked about the close fight and if the Left made it difficult for him, Tharoor said CPI candidate Pannyan Raveendran took two and a half lakh votes. "But the other is the three areas that are represented by the CPI(M), the CPI candidate came last and the BJP candidate came first. There are some legitimate questions being asked as to how exactly and why exactly that happened. But you know at the end of the day, a victory is a victory and we are savouring it as sweet," Tharoor told PTI. On the BJP winning its first seat in Kerala with actor-politician Suresh Gopi winning the Thrissur seat by a huge margin, Tharoor said it needs to be taken seriously as for the first time one seat has gone to the BJP. "But I must say Suresh Gopi, whom I know well and he supported me in 2009 is not a typical BJP candidate. He went out of his way to declare his secular credentials, appealed overtly to the minority voters in Thrissur particularly to the Christian community, and had this personal quality of being a celebrity candidate, a well regarded movie star as well as the host of the Malayalam edition of the Kaun Banega Crorepati," Tharoor said. "All of these make him a very unusual figure and it may not be that easily replicable elsewhere. Certainly if the BJP is going to abandon its communal message and go for the kind of secular campaign that Gopi led, perhaps they might do better but right now they have just gone from being a 13 per cent party in Kerala to a 16 per cent party in Kerala," Tharoor said.

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English Daily

Delhi's water crisis

THE Supreme Court's directive to Haryana to ensure that the additional water Himachal Pradesh has agreed to supply reaches Delhi underscores the issue of water politics in India. Since HP does not share a border with Delhi, the water must be routed through the Wazirabad Barrage in Haryana. Amid a scorching heatwave, Delhi is grappling with a water crisis. The court's call for an apolitical approach to water distribution highlights the fundamental need for cooperation and rational resource management among states.

Delhi relies heavily on neighbouring states for its water supply, making it vulnerable to inter-state disputes and inefficiencies in water management. The matter has been contentious for years, reflecting deeper systemic issues in water governance. Haryana has frequently been accused of withholding Delhi's fair share, citing its own water needs and lack of clear mechanisms to measure surplus supplies from HP. These disputes escalate during summers, leading to legal battles. The Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB), meant to mediate in such cases, has been criticised for its ineptitude, highlighting the need for a cooperative, transparent approach to water management. The ongoing crisis not only threatens public health but also highlights the necessity for sustainable and equitable water management practices. Meanwhile, the Delhi government also needs to fix its inefficiencies, including water wastage — which is reported to be over a shocking 50 per cent due to leakage, theft and the tanker mafia — and crack down on illegal connections. Simultaneously, efforts must be intensified to spur robust inter-state cooperation and effective implementation of agreements facilitated by bodies like the UYRB. This requires an apolitical, collaborative approach to water management that prioritises the needs of all citizens.

Does inequality lead to growth? | Explained

GNS News Agency, June 7

Rahul Gandhi's statements regarding redistribution — and the polarising rebuttal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi — have brought the topic of inequality to the forefront. Researchers from the Paris School of Economics have shown inequality in modern India to be greater than colonial times.

Several argue that inequality harms democratic processes. Some inequality, others argue, is actually beneficial, since it acts as an incentive to entrepreneurs to start businesses, thereby increasing employment and welfare for others. This view is mistaken, for inequality can have deleterious economic effects as well. Consider one form of inequality, that of concentration of monopoly power amongst capital relative to labour. This can have negative effects on consumption, welfare, and growth. If done properly, wealth taxes and distribution can have positive effects. Billionaires draw their wealth from monopoly. Their business groups are dominant players in their specific market. This allows them to set prices instead of being determined by the market. The extent of mark-ups above the cost of production is determined by their monopoly power. Thus, for any given level of money wages, real wages — which determine purchasing power — are lower in economies with strong monopolies.

These monopoly effects are currently being experienced as the cost-of-living crises affecting the developed economies. The phenomenon of "greedflation", or companies raising prices to increase profit margins in the wake of multiple demand-and-supply shocks due to the pandemic, has been pointed to as contributing to high rates of inflation in the West. Textbook economics shows us that the profit-maximising level of output under a monopoly is less than under a competitive economy, implying a welfare loss. Thus, the presence of monopolies can lead to lower real wages and lower levels of output and investment. Assume that a company decides to set up a new factory. Before the new capital stock is created, wages are paid out to workers to build it. The income of the workers is spent on purchasing goods, which increases the income of goods-sellers, whose increased income results in purchases of other goods, and so on. The total increase in the income of workers and goods-sellers is greater than the initial investment. This process is called the 'multiplier' effect, wherein investment raises incomes by a greater proportion than the initial investment. When companies exercise market power, mark-ups and prices will be higher. Real wages of workers are lower, and they can only purchase lesser items. However, companies, because of higher margins, will enjoy the same amount of profits from the sale of a lesser amount of goods. The increase in income from a given amount of investment will be lesser under monopoly because of reduced consumption power. Thus, investment will have a weaker effect on growth under monopoly while not affecting profits. One can argue that consumption of the rich can help boost growth. While the absolute amount of consumption of the rich is more, they consume a smaller proportion of their incomes. The multiplier process depends on the proportion of consumption from incomes. An unequal economy will put lesser incomes in the hands of those with a greater propensity to consume, leading to weaker expansion in the economy. Some argue that the 'cure' of redistribution can prove more harmful than the disease of inequality by affecting job creation. Entrepreneurs would see reduced incentives for amassing wealth under a high-tax regime, resulting in a scale-back of investment and jobs. One must make a distinction between wealth and profits. Investment occurs under the influence of future profit expectations, while wealth is accumulated past profits. As the Polish economist Michal Kalecki argued, taxes on wealth would not affect investment since it leaves expectations of future profits unchanged. For example, taxing Gautam Adani's wealth will not affect investment since expected profits from airports depends on the demand for air-travel which is independent of the value of his wealth. No doubt, the difficulty in converting profits into wealth may deter some business-owners from undertaking investment. But an economy with high expectations of profit would ensure businesses invest even if wealth is taxed. Redistribution can generate forces to spur growth even if some billionaires pull back on investment. For one, if wealth is redistributed and increases income, the multiplier process would become stronger. Businesses would be more willing to invest where purchasing power is strong. If monopolies are curtailed, then prices would be lower and real wages higher, leading to greater demand.

Civic body suspends town planning officer, his deputy for giving owners time to get structure regularised



GNS News Agency, June 7

The Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC) on Saturday suspended a town planning officer and his deputy, two days after the crime branch arrested them in connection with the gaming zone fire that killed 27 people on May 25. The suspended officers are M D Sagathiya, the RMC town planning officer (TPO), and Mukesh Makwana, a former assistant town planning officer (ATPO), who is now posted as deputy executive engineer in the RMC's waterworks department. Their suspension orders stated that they gave the owners of the TRP gaming zone time to get the structure regularised despite initiating action against them in April 2023.

"We suspended the TPO and an ATPO late on Saturday night," RMC Municipal Commissioner Devang Desai told The Indian Express on Monday. With this, the number of officers suspended by the RMC following the fire accident has increased to five. A day after the devastating fire which ripped through the three-storey tall tin shed, which was 50 metres wide and 60 metres long, the civic body suspended Gautam Joshi, incumbent ATPO for ward no. 10, 11, 12 of the RMC, for alleged dereliction of duty. On the same day, the commissioner suspended Jaydip Chaudhary, an assistant engineer in the RMC's town planning department, and Rohit Vigora, the fire station officer in charge of the RMC's Kalavad Road fire station.

Sagathiya and Makwana were arrested by the Rajkot crime branch late on Thursday following 48-hour questioning concerning the fire at the TRP gaming zone on the Nana Mava Road. One of the co-owners of the facility was among the casualties and nine people were injured in the fire. While seeking remand of the TPO and the ATPO, the crime branch told a local court on Friday

that the officers were aware of the illegal construction of a tin shed to house the indoor gaming facilities at the gaming zone but did not act against it.

The municipal commissioner suspended the two officers under Provision 7(2)(b) of Gujarat Civil Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1971, for having spent more than 48 hours in police custody as well as under Section 56(2)(f) of the Gujarat Provincial Municipal Corporation Act, 1949 for "irresponsibility, carelessness, laxity, dereliction and acts harming reputation of Municipal Corporation". The suspension orders underlined that the two officers initiated action against the TRP gaming zone way back on April 11, 2023, but did not take the proceedings to its logical conclusion and instead offered the owners a leeway to get the tin shed regularised under the Gujarat Regularisation of Unauthorised Development Act (GRUDA), 2022, popularly called Impact Fee Act. Under GRUDA, 2022, the state government afforded a sort of amnesty and provided for the regularisation of certain types of unauthorised constructions against payment of an impact fee. The order suspending Sagathiya, 55, says that he had issued an order on June 8, 2023, ordering the owners of the TRP gaming zone to remove the structure of their gaming facility within seven days, failing which RMC would do the same at the owners' risk and cost. "Despite having issued such an order, it clearly emerges that Sagathiya did not take further action for 11 months and instead afforded owners/occupants time to file an application under provisions of Impact (Fee Act). This proves a big, serious irresponsibility towards, dereliction of, laxity towards and carelessness of duty," the municipal commissioner recorded in his order.

In the order suspending Makwana, the commissioner stated that as then ATPO, Makwana issued a notice to the TRP Game Zone owners on April 11, 2023, for "having started construction without prior approval." Then, on June 8, 2023, the ATPO ordered the owners to remove the structure within seven days, failing which RMC would raze it. However, Makwana did not follow through with the order for 11 months. The suspension order notes and adds that he allowed the owners the leeway to file an application under the Impact Fee Act on May 4 this year. The Rajkot crime branch earlier arrested Vigora and Joshi. All four officers are currently on police remand. The crime branch also arrested four owners and a manager of the TRP gaming zone, and they are also currently on police remand.

Miss family, but want to earn enough for them, say first batch of Indian workers in Israel



Around 2,600 construction workers from India have been in Israel since April as part of a government-to-government agreement between the two nations.

GNS News Agency, June 7

Thousands of kilometres from his village in Haryana's Jind, Gurdeep, 29, has been plastering buildings in Jerusalem for nearly two months now. Despite the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, the pro-Palestinian military outfit, Gurdeep says his family's needs trump his fears. He says he decided to go to Israel for work despite the conflict because his two brothers, who are painters, struggle to find contractual work back home in Nirjan village. In April, the family of nine was forced to survive on a measly Rs 5,000. "I just sent them my savings of Rs 70,000," he says. Last November, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), a non-profit set up by the Ministry of Finance for skill development, received a demand for 10,000 construction workers from Israel's Population and Immigration Authority for four roles — formwork, iron bending, plastering and ceramic tiling. The NSDC has sent around 2,600 workers to Israel from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana so far under a government-to-government (G2G) agreement. At a recent recruitment drive in Telangana, 905 workers were selected to work in Israel. Over the past two months, the workers say they have acclimated to the ongoing conflict.

Indian workers sent to Israel A resident of Nirjan village in Haryana's Jind, Gurdeep's income supports his family of nine, including his wife Poonam. Gurdeep is one of the 43 workers from Haryana who are working in Israel. He and some others landed at Tel Aviv airport on April 2 and left for their five-storey accommodation in Jerusalem, around 50 km away. On April 12, New Delhi advised Indians to not travel to Iran and Israel till further notice "in view of the prevailing situation in the region". On April 14, in retaliation for the attack on its consulate in Damascus, Syria, two weeks earlier, Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles towards Israel. As alarms sounded across Israel, Indian workers say they received a WhatsApp message from the government representative asking them to shelter inside the bunker in their building's basement. Spotting them looking panicky and running on the streets, a neighbour reiterated the representative's advice.

Gurdeep told The Indian Express over telephone, "When the alarms rang on April 14, we knew we had no way out since the airspace was closed. However, NSDC officials contacted some of the workers and told them that we would be evacuated within 24 hours in case of a war." His colleague Sugriv Sahni, 32, from Uttar Pradesh's Deoria, says, "We were terrified initially. Once the alarms stopped ringing, we returned to our flats since we had to report to work the next day." The next day, "as if nothing happened a day before", a vehicle arrived to ferry them to the construction site, 8 km away. Sugriv, who lays ceramic tiles, says they are now accustomed to projectiles getting intercepted by the Iron Dome, the Israel air de-

fence system. "It looks like Diwali from afar. We have heard about the Iron Dome. It makes us feel safe," he says. Though there are news reports on injuries despite the Iron Dome, the workers say they are more concerned about their financial obligations. Sugriv, who has three children, says his daughter, 17, aspires to become a doctor. "She got good grades in Class 10 and is studying biology. Though I miss my family, I want to work here to earn enough for them," he says.

Gurdeep, who has an over five-year contract with his Israel employer, says, "If I work for 12 hours instead of the regular eight-hour shifts daily, I make an extra 52 shekels (Rs 1,100). I managed to save Rs 1 lakh in a month after expenses like rent, transport, mobile phone and WiFi. I have two children to look after. It took a lot for me to come to Israel. I don't plan on going back any time soon." Back in Nirjan village, his wife Poonam, 30, says she became extremely anxious when she heard about the ongoing conflict in Israel. "Though he assured me that he was safe in a bunker in Jerusalem, I was very scared. He would call me at least six times a day just to reassure me," she says. Gurdeep, who has studied till Class 12, adds that he has become used to heavy military presence in Jerusalem. "When we pass the checkpoints, they let us go since we are Indians. I have picked up a little Hebrew too." In Israel for two months now, most workers have fallen into a routine. Sugriv and Gurdeep's building has three flats on each floor. Sugriv, who shares his flat with three others, says they have an attached washroom but the whole floor has a common kitchen. "The building has all the amenities we need and there's a market nearby, where dal, rice and atta are available," Gurdeep says. The workers usually reach their construction site around 6 am and get an hour's break for lunch. If their supervisors are unable to convey instructions in English on site, the workers say they use Google to translate their directions into Hindi. "We have been asked not to use our phones during work hours, so we call home while commuting to and from work. It's usually 9 pm (Israel time) by the time we get done with cooking and household chores daily," Gurdeep says, adding that they get free around 2 pm on Fridays and are on leave on Saturdays. Nearly 100 km away from Jerusalem, Jind resident Basav Ram, 29, arrived in the coastal city of Netanya on May 20 for ceramic tiling and plastering. Netanya is nearly 430 km from Gaza, where Israeli bombing has killed 35,000 people since October 7 last year.

Indian workers sent to Israel Despite apprehensions, Jind resident Basav Ram was forced to seek employment in Netanya, 430 km from Gaza, due to lack of work back home. "After the April 14 attack by Iran, I was unsure about working in Israel. So I called some Indian workers who had come here in April and they assured me the situation was safe. Though I did not want to leave my family, I needed a job desperately," says Basav, who has a bachelor's degree in economics from Kurukshetra University. Speaking on the phone from Netanya, he says, "I wrote many exams in India, like the State Selection Commission, Delhi Police, Haryana Police, etc. Though I cleared the interview round in some cases, I failed to get the job." With his father's agricultural income no longer sufficient for their family of six, including two sisters who got married, Basav started working as a mason, but work was erratic. As he enters a Netanya market to buy groceries for the week ahead, an Arabic song playing loudly in the background, Basav says, "I have heard that Hindi songs are played here. I went to the beach when I first got here. The city is very clean and the crime rate low. Netanya reminds me of Chandigarh." To a question on his take on the Gaza war, a reticent Basav says, "I cannot comment on the issue when Israel is providing for my family but I think the situation is similar to the India-Pakistan tussle." Though he misses home, he plans on staying in Israel for five years. "If not for unemployment, why would someone leave their family behind willingly?" he says.

AC blast triggers fire in garment company, LPG cylinder explodes due to heat



GNS News Agency, June 7

A short circuit in the air conditioning system of a private company here triggered fire on Monday and an LPG cylinder on the building's third floor also exploded while the firefighting operation was on, officials said. No civilian or firefighter suffered any injuries in the episode and both the fires were doused safely, Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Pradeep Kumar Choubey said.

The fire broke out on the ground and second floors of a garment manufacturing company named KM Leasing Limited located in Sector 10 here, he said. "The fire service unit were alerted at 10.03 am about the blaze at a garment and printing company in Sector 10. Taking immediate action on the information, we sent eight vehicles (fire tenders) to the spot," Choubey said.

While the fire was almost almost extinguished, an LPG cylinder on the third floor of the building exploded, spreading fire on that floor. The blaze was, however, extinguished quickly, he added. The CFO said the factory was closed and when its air conditioner was switched on in the morning, a fire broke out due to a short circuit. "We were not informed in time about the presence of LPG cylinder on the third floor of the building. Our firemen had doused the fire (on the lower floors) but due to heat, the LPG cylinder on the third floor exploded," Choubey said. The officer said there were no casualties in the episode. In a similar incident, a fire broke out in an IT company in Noida's Sector 63 on June 1 due to a blast in the indoor unit of an air conditioner, according to officials. An "AC blast" generally refers to an explosion or fire involving an air conditioning (AC) unit. Such incidents can occur due to various factors, often related to electrical or mechanical failures, according to the officials. The officials have also urged the general public to not run their ACs continuously for long durations in order to prevent any mishap in extreme hot weather conditions.

Fire engulfs forest and urban areas across six districts in Jammu and Kashmir

GNS News Agency, June 7

A firefighter tries to extinguish a fire that broke out in a forest area, in Rajouri district. A firefighter tries to extinguish a fire that broke out in a forest area, in Rajouri district. Several fire incidents in the past 24 hours have devastated vast tracts of forest land and urban areas across six districts in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday. No injuries or loss of life occurred during any of the incidents, which were reported in Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Rajouri, Kathua, and Poonch districts, they added. In Poonch district, a blaze, which spread from across the Line of Control (LoC) on Sunday night, triggered multiple mine explosions along the Salotri forward area, the officials said.

Despite the high intensity, the fire was controlled without any loss of life, they added. Reasi district witnessed three separate forest fires in the Ardhkuwari, Bidda, and Mardi areas, which have now been extinguished, they said. The pilgrimage to the Mata Vaishno Devi cave shrine was briefly halted due to the fire incident in the Lambi Keri-Ardhkuwari belt. In Rajouri district, extensive forest areas such as Dungi, Grati, Bungaie, Tatapani, Kalakote, and Dhanore were affected in fire, resulting in significant forest damage, the officials said. A school shed in the Jallas area also suffered damage. Fire and emergency services responded promptly, mobilising teams to contain and extinguish the blazes, they said. In Kathua district, forest fires were reported in the Ramkote and Basholi areas. Massive flames also erupted in the Ramnagar forest division of Udhampur district, which has since been controlled without any casualties, they said. A large fire erupted in the Ragoora forest area near the outskirts of Jammu city, spreading across vast tracts of land. The fire has been doused, they said. No casualties have been reported so far.

El Niño may flip to La Niña later this year, says WMO

GNS News Agency, June 7

New Delhi: The 2023/24 El Niño event, which drove record-breaking temperatures and extreme weather around the world, is predicted to transition to La Niña conditions later this year, according to a new update from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The world experienced the warmest April ever and the eleventh consecutive month of record-high temperatures. Sea surface temperatures have been record-high for the past 13 months, according to the WMO. The WMO said this is happening due to the naturally occurring El Niño — unusual warming of waters in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean — and the additional energy trapped in the atmosphere and ocean by greenhouse gases from human activities. Amid a prevailing but weakening El Niño, millions of people in South Asia, including India and Pakistan, endured brutal heat in April and May. The latest forecasts from the WMO Global Producing Centres of Long-Range Forecasts give equal chances (50 per cent) of either neutral conditions or a transition to La Niña during June-August.

'Land for jobs' probe: Delhi High Court seeks ED response to Amit Katyal's interim bail plea, calls for medical status report



GNS News Agency, June 7

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought the Enforcement Directorate's stand on businessman Amit Katyal's interim bail plea on medical grounds in the money-laundering case linked to the alleged railway land-for-jobs scam. A single-judge bench of Justice Vikas Mahajan also asked the superintendent of Tihar Jail to file a medical status report with respect to Katyal along with his diet chart. The bench also asked the ED to file a status report. The matter is next listed for June 7. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Katyal, argued before the high court that Katyal had undergone bariatric surgery and had lost 10 kg and required "immediate attention".

Citing an urgency in the matter, Sibal said, "When you undergo this surgery you have to have a special diet and have to go for regular check-ups. He (Katyal) is in custody in Tihar. He cannot survive like this. He was supposed to go to Medanta Hospital for a check-up on May

7, but he wasn't allowed to go." On April 30, while declining to extend the interim bail of Katyal, the trial court, however, expressed displeasure with the ED for invoking a stringent provision of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act to record the statement of a doctor consulted by Katyal. The court questioned the manner in which the ED had dealt with "an ordinary citizen" unconnected to the proceeds of crime in the case.

"There was absolutely no justification for the ED to subject an ordinary citizen to the stringent process of Section 50 without an iota of allegation of nexus of the doctors with the allegations of money laundering against accused Amit Katyal," Special Judge Vishal Gogne of the Rouse Avenue Courts had said. "If there are any lessons to be learnt from history, it would be observed that 'strong' leaders, laws and agencies generally come back to bite the very citizens they vow to protect. After the masculinity of the law has been expressed against the stated targets, such laws are invariably alleged to have been employed against the average citizens," the trial court had further observed. Katyal was arrested in November last year by the ED. The case stems from a CBI probe into allegations that people were given jobs in the Indian Railways in return for land parcels gifted or sold at cheap rates to the family and associates of Lalu Prasad when he was Railways minister. Katyal and his A K Infosystems Private Limited had been under the scanner of the CBI and the ED in connection with the alleged land-for-jobs scam for a long time. The ED has found during its investigation that A K Infosystems had received a land parcel from a relative of a candidate who was selected as a Group-D substitute in the Railways. In 2014, Katyal allegedly handed over his company to the family members of Lalu Prasad Yadav.

Nagpur court grants life imprisonment to ex-BrahMos engineer for spying for Pakistan's ISI



GNS News Agency, June 7

A court in Nagpur on Monday granted life imprisonment to Nishant Pradeepkumar Agrawal, a former engineer of BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd, who was arrested in 2018 for allegedly spying for Pakistan's ISI. While awarding life imprisonment, district and additional sessions judge M V Deshpande held Agrawal guilty and convicted him under Section 235 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), for an offence punishable under Section 66 (f) of the IT Act, and various sections of the Official Secrets Act (OSA), 1923.

Agrawal, a senior systems engineer with BrahMos Aerospace, was arrested when he was 27 in October 2018 on espionage charges in a joint operation carried out by the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and Military Intelligence (MI). The agencies were investigat-

ing whether Agrawal leaked sensitive data about BrahMos to his "handler," who was suspected to be from Pakistan. He was booked under various stringent provisions of the OSA and the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

As per the prosecution, it was a case of honey trap and cyber activities by allurement to trap officers in illegal espionage activity. During the probe, ATS came across two more Facebook accounts that had women in their profile pictures and who were found to be in touch with Agrawal. In April last year, the Bombay High Court's Nagpur bench granted bail to Agrawal observing that "prima facie there is no material to suggest that the alleged act was committed by the applicant with intention, and to secure the presence of the applicant at the trial, certain stringent conditions can be imposed".

The High Court bench of Justice Anil S Kilor noted that most of the witnesses did not turn to give evidence and only six had been examined so far, and 11 more were yet to be examined as per the prosecution. Justice Kilor also noted during the trial, taking place in Maharashtra, every hearing was adjourned by a month as the witnesses were from Uttar Pradesh. The court added Agrawal was entitled to bail as the trial would not commence shortly. BrahMos Aerospace is responsible for designing, developing, and marketing supersonic cruise missile BrahMos, a joint venture between India's Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's Military Industrial Consortium, NPO Mashinostroyeniya.

National Green Tribunal fines Manali municipal council Rs 4.6 crore for poor waste management

GNS News Agency, June 7

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has slapped a Rs 4.6-crore fine on Himachal Pradesh's Manali municipal council for failing to properly manage waste at a dumping site in Rangri village after a petition said the garbage affected two nearby schools and a village. The tribunal's May 29 order directed the municipal council to pay the fine within three months and deposit it with the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board.

At a garbage processing plant in Rangri, which the council manages through a private company, more garbage than its daily capacity of approximately 20 tonnes is being dumped. Sources said that garbage collected from Kullu and nearby Lahaul and Spiti district was also dumped there. Many times, especially during the peak tourism season, the garbage dump has reached up to 80 tonnes a day. The tribunal said the fine would be used for compensating the damage caused to the environment as well as for its rejuvenation and restoration. When contacted, Karun Bharmoria, executive officer of the municipal council, told The Indian Express, "The NGT passed the order on May 29. We have received a copy of the judgment. We informed the tribunal that we are managing the garbage of not only Manali but also of Kullu and Lahaul and Spiti district. Indeed, the waste from Manali, Kullu and Lahaul & Spiti always goes beyond the limit of the garbage processing plant. We are working on solutions." The tribunal's action follows a written complaint from a petitioner about pollution affecting two nearby



schools and a local village due to unscientific dumping practices. On May 25, 2022, the head of Shalen gram panchayat in Manali, Paldan Phunchog, wrote that local residents were suffering from garbage scattered over a 2km area, which caused health problems and created "hellish" living conditions. On January 3, the state pollution control board found several violations at the solid waste treatment facility in Rangri. Its inspection revealed heaps of long-standing waste along with fresh mixed waste that required scientific processing. The tribunal has also directed Himachal Pradesh to form a joint committee comprising the Kullu district magistrate and the member secretaries of the central and state pollution control boards to ensure proper segregation and management of garbage and prepare an environmental rejuvenation plan within six months.

SC junks plea against circular saying 'mere signature is enough' for postal voters' Form 13A

GNS News Agency, June 7

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a petition filed by the YSR Congress Party challenging an Election Commission of India circular which it said had done away with the requirement that Form 13A, which needs to be submitted by postal voters, should be attested, stamped and verified. "In the facts and circumstances of this case, we do not find any merit in this petition", a bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Sandeep Mehta said dismissing the plea challenging an Andhra Pradesh High Court order that rejected the YSRCP petition on June 1.

Appearing for the petitioner, Senior Advocate A M Singhvi said that postal ballots have become critical over the years and sometimes even determine the winner. He said that the Election Commission's May 30 circular had done away with the requirement that Form 13A should be attested, stamped and verified. "Now circular says mere signature is enough. Anyone can give a squiggle. Circular says this squiggle is enough," Singhvi submitted. "The impugned circular comes. It says the rules which have been prevalent in accepting or looking at postal ballots, those rules are waived or changed. This is only for Andhra Pradesh."

Acknowledging that the counting is to happen on Tuesday, Singhvi added that when the ballots are opened, it has to be with regard to the existing rules, not the circular. "It is possible that all postal ballots have more than a signature, that they have a stamp, an attestation.



They are valid. If there are 10 of them which do not have a stamp or attestation, [they] will be excluded because the rules say so," he added. Singhvi said the high court had refused to intervene saying the election process had already started and that the way ahead would be an election petition. "There is no point in saying, after the postal ballots have been opened, the polling officer has accepted a squiggle, then it will be challenged in an election petition," he argued. The apex court, however, seemed to agree with the high court's reasoning. Justice Kumar said, "Accepting all your arguments, ultimately it boils down to what? Improper acceptance of the ballots or improper rejection. In that event naturally Section 100D (Of The Representation of The People Act 1951) will step in."

Amid Delhi water crisis, Supreme Court directs for urgent meeting of Upper Yamuna

GNS News Agency, June 7 People collect drinking water from a tanker of Delhi Jal Board during a hot summer day, at a slum in Geeta Colony area, in East Delhi, Sunday, June 2, 2024. (PTI Photo) People collect drinking water from a tanker of Delhi Jal Board during a hot summer day, at a slum in Geeta Colony area, in East Delhi, Sunday, June 2, 2024. (PTI Photo) Hearing a plea by the Delhi government highlighting water woes in the national capital, the Supreme Court on Monday called for an emergency meeting of the Upper Yamuna River Board to be held to deal with the issue. A bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and K V Viswanathan directed the meeting to be held on June 5 and a status report be submitted to it by June 6. Initially, the bench sought to know why there couldn't be a meeting of all stakeholders to address the issue. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta informed the bench it had already been taken note and the Board and Himachal Pradesh too had been asked to join as a party. The bench asked the Solicitor General if the meeting could be held on June 4 but Mehta said it may be difficult and suggested June 5 instead. Appearing for

the Delhi government, Senior Advocate A M Singhvi pointed to the extreme heat wave and the consequent shortage of water. Singhvi said the level of water at the Wazirabad plant has to be maintained and that the Haryana government had been requested for help but no favourable decision had come forth yet. Mehta said that for every 100 litres of water that comes into Delhi, only 52.25 litres are lost due to industry, water mafia etc and that the Delhi government will have to plug the leakages. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government said in its plea that the record-high temperatures and heatwave in Delhi, which has resulted in maximum temperature rising to around 50 degree Celsius at some places, have caused an extraordinary and excessive surge in water demand in the city. This has led to a water shortage in the National Capital Territory (NCT) and many parts are experiencing frequent supply cuts which has disrupted the daily life of ordinary residents. The Delhi Government said though it has taken all administrative measures to ensure optimisation.

Outcome of Pawar clan clash in Baramati to decide political future of Supriya Sule, Ajit Pawar

GNS News Agency, June 7

In the power struggle between Sharad Pawar and his nephew Ajit Pawar to prove their dominance, all eyes will be on the outcome of the Baramati Lok Sabha constituency on Tuesday. The result will decide the fate of three-time sitting MP and Sharad Pawar's daughter, Supriya Sule, as she faces the toughest election in her career against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's wife, Sunetra Pawar.

The Baramati Lok Sabha constituency has been a Pawar bastion for decades since Pawar Sr entered politics. He represented the constituency six times before handing it over to Sule in 2009. However, the split within the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) last year after Ajit Pawar parted ways with his uncle led to this high-voltage clash within the Pawar family in Baramati. NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) is part of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance in Maharashtra, while Ajit Pawar's rival faction is part of the ruling Mahayuti alliance, which also includes the BJP and the Shiv Sena faction belonging to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Baramati voted on May 7 in the third phase of Lok Sabha elections 2024.

"It is difficult to predict the outcome of Baramati considering the contest within the Pawar family. Voters have been very secretive in disclosing their vote in the prevailing political situation in the constituency. Whatever might be the result, it is certain to have an impact on the political career of all Pawar's active in electoral politics," said Prakash Pawar, political expert and former head of the political science department at Shivaji University. If Sule wins, he said, the political outcome should be seen as more of goodwill and sympathy for Pawar Sr. "Both Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar had political enemies in the constituency but those of Pawar Sr had turned old and unlikely to have an adverse impact on the performance of his daughter Sule. The political enemies of Ajit Pawar are comparatively young and still having influence on voters which could be the reason for the defeat of his wife," he said. Meanwhile, Sunetra Pawar personally has nothing to lose but her loss will have an impact



on the political career of her husband Ajit at the state and national level, Prakash Pawar said, "If Sunetra Pawar wins it will be seen as a victory of Ajit over Pawar Sr and would establish his leadership in Baramati, if not the state. It should not be seen as an end of career for Sule as the Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray and Congress will stand by her and can get her in Rajya Sabha." "The Congress has respect for Pawar Sr that is evident from the fact that senior leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, treat the veteran leader. Moreover, it was Pawar Sr who has kept alive the values of Congress in the state after former chief minister Yashwantrao Chavan," Prakash Pawar said, adding that the Congress would remain close with Pawar Sr. Political observer Sunil Kunjir, who is also a native of Baramati, said this contest was never between Sunetra and Sule but between Ajit and Pawar Sr. Thus, its result will have a lasting impact on the political career of members of the Pawar family. If Sule wins, then it would be a strong message to Ajit Pawar that his leadership has not been accepted in Baramati, and he will have to work from scratch to establish his hold. It will also mean that if a leader can't win his home constituency, then how will he lead a party; so it is a must-win situation for Ajit," he said. Kunjir said, "Pawar Sr had a long political career, so nothing will affect his future, but the Baramati result will affect the career of his daughter Sule. The NCP led by Pawar Sr and the Congress follow the same ideology, so it might lead to the merger of the two parties."

Arun Pillai moves interim bail on medical grounds, Delhi HC seeks ED's stand

GNS News Agency, June 7

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought the stand of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the plea of Hyderabad businessman Arun Ramchandran Pillai seeking interim bail on medical grounds in connection with the agency's probe into the now-scrapped excise police. A single-judge bench of Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma issued notice to the agency on Pillai's plea seeking interim bail for eight weeks and listed the matter on June 10. The HC also asked the ED to file its reply to the application, asking the agency to verify the medical documents submitted by Pillai. Appearing for Pillai, advocate Nitesh Rana submitted that Pillai is in severe pain, and his condition has not improved. Pillai was arrested by the ED on March 6, 2023. Pillai, 51, in his plea, has said that he has been suffering from a history of lower back aches for the past eight years.

The plea submits that during Pillai's incarceration, he has been having "severe pain" in his lower back "causing radiating pain to the legs", and "upper back pain radiating to his front chest muscles, which is affecting his day-to-day chores". It states that after he was taken to Max Hospital on April 25 and May 1 this year, Pillai underwent several tests including an MRI which revealed that there is a "multilevel degenerative disc disease". The applicant added that the consulting doctor has prescribed "tens laser" physiotherapy sessions.

"Taking into account the age of the Applicant (Pillai), the prolonged courses of painkillers prescribed to him, the family of the applicant has taken an opinion from Ayurvedic Doctors at renowned Pratheeksha Ayurvedic Clinic, Palakkad, Kerala to explore options other than allopathy that could provide the Applicant relief. The doctors at Pratheeksha Ayurvedic Clinic have opined that the Applicant needs to be admitted to the hospital to undergo 21 days 'Panchakarma Therapy' with further rest of 21 days," the plea submits.



The Delhi High Court on Monday sought the stand of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the plea of Hyderabad businessman Arun Ramchandran Pillai seeking interim bail on medical grounds in connection with the agency's probe into the now-scrapped excise police.

Pillai has said that he wishes to undergo a 21-day Panchakarma therapy at the clinic in Kerala with the "prescribed after treatment of 21 days" to "sustainably heal his back pain". The plea states that despite multiple courses of medications prescribed to Pillai, the pain has been recurring and has led to him taking painkillers for long periods which causes multiple side effects on patients. "Taking the above factors into account and the level of degeneration of the spine at 50 years of age, the Applicant and his family seeks to avail Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatment since Ayurveda has been a more effective course of treatment for the Applicant in the past and is known to have less side effects," the plea states. It adds that his back condition is getting worse, and he faces the risk of permanent damage to his back due to "improper treatment".

Mexico elects Claudia Sheinbaum as its first woman president



GNS News Agency, June 7

Mexico's projected presidential winner Claudia Sheinbaum will become the first woman President in the country's 200-year history. The climate scientist and former Mexico City mayor said Sunday night that her two competitors had called her and conceded her victory. "I will become the first woman president of Mexico," Ms. Sheinbaum said with a smile, speaking at a downtown hotel shortly after electoral authorities announced a statistical sample showed she held an irreversible lead. "I don't make it alone. We've all made it, with our heroines who gave us our homeland, with our mothers, our daughters and our granddaughters."

"We have demonstrated that Mexico is a democratic country with peaceful elections," she said. The National Electoral Institute's president said Ms. Sheinbaum had between 58.3% and 60.7% of the vote, according to a statistical sample. Opposition candidate Xóchitl Gálvez had between 26.6% and 28.6% of the vote and Jorge Álvarez Máynez had between 9.9% and 10.8% of the vote. The preliminary count, which started off very slowly, put Ms. Sheinbaum 27 points ahead of Ms. Gálvez with 42% of polling place tallies counted shortly after her victory speech.

The governing party candidate campaigned on continuing the political course set over the last six years by her political mentor President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. His anointed successor, the 61-year-old Ms. Sheinbaum led the campaign wire-to-wire despite a spirited challenge from Gálvez. This was the first time in Mexico that the two main opponents were women. Shortly before electoral authorities' announcement, Ms. Gálvez wrote on the social platform X, "The votes are there. Don't let them hide them." Ms. Sheinbaum is unlikely to enjoy the kind of unquestioning devotion that López Obrador has enjoyed. Both belong to the governing Morena party. In Mexico City's main colonial-era main plaza, the Zocalo, Ms. Sheinbaum's lead did not initially draw the kind of cheering, jubilant crowds that greeted López Obrador's victory in 2018.

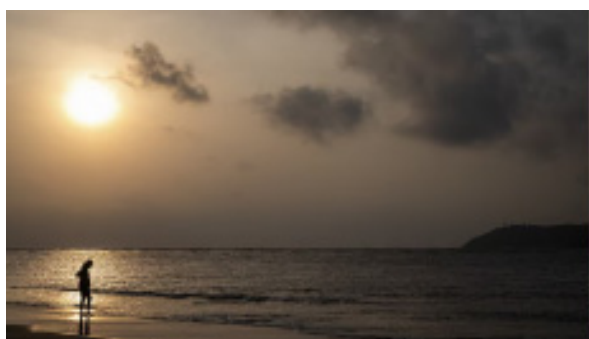
Ditch Maldives, head for Indian beaches, Israel tells citizens after entry ban

GNS News Agency, June 7

The Embassy of Israel has taken a unique approach after the Maldives banned Israeli passport holders from entering the country, promoting tourism in India as an alternative. The Maldives, famous for its idyllic beaches, just banned Israelis from visiting in response to the conflict in Gaza. In response, Israel advised its citizens to avoid travelling to the island nation and recommended that those already in the country consider leaving.

In the midst of these tensions, the Israeli Embassy's X page is blowing up with gorgeous photographs of Indian beaches, from Goa to Kerala. They're urging their citizens to ditch the Maldives and head to beach destinations in India instead. "Since the Maldives is no longer welcoming Israelis, here are some beautiful and amazing Indian beaches where Israeli tourists are warmly welcomed and treated with utmost hospitality," the Embassy of Israel tweeted on Monday.

In what may or may not have been a deliberate bid to rub it in, the Israeli Embassy also posted a photo of a beach in Lakshadweep. The archipelago in the Arabian Sea is something of a sore spot for Maldivians, as exhibited by the ministers who made derogatory remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he posted photos of himself snorkelling in Lakshadweep and enjoying its beaches. These remarks were seen as racist and caused a big furore in India, including calls to boycott the Maldives



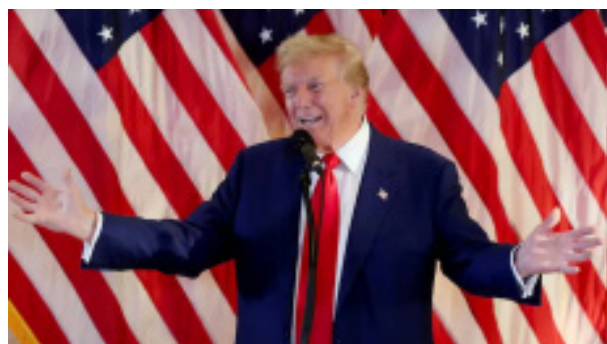
as a tourist destination. The Maldives relies heavily on tourism, so this Israeli ban could sting. It's not all smooth sailing for them right now after Indian tourists dropped to a record low. Moreover, official data shows the number of Israelis visiting the Maldives this year is down 88 per cent compared to last year. The decision to ban Israeli passport holders from entering the country appears to have been triggered by public anger over the ongoing conflict in Gaza and growing pressure from opposition parties. President Mohamed Muizzu has established a subcommittee to oversee the implementation of the ban. Additionally, a national fundraising campaign called "Maldivians in Solidarity with Palestine" has been launched to support the Palestinian people.

Donald Trump joins TikTok, gains 3 million followers in a day

GNS News Agency, June 7

The decision to join the platform on Saturday (June 1) could help the former US president reach younger voters in his third bid for the White House. Republican presidential candidate and former US president Donald Trump gestures as he speaks during a press conference at Trump Tower in New York City on May 31. (Photo: Reuters)

Roughly a day since joining TikTok, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump had attracted three million followers on the short video social media platform that he tried to ban as president on national security grounds. The decision to join the platform on Saturday (June 1) could help the former president reach younger voters in his third bid for the White House. He is in a close race with Democratic incumbent Joe Biden ahead of the November 5 presidential election. Biden's election campaign is already on TikTok, with over 340,000 followers, although Biden has signed a bill that would ban the app, which is used by 170 million Americans, if its Chinese owner ByteDance fails to divest it. Trump posted a launch video on his account, which has the address @realdonaldtrump, on Saturday night. The video, which has more than 56 million views, showed Trump greeting fans at an Ultimate Fighting Championship fight in Newark, New Jersey. Trump said a statement he would "use every tool available to speak directly with the American people." ByteDance is challenging in courts the law that requires it to sell TikTok by next January or face a ban. The White House says it wants to see Chinese-based ownership ended on national security grounds. TikTok



has argued it will not share US user data with the Chinese government and that it has taken substantial measures to protect the privacy of its users. Trump's attempt to ban TikTok in 2020 when he was president was blocked by the courts. He said in March that the platform was a national security threat but also that a ban on it would hurt some young people and only strengthen Meta Platforms' Facebook, which he has strongly criticised. Trump already has an active social media presence with more than 87 million followers on X and over 7 million followers on his own platform, Truth Social, where he posts almost daily. A US appeals court last week set a fast-track schedule to consider the legal challenges to the new law. The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ordered the case set for oral arguments in September after TikTok, ByteDance and a group of TikTok content creators joined with the Justice Department earlier this month in asking the court for a quick schedule.



Mandela's party slumped to just over 40 percent from the 57 percent it won in 2019. The new parliament is to meet within two weeks and its first task will be to elect a president to form a new government. But, with no outright winner for the first time since the advent of South Africa's post-apartheid democracy, the ANC will need outside support to secure Ramaphosa's re-election.

1 dead in US mass shooting, cops seek help from locals to track accused



GNS News Agency, June 7

The shooting killed a 27-year-old man, whose identity was not immediately released. The wounded ranged in age from 19 to 43, Police Chief Brian Harding said. Drug-addict accused of killing grandpa for Rs 5,000 acquitted by Mumbai court The mayor and police chief of Akron called on witnesses to come forward with information about a mass shooting in the Ohio city that killed one person and wounded 24 others, some critically, just after midnight Sunday. "This was a tragic incident which impacts our entire community", Mayor Shammus Malik said "The sheer number of victims is shocking and disconcerting. I want to be very clear: Anyone who was involved in last night's shooting will be held accountable to the full

est extent of the law".

The shooting killed a 27-year-old man, whose identity was not immediately released. The wounded ranged in age from 19 to 43, Police Chief Brian Harding said. There were 25 victims, including the man who died, and at least two wounded victims remained in critical condition. Others had non-life-threatening injuries, Akron police Captain Michael Miller said Sunday. No arrests were immediately reported and police asked anyone with information to call detectives. Rewards totalling \$22,500 for information leading to the arrest of a suspect were offered by three agencies \$5,000 from Summit County Crime Stoppers, \$7,500 from the US Marshal's Service and up to \$10,000 from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Akron officials said. "We have to hold people accountable when they commit violence. That's the only way to keep our communities safe", Malik said. Investigators found two handguns and more than 35 bullet shell casings at the scene of the outdoor party where the shooting took place, Harding said. Local hospitals told emergency dispatchers soon afterward that multiple victims with gunshot wounds were arriving in their emergency departments, police said. There was a street party in the area before the gunfire broke out and an unnamed witness at the scene said hundreds of people were enjoying themselves with everyone in white T-shirts and "women on top of vehicles dancing", WEWS-TV reported.

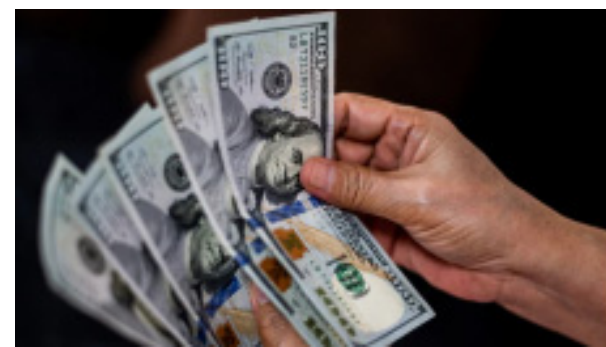
US couple finds safe with \$100,000 while fishing, cops let them keep it

GNS News Agency, June 7

A New York couple, who went 'magnet fishing', found a safe containing \$100,000 in cash from a lake in the city. The police allowed them to keep the safe after its owner could not be traced.

A couple in the US discovered a safe containing an estimated \$100,000 (approx Rs 83.08 lakh) in cash and pulled it up from a lake in New York. With no ID of the safe's owner found, the police allowed the couple to keep the secured box containing the money. James Kane and Barbie Agostini, who are 'magnet fishing' enthusiasts, said they threw a rope with a magnet into a lake in Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens and found the safe, a BBC News report said.

When the safe was opened, they found \$100 in currency notes that were damaged due to water. The couple told NY1 police that the safe was not linked to any crime. "We have found plenty of safes before. And then I saw the numbers and thought: 'This is not possible,'" Kane said. "We pulled it out, and it was big stacks of freaking hundreds. These are thick stacks - they're soaking wet, they're pretty much destroyed," he added. Magnet fishing is a hobby where individuals search for ferromagnetic objects in water bodies using a strong magnet. The prac-



ice involves attaching the magnet to a durable rope and casting it into bodies of water, such as lakes, rivers and canals, to retrieve submerged metal objects.

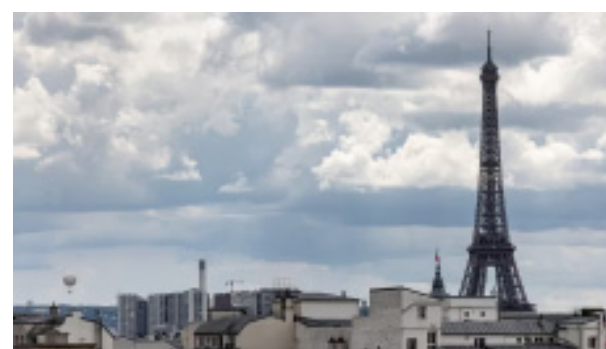
These objects can range from discarded bicycles and car parts to firearms, ammunition, and even historical artefacts like bombs and grenades. Kane and Agostini said they began magnet fishing during the Covid-19 pandemic. They said they earlier found World War II-era grenades, nineteenth-century guns and a full-size motorcycle, BBC reported.

Coffins draped in French flag found near Eiffel Tower, 3 arrested

GNS News Agency, June 7

Five coffins, draped in French flags with the inscription 'French soldiers in Ukraine', were found near the Eiffel Tower in Paris, after which the police arrested three people, sources close to the case said. Police have arrested three people after five coffins were found near the Eiffel Tower in Paris, draped in French flags with the inscription "French soldiers in Ukraine", sources close to the case said Sunday. The incident is being investigated as a possible interference by a foreign power in French affairs, they told AFP. Around 9.00 am (0700 GMT) on Saturday, three people left the five life-size coffins on the Quai Branly in Paris near the base of the Eiffel Tower, one of the world's most visited tourist attractions. The boxes contained gypsum, a source close to the case told AFP.

The driver of a van used to transport the coffins, who was arrested nearby, told police that he had been paid 40 euros (\$43) to drive the two others and their cargo, the source said. The man was believed to have arrived from Bulgaria the evening before. The two others were apprehended later Saturday across town at the Bercy coach terminal where they were about to board a service to Berlin, the source said. One of the three people was Bulgarian, another Ukrainian and the third German, the source said. They were still in custody on Sunday. President Emmanuel Macron said last month the question of sending Western troops to Ukraine would "legitimately" arise if Russia broke through Ukrainian front lines and Kyiv made such a request. The president was doubling down on earlier comments in which he did not



rule out sending troops to Ukraine, which sent shock waves through much of Europe and unsettled allies including Germany.

The Kremlin slammed the remarks, calling them "dangerous". French authorities have suspected foreign - notably Russian -- interference in domestic affairs in several other recent incidents, including last month when red hand graffiti was painted onto France's Holocaust Memorial. The three suspects in that case are believed to have fled abroad. France suspects that Russia was behind another high-profile incident, the daubing of dozens of Stars of David on buildings in Paris and its suburbs shortly after the October 7 attack by Hamas militants on Israel. Investigators said some of the mass graffiti, widely condemned as anti-Semitic, may have been carried out at the "express demand" of an individual residing abroad, implying a possible connection to Russia.

Firefighters battle wind-driven wildfire in California as thousands evacuated

GNS News Agency, June 7

California firefighters made significant progress on Sunday to tame a wind-driven wildfire that scorched thousands of acres 97 kilometres east of San Francisco, burned down a home and forced residents to flee the area near the central California city of Tracy. The fire erupted on June 1 in the grassy hills managed by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, one of the country's key centres for nuclear weapons science and technology. The cause was under investigation. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said the research centre was not under immediate threat from the blaze, dubbed the Corral Fire, which had devoured some 52 square kilometres by Sunday (June 2) afternoon. The fire was 50 per cent contained as of Sunday evening. Thousands of people in the area, including parts of the city of Tracy with a population of one lakh, were ordered to leave for evacuation centres on Saturday. The evacuation order was lifted to allow residents to return home starting Sunday evening. Tracy is about 112 kilometres south of California's capital in Sacramento. CalFire Battalion Chief Josh Silveira said on Sunday afternoon that the fire "burned right up to the

homes" in the area and destroyed one house. With calmer winds and milder weather on Sunday, Silveira said he didn't expect the fire to grow. Two firefighters suffered minor to moderate burns on Saturday and were expected to make a full recovery, Silveira said. The wildfire presented no threat to any laboratory facilities or operations and had moved away from the site, Lawrence Livermore spokesperson Paul Rhiem said in a statement to The Associated Press early on Sunday. "As a precaution, we have activated our emergency operations centre to monitor the situation through the weekend," Rhiem said. The wildfire also forced the closure of two major highways, including an interstate that connects the San Francisco Bay Area to San Joaquin County in central California. But they had reopened by Sunday afternoon. The San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services on Saturday issued an evacuation order for areas west of the California Aqueduct, south of Corral Hollow Creek, west to Alameda County and south to Stanislaus County. A temporary evacuation point was established at Larch Clover Community Centre in Tracy. The county also asked residents to temporarily use boiled tap water or bottled water for drinking and cooking purposes.

As heatwave continues, eye stroke cases are on the rise; learn how they are linked



As the relentless summer heat intensifies in India, an alarming surge of a rare condition known as 'eye stroke' has medical professionals sounding the alarm. While the term may seem unfamiliar to many, this is a serious condition that has been increasingly linked to the extreme temperatures and heatwaves.

With reports of cases on the rise, particularly during periods of prolonged heat exposure, concerns are mounting about the potential impact on public health and the urgent need for awareness and preventive measures. Dr Jagadish J Hiremath, public health intellectual, explains, "Eye strokes, or retinal artery occlusions, occur when blood flow to the retina is blocked, which can be caused by blood clots or plaque. During heatwaves, the body's response to extreme heat can increase the risk of blood clots." High temperatures can lead to dehydration, he elaborates, which thickens the blood and makes clot formation more likely. "Additionally, heat stress can cause the blood vessels to constrict, which further increases the risk of blockages in the delicate vessels of the eye. This combination of factors makes individuals more susceptible to eye strokes during periods of extreme heat." Certain groups and individuals with specific preexisting conditions are more vulnerable to eye strokes during heat

waves, agrees Dr Hiremath. These include:

Elderly individuals: Aging naturally increases the risk of cardiovascular and vascular issues. People with cardiovascular diseases: Conditions like hypertension, high cholesterol, and atherosclerosis increase the risk of blood clots. **Diabetics:** Diabetes can damage blood vessels and increase the likelihood of clots. Individuals with a history of strokes: Those who have had previous strokes are at a higher risk. **Men:** Studies suggest that men may be more prone to eye strokes compared to women. **Diabetes, eye stroke, heatwave, India:** Diabetes can damage blood vessels and increase the likelihood of clots. How individuals can protect themselves from the increased risk of eye strokes in summer? To protect against the increased risk of eye strokes during heatwaves, Dr Hiremath suggests drinking plenty of water to prevent dehydration, which can thicken the blood. Stay indoors during peak heat hours and use air conditioning or fans to stay cool. Keep conditions like hypertension and diabetes well-managed with medication and regular check-ups. Protect your eyes from direct sunlight and excessive heat. During extreme heat, avoid vigorous physical activities that can further stress the body.

Preventive measures or lifestyle adjustments that can help mitigate the risk of eye strokes

Preventive measures and lifestyle adjustments can significantly mitigate the risk of eye strokes during heatwaves. Dr Hiremath suggests making the following changes: **Healthy Diet:** Eat a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to maintain cardiovascular health. **Regular Exercise:** Engage in moderate physical activity to keep the heart and blood vessels healthy, but avoid overexertion during heatwaves. **Regular Eye Check-ups:** Routine visits to an eye care professional can help detect early signs of potential issues.

Medication Adherence: Ensure that any prescribed medications for controlling blood pressure, cholesterol, or diabetes are taken as directed. **Stress Management:** Practice relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation to manage stress, which can negatively impact blood pressure and overall vascular health.

Expanding Horizons in Skin Treatment: Parul Sevashram Hospital Introduces Diode Laser and CO2 Laser Treatments

Parul Sevashram Hospital leads with Diode and CO2 Laser treatments, shaping the future of skincare. Parul Sevashram Hospital leads with Diode and CO2 Laser treatments, shaping the future of skincare. Parul Sevashram Hospital, renowned as one of the best hospitals for skin treatment in India, is proud to announce the opening of its state-of-the-art Cosmetology division. This advanced facility is equipped with cutting-edge technologies, including Diode laser, CO2 laser, and Microdermabrasion, positioning the hospital at the forefront of dermatological and venereal disease treatment.

The newly inaugurated Cosmetology division at Parul Sevashram Hospital offers innovative skin treatments designed to address a variety of dermatological conditions with precision and care. The initiation of the Diode laser and CO2 laser technologies signifies a significant leap in providing effective, non-invasive treatments for a wide range of skin concerns, from hair removal to scar and wrinkle reduction. "Advances in cosmetology, such as Diode and CO2 laser technologies, have the potential to significantly improve patient outcomes for various skin conditions. Our focus is on leveraging these innovations to provide safe and effective treatments that enhance overall skin health and well-being," says Dr. Geetika Madan Patel, Medical Director, Parul Sevashram Hospital. **Diode Laser Treatment:** Known for its efficacy in hair removal, the Diode laser offers a safe and reliable solution for patients seeking long-term reduction of unwanted hair. **CO2 Laser Treatment:** This advanced laser technology is used for skin resurfacing, wrinkle reduction, and the treatment of scars and other skin imperfections, providing patients with rejuvenated and smoother skin. **Microdermabrasion:** A non-invasive procedure that exfoliates and removes the superficial layer of dry, dead skin cells, promoting a brighter complexion and enhancing skin texture. Additionally, the hospital has installed a PUA chamber for UV therapy, a significant addition for patients suffering from disorders such as vitiligo, psoriasis, and other skin conditions. This therapy uses ultraviolet light to manage and treat these chronic skin issues, offering new hope and improved outcomes for patients. The Skin and Venereal Diseases Department at Parul Sevashram Hospital is dedicated to providing comprehensive care for a wide range of dermatological and venereal diseases. With the latest advancements and a



team of experienced dermatologists and healthcare professionals, the hospital ensures top-tier treatment and care for its patients.

Furthermore, the hospital has been awarded the prestigious "Excellence in Digital Health" by the Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI) at AHPI GLOBAL CONCLAVE '24 in Gandhinagar. This award recognizes the hospital's effective use of cutting-edge digital technology to enhance healthcare delivery and accessibility. Founded in 2012 by the Parul Arogya Seva Mandal Trust and located in Waghodia, Vadodara District, Parul Sevashram Hospital aims to achieve "Health for all." The hospital is equipped with a comprehensive range of modern procedures and treatments, consistently delivering outstanding medical results through advanced technology and techniques. As the leading Superspecialty and multispecialty hospital in Vadodara, Parul Sevashram Hospital is NABH Accredited and spans 4.2 lakh square feet, housing over 750 beds. Since its inception, the hospital has served more than 2,000,000 OPD patients, and over 700,000 IPD patients, and has performed more than 700,000 surgeries. Committed to providing exceptional healthcare services, the hospital maintains its reputation for excellence through continual growth and innovation. This content is sponsored and does not reflect the views or opinions of IE Online Media Services Pvt Ltd. No journalist is involved in creating sponsored material and it does not imply any endorsement whatsoever by the editorial team. IE Online Media Services takes no responsibility for the content that appears in sponsored articles and consequences thereof, directly, indirectly or in any manner. Viewer discretion is advised.

Hyderabad man brings tailoring to your doorstep

Hyderabad: Gone are the days of multiple trips to a tailor's shop, only to face delays and miscommunications. Instead, a simple text on WhatsApp can now bring tailoring services right to your doorstep, thanks to platforms like Tailorsin.com. Founded by Nagesh in Hyderabad in 2020, this e-tailoring service offers swift services, with timelines starting as short as six hours. Nagesh, who previously worked for a biotechnology company, pivoted to tailoring when his job was at risk during the Covid-19 pandemic. With a knack for learning quickly, he established Tailorsin.com which streamlines the tailoring process through custom-built software and a strong logistics network. "Tailoring is an unorganised market. We are attempting to organise it. I don't say that I can change the whole market. Also, in India, we do not respect the tailoring profession as much. But we aim to smoothen the process for our customers," says Nagesh.

Here's how it works: customers reach out to Tailorsin.com via WhatsApp or the website. The company then collects the necessary details and sends a logistics team to pick up the fabric from the customer's doorstep. After the garment is stitched, it is delivered back to the customer. If alterations are needed, the outfit is picked up again, adjusted, and re-delivered, ensuring complete satisfaction. With a team of around 25 trained



tailors, Tailorsin.com not only stitches all types of clothes but also upcycles them. "Customers often bring their father's old shirts to be made into crop tops or their mother's sarees to be transformed into designer dresses," says Nagesh. The leftover fabric is returned to the customer along with their new outfit. "In today's busy world, we are helping people meet their stitching needs without going anywhere," says Nagesh, emphasising the time-saving benefits. Looking ahead, Nagesh envisions expanding the service to include fabric provision for customers interested in a complete solution. "

Meet Laxman Rao, tea seller and celebrated author of over 25 books:

'Never imagined my photo in a newspaper'



Life has been "quite a journey" for Laxman Rao, who arrived in New Delhi in 1975 from Maharashtra's Amravati village. In the years that followed, he worked as a labourer, at a mill, and even set up a tea stall, but never imagined he would meet two distinguished personalities — late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and former President Pratibha Patil — or make headlines some day. Despite many setbacks and rejections, he is now the proud author of over 25 books, and works as a tea consultant with a luxury hotel in Delhi. In an exclusive interaction with indianexpress.com, Rao shared all about his struggles and success, his thirst for knowledge, and his passion for writing. While at it, he also shared a few tips to brew the perfect cuppa. Read the edited excerpts below:

Q: You came to Delhi to fulfill your dream of becoming an author. How would you describe your journey since then?

Laxman Rao: My life has been quite a journey. Literature has always been my passion, and the works of Gulshan Nandaji captivated me. I grew up in a serene village called Telegaon in Maharashtra. My aspiration to become an author stemmed from a book I wrote about a boy from my village named Ramdas. After my tenth grade, I worked in a spinning mill in Amravati before fate led me to Bhopal, where I worked as a labourer. It wasn't until June 1975 that I landed in Delhi, where I opened a shop in ITO. Amid the hustle, my thirst for knowledge remained unquenchable. I often explored the Delhi Gate wholesale market for books on various subjects, from Shakespeare to Prem Chand. As I immersed myself in their work, I discovered the endless possibilities of life-long learning. Despite setbacks and rejections, my passion for writing never waned. Through it all, I held firm to the belief that the pursuit of knowledge is a journey worth embracing wholeheartedly.

Q: You self-published your first novel in 1979, which wasn't very common those days. How did you arrange funds?

Laxman Rao: I printed 1,000 copies from my savings. Initial sales weren't promising, but I persisted. Now, as my books sell, gaining recognition, I feel like I'm truly becoming a writer.

Q: Today, you have authored 25 books, and are covered in national and international media. Did you ever expect such a response and appreciation?

Laxman Rao: I never imagined my photo being published in a newspaper or getting such respect. I didn't envision the life of an author because those I knew of were from big cities like Bombay, Pune, and Delhi.

Q: But why did you decide to sell tea in the first place?

Chennai store sealed for selling breast milk by FSSAI: Why the food safety body advises against consuming it

Food Safety and Standards Authorities of India (FSSAI) officials in Chennai cracked down on an outlet suspected of selling human breast milk. The outlet was under observation for 10 days after receiving a complaint. While no sales were observed during the surveillance period, a surprise inspection on Friday uncovered a hidden stock of breast milk, according to reports. Samples from the recovered bottles priced at ₹500 for 50ml, have been sent for testing. It's important to note that the commercial sale of breast milk is strictly prohibited in India. The FSSAI issued an advisory last week clarifying that processing and selling human milk violates the FSS Act, 2006.

According to Dr Kranthi Shilpa, Consultant Gynecologist, CARE Hospitals, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, consuming breast milk, especially from unregulated sources, can be harmful for the following reasons:

– **Infections and Contaminations:** Breast milk can be a vector for transmitting infectious diseases such as HIV, hepatitis, and bacterial infections. If the milk is not properly screened and pasteurized, it can carry harmful pathogens. – **Adulteration and Contamination:** Commercially sold breast milk may not meet hygiene and safety standards. There is a risk of contamination with harmful substances, either through improper handling



While breast milk is highly beneficial and necessary for infants, its consumption by adults, especially from unregulated commercial sources, poses significant health risks and ethical concerns. It is best to avoid consuming breast milk and instead rely on a balanced diet that meets the nutritional needs of adults.

or intentional adulteration. Festive offer milk It is best to avoid consuming breast milk and instead rely on a balanced diet that meets the nutritional needs of adults. (file) – **Nutritional Imbalance:** Breast milk is tailored to meet the nutritional needs of infants, not adults. Consuming it might not provide the necessary nutrients required for adult health, and it could contribute to an imbalanced diet. – **Storage Issues:** Improper storage can lead to the

and how did this decision help you reach where you are today?

Laxman Rao: Selling tea wasn't a significant decision at the time, just a way to make ends meet. It provided a steady income and I never felt the need to quit. It was there that a senior leader from Shangri-La Eros New Delhi discovered me, drawn in by the aroma and warmth of my tea.

Q: Could you tell us how you became a revered tea consultant?

Laxman Rao: In 2021, I transitioned from the streets to the luxurious ambience of Shangri-La Eros New Delhi, stepping into the role of their esteemed tea consultant. For the past three years, I've had the pleasure of curating delightful tea experiences at the hotel's exquisite tea lounge, Mister Chai. It has been a journey of passion, expertise, and the art of tea making, bringing a touch of tradition and refinement to every cup served. As part of the engagement initiatives, guests can engage in a warm, 45-minute session where I share my personal stories and insights, while savouring a specially-crafted Indian street food-inspired high tea. It features local favourites such as vada pav, chicken tikka tacos, kale patta chaat, and beetroot chops, along with my signature masala chai.

Q: Could you give us some tips to make a perfect cup of chai?

Laxman Rao: For the perfect cup of tea, start by adding water, based on the number of servings, to a pot. Bring it to a vigorous boil and then add slightly more milk than water. Boil the mixture well before adding tea leaves or bags, and let it steep to your preferred strength. This method has been appreciated by many, including Europeans, who were initially unfamiliar with tea but grew to love it. The enjoyment and recognition of our tea have even led to people expressing their admiration and sometimes wanting pictures with me. That is always a pleasant surprise.

What common mistakes do people make when making tea? What are your views on the various experiments people do with tea?

Laxman Rao: One common mistake people make is not boiling the water and milk properly; both need to be brought to a good boil for the best flavour. Incorrect proportions, adding tea leaves too early, or not steeping long enough can also affect taste. These days, many are promoting unique methods of making tea, sometimes prioritising flair over flavour. These are entertaining, but the traditional method of properly boiling water and milk remains the key to a perfect cup of tea.

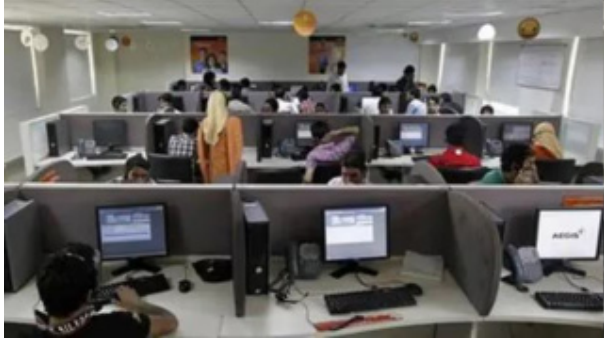
How is your writing coming along these days?

Laxman Rao: After finishing my work, I relax, and then read or write. On my days off, I enjoy leisurely writing and reading into the night. Writing isn't merely a task for me; it's my source of energy and passion.

Do you miss your tea stall and your regular customers now that you no longer run it?

Laxman Rao: I deeply miss my tea stall and the loyal customers who frequented it. Many would inquire about my absence and why I stopped selling tea. Respecting my customers and paying close attention to their needs were paramount to me. They often brought guests to enjoy tea and purchase my books. I remember those moments fondly.

Cheap engg, tech talent helping India transition up the services value chain



A popular Canada-based multinational clothing company that does not yet have a store of its own in India uses data analyses done by its workers in India to tell its global teams what they should stock up on after poring through sales data. An American retail giant which has no stores in India manages its entire global inventory through offices in the country. Welcome to the home for global capability centres (GCCs).

Back in the early 90s India made a name for itself at the global stage as the back office of the world. Today, more high-tech services are being exported from India, with firms offshoring tasks such as data analysis to research and development, helping fuel a new wave of services-led growth for India. With close to 1,600 GCCs of multinational companies in various sectors, India has become to the world what China is for tech hardware. Leading companies from across sectors – modern trade, apparel, finance, consumer electronics, automobile, and shipping – have opened big headquarters in India from where they manage a number of core functions including designing, inventory and supply chain management and transportation.

The movement has come on the back of some key trends: the country's large pool of engineers, availability of relatively cheap labour, low real estate and rental costs compared to other Asian destinations, and comparatively simpler labour laws which allow for longer working hours. Led by information technology (IT) giants like TCS, Infosys and Wipro, in the late 90s and early 2000s, India made a name for itself as a service-led export destination. But then, the move simply happened because of the cost arbitrage – for foreign firms, it was simply cheaper to outsource tedious grunt work to an army of IT professionals in India.

While the movement from the early business process outsourcing (BPO) days to the IT services sector boom leading up to setting up of more cutting-edge GCCs has largely been evolutionary with minimal government support, the Centre is currently discussing with the industry a new IT policy under which it aims to double the number of GCCs in the country in the next five years, The Indian Express had earlier reported. "Almost every tech-enabled enterprise has built a GCC in India – from a supermarket like Tesco digitising its operations from here to tech giants like Amazon and Samsung," said Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Electronics and IT.

"It has been a real transformation for India. Earlier it was a back office during Y2K led by the IT and ITes and business process outsourcing model where the tech ecosystem was built on cost arbitrage. Now, it is because of the skilled workforce we have domestically and a shortage of such talent in the western world," Chandrasekhar added. The activities of the GCCs are increasingly var-

ied.

For instance, since 2006, Goldman Sachs has invested over \$7 billion in India and set up global capability centres (GCCs) in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The Bengaluru GCC powers a wide range of key banking functions like corporate cash management, liquidity management, developing rich analytics, and virtual accounts payments. In fact, the GCC is understood to have been key in the launch of a co-branded credit card in partnership with Apple in 2019, and credit solutions tied with Amazon in 2020. All major financial services companies including the likes of Visa, Morgan Stanley, American Express, and Wells Fargo, among others have large capability centres in India.

Canada-based activewear company Lululemon's India GCC workers go through sales data and tell their global branches to stock up certain colours which are selling the most in their geography. American retailer Target, which does not have a store in India, from its tech centre in Bengaluru services various needs ranging from data analytics, merchandising, marketing to planograms and layouts for stores.

AMD, the semiconductor giant, recently opened its biggest research and development centre in India, and for years, the country has served a massive talent pool of design engineers working for all major chip firms like Intel, Texas Instruments, Samsung and STMicroelectronics who have worked on the conceptualisation of chips that end up in things that people use everyday. According to a 2023 report by tech industry body Nasscom and Zinnov, there were more than 1,500 GCCs in India registering a growth of over 60 per cent since 2015. A large part of these are technology centres established by companies from North America spanning sectors like modern trade, apparel, and consumer electronics. The report suggests that more than 1.6 million people were employed by these GCCs, with more than 70,000 individuals coming from smaller cities. As per estimates by global consulting firm EY, the GCC market size in India will reach \$110 billion by the year 2030. "It is predicted that by 2030, India will have 2400 GCCs and that number can potentially increase to 2550 as India emerges as the world's technology and services hub. The total number of new GCC set-ups every year can jump up to 115 (from the current 70)," EY said in a 2023 report titled 'Future of GCCs in India – a vision 2030'.

Currently, cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, and Delhi NCR remain popular sites for GCC establishments in India, but according to EY, tier-II cities are also grabbing the interest – cities such as Visakhapatnam, Jaipur, Vadodra, Kochi, Chandigarh are becoming popular for new set-ups owing to its improving infrastructure, favourable state policies, and lower real estate and talent costs. Given the competitive talent market, availability, attraction and retention of niche talent, building a pipeline of readily deployable talent with the new emerging skills, finding and nurturing talent equipped for global leadership positions, and cost arbitrage have emerged as key challenging factors facing GCCs in India, according to a report by Nasscom and KPMG released earlier this month. "Navigating these challenges, GCCs are leveraging innovative workforce strategy models, such as hire-build-scale, borrow-augment and co-create, to achieve near, medium, as well as long-term goals," the report said.

Japan Airline signs new codeshare pact with Indigo, to expand connectivity throughout India

Japan's private carrier Japan Airlines (JAL) has inked a new codeshare partnership with budget airline IndiGo, offering more travel options between the two countries, a statement said on Monday. The two airlines will commence the pact on India's domestic routes which connect to JAL-operated flights to and from Delhi and Bengaluru.

"The cooperation will allow Japan Airlines to strengthen its connectivity into India initially, while enabling more travel options for IndiGo customers on JAL's extensive domestic and international network in later phases," a press release read. Codesharing allows an airline to book its passengers on its partner carriers and provide seamless travel to destinations where it has no presence. In total, the partnership is adding about 14 destinations to its existing portfolio, JAL said in the statement. Currently, it operates daily services between Tokyo Haneda – Delhi, and from Tokyo's Narita to Bengaluru three times a week. The planned codeshare routes which are subject to government approval are eyeing a schedule of winter 2024.

Talking about the new pact, Senior Vice President of Indigo's Network Planning & Revenue Management Abhijit DasGupta said, "Japan has been increasing in popularity amongst Indian travellers, as both countries are working to strengthen bilateral relationships and ease the visa norms. This phase of the partnership expands



the choices available to Japan Airlines customers for journeys to/from Japan, using IndiGo's extensive network in India. This step to provide seamless connectivity to support trade, commerce, and tourism between the two countries. "In recent years, India has achieved remarkable economic growth, and the air travel demand between Japan and India are increasing more than ever before. Both partners are delighted to enter in partnership and hope to contribute further to the market by providing customers with more options and a great customer experience," said Ross Leggett, JAL's Managing Executive Officer and Senior Vice President of Route Marketing.

Indian power plants keep up with the demand despite heatwave

India's electricity grid has remained stable despite a record-shattering heatwave in May, demonstrating a high degree of technical skill and avoiding embarrassing blackouts during the election period. Daily temperatures in the New Delhi suburb of Palam have averaged a seasonal record 35.1°C so far in May, up from 30.1°C in May 2023 and a long-term seasonal average of 33.3°C. The exceptionally high temperature is likely to have increased the demand for air conditioning and refrigeration to record or near-record levels for the time of year. The grid met a record peak load of 246 million kilowatts on May 29 and then 250 million kilowatts on May 30, shattering the previous record of 240 million kilowatts set in September 2023. But the transmission system has been unusually stable throughout the heatwave – more stable than in other periods when demand was considerably lower.

Transmission frequency fell below the minimum acceptable target of 49.9 cycles per second (Hertz) for just 2.3% of the time in the first 30 days of the month. This has been the grid's best monthly performance for more than two years, despite the enormous extra demands imposed

by the heatwave. By contrast, the frequency was below target 9.8% of the time in May 2023 and May 2022, according to reliability reports published by the Grid Controller of India.

Frequency is the simplest and most commonly employed measure of power quality and reliability; controllers endeavour to keep it steady and very close to target at all times. Frequency above target ("over-frequency") is a sign that there is excess generation connected to the network compared with the load. Frequency below target ("under-frequency") signals the opposite. Repeated and prolonged periods of under-frequency are a sign the grid is struggling to meet demand; they increase the risk of cascading failure, forcible customer disconnections and uncontrolled blackouts. In the autumn of 2021 and again in the spring of 2022, coal shortages meant many power generators were unable to start up in response to instructions from the grid. The result was electricity shortages, prolonged and severe under-frequency, imposition of rotating power cuts, and uncontrolled blackouts across the country.

AC makers clock two-fold jump in sales in May amid scorching summer



A blistering summer has led to an almost two-fold jump in sales of air-conditioners in May even as leading manufacturers have been grappling with delays in installation and replenishing inventories of hot-selling energy-efficient models. The mercury is hovering above 45 degrees at several places including the national capital, which has been under the grip of a severe heatwave for the past few days. At the same time, AC makers are navigating exceptional demand, recording their best-ever sales in a month so far.

Leading brands like Voltas, LG, Daikin, Panasonic, and Blue Star witnessed robust sales in May and the industry expects an overall growth of 30 to 35 per cent in 2024 compared to their sales of last year. Voltas recorded a two-fold jump in the sales of residential AC in May and expects the positive momentum to continue in the remaining period of the April-June quarter, said its MD & CEO Pradeep Bakshi. "As we reflect on May 2024, Voltas has a remarkable surge in sales, showcasing a stupendous volume growth of 100 per cent compared to the same period last year. This milestone is particularly significant as May historically stands as one of the highest contributing months in the AC and cooling products industry," Bakshi told PTI. The Tata Group firm is optimistic to achieve 2 million units of AC sales mark within the first six months of this calendar year. Similarly, LG Electronics India said it is witnessing an "exponential growth" in room AC business and has "surpassed the last 5 years' records with a multi-fold surge in demand".

India receives highest FDI from Singapore in 2023-24; Mauritius second biggest investor: Govt data

India received the highest foreign direct investment (FDI) from Singapore in 2023-24 even as overseas capital inflows into the country contracted by about 3.5 per cent due to global economic uncertainties, according to the latest government data. Though FDI from Singapore has dipped by 31.55 per cent to USD 11.77 billion in 2023-24, India has attracted the maximum inflows from that country, the data showed. During the last fiscal, FDI equity inflows decreased from major countries, including Mauritius, Singapore, the US, the UK, UAE, Cayman Islands, Germany, and Cyprus. However, investments increased from the Netherlands and Japan.

Since 2018-19, Singapore has been the largest source of such investments for India. In 2017-18, India attracted the maximum FDI from Mauritius. According to experts, after the India-Mauritius tax treaty amendment, Singapore has emerged as the preferred jurisdiction for investment in India.

Rumki Majumdar, Economist, Deloitte India, said that as one of the world's prominent financial hubs, Singapore attracts global investors who want to invest in Asia. "Recently, India's initiatives such as amendments by the SEBI to the REIT Regulations 2014 have created new opportunities for Singapore-based investors, which is why India is likely seeing high FDI from Singapore," Majumdar said. She also hoped that FDI into India would pick up in the latter half of 2024-25. Sanjiv Malhotra, Senior Advisor, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co, said that Singapore and Mauritius are jurisdictions used by global investors to route their money into developing economies such as India.

"While there are many geo-economic and political factors why Singapore has gained more prominence in the recent past, the primary reason for it topping the FDI charts for India is tax," Malhotra said, adding Singapore has a very competitive domestic tax regime and efficient regulatory set-up. Historically, the double tax avoidance agreement between India and Singapore provided for many beneficial provisions including capital gains exemption in India for investments made from Singapore and even though this provision has been amended, Singapore still is a credible place to create operations with substance to invest further in South-East Asia (including India), he added. Malhotra added that in 2023-24, India witnessed a drop in FDI primarily due to the global uncertainty on account of the disturbances in the Middle-East and Europe. "Hopefully FDI inflows to India may improve in 2024-25 (from 2023-24) but they may still remain below 2022-23 levels. A stable government post elections surely will help the cause of more FDI into India but I see the global headwinds to be too strong as of now," he said.

Anindya Ghosh, Partner, INDUSLAW, too said that prior to 2016, Mauritius was a preferred jurisdiction for foreign investment in India due to the significant tax advantage it offered as a low-tax jurisdiction for routing investments. However, in 2016, India amended its tax treaty with Mauritius to introduce a source-based taxation regime for capital gains, eliminating the tax advantage and reducing the attractiveness of Mauritius as an investment hub for India. After the India-Mauritius tax treaty amendment, Singapore has emerged as the preferred jurisdiction for foreign investment in India due to various factors, Ghosh said.

She added that many multinational companies have their regional headquarters or holding companies based in Singapore, making it a convenient location for channelling investments into India. She added that global economic conditions, geopolitical tensions, and domestic policy developments may influence the overall FDI inflows in 2024-25. FDI equity inflows in India declined 3.49 per cent to USD 44.42 billion in 2023-24 as against USD 46.03 billion in 2022-23. The total FDI – which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings and other capital – declined marginally by one per cent to USD 70.95 billion during 2023-24 from USD 71.35 billion in 2022-23. In 2021-22, the country received the highest ever FDI inflows of USD 84.83 billion. Sectorally, inflows contracted in services, computer software and hardware, trading, telecommunication, automobile, pharma and chemicals. In contrast, construction (infrastructure) activities, develop-

"This year created many sales records starting from the south region and now North India. We are expecting a minimum 100 per cent growth in north India. Similar growth trends are expected to be seen in eastern states also," said LG Electronics India Senior VP Sanjay Chitkara. The company is "bullish on AC sales" as temperature is continuously rising, he added. Blue Star Managing Director B Thiagarajan said in March this year the room AC industry had a 40 per cent growth and it was expected that due to general elections in May, there will be some hiccups in the market but it did not happen. "In April the demand went skyrocketing. Then we thought that it would slow down in May but it did not because of sales from the northern region," he said adding that the industry sales are up 70 per cent. In May due to high sales, "installation delays are happening and the service calls are unprecedented. This is because of heat and the industry was never prepared for such kind of growth," he said. According to Thiagarajan, this is a "golden period" for the industry, in which it will have over 35 per cent volume growth in 2024. Daikin India Chairman and Managing Director Kanwaljeet Jawa said: "The challenge in the market is how many units you can produce and supply. That's the absolute challenge." According to Jawa, Daikin's sales in May were 60 to 70 per cent higher than the last year and the company expects 35 to 40 per cent growth in the first quarter of FY25. He added that last year in May, sales were slow due to rains in some parts of the country. Similarly, Panasonic India has also recorded an "exponential" growth for the AC category this summer. "In the month of May we recorded the highest-ever 52 per cent increase in sales compared to last year," said Abhishek Verma, Panasonic Life Solutions India Business Head, Air Conditioners Group. The company has witnessed a growing popularity of 5-star inverter ACs, which contribute to 55 per cent of its online AC sales. However, Jawa also warns about a possible price hike that the industry may take. The price of copper has gone up substantially in the global market and markers will pass on this to consumers. According to Thiagarajan, there are probabilities of early rains in June, which may slow down the sales. "Moreover, the Chinese market has revived, so the raw materials prices are also going up significantly," he said.



ment and power sectors registered a healthy growth in inflows during the period under review. FDI from Mauritius dipped to USD 7.97 billion in the last fiscal from USD 6.13 billion in 2022-23.

The US is the third largest investor in India in 2023-24 with USD 4.99 billion foreign investments, though it is down from USD 6 billion in 2022-23. It was followed by the Netherlands (USD 4.93 billion), Japan (USD 3.17 billion), the UAE (USD 2.9 billion), UK (USD 1.2 billion), Cyprus (USD 806 million), Germany (USD 505 million), and Cayman Islands (USD 342 million). As per the data, Mauritius accounts for 25 per cent of the total FDI which India has received during April 2000 to March 2024 (USD 171.84 billion), while Singapore's share is 24 per cent (USD 159.94 billion). The US accounted for 10 per cent of total overseas investments with USD 65.19 billion during the period. Foreign investments are crucial for India to overhaul its infrastructure such as ports, airports and highways to push growth. FDI also helps improve the country's balance of payments situation and strengthen the rupee value against other global currencies, especially the US dollar.

Zomato asks customers to avoid ordering during peak afternoon hours

New Delhi: Amid the extreme heatwave in the country, online food delivery platform Zomato on Sunday requested customers to avoid ordering during peak afternoon hours unless it is necessary. "Please avoid ordering during peak afternoon unless absolutely necessary," Zomato wrote on X.

Due to scorching heat, some states have recorded higher temperatures than in previous years, leading to problems like heatstroke. Heatstroke-related deaths have also been reported in Bihar, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand, as well as in Delhi. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting to review the situation of the ongoing heatwave in the country and the preparedness for the onset of monsoon. The PM was briefed that as per IMD forecasts, the heatwave is likely to continue in parts of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

PM Modi has instructed that proper drills for preventing and handling incidents of fire must be done regularly. Meanwhile, Zomato's co-founder and CEO, Deepinder Goyal has unveiled India's first crowd-supported weather infrastructure, providing localised, real-time information on key weather parameters such as temperature, humidity, wind speed, rainfall, and more.

Called weatherunion.com, it is a proprietary network of over 650 on-ground weather stations. It is currently available across 45 cities, and the company said that it will be expanding this in other cities very soon. The company has also opened up free access to this network (through an Application Programming Interface) to all institutions and companies in the country.

Amid backlash, Shane Nigam apologises to Unni Mukundan for controversial remark, clarifies 'Sudapi' comment



After a brief calm following last year's ban from several film organisations, actor Shane Nigam has once again found himself embroiled in controversy, this time over a comment he made about fellow actor Unni Mukundan during a recent film promotion. While promoting his upcoming film *Little Hearts*, accompanied by co-stars Mahima Nambiar and Baburaj, Shane expressed a preference for the pairing of Mahima and Unni over theirs when asked about on-screen chemistry. While Unni and Mahima appeared together in the recent film *Jai Ganesh*, *Little Hearts* marks the second venture for the Shane-Mahima duo after *RDX*.

The banter, however, continued and Shane proceeded to jest about Unni's production company, Unni Mukundan Film Production Company Limited (UMFPL), using wordplay. Unfortunately, the term Shane used could also be construed as a derogatory word in Malayalam, sparking controversy and drawing criticism toward the actor from various quarters. The row escalated further as Sangh Parivar sympathisers sided with Unni since the

actor has repeatedly expressed his admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, contrasting with Shane's identity which has earned him the label "Sudapi" — a derogatory term used for followers of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), a political party associated with radical Islamist ideologies.

Now, Shane has issued a public apology to Unni, stating that the remark was intended as a joke and was not meant to cause any harm. At a press conference in Dubai, he revealed that he had personally reached out to Unni to convey his apology and clarify the misunderstanding. Mathrubhumi reported. The *RDX* actor also maintained that he had lodged a complaint with the police regarding abusive messages directed toward his mother on social media. Recently, Shane came under fire after he took to his Instagram stories to post a photo of himself donning a keffiyeh, with the caption 'Sudapi from India,' to show solidarity with Palestine. However, the caption garnered a lot of attention, with many concluding that he had outed himself. "I posted the photo in solidarity with Rafah. These days, my Instagram inbox is filled with comments calling me Sudapi. So I thought it would be better to post the comment myself rather than seeing it in the comment box."

The 'Sudapi' comment was bound to happen in my comment box regardless of what I post. I am not angry or sad. Things only start getting worse when we take comments seriously. I am used to such comments on the internet, but it's different when it comes to my family. They are shattered by the online attacks I sometimes face. This eventually affects me a little, so I will be very careful about what I say from now on," he said, as reported by Kaumudi Online.

Suriya's retro look in teaser of Karthik Subbaraj's Suriya 44 stuns fans.

The much-anticipated teaser for *Suriya 44*, directed by Karthik Subbaraj, has finally been unveiled, leaving fans excited. The teaser showcases Suriya in a striking retro avatar, a look that has quickly become the talk of the town. Released across multiple platforms, the teaser shows Suriya sporting a vintage hair style. The actor is seen with long hair, bell-bottom pants, and a classic mustache, embodying the essence of a bygone era. This transformation is a significant departure from Suriya's recent roles. His costume is as vibrant as it can get and the actor strikes a sinister look in the teaser.

Karthik Subbaraj, known for his unique storytelling and innovative cinematic techniques, has once again piqued curiosity with the teaser of *Suriya 44*. The promo does not divulge much about the plot but hints at an intriguing storyline set against the picturesque backdrop of the Andaman Islands, where shooting has recently commenced. The buzz around *Suriya 44* has intensified with the release of the teaser, as fans and critics alike praised the actor's new look. The collaboration between Suriya and Subbaraj is particularly noteworthy, as they both have a reputation for pushing the envelope in Tamil cinema. Meanwhile, fans are waiting for the release of



Suriya's fantasy film *Kanguva*, directed by Siva. The movie, which is set in two timelines, has Suriya playing the role of tribal leader. Disha Patani and Bobby Deol are making their debut in Tamil with the film. *2024* is expected to change things for Suriya, who has not been seen on the silver screen (except for his cameo as Rolex in *Vikram*) for a while now. With *Kanguva* and *Suriya 44*, the actor is expected to reclaim his market in the year that has been dry for Tamil cinema.

When Amrita Singh said she let herself go after marrying Saif Ali Khan, insecurities of being a star wife 'damaged her mind'



Amrita Singh and Saif Ali Khan were married for 13 years before they decided to part ways in 2004. An old interview with Amrita Singh has recently surfaced, shedding light on her life after her divorce from Saif. During the interaction, the actor admitted to letting herself go after her marriage with Saif, becoming lazy, and gaining a significant amount of weight. She also opened up about how the insecurities of being a star-wife affected her mental well-being.

Speaking to Zoom, she said, "I became lazy and complacent after marriage. Someone told me that women have this great urge to nest and I started looking like a fat ostrich in a nest. I was just happy and living in my la la land."

When asked if she felt pressure to look good being

the wife of a star who is always surrounded by beautiful women, Amrita said, "This must be true for a conventional star wife, but I was a star before I became a star wife. So, I didn't have the insecurity to keep up with the Joneses in any way. You get complacent and lazy, you can make it sound romantic and say that it was love and trust but the bottom line is that you get lazy and since you have done it all, you don't get excited. For instance, I don't get excited when I have to sit in a beauty parlor for 5 hours. I did it because it was my job."

Amrita also admitted that while Saif didn't put any pressure on her, he did ask her to join the gym and look good for him if not for herself. "I am the kind of person who has to feel it herself. Nobody can make me do anything," she said. The *Betaab* actor also shared why she thinks having insecurities as an actor is better than being insecure as a star wife. She said, "The insecurity of being an actor is healthier because it pushes you to be creative but being a star wife, the insecurities are unhealthy. They can damage your mind. If you are an insecure person, you aren't going to be happy being a star wife." When asked if a large portion of her time was spent being insecure, she responded, "Not a large time but time enough to damage my mind." Amrita was last seen on the big screen in 2022's *Heropanti 2*. The film starred Tiger Shroff, Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Tara Sutaria in lead roles.

'Annoyed' Hrithik Roshan scolds paparazzi following him at Mumbai airport: 'Kya kar rahe ho aap?'

Hrithik Roshan, who is known for being polite to the media and paparazzi and has often been spotted greeting them with warmth, was recently seen being upset with the paps at Mumbai airport. Paparazzi videos, shared on Instagram, show the *Kaho Na..Pyar Hai* star, who was coming out of the airport, getting angry at the paparazzi at photographers outside the airport.

The clips show Hrithik not only losing his cool but also schooling the paps, who continued following him despite his resistance. When a group of shutterbugs asked the *War* actor to stop and pose, he didn't oblige and continued walking. The photographers soon began following him. After walking a few steps, Hrithik chided them by saying, "Dekho, kya kar rahe ho aap? (See, what are you doing?)" He then asked another person, "Kyun ho raha hai ye? (Why is this happening?)" He was heard asking them to click pictures calmly.

Two months ago, Animal actor Ranbir Kapoor also



lost his cool on paparazzi when they rushed to click his pictures, in his brand new Bentley car, in the wee hours. In a video shared by a paparazzo account, Ranbir gestured to show his annoyance as paparazzi ran after his car and surrounded it. Ranbir was seen gesturing to the paps, "What time is it?"

Panchayat's Bhushan, aka Banrakas, reveals he faced depression twice in 11 years; was forced to do soft porn movies: 'I hold casting director's feet...'



Highway, Sultan and Freaky Ali, he still had to fall on the feet of casting directors to bag a role.

He recalled, "When I first came to Versova on May 28, 2016, I made a few friends from Madhya Pradesh Drama School. We decided to get into the industry at any cost. We found Neeraj Singh and Gaurav Singh of Prithvi, we made Aram Nagar our adda. We started to knock doors of every casting director, I fell on their feet to cast me in some role. All this, after having done Highway, Freaky Ali, and Sultan." "My friends started to abuse me for falling on people's feet. I said, 'at any cost, I want to crack this.' This is the kind of struggle and dedication it takes to survive in the industry. It feels embarrassing to go out for random auditions after having worked in films, especially after the casting directors recognise you. I just had one day's role in *Panchayat* season 1. I shot for just 2.5 hours. I am really thankful to Chandan Kumar and Deepak Kumar Mishra who wrote the 'Banrakas' role. I am glad. I am not Irrfan, Nawazuddin, I am an average actor with survival instinct in me." Durgesh Kumar, whose first film was Intiaz Ali's 2014 film *Highway* starring Randeep Hooda and Alia Bhatt in the lead roles, was forced to act in soft porn for survival. According to DNA, Durgesh failed in every audition he gave from 2013-22. "Casting directors would say that you have talent but auditions are not working." For money, the actor starred in soft porn. He said, "

I can't live without acting. I did any work that came my way because I was confident in my abilities." Durgesh, who was also seen in the films *Laapataa Ladies* and *Bhakhshak* lately, had comparatively more screen time in *Panchayat* season 2, in which his character was introduced as 'Banrakas'. After *Panchayat's* fame, Durgesh claims, now she has been getting work. "Nobody takes us in the maar-dhaad wale shows (action genre). At least with comedy, we get these chances so it feels very good," said the *Panchayat* star.

In an interview with Lallantop, Durgesh Kumar said, "You need to be prepared psychologically, physically, mentally, emotionally and economically to be an actor. I have suffered depression twice in 11 years. Unless you are not psychologically, economically and mentally healthy, please don't come in the acting field. I am being brutally honest about it." Durgesh warned youngsters who are unaware of the industry and wanting to pursue career in films. He said, "This is no place to try. This place is filled with crazy people. All the successful people you see today, including Manoj Bajpayee and Pankaj Tripathi, who were my seniors at the National School of Drama or even Nawazuddin Siddiqui, they are all half crazy people, nobody discloses this."

"Alone Pankaj Tripathi's batch had 20 people. All of them equally talented, but do you see them anywhere? Nawazuddin Siddiqui's batch had around 30 people, other than Nawazuddin, the only person who made his name in the industry is Nirmal Das, who got a role in *Sarfarosh*. Later, that man went crazy and is dead today. Nobody is aware of it. Do you see the struggle here? You really need to be mentally strong. If you are not, I request you, please never come to Bombay," said the actor. He further recalled, how despite of having acting in films like

Dalljiet Kaur faces legal action from estranged husband Nikhil Patel following infidelity allegations: 'This is for cheap media attention'



Days after television actor and *Bigg Boss 13* contestant Dalljiet Kaur levelled allegations of infidelity against her estranged husband, Kenya-based entrepreneur Nikhil Patel, the latter retaliated by issuing her a legal notice and an ultimatum demanding that she move her remaining belongings out of his house this month, ETimes reported.

A few days ago, Kaur had shared some cryptic messages on Instagram suggesting that Patel was involved in an extramarital affair. In her Instagram stories, Kaur asked her social media followers, "What's your thought on extra-marital affairs? Who is to be blamed?... The girl... The husband... The wife." In another story, she wrote, "You are out on social media with her now every day shamelessly. Your wife and son came back in 10 months of the wedding. The entire family is humiliated. Some dignity for the kids would have been good. At least you should have left your wife a little dignity publicly as I was quiet about a lot of other things too."

In response to the allegations, Patel told ETimes that he was disturbed to witness how the loopholes in IT laws across the world were being exploited by certain people in their endeavour to attract 'cheap media attention'. He also pointed out that the actions of such people "place innocent children and women at risk". Patel also condemned the posting of pictures and videos of others,

especially children, without their consent, calling it illegal and negligent. The entrepreneur also stated that his team has gotten in touch with the actor, demanding that she collect her remaining belongings from his place in Kenya by the end of this month. If she fails to do so, Patel stated the items would be donated to charity in Kenya, as he has "no obligation to store them for her." Patel further emphasised that his legal team has put its foot down in the matter, asserting it would no longer take harassment lying down and would take stern legal action if the actor continued with her "unlawful actions."

According to News18, rumours of their separation first surfaced in February this year when the actor deleted all their wedding pictures from Instagram and dropped Patel from her name. "I hereby state that Dalljiet and Jayden (her son) are in India currently for Dalljiet's dad's surgery followed by her Maa's surgery as well, which required them to be beside him. In addition to this, I would only like to say that Dalljiet, at the moment, would not like to make any comments on anything because the kids are in the picture. Please respect her kids' privacy and please consider this as the only statement she would like to give out," Kaur's team said in a statement. Dalljiet Kaur and Nikhil Patel tied the knot on March 18, 2023, in the presence of family and close friends. She was earlier married to actor Shaalin Bhanot, and Jayden is their son.

Rajinikanth's Vettaiyan gets release date; Superstar shares update on Coolie

Rajinikanth is gearing up to grace the silver screen with his film *Vettaiyan*. Fans of the superstar can mark their calendars as the movie is slated for release on October 25, 2024. Directed by acclaimed filmmaker TJ Gnanavel, *Vettaiyan* is generating significant buzz in the industry as it also stars Amitabh Bachchan and Fahadh Faasil in pivotal roles. The film, produced by Sun Pictures, is expected to be an action-packed entertainer, showcasing Rajinikanth in a role that aligns with his iconic style and larger-than-life persona. While the makers are yet to officially confirm the release date of the movie, Rajinikanth revealed it during his visit to the Himalayas.

On his ongoing trip to the Himalayas, Rajinikanth visited numerous yogis and sadhus. In a conversation with one of the yogis, he shared insights about his upcoming film, *Vettaiyan*. He mentioned, "Vettaiyan will release for Dussehra. I have completed my portions. The shooting with other members of the cast is still going on."



The film will release on October 10 or so." Rajinikanth also discussed his film with director Lokesh Kanagaraj titled *Coolie*. He stated, "There's a new picture as well. I start shooting for it from June 10 onwards."

How a crisis meeting helped India's hockey forwards find scoring touch



GNS News Agency, June 7

Their impotence was one of the biggest concerns to emerge from a forgettable tour. They couldn't score, couldn't put pressure on Australia's defence and couldn't win enough penalty corners to allow captain Harmanpreet Singh to showcase his might. The forwards knew they had a little more than two months to fix this problem. "So, after the tour, we had a meeting," India forward Sukhjeet Singh said. Frank words were spoken and ideas were exchanged. When they left the room an hour or so later, an understanding was reached. "If you enter the 'D', then you have to have an outcome," Sukhjeet recalled. The 'outcome' needn't necessarily be a goal – it could even be a shot or winning a penalty corner. In short, not letting an attack go to waste, the forwards walked their talk. And Sukhjeet, as was the case in Antwerp last weekend, was at the heart of most attacking moves.

The 27-year-old outwitted a defender to win a penalty corner, which Harmanpreet Singh converted, and then started a move from the left flank and finished it with a beautiful strike as India defeated world champions Germany 3-0 in a Pro League match in London. Sukhjeet didn't reveal all that was spoken in that meeting after the team returned from Perth. But he did hint that all players, young and old, juniors and seniors, could voice their thoughts without worrying about hierarchy. It wasn't always like this. Frankly airing opinions wasn't the culture in the team, coach Craig Fulton recently said at The Indian Express Idea Exchange. "One of the bigger problems in India (hockey) though is that of the hierarchy. The more junior you are as a player, the less say you have. I don't subscribe to that," Fulton had said (full interview to be published on Monday, June 3). He added: "If that's the case, you are in a flawed system. I have tried to crack that wide open: of course you need seniors but you want a safe space where players can share without any worries. That we have achieved from my side and also from se-

niors which is great."

The culture change seems to have had a positive impact. It's telling that the most impactful forwards heading into the Olympics are also among the youngest, not necessarily age-wise but in terms of international experience. The older guard – Mandeep Singh, Lalit Upadhyay and Akashdeep Singh who have been a part of the team for a major part of the last decade – haven't exactly been able to influence the proceedings as they once did. But Sukhjeet, Abhishek and Gurjant Singh – the scorer of India's third goal on Saturday – have done enough to impose themselves on opposition defences. They did it against the current and former Olympic champions, Belgium and Argentina respectively, and flummoxed the world champions (albeit not at full strength) on Saturday.

For the first goal, in the 16th minute, Sukhjeet won possession near the 23m line and passed to Hardik Singh. He continued his run into the 'D' and was there to receive the ball back from Hardik on top of the circle, turned to face the goal and invited a tackle from behind from the German defender. The referee didn't hesitate to award a corner – India's only PC of the match – and Harmanpreet put India ahead against the run of play. Eleven minutes into the third quarter, Sukhjeet swung the momentum in India's favour yet again. He got the ball on the left flank, played it forward to his strike-partner Abhishek while continuing to run inside the 'D'. Abhishek dribbled and swerved past the defence near the baseline and passed the ball back to Sukhjeet, who took one touch and unleashed a powerful tomahawk with the second to give German goalkeeper Alexander Stadler no chance to save. If the first two goals were all about decisive and brave play inside the 'D' – an element that's been missing for a while – the third was all about combinations and silky, one-touch passing with seven out of 10 outfield players involved in the play.

The move started with Harmanpreet's forward pass to Manpreet Singh, who played it to Vivek Sagar Prasad on his right. Vivek passed it to Lalit Upadhyay, who spotted a fine overlapping run on the wings by Sanjay. The defender saw Jarmanpreet Singh positioned near the baseline and found him with a neat pass. Jarmanpreet looked up a couple of times and crossed the ball towards the goal. Gurjant got on his knee and tapped the ball past the goalkeeper with a first-time shot. In the end, it was a comfortable win for India despite them not being at their best against an under-strength Germany. And while the result will remain a footnote, the performance of the forward line heading into the Olympics will be a big takeaway.

Why Rishabh Pant's one-handed shots are a double-edged sword

GNS News Agency, June 7

In his first hit out in the national blues since November 2022, Rishabh Pant sparkled like he had never before in T20s for India. Albeit a warm-up outing against a depleted Bangladesh attack, Pant looked in free-flowing touch, even unfurling a range of his ramps and scoops in sunny New York.

Feeding on T20 cricket's unique skill sets and terminologies, the local baseball-loving Americans could soon come across the one-handed swat off Pant's willow more often during India's Group A fixtures in New York and Florida. While he nailed a one-handed six over long-on on Saturday, Pant's trademark shot has seen wavering results since his comeback IPL 2024 season. The chances are reasonably high for such an occurrence, for one in every 14 deliveries that Pant played during the IPL ended up as either a one-hander or the bat falling completely off his grasp.

For the keen US enthusiasts who may take their curiosity online to understand the commonness of this 'one-handed' shot in cricket, one awaits a sea of Pant's pictures from different angles employing the shot. Pant in Edgbaston, Pant in Delhi, in Ranchi, Dubai, and Kolkata – there are elaborate compilations of the left-hander's slick shot in different jerseys and formats across continents and conditions. The distinct bottom hand (left for Pant) rests above where a regulation top hand usually occurs. At a glance, it would strike a newbie that the entire power is generated from the bottom hand, with the freed-up top hand lending direction and distinctiveness.

Often launched in complete precipitance against attacks in Test cricket, Pant relished the highs from the stroke until mid-2022, before the chinks in the shotmaking began to crop up. Festive offer Rishabh Pant Clockwise from left: Mismisties pull vs CSK; Drags a ball to mid-wicket vs GT; Pant is

Coupled with his 'falling' sweep/scoop shots to the on-side, where he attempts a deliberate shuffle across the line of the stumps and somehow drags the ball behind the square of the wicket, the one-hander was found wanting. Even during Saturday's knock, 46 of Pant's 53 runs against Bangladesh were made through the on-side, underlining his tendencies.

After a lowly IPL 2022 season without a half-century, Pant captained India for the first time in five T20s against South Africa. He was targeted with deliveries far outside the off-stump by the South Africans and dismissed in four successive matches with the same play; his one-hander and minimal off-side range could not stand up to the relentless attack. "He can't throw enough muscle on that. He has got to stop looking to go aerial that far outside the off-stump. Ten times, he has been dismissed wide outside off-stump (in T20s in 2022). Some of them would have been called wide if he had not made contact with them. Because he is so far away, he has to reach out for it. He will never get enough power on it," India batting legend Sunil Gavaskar would rue after Pant's dismal streak.

'Predetermined, premeditated' Two months later, Gavaskar would add that Pant is a "predetermined, premeditated cricketer who decides quite often what he is going to do before the ball is bowled." Racing towards a T20 World Cup, Pant was limited from making amends then. With his accident and 14-month layoff since December 2022, he was further pruned from working on



that little grey area in his game, as exemplified during his IPL return. It was strange to have cricket's 'Spidey' lose the grip on his bat as many as 20 times over the last two months. While heavy hitters like Chris Gayle, Shahid Afridi, and MS Dhoni have employed the shot in the past, it came off as a rarity, a once-in-a-while abruptness in the slog that eventually crosses the fence due to the solidity in their big-hitting technique. Pant is a new-age outlier who has seen intentional value in this shot, perhaps even carrying the notion of demoralising the opposition bowler with it. The Delhi southpaw also showed more affinity for shots towards the on-side, more so behind the square of the wicket this IPL.

In his previous stint in 2022, Pant scored 49 per cent (162 of 340) of his runs through the on-side, of which 57 were made through the square leg and fine leg. He compiled 139 runs behind the square that season – 42.1 per cent of his total runs. Despite missing out on substantial knocks, Pant scored relatively freely through the off-side, accounting for 178 runs, of which almost 100 were scored through cover and long-off.

This year, Pant's run-making has been heavily swayed (65.4 per cent) to the on-side – 292 of 446. From this, nearly 50 per cent (154) of the on-side runs have emanated from behind square, one of his dominant scoring zones of the season. Pant's scoring down the ground on the off-side was plugged heavily – only 16 runs through long-off in the entire IPL season. A possible explanation for this stems from Gavaskar's observation in 2022; Pant continues to pre-empt and manufacture strokes to the on-side even from deliveries well outside the off-stump. The positives? Pant has obliterated most lines and lengths at the stumps or on the leg side, with the pull, flick and pick up shots garnering him 156 runs at a 208 strike rate with no dismissals and a control rate above 75 per cent. However, his control rate plummets drastically to the hook (37.50%), slog sweep (44.40%), on-side slog (16.70%), the sweep (54.50%), off-side slog (0) and late cut (66.70%) – all of which require power generation from outside the off-stump. These strokes have resulted in eight dismissals, with his habitual falling sweeps and slogs faltering due to lack of balance or timing. Off the 20 deliveries where Pant had lost his grip or bat this season, he had been dismissed four times, highlighting the excessive risk attached to the quirks. In fact, bowling a half-volley or fuller delivery outside the off-stump has seen the back of the Delhi Capitals skipper six times in 78 balls while aggregating 98 runs. In the Americas, Pant will encounter scrupulous international attacks who may have already picked up on the weakness. His overall T20 numbers, 987 runs at 126.37 strike rate, do not vouch for fine reading either. Still, India's favoured keeper can bear great satisfaction if he can overcome this specific hurdle soon in his comeback trail.

The real Amit Panghal shows up as he puts the struggles of last three years behind to win Paris Olympics quota



GNS News Agency, June 7

That chance came when India exhausted all other options and had no choice but to bring their World Championship silver medallist boxer back from the unnecessary exile they had put him in. Deepak Bhoria, his successor after that Tokyo Olympics debacle, lost early at the Asian Games and lost early in the first Boxing World Qualifiers. Irish High Performance director Bernard Dunne resigned after every male Indian boxer not named Nishant Dev exited the first Qualifier in the first round itself. Better sense finally prevailed to allow Panghal a chance, with less than two months for the Paris Olympics to go. On Sunday against China's Liu Chuang, he found himself down in the scorecards from all judges bar one after the first round. For the first time in three years, here was one of the better boxers India had produced over the last decade, with his destiny finally in his own hands. Out went the rustiness that has been a hallmark of his performances at these qualifiers, and suddenly the boxer that was the No 1 seed at the previous Olympics showed up. Taking that all important second round in Bangkok must have felt therapeutic considering that's where it all fell apart at Tokyo. A close third round followed, but Panghal was the one who managed to convince all judges that he would have to be the one to go to Paris.

The last three years have not been easy for the Rohtak boxer. Panghal may have been the reigning Asian champion as well as the World's silver medallist going into the previous Olympics but that one loss somehow also saw faith in him diminish. India's then high-performance director Santiago Nieva made an exit and along with it, Panghal was brushed aside. "It was obviously tough for Amit. All of us, including him, had high expectations from Tokyo. We understood that the world's best boxers are there in Tokyo and there will be some close fights. It was a tough loss against a world class boxer and it took

some time for that loss to sink in for Amit as well as us," Nieva told

It took time for Panghal to recover. Instead of boxing, he started to go on long cycle rides at the Sports Authority of India in Rohtak, amid familiar settings. Meditation became a key source of calm for the boxer who felt uneasy stepping back into the ring. Any other sport but boxing would be his mantra. Outside of that bubble, India chose to move on from Panghal. A new national coach, a new high-performance director and their own way, found it itself as his latest opponent. Panghal returned in 2022 and went to the Commonwealth Games, won a gold medal, but was denied the chance to go to two World Championships and the Asian Games, all in this Olympic cycle. The reason given to him was a process of evaluation for boxers devised by Bernard Dunne, one that moved on from India's trial system. One of those evaluations came to the conclusion that one of the best boxers in the world, was at best, No 2 in India. The snub saw Panghal slowly get demotivated. At first, he would spar with Deepak Bhoria and try his best to show the coaches his worth. When that didn't work, he had to go to court. At home though it was his brother who kept advising him to raise his game and wait for his opportunity. "Performance bolti hai aur hum kya bole (Performance speaks and what do we need to say). If somebody does not show trust in you, then you have to make a comeback," said elder brother Hawaldar Ajay Panghal to this daily. "I would always tell him that talent hai toh kismet bhi badal jayegi kisi din aur Olympics medal bhi ayega (if there is talent, then the luck can be turned around any time and Olympic medal too shall come)."

When Bhoria blew his chances, the coaches had no choice but to select him to go to Bangkok. And at that time, instead of joining the national team at a camp in Thailand, Panghal and his long-time basic coach Anil Dhankar went to BI Fernandes. Once upon a time India's chief boxing coach, Fernandes was at that time situated at NBA, Rohtak. The Cuban spent a couple of weeks with Panghal, sharpening the boxer but privately admitting to Dhankar that there was something else that their boxer required – confidence. "Fernandes ji would ask him to box 8-10 rounds against youth boxers in Rohtak. He took it upon himself to help Amit. In the end he said that while Amit was training well, he would need constant motivation from now on. In fact, Amit stayed back in India for a few extra days even though the team went to Bangkok for training. It's clear now that it was the deciding factor," said Dhankar.

Real Madrid win the trophy they were destined to

GNS News Agency, June 7

Everyone knew how it would end; everyone has seen how it ends. The players knew it; the spectators at the Wembley and the millions watching on television knew it, perhaps the Yellow Wall of Borussia Dortmund and the team's biggest fan, the manager Edin Terzic, knew it too. It would end with the uncontrollable, unpreventable destiny of Real Madrid celebrating another Champions League final night; the muscle-memory in those trophy-bearing arms holding the giant ears of the trophy into the Wembley night sky, their opponents wandering aimlessly, their legs wilting as much as their hearts. No pair in football exists quite like Real Madrid and Champions League. So in love with each other that they start to resemble each other, as when happy couples grow old. One is often the identity of the other, one and the same, inseparable and irresistible after all the years, content with their familiarity. The thought of Real Madrid, those famous names and iconic images roll out of your head, and they always have one hand on the big-eared trophy. No one remembers them winning a league, even if it has been harder to achieve in the last 15 years than the premier European club competition. In the same span that they have won six Champions league titles, they have collected five league titles. Real Madrid, then, is the ultimate European trophy. It is their identity, its cause. It is, they feel, their trophy. So Dortmund was not just facing an elite team, or history, or heritage, but an identity and a cause. The more a breakthrough goal eluded them, the heavier the burden felt. You could sense the mood as early as half-time. When the whistle blew, Dortmund men looked forlornly into the ground, they could sense the earth beneath them falling apart. How they have spilled their chances, how gloriously had they squandered the fairytale ending to a fairytale season; they could sense the cloud of doom descending on them. Madrid's men, though, were ambulating into the tunnel, captured by a vivaciously smiling Vinicius Junior, who had endured a shoddy first half. Someone just tuning in could think Dortmund were battered. On the contrary, they were the far superior side, moving upfield with pace and precision, pressing aggressively, controlling the tempo, getting runners pierce into the space behind the Madrid backline. Several times they came close. Karim Adeyemi, after a rapid run from the half-line had just Thibaut Courtois, playing in just his fifth game of the season, to beat. He could see the lights of history winking at him, then he just saw the spread-out frame of the Belgian goalkeeper, his halo and stature. The 22-year-old German froze, made a heavy touch and Dani Carvajal hoofed the ball to safety. Ian Maatsen soon sliced a pass through the centre of the defence and released Niclas Fullkrug, Dortmund's most prolific goalscorer this season. But the nerves swelling and pulsing in his head and feet, he lashed the ball across Courtois and onto the base of the right-hand post. Another night, another opponent, they could have been 2-0. But it was the Champions League night, and it was Real Madrid. It could not have gone any other way. The yellow army buzzed, Madrid never really strummed into gears. The lively Adeyemi and industrious Marcel Sabitzer had shies at the goal blocked. Somehow, they survived the onslaught. That's what they often do, especially in the post Ronald-Bale era, becoming champions without exuding the authority of one, grinding out wins rather than demolishing opponents. That's perhaps more agonising for their opponents, for they give hope and then kill it. As the game swept past the hour-mark, you could see sparks flaring in the Madrid frontline. Vinicius, after a "bit of scolding" from



Carlo Ancelotti, discovered his twinkling feet. A belief-defying nutmeg of Julian Ryerson was a cheeky warning of what was to come. Not a quick kill, but a slow, draining, draining death. Toni Kroos had a brace of curling free-kicks towards the Dortmund goal, repelled acrobatically by Gregor Kobel. By now even the romantics could sense the inescapable fate flapping its wings. Madrid would soon twist the knife. From an unlikely source, Dani Carvajal, who had a couple of tense moments on the right flank. The right back had lost the searing pace of his youth; he has scored only one goal ever in Champions League, and 12 in as many top-flight seasons. But he leapt over the yellow wall—a leap of ambition rather—and flicked a brutal header into the nets. It must have felt like a bullet through the heart of Dortmund players. That moment when they saw destiny mocking them. Madrid would close out the game with calm and ease; they were playing walking ghosts in yellow. What followed was extraordinarily harsh on them, but it is also true that they had started to look weary and were not creating any real threat by the point everything began to unravel. Vinicius would put the match beyond contest, and by now there was a sense of watching a familiar climax unfold. Atletico, Liverpool, Bayern Munich, Chelsea and Manchester City have all felt the pain in the last decade of Madrid supremacy in the Champions League. It's difficult to think of any team dominating any continental tournament like they have. Then it's no longer a tournament for Madrid, a quest for glory, but an identity. And you knew how the night would end.

Oman-Namibia record first Super Over in 12 years, third overall

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Oman and Namibia played out a thrilling T20 World Cup 2024 tie in their Group B match in Barbados on Monday, prompting a first Super Over in 12 years in the tournament. Batting first on a sticky surface, Oman tottered to 109 in 19.4 overs after left-arm pacer Rubel Truempelmann trapped opener Kashyap and skipper Aqib Ilyas off the first two deliveries of the match before dismissing wicketkeeper Naseem Khushi in his second over. Veteran David Wiese then dented the middle-order with three wickets before Truempelmann returned to record his best bowling figures – 4/21 in four overs. In reply, Namibia seemed to be in control of a slow chase before Oman tightened the noose at the end. While only five runs were required in the final over, medium pacer Mehran Khan pulled off two wickets before enforcing the tie.