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## Hyderabad wakes up to cloudy skies; rainy spell ahead in Telangana

Hyderabad: Residents of the city were greeted with cloudy weather on Saturday morning following intermittent scattered showers across various areas after a brief lull in rainfall. Weather experts anticipate a rain spell episode this coming week, with moderate to heavy rains expected across the city.

On Friday, the northern pockets of Hyderabad, including Serilingampally, Kukatpally, Tirumalagiri, Bowenpally, Malkajgiri, Kapra, Neredmet, Karkhana, and Alwal, experienced substantially short-duration rains. Specific areas such as Malkajgiri, Kapra, Alwal, and Uppal recorded moderate showers of around 20 to 25 mm.

## I.N.D.I.A bloc wins three Assembly seats, leading in 8



GNS News Agency, July 13

New Delhi: I.N.D.I.A bloc parties won three Assembly seats and were leading on eight, while the BJP and an Independent were ahead on one each as votes were counted on Saturday for the by-elections held earlier this week, according to the trends on the EC website. AAP's Mohinder Bhagat won the Jalandhar West seat in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's wife and Congress candidate Kamlesh Thakur won in Dehra and TMC's Krishna Kalyani in West Bengal's Raiganj.

The Congress, Trinamool Congress (TMC), AAP and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) are the I.N.D.I.A bloc parties that fielded candidates in the bypolls held on Wednesday in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Tamil Nadu. In Punjab, Bhagat won the Jalandhar West seat by defeating his nearest rival and BJP nominee Sheetal Angural by a margin of 37,325 votes, the Election Commission (EC) said. The seat fell vacant after Angural resigned as the AAP legislator and joined the BJP in March. In Tamil Nadu, DMK's Anniyur Siva was ahead of PMK's Anbumani C by 39,435 votes in the Vikravandi assembly seat, the website showed. TMC's Kalyani defeated BJP's Manas Kumar Ghosh by a margin of 50,077 votes to win the Raiganj assembly seat, one of the four constituencies where bypolls were held in



West Bengal. The party's other candidates Mukut Nami Adhikari, Madhuparna Tahkur and Supti Pandey are in the lead in Ranaghat Dakshin, Bagda and Maniktala. In Ranaghat Dakshin, the BJP is trailing by 31,737 votes; in Bagda by 33,455 votes and in Maniktala by 34,865 votes, according to the EC website. In Himachal Pradesh, Congress' Kamlesh Thakur defeated BJP's Hoshiyar Singh by a margin of 9,399 votes to win the Dehra Assembly seat. In the other two seats where bypolls were held in the state — Congress' Hardeep Singh Bawa is in the lead in Nalagarh and BJP's Ashish Sharma in Hamirpur. In Hamirpur, Congress' Pushpinder Verma was trailing by 1,571 votes against Sharma while Bawa was leading with 8,990 votes against BJP's K L Thakur in Nalagarh, according to the website. The Congress' candidates for the Badrinath and Manglaur bypolls — Lakshpat Singh Butola and Qazi Nizamuddin — in Uttarakhand were leading in both seats, according to the poll panel. BJP's Rajendra Bhandari was trailing by 4,196 votes in Badrinath, while in Manglaur, BJP's Kartar Singh Bhadana was at second spot and BSP's Ubaidur Rahman at third. In Madhya Pradesh's Amarwar seat, Congress' Dheeran Shah Inwati was ahead of BJP's Kamslesh Pratap Shahi by 2,069 votes, while in Bihar, JD(U)'s Kaladhar Prasad Mandal was trailing by 5,069 votes against Independent candidate Shankar Singh, the EC website showed.

## Hostel roof slab collapses triggering student protest

Warangal: Students of the Kakatiya University here on Saturday staged a protest against the collapse of a roof slab in a hostel room on the university campus. A large portion of a roof slab collapsed in a room at the Ranirudrama Women's Hostel on Friday night. However, no one was injured as there were no students at the time of the incident, averting a potential tragedy. The incident sparked outrage among students, who staged a protest in the campus demanding the university authorities to improve facilities in the campus hostels. Mild tension prevailed at the campus following a heated argument between the agitating students and the university Registrar Mallareddy, who went to inspect the hostel room.

## Modi bowing to Naidu's demands on bifurcation promise; BRS sees red

GNS News Agency, July 13

Hyderabad: With reports indicating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had agreed to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's demand for a Rs.60,000 crore petrochem hub and Indian Oil refinery, one of the promises in the Thirteenth Schedule of the AP Reorganisation Act, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi has registered its protest over the Centre's continued discrimination towards Telangana. Pointing out that Modi was bowing to pressure by Naidu on account of the TDP's support to the NDA, the BRS demanded the eight BJP MPs from the State to spell out their stance. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan here on Saturday, former MP and senior BRS leader B Vinod Kumar said the net contribution of the eight BJP MPs to the development of the State was insignificant so far. Now that the BJP was dependent on the support of the TDP, Modi had granted the petroleum hub and refinery to Andhra Pradesh. He asked



why the NDA government had failed to consider the bifurcation commitments given to Telangana. He wanted the BJP MPs from the State to spell out their stand on the Bayyaram steel plant and Kazipet coach factory for which the BRS was fighting for long. The BJP government had also deprived Telangana of the ITIR. Though 23 new districts came into existence newly as part of the reorganisation revenue system, not even a single Navodaya Vidyalaya was given to the State.

The BJP government

had a Cabinet Minister and a minister of State from Telangana. He wanted to know from them what role they would play on their part to ensure Telangana its due share in the upcoming budget. Earlier, coming down heavily on elected representatives switching parties undermining the mandate given by the electorate, Vinod Kumar said that the defections engineered by the Congress leadership would prove to be counter-productive for the Congress only. By taking the BRS MLAs into its fold, the Congress party had

upset the priorities for which the people had voted. The BRS that survived many a turbulence during its long eventful history, would overcome the setback, he said. The BRS leadership will focus on infusing new blood and strive to revive its old glory. The party would discuss the way forward soon, he said, adding that the BRS would stage a comeback galvanising the rank and file. Leaders who preferred to desert the party when it was out of power, had exposed their lack of commitment to the organisation.

## Delhi Excise policy case: Court defers hearing on K Kavitha's bail plea



GNS News Agency, July 13,

New Delhi: The Rouse Avenue court on Friday deferred hearing on Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha's plea seeking default bail in Delhi Excise policy case. Special judge Kaveri Baweja listed the matter on July 22 for further hearing. On Monday, the court issued notice to the Central Bureau of Investigation on K Kavitha's plea. Advocate Nitesh Rana represented K Kavitha.

He had submitted that while considering the charge sheet for the purpose of cognizance on July 6, it was specifically dictated by the court that the charge sheet was defective. It was submitted that the applicant seeking default as the CBI has failed to file a complete charge sheet within a mandatory period of 60 days. It was also submitted that she should be granted default bail in the matter and interim bail during the pendency of the present bail application. Notably, Kavitha's earlier regular bail applications were dismissed by the trial court and High Court. She was arrested by the CBI on April 11 in the Delhi Excise Policy case. Prior to this, she was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 15.

CBI filed a charge sheet against her on June 6. The same is pending for cognizance on July 15. This was the third supplementary charge sheet filed by the CBI in the Delhi Excise Policy case. (ANI) On July 8, the Rouse Avenue court reserved the order on cognizance of the CBI's charge sheet filed against BRS leader K Kavitha in the Delhi Excise Policy case. Special judge Kaveri Baweja reserved the order after hearing submissions by CBI's Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) DP Singh. The court said that it will pronounce the order on July 15. Advocate DP Singh submitted that cognizance of the offence has already been taken. We are aware that a policy was made and the influence of South Group was there. All key persons in the group worked under Kavitha's command.

He also read over the statements of TDP MP Magunta S Reddy, who met Delhi CM Kejriwal on March 16, 2021. His son, Raghav Magunta, also confirmed this.

He also submitted that there is a list of statements we are relying upon, including Sarath Reddy, Gopi Kumaran and Raghav Magunta. There are many people who will ultimately speak against Kavitha.

Cognizance of the offence is already taken; this charge sheet is only for the limited purpose of consideration and summoning of this accused, said DP Singh.

## Mehbooba, other J&K politicians claim they are under house arrest

GNS News Agency, July 13

Srinagar: Several political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir, including PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, on Saturday claimed authorities have put them under house arrest to prevent them from visiting the 'martyrs' graveyard' to pay homage to the 22 Kashmiri people killed by the army of a Dogra ruler on this day in 1931. However, there was no official word on the claims made by the politicians. Mehbooba, a former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, alleged that she was put under "house arrest" at her residence in Khimber in the outskirts of the city. "The gates of my house have been locked up yet again to prevent me from visiting Mazar e Shuhada — an enduring symbol of Kashmir's resistance and resilience against authoritarianism, oppression and injustice," she said in a post on X. The PDP chief said the "sacrifices of our martyrs is a testament that the spirit of



Kashmiri's cannot be crushed" and added that "today even observing it in remembrance of the protesters martyred on this day has been criminalised". "On 5th August, 2019 J&K was dismembered, disempowered and stripped of everything that was sacrosanct for us. They intend to erase each one of our collective memories," she said referring to the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of J-K into Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. But such assaults will only strengthen our determination to continue the fight for our rights and dignity," she

added. The gates of my house have been locked up yet again to prevent me from visiting Mazar e Shuhada — an enduring symbol of Kashmir's resistance & resilience against authoritarianism, oppression & injustice. The sacrifices of our martyrs is a testament that the spirit of Kashmiri's... Separatist-turned-mainstream politicians and People's Conference chairman Sajad Lone also claimed that he has been put under house arrest. "For no reason informed of being under house arrest. I really fail to understand what the administration gets in stop-

ping people from going to the martyrs graveyard," Lone said on X. He said people have a right to choose their heroes and "the martyrs are heroes for the people of Kashmir". "Why be in a denial and why on earth would a non-resident government need to meddle in it. Actually believing that a government will decide on what has been historically heroic and who are the historical heroes is an unambiguous sign of despotism," Lone said. For no reason informed of being under house arrest. I really fail to understand what the administration gets in stopping people from going to the martyrs graveyard. The gate of the residence of National Conference (NC)'s provincial president, Kashmir, Nasir Aslam Wani, was also locked by police. "The gate has been locked and police personnel deployed to stop us from going to pay our respects at martyrs' graves. I really fail to understand what the administration gets in stop-

## SC judge says Sutlej turned into rivulet, blames construction of dams

GNS News Agency, July 13,

New Delhi: Supreme Court judge Justice Sanjay Karol said the construction of dams on the Sutlej has turned the trans-Himalayan river into a rivulet, altering the entire ecosystem and eco chain. Speaking at the launch of a book titled 'Climate Change: The Policy, Law and Practice' by lawyer Jatinder (Jay) Cheema, Justice Karol also highlighted that climate change is heavily impacting the agriculture sector in the country. The Supreme Court judge noted that stretches of certain rivers are drying up due to rising temperatures and human activity. "The only trans-Himalayan river in India, the Sutlej, has turned into a rivulet because of the construction of several dams, changing the entire ecosystem and eco chain," he said. Justice Karol said successive governments have spent Rs 30,000 crore on cleaning the Ganga. "We know the current state. We have all seen it. A lot more needs to be done on this issue. The famous Gangetic river dolphins, unfortunately, are nowhere to be seen." He added that farming has suffered due to the erosion of climate stability over the years. "With nearly 58 per cent of the Indian population relying on agriculture and its allied activities for their livelihood, and even while other sectors have seen tremendous growth, agriculture retains its predominance. While India accomplished the noteworthy milestone of self-reliance in the 1970s with the Green Revolution and now produces an adequate amount of foodgrain for its entire population, farming in India is embroiled in a host of socio-economic and environmental issues," he said. "Owing to climate change, India's agricultural yield is said to have reduced. Other factors leading to the erosion of farming conditions and agricultural produce include the adoption of unsustainable practices such as the use of heavy chemical fertilisers — we have seen what is happening in Punjab — over-irrigation, and excessive groundwater extraction," Justice Karol said.

## KTR decries Congress Govt bid to recover pension money from 80-year-old woman

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Hyderabad: Stating that it was disheartening for the people of the State who pinned hopes on the assurances made by the Congress Party to scale up the benefits under the welfare initiatives, only to find themselves at the receiving end, BRS working president KT Rama Rao wanted the government to mend its ways or face the ire of the people.

Decrying the strange ways of the government, he said disappointment prevailed everywhere with the Congress party government breaking its promises. Instead of fulfilling its commitments, the government was out to force people to cough up for the help received in the previous regime.

## Revanth Reddy participates in quality engineering education program, assure govt. support

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy recently announced that the government is prepared to offer support to engineering colleges in the state. He made this statement while participating in the 'Quality Engineering Education' programme as the chief guest. During his speech, CM Revanth Reddy highlighted the importance of the fee reimbursement scheme introduced by the Congress party, stating that it was the first of its kind in the country. He emphasized the need for college management to be familiar with the government's policies, particularly the Bhutva policy. The Chief Minister assured that there would be no fee reimbursement arrears from the current academic year onwards. He urged colleges to focus on offering courses that align with future industry needs, such as civil, mechanical, and electrical engineering. CM Revanth Reddy also emphasized the

importance of adapting to emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), which he believes will play a significant role in the future. He suggested that colleges in the state should consider introducing courses related to AI and reiterated the government's support for such initiatives. Furthermore, the Chief Minister announced the upcoming establishment of a Skill Development University and the granting of autonomous status to certain educational institutions. He emphasized the government's commitment to creating employment opportunities for the unemployed and ensuring that the state remains competitive on a global scale. The meeting was attended by Minister Sridhar Babu, JNTU Vice-Chancellor Burra Venkatesham, and representatives from various engineering colleges. The government's efforts to support and enhance engineering education in Telangana were well-received by the attendees.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Highway hiccups

THE termination of three national highway projects worth over Rs 3,300 crore by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is bad news for Punjab, which aspires to become a go-to destination not only for investors but also for tourists. The NHAI, which has also initiated the process for scrapping four other projects worth over Rs 4,940 crore, has flagged a major roadblock — an inordinate delay in the possession of acquired land due to tardy declaration of compensation by the authorities. Farmers' resistance to land acquisition and disagreement over fixing of the award amount are the other contributory factors. Punjab has assured the NHAI that it will expedite acquisition, but coming up with offers that are acceptable to all stakeholders is a big challenge. Unfinished highway projects are an eyefore for commuters as well as visitors. The ubiquitous traffic diversions cause inconvenience to motorists day in, day out. It is difficult for the state government to improve ease of doing business when the work on highways drags on indefinitely or is discontinued abruptly. Much depends on offering the rightful sum to landowners. Even as land is acquired under the National Highways Act, 1956, compensation is decided as per the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013. The award is supposed to be two to four times the determined market value of the land, but procedural anomalies and irregularities often lead to a stalemate or even litigation. These thorny issues must be sorted out in a time-bound manner. Punjab can take a cue from Telangana, one of the best-performing states in terms of providing a business-friendly environment. Earlier this week, Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy told district collectors to ensure that farmers who parted with their land for the construction of national highways got the maximum compensation as per law.

## Himachal CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's wife has her work cut out if she wins Dehra bypoll

GNS News Agency, July 13

People of Chamnal, the native village of Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's wife and Congress candidate in the July 10 bypoll in Dehra, Kamlesh Thakur, are ready with their wish list, the main demand being inclusion of their Nalsuha panchayat in the Assembly constituency. "Pahve sadi dhayan Dehra tu lad rai, aasa na gran Jaswan-Pragpur chh pendu. Assan ni pehle demand, assan ki Dehra vich lane di (Indeed, our sister is contesting from Dehra, but our panchayat falls under the Jaswan-Pragpur Assembly constituency. After her win, our first demand will be to include our panchayat in the Dehra Assembly constituency)," Manita Sharma, sarpanch of Nalsuha panchayat, told The Indian Express.

"Our village tehsil (taluka) is Dehra, but our Assembly constituency is different. For every small and big administrative work, we have to go to Dehra, but during elections, we vote in the Jaswan-Pragpur Assembly segment (represented by BJP MLA Bikram Thakur). We have already prepared a wish list to present to Kamlesh Thakur if she wins, and our foremost demand is to include our panchayat in the Dehra constituency. We have basic facilities—water, electricity, and roads—but there are some areas that require attention. As Kamlesh is saying that there will be another chief minister's office at Dehra if she wins the election, we are eagerly looking forward to it," Sharma added. Said Kishan Kumar from Chanota, another village in Nalsuha, "Since Kamlesh Thakur was declared the Congress candidate from Dehra, the entire country has been watching the constituency, and our panchayat is also in the limelight." There are seven villages under Nalsuha panchayat—Chamnal, Madwada, Upper Chanota, Chanota, Nalsada Bharwadia, Nalsuha, and Soked. The entire area, including Dehra sub-town, was part of Jaswan-Pragpur from 1967 to 2012. In 2012, Dehra was made a separate Assembly constituency.

Shukal Kumar, a tailor who has his shop in Nalsuha, said, "My workplace is in Nalsuha, but my village Paddal falls in the Dehra Assembly constituency, from where Hoshyar Singh Chambyal won twice independently. It is also my wish that my workplace comes under the Dehra Assembly segment. Nalsuha panchayat has a population of approximately 2,000 people, out of which 1,400 are registered voters. Had we been under the Dehra Assembly constituency, we could have supported our sister."

Chamnal is located around 12 km from Dehra sub-town. A narrow kutcha (temporary) road goes to the maternal house of Kamlesh Thakur. People have to give up small portions of their land if a permanent and concrete road is to be constructed. Earlier, people were not ready to surrender their land but now they are. A local requesting anonymity said, "Recently, officials from the local administration made an estimate for the road." "Sitting in Kamlesh Thakur's maternal house in Chamnal, her two nieces said they have urged their friends and family members to rally behind their aunt in the upcoming bypoll. "We have been asking our friends and family members to support our aunt," said Divya Thakur, a Class 12 student, and Deepti Thakur, a BTEch graduate.

Surendra Patyal, the elder sister of Kamlesh Thakur, who came from Dehradun to support her, said, "We have two brothers, Yudhvir Thakur and Surinder Thakur, in the village. They, along with our nephew Dushyant Thakur, are all busy campaigning. We were all born and brought up in this house and have an emotional attachment to this village. Our father retired from the Military Engineering Service." Patyal said no one in the family had any idea that Thakur would make her electoral debut. Though villagers say that Hoshyar Singh Chambyal should not be underestimated, they believe Kamlesh Thakur has a bright prospect.

Naresh Kumar, who has relatives in the Dehra Assembly constituency, said, "The first plus is that CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu is the husband of the Congress candidate. Everybody in Dehra knows that if Kamlesh wins, they will benefit. Second, why did Hoshyar Singh resign if he wanted development in this area? When he had won independently in 2022, why did he support the BJP at the last moment? He should have remained neutral."

## 'Guilty will not be spared': Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde assures justice in Mumbai BMW hit-and-run case



GNS News Agency, July 13

Eknath Shinde CM Shinde said common citizens are of utmost importance to the government. He directed the police to take hit-and-run cases seriously and ensure justice for the victims. Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Monday directed the police to take strict action in the Mumbai BMW hit-and-run case without sparing anyone guilty. He said wealthy politicians attempting to manipulate the system by abusing their power will not be tolerated.

The speeding BMW car that hit a scooter in

## CPI(M)'s Md Salim, BJP's Amit Malviya booked by Bengal police for circulating video of Chopra public flogging after complaint by victim

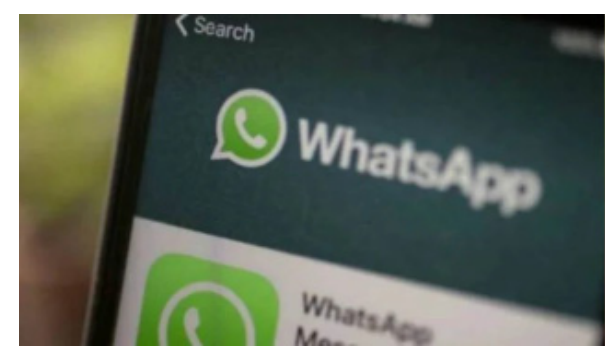
GNS News Agency, July 13

The West Bengal Police have booked CPI(M) state secretary Mohammed Salim (right) and Amit Malviya, BJP co-observer for Bengal, for circulating the video of the Chopra public flogging. (File Photos) The West Bengal Police have booked CPI(M) state secretary Mohammed Salim (right) and Amit Malviya, BJP co-observer for Bengal, for circulating the video of the Chopra public flogging. The West Bengal Police have booked CPI(M) state secretary Mohammed Salim and Amit Malviya, BJP co-observer for Bengal, for circulating the video of the Chopra public flogging.

Police sources reported that a First Information Report (FIR) was filed based on a complaint from the victim woman. She stated that a video was taken and circulated without her permission or knowledge, causing her defamation and grief. She urged the police to take necessary action against Salim and Malviya. On June 28, a man and a woman were flogged in a kangaroo court at Chopra in the Uttar Dinajpur district over their alleged extramarital relationship. Tajimul Islam, identified as the one who was mercilessly whipping the duo after they were dragged into the kangaroo court, is a Trinamool Congress (TMC) local functionary who is known as JCB.

The video of the incident was shared on the social media handles of Malviya and Salim on June 30. Subsequent to public outrage following the video going viral, the police registered a case on their own and arrested the main accused, Islam, along with three others. They invoked attempt to murder and molestation charges against the accused. Speaking to The Indian Express, Joby Thomas, Superintendent of Police, Islampur police district, said, "I cannot tell you the sections off hand. That is not the only FIR registered in the Chopra police station. Other FIRs have been registered, too. We are investigating the cases, including this one."

## 'Warrant is not issued over WhatsApp': Noida police issue advisory to prevent 'digital arrests' in cyber frauds



GNS News Agency, July 13,

The Noida police have issued an advisory warning citizens about a rise in cyber fraud involving the 'digital arrest' method. Officials have reported around 10 cases of 'digital arrests' in the past few months, leading to the filing of FIRs and ongoing investigations. "Through in-depth analysis of bank account holders, registered mobile numbers and mobile numbers, it has been found that active cyber criminals from Jaipur, Bhiwar and Bikaner of Rajasthan were carrying out this act. In this regard, a team under the leadership of ACP (Cybercrime) and the inspector in charge of the cyber police station went to Jaipur and Bikaner in Rajasthan, collected some important clues from their possible locations and included them in the analysis. The gang will be exposed as soon as possible," said an official.

"Digital arrest" is a highly sophisticated method cyber criminals use to deceive citizens. They pose as police officials or enforcement officers from departments such as Customs and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) through WhatsApp or mobile phone and claim that their package has been intercepted and that illegal items such as drugs have been found in it. Further, they ask the victims to stay over the Skype call for many hours and threaten them that if they tell anybody about this, including their family or friends, during the whole operation, they will have to face dire consequences. In this way, cyber criminals hold people in custody or arrest over the digital space for even up to 24 hours. They provide the victim with hope by promising to clear their name and issue a clearance certificate, which will prevent future harassment. However, in order to do this, they ask the victims to transfer money. Once the fraudsters receive the money, they vanish completely.

In the 12-point advisory, the Noida police said, "Before believing the calls made by any unknown person wearing a police uniform, check the phone number and the mentioned name and post through Google search or details available on the website of the concerned department and their deployment. Before sharing any informa-

Mumbai's Worli on Sunday morning, leading to a 45-year-old woman's death, was allegedly being driven by Mihir Shah, 24, son of Rajesh Shah, a senior leader of the Shinde-led Shiv Sena. The Mumbai police have issued a lookout circular (LoC) against Mihir and arrested his father and driver for allegedly helping Mihir escape after the accident. Shinde said common citizens are of utmost importance to the government. He directed the police to take hit-and-run cases seriously and ensure justice for the victims. "Whoever is guilty in these cases, no matter how rich, influential, or bureaucrats, children of people's representatives of any party, they will not be supported," Shinde said, adding that he and the government stand firmly with the victims and their families. He also said the government is committed to a safe Maharashtra for everyone. The woman, identified as Kaveri Nakhwa, was killed when the speeding BMW car owned by the Shinde Sena leader rammed into a two-wheeler on which she was travelling and dragged her on the bonnet for nearly two kilometres before flinging her on the road. A resident of Worli Koliwada, she was heading back with her husband, Pradeep Nakhwa, 50, to sell fish bought from Crawford market. Pradeep was injured in the accident.

## Woman makes hoax bomb call to Bengaluru airport to prevent boyfriend flying to Mumbai, booked



GNS News Agency, July 13

A 29-year-old woman was recently booked for allegedly making a hoax call to the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) helpline to stop her boyfriend from flying to Mumbai. While the incident took place on June 25, it came to light when a police complaint was filed on July 3. The KIA police registered a case under Section 505(1)(B) (statements conducing to public mischief) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) as the incident happened before the new criminal laws came into force.

According to the police, the accused has been identified as Indra Rajwar, who is from Pune and works in Bengaluru. "A woman contacted the airport helpline where she stated that Mir Raza Mehdi who was travelling from Bengaluru to Mumbai, had a bomb in his bag. She also mentioned that Mehdi was her boyfriend," said a police officer from KIA Police Station. The airport authorities immediately conducted a thorough frisking of Mehdi at the airport and found nothing incriminating. The Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) after the meeting decided to file a complaint with the police. KIA officials also found that Indra Rajwar and Mehdi were at the Bengaluru airport at the same time. "Both of them had tickets booked for Mumbai on different flights and had been seen conversing in the departure lounge before Rajwar made the call to the helpline. She was taken to the police station and she admitted that she had called the airport helpline to prevent Mehdi from flying to Mumbai as there were some differences between them," a police officer said.

## How police cracked an elderly man's murder — CCTV footage, minors moving suspiciously



GNS News Agency, July 13

Pune crime files, police, indian express Two teams of Pune rural police from the Ottur police station and another from the local Crime Branch led by Senior Inspector Avinash Shilimkar launched their probe into the murder case. For two days after a 72-year-old man was found dead at his home in a dilapidated building in a rural area in June, the police in the Junnar taluka under the Pune District was trying to find out who the killers could be.

According to the police, Nawab Ahmad Shaikh was killed on June 8 in the building where he lived alone near Wadar Vasi in the Ottur village. A team of the Pune Rural police rushed to the spot as they received information about the murder. After Shadab Shaikh, the deceased man's son, lodged the First Information Report (FIR) of the murder at the Ottur Police Station, the police started their investigation. Two teams of Pune rural police from the Ottur police station and another from the local Crime Branch led by Senior Inspector Avinash Shilimkar launched their probe into the murder case. While medical reports confirmed Nawab Shaikh was murdered by assault and strangulation, the police were yet to find information that could help them zero in on the perpetrators. As they widened their probe, the police analysed a CCTV camera installed a few metres away from the crime scene. Officers said this systematic investigation by the Pune rural police led to the arrest of seven youngsters, including four minor boys, who allegedly murdered the senior citizen to loot his valuables.

"The deceased man was old and had no previous enmity with anyone. His family members resided in Pune city. Also, there was no CCTV camera installed near his residence. A couple of CCTV cameras were installed on two routes going towards the house of the deceased. To get clues, we checked the footage captured by the CCTV cameras installed by Gram Panchayat at spots that were over 500 metres from the crime scene," said Lahu Thate, Assistant Police Inspector, Ottur police station. "We found some young boys moving suspiciously, and the way they were handling cell phones was also very suspicious. The cell phone of the deceased man was also missing. So, we started zeroing these young boys. We rounded up the boys seen in the CCTV videos for investigation. All of them lived in Ottur. The probe confirmed their involvement in the murder. We arrested three youngsters of age above 18 years. Four minor boys of age between 14 and 18 years old were apprehended and sent to an observation home. Initially, we had no clues, but we solved the case within 48 hours," said Thate Vilas Wagh, 20, Prakash Wagh, 19, and Bhima Hilam, 25, and the four other accused were known to each other, said the police. "They had no previous criminal record. They just conspired to get some money by looting the old man who lived alone. However, when they tried to loot the old man at night, he resisted. So, they attacked him so hard that he died on the spot. The boys looted two cell phones from him and escaped from the spot. They were seen handling the cell phones with curiosity in the CCTV footage. This raised doubts due to which we nabbed them and the murder case was solved," Thate said.

## Annoyed by negative review on Google, PG owner advertises woman as 'call girl' online, posts her photos

GNS News Agency, July 13, The East Division CEN police in Bengaluru on Sunday arrested a paying guest facility owner for allegedly harassing a 24-year-old woman online she left a negative review about his establishment on Google. The accused, Anand Sharma, 32, a resident of Sheshadripura and a native of Rajasthan, posted the woman's photos advertising her as a 'call girl', said the police. "The woman left the PG due to lack of maintenance and inadequate facilities. She posted a negative review on Google.

## When Dal Makhni weds Litti Chokha



GNS News Agency, July 13

"What have you cooked?" he wailed in frustration over the phone. "It's Bharta," I mumbled, avoiding my boss's eye. "But this is baingan," he moaned. Almost falling off my office chair, I asked, "What else is Bharta?" "Aloo!" he proudly informed me. Until then, I had no idea that aloo is the fulcrum of every Bihari kitchen—Aloo Bharta, Aloo Dum, Aloo Tamatar, Aloo Bhujia—the list is endless. As someone said, "Each Bihari eats at least two truckloads of aloo in a lifetime." And how can one forget Litti Chokha and Dahi Chiwda—Bihari staples. Life taught me very late that every dry vegetable is bhujia, and the lowly pakoda is bhaja. Tab tak baj gaya tha mera baja!

This saga began when I entered my Bihari household after marriage, with orange sindoor (vermillion) applied by my husband from the tip of the nose to the maang. The fun began later with ladies taking over—smearing me lavishly from my nose to the maang, through an orange-smearing forehead, or was it the other way around? It had no ending and no beginning. I reached home where I saw red—oops—orange! Beginning with a face wash, I ended with detergent to be presentable for our reception while ensuring that sindoor remained in the maang.

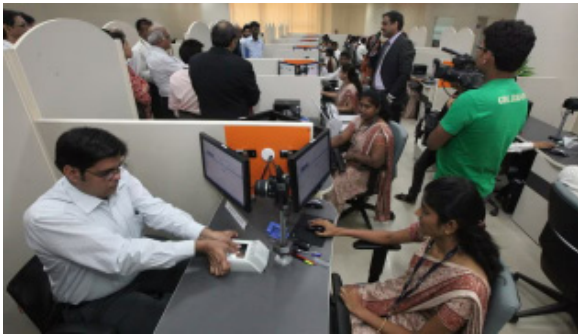
The thick, warm aroma of spices woke me up the

next morning. Hot, spicy mutton was waiting for me. It smelled and tasted good until the spices set my system on fire. I hesitantly requested exemption from such love! To compensate, I was fed delicious homemade Bihari sweets like thekua and paidakia (gujiya, to the uninitiated). While my Punjabi palate was getting used to experimentation, I encountered the salty chana sattu drink! I was gasping for breath. Sattu for Punjabis is barley sattu and a sweet drink. My second attempt at cooking also rebounded. My black chana and rice for dinner left my husband aghast. "Black chana is to be had only with parantha and only at breakfast," he announced.

For a Sardarni, festivals mean indulgence. In Bihar, they mean abstinence—no non-vegetarian food and sometimes, no food at all! The icing on the cake was Teej—a tougher version of Karwa Chauth with more than 30 hours of fasting! I decided to observe a practice fast. My mother-in-law, God bless her, allowed me to have fruit, water, and cold coffee. I survived and even lost one kg! Happy and ready for Teej, I took leave and came to Chandigarh. My husband promptly went on tour. With mehndi on my hands and a scowl on my face, I fasted and did pooja for him, without him. The next year, I fasted for him in Delhi, again without him. Seething with hunger and anger, I told him, "I am never going to fast for you again!" He smiled and said, "Who asked you to?" Thus ended my experiments with fasting. I have been exempted from fasting as no one wants a Sardarni to die of starvation. Partaking the prasad is my only participation. Luckily, I have a Himachali daughter-in-law who more than makes up in the fasting drill. One last episode before I sign off—I wore the dholna (mangalsutra in Bihar) very proudly until the day it accidentally fell off my neck, with me howling and my husband convincing me that nothing would happen to him. In Sikh families, there is no concept of a mangalsutra, payal, and bichias, which have a special place in every Bihari heart and now in my bank locker. As you can see, life is one roller coaster ride for this Sikhni and this Bihari—with miles and miles to go.

## Passport Seva Kendra corruption case: CBI files 2 more

### FIRs against regional passport officers in Mumbai



GNS News Agency, July 13

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed two more First Information Reports (FIRs) in connection with the alleged corruption practices at the Passport Seva Kendra (PSK) in Mumbai, and booked a deputy passport officer (DPO) and a granting officer (GO).

The fresh FIRs were filed on Friday taking the number of officials booked in the Passport Seva Kendra corruption case to 14. The agency booked DPO Pradya Pradeep Wankhedkar of the Passport Seva Kendra at Malad and Umesh Devadhia, superintendent and GO at Lower Parel PSK. The 14 Regional Passport Office (RPO) officials who have been booked, include passport assistants or senior passport assistants, posted at Passport Seva Kendras of Lower Parel and Malad. According to CBI's FIR, Wankhedkar received illegal gratification in lieu of favouring passport agents in the matter of issuance of passports of various applicants. She allegedly accepted undue advantage from different private individuals or agents connected with official dealings and also entered into suspicious transactions with her colleagues.

The FIR said Wankhedkar received bribes through bank transfers and cash deposits worth approximately Rs 51 lakh in her bank accounts from various passport facilitation agents such as Shaikh Muzammil, Suleman Sheikh, and other unknown persons. She also received undue advantage from one agent, Mehul Desai, who has also been accused in the case, the FIR added. The second accused, GO Umesh Devadhia, also received an undue advantage in lieu of favouring passport agents in the issuance of passports. He obtained Rs 4.08 lakh from agent Muzammil as illegal gratification between October 2020 and June 2024, according to the agency's FIR. There were also suspicious credit entries to the tune of approximately Rs 7.37 lakh during May, 2023-May, 2024 in his bank account, added CBI's FIR.

Claiming to have busted a deep-rooted nexus between touts and RPO officials, CBI last month registered 12 FIRs against 32 people, including 14 officials of passport offices. The premier investigation agency on June 26 conducted joint surprise checks at PSKs in Lower Parel and Malad along with vigilance officers of the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Division and officers of Mumbai RPO. CBI also learned some officers of Passport Seva Kendras were also in touch with passport facilitation agents, who were involved in making fake passports by compromising the country's national security. The Central agency had the information that some officers were receiving the bribes directly in their bank accounts or those of their family members from the passport facilitation agents. On June 29, the agency conducted simultaneous searches at 35 locations in Mumbai and Nashik, recovering several incriminating documents, digital evidence pertaining to passport documents, etc. revealing a deep nexus between touts and the RPO officials. Later, the agency also raided one more passport agent's premises in Mumbai and seized cash worth Rs 1.59 crore.

## Heavy rain disrupts express train, local and BEST bus services in Mumbai

GNS News Agency, July 13

Heavy rainfall in Mumbai led to significant water logging on railway tracks and roads, disrupting several long-distance and suburban local train as well as bus services during Monday morning rush hour. According to the Mumbai Division of Central Railway (CR), while services on the main line (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus-Kalyan) are operational, trains between Bhandup and Nahur were being run by clamping and padlocking the points due to the heavy rain and waterlogging.

Western Railways (WR) also acknowledged that local train services are running approximately 10 minutes late due to the heavy rainfall. Swapnil Nila, Chief Public Relations Officer, CR, said trains on the main line are running on the slow line in both directions at a restricted speed limit. Nila said the water level on the tracks at Bhandup is currently 4 inches, necessitating the reduced speed. In the morning, the water level on the tracks was between 6 and 7 inches, making train operations impossible, he added. Central Railways advised commuters to avoid travel unless necessary, citing disruptions due to the heavy rain and high tide in Mumbai. Office goes criticised the railways for their delayed response, with many users on X reporting that trains are not running



beyond Thane towards CSMT and that harbour line trains are only running until Vashi instead of CSMT. In addition to train disruptions, BEST bus services on various routes have been diverted due to water logging on various roads.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) reported Mumbai recorded more than 300 mm of rainfall in various locations between 1 am and 7 am on Monday. More heavy rain is expected later in the day. To avoid inconvenience to students, a holiday has been declared for all BMC, government, and private schools and colleges in the Mumbai (BMC area).

## People will punish BJP in Haryana Assembly polls for mess it created in the last decade: Bhupinder Hooda



GNS News Agency, July 13,

Bhupinder Hooda, haryana assembly polls, haryana BJP, indian express Bhupinder Hooda said the wheels of development will be set in motion again when a Congress government is formed in the state after Legislative Assembly elections will be held later in the year to elect 90 MLAs. (FB) Haryana Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Sunday said the BJP-led government created so much mess in the past ten years that it will be impossible to undo it in three months if and when the Congress returns to power.

Addressing party workers in Nuh, Hooda alleged that the failures of the BJP had come before the people. "Now, the BJP itself has accepted the failure of its schemes. Therefore, the government is taking a U-turn from all its plans, seeing defeat in the Assembly polls. BJP has now lost the right to repent, and the public is now going to punish it by ousting it from power," he stated. Hooda said the wheels of development will be set in motion again when a Congress government is formed in the state after Legislative Assembly elections will be held later in the year to elect 90 MLAs. "Elderly people will receive a monthly pension of Rs 6,000, and employees will benefit from the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). To alleviate the impact of inflation, 300 units of free electricity and LPG cylinders will be provided at the cost of Rs 500 per cylinder. To address unemployment, two lakh vacant positions will be filled, and proactive measures will be taken to stimulate investment and generate employment opportunities in the state," he said.

Hooda thanked the people of the Mewat region for voting for Congress in large numbers in the Lok Sabha elections 2024 and expressed hope that the party would get more support in the Assembly elections. He announced that when the Congress government is formed, a new railway line will be laid in Mewat and a new university will be built in the area. He also promised that the Congress would take steps to end the staff shortage in Shaheed Hasan Khan Mewati Government Medical College, built during the Congress government, and schools in Mewat. Hooda was accompanied by Haryana Congress President Udai Bhan and Congress's Lok Sabha candidate from Gurgaon, Raj Babbar. Udai Bhan mentioned

that Mewat was developed by the Congress in the past, and the party will continue to work for its progress in the future. "The Congress built a medical college here in the name of Hasan Khan Mewati, but today, the BJP is not even providing full staff. As many as 60 per cent of posts are lying vacant in the medical college," he said. Babbar, who lost the Lok Sabha polls to the BJP's Rao Inderjit Singh in Gurgaon, thanked the people of Mewat for their votes and support in the Lok Sabha elections. He said the Lok Sabha results clearly indicated that a Congress government would be formed in Haryana. "When the Congress forms the government, development, brotherhood and unity of all communities will be strengthened in the state," he said.

## Supreme Court issues guidelines on portrayal of disabled persons in films



GNS News Agency, July 13,

New Delhi: The Supreme Court laid down guidelines against "disparaging" portrayal of persons with disabilities in visual media and films on Monday, saying that terms such as "cripple" and "spastic" have acquired "devalued meanings" in societal perceptions. The verdict came on a plea filed by one Nipun Malhotra, who submitted that the Hindi film 'Aankh Micholi' contained derogatory references to differently abled persons. Pronouncing the verdict, a Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said, "Words cultivate institutional discrimination and terms such as cripple and spastic have come to acquire devalued meanings in societal perceptions about persons with disabilities." Laying down several guidelines, the Bench said the film certification body CBFC must invite the opinion of experts before allowing screening. "Visual media should strive to depict diverse realities of persons with disabilities, showcasing not only their challenges but also successes, talents and contribution to society."

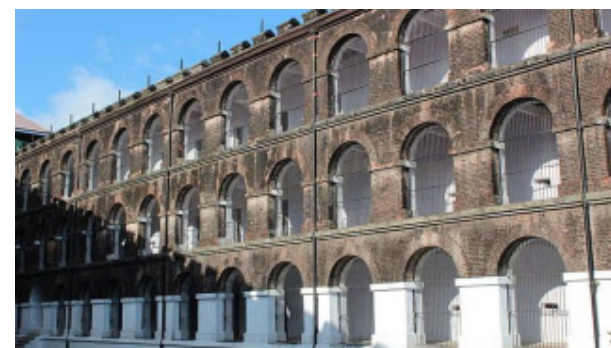
## Punjab starts process to set up first high-security 'radial jail' in Ludhiana

GNS News Agency, July 13

The Punjab government has initiated the process to set up a high-security "radial jail", a first-of-its-kind Central jail in the state, to lodge terrorists, high-risk prisoners, dreaded gangsters and hard-core criminals. The tender for the construction works of the jail was recently floated. The jail will come up in an area of 50 acres in Gorsian Kadar Baksh village in Ludhiana district at a cost of Rs 100 crore and will have a capacity to lodge 300 prisoners. The construction of the jail was announced by Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann in June last year. As per a government functionary, "The tender for the construction works of the jail has been floated. We aim to get the jail constructed at the earliest possible." The entire funding for the jail would be provided by the Centre, said a Punjab government functionary. An official privy to the jail project, told The Indian Express that "the cellular prison" will have cells in "radial" blocks, which will help jail staff to monitor the prisoners effectively. The details of the proposed jail indicate that it has been designed on the lines of the British colonial prison "the Cellular Jail", notoriously referred to as Kala Pani, in Port Blair of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which had solitary confinement cells in blocks radiating from a central tower which served to keep a watch on inmates.

"The whole prison shall be made as a cellular prison and will be divided into various zones as per functional requirement, to avoid inter-mixing of similar gangs and confrontation of anti-gangs and curtail their movement," said the jail department official dismissing that the jail pattern was akin to 'Kala Pani' jail which he said was "notorious" for all the "negative connotations" associated with that. Elaborating on upcoming jail in Ludhiana district, the official said "All the major as well as potentially vulnerable high risk prisoners in will be transferred and lodged in this prison."

An area of up to 50 meters around the outer boundary wall of the prison will be declared as a prohibited zone. Among other things, in what is known as "throw" from outside, the state prison department has been facing a major challenge to check the entry of prohibited items into the jail. Another salient feature of the upcoming jail would be that it would house a dedicated court complex and video conferencing infrastructure for hearings inside the complex, to curtail the movement of the prisoners and in the process prevent scenarios where prisoners attempt to escape if taken outside the jail for



court hearings. On similar lines, to avoid movement of prisoners outside the prison, in house hospital facility would be provided in the jail.

"The prison will be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment for security, surveillance and incident response and special forces will be deputed for security on rotational basis," said the official, adding that "This high security prison is anticipated to be a game changer in controlling the nefarious activities of prisoners, and to prohibit smuggling of contraband inside the prisons as well as the maintenance of law and order in the state of Punjab." Asked why such a high security jail was needed, Punjab Additional Director General of Police (Prisons) Arun Pal Singh said, "Earlier, a high security jail was constructed in Bathinda. The upcoming jail in Ludhiana is in continuation of having more such jails in the state." Currently, there are 10 central prisons among the 25 prisons in the state. Overall, the prisons across the state have a sanctioned capacity to lodge 26,081 inmates, but more than 32,000 inmates are lodged in the prisons, making these overcrowded. Punjab prisons have infamous for use of mobile phones by the inmates from inside the jail and videos of inmates holding celebrations inside the jail on occasions like birthdays going viral on social media platforms. The State prisons are also notorious for drug smugglers and dreaded gangsters operating their cartels from inside the jail. Currently, most of high-risk dreaded gangsters and drug peddlers are lodged in high security zone of Bathinda Central jail. An official said top drug smugglers are among those lodged in high security zone in Bathinda jail where cutting edge technology to jam all mobile phone signals in the high security zone to ensure they were not able to operate their cartels from inside the jail.

## Ludhiana's 'gedi route' now leads to sprawling Sunview Plaza

GNS News Agency, July 13,

For Ludhianvis born in the 1990s or before, the only "gedi route" in the city that invokes memories is the Sarabha Nagar market, housing the good, old eating joints, including Kipps, Hot Breads, Cremica ice-cream parlour and Bukhara among others. So popular has been the "Kipps" that the market is also famously known as "Kipps market". The eatery has always been the favorite for its potato patties, hot dogs, pastries, cold coffee etc. While the Sarabha Nagar market with its old charm still continues to rule the hearts of many, the Gen-Z in Ludhiana now has a new "gedi route". Emerging as the hot favorite is the "Sunview Plaza", a sprawling market developed in Ayali Kalan village near South City (towards Canal road). The high street style market spread over 6 acres, and designed in grand European style architecture, is proving to be gastronomical delight. In past few months, Sunview Plaza has emerged as the go-to place for city's youths; either it's a birthday or a get-together. Sunview market Ludhiana, Sunview market architecture, Sunview market style, Sunview Plaza, Ludhiana's Sunview Plaza, Sarabha Nagar market, Sunview Plaza architecture, Ludhiana's gedi route, Ludhiana eating joints, Kipps market, Ludhiana eateries, Ludhiana Gen-Z, Chandigarh news, Indian express news Sunview market in Ludhiana. (Express Photo by Gurmeet Singh) Sunview Plaza is probably the only place in Ludhiana in current times where a number of food chains and clothing brands can all be found next to each other. When it comes to food, everything from Tim Hortons and Starbucks to McDonald and Sagar Ratna, are available in the vicinity. Jatin Kaura, a college student, who often visits the plaza for get-togethers with his friends, says what has made Sunview Plaza a new destination for the

youths is the variety of food joints available in one market. "We have Tim Hortons, Barista and Starbucks for coffee while Nik Baker's and McDonald's are also nearby if one feels hungry. One can also enjoy amazing waffles and other desserts at Brooks and for tea lovers there is Tea Hut. My friends who like pizza visit here for 1830 Pizzeria. There are just so many options available that it's always a good idea to visit here. Earlier, we used to visit Sarabha Nagar market but more options are now available in Sunview now. Several new outlets such as The Edge, Cinnabon, MyFresh, Chili's American Grill & Bar, Pluk by Wok Singh are a delight for food lovers," he said. Sunview market Ludhiana, Sunview market architecture, Sunview market style, Sunview Plaza, Ludhiana's Sunview Plaza, Sarabha Nagar market, Sunview Plaza architecture, Ludhiana's gedi route, Ludhiana eating joints, Kipps market, Ludhiana eateries, Ludhiana Gen-Z, Chandigarh news, Indian express news Sunview market in Ludhiana. Another reason why Sunview is being preferred is for its ample parking space, which isn't the case anymore in Sarabha Nagar. "We always get stuck in traffic and there is total chaos in Sarabha Nagar market due to limited parking area. The Sarabha Nagar market was designed when not everyone owned four-wheelers but times have changed now. Sunview is new establishment so the parking space is ample to accommodate vehicles," says Shivam Gupta, who had his college reunion at a joint in Sunview Plaza. Other features, including soothing water fountains, outdoor seating outside every joint, grand architecture, location of the plaza (away from city's buzzing areas) and ample green cover in nearby South City colonies have added to the reasons why the gedi route of Ludhiana has now diverted towards Sunview.

## Look Out Circular issued against Sena leader's son



GNS News Agency, July 13

Mumbai: The Mumbai Police have issued a Look Out Circular (LOC) against a 24-year-old man, who was allegedly driving a BMW car which fatally knocked down a woman in Worli, an official said on Monday. The accused is the son of a Shiv Sena leader from neighbouring Palghar district.

Kaveri Nakhwa (45), resident of Worli Koliwada, was going with her husband Pradeep on the arterial Dr Annie Besant Road when the luxury car, allegedly driven by Mihir Shah, crashed it into the couple's two-wheeler at around 5.30 am according to the police. The car dragged the woman for more than 2 km, a police official said. She was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared her dead on arrival. After the accident, the accused fled towards the Bandra-Worli Sea Link. He left the car and his driver Rajrishi Bidawat, who was sitting next to him, near Kala Nagar in Bandra area and ran away, the official said. Mihir's father Rajesh Shah and Bidawat were later arrested by the Worli police on Sunday for allegedly helping Mihir escape after the accident, the official

said. Rajesh Shah is a Shiv Sena leader from Palghar. The official said the car is owned by Rajesh Shah. "As there was a possibility of Mihir Shah fleeing the country, the Mumbai Police on Sunday evening issued an LOC against him," the official said.

The police have launched a search for the accused and formed six teams to trace him, he said. Police suspect Mihir was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident as he was spotted at a bar in Juhu area here a few hours before the incident, the official said. The police have also found a bill of Rs 18,000 of the bar and are verifying it, the official said without elaborating. The CCTV footage of the bar is also being examined, he said. The two arrested persons will be produced before a local court later in the day, he added.

The accused persons have been booked under various Sections, including 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), according to the police. Speaking about the incident, Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena head Eknath Shinde on Sunday said law was equal for everyone and no one would be spared. Asked if the man involved in the accident was a Shiv Sena leader's son, the CM said, "The law is equal for all and the government sees every case in the same way. There will be no separate rule for this accident. Everything will be done as per the law." "The police will not shield anyone. The Mumbai accident is unfortunate. I have spoken to the police department to take strict action," he added. Shiv Sena (UBT) MLA Aaditya Thackeray, who represents the Worli Assembly constituency, in a post on X on Sunday said, "I will not go into the political leanings of Mr Shah, the accused of the hit and run, but I hope the police will act swiftly to catch the accused and bring him to justice. Hopefully there will be no political refuge by the regime."

## Floods claim lives of 131 wild animals in Kaziranga National Park, 97 rescued



GNS News Agency, July 13

Guwahati: At least 131 wild animals have died so far in floods in the Kaziranga National Park while 96 others have been rescued, an official said on Monday. The dead animals include six rhinos, 117 hog deer, including 98 by drowning, two by vehicle hits and 17 during treatment, two sambar, a rhesus macaque and an otter due to drowning in the park. A total of 25 animals have died during treatment and these include 17 hog deer, one each of swamp deer, Rhesus Macaque and an otter pup. The forest officials rescued 85 hog deer, two each of rhino, sambar and scops owl and one each of swamp deer, Indian hare, Rhesus Macaque, otter, elephant and a jungle cat.

Currently, 25 animals are under medical care while 52 others have been released after treatment, the official said. The park is experiencing the worst-ever deluge in recent years with the previous large-scale devastation occurring in 2017 when over 350 wildlife died in the flood

waters and in vehicle hits while migrating through animal corridors to the highlands. The NH-715 is a corridor for the animals to cross over to the hills of Karbi Anglong. Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday said that the floods in the State have affected humans and animals alike and 'Team Assam is working round the clock to aid everyone'.

"Recently, while passing through Kaziranga, I noticed this stranded rhino calf and instructed its immediate rescue", Sarma posted on 'X'. Out of the total 233 camps in the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division, 69 are still inundated till Friday evening as against 68 the previous day, the official said. Recently, while passing through Kaziranga, I noticed this stranded rhino calf and instructed its immediate rescue. The #AssamFloods have affected humans and animals alike and Team Assam is working round the clock to aid everyone. Himanta Biswa Sarma (@himantabiswa) July 8, 2024 In the Eastern or Agorotoli range, 14 of the 34 camps have been inundated while 22 of the 58 camps are in central range, 20 out of the 39 in Western or Bagori range and 4 each in Burapahar range, Bokakhat and Nagaon along with one in Biswanath Wildlife Division are under flood waters. Altogether four camps have been vacated by the forest personnel so far with two each in central range and Bokakhat. Forest department employees including security personnel stay in camps inside the national park to conduct patrolling for the protection of flora and fauna. Meanwhile, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) to restrict the movement of vehicular traffic on NH-37 (New NH-715) and its speed to between 20 to 40 km/hour is in force.

## MC may double booking charges of commercial grounds — from Rs 12,500 to Rs 25,000 per day

GNS News Agency, July 13,

The Chandigarh civic body is likely to double the booking charges for commercial grounds. An agenda item to this effect will be coming up before the Finance and Contract Committee meeting Monday. There are three commercial grounds — Housing Board, Manimajra, Circus Ground, Sector 17, and Exhibition Ground, Sector 34 — from where revenue is being generated on account of booking. At present, all three grounds have Rs 12,500 per day charges. However, with the new provisions that will be tabled before the Finance and Contract Committee panel, there will be e-auction, minimum reserve price of which shall be Rs 25,000 a day. "The Exhibition Ground in Sector 34 is highly in demand in festival season and the booking for the period from August to December is being done through e-auction to fetch the highest amount. Following this, the proposal has been mooted to book all the commercial grounds through e-auction for every year from January 1 to December 31," it was mentioned. In the new provisions, the booking of all commercial grounds will be done through the mode of e-auction. It was said that "in case any event falls under public amusement, a separate permission from the office of District Magistrate-cum-Nodal Officer as per Public Amusement Policy, 2016, shall be obtained by the organiser separately". And in no



case, it was said, the bid amount shall be less than Rs 25,000 per day which is the reserve price fixed for the booking of all commercial grounds for each day. Once the highest bid is placed, the highest bidder shall not be permitted to withdraw or surrender his/her bid on any ground and in case he does so the EMD deposited by him/her shall be forfeited. The successful bidder shall deposit Rs 10,00,000 for each ground as security (refundable) within 10 days from the closing of the bid. In case of non-compliance, the booking shall be cancelled and the EMD or amount deposited (if any) shall be forfeited," the new provisions said.

## Plan to install 50-ft-tall Gandhi statue on Nelson Mandela Marg dropped

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Mahatma Gandhi statue, Mahatma Gandhi life size statue plan, Gandhi statue on Nelson Mandela Marg, 50 feet mahatma Gandhi statue, Mahatma Gandhi, delhis Nelson Mandela Marg, Delhi Public Works Department, Indian express news The statue, 50 feet tall and with a 10-foot-high foundation, was to be a unique feature of the redevelopment and beautification project of the stretch. After several attempts to install a 50-ft statue of Mahatma Gandhi on Nelson Mandela Marg, the Delhi Public Works Department (PWD) has decided to shelve the ambitious plan as a solution could not be found to keep it stable, said officials. The statue, 50 feet tall and with a 10-foot-high foundation, was to be a unique feature of the redevelopment and beautification project of the stretch. But its weight was around 500 kg which, according to officials, was less compared to its height. With

these specifications, it would cause stability issues, officials had said earlier. "The statue might dislodge or keel over when there is strong wind... it would have been a national shame... To avoid any such disaster, PWD officials had directed the contractors to consult the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi but a concrete solution could not be reached..." said officials. "The project has been dropped," they added. The statue, of Gandhi holding a stick, was to be similar to the one at the Gyarah Murti on Sardar Patel Marg. The head and torso were being created separately with reinforced fibre. The idea behind the project was to ensure the statue was visible even from a distance. Meanwhile, officials said the rest of the beautification work was completed earlier — sidewalks and footpaths have been revamped, cycle tracks created, and plantation work has been done."

## Chandigarh to serve sweetened milk to students of govt schools



GNS News Agency, July 13

The sweetened milk (130 ML with 3% fat content in tetra pack cartons) will be served to students of 111 government schools and seven government-aided schools in midday meal as part of PM Poshan from next week. "The essential nutrients of milk, including calcium, proteins and vitamins, are crucial for the growth and development of children. Introducing milk into school meals will help address common nutritional deficiencies among children. Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies can lead to stunted growth, weakened immunity, and cognitive impairments, all of which can be mitigated by regular consumption of milk along with aiding in better concentration, memory, and learning capabilities," said Director (School Education) H P S Brar.

He added, "By including milk in school meals, Department of School Education has attempted to contribute to improving students' cognitive development and academic outcomes. Well-nourished children perform better in school, have higher attendance rates, and are more engaged in their studies. Regular consumption will also help reduce absenteeism and dropout rates, fostering a more conducive learning environment." This milk to the schools will be supplied by Milkfed Punjab under their brand Verka, the UT administration said. For this, Milkfed Punjab's Verka brand and Tetra Pak have partnered and through this collaboration, students in

Chandigarh will receive nutritious milk in tetra pack cartons. Desks to be made from used cartons

After consumption, these used cartons will be collected by local NGOs and collection agencies and recycled into various useful items such as notebooks, planters, school desks and more. The cartons are primarily paper-based (on average 70% paperboard) and made of six layers, including paperboard, polymer, and aluminium foil, which protect the contents from light, air, and bacteria, making them safe for consumption and extending the shelf life of the milk. To encourage milk consumption among school kids, Verka will make milk available in cardamom (elaichi) flavour to begin with, making it more appealing to children.

Recycling of tetra pack cartons will be a key aspect of this initiative. The used cartons will be collected and recycled through two key processes. Through pulping, the paper-board will be separated from the Polymer-aluminium (PolyAl) compound, and used for different end products like stationary on one hand and roofing sheets on the other. The second recycling process will convert the entire carton into a composite sheet, like wooden boards, through a combination of heat and pressure. These composite sheets can be used to make furniture, items such as pen stands, coasters, and even seats & backrest of autos. In addition to providing much-needed nutrition to children, this school milk initiative will serve as an educational opportunity for children, teaching them the importance of responsible consumption and planet-friendly practices like recycling. By engaging students in the recycling process, the programme aims to instill a sense of environmental responsibility and the value of sustainable living from a young age," Brar said. Cassio Simoes, managing director of Tetra Pak, said, "This programme provides essential nutrition to children while also teaching them the importance of responsible consumption and recycling. By transforming used cartons into valuable resources, we highlight the significance of sustainability. Our collaboration with Verka underscores our promise to protect what's good — food, people & the planet."

## Had he shown humanity, my wife would have been alive, says deceased woman's husband

GNS News Agency, July 13

The husband of a 45-year-old woman who was killed in a hit-and-run incident involving a BMW car in Worli has demanded harsh punishment for the 24-year-old accused who was at the wheels. Speaking to reporters at the Worli police station, Pradeep Liladhar Nakhwa, 50, husband of victim Kaveri Nakhwa, said, "Had the car driver shown some humanity and stopped the car, my wife would have been alive today. When the car hit our scooter from behind, I fell on the car's bonnet, and Kaveri fell on my back, not sustaining grave injury initially."

"We were shouting 'Stop! Stop!' to the person driving the vehicle. But he sped away with Kaveri on the bonnet. He dragged my wife on the bonnet from Ceejay House to Sea Link. I saw him; he was a young, skinny man with a beard and dense hair," Pradeep added. Pradeep took a taxi looking for his wife, but as he didn't find her anywhere he took the taxi to the Worli police station. There he found out that the police had taken her to the Nair hospital from the near sea link entry point (from Worli side). "My wife will never come back, but he should get the strictest punishment," said the aggrieved husband. According to Pradeep, Kaveri was the backbone of their family. The couple's son Yash recently got a job and they were planning a holiday, he said. They also have a daughter. The family, from the fishermen community, has been living in Nakhwa House, in Shankar temple area of Worli Koliwada for years.

"Kaveri loved our son so much. He came home from work in the morning. I didn't know how to tell him about his mother's death. The culprit should get harsh punishment," Pradeep said. After day-long questioning, the Worli police arrested Mihir's father Rajesh Shah, a Borivali resident, and their driver Rajrishi Bidawat. It is suspected that Mihir called his father Rajesh Shah and informed him about the crash and the father allegedly helped him escape. Hence, his father was placed under arrest after his role was established.

The Shah family's driver/caretaker Rajrishi Bidawat



was also arrested for not informing police about the accident. He witnessed the entire incident, another officer said. The two arrested accused will be produced in Bhoiwada court on Monday. The investigation also indicated multiple attempts to destroy evidence, police said. The car's rear number plate was removed and the front plate was distorted. Additionally, the car's windshield had a Shiv Sena sticker, which had been scratched to conceal the vehicle's link with the Sena leader. One of Mihir's pictures on social media from earlier shows the sticker. "We have scanned the CCTV footage of the area and, based on our information network, traced the vehicle," an officer said. Police have called in RTO and forensic lab officials to inspect the car. According to police sources, after mowing down the woman in Worli, Mihir abandoned his car in Bandra before fleeing in an autorickshaw. Unconfirmed reports suggest he went straight to his friend's place in Goregaon. After an hour, he left her place to go to Bandra to another friend's place. Police have inquired about Mihir's whereabouts. "Six police teams are looking for Mihir," a senior police officer said. "His phone has been switched off since then. Police are inquiring about Mihir's whereabouts by investigating the people he called after the accident. Police are also inquiring about his friends with whom he partied the previous night," another officer said.

## Doctor loses Rs 50 lakh in foreign currency investment fraud



GNS News Agency, July 13,

foreign currency investment fraud, forex currency fraud, Doctor lost Rs 50 lakh, social media conversation, financial advice fraud, delhi cyber fraudsters, delhi police, Indian express news The doctor works in the surgical oncology department at a hospital in Gurgaon. What started as a friendly conversation on social media with a woman claiming to give financial advice ended up in a fraud of Rs 50 lakh — a Gurgaon-based doctor has alleged in a police complaint, police said on Sunday.

The doctor works in the surgical oncology department at a hospital in Gurgaon. In his complaint submitted to the Cyber Police Station of South district last month, he said, "A woman befriended me on social media, and she then carried on the conversation on Telegram. After gaining my trust, she said she could offer me advice on gaining maximum return from foreign currency investments." "The woman", the doctor further said, "asked me to try out a website. I invested Rs 40,000 at first and was shown a huge profit after which I was told to withdraw Rs 5,200. Lured by more returns over time, I invested more money and by May, I had increased my investment to Rs 23 lakh." "After I paid the amount, I was

told by the woman to invest more and I invested more money for which I had to pay a tax of \$9,000 for a profit of \$30,000." Over time, the complainant kept paying tax for the amount he had invested, which totaled Rs 50 lakh. This also included the tax amount he had to pay at regular intervals, he told police. The woman had after two months since befriending him, blocked his contact and the complainant is unable to contact her on her mobile phone or WhatsApp, he claimed. A senior police officer said that a case of cheating under section 420 (cheating) of IPC has been lodged and an investigation is ongoing.

## Gold prices surge upward in Hyderabad

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Hyderabad: Gold prices in Hyderabad are currently experiencing a notable surge amidst fluctuating trends in the international market.

As of today, the price for 10 grams of 22 karat gold stands at Rs 67,650, marking a Rs 1,400 increase from July 1st when it was priced at Rs 66,250. Similarly, 24 karat gold is now priced at Rs 73,800, up by Rs 1,520 from its rate of Rs 72,280 at the beginning of the month.

The price of the yellow metal has risen by Rs 650 since July 5th, when it was priced at Rs 6,700 per gram. The rate of 24 karat gold has increased by Rs 710, rising from Rs 7,309. In June, there was a downward trend in gold prices, although with fluctuations, resulting in a 0.38 per cent decrease. However, July has seen a notable 2.11 per cent increase in just six days. The peak prices in June were observed on June 7th, reaching Rs 67,600 for 22 karat gold and Rs 73,570 for 24 karat gold.

## Boeing to plead guilty in U.S. probe of fatal 737 MAX crashes, says DOJ official



GNS News Agency, July 13

Boeing has agreed to plead guilty to a criminal fraud conspiracy charge to resolve a U.S. Justice Department investigation linked to two 737 MAX fatal crashes, a government official said on July 7. The plea, which requires a federal judge's approval, would brand the planemaker a convicted felon. Boeing will also pay a criminal fine of \$243.6 million, a Justice Department official said. The charge relates to two 737 MAX crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia over a five-month period in 2018 and 2019 that killed 346 people and prompted the families of the victims to demand that Boeing face prosecution. A guilty plea potentially threatens the company's ability to secure lucrative government contracts with the likes of the U.S. Defense Department and NASA, although it could seek waivers. Boeing became exposed to criminal prosecution after the Justice Department in May found the company violated a 2021 settlement involving the fatal crashes.

Still, the plea spares Boeing a contentious trial that could have exposed many of the company's decisions leading up to the fatal MAX plane crashes to even greater public scrutiny. It would also make it easier for the company, which will have a new CEO later this year, to try to move forward as it seeks approval for its planned acquisition of Spirit AeroSystems. Boeing declined to comment. Boeing has also agreed to invest at least \$455 million over the next three years to strengthen its safety and compliance programs, the official said. DOJ will appoint a third-party monitor to oversee the firm's compliance. The monitor will have to publicly file with the court annual reports on the company's progress.

The Justice Department on June 30 offered a plea

agreement to Boeing and gave the company until the end of the week to take the deal or face a trial on a charge of conspiring to defraud the Federal Aviation Administration in connection with a key software feature tied to the fatal crashes. After being briefed last week on the DOJ's offer, a lawyer for some of the families criticized it as a "sweetheart deal". They have vowed to oppose the deal in court. The Justice Department's push to charge Boeing has deepened an ongoing crisis engulfing Boeing since a separate January in-flight blowout exposed continuing safety and quality issues at the planemaker.

A panel blew off a new Boeing 737 MAX 9 jet during a Jan. 5 Alaska Airlines flight, just two days before the 2021 deferred prosecution agreement that had shielded the company from prosecution over the previous fatal crashes expired. The agreement only covers Boeing's conduct before the fatal crashes and does not shield the planemaker from any other potential investigations or charges related to the January incident or other conduct. Boeing is pleading guilty to making knowingly false representations to the Federal Aviation Administration about having expanded a key software feature used on the MAX to operate at low speeds. The new software saved Boeing money by requiring less intensive training for pilots. The Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS) is a software feature designed to automatically push the airplane's nose down in certain conditions. It was tied to the two crashes that led to the FAA's grounding the plane for 20 months, an action that cost Boeing \$20 billion, and the government lifted in November 2020. As part of the deal, Boeing's board of directors will meet with relatives of those killed in the MAX crashes, the official said. The agreement does not shield any executives, the DOJ official said, though charges against individuals are seen as unlikely due to the statute of limitations. The agreed penalty will be Boeing's second fine of \$243.6 million related to the fatal crashes — bringing the full fine to the maximum allowed. The company paid the fine previously as part of 2021's \$2.5 billion settlement. The \$243.6 million fine represented the amount Boeing saved by not implementing full-flight simulator training. Families of the victims of those crashes slammed the previous agreement and earlier this year pressed the Justice Department to seek as much as \$25 billion from Boeing. This year, the DOJ has held several meetings to hear from the victims' families as they investigated Boeing's breach of the 2021 deal.

## \$5 billion investment pledged for oil, gas exploration in Pakistan: Shehbaz Sharif

Pakistan is expected to get an investment of \$5 billion over the next three years from local and international firms for the exploration and development of petroleum and gas reserves that will save the cash-strapped country's valuable foreign exchange and provide relief to the common man bearing the brunt of high fuel prices. The announcement was made in a meeting presided over by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday during a meeting with a delegation of oil and gas exploration and production sector companies.

According to the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan, the meeting was informed that during three years, around 240 places would be excavated with an investment of \$5 billion to explore petroleum and gas in Pakistan. The meeting was informed that currently, Pakistan's domestic production stood at 70,998 barrels and 3,131 MMSCFD (million standard cubic feet) gas per day. The Prime Minister invited petroleum and gas exploration and production companies to also find offshore reserves. "Exploring the oil and gas reserves at the local level in Pakistan is our top priority," Prime Minister Sharif said, adding that Pakistan spent billions of dollars every year on importing oil and gas.

"Production from local reserves will save Pakistan's valuable foreign exchange and fuel and gas will become affordable for the common man," he added and directed the concerned authorities to provide solutions to all the problems of the sector on a priority basis. Currently, the price of petrol in Pakistan is Rs. 265.61/Ltr, high-speed



diesel is Rs. 277.45/Ltr and light-speed diesel is Rs 166.86/Ltr. The Prime Minister constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar that would include experts, secretaries and the relevant authorities.

The committee, after consultation with the representatives of the sector, would formulate proposals to create an attractive policy for the exploration and development of petroleum and gas reserves in Pakistan. Mr. Sharif directed the relevant authorities to solve all the problems of the sector and submit policy proposals to the constituted committee on priority. The delegation thanked the Prime Minister for making the petroleum and gas exploration and production sector a part of the consultation process, listening to their problems and finding serious solutions to them.

## A Ukrainian drone triggers warehouse explosions in Russia as a war of attrition grinds on

GNS News Agency, July 13,

A village in a border region of western Russia was evacuated on July 7 following a series of explosions after debris from a downed Ukrainian drone set fire to a nearby warehouse, local officials said. Social media footage appeared to show rising clouds of black smoke in the Voronezh region while loud explosions could be heard in succession. Governor Aleksandr Gusev said that falling wreckage triggered the "detonation of explosive objects". No casualties were reported, but residents of a nearby village in the Podgorensky district were evacuated, he said. Roads were also closed with emergency services, military and government officials working at the scene. A Ukrainian security official told The Associated Press that a strike had been carried out on a warehouse storing ammunition in the village of Serhiivka in the Voronezh region. "The enemy stored surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, shells for tanks and artillery, and boxes of cartridges for firearms," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to give the information to the media. "It is from this warehouse that the occupiers supply ammunition to their troops in Ukraine." The official also said that Ukraine's State Security Service was behind a drone attack on an oil depot in Russia's Krasnodar region the previous day. Russian emergency services had reported that falling drone debris had started a fire at the site, which was successfully extinguished Sunday morning. Russia's Ministry of Defence did not address either strike in their morning briefing, but said that air defence systems had destroyed a Ukrainian drone over the Belgorod region. The strikes come after a Ukrainian military spokesperson told AP on Thursday that Kyiv's troops had retreated from a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Chasiv Yar, a strategically important town in Ukraine's Donetsk region that has been reduced to rubble under a month-long Russian assault. Russian forces have for months tried to grind out gains in Ukraine's industrial east, in an apparent attempt to lock its defenders into a war of attrition. In a joint investigation published Friday, independent



Russian news outlets Meduza and Mediazona reported that Moscow's forces were losing between 200 and 250 soldiers in Ukraine each day. Military analysts say Chasiv Yar's fall could also compromise critical Ukrainian supply routes and put nearby cities in jeopardy, bringing Russia closer to its stated aim of seizing the entire Donetsk region. Russian strikes have also heavily targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Officials in Kyiv said Saturday that the city had restored two-thirds of its power generation capacity after recent Russian missile attacks destroyed key power plants. "Colossal work has been carried out," said deputy head of the Kyiv city administration Petro Panteleev. "The city's energy facilities, which were built mainly in the Soviet period, are being modernized and become much more efficient." Russia sent overnight into Sunday two ballistic missiles and 13 Shahed drones, Ukrainian air force officials said. All were shot down but the officials did not elaborate on the impact of the missiles. Eight people were killed in Russian attacks across Ukraine in the past day, according to local regional authorities. Four people were killed in the Kherson region, said Gov Oleksandr Prokudin, while in Donetsk, Gov Vadym Filashkin said another two people had been killed in the towns of Niu-York and Ukrainsk. In Dnipropetrovsk, a 65-year-old woman was killed in a Russian attack in the Nikopol district, while a 47-year old man was killed in the Kharkiv region,

## President Emmanuel Macron bid to reshape political landscape leaves no clear path to form new government



GNS News Agency, July 13

President Emmanuel Macron on July 8 was to start efforts to extract France from its most severe political uncertainty in decades after the left defeated the far right in elections with no group winning an absolute majority. The outcome of the legislative elections, called by Mr. Macron three years ahead of schedule in a bid to reshape the political landscape, leaves France without any clear path to forming a new government three weeks before the Paris Olympics. Prime Minister Gabriel Attal is due to submit his resignation to Mr. Macron on July 8 but has also made clear he is ready to stay on in a caretaker capacity as weeks of political uncertainty loom. The left is emerging as the biggest group in the new parliament but has yet to even agree on a figure who it would want to be the new Prime Minister. The unprecedented situation is taking shape just as Macron is due to be out of the country for most of the week, taking part in the NATO summit in Washington. "Is this the biggest crisis of the Fifth Republic?" that began in 1958, asked Gael Sliman, president of the Odoxa polling group. "Emmanuel Macron wanted clarification with the dissolution, now we are in total uncertainty. A very thick fog." Divided parliament After winning the June 30 first round by a clear margin, the results were a major disappointment for the far-right National Rally (RN) of Marine Le Pen, even if her forces are set to boast about their biggest ever contingent in parliament.

Macron's centrist alliance will have dozens fewer members of parliament, but held up better than expected and could even end in second. The left-wing New Popular Front (NFP) -- formed last month after Macron called snap elections -- brought the previously deeply divided Socialists, Greens, Communists and the hard-left France Unbowed (LFI) together in one camp. Projections by major polling agencies showed the NFP set to be the largest bloc in the new National Assembly with 177 to 198 seats, Macron's alliance on 152 to 169 seats and the RN on 135 to 145 seats. That would put no group near the 289

seats needed for an absolute majority and it remains unclear how a new government could be formed. Macron, who has yet to speak in public about the projections, is calling for "prudence and analysis of the results", said an aide, asking not to be named. LFI lawmaker Clementine Autain called on the NFP alliance to gather on Monday to decide on a suitable candidate for prime minister. In key individual battles, Le Pen's sister Marie-Caroline narrowly lost out on being a lawmaker, but former president Francois Hollande will return to frontline politics as a Socialist member of parliament. Muddle Firebrand leftist Jean-Luc Melenchon, leader of LFI and the controversial figurehead of the NFP coalition, demanded that the left be allowed to form a government. Only one week ago, some polls had indicated the RN could win an absolute majority with Le Pen's 28-year-old lieutenant Jordan Bardella becoming prime minister. Bardella dubbed the local electoral pacts that saw the left and centrists avoid splitting the anti-RN vote as an "alliance of dishonour". He said it had thrown "France into the arms of Jean-Luc Melenchon's extreme left". Le Pen, who wants to launch a fourth bid for the presidency in 2027, declared: "The tide is rising. It did not rise high enough this time, but it continues to rise and, consequently, our victory has only been delayed." The first round saw more than 200 tactical-voting pacts between centre and left-wing candidates in seats to attempt to prevent the RN winning an absolute majority. This has been hailed as a return of the anti-far right "Republican Front" first summoned when Le Pen's father Jean-Marie faced Jacques Chirac in the run-off of 2002 presidential elections. The question for France now is if this alliance of last resort can support a stable government, dogged by a still substantial RN bloc in parliament led by Le Pen herself as she prepares a 2027 presidential bid. Risk analysis firm Eurasia Group said there was "no obvious governing majority" in the new parliament. "It may take many weeks to resolve the muddle while the present government manages current business."

## Ranil Wickremesinghe to contest presidential polls as independent candidate, says aide

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe will contest the Presidential election as an independent candidate, his aide said. Deputy Chairman of the United National Party Ruwan Wijewardene confirmed that the presidential election will definitely be held and Mr. Wickremesinghe, 75, will contest the election as an independent candidate, News 1st reported. "Only one leader possesses the knowledge to solve Sri Lanka's economic crisis. That is Ranil Wickremesinghe. He has proved it with his actions," he was quoted as saying by the news portal. On July 7, Election Commission Chairman R.M.A.L. Ratnayake said the electoral body would be legally empowered after July 17 to announce the date for the election.

Mr. Ratnayake added that the commission will announce the date for the next presidential poll before the end of this month. The Election Commission in May said the presidential election would be conducted between September 17 and October 16. Mr. Ratnayake said the commission is currently in the process of putting final touches to the 2024 electoral register which will be the basis for the election. Over 17 million would be eligible to vote in the election as per the revised list, officials said. In April 2022, the island nation declared its first-ever sovereign default since gaining independence from Britain in 1948. The unprecedented financial crisis led President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to quit office in 2022 amid civil unrest over his inability to handle the crisis. In July 2022, Mr.



Wickremesinghe was elected through parliament to become stop-gap President for the balance term of Mr. Rajapaksa. Mr. Wickremesinghe, also the Finance Minister, hasn't made any public statement on his bid for re-election. "This election isn't merely about selecting individuals but about choosing the most effective system for our country's progress. If you believe in the merits of the current approach, let us proceed accordingly," the President's Media Division quoted him as saying earlier. The government under Mr. Wickremesinghe has set in place hard economic reforms as dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme. President Wickremesinghe last month said that his government has finalised a long-delayed debt restructuring agreement for \$5.8 billion with its bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris to meet a key condition of an IMF bailout.

## 'Peace mission 3.0': Hungary PM Orbán makes surprise visit to China to discuss Ukraine war

GNS News Agency, July 13,

Beijing: Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made a surprise visit to China on Monday, after similar trips to Russia and Ukraine, to discuss prospects for a peaceful settlement in Ukraine.

"Peace mission 3.0" is how Orbán captioned a picture posted early on Monday on X depicting him after having stepped off his plane in Beijing. He was being greeted by Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Hua Chunying and other officials. Besides Russia and Ukraine, the end of the war "depends on the decision of three world powers, the United States, the European Union and China," Orbán wrote in a Facebook post showing him shaking hands with Xi. Orbán met with Xi just two months ago when he hosted the Chinese leader in Hungary as part of a three-country European tour that also included stops in France and Serbia, which unlike the other two is not a member of the European Union or NATO. Hungary under Orbán has built substantial politi-

cal and economic ties with China. The European nation hosts a number of Chinese electric vehicle battery facilities, and in December it announced that Chinese EV manufacturing giant BYD will open its first European EV production factory in the south of the country. His previously unannounced visit comes on the heels of similar trips last week to Moscow and Kyiv, where he proposed that Ukraine consider agreeing to an immediate ceasefire with Russia. His visit to Moscow drew condemnation from Kyiv and European leaders. "The number of countries that can talk to both warring sides is diminishing," Orbán said. "Hungary is slowly becoming the only country in Europe that can speak to everyone." Hungary assumed the rotating presidency of the EU at the start of July and Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested Orbán had come to Moscow as a top representative of the European Council. Several top European officials dismissed that suggestion and said Orbán had no mandate for anything beyond a discussion about bilateral relations.

## Hindenburg shared Adani report with client two months before publishing it: Sebi



nities Fund Ltd, had a pact to share with Hindenburg 30 per cent of profit made from trading in securities based on the report, the Sebi letter said, adding this profit share was cut to 25 per cent due to the extra time and effort needed to reroute trades via the K India fund. The market regulator said Kingdon transferred USD 43 million in two tranches to build short positions in AEL. The K India fund built short positions for 8,50,000 shares ahead of the report release and squared off these positions soon after the report was released.

According to Sebi, Hindenburg published a report titled 'Adani Group: How the World's 3rd Richest Man is Pulling The Largest Con in Corporate History' on January 24, 2023 (United States time – January 25, 2023, according to IST) during pre-market hours. "Prior to the release of the Hindenburg Report, concentration in short-selling activity was observed in the derivatives of Adani Enterprises Ltd," it said. "Pursuant to the release of the said report, the price of AEL fell by around 59 per cent during the period from January 24, 2023 to February 22, 2023" — from Rs 3,422 to Rs 14,04.85 per share. Sebi said K India Opportunities Fund Ltd – Class F (KIOF Class F) opened a trading account and started trading in the scrip of AEL just a few days prior to the publication of the report and then squared off its entire short position post-publication of the Hindenburg Report, making significant profits of Rs 183.23 crore (USD 22.25 million). "The net profit after trading and legal expenses comes to USD 22.11 million," Sebi said.

As part of the deal, Kingdon owned Hindenburg USD 5.5 million, of which USD 4.1 million had been paid as of June 1, the notice said. In its response to Sebi, Kingdon Capital said it had got legal opinion that it could "enter into a research services agreement with a third-party firm that publicly releases short reports on companies, pursuant to which Kingdon Capital would be given a draft copy of the report before it is made publicly available and would have the opportunity to accordingly made investments before the report's public dissemination". A show-cause notice is often a precursor to formal legal action that may include imposing financial penalties and barring participation in the Indian capital market. Sebi can also seek government help to geoblock the research firm's website. Sebi has given Hindenburg 21 days to respond to its allegations. Hindenburg, which published the Sebi notice on its website, in its response stated that it made just USD 4.1 million from its declared positions on Adani stocks and criticised the regulator for not focusing its investigation into the January 2023 report "providing evidence" of the conglomerate creating "a vast network of offshore shell entities" and moving billions of dollars "surreptitiously" into and out of Adani public and private entities. It said that while Sebi was seeking to claim jurisdiction over a US-based investor, the regulator's notice "conspicuously failed to name the party that has an actual tie to India: Kotak Bank," which created and oversaw the offshore fund structure used by Hindenburg's investor partner to bet against Adani. The regulator "masked the 'Kotak' name with the acronym 'KMIL', it added.

US short-seller Hindenburg Research had shared an advance copy of its damning report against Adani group with New York-based hedge fund manager Mark Kingdon about two months before publishing it and profited from a deal to share spoils from share price movement, according to market regulator Sebi.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), in its 46-page show cause notice to Hindenburg, detailed how the US short seller, the New York hedge fund and a broker tied to Kotak Mahindra Bank benefited from the over USD 150 billion routs in the market value of Adani group's 10 listed firms post-publication of the report. Sebi charged Hindenburg of making "unfair" profits from "collusion" to use "non-public" and "misleading" information and induce "panic selling" in Adani Group stocks.

Hindenburg, which made public the Sebi notice, in its response, has described the show cause as an attempt to "silence and intimidate those who expose corruption and fraud perpetrated by the most powerful individuals in India" and revealed that the vehicle used to bet against Adani's flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd belonged to Kotak Mahindra (International) Ltd, a Mauritius-based subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. Sebi notice includes extracts of time-stamped chats between an employee of the hedge fund and KMIL traders for selling future contracts in AEL. Kotak Mahindra Bank has stated that Kingdon "never disclosed that they had any relationship with Hindenburg nor that they were acting on the basis of any price-sensitive information".

Sebi — which last year told a Supreme Court-appointed panel that it was investigating 13 opaque offshore entities that held between 14 per cent and 20 per cent across five publicly traded stocks of the Adani group — has sent notices not just to Hindenburg but also to KMIL, Kingdon and Hindenburg founder Nathan Anderson. Senior lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani, who had in the past spoken for the Adani group, in a post on X claimed that Kingdon had a Chinese link.

"Accomplished Chinese spy Anla Cheng, who along with her husband Mark Kingdon, hired Hindenburg for a research report on Adani, engaged the services of Kotak to facilitate a trading account to short sell Adani shares; made millions of dollars from their short selling; eroded Adani market cap enormously," he alleged. Kingdon, which had a controlling stake in KMIL's K-India Opportu-

## Jobs, rural India likely to be focus of new Modi government's first budget, says Goldman Sachs

goldman sachs, india jobs, business news, indian express Goldman Sachs expects a focus on agricultural infrastructure and incentives to increase domestic production of key crops as a way to target high food inflation, which has been running close to 8% for many months. The first budget by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new government may tilt towards, but not pivot to welfare spending, with a focus on rural economy and job creation, economists at Goldman Sachs said in a note on Monday. The budget proposal for the financial year ending March 2025 will be presented on July 23, the government said over the weekend.

Goldman economists expect the government to stick to its fiscal deficit target of 5.1% of GDP set in the interim budget but said it will likely make an "overarching statement" about long-term economic policy. "We see an emphasis on job creation through labor-intensive manufacturing, credit for micro, small and medium enterprises, continued focus on services exports by expanding global capability centres, and a thrust on domestic food supply chain," Santanu Sengupta, chief India economist at the Wall Street bank wrote. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party failed to win a majority on its own in national elections this year and returned to power with the help of allies. Post-poll surveys showed that unemployment and inflation were key concerns among voters, particularly outside of urban areas.

While the Indian economy is seen growing a fast clip of 7.2% this year, job creation has lagged. "Even 7% GDP growth might not be able to fulfill the job requirement over the next decade," Citi's chief India economist



Samiran Chakraborty said in a note last week, adding that growth of close to 7% will generate 8 million to 9 million jobs per year, short of the 11 million to 12 million needed. Goldman expects the budget to push labour intensive manufacturing through fiscal incentives across sectors like toys, textiles and apparel manufacturing, along with commercial aircraft manufacturing. Citi, in a report, said the government could consider extending its flagship production linked incentive scheme with a focus on "more domestic value addition and explicit employment targets." "Almost two-third manufacturing jobs are in low-skilled labor-intensive sectors, Citi said, without specifying whether these announcements would be made in the budget. Goldman also expects a focus on agricultural infrastructure and incentives to increase domestic production of key crops as a way to target high food inflation, which has been running close to 8% for many months.

## Crop insurance coverage declines in FY24 as four top insurers cut exposure

General insurance companies reduced their exposure to crop insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during FY24 despite the government's push to expand the insurance coverage in the farm sector.

Gross direct premium underwritten by insurers declined by 4.17 per cent to Rs 30,677 crore during the fiscal as against Rs 32,011 crore in the previous year even as farmers faced crop losses due to floods, unseasonal rains and heatwaves. The decline is mainly due to the 32 per cent fall in premium income underwritten by state-owned Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC) to Rs 9,890 crore during FY24 from Rs 14,619 crore a year ago, according to data released by the General Insurance Council. AIC is the leading crop insurer in the country. Four government-controlled insurers — AIC, New India Assurance, Oriental Insurance and SBI General — reduced their exposure to crop insurance in FY24.

State-owned Oriental Insurance Company also reduced its exposure to just Rs 8.94 crore in FY24 from Rs 1,752 crore a year ago. SBI General Insurance also reduced its exposure. New India Assurance Company, the largest insurer in the country, reported a negative premium underwritten at Rs 34.41 crore as against Rs 11.38 crore last year. "Four insurers controlled by the government directly or indirectly reported a decline in crop

insurance coverage. The farm sector is a vital sector of the economy. Public sector entities should have been in the forefront of providing cover to the farmers who are facing the risk of losses due to floods, heatwaves and unseasonal rains," said an official of an insurance firm. FY24 was a nightmare for farmers as they faced crop losses due to a host of factors, leading to a rise in inflation levels. However, general insurers overall reported a 19.5 per cent rise in premium income underwritten from Rs 17,391 crore a year ago to Rs 20,786 crore. As many as eight general insurers kept away from crop insurance during the year. The PMFBY scheme, which is currently integrated with multiple stakeholders on a single platform, has covered nearly 4 crore farmers with more than 50 different crops in FY24 under the insurance coverage. More than 55 per cent of the insured farmers in the year are under non-loanee farmer category and are majorly enrolled through CSCs (common service centres) as a channel partner wherein the channel has registered an impressive 4 crore farmer applications, with 2.5 crore and 1.5 crore enrolments in Kharif and Rabi seasons, respectively. PMFBY provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop, thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers and encourage them for adoption of innovative practices. The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmer obtaining crop loan or kisan credit card (KCC) account for notified crops.

## Man dies of suffocation and several others injured as millions gather during Rath Yatra in Puri; how to stay safe when visiting popular places of worship



The recent tragedy at the Puri Rath Yatra, where a man lost his life due to suffocation amidst massive crowds, serves as a stark reminder of the potential dangers lurking in popular religious gatherings and festivals. According to a report by indianexpress.com, a devotee died of suffocation while pulling the chariot of Lord Balabhadra during the annual Rath Yatra in Odisha's Puri on Sunday. A million devotees from across the globe are in the temple town for the festival. The man, who is yet to be identified, was rushed to the Puri district headquarters hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival, it added. Many others are reported to have been injured in a stampede-like situation.

As devotees from across the globe flock to sacred sites this season, this unfortunate incident highlights the critical need for awareness and caution. While spiritual events offer profound experiences and cultural richness, the sheer volume of attendees can create hazardous conditions, particularly in areas with limited crowd management infrastructure. State health minister Mukesh Mahaling said, "We are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased. I have personally monitored the health infrastructure and directed the hospital authorities to be ready to ensure proper healthcare to the injured." Dr Narayanaswamy S, founder and medical director at Athreya Super Speciality Hospital, "Large gatherings at places of worship and festivals like the Puri Rath Yatra are undeniably vibrant and culturally rich experiences. However, it's crucial to acknowledge the inherent safety risks associated with such massive crowds. Overcrowding, especially in confined spaces, can lead to a range of hazards." Crowd Crush: In extreme cases, the pressure of a surging crowd can cause people to be crushed or trampled, leading to serious injuries or even fatalities. Suffocation: Limited oxygen and the inability to breathe freely due to overcrowding can lead to suffocation, a potentially life-threatening condition. Heatstroke: In hot and humid weather, large crowds can exacerbate the risk of heatstroke, a serious condition characterised by elevated body temperature and potential organ damage. Dehydration: Dehydration can occur quickly in crowded conditions, especially when access to water is limited or challenging. Injuries from Falls or Stumbles:

Uneven terrain, obstacles, and the sheer density of the crowd can increase the risk of trips and falls, resulting in injuries. To safeguard yourself in such environments, Dr Narayanaswamy says, constantly assess your surroundings and be mindful of exits and potential escape routes. Carry a water bottle and drink fluids regularly to prevent dehydration. "Choose loose-fitting, breathable clothing and comfortable footwear to avoid overheating and blisters. Steer clear of areas where crowds are particularly dense or where there's limited space to move," he adds. If you're attending with others, establish a meeting point in case you get separated. Understanding suffocation and crowd-related incidents According to Dr Narayanaswamy, suffocation in crowded settings often results from "compressive asphyxia, where external pressure on the chest restricts breathing." This can occur when people are packed too tightly together, leaving them unable to expand their chests to inhale. Other contributing factors include: Panic and Fear: In a crisis, panic can lead to irrational behaviour, further exacerbating crowd crush and increasing the risk of suffocation.

Lack of Crowd Control: Insufficient crowd management measures, such as barriers or designated pathways, can contribute to overcrowding and dangerous situations. Inadequate Exits: Limited or poorly marked exits can make it difficult for people to evacuate quickly in an emergency. If you find yourself caught in a suffocating crowd, try to stay calm. "Panic can worsen the situation. Take deep breaths and try to remain as calm as possible," says Dr Narayanaswamy. If possible, he adds, try to create some space around your chest by placing your arms in front of you to form a barrier. "Avoid struggling or pushing against the crowd, as this can quickly deplete your energy. If you can, alert those around you and try to work together to create space or move towards an exit."

Ensuring safety at large-scale events: The role of organisers and authorities Event organisers and local authorities have a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of attendees at large-scale festivals and religious gatherings, asserts Dr Narayanaswamy. This involves: Crowd Management: Implementing effective crowd control measures, such as designated entry and exit points, barriers to manage flow, and sufficient security personnel to monitor the crowd. Emergency Preparedness: Developing and communicating clear emergency evacuation plans, including designated assembly areas and procedures for handling medical emergencies. Medical Facilities: Providing on-site medical facilities equipped to handle a range of medical emergencies, including those related to crowd crush and heatstroke. Communication: Establishing clear communication channels between organisers, security personnel, and attendees, and regularly broadcasting safety messages and updates. Environmental Considerations: Taking into account weather conditions, terrain, and potential hazards when planning the event layout and ensuring adequate access to water and shade.

## Some surprising signs that indicate you are consuming excessive amounts of sugar

Most of us are aware of the common side effects of excessive sugar consumption, such as weight gain and increased risk of diabetes, but several lesser-known signs can indicate you're overdoing it on the sweet stuff. Dr Rupy Aujla, shares a clip from his podcast on Instagram, where he mentions, "Aside from the more obvious signs such as weight gain and frequent energy crashes, there are some more unusual signs and symptoms that you may not have come across before (sic)."

But, before identifying the signs, it is imperative to understand some seemingly healthy food sources that are loaded with sugar and can eventually lead to health issues in the long run. Hidden sources of sugar people may consume thinking they are healthy Kanikka Malhotra, consultant dietician and certified diabetes educator, stresses, "Sugar lurks in many places you wouldn't expect, even in foods marketed as healthy." Here are some surprising sources of hidden sugar, according to her: Low-fat yogurts: These often pack a sugary punch to replace the creaminess of full-fat yogurt. Check the label — a single cup can contain 11 teaspoons of sugar! Granola bars: These seemingly healthy snacks can contain hidden sugars like brown sugar, corn syrup, and agave nectar. Look for bars with less than 5 grams of added sugar.

Salad dressings: Beware of creamy dressings and sugary vinaigrettes. They can easily add grams of sugar to your otherwise healthy salad. Pasta sauces: Even savoury sauces can harbour hidden sugars. A half-cup serving can contain 6 to 12 grams of sugar. Choose low-sugar options or make your own sauce from scratch. Instant oatmeal: While oats themselves are great, flavoured packets often come loaded with added sugars. Stick to plain oatmeal. Some lesser known signs indicating you are consuming too much sugar Malhotra decodes the health signs mentioned by Dr Aujla in his clip. She says that one needs to remember that these "are just some potential signs, and the cause could be something else entirely."

\*Constant Cravings and Hunger: Sugar stimulates the reward system in your brain, causing desires for more sweet meals. This creates a loop in which you ingest sugar, have a momentary energy spike, and then fall, resulting in new cravings. \*Low Energy and Poor Sleep: Sugar increases followed by crashes might make you feel exhausted and sluggish. Sugar can also disturb sleep cycles, making it difficult to fall and remain asleep. \*Mood Swings and Irritability: Blood sugar fluctuations can impact your mood, leading to irritability, anxiety, and even symptoms of depression. \*Gut Issues: Excessive sugar intake can disrupt the balance of good and bad bacteria in your gut, potentially leading to bloating, discomfort, and digestive problems. \*Weaker connections \*Chronic Sinus Problems: While a weakened immune system (perhaps induced by high sugar) may increase your susceptibility to infections, there is no clear link between sugar and chronic sinus problems. Practical steps to take to reduce their sugar intake Here are some practical steps you can take to reduce your sugar intake and mitigate the negative health effects, as suggested by Malhotra: Read Food Labels: Pay close attention to 'added sugars' on nutrition labels. The American Heart Association recommends limiting added sugar to 25 grams for women and 37.5 grams for men daily. Beware of Sneaky Sugars: Look for hidden sugars like brown sugar, corn syrup, honey,



molasses, and dextrose listed high up on ingredient lists. Prioritise Whole Foods: Build your meals around whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. These are naturally filling and keep you feeling satisfied longer.

## Zika cases rise to 8, Centre issues advisory of surveillance to all states

New Delhi: Amid the rise in Zika virus cases in Pune, the Centre, on Wednesday, issued an advisory to all states asking them to step up vigil.

Zika virus disease (ZVD) is a mosquito-borne disease transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. While it is usually mild to moderate disease in adults and requires no specific treatment, in pregnant women, it may cause microcephaly, a condition in which the head is significantly smaller due to abnormal brain development, in the foetus.

Maharashtra has reported eight cases of Zika virus till July 2. Of these, six are from Pune, one each from Kolhapur and Sangamner, and 2 are pregnant women. "In view of some reported cases of Zika virus from Maharashtra, Dr Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services (DGHS), has issued an advisory to states highlighting the need for maintaining a state of constant vigil over the Zika virus situation in the country," the Health Ministry said. The ministry urged states "to instruct the health facilities in the affected areas or those catering cases from affected areas to screen the pregnant women for Zika virus infection."

The health workers must also "monitor the growth of the foetus" of Zika-positive women and "act as per Central government guidelines," the ministry said. It also asked health facilities and hospitals to identify a nodal officer to monitor and act to keep the premises free of Aedes mosquitoes. Besides, the advisory called on states to "strengthen entomological surveillance and intensify vector control activities in residential areas, workplaces, schools, construction sites, institutions, and health facilities."

## Director Sudha Kongara admits she and Akshay Kumar didn't get along during Sarfira shoot initially: 'What rubbish is this girl making me do'



After the success of the blockbuster Soorari Potru with Suriya, filmmaker Sudha Kongara is gearing up for its Hindi remake titled Sarfira, starring none other than Akshay Kumar. In a recent interview, Sudha discussed her initial challenges during the film's first week of shooting with Akshay. She explained how she desired Akshay to channel Suriya's performance rather than interpreting it in his own way, which made the Khiladi Kumar uncomfortable. However, the Bollywood star later explained his approach to her, leading to a better understanding between them.

Speaking to Galatta Plus, she said, "Suriya is Suriya. I have known him for over 25 years, and it's much easier to tell him what I want. It's very friendly and casual. But with Akshay sir, it's 'sir' first of all, and I was meeting this gentleman for the first time. Since I have no filters, it was almost similar. The first six days, he wasn't happy. He was like, 'What is this girl making me do all this rubbish?' So then he and the producer spoke to me, and I said, 'You do whatever you like to do, and I will tell you when it isn't going right.' I also had to let go because I had created the perfect Maara in my head, and I thought there could be nobody better than Suriya, and that's how it had

to be played. I soon realised that I was suffocating this actor who had his own method, so I had to let go." Explaining how she made peace with Akshay, Sudha said, "After six days, I showed him a cut of a particular scene, and the next day he came to me and said, 'I have a way of performing. I have a way of doing things and a process, but this is the first time I am trying to understand what is going on in your head. I am trying to give you that.' I said, 'Very good. I love it.' From there, we made peace, and we had a wonderful time shooting with each other. I really enjoyed working with him. He keeps saying, 'Isko toh filter he nahi hai (She doesn't have a filter).'"

Soorari Potru was inspired by events from the life of GR Gopinath, founder of Indian low-cost airline, Deccan. The film received critical acclaim and was selected as one of ten Indian films to be screened in the Best Foreign Film category at the 78th Golden Globe Awards. It also won five awards at the 68th National Film Awards, including Best Feature Film, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Screenplay, and Best Background Score. The film's Hindi remake Sarfira stars Akshay Kumar in the lead role, along with Paresh Rawal and Radhika Madan in pivotal roles.

## Aryan Khan spotted partying with a mystery woman, fans wonder if it is his rumored girlfriend Larissa Bonesi.

Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan might not be in the limelight as much as his other family members, however, the lad never fails to make headlines whenever he gets spotted. One such incident also happened recently when he was seen in the city partying with a mystery girl. In a video that has surfaced on social media, Aryan Khan is seen in close proximity with a girl, and fans wonder if it's his rumored girlfriend Larissa Bonesi.

While Aryan grabbed a lot of attention at the exclusive party, he was there with his friends and also happily posed for the paparazzi. Larissa was also spotted arriving at the party later, which is what sparked rumors about Aryan's love life once again. In the video, many claim that Aryan is getting 'cozy' with the mystery woman, whereas in the video, he is just seen leaning forward to talk to the girl.

Rumors around Aryan Khan and Larissa have been doing rounds for several months now, some time back the two were spotted attending a concert together. On the work front, Aryan is in the news for his directorial debut.



While he is working on his first web series called Stardom, the young director has shot with many big names in Bollywood like his father SRK, Ranveer Singh, Karan Johar, Bobby Deol, and many more who are confirmed to have a cameo in the show. The series will feature Mona Singh, Lakshya Lalwani, and Gautami Kapoor in important roles and has shot in the bylanes of Mumbai.

## Ananya Panday's cousin Alanna Panday welcomes baby boy with Ivor McCray



Actor Ananya Panday's cousin, social media influencer Alanna Panday, has joyfully announced the arrival of her first child, a baby boy, with her husband, Ivor McCray. The couple shared the delightful news on their Instagram handles, revealing the baby's face to their followers. In the Instagram post, the couple can be seen embracing their newborn. Alanna wrote, "Our little angel is here." Her post received a lot of love from friends and family. Ananya shared the video on Instagram and wrote, "My beautiful baby boy nephew is here." Ishq Vishk Rebound actor Jibraan Khan responded, "Ohhhhh my god!! Congratulations you two." Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap's daughter Aaliyah Kashyap, who is also a social media influencer, commented, "oh my god!!!! congratulations you guys."



Alanna and Ivor, who tied the knot in March 2023 in a picturesque ceremony in Mumbai, have been documenting their journey to parenthood on social media. Their announcement video, capturing the tender moments of Alanna's pregnancy and their excitement for the new arrival, garnered overwhelming love and support from fans and family alike. Alanna, a popular figure on social media with 1.6 million followers, has been sharing snippets of her life with Ivor, a US-based photographer and videographer. Their journey from their dreamy wedding to the much-anticipated gender reveal picnic has captivated their audience. The gender reveal event, held a few months prior, was an elegant affair adorned with pastel decorations and a special cake that disclosed they were expecting a boy.

## Manisha Koirala recalls a famous photographer told her off for refusing to wear a bikini: 'Jo mitti pighalne se...'

Bollywood actor Manisha Koirala, who continues to relish the success of her latest work in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi, recently opened up about a time early in her career when she was asked to pose in a two-piece bikini by a famous photographer. While the actor agreed that she often wears a bikini while swimming, she didn't find it necessary for the photoshoot and refused to wear it. In an interview, she recalled the instance and said, "Very early on in my career I was asked to go and take photographs, and there was this very famous photographer. I went with my mom, and initially, that photographer said things like, 'You are the next superstar and this and that.' Cut to him bringing a two-piece bikini to me and asking me to wear it. I told him, 'Sir, I wear this when I go to the beach or for a swim, but if this is the way I have to get into the movies, I don't want it, and I am not wearing that.'"

After knowing about Manisha's inhibitions, the photographer told her off. Recalling the same, Manisha said, "I told him either you shoot me fully clothed otherwise I am..." I remember he gave me a big dialogue. He said, 'Jo mitti pighalne se sharmati ho uske murti kaise banaye (The clay that refuses to melt, how do I make a statue from it)'. I have not forgotten that." During the conversation, Manisha admitted that this was the mentality of some



people during the 90s. She also recalled that the same photographer had to click her later in her career, when she had become a big star, and he quickly ate his words and said, "Oh, I knew you were going to be a big star." While Manisha wasn't happy with his behaviour, she also understood where he came from, "Not to be mean to the person, but their conscience level was that. Their exposure was that, so they behaved like that," she added. Manisha played the pivotal role of Malikajaan in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut web show Heeramandi and garnered heaps of praise for her performance. Before the web show, she starred in Kartik Aaryan's Shehzada in 2023.

## Saira Banu reveals Dilip Kumar used to call her 'aunty', pens note about their pure love: 'Saira, you are my...'



Saira Banu and Dilip Kumar have been one of the most iconic couples in Bollywood. Even today, years after the legendary actor passed away, his wife Saira Banu shares lovely anecdotes from their life remembering the legend Dilip Sahib. Recently, she did the same again when she penned a heartfelt note, thanking everyone for checking on her and also praying for Dilip Sahib's well-being in the hereafter.

Sharing a series of photos, and a letter, Saira Banu wrote a long note talking about the late Dilip Kumar. She revealed that he was quite a loving husband and had given Saira a cute nickname too. She wrote, "I am expressing my Love by writing this note to thank all of his admirers and fans, well-wishers, dearest friends and family who take the trouble of sending us lovely messages on occasions. It makes me happy that they all remember our important dates and pray for his well-being in the hereafter for Dilip Sahib is an inspiration for Six generations of actors as also for the coming generations."

The note further read, "Sahib has been the best of friends to the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Sahab, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sahab, Narasimha Rao Sahab, alongside the leading lawyers, economists, and Industrialists, etc. He has been a die-hard supporter of sportsmen. He played Football and Cricket with great ease. In fact, he would have wanted to

be a Sportsman at the national level rather than what destiny had in store for him.

You see, Sahib was the greatest actor of all time. He had absolutely everything at his disposal, yet not many people know that he suffered from severe insomnia. Before our marriage, even after taking pills, he would remain awake until dawn. However, once we got married and became indispensable to each other, he started sleeping just in time. He even gave me a cute nickname, endearingly saying, "Saira, you are my sleeping pill, you are my pillow." To this day, I burst into laughter remembering the charm with which he would say it. "There was another memorable incident when he wrote me a note. He had a deep appreciation for music and would often have a whole Darbar set up in our home, witnessing the magic created by the artists. Sahib, ever so efficiently, would often sneak away from the Darbar to get some sleep. On one such evening, despite managing to sneak away, he found himself unable to sleep without me. So, he penned a note saying, "Feeling sleepy, what do you suggest, Aunty? ...Yours 100%". He was a fun-loving person, always calling me 'Aunty' and laughing. Yet, beneath the jests, laughter, and those heartfelt notes, there lay pure love. Dilip Sahib is forever... May Allah keep him in his love and blessings... Aameen," concluded the note.

## Prabhas' film crosses Rs 900 mark globally, mints Rs 507 cr in India

Kalki 2898 AD is showing no signs of slowing down at the box office. In its second week, the film has surged past the Rs 500 crore mark in India and is eyeing Rs 1000 crore mark globally with its gross collection. Interestingly, the film's Hindi version is outperforming the Telugu version. According to Sacnilk, the film earned Rs 41.3 crore on Sunday, marking a nearly 21 percent increase in its domestic revenue. This brings the film's net collection in India to Rs 507 crore.

On Sunday, the film's Telugu version brought in Rs 14 crore, while its Hindi version surpassed it with Rs 22 crore. The Tamil version earned Rs 3 crore, Malayalam Rs 1.8 crore, and Kannada Rs 0.5 crore. After grossing Rs 414.85 crore in its first week, the Nag Ashwin-directed film experienced a brief drop in collections but quickly bounced back over the weekend. The film saw a 100 percent jump on Saturday, earning Rs 34.15 crore, followed by an even higher collection on Sunday. Released in theatres on June 27 in multiple languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi, and English, Kalki 2898 AD continues to captivate audiences. Director Nag Ashwin recently took to Twitter to urge fans to set aside their analysis and appreciate the film's multilingual re-

lease. He wrote, "This weekend, let's celebrate. The fandoms, the audiences, the languages that have come together. The doors that have opened, the possibilities for future filmmakers that are unlocked. Let's save the analysis for later. This weekend let's celebrate Indian Cinema!"



Produced by Vyjayanthi Movies, Kalki 2898 AD stars some of the biggest names in Indian cinema, including Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Amitabh Bachchan, and Kamal Haasan. The film also features cameos from notable stars across various South Indian film industries, such as Ram Gopal Varma, SS Rajamouli, Dulquer Salmaan, Vijay Deverakonda, Mrunal Thakur, and Anna Ben.

## Manchester United nightmare ends for Van de Beek after completing Girona move



GNS News Agency, July 13

Donny van de Beek has finally sealed his permanent transfer to La Liga side Girona from Premier League side Manchester United, in hopes to turn the wheel of his fate after a forgetful chapter in England. The 500,000 euros move of the Dutchman has seen him pen down a four-year deal with Girona and that marks a hefty loss for United, who roped in the player from Ajax for 35 million

euros. Coming to Manchester United in running hot form in 2020, Van de Beek's dip in form is still considered one of the most hurtful topics for the Red Devils. Despite being in consistent good books of the club's massive fanbase, the Dutchman could not click into the United system in his 4-year stay with the side. Having played under three different managers, van de Beek was never able to make his way into the first team and could only manage 62 appearances to his name and just scored twice. The 27-year-old spent two loan spells at Everton and Eintracht Frankfurt, but did not manage to impress there either.

van de Beek will be hoping that the Girona move will give him the much desired first-team action, and bring back the similar touch he boasted back at Ajax. The move also ensures UEFA Champions League football for the midfielder after Girona finished third in the La Liga 2023/2024 points table on top of some brilliant performances, even against top sides like FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid.

## Manchester United appoint Ruud van Nistelrooy and Rene Hake as new assistant managers

GNS News Agency, July 13

Manchester United have appointed Ruud van Nistelrooy and Rene Hake as their new assistant managers, the club announced in an official statement on July 11, Thursday. Both men will be working under manager Erik ten Hag until June 2026 as Mitchell van der Gaag and Benni McCarthy have left the club.

"Manchester United has appointed Rene Hake and Ruud van Nistelrooy as assistant managers of the men's first team, to work under Erik ten Hag until June 2026," read the statement. Van Nistelrooy had a legendary career with United as a player as he was their leading striker from 2001-2006, where he won 1 Premier League title and a League Cup and FA Cup. As a manager, Van Nistelrooy won the Dutch Cup with PSV Eindhoven in 2022-23 season and finished second in the league before leaving abruptly. Hake was the manager of Utrecht and Go Ahead Eagles till last season before taking up the job with United.

Ten Hag said he was delighted to have both men join their project. The Dutch tactician felt it was a good time to refresh the coaching team as they look to build on from the achievements of the past two seasons. "I am delighted that Rene and Ruud have agreed to join our



project, adding a wealth of experience, knowledge and new energy to the staff. Now is a good time to refresh the coaching team as we look to build on the achievements of the past two years and push to the next level," said Ten Hag. Manchester United had an underwhelming campaign last season as they finished 8th on the Premier League table with just 60 points to their name. United ended up winning the FA Cup to make it to the Europa League and the appointment of Van Nistelrooy and Hake is part of the shakeup from INEOS.

## ENG vs WI, 1st Test, Day 2: England dominate West Indies with Anderson double



GNS News Agency, July 13

ENG vs WI, 1st Test, Day 2: England need four wickets for an innings victory over the West Indies after dominant performances by Anderson, Atkinson, and Stokes, backed by strong batting from Root, Brook, and debutant Jamie Smith on Day 2 of the first Test. England are on the verge of securing an innings victory over the West Indies within three days, requiring just four more wickets. James Anderson, Gus Atkinson, and Ben Stokes shared six wickets on the second evening, positioning the hosts firmly in control. England's commanding batting performance, maintaining a scoring rate of over four runs per over, laid the foundation for their bowlers to tighten their grip and approach a 1-0 series lead.

Set a daunting task of 250 runs to force England to bat again, Kraigg Brathwaite's West Indies collapsed to 37 for 4 within 19 overs. Anderson's inswinger knocked back Kraigg Brathwaite's middle stump, while Stokes dismissed Mikyle Louis and Kirk McKenzie during a productive ten-over spell. The West Indies batters adopted a

cautious approach, aiming to survive rather than score, but ultimately succeeded in neither. Alick Athanaze showed some resistance at No. 4 but was dismissed for 22 after being meticulously set up by Anderson. Joshua da Silva and Jason Holder added 24 for the sixth wicket, the third-highest partnership for the West Indies in the match, before Holder fell to Atkinson's bouncer. Earlier, England's first innings ended at tea on the second day, with the team building a significant lead. Half-centuries from Harry Brook, Joe Root, debutant Jamie Smith, Zak Crawley, and Ollie Pope highlighted their innings. Except for Jayden Seales, the West Indies bowlers struggled due to their lack of experience with the red-ball.

Brook and Root were prolific, with Brook reaching his fifty in his first Test innings in almost a year. However, he fell soon after, top-edging a hook off Alzarri Joseph. Root's 68 runs saw him surpass Allan Border's career tally, entering the top ten all-time Test run-scorers, but he was bowled by Gudakesh Motie before lunch. Motie also dismissed Stokes with a sharply turning delivery. In the second session, Smith excelled, striking Seales for six over the Tavern Stand in his maiden Test innings. He formed a steady partnership with Chris Woakes, but after quick wickets, Smith accelerated, hitting Shamar Joseph for six into the Grandstand and clearing Lord's with a shot off Seales. Louis' direct-hit run-out of Shoaib Bashir marked the end of England's innings, bringing Anderson to the crease. Anderson didn't face a ball, as Smith was caught at deep square leg, finishing with 70 runs. Shamar Joseph, suffering from muscle tightness, had to leave the field and struggled through his 15th over. Although Anderson won't surpass Shane Warne's wicket tally, he aims to secure one last victory for England in his 188th and final Test on Friday.



Former India pacer Irfan Pathan has posted a hilarious meme based on his altercation with brother Yusuf Pathan during their side, India Champions' clash against South Africa Champions in the WCL.

India's bowlers mounted a late comeback in the death overs, but the damage was already done. South Africa's powerful batting performance had set an insurmountable target, making it too difficult for India to chase down.

## Wimbledon 2024 semifinals prediction, live streaming: Djokovic vs Musetti and Alcaraz vs Medvedev



GNS News Agency, July 13

Wimbledon 2024: Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz faces a tricky test as he will take on former US Open champion Daniil Medvedev in the first men's singles semi-final. Seven-time champion Novak Djokovic takes on 22-year-old Lorenzo Musetti, who is playing in his first-ever Grand Slam last-four match.

It's time for the men's singles semi-final day in Wimbledon. Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz and seven-time champion Novak Djokovic will take the centerstage at Centre Court in London. Carlos Alcaraz will face a stiff test against 2021 US Open champion and fifth seed Daniil Medvedev in the first semi-final -- a repeat of last year's semi-final. Alcaraz stormed past Medvedev, beating the Russian in straight sets while dropping only 9 games. However, Alcaraz of wary of a rejuvenated Medvedev, who is high on confidence after having beaten World No. 1 Jannik Sinner in the quarter-finals this year.

Medvedev avenged his Wimbledon defeat to Alcaraz last year by beating the Spaniard in the semi-final of the US Open. However, the Russian lost their only meeting of 2024 in the final of the Indian Wells Masters on hard court. Alcaraz has been made to work hard in Wimbledon 2024. The defending champion overcame a five-setter against Frances Tiafoe in the third round before playing out four-setters against Ugo Humbert and Tommy Paul.

On the other hand, Novak Djokovic, who is yet to reach a final in 2024, will be keen on making the most of the extra day's break he got after his quarter-final opponent Alex de Minaur withdrew due to injury. Musetti, on



the other hand, is heading into the match on the back of a sensational five-set marathon against Taylor Fritz. Musetti will be playing in his first Grand Slam semi-final and the lack of experience might work against him. However, the 22-year-old Italian has the tools and a varied skillset to trouble Djokovic if the Serb is not at his best. Djokovic seems to have completely recovered from the knee injury that he was dealing with earlier this season and the extra day's rest must spur him on against Musetti. It will also be interesting to see his equation with the crowd after the sensational rant earlier this week. The first semi-final between Carlos Alcaraz and Daniil Medvedev will get underway from 1:30 pm local time and 6 pm IST on the Centre Court. Novak Djokovic will take on Lorenzo Musetti after the first semi-final on Centre Court. Star Sports will provide the live television coverage of the matches in India. Hotstar will provide live streaming of the matches. Alcaraz and Medvedev have played six times with the Spaniard winning four of their matches. Friday will be the third time they meet in Wimbledon. Medvedev defeated Alcaraz in the second round in 2021 before losing to him in the 2023 semi-final. Djokovic and Musetti have met each other on the tour six times with the Serb winning five of them. Musetti's only win came in Monte Carlo on clay last year.

WIMBLEDON SEMIFINAL PREDICTION: WHO WILL WIN?

Daniil Medvedev has the tools to trouble Carlos Alcaraz, but the Spaniard is likely to win the first semi-final in four sets. Alcaraz will be keen on extending his title run and give himself another shot at glory.

## Shaheen Afridi posts cryptic message amid widespread reports of his misconduct



GNS News Agency, July 13

Star Pakistan seamer Shaheen Afridi posted a video of him bowling in the nets amid widespread reports of his misconduct in the national team. Notably, Pakistan cricket is undergoing a tumultuous period after their first stage exit from the T20 World Cup 2024. The Babar Azam-led side suffered a shocking loss against the USA followed by a narrow 6-run loss against arch-rivals India where they failed to chase down 120. As a result, the 2009 champions were knocked out of the tournament in the first stage itself. In the aftermath of the poor performance, PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) sacked chief selector Wahab Riaz along with Abdul Razaq who was also member of the selection committee.

Amid all the drama, several reports in the Pakistan media have also claimed that there was no unity in the Pakistan team and Shaheen Afridi was involved in inappropriate behaviour with the coaching staff. Amid all the reports, the left-arm seamer posted a video of him bowling in the nets with a caption, "Rise Above."

Shaheen had a decent T20 World Cup being the joint second highest wicket taker of Pakistan with five wickets to his name from four innings at an average of 21 and an economy of 6.56. His best performance of the tournament came against Ireland where he picked 2/11 in four overs. PCB took away captaincy from Shaheen

Heading into the T20 World Cup, PCB made a surprising move by re-appointing Babar as the T20I skipper two months ahead of event. The 29-year-old was sacked from his position in all three formats after Pakistan failed to reach the semi-final of ODI World Cup. After Babar's sacking, Shaheen took over the duties of the T20I side but didn't have a memorable beginning losing the away series against New Zealand by 1-4 in January earlier this year. In a surprising move, PCB re-instated Babar as the T20I skipper in March, a decision which seemed to have irked Afridi. Following several reports of discord in the national side, there is a lot to fix in the Pakistan team as they prepare themselves for the Champions Trophy 2025 set to be hosted by them

## South Africa's Morne Morkel to be Team India's bowling coach?

GNS News Agency, July 13,

New Delhi: Former South Africa pacer Morne Morkel is believed to be in contention for India's bowling coach as head coach Gautam Gambhir approached BCCI for his inclusion in his support staff team, says a report. As per the Cricbuzz report, Gambhir is believed to have requested the BCCI to consider Morkel for the position of bowling coach. Morkel, who previously served as Pakistan's bowling coach during the ODI World Cup 2023, has been contacted for the same, the report added. The former pacer has played 86 Tests, 117 ODIs, and 44 T20Is in a period between 2006 and 2018 for South Africa. Gambhir and Morkel have worked together at Lucknow Super Giants, where the former India opener was the mentor of the franchise for two years.

Morkel continued to serve as the team's bowling coach under new head coach Justin Langer in the last edition as Gambhir joined Kolkata Knight Riders as a mentor and ultimately made them champions after 10 years gap.

Morkel has established a great reputation as a competent coach both internationally and in IPL circles. The 39-year-old retired in 2018 and is nonetheless well-versed in the game's current strategies. In contrast, there



have been reports making rounds that former India pacers Zaheer Khan, Lakshmpathy Balaji and Vinay Kumar are also in the fray for the role.

However, the final call is yet to be taken by the BCCI. If chosen, Morkel will succeed Paras Mhambrey, who has performed admirably in the post for the previous three years under head coach Rahul Dravid. Previously, Gambhir has also recommended Abhishek Nayar and Ryan ten Doeschate, while the BCCI is known to be interested in keeping fielding coach T Dilip from the departing Dravid era.