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## IMD warns of heavy rains across Telangana, including Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Heavy overnight showers on Sunday made way to overcast conditions across Hyderabad on Monday morning. Rains, however, are not likely to relent with IMD, Hyderabad on Monday issuing a warning that heavy to very heavy rains across multiple regions of Telangana State, including Hyderabad and the neighboring districts, will occur in the coming 24-hours.

While there were no reports of major downpour during peak office hours in Hyderabad on Monday morning, wet and inundated roads, however, caused traffic congestions at several sections

## 15 passengers injured as APSRTC bus rams DCM van in Jadcherla

Mahabubnagar: About 15 passengers suffered injuries when an APSRTC bus in which they were travelling hit a DCM van at Bhureddipally near Jadcherla early on Monday. The bus, headed towards Dhamaravaram in Ananthapur from Hyderabad, hit the DCM van, which was taking a U turn at Bhureddipally. Such was the impact of the accident that flames erupted from the bus and it got gutted in the incident, according to reports.

Noticing flames in the bus, passersby alerted the passengers and helped them get out of the bus. They also alerted the police, who in turn pressed fire tenders into service to douse the flames.

## Oli thanks PM Modi, vows to take India-Nepal ties to new heights



GNS News Agency, July 15

Kathmandu: Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his congratulatory message, Nepal PM K P Sharma Oli on Monday vowed to elevate the "his-

toric ties" between two neighbouring countries to new heights. "Thank you, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for your warm congratulations. I am committed to working closely with you to strengthen Nepal-

India relations for our mutual benefit. Together, we can elevate our historic ties to new heights," Oli said in a post on X. Earlier in the day, Nepal President Ram Chandra Poudel administered the oath of office to

72-year-old Chairman of Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist, CPN-UML) as the country's Prime Minister for the fourth time.

Prime Minister Modi today congratulated Oli on his appointment and expressed hope to work closely to further strengthen the deep bonds of friendship and expand the mutually beneficial cooperation between India and Nepal. "Congratulations K P Sharma Oli on your appointment as the Prime Minister of Nepal. Look forward to working closely to further strengthen the deep bonds of friendship between our two countries and to further expand our mutually beneficial cooperation for the progress and prosperity of our peoples," said PM Modi.

## Telangana govt. launches Online Application Portal for CMRF



GNS News Agency, July 15

In a significant move to prevent misuse of funds and ensure that they reach the deserving beneficiaries, the State Government (Congress Govt.) has launched an online application portal for the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). The initiative, announced by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, aims to streamline the process of providing financial assistance to those in need.

Local ministers, MLAs, MPs, and MLCs have been assigned a login ID to access the CMRF portal and enter details of patients seeking assistance. This step will help verify the accuracy of the certificates submitted by the victims and ensure that funds are allocated to the right recipients. The online portal, developed under the guidance of the Center for Good Governance, will centralize the application process and improve transparency in fund distribution. Applicants are required to upload their rec-

ommendation letters from local representatives, along with their bank account details, on the website. Upon submission, a unique code will be provided for the CMRF application, and original medical bills must be submitted to the Secretariat for verification. The application will then be forwarded to respective hospitals for confirmation before approval.

Once approved, a check with the beneficiary's account number printed on it will be prepared and handed over to the applicants by their representatives. This measure aims to reduce the risk of check misplacement and ensure that the funds reach the intended recipients promptly. The implementation of an online portal for CMRF applications marks a step towards efficient and transparent distribution of funds, addressing concerns of past fund diversion. The government's commitment to accountability and fairness in fund allocation is evident through this new initiative.

## KTR slams CM, Ministers for insensitive remarks on toddy tappers



GNS News Agency, July 15

Hyderabad: BRS working president and former Minister KT Rama Rao slammed Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and his Cabinet colleagues for making insensitive remarks about toddy tappers. He termed their actions as "downright disgusting and inhuman," criticising

them for cracking crude jokes while the toddy tappers risked their lives. The State government on Sunday, launched the distribution of safety kits for toddy tappers from the Goud community. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy launched the distribution of the safety kits under 'Katamayya Raksha Kavacham' scheme, at Lashkarguda village at Abdullapurmet on the outskirts of Hyderabad. On the occasion, the toddy tappers were forced to dangle to the trees for several minutes, while the Chief Minister interacted with them using a microphone. Responding to the incident, Rama Rao expressed his dismay at the lack of empathy shown by the Chief Minister and the Ministers.

"Making those hapless toddy tappers dangle dangerously while the Chief Minister and Ministers crack crude jokes on their occupation is downright disgusting and inhuman! No sane leader would do this," he said. He also stated that the State government's focus on publicity to gain attention, often indicates the weakness of its policies.

## Amit Shah calls up CMs of Assam, U.P., Gujarat on flood and rain situation; assures Central assistance

GNS News Agency, July 15

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on July 15 spoke to Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and took stock of the flood situation in the State. The Home Minister also spoke with the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat and inquired about the increased water level in both States. He also assured the CMs of providing Central assistance as well as support of the National Disaster Response Force to combat the crisis.

Mr. Shah reached out to the Chief Ministers of Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat in separate telephonic conversations to assess the flood situation as well as the surge in water level due to heavy rainfall. The proactive engagement by the Union Home Minister comes as the Assam flood and the resulting surge in waters continue to affect thousands of people across these States. The flood situation in Assam remains grim, with the death toll rising to more than 90 as per the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA). More than 5 lakh people across 18 districts are reeling under the deluge, with Assam's Cachar being the worst-hit district. The flood-affected districts in Assam include Cachar, Chirang, Darrang, Dhemaji, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Golaghat, Jorhat, Kamrup, Kamrup Metropolitan, Karimganj, Majuli, Morigaon, Nagaon, Nalbari, and Sivasagar. On the other hand, 1,342 villages under 52 revenue circles are still under water and the flood waters submerged 25367.61 hectares of crop area in Assam. The water level of the Brahmaputra River is flowing above the danger level mark at Neamatighat, Tezpur and Dhubri while the Burhidighing River is flowing above the danger level mark at Chenimari (Khowang), Disang River at Nanglamuraghat. Over 58,000 people are still taking shelter in 172 relief camps and distribution centres in 13 districts. 2,83,712 domestic animals were also affected by



the deluge. Vendors push their cart along the banks of the river Ganga after the water level of the river Ganga and Yamuna rises following heavy rainfall, in Prayagraj on July 14, 2024. Vendors push their cart along the banks of the river Ganga after the water level of the river Ganga and Yamuna rises following heavy rainfall, in Prayagraj on July 14, 2024. | Photo Credit: ANI The situation in Uttar Pradesh, especially in the eastern and central regions, is also under observation after an increase in the water levels of several rivers following incessant rains impacting around 18 lakh people in more than 900 villages. As per officials, nearly 18 districts, including Azamgarh, Mau, Ballia, Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur, Kushinagar, Shravasti, Balrampur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Barabanki, Sitapur, Gonda, Siddharth Nagar, Moradabad, Bareilly and Basti in Uttar Pradesh were affected by increased water level. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath earlier conducted an aerial survey of the affected districts and directed the officials to provide all possible assistance to the affected people. Due to heavy rain in the Valsad district in Gujarat, many low-lying areas have been inundated, and the national highway was also flooded.

## Supreme Court issues notice on NTA plea to transfer NEET cases in High Courts to top court

GNS News Agency, July 15

The Supreme Court on July 15 sought responses from students-petitioners to a request made by the National Testing Agency (NTA), which is under a cloud over the conduct of NEET-UG 2024 marred by leaks and other irregularities, to transfer their pleas pending in High Courts to the Supreme Court. A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud issued notice to the students, who are the petitioners in the High Courts. NTA had applied to the Supreme Court to transfer the pending cases in the High Courts to the Supreme Court for an authoritative ruling. The three-judge Bench of the Chief Justice

and Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra are hearing over 40 separate petitions seeking various reliefs from fresh NEET to abolishment of the NTA itself. The NTA has urged the Supreme Court to tag its petitions to transfer the High Court cases with these petitions. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the NEET case on July 18. The primary question before the Supreme Court is whether or not to order a re-test. The court has indicated that its first priority is to examine whether the wrongdoers among the exam-takers could be segregated from the innocent students. The court has made it clear that it did not want to pass any orders which would upset the future of 23 lakh students who took NEET on May 5.

## On Bhujbal's plea, Sharad Pawar to contact Maha CM to defuse tension



GNS News Agency, July 15

Mumbai: Perturbed by the deteriorating situation on the caste front in Maharashtra, Nationalist Congress Party's Minister Chhagan Bhujbal held an unscheduled meeting with Nationalist Congress Party (SP) President Sharad Pawar, on Monday, sparking huge political speculation. Speaking to the media, Bhujbal said that after his detailed discussions of nearly one-and-a-half hours, NCP(SP) supremo Pawar agreed to speak with Mahayuti Chief Minister Eknath Shinde in the next couple of days. Sharad Pawar also promised to speak with all prominent leaders to hammer out an amicable solution. "I had not taken an appointment, and reached there (Silver Oaks) at 10.10 A.M., when Sharad Pawar sahib was still sleeping, as he was unwell. I waited and an hour later, he called me... and I requested him to intervene in the entire issue to help work out an amicable solution," Bhujbal said. He informed the senior Pawar that he had not approached him as a MLA, Minister, representing any party or with any political agenda, but to express his grave concern at the current volatile scenario fomenting in the state owing to the OBC-Maratha caste row. "The common man should not suffer... I emphasised to Sharad Pawar Sahib that as a senior leader in the state, it was his responsibility to intervene and cool the tempers... In such an atmosphere, I don't want the homes of the poor people to get torched. Tensions must be defused," Bhujbal said regarding the meeting. Elaborating, he informed Sharad Pawar how a major caste-schism has developed in the state, some are with Marathas, some with OBCs, Dhangars, etc, and how those supporting the OBCs or Marathas are avoiding each other, even for family functions, and it leads to occasional skirmishes. After listening patiently, Sharad Pawar said he was not aware what

transpired between CM Shinde and the Shivba Sanghatana leader Manoj Jarange-Patil, or between Bhujbal and the OBC leaders. However, the Maratha strongman assured Bhujbal that he would phone the CM in the next couple of days and work to resolve the contentious caste issues that threaten to peak ahead of the October Assembly elections. Referring to kite-flying and sharp reactions of leaders across party lines, Bhujbal said he had informed senior NCP leader Praful Patel of the meeting and even secured his green signal, reiterating that he had no political agenda behind the sudden encounter with Sharad Pawar.

## Chandrababu releases white paper on natural resources, alleges of exploitation



GNS News Agency, July 15

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has accused exploitation natural resources over the past five years. He claims that forests were destroyed by the previous government and has released a white paper in the Secretariat detailing the exploitation of natural resources. According to Chandrababu, lands and minerals were looted and alleged that there were land grabs in Visakhapatnam, Ongole, and Chittoor, under the guise of house construction. Chandrababu expressed his outrage at the exploitation of natural resources, stating that a new system has been put in place to prevent such actions. Naidu also found fault with Land Titling Act.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## INDIA shining

A month after its impressive performance in the Lok Sabha polls, the INDIA bloc has upstaged the BJP in the Assembly byelections in seven states, winning 10 seats out of 13. The Congress won four seats — two each in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh — while the Trinamool Congress (TMC) clinched all four in West Bengal. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won the Jalandhar West seat in Punjab and the DMK bagged the Vikravandi constituency in Tamil Nadu. The BJP got one seat each in Himachal and Madhya Pradesh, while an independent candidate won a seat in Bihar. The victories in Uttarakhand and Himachal are a morale-booster for the Congress as the party had suffered a rout in both states at the hands of the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections. The same holds true for AAP, which was under pressure after having won just three seats out of 13 in the Punjab parliamentary battle. Himachal Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann can breathe easy for now. The TMC and the DMK — the ruling parties in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, respectively — have strengthened their position. For the BJP, the losses are another setback after it failed to get a majority on its own in the Lower House. The reversals are particularly significant in Uttarakhand, where the party is in power and had swept the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The bypoll results augur well for the resurgent Opposition, which made its presence felt in the recent session of Parliament. INDIA is looking to upset the BJP's hold in Haryana and Maharashtra, which will witness Assembly elections later this year. However, there is no room for complacency in the Opposition camp as the saffron party has a knack for winning elections against heavy odds. What the BJP needs is honest introspection to find out why things are going wrong and how it can do course correction.

## HC seeks Sunita Kejriwal's response on plea to remove 'recordings' of court proceedings concerning Delhi CM



GNS News Agency, July 15

The Delhi High Court Tuesday asked Sunita Kejriwal to file her response to a PIL seeking removal of alleged audio/video recordings of trial court proceedings when her husband, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, had personally addressed the court, from social media. The HC in an interim order directed social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Meta (formerly Facebook), and YouTube to remove the alleged audio/video recordings from their respective platforms. The senior counsel appearing for Sunita Kejriwal submitted before a division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela that his client be "dropped" as a party from the "proceedings". "The issue is very short. There was a proceeding before the trial court, which was a virtual hearing and anybody could attend through the web. Somebody had recorded that court proceeding and put it on the web on different social media platforms. Respondent No 1 (Sunita Kejriwal) has only (reshared) the post. It is not a post that they say is edited or manipulated... This is not contempt or defamation. This is a PIL," her counsel said.

Her counsel further said she was not the originator of the alleged audio/video recording and that the person was someone else. "How am I concerned? Dragging people when they have nothing to do with it," he said. He further submitted that while he was not against the PIL proceeding further, his client be dropped as a party from the proceedings.

At this stage, the bench said that he could move an appropriate application in this regard, however, "court proceedings cannot be on the net". "The problem is the anonymity of the net... There is already a notice issued and an interim order is passed. We will have to deal with the matter. You file a counter (reply)," the bench orally said. The bench also noted the contention of the counsel appearing for the respondents that the "copy of the writ petition served upon them does not tally with the writ petition filed in the court".

The HC asked the petitioner to supply another copy of the petition to the counsel for the respondents during the day. The bench then permitted the respondents to file their "counter affidavits and/or applications" within four weeks and listed the matter on October 7. The court also asked the petitioner to file an amended memo of parties, after taking note of the contention of Meta's counsel that the nomenclature of respondent 8 in the petition should be Meta Platforms Inc and that Instagram is not an independent entity and should be dropped from the array of parties. The counsel for Meta additionally said that it was not possible for the platform to comply with the vacation bench's direction to ensure that the content is not re-uploaded. To this, the bench asked the counsel to file an appropriate application addressing the issue. The petitioner, advocate Vaibhav Singh, had moved the HC contending that when the CM, who had been arrested in the excise policy case, was produced before the trial court on March 28 he had addressed the court in person. He had earlier argued that certain persons had recorded the trial court proceedings from that day and had posted it on social media platforms. He had alleged that this post of the audio-video recording had been "reposted" by Sunita Kejriwal and other respondents, adding that "unauthorised recording of proceedings by any person or entity is a violation of Delhi High Court Video Conferencing Rules, 2021". Apart from removal from the platforms, Singh has additionally prayed for setting up an SIT to conduct an investigation and to identify the individuals responsible for recording and sharing the audio/video recording.

## Despite early onset of monsoon, sowing sluggish in Gujarat



GNS News Agency, July 15

The slow progress of monsoon after an early onset in Gujarat this year has resulted in sluggishness in sowing Kharif crops in the state, which is the largest producer of cotton and groundnut in India. Latest data available with Gujarat's Directorate of Agriculture (DAG) showed that around a month after monsoon hit the state, farmers had completed sowing in 40.26 lakh hectare (lh) of land as of July 8. The figure was 52.32 lh during the corresponding period last year, the data showed.

The comparatively slow speed of sowing is despite the southwest monsoon hitting the state on June 11, four days earlier than its normal date of advent. "Monsoon did indeed hit south Gujarat on June 11. But it remained sluggish for the next 10 days. The state as a whole started receiving rainfall only from June 23. Hence, the sowing has been sluggish compared to the previous Kharif season," a DAG official told The Indian Express. Incidentally, districts falling in the central and eastern part of Gujarat registered a 15 per cent deficit in June rainfall. Officials said this has reflected on the sowing trend as well. The 40.26 lh area sown so far represents 47 per cent of the previous three years' average of 85.58 lh in Kharif

season. Though farmers are still complaining about the comparatively low market price of cotton in the 2023-24 marketing season, this natural fibre crop is a favourite of cultivators this year also, data suggested. Of the 40.26 lh sown so far, cotton accounts for 18.60 lh or about 46 per cent of net area sown. It represents 74.57 per cent of the previous three years' average cotton area of 24.96 lh but lower when compared to 23.75 lh sowed during the corresponding period last year. In the 2023 Kharif season, farmers had sown cotton in 26.82 lh. Cotton and groundnut are the main cash crops sown during Kharif season in Gujarat. However, many farmers are holding on to their cotton harvested in 2023-24, as market prices have hovered around Rs 7,000 per quintal when compared to the average Rs 8,500 in the 2022-23 marketing season and more than Rs 10,000 towards the end of the 2021-22 marketing season. "These are initial sowing trends. It is too early to predict a defined change in trend at this stage. As the state has received good rainfall from June 23, sowing of most Kharif crops, save castor and paddy, among others, should be over in the next fortnight and the picture will become clear after that," said the official. "There is a lag of around a week in actual sowing and its reporting and July 8 data should be read with this caveat," the official added.

Meanwhile, groundnut sowing has been completed in 14 lh, which is 80 per cent of the previous three years' total average acreage of 17.51 lh. At this time the previous year, groundnut sowing had been completed in 15.23 lh. Market prices of groundnut, too, hovered around Rs 6,000 per quintal in the 2023-24 marketing season though the government has jacked up the minimum support price of this oilseed crop to Rs 6,783 this year from Rs 6,377 the previous year. Soybean is the other cash crop whose acreage this season has already crossed one lakh hectare mark and stood at 1.56 lh or 66 per cent of average 2.36 lh, data showed.

## Karnataka HC quashes cognizance in case against police officers accused of extortion, trespass

GNS News Agency, July 15

The Karnataka High Court has quashed the cognizance granted by a special court in a case allegedly involving extortion, trespass and other offences filed under the IPC as well as the Prevention of Corruption Act. The accused were seven police officers, including former Anti Corruption Bureau head ADGP Seemant Kumar Singh. The order was passed by a bench consisting of Justice M Nagaprasanna.

While the special court had granted cognizance of the offences without prior sanction, the High Court said that the same was contrary to the prior judgments by the Supreme Court. The bench noted, "The merit of the matter is not what is submitted by either of the parties. It is only concerning sanction. If it is in the discharge of official duty and has nexus to such discharge, sanction for such prosecution under Section 197 of the Cr.P.C. for offences other than under the Act is imperative, while it is mandatory for any offence under the Act. Therefore, sanction was required both under Section 19 of the Act or under Section 197 of the Cr.P.C." "The matter had begun with a case allegedly involving Bengaluru Development Author-



ity personnel and forged documents in 2021, following which a Bengaluru realtor, Mohan Kumar, was raided by the ACB in connection with this. In 2023, Kumar obtained an order in his favour quashing proceedings against him as the alleged crime had not been registered. The special court had taken cognizance of the alleged offences committed by the police, based on a subsequent complaint by Kumar. While the cognizance of the court for the offences has been quashed, the complaint filed by the realtor still remains.

## 'Yes, I stalled the paver works': Commissioner Anindita Mitra, says 'civic body facing severe financial crisis'



GNS News Agency, July 15

Anindita Mitra, Chandigarh paver work, Jasbir Singh versus Anindita Mitra, Chandigarh MC commissioner versus councillors, Chandigarh MC financial crunch, Chandigarh cremation ground revamp, Municipal Corporation Chandigarh (MCC) Commissioner Anindita Mitra. In a heated debate with AAP councillor Jasbir Singh, Municipal Corporation Chandigarh (MCC) Commissioner Anindita Mitra accepted that she stalled paver works as the civic body is facing a grave financial crisis. Mitra's remarks came on the General House meet after the AAP councillor alleged that all his agendas for the last one year were not being given administrative approval and demanded the reason for the same from the civic body officials.

Responding to the allegations by the AAP councillor, Mitra asked Jasbir to specify the name of the officer against whom he is levelling allegations. "Unsubstantiated allegations may not be levelled against the officials, I would like to clearly mention here," Mitra told the General House of the MCC. The commissioner stated the agendas have been put on hold by her because of the poor financial condition of the civic body. She added that not just in the AAP councillor's ward, but the works of pavers and tiles in the entire city has been held back. "Irrespective of the area of any councillor, agendas of all pavers and tiles have been stalled. And I have stalled them, not any other officer. In the last two-three months, I have not given out any tender for all of these works like pavers or tiles because the financial condition of the civic body is not good at all," the commissioner said. After Mitra's reply, Jasbir clarified that he "never hinted that any officer is behaving in any underhand way".

The financial condition of the MCC has been going through a crisis, officials say, so much so that the civic body is struggling to pay salaries of the staff as well. Only funds to the tune of Rs 32 crore have been left in the coffers, officials claim. The corporation stated that they have been waiting to get the grants from the central government — the funds that they should have received by June-end. The civic body's monthly expenditure, including salaries and committed liabilities, is Rs 58 crore while only with Rs 32 crore in the coffers. It is still awaiting the revenue from water receipts and other sources of

## IAS probationer Pooja Khedkar transferred to Washim amid complaints



GNS News Agency, July 15

The state government late on Monday evening decided to transfer IAS probationer Dr Pooja Khedkar from Pune to Washim. The government order — signed by S M Mahadik, assistant secretary, government of Maharashtra — said the transfer was done for administrative reasons. Highly placed sources in the government said the probation officer is likely to face an enquiry regarding the various complaints received against her.

Khedkar had created ripples in the administration as her demands and actions had taken many by surprise. As a probationary officer, she was not entitled to use a beacon light on a vehicle, but she had done so nonetheless with her private vehicles. She had also demanded letter pads, as well as a separate office, staff and quarters — none of which she was entitled to. Posted as an assistant collector with the Pune district collector's office, Khedkar had stood 841st in the country in the main civil services examinations. The officer had allegedly converted the antechamber of a senior officer into her office without the knowledge or permission of that officer. Her father, who was a senior officer in the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), had allegedly interfered on behalf of his daughter and tried to use his influence for her benefit. Suhas Diwase, district collector, Pune, had sent a report about Khedkar's behaviour to the chief secretary of the state. The officer had allegedly asked for special privileges which were not allowed for a probation officer. She had allegedly used a red and blue beacon on her private vehicle — a picture of which had gone viral on the Internet.

## Karnataka HC rejects plea by Chinese national accused in Power Bank loan app scam to visit ailing father in China

GNS News Agency, July 15

The Karnataka High Court has rejected the application of a Chinese citizen, accused in the Power Bank loan app scam, to leave the country to visit her ailing father. The order was issued on July 5 by Justice Nagaprasanna, in response to a petition filed by the accused, Hu Xiaolin. The scam allegedly worked by promising investors high returns on their investments if they deposited money into the Power Bank app.

She had previously obtained bail on condition that she could not leave the area of jurisdiction of the court. Xiaolin's counsel argued that the Kerala High Court had permitted her to visit China and return with regard to the cases registered in their jurisdiction. It was argued that if the permission was not granted, then Xiaolin would lose the chance to be with her 80-year-old father in his last days. The opposing counsel argued that there were seven different cases registered against the petitioner and her husband in the Power Bank scam, and it would be impossible to make her return from China. The bench observed that the prevailing laws in China prohibited exit of a foreign national from the country under these circumstances, and thus similarly the laws of India could not be made flexible in such a matter. The bench stated, "...if petitioner is permitted to move out of the shores of the nation, despite the plethora of crimes pending against her, it would become impossible to conclude trial, as it would be permitting her to flee justice and create a dent in the majesty of law.... Therefore, seeking permission to travel abroad does not merit any consideration in the peculiar facts of this case."

## Bangladeshi woman gets 14 months in jail for getting fake Aadhaar card made

GNS News Agency, July 15

The Surat district court on Monday sentenced a 63-year-old Bangladeshi woman to 14 months in jail for getting a fake Aadhaar card made with forged documents to claim Indian nationality. The convict, Mallika Sakin Sardar, is a resident of Mandarwaja tenement in Salabatpura. She hails from Gopalganj district in Bangladesh and has been staying in Surat since 2020.

Last March, Sardar was arrested by Athwalines police, which recovered a Bangladeshi passport issued to her on September 28, 2022 for 10 years, Aadhaar card and Covid-19 vaccination certificate, among others. The police also found valid Bangladeshi visa from October 30, 2022 to October 19, 2023. Sardar was booked under sections 465 (forgery), 470 (forged document), 471 (Using as genuine a forged document), 467 (forgery for valuable security) and 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating) of the Indian Penal Code. Sardar, who used to stay alone, is at present lodged at Surat Central Jail. In his arguments before the court of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Vijaykumar Barot, public prosecutor Pawan Shah said that Sardar got the Aadhaar card made with fake documents to seek Indian citizenship. Alleging that there is a rise in illegal immigrants entering India from Bangladesh, he added, "If leniency is shown to the accused, it will motivate others to illegally enter India and make Indian citizenship documents with forged document..." The court in its order said that Sardar is being convicted under Section 465 of the IPC for seven months and Section 471 of the IPC for another seven months. After the 14 months, she should be sent to Bangladesh and a report in this regard should be submitted to the court, it added.

## DKS wants Ramanagar district renamed as Bengaluru South, JD(S) smells real estate interests

GNS News Agency, July 15

A delegation led by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar submitted a proposal to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to rename Ramanagara district as Bengaluru South district. Ramanagara district has five taluks — Ramanagara, Channapatna, Magadi, Kanakapura and Harohalli. Renaming Ramanagara as Bengaluru South district will help the talukas benefit from the international reputation enjoyed by Bengaluru, Shivakumar said in the memorandum.

Signatories of the petition included Ramalinga Reddy, Transport and Ramanagar district-in-charge minister, Iqbal Hussain, Ramanagar MLA, D K Suresh, former MP, MLCs Puttanna, S Ravi and Sudham Das, among others. Ramanagar is among the relatively new districts of the state and was formed in 2007.

"The people of Doddaballapur, Devanahalli, Hoskote, Kanakapura, Ramanagara, Channapatna, Magadi are all originally Bangaloreans. Ramanagara and Bengaluru rural districts were carved out from Bengaluru urban for administrative ease," he said. Ramanagara needs to be renamed keeping Ramanagara as the district headquarters, he added. "Renaming would help bring industries to the district and the land valuation would go up as well. Bengaluru has scope to grow only towards Ramanagara and Tumkur as it has Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh on the other sides," Shivakumar told reporters after submitting the memorandum.

The JD(S), meanwhile, has criticised the proposal alleging that it was an "appeasement tactic" apart from turning the district into a haven for real-estate barons.



## As Modi raises Indian youths' induction in the Russian army with Putin, families in Haryana hope to see their sons soon



GNS News Agency, July 15

Haryana boys stuck in Russian army, PM Modi Russia, Vladimir Putin Indians in Russia, Harsh Sambhali village, Abhishek Fatehabad Gorakhpur village, Haryana boys forcibly inducted in Russian army, Indians in war against Ukraine, Indian families appeal, Russian army contract, India-Russia diplomatic efforts, travel agent deception, Indian youths Russia-Ukraine war, Prime Minister intervention, family distress, Indian government appeal, Russian army training, war zone bunkers, diplomatic negotiation, return of Indian youths Harsh, 19, from Karnal's Sambhali village, and Abhishek, 20, from Fatehabad's Gorakhpur village, have been stranded in Russia since January. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi raising the issue with Vladimir Putin, the families of two Haryana boys stuck in the Russian army are hopeful their sons will soon return home.

Harsh, 19, from Karnal's Sambhali village, and Abhishek, 20, from Fatehabad's Gorakhpur village, have been stranded in Russia since January. Their families claim they went on tourist visas but were forcibly inducted into the Russian army amid the ongoing war against Ukraine. Harsh's family claims he went to Moscow as a tourist, while Abhishek's family says he went to "explore foreign dreams." "It has been seven months since Harsh left home to visit Russia as a tourist. He boarded the flight from IGI Airport, New Delhi. He met a few others from Punjab on the same flight. He had a two-month-long tourist visa and was expected to come back home within a few days. In Moscow, he met a few other Indians, and all of them decided to go to Belarus. They were around six or seven of them. They came into contact with a travel agent who told them he could take them to Belarus. He did not tell them that they required a separate visa for that. They were made to board a taxi and were taken to Belarus. They argued with the taxi driver, who demanded more money than what was agreed upon. When they refused, he informed the Russian police. The Russian police then handed them over to the Russian army. They

were given two options: either face 10 years of imprisonment or work in the Russian army in their ongoing battle against Ukraine for one year. They were forcibly made to sign a one-year contract in Russian. We were devastated when we got to know that. For nearly a week, we could not get in touch with Harsh," Harsh's brother Sahil told The Indian Express.

"They were given 10-15 days of weapon training during which they were not even given adequate diet. For several weeks, Harsh and others like him have been shifted from one place to another in the war zone. They were made to live in bunkers," Sahil added. But Harsh and others are no longer in the war zone. "I spoke with Harsh at about 2:30 pm today. They were initially kept in the forward areas in the war zone. But for the last few weeks, Harsh and others have been brought back to a normal zone. I don't exactly know his current location. But, the [Russian army] have given each one of them a credit card that they use to buy their groceries and other necessary items for daily use. I hope that he comes back home soon," Sahil added. Harsh's father, Suresh Kumar, said, "We got to know today that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has raised this issue with the Russian president. We don't know how many days it will take for Harsh to get back home. It may take one week or even more. We hope that he comes back soon. I spoke with Harsh last night. He is also terrified and wants to come back home." Harsh's family runs a small confectionary shop in the village to earn their livelihood.

"He had completed his 10+2 and wanted to go to Russia as a tourist with his friends. We spent around Rs. 2.5 lakh and he got his tourist visa through a travel agent. But, rather than coming back home, he got stuck there only. We had been appealing to the Government of India and the state government of Haryana to help us get our son back," Harsh's mother, Suman, told The Indian Express. A similar story is shared by Abhishek Kumar's family, who are waiting for him to return home. "Abhishek completed his 10+2 and wanted to explore his foreign dreams. We got him a tourist visa. He was supposed to go to Portugal. He left here on January 18 and landed in Russia. He got in touch with a few others like him, and all of them were in a taxi when they were caught by the police there. Their documents were lying in their room where they were staying, but they were not heard. They were forcibly made to sign a one-year contract and made to fight for the Russian army. He is not in the war zone anymore, and whenever he can, he calls us. Abhishek's father, Satish Kumar, and mother, Kaushalya, are in a state of shock and have appealed to the government to bring back their son. We shall be relieved if our child comes back home," Abhishek's uncle, Sunil Kumar.

## HC seeks state, Centre's reply on implementing decision to broadcast educational TV programmes for children with special needs

GNS News Agency, July 15

After the state government submitted that it did not have sufficient funds to telecast educational videos in sign language through TV programmes and on YouTube for children with special needs, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday sought reply from the Maharashtra government and the Centre as to how the decision for funding and securing time slots on Doordarshan and other platforms for such programmes can be implemented. A division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar was hearing two PILs filed by NGO Anamprem and Dr Kalyani N Mandke, argued through advocate Uday Waranjikar, seeking relief for specially-abled school and college students by implementing provisions of Right to Persons with Disability Act, 2016.

The PILs also sought direction to the authorities to come up with new learning methods for children with special needs through electronic medium. They further sought that a structured recovery programme be formulated for the next three years for both regular and children with special needs, who suffered during the pandemic and to collectively decide guidelines for teachers to fill the learning gap.

The bench noted that the state social justice department had informed that certain decisions were taken to strengthen education for specially-abled students and it had decided to reserve a time slot on Doordarshan (for hearing impaired) and Akashvani (visually impaired) to broadcast educational programmes for them. It was decided that the DD Sahyadri channel shall broadcast such programmes throughout the state for two hours in the morning and evening and such videos should contain



sign language interpreters to make it accessible for hearing-impaired students. The government also stated that total expenses for creating and broadcasting such programmes were nearly Rs. 4 crore and as no funds are available for the same, it would need funds from the Central government.

The state government also claimed that availability of time slots for such programmes was also a challenge. The government affidavit stated that the television telecast has disadvantages that if hearing-impaired students miss a programme, they cannot watch it again. Therefore, a better option has to be provided through education videos on YouTube, which can be seen frequently as per their convenience but no funds are available for such purpose, it added. The court then directed the state government to file a fresh affidavit within six weeks stating what steps it had taken to implement decisions taken on August 10, 2021. It also sought an affidavit of the concerned ministry of the central government, detailing how the said decisions can be implemented.

## Madhya Pradesh-based 'Chaddi gang' robs Mangaluru house, arrested within 5 hours

GNS News Agency, July 15

The arrested were identified as Raju Singhania, 24, Mayur, 30, Bali, 22, and Vikky, 21, all from Madhya Pradesh. (Express Photo) The arrested were identified as Raju Singhania, 24, Mayur, 30, Bali, 22, and Vikky, 21, all from Madhya Pradesh. In a joint operation, Mangaluru and Hassan district police officials on Tuesday arrested the members of the notorious inter-state 'Chaddi gang', hours after they allegedly robbed a house in Mangaluru city. The arrested were identified as Raju Singhania, 24, Mayur, 30, Bali, 22, and Vikky, 21, all from Madhya Pradesh.

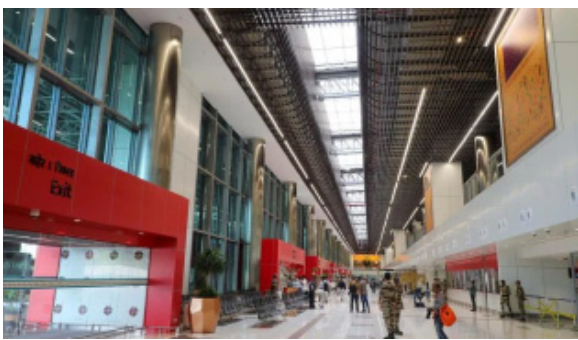


The gang broke into the house through the window grill early on Tuesday, assaulted an elderly couple and fled with gold and diamond jewellery

worth Rs 12 lakh, a mobile phone and 10 branded watches worth Rs 1 lakh and cash of Rs 3,000. The Hassan district police seized the stolen items and

handed them over to the Urwa police. The Hassan district police seized the stolen items and cash from them and handed them over to the Urwa police.

## New Pune Airport Terminal will be operationalised in phases; two airlines will shift operations



GNS News Agency, July 15

The new terminal building of Pune Airport will be operationalised in phases with operations of two airlines to be shifted to the new building on July 14, officials of Airports Authority of India (AAI) have said. A total of eight airlines currently operate from Pune Airport. "Air India and Air India Express will start operating from the new building from July 14. Air India flight AI - 858 (Pune - Delhi) will be the first flight to depart from Pune airport. Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol will felicitate the first passenger by handing them their boarding pass. Remaining airlines operating at Pune Airport will start operation from the new building in a phased manner. We aim to complete the shifting by August 5," said Santosh Dhoke, Pune Airport Director.

"The operationalization of the new building was delayed for the last few weeks because of the shortage of CISF personnel at the airport. The Airport has a sanctioned strength of 724 CISF personnel but only about 453 persons were deployed at the airport until recently. After the new terminal building was constructed to cater

to the growing need of the flyers, the AAI had requested the CISF to deploy more persons as the new terminal building is larger and that the transition will require deployment at both buildings," said Dhoke. "We have received a sufficient number of additional CISF personnel to go ahead with the shifting in a phased manner," added Dhoke without divulging the actual number of CISF personnel that have joined.

The existing terminal building with a built-up area of 22,000 square metres has a passenger handling capacity of 7 million per annum. The new building with a built-up area of 52,000 square metres has a passenger handling capacity of 9 million per annum, officials said. The state-of-the-art building is centrally air-conditioned with the provision of an additional five passenger boarding bridges taking the count of passenger boarding bridges to ten, this will provide convenience and hassle-free movement for passengers from the terminal building to aircraft. A total of 34 Check-in Counters and 25 self-check-in counters will also provide faster check-in experience to travellers, officials added. "The terminal incorporates Pune's cultural elements such as a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Palkhi traditions, displays of local art, and local heritage. The terminal is equipped with baby care rooms, child play areas, and open seating arrangements for added comfort. The terminal has 15-20 shops including those offering food and beverages," said Dhoke. He said that two electric buses and six baggage trailers will be deployed to facilitate transportation of passengers between new and old terminals. The building has 10 aerobridges, of which three will connect to the existing terminal. Five carousels are dedicated for arrivals with two specifically for international passengers, officials said.

## Controversial Anil Masih's entry after five months sparks furore

GNS News Agency, July 15

A furore erupted in the municipal corporation's (MC) General House when nominated councillor Anil Masih, who came to attend proceedings after five months, tried to speak on an issue. Masih, as the returning officer for the Chandigarh mayor polls held on January 30, allegedly was found defacing eight votes of AAP councillors on camera, apparently to turn the elections in the favour of the BJP. He later tendered an unconditional apology to the Supreme Court in response to a show-cause notice issued to him for making a false statement before the top court.

Dressed in a pink shirt, Masih in the initial hours of the meeting kept mostly quiet. However, when he tried to comment on an issue, an AAP councillor reacted, which led to BJP leaders protesting citing personal comments made against Masih. When Masih stood up to give his views, AAP's Munawar remarked whether the former was mentally fit to speak. Munawar was referring to the Supreme Court hearing some months ago during the mayor election controversy, when Masih had told the court that he was not in the "right frame of mind" and was suffering from depression. Over the AAP councillor's remarks, BJP councillors Kanwarjeet Rana and Saurabh Joshi got infuriated as to how could pass personal comments on someone. All the BJP councillors came near the mayor's well and even made a kind of human chain after Mayor Kuldeep Kumar asked the marshalls to move out the agitating councillors. The BJP leaders said that they would not let the mayor misuse his powers and will not leave the House. In the process of moving out the councillors, the situation went out of hand and BJP's Joshi got hurt. Kumar then decided to adjourn the house at 4.30 pm.

Later, speaking to The Indian Express, Joshi said it is "unacceptable" to make personal remarks against anyone. "You cannot remark on someone personally like this the way the AAP councillor did. This is unacceptable. And then the mayor tried using his powers to move us



out," he added. Meanwhile, AAP leader and co-incharge of Chandigarh SS Ahluwalia said that in the House meeting BJP councillors did not allow the proceedings to be conducted only for Masih, who "killed democracy." "For quite some time, Mayor Kumar had asked the BJP councillors to calm down, but the BJP councillors did not listen and continued the ruckus. Eventually, the mayor had to call the marshalls and order the ruckus-creating BJP councillors be moved out of the House. I condemn this act of the BJP councillors," he said. "BJP is still running with the support of Anil Masih, who killed democracy in the mayor election." Ahluwalia said that Masih was caught by the Supreme Court in the case of wrongly cancelling eight votes polled in favour of Kumar. Masih has also lied twice to the Supreme Court that he was mentally unstable during the Mayor election. BJP councillors should not support Masih, the killer of democracy, in the municipal corporation. The people of Chandigarh have rejected BJP in the Lok Sabha elections and will never forgive BJP for the disgrace that Masih has caused to Chandigarh," he added.

## Karnataka BJP expels leader over alcohol distribution during party MP Sudhakar's 'thanksgiving' ceremony

GNS News Agency, July 15

Following the controversy over the distribution of alcohol at a public event to celebrate BJP MP K Sudhakar's win in the recent Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party on Tuesday expelled Jagadeesh Choudary, the taluka president of Nelamangala, for six years. The move came after videos of liquor distribution to the party workers and the public went viral at the event held "In the event organised to celebrate the win of the MP, it is said that the alcohol was distributed to the public and it has been covered by print and electronic media. It has caused an embarrassment and is against the ethics of the party. It is also a violation of the party's discipline," H Ramakrishnappa, president of Bengaluru rural district BJP unit, said in his letter. "Based on the direction of state BJP president (B Y Vijayendra), you have been expelled from the party for six years," Ramakrishnappa added. Earlier, Choudary told The Indian Express he had sought permission from the police for the event. "I was told to get the permission for the event and we had taken permission by taking a license from the excise department to distribute alcohol to 500 to 5000 people," he said.

Former health and higher education minister K Sudhakar lost in the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections against Pradeep Eshwar in what was considered one of the biggest upsets. He managed to win against Congress candidate M S Raksha Ramaiah by a margin of more than 1.5 lakh votes from the Chikkaballapur constituency in the Lok Sabha elections. While speaking to The Indian Express, K Sudhakar distanced himself from the event. "I was invited to the felicitation programme organised by our local leaders and karyakartas in Nelamangala. I was not aware that liquor was being distributed. In fact, I came to know about it through the media. In my 20 years of political career, I have never indulged in such politics. Even if our karyakartas have done it, it's wrong," the Chikkaballapur MP said.

Several Congress leaders attacked the BJP over the distribution of liquor to its workers at the public event in Nelamangala. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said, "To register a case in this regard is



Following the controversy over the distribution of alcohol at a public event to celebrate BJP MP K Sudhakar's win in the recent Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party expelled Jagadeesh Choudary, the taluka president of Nelamangala, for six years.

another matter, but before that BJP national president J P Nadda must answer how his party allowed its MP to distribute liquor to party workers in a public event. Rather than the local BJP leaders, it is important that national leaders of the BJP tell people how the BJP is upholding the culture of land by distributing liquor in public meetings". Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundurao posted on X, "Saying one thing, doing another, how to believe them (BJP)... BJP leaders are busy distributing liquor while the state is facing dengue. Where are the BJP leaders who questioned venturing into swimming when I visited Mangaluru? Is this (distribution of liquor) your culture?"



## With an eye on Haryana Assembly polls, Selja announces state-wide padyatra with a focus on urban areas



GNS News Agency, July 15

In what is being seen as an attempt to create a parallel power centre in the Congress's Haryana unit ahead of the Assembly elections, party general secretary and Lok Sabha MP from Sirsa Kumari Selja on Monday announced she will hold a foot march in urban areas across the state to strengthen the organisation. The announcement comes days after the June 26 meeting of AICC chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi where Selja accused party affairs in-charge Deepak Bararia of being more inclined towards the Bhupinder Hooda camp and ignoring other leaders.

With this padyatra, which will begin in the last week of July, party sources said Selja is also trying to convey her show of strength to the party high command ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections. In announcing a state-level event and bypassing the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC), Selja has also indicated she has the backing of the party high command for her padyatra, they added.

While talking to The Indian Express, HPCC chief Udai Bhan said, "She is a general secretary in the AICC. She has announced her programme. It was not discussed with us, but it is good if she is taking out this padyatra. Wherever she will go, she will promote the Congress party and mobilise the party workers." "As far as the PCC is concerned, we are touring across the State. In the coming days, there shall be programmes of Member of Parliament Deepender Hooda ji, [Bhupinder] Hooda ji, and mine too. By the time we go to the Vidhan Sabha polls, we will have covered each and every Assembly constituency of Haryana. We are getting immense response from the people. Our worker-level meetings are getting converted into public rallies due to the enthusiasm among the people who have made up their minds to bring Congress to power this time," Bhan added.

Selja said through the padyatra, which will be conducted with hundreds of her supporters from across

Haryana, people will be informed about the "misrule of the BJP". "Through this yatra, the message of Congress's National President Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi will be communicated to every urban voter. Additionally, people will be informed in detail about the misrule of the BJP's 10 years," Selja said. The focus of the padyatra, Selja said, would be the urban Assembly areas in Haryana. "The main objective of the padyatra is to strengthen the Congress in urban Assembly areas compared to the BJP and gain a decisive advantage... With the Assembly elections approaching, Congress needs to focus on urban Assembly areas under a new strategy. Therefore, I have decided to conduct a padyatra in urban areas to strengthen the party," she said.

A study of the Lok Sabha election results done by the Congress party has shown that the BJP gained an edge in 44 Assembly areas in Haryana, most of which are urban. Invoking Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, the "biggest yatra in the history of the country," the former Union minister said, "He travelled from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Manipur to Maharashtra to fight for the common people. He talked to every section of society, understood their pain, and communicated the Congress message to them. Inspired by him, a Congress message yatra was conducted in Haryana in January-February, the result of which was clearly seen in the Lok Sabha elections. The people reduced the BJP to half. "Congress party is not as weak in urban areas as BJP tries to show. Congress still has a strong workforce in the urban areas. They need to be united and infused with new energy. Rahul and Kharge's message needs to be conveyed to them. Once the morale of urban workers is boosted, nothing can stop Congress from achieving a three-fourths majority in the state's power," Selja added. She also pointed to the "heaps of problems in urban areas". "Every third family is trapped in the vortex of Property ID. Every second family is entangled in the PPP mess. Shopkeepers and traders are terrified of extortion incidents. GST has ruined the business of small shopkeepers. There isn't a single city where the sewerage system and drinking water arrangements are proper. Through the padyatra, people will be made aware of the anti-people decisions taken during BJP's 10-year tenure," she said. The Congress leader said the route map and logistics of the padyatra are being finalised. "The route of the yatra will soon be announced to party workers through the media along with the exact date of its commencement. Some important responsibilities regarding this padyatra will also be assigned to the workers. For this, a workers' meeting will be called," Selja added.

## Bengal Governor seeks report from Mamata Banerjee on 'action taken' against Kolkata police commissioner and deputy commissioner

GNS News Agency, July 15

West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose on Tuesday asked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to submit a report on the action taken against the Kolkata commissioner of police and the deputy commissioner of police on a report sent by the Raj Bhawan to the Centre and the State Government. The Governor also sought a report on CBI enquiry on the assault and disrobing of a woman in Coochbehar and the public flogging of a couple in Chopra in the state's Uttar Dinajpur district.

"Upon the authority vested in the Hon'ble Governor under Article 167 of the Constitution of India, Honorable Chief Minister has been called upon to submit the reports on: 1. Action taken against the Commissioner of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kolkata on the report sent by Hon'ble Governor to the Government of India and the Hon'ble Chief Minister. 2. CBI enquiry into the violent incidents of disrobing a woman in public, public flogging of a couple and operation of Kangaroo Courts with no effective action by Police," Ananda Bose wrote in his X handle. This comes after Governor Ananda Bose sent a detailed report to the Union Minister of Home Affairs against Kolkata police Commissioner Vineet Goyal and Deputy Commissioner (Central) Indira Mukherjee in late June. On July 4, the report was sent to the Bengal Government. In his report against Goyal and Mukherjee, the Bengal governor said Goyal and Mukherjee were functioning in a manner which is unbecoming of a public servant and alleged that the officers through their actions tarnished the office of the Governor and also ignored service rules.

The Governor's report highlighted various incidents including what he alleged was promoting and encouraging "concocted allegations" by a woman employee of Raj



Bhawan against the Governor himself. On May 8, the woman employee alleged molestation bid on the part of the Governor at Raj Bhawan and Kolkata police initiated an enquiry into the incident. The report highlighted Vineet Goyal and Indira Mukherjee formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and continued media briefings on the alleged molestation issue "giving an impression that the Governor could face criminal charges". Bose's report also highlighted that despite his permission the Kolkata police prevented the victims of post-poll violence from meeting him. The report highlighted the Kolkata police defied the Bengal Governor's orders on June 13 to withdraw the police contingent from Raj Bhawan premises. In a separate issue, Governor Bose also sent a report on two recent incidents including one in Coochbehar where a BJP woman worker was allegedly beaten up and disrobed. In another incident, a couple was publicly flogged at a kangaroo court in Chopra in the state's Uttar Dinajpur. The Governor has advised CBI enquiry into these two incidents.

## Booked by CBI for 'graft' in morning, Chandigarh police officer found dead in evening

GNS News Agency, July 15

The deceased ASI has been identified as Vajinder Singh, who was found dead under mysterious circumstances here at the dividing road of Sector 40-41, Chandigarh, on Tuesday evening. (File Photo) The deceased ASI has been identified as Vajinder Singh, who was found dead under mysterious circumstances here at the dividing road of Sector 40-41, Chandigarh, An assistant sub inspector (ASI) of the Chandigarh Police, who had been booked by the CBI on Tuesday morning following a trap set to catch him accepting a bribe, died under mysterious circumstances later in the evening. Meanwhile, another ASI, Satish, from whom the graft money was allegedly recovered, has been taken into the custody by the CBI for questioning.

The deceased ASI has been identified as Vajinder Singh, who was found dead under mysterious circumstances here at the dividing road of Sector 40-41, Chandigarh, on Tuesday evening. Prime facie, the death is suspected to be suicide, according to the police sources.

The CBI on Tuesday morning had laid a trap over the complaint of a woman, who alleged that ASI of Police Station at Sector 26, Vajinder Singh was demanding Rs 20,000 from her to get her brother Bhoora's name out of chargesheet, in an attempt to murder case registered in the Sector 26 police station, sources said. The incident took place in March this year at Sector 26 grain market, when following an altercation, a youth named Kishan

was allegedly stabbed with a knife by Gajendra and Bhoora. Following the complaint by Kishan, an attempted murder case was registered against the duo. However, as per allegations of the sister (complainant) of Bhoora, ASI Vajinder approached and told her that he will get her brother's name out of the chargesheet and will get a medical report prepared of victim Kishan showing less injuries. The complainant alleged to the CBI that the accused ASI then asked for Rs 40,000 for the task, however on woman's refusal, the amount was negotiated to Rs 20,000.

The CBI team, thus on the complaint of the woman, initiated an inquiry in the matter, and laid a trap on Tuesday morning. When the woman reached today to give Rs 20,000 to Vajinder, the latter asked her to keep the money in a file. In the meantime, Vajinder, suspecting it to be a trap by the CBI, escaped from the spot, while handing over the file with money, to ASI Satish. The CBI team reached at the spot and nabbed Satish while recovering the amount from him. The investigation agency was in the process of tracing the absconding police officer, however, in the evening later today, his body was found under mysterious circumstances in a private car. The deceased was rushed to Government Multi Speciality Hospital (GMSH) Sector 16, Chandigarh, where doctors on duty declared him brought dead. Inquest proceedings have also been initiated.

## BSF shot down 125 drones from Pakistan so far in 2024, up from 107 in all of 2023



GNS News Agency, July 15

Between January and July 9 this year, the Border Security Force (BSF) has shot down 125 drones along Punjab's border with Pakistan against 107 in the entire 2023. In 2022, the BSF had intercepted only 22 such drones in the entire year. Over the years, the number of drones that are being flown into the Indian territory from across the International border with Pakistan in Punjab has seen a significant rise. The drones, which carry drugs, arms, ammunition and fake currency from Pakistan into India, are mostly shot down in Abohar, Ferozepur, Tarn Taran, Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Pathankot districts, with maximum recoveries from Tarn Taran and Amritsar, BSF sources said. Sources added that with better drone interdiction technology now available with the BSF, they are able to bring down a large number of the drones and seize the consignments that they carried.

Around 145 kg heroin and 15 kg opium has been seized by the BSF between January and July 9 this year, including the payload carried by the drones. The Chinese made DJI Mavic-3 Classic drones are the most common among those which were seized in Punjab and these carry small payloads of drugs often accompanied by automatic pistols and a few rounds of ammunition. As per data sourced by The Indian Express, 18 weapons, 24

magazines and 313 rounds of ammunition of various calibres have been seized in the border areas in the same time period of six months. One Pakistani intruder has also been killed while attempting to enter India along the border fence in Punjab while a few mobile phones with Pakistanis SIM cards have also been recovered.

The seizures made by the BSF also include huge quantities of drugs such as ICE and Tramadol Hydrochloride tablets. As per one estimate 21,473 tablets of Tramadol have been recovered along with one KG of ICE. 111 litres of locally made illicit liquor have also been seized from border areas. As many as 35 Indian smugglers have been nabbed in the past six months and 42 persons have been caught while trying to enter Pakistan from India in Punjab. The BSF also apprehended 21 Pakistani citizens at the border and handed 13 of them back to Pakistan as they were found to have been inadvertent border crossers. One Bangladeshi and one Afghan citizen were also nabbed at the border. Indian currency worth Rs 2 crore, fake Indian Currency notes worth Rs 40,000, Pakistani currency worth Rs 36,000 and a few hundred Bangladeshi Takas have also been seized. Punjab has a 553 km long border with Pakistan, most of which is fenced. However, there are certain riverine stretches where the fence gets damaged during monsoons due to flooding of rivers and hence the BSF has to take extra precautions to ensure that there is no illegal activity undertaken by the smugglers by taking advantage of the situation.

According to a senior BSF officers, operations in the border areas are also undertaken with the close cooperation of Punjab Police in the border areas. The Punjab Police has undertaken an extensive exercise to install CCTV cameras all along important points on the Indo-Pak border. As per a statement issued by the Punjab DGP, Gaurav Yadav, the project worth Rs 20 crores has been already sanctioned. Tenders for the same were also floated by the Punjab Police a few months back.

## Boycott controversy in Haryana, newly married couple asked to leave village

GNS News Agency, July 15

The couple are currently living in a government-run safe house. (File Photo) The couple are currently living in a government-run safe house. A newly married couple in Haryana have been asked to leave the village by the family of the groom in Mahendragarh district. The family members of the groom agreed to "bedkhal" (evict) the couple after their village has been facing a boycott from the bride's village for the past nearly one month. The distance between the villages is nearly 1 km. The residents of the girl's village were opposing the marriage on the ground that they have brotherhood, and marriages can't be allowed between the residents from both villages. The couple are currently living in a government-run safe house. On Tuesday, representatives from both villages reached Nizampur police station and informed the police about their decision. Police station SHO Gobind Singh told The Indian Express: "Both parties have agreed for a compromise. The father of the youngster has evicted his son and his daughter-in-law. It means they were not obeying his father and they have nothing to do with his property now. They may stay anywhere but not in their native village." Villagers say the family of the youngster has prepared an affidavit in this regard. The 27-year-old groom and the 21-year-old bride had eloped nearly a month ago and got married. The couple is from the same caste Ahir. However, the residents of the woman's village opposed the marriage and announced a boycott of the residents of the groom's village. As a result, the residents of groom's village faced several problems as the post office and bank, common to both villages, are situated bride's village. Meanwhile, amid increasing tension and pressure to end their marriage, the couple have taken shelter in a government-run safe house. The SHO said: "Some of the shops were opened today and more will be opened from tomorrow after the compromise. Now, both villages will



live peacefully. We will withdraw the police from the village which was deployed to maintain peace in the village." One of the villagers, who took part in the negotiations on Monday, said: "The bride is a college student, while the groom was preparing for competitive exams. They got married on June 10 after their elopement on June 9. It upset the residents of our village because it was against the norms of our brotherhood. The residents of our village felt cheated. The couple approached the court for security on June 12. On the same day, the residents of our village announced a boycott of the residents of the groom's village." He said: "The residents of our village did not block the roads to deny entry to the residents of the other village. In fact, after the incident, they did not come to our village." Referring to the new decision, he said that "now the couple will not come to their native village but may stay in another village or town". Father-in-law the sarchpanch of one of the villages said: "The couple got married in a temple of UP on June 10. Two days after it, the girl gave a statement in the court to state that 'she will stay with her husband'. The court ordered their stay in the government run safe-house. They are still staying there."

## Bhagwant Mann urges farmers to lift dharna, they say: 'mediate, get our issues resolved by Centre'

GNS News Agency, July 15

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who had earlier mediated between the Centre and the farmers agitating at Shambhu and Khanauri borders, asked the farmers leaders to lift the dharna as it was obstructing traffic flow besides creating problems for transport of raw materials and other goods for the industry. Mann also handed over a cheque of Rs 1 crore to the father of farmer Shubhakaran Singh, who had died at the border during protest, and appointment letter to his sister Gurpreet Kaur as constable in Punjab Police, during the meeting of farmers led by Samyukt Kisan Morcha (non political) leader Jagjit Singh Dailawal.

Shubhakaran, a native of Bathinda, was killed in the clashes on the Punjab-Haryana border on February 21 during farmers' protest. The clashes erupted when some protesting farmers were trying to head towards the barricades installed by Haryana and were stopped by security personnel from crossing the state border and marching to Delhi. Interacting with the bereaved family members after handing over the cheque and appointment letter, Mann said the Punjab government is committed towards the well-being of the state's food growers. Shubhakaran had attained martyrdom, Mann said, adding that this "barbaric and tragic incident had bruised the psyche of every Punjab". "The martyrdom of a farmer is a huge and irreparable loss for the family which cannot be compensated by any means," he said.

Later, sources privy to the meeting told The Indian Express that the CM spoke to the farmers' delegation about several issues confronting the agriculture and the farmers themselves. "He told them that it has been long that they have been sitting on a dharna at border. Several farmers lost their lives. The industry was complaining that it was suffering and it would not be in favour of Punjab if the industry flies away from the state. He also talked about depleting of underground water that was fast turning Punjab into desert," said the source. He added that the farmers then told Mann that their protest was against the Centre. They asked him to mediate between the Centre and the farmers and ensure that their demands were met. The CM is also learnt to have told the farmer leaders that Punjab Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh

Khuddian is meeting Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday, and he would take up their issue with him.

Tejveer Singh, a spokesperson of farmers said, "The CM asked the delegation to lift the dharna. However, the leaders told them that he should get their matter resolved with the Centre and they would happily go home. But they also told him that unless their demands are met in totality, they would not go home. The CM has assured the leaders that he would intervene and take up the matter with the Centre." He also added that they have called off their protest of gherao the Bathinda SSP and Deputy Commissioner scheduled on July 12 after the government met with their demand to hand over the compensation and job to Shubhakaran's family. He added, "We also understand that they had organised this meeting ahead of Jalandhar byelection. There are several farmers who have still not got the ex-gratia. Some have not been given the entire amount." The CM has been busy with campaigning in Jalandhar West for past several days. He returned to Chandigarh Monday evening and held a meeting with the farmers leaders on Tuesday. Earlier, in February, when the farmers had started the protest, Mann had mediated for six rounds of meetings between farmers and a panel of Union ministers. The meetings had remained inconclusive. The farmers have been demanding MSP on all crops and have stated that they will not budge until MSP is given. Khuddian, who is meeting Chouhan on Wednesday, has diversification, MSP, depletion of underground water on agenda, it has been learnt. Sources said that the state government will seek funds for ensuring canal water supply coverage in all parts of Punjab. The move aims to make sure that the power-pumped tubewells are replaced and injudicious use of underground water is stopped. Sources also said that Khuddian will be raising the issue of withholding of Rural Development Fund (RDF) and Mandi Development Fund (MDF) to the tune of Rs 6,767 crore by the Centre. "We have prepared a case as to how our mandi infrastructure and roads network in villages was suffering as the state had no money due to Centre not paying anything. Also, we have to seek MSP on all crops for the diversification. Otherwise, Punjab's fertile land would turn into barren land," an official said.



# How Hezbollah is trying to counter Israel's high-tech surveillance

GNS News Agency, July 15

BEIRUT, Coded messages. Landline phones. Paggers. Following the killing of senior commanders in targeted Israeli airstrikes, the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group, Hezbollah, has been using some low-tech strategies to try to evade its foe's sophisticated surveillance technology, informed sources told Reuters. It has also been using its own tech — drones — to study and attack Israel's intelligence gathering capabilities in what Hezbollah's leader, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, has described as a strategy of "blinding" Israel. The sides have been trading fire since Hezbollah's Palestinian ally in the Gaza Strip, Hamas, went to war with Israel in October. While the fighting on Lebanon's southern border has remained relatively contained, stepped-up attacks in recent weeks have intensified concern it could spiral into a full-scale war. Tens of thousands of people have fled both sides of the border. Israeli strikes have killed more than 330 Hezbollah fighters and around 90 civilians in Lebanon, according to Reuters tallies. Israel says attacks from Lebanon have killed 21 soldiers and 10 civilians. Many of Hezbollah's casualties were killed while participating in the near-daily hostilities, including launching rockets and explosive drones into northern Israel. Hezbollah has also confirmed the deaths of more than 20 operatives — including three top commanders, members of its elite Radwan special forces unit and intelligence operatives — in targeted strikes away from the frontlines. Israel's military said it was responding to an unprovoked attack from Hezbollah, which began firing at Israeli targets the day after Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a statement to Reuters that they were striking military targets and taking "feasible precautions in order to mitigate harm to civilians." "The success of these efforts hinges on the IDF's ability to gather thorough and precise intelligence on Hezbollah's forces, its leaders, the organization's terrorist infrastructure, their whereabouts and operations," the statement said. The IDF did not answer questions about its intelligence gathering and Hezbollah's countermeasures, citing "reasons of intelligence security". As domestic pressure builds in Israel over Hezbollah's barrages, the IDF has highlighted its ability to hit the group's operatives across the border. On a tour of Israel's Northern Command, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant pointed to pictures of what he said were slain Hezbollah commanders and said 320 "terrorists" had been killed as of May 29, including senior operatives.

Electronic surveillance technology plays a vital role in these strikes. The IDF has said it has security cameras and remote sensing systems trained on areas where Hezbollah operates, and it regularly sends surveillance drones over the border to spy on its adversary. Israel's electronic eavesdropping — including hacking into cell phones and computers — is also widely regarded as among the world's most sophisticated. Hezbollah has learned from its losses and adapted its tactics in response, six sources familiar with the group's operations told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive security matters.

Cell phones, which can be used to track a user's location, have been banned from the battlefield in favour of more old-fashioned communication means, including pagers and couriers who deliver verbal messages in person, two of the sources said. Hezbollah has also been using a private, fixed-line telecommunications network dating back to the early 2000s, three sources said.

In case conversations are overheard, code words are used for weapons and meeting sites, according to another source familiar with the group's logistics. These

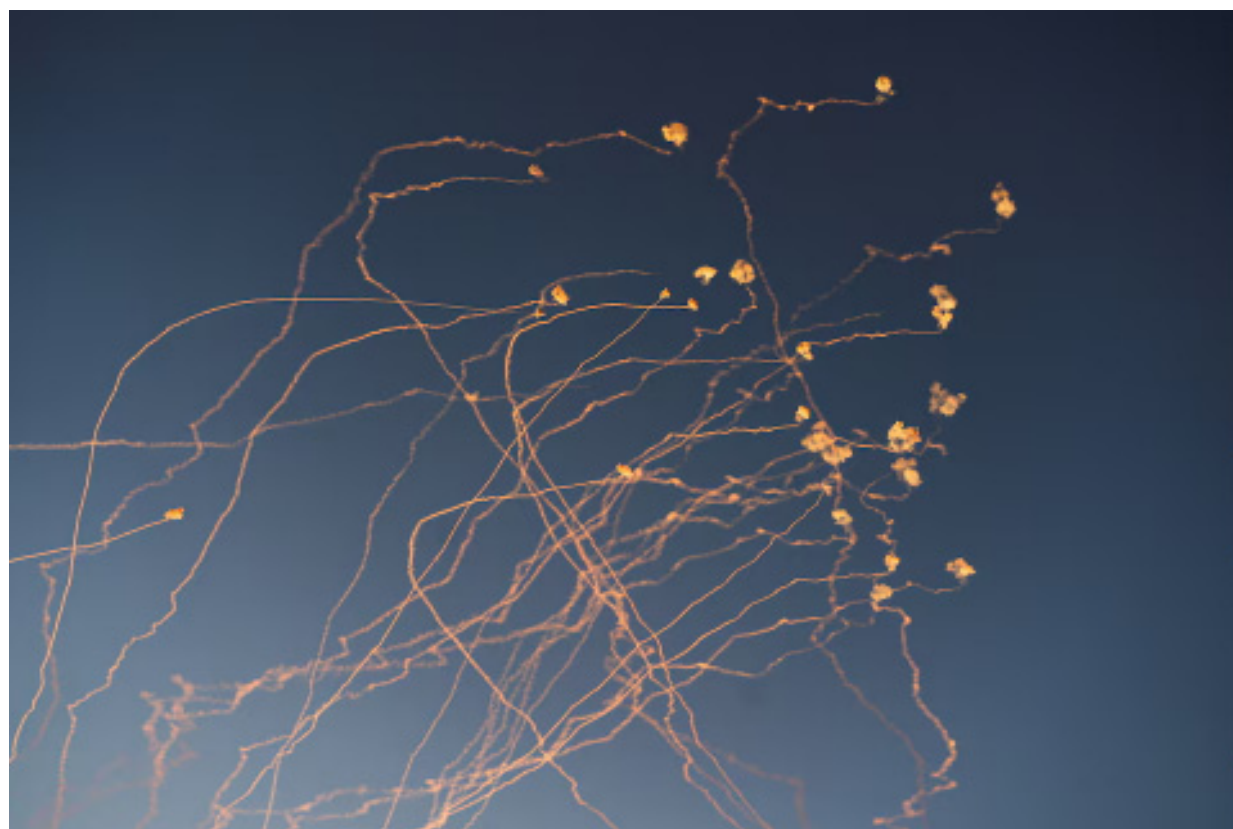
are updated nearly daily and delivered to units via couriers, the source said. "We're facing a battle in which information and technology are essential parts," said Qassem Kassir, a Lebanese analyst close to Hezbollah. "But when you face certain technological advances, you need to go back to the old methods — the phones, the in-person communications ... whatever method allows you to circumvent the technology." Hezbollah's media office said it had no comment on the sources' assertions.

LOW-TECH COUNTERMEASURES Security experts say some low-tech countermeasures can be quite effective against high-tech spying. One of the ways that al Qaeda's late leader, Osama bin Laden, evaded capture for nearly a decade was by disconnecting from the internet and phone services, and using couriers instead.

"The simple act of using a VPN (virtual private network), or better yet, not using a cell phone at all, can make it much harder to find and fix a target," said Emily Harding, a former CIA analyst now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington. "But these countermeasures also make Hezbollah's leadership far less effective at communicating rapidly with their troops." Hezbollah and Lebanese security officials believe Israel has also been tapping local informants as it zeroes in on targets. Lebanon's economic crisis and rivalries between political factions have created opportunities for Israeli recruiters, but not all informants realize who they are speaking with, three sources said. On Nov. 22, a woman from south Lebanon received a call on her cell phone from a person claiming to be a local official, according to two sources with direct knowledge of the incident. Speaking in flawless Arabic, the caller asked whether the family was home, the sources said. No, the woman replied, explaining they had travelled to eastern Lebanon. Minutes later, a missile slammed into the woman's home in the village of Beit Yahoun, killing five Hezbollah fighters including Abbas Raad, the son of a senior Hezbollah lawmaker and a Radwan member, the sources said. Hezbollah believes Israel had tracked the fighters to the location and placed the call to confirm whether there were civilians present before launching the strike, they told Reuters without disclosing further details. Israel's military said at the time that it struck a number of Hezbollah targets that day, including a "terrorist cell". Within weeks, Hezbollah was publicly warning supporters via the affiliated Al-Nour radio station not to trust cold callers claiming to be local officials or aid workers, saying Israelis were impersonating them to identify houses being used by Hezbollah.

It was the first of a series of strikes targeting key Hezbollah operatives in Lebanon. Others killed include Wissam al-Tawil, Taleb Abdallah and Mohammed Nasser, commanders who played leading roles directing Hezbollah's operations in the south. Saleh al-Arouri, deputy head of Hamas, was also killed while attending a meeting in the capital, Beirut. Hezbollah began suspecting that Israel was targeting its fighters by tracking their cell phones and monitoring video feeds from security cameras installed on buildings in border communities, two sources familiar with the group's thinking and a Lebanese intelligence official told Reuters. On Dec. 28, Hezbollah urged southern residents in a statement distributed via its Telegram channel to disconnect any security cameras they own from the internet.

By early February, another directive had been issued to Hezbollah's fighters: no mobile phones anywhere near the battlefield. "Today, if anyone is found with their phone on the front, he is kicked out of Hezbollah," said a senior Lebanese source familiar with the group's



operations. Three other sources confirmed the order. Fighters began leaving their phones behind when they carried out operations, one told Reuters. Another, the Lebanese intelligence official, said Hezbollah would sometimes perform surprise checks on field units to see if members had phones on them. Even in Beirut, senior Hezbollah politicians avoid bringing phones with them to meetings, two other sources said. In a televised speech on Feb. 13, Nasrallah warned supporters that their phones were more dangerous than Israeli spies, saying they should break, bury or lock them in an iron box. Hezbollah has also taken steps to secure its private telephone network following a suspected breach by Israel, according to a former Lebanese security official and two other sources familiar with Hezbollah's operations. The vast network, allegedly financed by Iran, was set up around two decades ago with fibre optic cables extending from Hezbollah's strongholds in Beirut's southern suburbs to towns in south Lebanon and east into the Bekaa Valley, according to government officials at the time. The sources declined to say when or how it had been penetrated. But they said Hezbollah telecommunications specialists were breaking it into smaller networks to limit the damage if it is breached again. "We often change our landline networks and switch them up, so that we can outrun the hacking and infiltration," the senior source told Reuters. DRONE SURVEILLANCE

The group has also been touting its ability to collect its own intelligence on enemy targets and attack Israel's surveillance installations using its arsenal of small, homemade, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). On June 18, Hezbollah published a nine-minute excerpt of what it said was video gathered by its surveillance aircraft over the Israeli city of Haifa, including military installations and port facilities. The Israeli Air Force said air defense systems had detected the drone, but a decision was made not to intercept it because it had no offensive capabilities, and doing so could endanger residents. Another video released by Hezbollah included aerial pictures it said it had collected of a massive Israeli observation balloon

known as Sky Dew on the day before it was hit in a May 15 drone attack. Reuters could not verify the authenticity of the images. But IDF spokesperson Daniel Hagari said at the time that the airship, used to detect incoming rockets, was hit while on the ground at a military base in northern Israel. He said there were no casualties and no impact on the military's "aerial situational awareness capability" in the area. Hezbollah says it has also shot down or taken control of half a dozen Israeli surveillance drones, including Hermes 450, Hermes 900 and SkyLark UAVs. Hezbollah operatives disassemble the drones to study their components, according to two of the sources. Israel has confirmed that five air force drones were downed by surface-to-air missiles while operating over Lebanon. However, the IDF said Hezbollah's declarations "should be noted with reservation," saying the group aims to instil fear in Israelis. Nicholas Blanford, a Beirut-based security consultant who has written a history of Hezbollah, said the group's "awareness and wariness" of security breaches was at an all-time high. "Hezbollah has had to tighten up its security far more than it needed to do in earlier conflicts," he told Reuters. Israel retains a technological advantage, however, Blanford said. On the afternoon of July 3, a car driving through a Lebanese coastal village more than 20 km (12 miles) north of the Israeli border burst into flames, witnesses said. The Israeli military said it had eliminated Nasser, who it said commanded a unit that is attacking Israel from southwestern Lebanon. His death came less than a month after the strike that killed Abdallah, who commanded operations in the central region of the southern border strip. Hezbollah acknowledged both killings and in response launched some of its biggest barrages to date into northern Israel. Get the latest news and expert analysis about the state of the global economy with Reuters Econ World. Sign up here. Writing by Maya Gebeily; Additional reporting by Maayan Lubell in Jerusalem; Editing by Alexandra ZavisOur Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tab

## Kyiv hospital took direct hit from Russian missile, UN analysis suggests

GNS News Agency, July 15

KYIV, A U.N. rights mission said on Tuesday there was a "high likelihood" that Kyiv's main children's hospital took a direct hit from a Russian missile during a series of airstrikes on Ukrainian cities, as the Kremlin continued to deny involvement. Ukraine flew its flags at half mast in a national day of mourning to mark the deaths of 41 people, killed across the country in Monday's air attacks, including four children and two people at the Okhmatdyt children's hospital in the capital. "Analysis of the video footage and an assessment made at the incident site indicates a high likelihood that the children's hospital suffered a direct hit rather than receiving damage due to an intercepted weapon system," said the head of the U.N. Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

Ukraine's security service said it had unequivocal evidence the medical facility was hit by a Russian Kh-101 cruise missile during the deadliest series of strikes in months, and published images of what it said were fragments of the weapon's engine. The Kremlin said, without providing evidence, it was Ukrainian anti-missile fire, not Russia, that struck the children's hospital, which is one of Europe's largest and treats patients with serious conditions such as cancer and kidney disease. Damage at the site triggered millions of dollars in donations from inside Ukraine and abroad more than 28 months since Russia's full-scale February 2022 invasion.

NATO on Tuesday begins a three-day summit of the alliance's leaders in Washington, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy set to attend as he seeks to win commitments from allies to beef up Ukraine's air defences and boost their military support. Russian forces are slowly advancing and claimed on Tuesday the capture of the village of Yasnobrodivka in the eastern Donetsk region. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine, which has reported heavy fighting in the region for months. During a visit to Moscow, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Russian President Vladimir Putin the "heart bleeds" when children are killed in war, conflict or a terrorist attack. Modi's pointed remark was an implicit rebuke to Putin, who moments earlier had welcomed him to the Kremlin with a warm statement on the importance of the strategic ties between the two countries. Zelenskyy has blasted Modi's trip to Russia, calling it "a huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts".

The Ukrainian leader vowed retaliation against Russia after Monday's attacks and Russia's Defence Ministry said it had subsequently shot down 38 drones. A Russian regional governor reported fires at an oil depot and an electricity substation. A security source told Reuters Ukrainian drones had attacked a Russian oil refinery, a military airfield, and an electricity substation in a joint operation. Rescuers concluded operations at the children's hospital earlier on Tuesday. Elsewhere in the capital, five bodies were recovered from the ruins of a residential building where 12 people were killed, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said. Zelenskyy put the death toll from Monday's assault at 38 with 190 wounded, although tal-



lies of casualties from impact sites in different regions brought the total to at least 41. Okhmatdyt's general director, Volodymyr Zhovnur, told reporters one of their young doctors had been killed, that the building for dialysis had been completely destroyed and that they no longer had electricity supply. "At least four buildings of the hospital were partially destroyed," he said. Ukrainian business leaders rushed to announce donations to rebuild the hospital. There was no available figure for the total amount of donations, but Reuters calculations based on statements and Ukrainian media reports put the figure from Ukraine's corporate section at about 300 million hryvnia (\$7.3 million). In Kyiv, Oleksandr Baraboshko, 34, a strategic communications consultant, said aerial attacks like Monday's served to unite Ukrainians against Russia.

"They're not scaring us. On the contrary, they're motivating us to do even more," said Baraboshko, who helped coordinate an effort with a local shop to distribute gloves and tools to volunteers clearing debris at the hospital. In Geneva, the World Health Organization's Tarik Jasarevic said the hospital strike was one of 1,882 attacks on healthcare in Ukraine that have killed a total of 150 people in the more than two-year conflict. The WHO does not attribute blame for the attacks.

## 'Defiant' Biden dares detractors to challenge him at Democratic convention

Washington: US President Joe Biden dared his detractors on Monday to challenge him at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago next month, amidst increasing voices from within his own party colleagues that he should step down from the November 5 presidential election. Biden, 81, who has been attacked by his own party colleagues after his poor performance at the Atlanta debate on June 27 against his Republican rival Donald Trump, adopted a defiant approach on Monday. He called the popular "Morning Joe" show challenging his opponents to bring this issue in Chicago next month.

Later in the evening, he told his national finance committee members that he is done talking about the debate. "We need to move forward. Look, we have roughly 40 days till the convention, 120 days till the election. We cannot waste any more time being distracted," Biden said in a private call with donors on Monday, according to a recording obtained by Politico. "I have one job and that is to beat Donald Trump. I am absolutely certain I am the best person to be able to do that. So we are done talking about the debate, it is time to put Trump in a bulls eye," the

President said, according to Politico. Earlier in the day, he gave a phone interview to MSNBC. "I am getting so frustrated by the elites — now I am not talking about you guys — the elites in the party, 'Oh, they know so much more.' Any of these guys that do not think I should run, run against me. Announce for President, challenge me at the convention," Biden said. During the interview, Biden asserted that he will be the Democratic nominee. "I am not going to explain anymore about what I should or I should not do. I am running. I am running, and if you want to stop me, come...," he said.

## Gazans flee Israeli assault that Hamas warns could threaten ceasefire talks

GNS News Agency, July 15

CAIRO/GAZA, July 9 (Reuters) - Gaza City residents fled under Israeli fire as tanks thrust deeper into the heart of the city on Tuesday, the second day of a stepped-up military offensive that Palestinian militant group Hamas said could jeopardise ceasefire talks. The armed wings of Hamas and its ally Islamic Jihad said its fighters battled Israeli forces in fierce clashes with machine guns, mortar fire and anti-tank missiles on Gaza City's front lines and had killed and wounded Israeli soldiers.

Israel's military did not comment on casualties but said its soldiers were engaged in close-quarter combat with militants and had taken more than 150 fighters out of action in the last week and destroyed booby-trapped buildings and explosives. The fighting has unfolded as senior U.S. officials were in the region to push for a ceasefire after Hamas made concessions last week. But the renewed campaign threatened talks at a crucial time and could bring negotiations "back to square one", Hamas quoted leader Ismail Haniyeh as saying.

Footage circulated on social media showed families packed onto donkey carts and in the backs of trucks piled with mattresses and other belongings making their way through the city's streets to flee areas under Israeli evacuation orders. "Gaza City is being wiped out, this is what is happening. Israel is forcing us to leave homes under fire," Um Tamer, a mother of seven, told Reuters via a chat app. She said it was the seventh time her family had fled their house in Gaza City, in the north of the enclave and one of Israel's first targets at the start of the war in October. "We can't take it anymore, enough of death and humiliation. End the war now," she said. Israeli tanks pushed deeper into several districts including Shejaia, Sabra and Tel Al-Hawa, where residents have reported some of the most fierce fighting in months.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said all of its medical clinics were out of service in Gaza City due to Israeli evacuation orders which have pushed thousands of people westward towards the Mediterranean and to the south. Nine months of war and displacement have caused a hunger crisis and the recent deaths of several more



children from malnutrition in the Gaza Strip indicate that famine has spread throughout the enclave, a group of independent human rights experts mandated by the United Nations. In a Khan Younis hospital, Palestinian woman Ghaneyma Joma told Reuters she feared her son would die of starvation. "It's distressing to see my child... lying there dying from malnutrition because I cannot provide him with anything due to the war, the closing of crossings and the contaminated water," she said, seated on the floor next to her motionless son, who had an intravenous drip attached to his wrist. In Al-Nuseirat in central Gaza, an Israeli airstrike early on Tuesday on a house of several storeys killed 17 people, including 14 children and a woman, Hamas' media office said. Neighbours rushed to help medics and emergency workers recover bodies and search for survivors under the rubble. "They were displaced during the night after Al-Nuseirat camp school was hit... They said they would sleep in the house, fearing for the children and there was a massacre in the house. They are not safe in the schools nor the houses," said Yasser Abu Hamada, a local resident. Across Gaza, more than 40 Palestinians were killed on Tuesday in Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City in the north, Al-Bureij, Deir Al-Balah and Al-Nuseirat in central Gaza and in Rafah in the south, according to medics.



## Paytm gets government panel nod to invest in payments arm: Report



The approval, which still has to be vetted by the finance ministry, will remove the main stumbling block to the unit, Paytm Payment Services, resuming normal business operations.

Paytm has secured approval from a government panel that oversees investments linked to China to invest 500 million rupees (\$6 million) in a key subsidiary, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. The approval, which still has to be vetted by the finance ministry, will remove the main stumbling block to the unit, Paytm Payment Services, resuming normal business operations. Paytm Payment Services is one of the biggest remaining parts of the fintech firm's business, ac-

counting for a quarter of consolidated revenue in the financial year ended March 2023.

A separate unit, Paytm Payments Bank, was wound down this year by order of the central bank due to persistent compliance issues, triggering a meltdown in Paytm's stock. The government panel had earlier held back approval due to concerns about the 9.88% stake in Paytm held by China's Ant Group. India has intensified scrutiny of Chinese businesses since a 2020 border clash between the two countries.

All in all, Paytm has been waiting for the nod from the government panel for about two years and without it, it would have had to also wind down its payment services business, which was forbidden from taking on new customers in March 2023. Once the approval has been formalised, it will be able to seek a so-called "payment aggregator" licence from the Reserve Bank of India. The sources, two of whom are government sources, declined to be identified as the decision has not been formally announced. India's foreign, home, finance and industries ministries, whose representatives sit on the panel, did not reply to emails seeking comment. A Paytm spokesperson said the company does not comment on market speculation. "We will continue to make disclosures in compliance with our obligations under the SEBI Regulations, and will inform the exchanges when there is any new material information to share," the spokesperson said.

## How to report foreign income in tax return

Income-tax Return (ITR) forms 2 and 3 include Schedule FA, which is used for reporting foreign assets, income, and beneficial ownership. Filing your Income-tax Return (ITR) in India can be challenging, especially when it involves foreign income. Reporting foreign income correctly is essential to comply with Indian tax laws and avoid penalties. Here's a detailed guide on how to report foreign income in your ITR. Income-tax Return (ITR) forms 2 and 3 include Schedule FA, which is used for reporting foreign assets, income, and beneficial ownership. This schedule has been a part of ITR forms since FY 2011-12 (AY 2012-13) and aims to prevent tax evasion and money laundering.

In this schedule, individuals who are ordinarily resident in India must provide information about their foreign assets and income, whether the income is taxable in India. Non-resident individuals (NRIs) or not-ordinarily resident individuals (NOR) do not need to make any disclosures in this schedule.

Who needs to file?

Individuals with foreign assets and income must use either ITR 2 or ITR 3 forms to file their tax returns, as Schedule FA is available in these forms. The following details need to be disclosed in Schedule FA: Income from any source outside India, such as dividends, interest, or capital gains. Any asset held outside India, including shares, debentures, life insurances, annuity contracts, immovable property such as a house property or other capital asset. Financial or beneficial interest in any overseas entity. For example, if you are a partner in a partnership or firm located overseas or if you are a beneficiary of a private trust based in another country. Signing authority in any bank or trading account located outside India. Reporting in this schedule is mandatory regardless of the asset's ownership type, whether legal or beneficial.

Period of disclosure: You must report any foreign assets or income from the calendar year 2023 (January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023) when filing your tax return for the FY 2023-24 (AY 2024-25). It should be noted that though disclosure in Schedule FA is for the calendar year, the taxable income shall be computed based on the financial year. This means that the income earned in the financial year 2023-24 (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024) shall be offered to tax, but for disclosure in Schedule FA, the calendar year 2023 shall be followed in the ITR for the FY 2023-24. Steps to report foreign income in ITR: Suresh Surana shares useful tips on how to report foreign income in your Indian tax return: Determine residential status: Know your residential status in India as per the Income Tax Act, which can be resident, non-resident, or resident but not ordinarily resident. This determines how your foreign income will be taxed. Types of foreign income: Identify the types of foreign income you have earned, such as salary, interest, dividends, rental income, capital gains, etc. Taxability under Indian law: Understand which types of foreign income are taxable in India. For example, residents and ordinarily residents are taxed on global income, whereas non-residents are taxed in India only on the income received/accrued or deemed to be received or accrued in India. Furnishing of ITR form: Use the correct ITR form applicable to your income and residential status. For example, NRIs typically use ITR-2



or ITR-3 depending on their sources of income.

Reporting foreign income: Resident and Ordinarily Resident (RoR) taxpayers must disclose their foreign sourced income details in Schedule FSI "Details of Income from outside India and tax relief". The taxpayer must report the details of income, which is already included in total income, accruing or arising from any source outside India. It is important to note that such income should also be separately reported in the head-wise computation of total income.

The relevant head of income under which such foreign source income has been reported should also be duly mentioned. The reporting requirement of foreign sourced income is generally not applicable in the case of Resident and Not Ordinarily Resident (RNOR) and Non-Residents (NR), unless such income is received/accrued or deemed to be received or accrued in India. Claiming foreign tax credit: If you have paid taxes on foreign income in the country where it was earned, you may be eligible to claim foreign tax credit in India under Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAA) or unilateral relief. This helps avoid double taxation. In case any tax has been paid outside India on such foreign source income and tax relief, as admissible, is being claimed in India, the relevant article of the applicable DTAA should also be mentioned.

Further, in Schedule TR "Summary of tax relief claimed for taxes paid outside India", a summary of tax relief claimed in India for taxes paid outside India in respect of each country must be provided. Disclosure of foreign Assets and liabilities: If a taxpayer is a resident and ordinarily resident in India, the details of all foreign assets or accounts in respect of such taxpayer who is a beneficial owner, a beneficiary or the legal owner, must be disclosed in Schedule FA "Details of Foreign Assets and Income from any source outside India". A beneficial owner of an asset means an individual who has provided, directly or indirectly, consideration for the asset and where such asset is held for the immediate or future benefit, direct or indirect, of the individual providing the consideration or any other person. A beneficiary of an asset means an individual who derives an immediate or future benefit, directly or indirectly, in respect of the asset and where the consideration for such asset has been provided by any person other than the beneficiary. Tax computation and payment: Calculate total taxable income, including foreign income, and compute tax liability accordingly. It's crucial to accurately report all income, including foreign income, to avoid penalties for non-disclosure or incorrect reporting.

## 'Factually incorrect': Yes Bank dismisses stake sale report

Earlier today, a media report suggested that the RBI had approved the sale of up to a 51% stake in Yes Bank, which would pave the way for a new owner for the bank, which narrowly avoided collapse four years ago. YES Bank shares stand higher than the 5 day, 10 day, 20 day, 50 day, 100 day, 150 day and 200 day moving averages. Yes Bank has dismissed a media report claiming that it received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a stake sale, labeling it as 'factually incorrect'. The private lender clarified in a stock exchange filing on Tuesday that no such approval has been granted by the RBI. Earlier today, a media report suggested that the RBI had approved the sale of up to a 51% stake in Yes Bank, which would pave



the way for a new owner for the bank, which narrowly avoided collapse four years ago. "Yes Bank would like to clarify that the contents of the said article are factually incorrect and purely speculative in nature," the company said.

"RBI has not given any

in-principle approval as stated in the article, and this clarification is issued by the Company voluntarily to dispel the baseless media article. "Following the clarification, shares of Yes Bank were trading up by around 1.44% at around 1:41 pm. In March 2020,

several banks including SBI, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Federal Bank, Bandhan Bank, and IDFC First Bank collectively invested Rs 10,000 crore in Yes Bank to prevent its collapse and avoid systemic risks to the banking sector.

## This may be the most overlooked COVID symptom



Two of his symptoms, a cough and a fever, were among those that would become known as the telltale symptoms of COVID. But the patient had also experienced two days of nausea and vomiting. Many of us associate COVID with respiratory issues. But some people who get sick with the virus never experience a sore throat, coughing or body aches, said Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, an infectious disease specialist at the University of California, San Francisco. Certain people end up feeling more like they have food poisoning than anything else.

That's because coronavirus is "like throwing a bomb in your body," said Ken Cadwell, a professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania who studies how COVID affects the gut. "You're going to feel that in multiple different organs, not just the lungs." With COVID cases climbing, and the so-called "FLIRT" variants fueling yet another summer spread, here's how to spot, and address, the lesser-known gastrointestinal symptoms. In some people, gastrointestinal symptoms hit during the first few

days of an infection, before they develop a fever and cough. But many people who only experience stomach symptoms "never think of it as COVID," Chin-Hong said.

Diarrhea is a common COVID-related gastrointestinal symptom, Chin-Hong said. People can also lose their appetite, and experience nausea, abdominal pain and vomiting. COVID doesn't look the same every time you get infected, said Dr. Davey Smith, an infectious disease specialist at the University of California, San Diego. You might have cold and flu symptoms during one bout of the virus, and gastrointestinal symptoms the next time. Paxlovid, an antiviral medication that reduces the risk of severe disease, can also cause diarrhea.

Hydration is important for anyone with COVID, but drinking enough fluids is critical if you experience diarrhea or vomiting. If you're struggling to hold food down, stick to bland foods like toast and bananas, said Dr. Adrianna Jirik, a gastroenterologist at Cleveland Clinic. Those who share a bathroom can take steps to avoid contaminating the area with the viral particles in your waste, like opening a window to improve ventilation.

The most common variants currently circulating appear to cause the same symptoms we've seen in other recent strains of the virus. In addition to digestive discomfort, people commonly develop a sore throat, congestion or a runny nose, head and muscle aches, fever or chills, a cough and fatigue. In severe cases, they can struggle to breathe. While some people who get sick lose their sense of taste or smell, that symptom is far less common now than it was earlier in the pandemic. Any of these symptoms can hit days after spending time with someone who has the virus. If you know you've been exposed, it's important to keep an eye out for all the symptoms, including gastrointestinal ones, Chin-Hong said. "If everybody in your house has COVID and you have diarrhea, then you have to put two and two together," he said.

## After Samantha Ruth Prabhu, 'The Liver Doc' slams Zerodha founder Nikhil Kamath for podcast episode on liquor industry: 'Absolutely garbage...'

In a post shared on X, Dr Cyriac Abby Philips, known online as 'The Liver Doc,' has sharply criticised a podcast episode featuring Zerodha co-founder Nikhil Kamath discussing the liquor industry. In an episode of 'WTF is,' Kamath discussed the liquor industry in India with Abhishek Khaitan, Minakshi Singh, Shuchir Suri, and Suraj Shenai. This comes just days after Dr Philips publicly criticised actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu for her spreading "misinformation" through her health podcast. Dr Philip wrote, "A bunch of businessmen, some quite famous, sit around a table discussing the 'business of alcohol.' So far so good. Alcohol is good business, a business that leeches out others' life. It rakes in money for governments through taxation & monopoly; and fattens the bank accounts of those behind the industry (like this round table group) and makes barons out of those who sell well." He added, "But when these businessmen, start glorifying their business of alcohol by equating it to 'good healthcare intervention,' it goes definitely into the realm of health misinformation, which is why, I have to keep discussing this absolutely garbage myth that 'alcohol in moderation is good for you' and the absolute nonsense disclaimer to support that myth, which they call 'drink responsibly'." Furthermore, he stated, "I treat alcohol use disorder and related acute liver disease, chronic liver failure and acute-on-chronic liver failure (the most devastating of them all with highest death rate without a timely liver transplantation) on a daily basis."

The doctor's lengthy critique targets not only the podcast's content but also challenges broader societal attitudes towards alcohol consumption, drawing on his medical expertise and experiences treating patients with alcohol-related illnesses. Why drinking alcohol in moderation is unsafe for you. Dr Pranav Honnavara Srinivasan, consultant gastroenterologist at Fortis Hospitals, Bengaluru, says that the notion that moderate alcohol consumption is beneficial to health has been a topic of significant debate. "Early studies suggested potential benefits, particularly for cardiovascular health. However, recent research offers a different perspective," he reveals.

Dr Srinivasan continues, "A comprehensive study published in The Lancet found that any level of alcohol consumption increases the risk of developing health issues such as cancer, liver disease, and cardiovascular problems. This extensive study concluded that no level of alcohol consumption is entirely safe, challenging the earlier belief in the benefits of moderate drinking." Many studies promoting the idea that moderate drinking is beneficial often have methodological flaws or are funded by the alcohol industry, which can lead to biased results, warns Dr Srinivasan. "Moreover, the health impacts of alcohol can vary significantly among individuals, making it difficult to generalise any potential benefits. Thus, spreading this notion without acknowledging these nuances can lead to health misinformation, potentially en-



couraging harmful behaviours." Dr Philips highlights the societal and economic consequences of alcohol use, such as increased healthcare costs and societal harm. According to Dr Srinivasan, "Alcohol consumption leads to substantial healthcare costs due to the treatment of alcohol-related diseases, accidents, and injuries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), alcohol use is a leading risk factor for disease and disability globally." Additionally, he states that alcohol contributes to various social issues, including domestic violence, road accidents, and loss of productivity, imposing a significant economic burden on society.

While the alcohol industry generates considerable revenue and provides employment opportunities, these economic benefits are often outweighed by the public health and societal costs associated with alcohol consumption. Dr Srinivasan stresses, "Although alcohol taxes contribute to government revenue, studies, such as those by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), indicate that the costs associated with alcohol-related harm far exceed these revenues." Role of media and influencers in shaping public perceptions of alcohol. Dr Srinivasan agrees with Dr Philips that the media and influencers often portray alcohol consumption as glamorous and socially acceptable, "which can lead to increased consumption, particularly among impressionable audiences." When influential figures promote the idea that moderate drinking is beneficial, he says, they perpetuate myths and potentially harmful behaviours. He stresses, "Media and influencers have a responsibility to share evidence-based information about the risks of alcohol consumption. They can play a crucial role in promoting healthier lifestyle choices and alternatives to alcohol consumption. Ethical considerations should guide their endorsements, striving to avoid promoting products that could harm their audience." Dr. Cyriac Abby Philips' criticisms highlight the need for accurate, evidence-based discussions about alcohol consumption, he believes. "While the alcohol industry may provide economic benefits, the societal and health costs are significant. Effective regulation and responsible media representation are crucial for mitigating the harms associated with alcohol use."

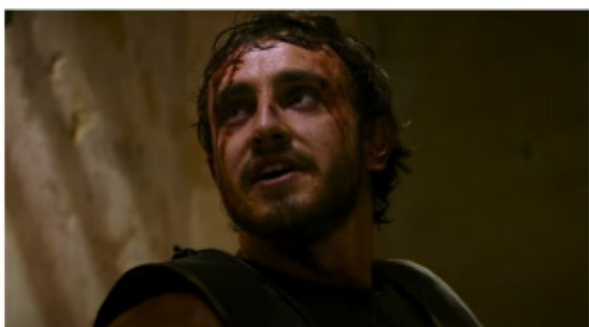
## Can washing your hair regularly for 21 days keep dandruff away?

Dandruff is a common problem caused by multiple factors like sweating, using chemical-based shampoos, and exposure to dirt and dust. But what many people don't realise is that if ignored, it can become a chronic issue. Explaining the same, Dr Rashmi Shetty told Ranveer Allahbadia, "Dandruff is a fungus. What you need to understand is that it will grow on days you don't wash (your hair). So, one should wash every day for 21 days continuously to ensure it doesn't become chronic. The issue can't be treated if you use anti-dandruff shampoo twice a week or so," said Dr Shetty. Dandruff, or seborrheic dermatitis, is a common scalp condition caused by an overgrowth of the yeast Malassezia, leading to flaking and itching. "While regular hair washing can help manage dandruff by removing flakes and reducing oil buildup, the idea of shampooing daily for 21 days is not universally effective. It is important to understand that everyone's skin is different, and what works for one person may not work for another," said Dr Sachin Gupta, consultant, dermatology, Amrita Hospital, Faridabad. Washing or shampooing your hair continuously for 21 days to eliminate dandruff is a temporary solution;

your dandruff might eventually worsen over time, said Dr Rinky Kapoor, consultant dermatologist, cosmetic dermatologist and dermatologist, The Esthetic Clinics. "Over-washing your hair can strip away essential oils from your scalp resulting in dryness and itching. Excessively washing hair with chemical-based anti-dandruff shampoo for 21 days can damage your hair making them brittle and frizzy," said Dr Kapoor. Management of dandruff is done as per the individual's needs and the severity of the condition. Dr Gupta noted that for mild cases, using anti-dandruff shampoos containing active ingredients like ketoconazole, selenium sulfide, or zinc pyrithione 2-3 times a week can be effective. "For more persistent or severe dandruff, consulting a dermatologist is recommended," said Dr Gupta. Dermatologists can provide a comprehensive assessment, rule out other conditions that mimic dandruff, and prescribe stronger treatments like lotions or oral medicines depending on severity. "Personalised care ensures the most effective and safe management of dandruff, taking into account the unique characteristics of each individual's scalp and skin," said Dr Gupta.



## Gladiator 2 trailer: Paul Mescal, Pedro Pascal battle it out in Ridley Scott's epic sequel, Denzel Washington steals the show.



Joaquin Phoenix). Lucius, portrayed as a child in the original Gladiator, remembers how the slave Maximus (played by Russell Crowe) took revenge on Emperor Marcus. In the sequel, Lucius is seen living in the northern African region of Numidia, sent there by his mother to keep him out of the reach of the Roman Empire. Circumstances bring him back to Rome, but this time as a gladiator.

He reunites with his mother, who gives him the ring of Maximus. Maximus' legacy lives on as Marcus Acacius (Pedro Pascal) appears on screen. Marcus is a Roman general who trained under Maximus. Later, Lucius and Marcus end up in the pit and battle it out at the Colosseum. Denzel Washington plays the role of a wealthy powerbroker in the film and is the most impressive part of the trailer. In the original film, Maximus is a Roman general betrayed by Commodus and reduced to slavery, ultimately fighting as a gladiator to avenge his family. Maximus also saves the lives of Lucius and Lucilla. Released in 2000, Gladiator fetched 11 Oscar nominations and won the Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Costume Design, Best Sound and Best Visual Effects awards.

The Colosseum is alive, and this time it is Paul Mescal battling against Pedro Pascal in the ring. Gladiator 2 unveiled its trailer on Tuesday as they shared the sneak peek of Ridley Scott's action-packed film which is the sequel to the epic 2000 film Gladiator. It also stars Joseph Quinn, Fred Hechinger, and Denzel Washington in pivotal roles.

The trailer begins with Lucius (Mescal), grandson of the former Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (played by

## 'Salim-Javed asked me to dub Amjad Khan's voice for Gabbar in Sholay,' recalls director Ramesh Sippy

Despite delivering various memorable films like Shaan, Seeta Aur Geeta and Shakti, Ramesh Sippy's Sholay remains his most memorable work. In a recent interaction with Arbaaz Khan, the filmmaker spoke about various aspects of the film, including living up to its massive, timeless success for the rest of his career. He also divulged details about actor Amjad Khan, who played the legendary role of Gabbar Singh, and how writers Salim-Javed didn't find his voice menacing enough.

While it is well known that the role of Gabbar was first offered to Danny Denzongpa, Ramesh and the team went ahead with Amjad Khan after his name was suggested by the writers of the film, Salim-Javed. But, later, the writers wondered if his voice should be dubbed in the film. "Salim-Javed sahab asked me to dub Amjad's voice. They had their opinion. I just felt he is a mountain of a man, and his voice not matching that image is in itself very fascinating. I wanted to stick by that. I had a strong feeling that as it is the character, the way his voice comes out just makes sense," he shared on Bollywood Bubble.

In the same chat, Arbaaz also asked Ramesh about exceeding the budget of the film. The film was supposed to be shot for Rs 1 crore but by the time production ended, the budget was close to Rs 3 crore. The film was being produced by Ramesh's father GP Sippy and he shared that he never felt any kind of pressure from his father. "GP



Sippy was one of the finest entrepreneurs ever in any field. I didn't feel the pressure because he didn't apply any pressure on me. I got so involved in the film that if it was taking time, I insisted on getting what I wanted and I kept waiting, whether it was for the perfect light or for a perfect shot," he said. He also shared that Sippy Films was presented with two scripts at the time by Salim-Javed - Sholay and Majboor - and while Ramesh was of the opinion that they should start production on Majboor as the script was ready, his father told him to go ahead with Sholay and "not to waste time" on Majboor. Majboor was then directed by Ravi Tandon and also starred Amitabh Bachchan.

## JD Majethia claims cops asked him 'aadhethe' questions in Gurucharan Singh missing case: 'They thought I was avoiding them'



Actor Gurucharan Singh (left) went missing a few months ago and producer JD Majethia (right) was questioned by cops in this case. Actor Gurucharan Singh (left) went missing a few months ago and producer JD Majethia (right) was questioned by cops in this case. (Photo: TMKOC, Siddharth Kannan/YouTube)

Producer JD Majethia, who has made shows like Sarabhai vs Sarabhai and Khichdi for Indian television, recently shared that he was questioned by the cops after actor Gurucharan Singh, of Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah

Chashmah fame, went missing a few months ago. Majethia claimed that he was asked "aadhethe sawaal (twisted questions)" by the cops even though he had no connection with the actor, aside from meeting him once at a social gathering.

In a chat with Siddharth Kannan on his YouTube channel, JD Majethia shared, "I had gotten a call from an actor I had once worked with, she was very scared and frantically called me multiple times. I was in a channel meeting, yet I took the call, and she informed me that Gurucharan was missing for a week. She informed me that she had gone to receive him at the Mumbai Airport, but he never came. I found something fishy, so I immediately called CINTAA, Asit Modi, and the channel. I was in touch with them, and later when the Delhi police came, I was questioned too.

"They held a proper inquiry. We could not meet in the initial two days so they thought I was avoiding them, they asked me lots of aadhethe sawaal (twisted questions). I have no connection with Sodhi other than meeting him at a function once. In the end, the cops told me that they never found anyone like me in Mumbai," Majethia said.

## Shah Rukh Khan and Suhana Khan go shoe shopping in New York.

Shah Rukh Khan is currently enjoying a holiday in New York with his daughter Suhana Khan, and photos of them shopping together have made their way onto social media. SRK and Suhana will share the screen for the first time in Sujoy Ghosh's The King, and many anticipate that the father-daughter duo is in the Big Apple to prepare for their upcoming film.



In the viral photos, Shah Rukh is seen trying on a pair of shoes at a shop. The actor is wearing a grey T-shirt, blue jeans, and a cap, completing his look with his trademark ponytail. In another photo, he is seen walking in the store with Suhana, who is wearing a floral dress. In the next photo, Shah Rukh is seen giving an autograph to a fan. Take a look: Earlier,

Shah Rukh teased the confirmation of his next action drama The King, which would also feature Suhana. While the film has been speculated for months, Shah Rukh confirmed The King in an earlier video where fans spotted its script

next to the superstar on his study table. It is said that the film will feature Shah Rukh as a gangster while Suhana will play his protegee. The King is expected to go on floors later this year, as the film is currently in pre-production. It aims to

hit the screens in 2025.

Suhana made her Bollywood debut in Zoya Akhtar's The Archies. The film also launched other star kids like Boney Kapoor and Sridevi's daughter Khushi Kapoor and Amitabh Bachchan's grandson Agastya Nanda.

## Sonakshi Sinha says Shah Rukh Khan's voice note was the 'highlight' of wedding day for Zaheer Iqbal, shares unseen pics



Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal got married just a few days ago and the new bride has been sharing many unseen moments from her wedding festivities on her social media handles. On Tuesday, Sonakshi shared ten photos from her wedding day as she and Zaheer got ready for their reception after their wedding ceremony. In one of the photos, Sonakshi and Zaheer can be seen hearing a voice note and while the actor did not share the content of the message, she shared that this was an audio message from Shah Rukh Khan and was the "highlight of Zaheer's day."

She started her caption by writing, "A wedding can be chaotic... but you have to steal those moments in between, that will stay with you forever??" She then shared separate captions for all the photos. For the first two photos, she wrote, "Pic 1&2: being filmy and making our own music (since 2017), here in the midst of getting our wedding photos clicked!! Pic 1 is now my wallpaper??"

For the third and fourth photo, she wrote, "Pic 3&4: hero watching his heroine get ready for her dream role. And since there's too much peace in the process... of course he HAS to disrupt it by saying something silly to make her laugh??" Sonakshi and Zaheer dated for seven years before getting married. Sonakshi and Zaheer dated for seven years before getting married. (Photo: Sonakshi Sinha/Instagram) Sonakshi and Zaheer were seen together in the film Double XL. Sonakshi and Zaheer were seen together in the film Double XL.

She then shared for the next photo, "Pic 5: listening to a voice note from his all time favorite SRK (see pic 1 for reference), sending us both so much love and good wishes for the big day... i think this was the highlight of She shared that she was ready before Zaheer and wrote that she teared up when she saw herself wearing sindoor. "Pic 6&7: ever heard of a bride who got ready before her groom? No?? Well, here you go. Bride also cried looking at herself in Sindoor for the first time!!!"

For the next picture, Sonakshi shared that she admired Zaheer from afar as he got ready. "Pic 8: since bride was ready, she went to admire groom from afar who still wasn't. I remember telling @sam\_and\_ekta who are the geniuses behind capturing all these moments "isn't he supposed to be admiring me like this while i get ready???" There was a collective nod from everyone present in the room ??? Sonakshi shared this BTS photo as Zaheer got ready for the wedding reception. Sonakshi shared this BTS photo as Zaheer got ready for the wedding reception. The last two photos had Sonakshi and Zaheer walking through their house. "Pic 9&10: a minute to breath and take a walk around the home we will build together??" She concluded by writing, "What a day ?? 23.06.2024"

Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal soak in the view from their balcony. Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal soak in the view from their balcony.

## Orry finds hair in vada pav at Ambanis' pre-wedding festivities in Portofino: 'I wanted another but there's a hair in it'.



Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant have been hosting their pre-wedding festivities for months now and one of the events, that was held in Portofino, Italy, just a few months ago was attended by many Bollywood celebrities including Shah Rukh Khan, Janhvi Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and many others. Celebrity influencer Orry, who has been sharing vlogs from the Ambani festivities, recently shared a vlog from the Portofino festivities where he gave a tour of the extensive range of food stalls that were set up for the guests at the event.

The scene looks like it is out of a wedding function where guests hop from one stall to another and try different delicacies, and share their opinions about the food while also tasting dishes from their friends' plates. They were served different kinds of pastas, unique varieties of cheese and bombolones with different sauces here. At one point, Orry and his friend Tania Shroff land up at a stall where he tries the "best vada pav in Portofino." Tania first exclaims "wow" after having the first bite but soon

says "there's a hair" and Orry zooms in on it. After spotting the hair, Orry has one bite of another vada pav and reacts like he is enjoying it. Tania can be heard in the background saying, "I wanted another bite but there's a hair in it."

Orry and Tania also land up at a stall serving Manali rolls (soft parathas with eggs and masala chips), which was served in an empty packet of Lays, and with chips crushed inside the roll.

The Ambanis hosted a three-day event in Jamnagar which was attended by the likes of Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan and saw performances by Rihanna, Diljit Dosanjh and Akon. The Portofino festivities was a part of a three-day cruise events across France and Italy and here, Backstreet Boys and Katy Perry performed for the guests. The wedding festivities in India have also kicked off and just a few days ago, Justin Bieber performed for the guests in Mumbai.

## Cartoon Network to shut down?

Hyderabad: Cartoon Network, owned by Warner Bros. Discovery, has been a beloved part of the childhoods of many 90s and early 2000 kids with shows like Scooby-Doo, Tom and Jerry, and Ben 10. The trend started after Animation Workers Ignited, a community-run account sharing updates on animated industry, posted a video asking if Cartoon Network was "dead," highlighting the challenges faced by the animation industry amid widespread layoffs. The video urged people to post their favorite Cartoon Network shows using #RIPCartoonNetwork and mentioned the impact of COVID-19 on the industry. Despite animation's ability to continue remotely during the pandemic, many studios have since canceled projects, outsourced jobs,





## After loss to Alcaraz, end of Djokovic era near – GOAT missing arch rivals Federer, Nadal



GNS News Agency, July 15

These are the kind of matches that play tricks with the minds of players approaching their 40s. One-sided finals and defeat at the hands of a much younger opponent trigger self-doubt and force them to rethink their long-term plans. So what if you are Novak Djokovic, the greatest tennis player of all time. The 37-year-old's 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 loss to 21-year-old Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final on Sunday might bring an end to tennis' golden period aka the 'Big 3' era. Roger Federer has retired, Rafael Nadal's career is as good as over and on the world's most storied court, there were enough signs that Djokovic too might be in the last stage of his sparkling career. He might stick around but it looks increasingly unlikely that the Serb will add any more Grand Slam titles to his record tally of 24. Last year too, Djokovic had lost to the same opponent but it had been a five-set thriller, the

two players going toe to toe till Alcaraz prevailed. It was anyone's match that would have made Djokovic think that he still had it in him to win Slams. He would have found peace by telling himself that it was not his day.

Today was different. Alcaraz's overwhelming superiority in his straight-sets win would have made Djokovic feel inferior – it is a feeling he isn't used to. The young champ blew away the veteran off the court. The pace of his serves and groundstrokes and the sublime touch in his drop shots was too much for Djokovic. It was an unusual start to the final. The GOAT was showing nerves and the young champion was on a roll. Djokovic would double-fault and get broken, Alcaraz would hit booming aces to hold serve. The Serb would net regular forehands, the Spaniard would pull off impossible shots with ease. After Alcaraz took the first two sets easily, Djokovic, for a brief while, tried to claw back in the contest. He had done that so many times, but not today. He seemed to have lost the old touch. Maybe, time and age had finally caught up. He has been doing it for far too long and the signs of wear and tear were there to see. He had a heavily-strapped knee, a reminder of the surgery he had a month ago. But more than that, it seemed it was a tired mind that was responsible for the loss. After Federer and Nadal left the scene, there were those who thought that Djokovic would have it easy. It wasn't true, Djokovic seemed to be missing the two as there was no one around to push him to raise his game. And it's tough to see a 21-year-old with great manners and a golden smile as your arch rival and motivate yourself to knock him over.

## Wimbledon 2024 final: Carlos Alcaraz defeats Novak Djokovic to retain crown

GNS News Agency, July 15

Tennis Alcaraz Wimbledon Djokovic Carlos Alcaraz of Spain plays a forehand return to Novak Djokovic of Serbia during the men's singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Sunday, July 14, 2024. Carlos Alcaraz defeated Novak Djokovic to retain his Wimbledon crown on Sunday. This was also the Spaniard's 4th Grand Slam title.

Earlier, Alcaraz won the first two sets 6-2, 6-2 in the men's final on Centre Court after breaking his opponent twice in each set. He would then put down the Serb in the 3rd set tiebreaker 7-6 (4) to win the whole thing. Sunday's final at the All England Club was a rematch from last year, when Alcaraz got past Djokovic in five sets. This one — played in front of a Centre Court crowd that included Kate, the Princess of Wales, in a rare public appearance since announcing she has cancer — was much easier for Alcaraz, at least until he stumbled while holding three match points as he served for the victory at 5-4 in the third set. Still, Alcaraz regrouped and eventually picked up a second major trophy in a row after last month's triumph on the clay at the French Open. The Spaniard



won his first Slam title at the 2022 U.S. Open as a teenager, and no man ever has collected more Slam hardware before turning 22 than he has. The 37-year-old Djokovic, wearing a gray sleeve on his surgically repaired right knee, was denied in his bid for an eighth Wimbledon title and record 25th major overall. He tore his meniscus at Roland Garros on June 3 and had an operation in Paris two days later. Less than six weeks later, Djokovic was hardly at his best on Sunday — and Alcaraz certainly had something to do with that.

## Lamine Yamal & Bukayo Saka lead the way as wingers steal the limelight and change how game is played



GNS News Agency, July 15

The Euro of Yamal. Posterity would remember, and recognise, the European Championship of 2024 as the one where Lamine Yamal burst forth and marvelled not only the continent but also the world with his immense skill and outrageous football IQ. The fearful symmetry of the curler that shook France would be rewatched for ages, and described as the exact moment he arrived to conquer the game. Like Kylian Mbappe's solo run in the 2018 round-of-16 game against Argentina, or Lionel Messi's lob over Alcantara goalkeeper Raul Valbuena in 2005, the exact moment the world held its breath and sighed at the first revelation of unfolding greatness.

In years to come, Yamal could change the way the game is played; he, who began the tournament at 16 and ended it at 17, winning fame and flattery, has already changed the way Spain has played football. The soul of the Spanish game was the midfielder; the football-orchestra conductor, the virtuoso technician. The heart of Spain is now on the wings, on Yamal and his left-winged counterpart Nico Williams, equally quick and mischievous. In that sense, wingers have blossomed in this tournament.

Not just the pair of Yamal and Williams — a duo that could define an era of Spanish domination like the midfield twins of Andres Iniesta and Xavi Hernandez — a raft of wingers have blossomed. England's leading light, even in their early dark days in the tournament, was Bukayo Saka. Like Yamal, he is an inverted winger (left-footed player on the right side), who has flourished after England's embracing of the three-man defence. The shift to a back four was considered the beginning of the end of the old-fashioned winger. The extra man denied acceleration room for the winger, fullbacks pushing tight on wingers not allowing them to accelerate down the line; then teams began to build play from the back, eschewing the frenetic switch of play from the backline to the wings.

In most games for Arsenal, Saka operates as a wide forward rather than a conventional winger, waiting for a snappy pass from a defender and turning on the afterburners. But once Gareth Southgate began to employ a three-man defence, Saka reshaped into a semi-orthodox winger. The conventional touchline-hugging, bandy-legged speed merchants are a relic, but Yamal, Saka and Williams are as close to the old-world as modern variants could be. Their duties too have doubled — they

are expected to fall back and defend, should score goals, and play-make — rather than just run and cross. It was not a coincidence that the most penetrative players of most teams were wingers. Portugal relied on Rafael Leão for attacking thrust, France looked most lethal when Mbappe functioned as a winger and not a forward; Georgia's Khvicha Kvaratskhelia doubled his number of admirers with his explosive speed and crossing verve, Turkey's Arda Güler sparkled, and as did Germany's Florian Wirtz; the Dutch employed a false fullback of sorts in Denzel Dumfries, who essentially performed the duties of a classical winger. All of them are instinctive dribblers too, which disturbs the predictability that 4-3-3 engenders. The montage video of this Euro would feature a horde of wingers cutting this way and that, in a blur, scoring mind-bending goals and ripping defence-splitting crosses.

But as with anything in football, or any other sport, the renaissance of wingers was a reaction to the prevalent tactics of the era. Most teams press aggressively. The best way to beat the press, tacticians realised, is to cross more often into the box, switch flanks regularly, and make the game direct. That was an energy-efficient method too, as pressing consumed an incredible amount of energy. The players have already had a gruelling league season. Besides, national sides have barely any time to settle into a passing rhythm. So one could see wingers flying on the flanks, cutting inside, often crossing or taking shots themselves, like Yamal's stunner against France and Saka's equaliser against Switzerland. Wingers would often target the back post, as Mbappe served Kolo Muani for France's opener against Spain. Austria, the most free-flowing team after Spain, too resorted to crossing. Slow build-up and weaving a web of intricate passes was not only draining but also unsustainable. To beat the press, to bypass the crowded box, they are playing the ball over it. Or flipping long rangers. So even Spain — the Tiki-Takians would loathe to ping the ball cross-field — crossed with joy. Spain's 16.3 open-play crosses per 90 minutes at Euro 2024 is their highest rate in major tournaments this century. "The idea was to play with the depth we had, with wingers, crosses, look for shots, chances to break into space," coach Luis de la Fuente had said last September. "That is what we had been working on and I am sure this is the path and we will polish these details and perform better." A year later, they indeed have polished the standard of crossing. As a chain reaction, coaches, to maximise the prowess of the wingers, began to employ double pivots. Spain have two high-class operators in Rodri and Fabian Ruiz; England's began to bed in as a team when Southgate fused Kobbie Mainoo with Declan Rice. It was thus a tournament that would be remembered for solo efforts more than any major tournament this decade. Much of the liberation of individuals from claustrophobic systems owe to the power of wing-men in this tournament. And it is apt that the tournament would be remembered for the most electric winger in the tournament and his ridiculous strike against France.

## IND beat ZIM by 42 runs win the series 4-1 in Harare



GNS News Agency, July 15

India vs Zimbabwe highlights, IND vs ZIM 5th T20I Match Today: Mukesh Kumar's four wickets meant that India restricted Zimbabwe to 125/10 resulting in a 42-run victory in the fifth of the five-match T20I series in Harare on Sunday. Earlier, a half-century from Sanju Samson helped India to get 167/6 after Sikandar Raza won the

toss and put India into bat first. India have beaten Zimbabwe five match T20I series 4-1 in Harare. The Men In Blue will next take on Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka in a bilateral tournament as their next assignment. India vs Zimbabwe highlights, 5th T20I: Catch the highlights of the IND vs ZIM 5th T20I from the Harare Sports Club in Harare

Two Saturdays apart, the mood couldn't have been more different in Harare. After being bowled out for 102 while chasing 116 in the first T20I, India overpowered Zimbabwe in the fourth match, winning by 10 wickets to clinch the series 3-1. Sure, it was on a fresh pitch — one where the ball came along quite nicely with the new ball especially — but it still underscored how India have managed to turn things around after that rusty start.

And leading that charge was Yashasvi Jaiswal. How do you tell an opener who just smashed a 47-ball 100 with 10 sixes that you have to bat at No 3 immediately from the next match? Suppose it becomes easier to explain when the player replacing you at the top is someone as talented as Jaiswal.

## BCCI to provide Rs 1 crore financial assistance for Anshuman Gaekwad's cancer treatment

GNS News Agency, July 15

The BCCI will release Rs 1 crore as financial aid for the ailing Anshuman Gaekwad. (File) The BCCI will release Rs 1 crore as financial aid for the ailing Anshuman Gaekwad. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah has instructed the board to release Rs 1 crore as financial assistance for former India cricketer Anshuman Gaekwad's cancer treatment.

According to BCCI Apex Council sources, Shah has also spoken to Gaekwad's family to take stock of the situation and extend support. Gaekwad has been undergoing treatment for blood cancer at the King's College Hospital in London. "The board stands by Gaekwad's family in this hour of crisis and will do whatever is essential for Mr Gaekwad's quick recovery. The BCCI will continue to monitor Mr Gaekwad's progress and is confident that he will come out of this phase strongly," the BCCI Apex Council stated. Gaekwad, represented India in 40 Tests and 15 ODIs, amassing over 2000 runs in a career spanning 13 years from 1974 to 1987. Former cricketers had recently come out in support of Gaekwad as he sought the BCCI's intervention. Shortly after the BCCI announced a Rs 125 crore bonus prize for India's T20 World Cup winners last month, former India batter Sandeep Patil urged the board to look into Gaekwad's request for financial aid.

"The BCCI has walked the talk with this humungous cash reward. It's unprecedented but not undeserving from the players point of view. A Board can have money power and yet not share the pie with its players. Here, BCCI is



putting out the best spread for the people who have made their country so very proud. I visited London in May for a function and happened to catch up with my former India and West Zone teammate Anshuman Gaekwad. He was in hospital fighting blood cancer. Anshu told me that he needs funds for his treatment. Soon, Dilip Vengsarkar and me spoke to BCCI treasurer Ashish Shelar. In fact, our calls were made to Ashish Shelar after seeing Anshu at King's College Hospital in London," Patil wrote in a column for Mid-Day. "Ashish Shelar instantly said he would look into ours and other former cricketers' request for funds. I'm sure he will facilitate this and, at the risk of sounding macabre, save Anshu's life," Patil added. The 71-year-old Gaekwad had also served as the head coach of the national side in two stints and also led the Indian team that finished runners-up in the 2000 ICC Knockout Trophy.

## What Chirag Shetty-Satwiksairaj Rankireddy don't have that Paris Olympics gold contenders from China, Indonesia, Malaysia do



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Chirag Shetty, a fairly well-read and soft-spoken doubles badminton player and mighty high-achieving too, recently lamented how his home state Maharashtra had stayed indifferent to India's Thomas Cup title, badminton's direct equivalent of a World Cup. A large number of cricket fanatics, drunk on the revelry following the T20 World title, thought he was clamoring after and resentful of the Rs 11 crore dispersed by the local government to 4 cricketers from the state. Son of a well-off Mumbai businessman with roots in Mangalore, Chirag wasn't really talking money here, though that would be a nice acknowledgment of India's first World No 1 doubles pairing in a highly competitive sport.

A fortnight away from aiming for the gold medal at the Olympics in a mindbogglingly difficult field, Chirag received a reality check of just how vastly different the popularity of cricket and badminton are in his country. Since he blasphemed by uttering the c-word of cricket, many on social media took it upon themselves to explain to him that the bat & ball sport brought in revenues and money in billions, while badminton couldn't pull much. He perhaps was looking for a tiny bit of respect, some generous adoration. You couldn't blame Chirag for being befuddled by his country's fanbase that struggles to see beyond cricket. The opponents that he busts his lungs to defeat from China, Indonesia, Korea and Malaysia, even Denmark, receive generous love and appreciation from large populations that dote on and even worship badminton. They all have other team sports that are healthy substitutes for religion — football or volleyball or basketball or handball. But nobody outside of India asks its badminton players how much revenue they generate when reminded that he & his team won the biggest team championship in his sport and returned to a cold reception from corporates and utter ignorance from local administration. Gold medals are won for the self first, the country too, and maybe Chirag and partner Satwiksairaj Rankireddy need to seal the gold in Paris. But perhaps China, Indonesia, and Malaysia give their shuttlers respect that Indians just can't summon.

Chinese badminton chief Zhang Jun told Global Times confidently recently that the country was aiming for 5 gold medals from Paris — a clean sweep including a men's doubles gold. But the true popularity of Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang, the combine born in early 2000s, is in how they are household names in the country and wildly adored on Weibo, their prospects talked up and their playing mistakes receiving indulgent advice from millions. China spends plenty on every gold medal it

covets, as has been India since the 2010 Commonwealth Games. But it's in the large scale pride that sports followers take in Liang-Wang's results, the endless ribbings of Weikeng's weight loss efforts, the fixation with the duo's variety in serves by a chattering public, that the shuttlers get fortified with confidence. Their inconsistency gets lamented the same way as Indians mope over their cricket. But one thing Liang-Wang know — is the Chinese care deeply.

Wang would get emotional and tell Global Times, "We have won championships, we've also been runners-up, and of course, there have been times when we didn't perform well. Experiencing failure helps us grow and teaches us how to handle future matches." Weibozens swooned collectively the next day, at this earnest declaration. Down south in Malaysia, Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik have taken over the mantle of giving the country its first gold since 1956. Wooi Yik has been staying like a hermit at the academy hostel, his silent dedication followed by a nation of shuttle lovers. Aaron-Soh had beaten the Minions and Daddies on the way to bronze at Tokyo but the country still searching for a gold, is pretty chuffed at how the creative combine nails big occasions.

The 8 pm night training sessions — after morning and evening — are devoted to Aaron-Soh getting leaner, and their weight loss is often a topic of chatter on badminton Twitter, as their diet to reduce body fat and increase muscle is widely discussed in drawing rooms keeping an eye on the preparation updates of the 2022 World Champs. Koreans Seo Seung-jae and Kang Min-hyuk, despite being world champions from 2023, don't enjoy the crazed support that other three countries do. But camped at their elite training base in north Chungcheong province, the Koreans are doing their darndest to prepare Seo for two events — men's and mixed golds.

At a media day event, Kang voiced his deepest concerns over a tepid season as reported by Archysport.com: "I was so greedy to do well that I put a lot of effort into my play. I think my desire to do better before the Olympics pushed me to do better. But rather than being greedy to do better, we will focus on our strengths, aggressive play, and find areas where we can excel." Seo's game was dissected as he told a media bustle about course correction. "I felt that I was not able to play well because I was physically exhausted and there were parts of me that were sore. Because I lacked stamina, the technical aspects also did not work well. I have to play two matches (including mixed doubles), so I'm working on building up my body to be able to physically endure it. I felt like I was lacking in areas where I had to give up points in the front or middle of the court. I'm making up for it." He would then chuckle and exaggerate to say, "If I have fun and do my best in each game, I can easily win three gold medals (in badminton)." Indonesians love badminton because the sport regularly delivers a gold medal, even when everything else is falling apart. They were the earliest to book a training base at Chambley-Bussières, France, for a pre-Olympics camp.