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## Break darshan to be introduced soon at Vemulawada temple

Siricilla: Devotees who are in a hurry can soon opt for break darshan at the historic Sri Rajarajeshwara Swamy temple in Vemulawada with authorities deciding to introduce a break darshan system in the shrine. A proposal has already been sent to the State Endowment department. Once the approval comes from the higher officials, arrangements for the break darshan facility will be made at the temple, temple authorities said. The move is being made in the wake of an increasing numbers of devotees visiting the shrine every day, with the authorities deciding to provide special darshan to pilgrims twice in a day.

## Telangana Govt. appoints chairmen for 34 Corporations, issues orders

The Telangana state government has finally released orders appointing chairmen for 34 corporations. This announcement comes after a delay due to the Parliament Election Code which was in effect for several days. Some of the new chairmen include Eravatri Anil for the Mining Corporation, Narsimha Reddy for the Urban Development Corporation, Anvesh Reddy for the Seeds Development Corporation, Kasula Balaraju for the Agro Industries Corporation, and Janga Raghava Reddy for the Oil Seeds Corporation. The government had previously announced chairmen for several corporations, but the release of Jio was put on hold until the Election Code was lifted.

## Prime Minister Modi arrives in Russia to hold summit talks with President Putin



Moscow, GNS News Agency, July 8

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here on Monday on a two-day high-profile visit to Russia during which he will hold summit talks with President Vladimir Putin to review all aspects of bilateral ties and explore opportunities to further boost cooperation in sectors like trade, energy and defence. It is Modi's first trip to Russia in nearly five years. His last visit to Russia was in 2019 when he attended an economic conclave in the Far East city of Vladivostok. During the 22nd India-Russia annual summit on Tuesday, Modi and Putin are expected to explore ways to further expand bilateral relations in diverse areas, including trade, energy and defence. "The special and privileged strategic partnership between India and Russia has advanced over the past 10 years, including in areas of energy, security, trade, investment, health,

education, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges," Modi said in his departure statement. "I look forward to reviewing all aspects of bilateral cooperation with my friend President Vladimir Putin and sharing perspectives on various regional and global issues," he said. "We seek to play a supportive role for a peaceful and stable region," he said without making any specific references. The annual summit between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Russia is the highest institutional dialogue mechanism in the strategic partnership between the two countries. So far, 21 annual summits have taken place alternatively in India and Russia. The last summit was held on December 6, 2021, in New Delhi. President Putin had visited India to attend the summit. Putin, as head of the Russian state, has visited India nine times. Prime Minister Modi and President Putin last held bilateral talks on the margins of a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at Samarkand in Uzbekistan on September 16, 2022.

In the meeting, Modi had famously pressed Putin to end the conflict in Ukraine saying, "Today's era is not of war". Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Modi has held several telephonic conversations with Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. In reflection of its strong friendship with Russia, India has not yet condemned Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and it has been maintaining that the crisis must be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue. In Russia, the prime minister will also meet the vibrant Indian community. From Russia, Modi will travel to Austria on Tuesday in the first visit by an Indian prime minister to that country in over 40 years.

## Six guarantees inspired by YSR, says Revanth Reddy



GNS News Agency, July 8

Six guarantees inspired by YSR, says Revanth Reddy Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said on Monday that the six guarantees announced by the Congress party in Assembly elections were inspired by former Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy (YSR). He paid rich tributes to the late Congress leader on his 75th birth anniversary celebrations held at Gandhi Bhavan, the headquarters of Telangana Congress. The Chief Minister said that his government's plans for the Musi Riverfront Development project, Metro Rail, Krishna and Godavari waters and attracting investments in Hyderabad were all inspired by YSR.

Revanth Reddy stated that YSR's Padayatra also influenced Rahul Gandhi to embark on his Bharat Jodo Yatra. He recalled that the departed senior leader's yatra helped bring Congress to power in united Andhra Pradesh. He claimed that Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo yatra was instrumental in Congress coming to power in Telangana, Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh. The Chief

Minister recalled that after coming to power for a second consecutive term in 2009, YSR wanted to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister. "YSR left us even before Rahul Gandhi ascended to the PM's post. With the inspiration of YSR, all the Congress workers should strive hard to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister," he said.

Asserting that Rahul Gandhi is already working hard as the Leader of Opposition, Revanth Reddy claimed that he is just one step away from assuming the PM's post. He remarked that the country will develop only under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi. He said all Congress workers should take oath to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister. "Posts and positions are not important for Rahul Gandhi. The Congress leader would have become the PM in 2004 and 2014," he said, adding that the entire country was waiting for Rahul Gandhi to become the PM. Revanth Reddy said that the development that took place during the YSR regime is most useful for Telangana. "YSR is synonymous with welfare and the entire country remembers the great leader," he said and urged all the political parties and leaders to implement the welfare schemes launched by YSR. He mentioned that he took charge as TPCC President on July 7, 2021. He claimed that despite facing numerous hurdles in three years, he brought the party to power in Telangana. Earlier, the Chief Minister inaugurated a photo exhibition on YSR at Praja Bhavan. Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, AICC in-charge Deepa Dasmunshi, former MP K. V. P. Ramachandra Rao, senior leaders Madhu Yashki, Mohammed Ali Shabbir and other leaders were present. The Chief Minister also garlanded the statue of YSR at Panjagutta in the heart of the city and paid tributes to the leader, who had served as Chief Minister of united Andhra Pradesh between 2004 and 2009.

## President Droupadi Murmu takes stroll on pristine Puri beach

GNS News Agency, July 8

Bhubaneswar : The President of India Droupadi Murmu who is in Puri on the occasion of the annual Rath Yatra festival, turned meditative while taking a stroll at the sea beach of Puri on Monday. Sharing her divine experience on the official 'X' handle, the President said: "There are places that bring us in closer touch with the essence of life and remind us that we are part of nature. Mountains, forests, rivers and seashores appeal to something deep within us. As I walked along the seashore today, I felt a communion with the surroundings - the gentle wind, the roar of the waves, and the immense expanse of water. It was a meditative experience." She said that she experienced a profound inner peace after having the darshan of Lord Jagannath during the Rath Yatra on Sunday.

"And I am not alone in having such an experience; all of us can feel that way when we encounter something that is far larger than us, that sustains us and that makes our lives meaningful," the President said. She further added that human beings have lost connection with 'Mother Nature' and are engaged in its exploitation for their own short-term gains. "The result is for all to see. This summer, many parts of India suffered a terrible series of heatwaves. Extreme weather events have become more frequent around the globe in recent years. The situation is projected to be far worse in the decades to come," wrote Murmu. The President also noted that more than seventy per cent of the surface of the earth is made up of oceans, and global warming is leading to a rise in global sea levels, threatening to submerge coastal areas. She



said that the oceans and the wide variety of flora and fauna found there have suffered heavily due to different kinds of pollution. "Fortunately, people living in nature's lap have sustained traditions that can show us the way. Inhabitants of coastal areas, for example, know the language of the winds and waves of the sea. Following our ancestors, they worship the sea as God," the President wrote on X. "More than seventy per cent of the surface of the earth is made up of oceans, and global warming is leading to a rise in global sea levels, threatening to submerge coastal areas. There are two ways, I believe, to meet the challenge of protection and conservation of the environment; broader steps that can come from governments and international organisations, and smaller, local steps that we can take as citizens. The two are, of course, complementary. Let us pledge to do what we can do - individually, locally - for the sake of a better tomorrow. We owe it to our children," added President Murmu.

## Frame model policy on menstrual leaves, Supreme Court tells Centre



GNS News Agency, July 8

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Centre to frame a model policy on menstrual leave for women employees by holding consultations with States and other stakeholders. A Bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said the issue related to policy and was not an issue for the courts to look into. Moreover, such a decision from a court on granting such leave to women may prove to be counterproductive and "detrimental" to the cause as employers may avoid employing them.

How will the leave encourage more women to be part of the workforce, the court asked the petitioner and said mandating such leave will lead to women "being shunned from the workforce". "...we do not want that," the

Bench said. "This is actually a government policy aspect and not for the courts to look into," it said. "Petitioner says that a representation was submitted to the Centre in May 2023. Since the issues raise multifarious objectives of state policy, there is no reason for this court to intervene in light of our previous order," it said. The Bench, however, permitted lawyer Rakesh Khanna, appearing for petitioner and lawyer Shailendra Tripathi, to move the secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati.

## Delhi Rouse Avenue Court adjourns default bail petition to Friday

GNS News Agency, July 8

The Rouse Avenue court hearing on the petition filed by MLC Kavitha seeking default bail in the Liquor Policy CBI case has been adjourned. The trial for this case began on Monday afternoon, with MLC Kavitha's lawyer requesting the release of the charge sheet filed by the CBI on June 7. The lawyer informed the court that the chargesheet refiled by the CBI contained errors, prompting the Rouse Avenue Court to order the CBI to file a counter by next Thursday. The hearing for Kavitha's petition has now been postponed to Friday, where the court will review the CBI's chargesheet regarding Kavitha's role in the liquor case. MLC Kavitha has been in custody for four months without bail, leading to the filing of a petition for default bail.

## Former Jharkhand CM Champai Soren, 10 others take oath as ministers in Hemant Soren Government

Ranchi, GNS News Agency, July 8

Former chief minister Champai Soren and 10 other leaders of the JMM-led coalition took oath as ministers in the Hemant Soren government in Jharkhand on Monday. Champai had resigned from the post of CM on July 3, a day before JMM executive president Hemant Soren took oath as the 13th chief minister of Jharkhand on July 4. Jharkhand Governor C P Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office and secrecy to the 11 leaders at a function in the Raj Bhavan in the presence of Chief Minister Hemant Soren and other senior politicians of the JMM-led alliance and government officials.

The new faces in the 12-member cabinet, which includes the chief minister, are Congress's Jamtara MLA Irfan Ansari, Mahagama MLA Deepika Pandey Singh and JMM's Latehar MLA Baidynath Ram. Ram's name had been excluded at the last moment from the list of ministers in the previous Champai Soren cabinet, which he had termed as an "insult". Those who retained their ministerial berths include Rameshwar Oraon and Banna Gupta of the Congress, besides JMM's Mithilesh Kumar Thakur, Hafizul Hasan, Dipak Birua and Bebi Devi and RJD's Satyanand Bhokta. Earlier in the day, the Hemant



Soren government won a vote of confidence in the assembly amid a walkout by opposition members. Hemant Soren was released from jail on June 28 after the Jharkhand High Court granted bail to him in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam. He had resigned as the CM shortly before his arrest on January 31 by the Enforcement Directorate.

## 25 drug users nabbed appear for questioning



GNS News Agency, July 8

Hyderabad: Twenty five persons who were apprehended by the TSANB and Raidurgam police following a raid on 'The Cave Pub', at Manikonda two days ago, appeared before the police for questioning on Monday. Earlier, the Raidurgam police had issued them notices asking them to appear before them for questioning. "All the suspects were questioned about the party and the source of the drugs they had consumed. It is part of the investigation and their statements were recorded. Based on the outcome we will decide the future course of action," said an official who is supervising the investigation. Among those apprehended during the raid are IT employees, individuals employed in private companies, students and businessmen. "All of them had one thing in common, which is that they were invited to the event by the organizers. Most of them were regularly attending such parties in the city and elsewhere. We could gather some more information about such 'psychedelic parties and the organizers," the official said. Meanwhile, the police teams are making efforts to nab Rajesh, Abhinav, Sai Krishna and Sunny; the four persons are owners of the pub and are presently absconding. "After we are able to nab them we can know more about the illegal activities at the pub," said the official. During the raid, the police who conducted checks with 'drug detec-

tion kits' found that a majority of those who attended the party had consumed ganja while two others consumed cocaine and MDMA. The police on the other hand will hold a counselling session for all those who were caught at the bar. "A date will be decided and all of them have to attend the counselling along with their family members. Later on we will randomly conduct anti-drug tests on the suspects to check if they are using drugs or not," said the official.

## Rahul visits flood-ravaged Assam, says he is their 'soldier in Parliament'

GNS News Agency, July 8

Silchar: Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday said that he stands with the people of Assam and is their 'soldier in Parliament'. He urged the Centre to extend all possible help and support to the State immediately. "I stand with the people of Assam, I am their soldier in Parliament, and I urge the central government to extend all possible help and support to the State expeditiously", Gandhi posted on X, after visiting a flood relief camp at Fulertal in Assam's Cachar district. Assam needs a "comprehensive and compassionate vision-relief, rehabilitation and compensation in the short term, and a pan-Northeast water management authority to do everything necessary to control floods in the long term", he said. The extreme devastation caused by flooding in Assam is heartbreaking - with innocent children like 8-year old Avinash being taken away from us. "The extreme devastation caused by flooding in Assam is heartbreaking with innocent children like 8-year old Avinash being taken away from us. My heartfelt condolences to all the bereaved families across the State", he said.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Breaking point

THE revelation that seven police officers of Haryana have sought demotion due to stress-related ailments underscores a profound crisis in the state's law enforcement setup. The applications, detailing struggles with depression, hypertension and other health issues, paint a grim picture of the working conditions of the police personnel. Their plea for relinquishing future claims to seniority and career progression sums up their desperation. The Haryana Police have a sanctioned strength of 70,000 personnel, but there are only around 50,000 cops on duty. This shortfall puts an enormous strain on the force. Cops are expected to perform their duties under tough conditions, conducting investigations, maintaining law and order and fulfilling numerous additional responsibilities. The situation is aggravated by the inadequate pay and the failure to implement the recommended reforms.

Reports from other states validate this distressing scenario. In Maharashtra, cops have been working extended hours without adequate rest. In Uttar Pradesh, the police have faced complaints of overwork, with officers reporting burnout and psychological distress. The Indian Police Foundation has highlighted the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to address these systemic issues, emphasising better staffing, improved working conditions and mental health support for personnel. The cops, who dedicate themselves to public safety, deserve better support, fair compensation and a work environment that safeguards their wellbeing. State governments and police authorities must address these issues promptly. Implementing the Supreme Court's directives and police commissions' recommendations for reforms is essential. The recruitment process must be expedited to relieve the pressure on the staff.

## BBMP to soon begin major white topping work in Bengaluru, utilities asked to shift water, sewer pipes

GNS News Agency, July 8

Bengaluru roads are set to be riddled with hassles, as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will soon begin white topping nearly 150 km of road network in the city. White topping, which is considered more costlier than asphalted roads, is a process where the normal black-top roads or the bitumen asphalted roads are cleared and the roads are given a layer of concrete on top. The concrete used is considered to be more long-lasting and is believed to prevent the formation of potholes. BBMP chief commissioner Tushar Giri Nath on Tuesday instructed officials to complete all preparations for the groundbreaking ceremony related to the white topping works in the BBMP jurisdiction. Addressing an inter-departmental coordination meeting held at the BSNL office regarding the implementation of white topping works in the city, he stated that the works will be undertaken in 15 packages. Out of these, 13 packages have already been finalised, and work orders have been issued to the contractors. However, the remaining two packages are pending at the government level.

He instructed that surveys be conducted by the departments concerned regarding the relocation of water and sewer pipes by Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) and Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation (KPTCL) cables, Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), and other utilities in the areas where white topping works are planned. The Karnataka government on January 9 had issued a government order approving the BBMP's request to whitetop proposed roads to fix the road infrastructure issues in Bengaluru.

The BWSSB was specifically instructed to lay pipes on both sides of the road without damaging the roads. "Once the work is completed, no permission will be granted to damage the roads for any reason," Nath said. According to the BBMP, a list of areas where white topping works will be carried out has already been provided to all departments. Joint inspections have been conducted based on this list, and final preparations for commencing work are underway. The roads identified for whitetopping include Tannery Road, Mosque Road, DJ Halli main road, Hennur 80ft road, CBI Road, Dinnur Main Road, Malleswaram 8th main road, Holiday Village Road (near Kanakapura Road) and Bull Temple road among others. The BBMP chief directed comprehensive arrangements to be made to install utility ducts on both sides of the roads undergoing white topping works and emphasised on the need for coordination with the relevant departments to ensure this. Nath insisted on coordination with the traffic police division to implement route changes where white topping works are being undertaken. "The work should be completed within the stipulated time, and it should be carried out in stages to ensure there is no disruption to vehicle traffic," Nath said. BBMP Bengaluru roads The BBMP chief directed comprehensive arrangements to be made to install utility ducts on both sides of the roads undergoing white topping works and emphasised on the need for coordination with the relevant departments to ensure this.

Chief Engineer Prahlad mentioned that approximately 150 km of roads in the city will undergo white topping works and he requested traffic police officers to identify alternative routes in the areas where the work is being carried out.

He also assured that the work will be conducted day and night to complete it within the given timeline. The Karnataka government on January 9 had issued a government order approving the BBMP's request to whitetop proposed roads to fix the road infrastructure issues in Bengaluru. The government had approved white topping works worth Rs 800 crore for 64 km of road network in Bengaluru. Meanwhile, white topping works of 145 km road network in Bengaluru has already been completed in the first and second phases under Urban Development Plan of 2016-17 and white topping work of 4.8 km long road has been carried out under the Amrita Urban Development in 2022-23.

## Passport Seva Kendra corruption: CBI raids Mumbai passport agent's premises, seizes Rs 1.5 crore



GNS News Agency, July 8

CBI Passport Seva Kendra Mumbai corruption Busting a deep-rooted nexus between touts and Regional Passport Office (RPO) officials, the CBI recently registered a dozen cases against 32 people, including 14 officials of passport offices. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday stated that as part of its ongoing crackdown on corruption at Passport Seva Kendra (PSK) in Mumbai, the agency raided one more passport agent's premises in Mumbai and seized cash worth Rs 1.59 crore.

The central agency on Sunday and Monday raided the office and residence of the passport agent. Besides the cash seizure, other incriminating materials in the form of five diaries and digital evidence have also been seized, officials said. Busting a deep-rooted nexus between touts and Regional Passport Office (RPO) officials, the CBI recently registered a dozen cases against 32 people, including 14 officials of passport offices. The CBI conducted

raids based on information that some officers were receiving the bribe directly in their own bank accounts or in the bank accounts of their family members from the passport facilitation agents. The CBI also learned that some officers of Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) were also in touch with passport facilitation agents, who were involved in making fake passports by compromising with the national security of the country.

The premier investigation agency on June 29 conducted searches at 35 locations in Mumbai and Nashik, recovering several incriminating documents, digital evidence pertaining to passport documents, etc. revealing a deep nexus between touts and the RPO officials. The 14 RPO officials who were booked, include passport assistants or senior passport assistants, posted at Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) of Lower Parel and Malad. According to the CBI, the accused officials posted at Lower Parel and Malad PSKs in Mumbai were indulging in collusive corruption with agents or touts. The entire racket was exposed after CBI received reliable information indicating that some granting officers and verifying senior officers posted at Passport Seva Kendra, Lower Parel, are indulging in collusive corruption. The accused officers were in regular contact with passport facilitation agents and conspired with them to obtain undue advantage in lieu of issuance of passport based on fake/forged documents or changing the personal particular of applicants in their passport, the CBI said. The CBI on June 26 conducted joint surprise checks at PSK, Lower Parel and PSK, Malad along with the Vigilance Officers of the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Division and officers of RPO Mumbai. CBI sources also hinted that more senior RPO officers are under scanner.

## Delhi High Court to physically inspect Central, Southern Ridge forest to assess afforestation, trees felling

GNS News Agency, July 8

Delhi trees, Delhi High Court on tree felling, Delhi Central Ridge, Delhi Central Ridge tree felling, Delhi Southern Ridge tree felling, Aravalli range tree felling, Delhi afforestation, Delhi tree cutting, Justice Jasmeet Singh, Delhi's green lungs, Delhi large-scale felling of trees, Delhi large-scale afforestation, Asola Bhatti Wildlife, 'Walk with Wildlife' event, Delhi Ridge forest. Delhi Ridge, which is divided into Northern, Southern, South Central and Central Ridges, serves as the green lungs of the city. The Delhi High Court is set to physically inspect the Central and Southern Ridge forest, an extension of the Aravalli range, to assess the extent of afforestation and cutting of trees in the area.

While hearing a matter concerning felling of trees in the national capital, a single judge bench of Justice Jasmeet Singh in its July 1 order took note of the "conflicting claims" of the Delhi government's Principal Secretary—Department of Environment and Forest and the amicus curiae (appointed in the matter by the court) regarding "afforestation and cutting of trees in Central Ridge and Southern Ridge".

Justice Singh thereafter said, "...I am of the view that a physical examination with respect to the extent of afforestation and cutting of trees in Central Ridge and Southern Ridge should be done by this court". Justice Singh then directed that on July 17 advocate Gautam Narayan, the amicus curiae appointed in the matter, counsels appearing for the Delhi government, Delhi Development Authority, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, along with the Principal Secretary of Delhi government's department of environment and forests, and the additional principal chief conservator of forests to meet him at 11 am in his chamber in the high court after which they are to proceed for a "physical inspection". Delhi Ridge, which is divided into Northern, Southern, South Central and Central Ridges, serves as the green lungs of the city. The HC said that by



July 15, the amicus curiae shall give an advance copy of the areas wherein large scale felling of trees is stated to have happened and Delhi government's counsel shall also provide the details of the areas where large scale afforestation has taken place.

Notably, the High Court in December last year restrained the Delhi government's forest department from holding a proposed event — 'Walk with Wildlife' — inside the city's Asola Bhatti Wildlife, located in the Southern Ridge, after noting that the department gave permission for the event in a "mechanical manner". The HC had said that there was no analysis of the threat perception to the "people, the animals and the Sanctuary".

The court said that the event which was proposed to be held on December 9 and 10, 2023, had the "trappings of it turning out to be a misadventure as the location of the animals are unknown, their area of movement is not isolated, the certainty with regard to number and species are guesswork and there appears to be no plan in place". In another matter, the HC had said in May this year that the Central Ridge "our green heritage" and it cannot be allowed to degenerate by felling trees when the city is grappling with rising pollution levels. The HC was hearing a contempt plea pertaining to tree plantation in Delhi and the well-being of the Ridge forest.

## Pune civic body to legalise water supply to illegal buildings with a rider: Don't seek approval for construction



GNS News Agency, July 8

water supply, Pune Municipal Corporation, PMC water connections, PMC water in illegal buildings, PMC unauthorised buildings water connection, PMC illegal buildings water connection, PMC water connection fee, PMC affidavit requirement, PMC illegal structures, PMC ownership documents, Rajendra Bhosale, PMC legalising water connections, PMC tax receipt, Aadhaar card, PMC illegal water connections, PMC fine for illegal connections, PMC illegal water connections Authorities say if anyone has already taken illegal water connections, the PMC will legalise them by charging the owner a fine. The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) is set to offer water connections to unauthorised buildings. However, the owners will be required to pay a fee and submit an affidavit confirming that they will not seek approval for the construction by using the water connection as a reason.

In a proposal recently tabled in the civic body's standing committee, Municipal Commissioner Rajendra Bhosale said, "For those seeking water connection for an illegal structure, the owner will have to submit documents of ownership with the application form, latest tax receipt, and Aadhaar card. The building does not become legal only because it has been given a water connection, and the same should be submitted as an affidavit to the PMC." Similarly, if anyone has already taken illegal water connections, the PMC will legalise them by charging the owner a fine, he said. As per the PMC, water is essential, and everyone expects to obtain water legally. In the recently merged area within the civic jurisdiction, numerous buildings are without completion certificates. It has been observed that owners of these buildings tend to

seek water connections through illegal means. Many houses are inherited, and the current owners lack the necessary documents to apply for a water connection. Additionally, there are issues related to property distribution among various members. "If legal water supply connections are provided, the number of illegal connections will decrease," Bhosale said, noting that PMC also incurs financial losses due to illegal water connections. Bhosale added that legalising all water connections for illegal buildings will help increase civic bodies' revenue and ascertain citizens' actual water consumption.

## On the run for 29 years after getting bail in 1993 Mumbai riots case, man arrested again

GNS News Agency, July 8

The Mumbai police have arrested a 65-year-old man for whom a non-bailable warrant was issued in 1995 as he skipped trial after getting bail in a 1993 communal riots case.

Sayed Nadir Shah Abbas Khan, who was picked up on June 29 from the Sewri area of central Mumbai, had earlier been arrested by the Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Marg police under Indian Penal Code sections 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 307 and 34—charges related to rioting and unlawful assembly. Khan, a driver, disappeared after getting bail and did not attend the court proceedings.

Whenever the police visited Khan's home, his family would say he was not there. Recently the police got the mobile number Khan was using. They analysed the call details of the number and figured out that Khan would be coming home on June 29. A trap was then laid around Khan's home and he was arrested as he arrived there, the police said on Tuesday. He has been sent to judicial custody again, after 29 years.

## Farmers plant saplings in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar, name them after Indian cricket team players to celebrate T20 World Cup victory



GNS News Agency, July 8

In an uplifting display of success and environmental goodwill, farmer collectives in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra, marked the Indian Men's Cricket Team's ICC T20 World Cup triumph with a unique celebration. Members of the Samruddh Shetkari Vikas Gat and the Saikrupa Mahila Shetkari Gat, alongside the Paani Foundation, engaged in a series of community-focused activities in the villages Sarola Kasar and Savargaon Tal of Ahmednagar.

Inspired by the cricketing achievement, the Samruddh Shetkari Vikas Gat took up an innovative approach by planting saplings named after players of the Indian cricket team. Notably, they also dedicated a sapling in honour of the prestigious tournament trophy and hoisted the national flag. This initiative was carried out at the Zilla Parishad Primary School in Sarola Kasar, the Nagar block, ensuring that these saplings are in an environment where they will receive optimal care and attention. "The sarpanch of Sarola Kasar, Jayaprakash Patil, had an idea to plant trees in the name of the players of the Indian cricket team, as something that could be done from their side to celebrate the team's victory. The entire gat (group) gathered for this activity," said Vikram Fatak, 34, the regional coordinator for Ahmednagar and Nashik districts, Paani Foundation. He underscored the collective spirit of the Samruddh Shetkari Gat, which was initially formed to participate in the Satyamev Jayate Farmer Cup, a competition conducted by the Paani Foundation for farmers to compete for best work in the field of sustainable agriculture.

Similarly, the Saikrupa Mahila Shetkari Gat joined the celebrations by planting saplings and hosting their own flag hoisting ceremony at Savargaon Tal, Sangamner. This group, previously recognized for their state level achievement in the Farmer Cup, added their own form of celebration to the festivities. "Just as our flag was lifted high in the West Indies, the members of the Mahila gat made sure they did the same here," noted Fatak. "They do birthdays together, they support each other when there is a family wedding, they are there for each other when there is a death in the family; all along, through grief, loss and celebration," said Lipi Mehta, 33, Head of Outreach and Partnerships with the Paani Foundation.

She added, "The sapling plantation was not something we suggested; the farmer collectives came up with these ideas on their own and have been working together for the longest time. So, when the Indian cricket team won, they were jubilant and wanted to do something to mark it." The Paani Foundation, active for around seven years in the villages of Maharashtra, has empowered nearly 50,000 farmers and 4,356 farmer collectives, from which almost 1,000 plus groups are an all women collective. Over 6,000 villages have also unitedly learned the science of watershed management from Paani, culminating in another competition for the farmers, called the Water Cup. The residential training provided by Paani is absolutely free of cost.

"The best part about all this is, Paani does not give a single rupee to the farmers — we create an ecosystem of knowledge and training and the farmers themselves decide to participate and gain from this ecosystem. There is no monetary exchange, it is not a regular CSR activity where we go to their fields and work on casual tasks. The farmers have all done it by themselves," said Mehta. Paani Foundation also has a platform called the Digital Farming School where the farmers join classes via Zoom and YouTube and speak to the best scientists in Maharashtra from different agricultural universities and learn about such sustainable and healthy practices directly from them.

## Delhi court grants custody parole to jailed Kashmiri leader Engineer Rashid to take oath as MP

GNS News Agency, July 8

Engineer Rashid won the Lok Sabha elections 2024 as an independent candidate from the Baramulla constituency in Jammu and Kashmir. (Express file photo by Shuaib Masoodi) Engineer Rashid won the Lok Sabha elections 2024 as an independent candidate from the Baramulla constituency in Jammu and Kashmir.

A Delhi court on Tuesday granted custody parole for two hours to jailed Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, to take oath as an MP on July 5. The order is awaited.

This comes a day after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) gave its consent to Rashid to take oath as a Member of Parliament.

Rashid, who is lodged in Tihar Jail in Delhi in a 2017 terror funding case, won the Lok Sabha elections 2024 as an independent candidate from the Baramulla constituency in Jammu and Kashmir. He defeated his nearest rival, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, by a margin of more than 2 lakh votes.

On Monday, the NIA counsel did not oppose Rashid's plea to take oath but said he should be subject to certain restrictions such as not speaking to the media. The counsel said the MP should finish taking the oath and undertake all other activities within a day.

A Delhi court had adjourned Rashid's interim bail plea hearing until July 1 and granted NIA time to file its reply to the petition. Rashid, who has been in jail since 2019 after the central agency charged him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, earlier moved an interim bail plea before the Patiala House Court in Delhi for taking oath as an MP.



## Uddhav Sena sticks its neck out, fields Milind Narvekar for Maharashtra Legislative Council polls



GNS News Agency, July 8

With the Shiv Sena (UBT) fielding Milind Narvekar as its candidate for the July 12 Maharashtra Legislative Council elections on the last day of filing of nominations on Tuesday, the Maha Vikas Aghadi will have three candidates in the fray though it has numbers to get only two candidates elected. While the Congress has renominated Pradnya Satav, the wife of late Congress leader Rajeev Satav, the Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) has decided to back Jayant Patil of the Peasants

and Workers Party. From the Mahayuti, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has fielded five candidates — Pankaja Munde, Amit Gorkhe, Yogesh Tilekar, Sadabhau Khot, and Dr Pranay Phuke.

The NCP led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has fielded Rajesh Vitekar and Shivajirao Garje. Rajesh Vitekar was to be fielded from Parbhani for Lok Sabha elections. However, the seat was allocated at the last minute to Madhav Jankar's party. Therefore, the party has now nominated him," said NCP spokesperson Umesh Patil. The Shiv Sena of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has fielded Bhavana Gawali, who was denied the Lok Sabha nomination despite having won five times from the Yavatmal-Washim constituency. The second Sena candidate is Krupal Tumane. Tumane, a former MP, was denied a ticket by the Sena from the Ramtek constituency in the recently held Lok Sabha elections. Each candidate needs 23 votes of MLAs to get elected as an MLC. The BJP-led Mahayuti has the support of more than 200 MLAs, including Independents. The Maha Vikas Aghadi has the support of 63 MLAs, and is short of at least six votes to get all the three candidates elected. "We are confident of our candidate winning," said Uddhav Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut.

## Opposition leader Ambadas Danve suspended from Maharashtra Legislative Council over 'abusive remarks'



GNS News Agency, July 8

Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Legislative Council Ambadas Danve of Shiv Sena UBT has been suspended for five days for allegedly misbehaving and using abusive language in the House Council's Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe took action against Danve on Tuesday following the Shiv Sena's UBT leader's alleged use of swear words when there was uproar in the House on Monday over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's sharp attack against BJP in the Lok Sabha stating that those who call themselves Hindus are spreading 'violence and hate'. The Opposition, Maha Vikas Aghadi, meanwhile opposed Danve's suspension and demanded a discussion on the issue. However, when deputy chairperson Gorhe refused to budge, the Opposition MLAs staged a walkout in protest. Shiv Sena UBT chief and Maharashtra former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray termed the act undemocratic. "Ambadas should have been given an opportunity to present his side of the story. But it was not allowed. No one was allowed to speak or discuss the issue. This would be the first time in history that without discussion and in a pre-decided manner an Opposition leader is suspended with a vendetta. The people

of Maharashtra are watching the injustice towards the opposition leader who was raising the voice of people in the House," Thackeray said on Vidhan Sabha premises. Earlier in the day, the Maharashtra Legislative Council was adjourned thrice as BJP MLC Pravin Darekar objected to the alleged use of swear words by Danve in the House the previous day and.

As the proceedings commenced, Darekar demanded a discussion on Danve's alleged use of foul language on Monday evening while responding to a discussion on Rahul Gandhi's speech in the Lok Sabha. Gorhe urged Darekar to allow the completion of the Question Hour, but Darekar insisted on discussing the issue in the House. "The legislative council's sanctity needs to be maintained, more so by the Leader of the Opposition," Darekar said. Gorhe said the matter was serious and that a decision could only be made after reviewing the video clips of the remarks and gathering other details. Expressing his disapproval, Darekar alleged that Danve not only used foul language on the floor of the House, but also spoke about it to the media, which raises a question mark over the seriousness of his behaviour. He asserted his right to speak and threatened to disrupt the proceedings of the House, prompting Gorhe to adjourn it for one hour initially.

After the proceedings resumed later, unruly scenes prevailed in the House over the same issue, following which the deputy chairperson adjourned it twice later till 2 pm. On Monday, the confrontation over the issue erupted in the Upper House of the state with BJP legislator Prasad Lad and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Ambadas Danve (Shiv Sena UBT) adopting aggressive stands and allegedly using unparliamentary language at each other. The ruling Mahayuti alliance in the state, comprising BJP, was demanding a resolution be passed in the Council and sent to the Lok Sabha condemning Rahul Gandhi for his alleged anti-Hindu remarks.

## Water levels in Pune's dams lower than last year as rain fails to bring much cheer

GNS News Agency, July 8

Water levels in three of the four dams that cater to the needs of Pune city—those in Khadakwasla, Temghar and Warasgaon—continue to be lower than last year's levels. Water levels in three of the four dams that cater to the needs of Pune city—those in Khadakwasla, Temghar and Warasgaon—continue to be lower than last year's levels. Dams in Pune have less water than last year even as the district has received above-normal rain—122.2 mm as against 97.7 mm—as of Tuesday. But the heavy to intense rain received in a short period has led to more runoffs rather than water accumulating in the dams. Water levels in three of the four dams that cater to the needs of Pune city—those in Khadakwasla, Temghar and Warasgaon—continue to be lower than last year's levels. Only the Panshet dam has reported a water level slightly higher than last year's. Thus Khadakwasla dam reported 41.01 per cent of its water level on Tuesday, down from 48.28 per cent last year. The figures for the other three dams are Temghar (0/3.35 per cent), Warasgaon (10.40/17.84 per cent) and Panshet (19.67/18.20 per cent).

The Pawana dam, crucial for water supply to Pimpri-Chinchwad, has a water level of 15.93 per cent, compared with 18.68 per cent last year. The India Meteorological



Department (IMD) has said that the patchy rain pattern is responsible for water storage being far less than satisfactory. The IMD's website showed that for Pune most of the rain happened in the second week of June (5-12), while the next two weeks were mostly dry. The week starting from June 12 was almost dry while the next week was normal in terms of rain. "Heavy to intense localised rainfall in a short spell of time has not resulted in any significant rise in water storage levels in the dams. At most they have caused localised floods," said an IMD officer. As excess rain is expected in July, the IMD and others hope the dam water levels will improve.

## Even as water level at lakes get rainfall push, Mumbai civic body says 10% supply cut is here to stay



GNS News Agency, July 8

Mumbai lake level water supply After Tuesday's rain, data furnished by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) showed that while the Santacruz observatory recorded 52 mm of rainfall, the Colaba station registered 29 mm rainfall until 8.30 am on Tuesday. Amid moderate showers sweeping Mumbai and its neighbouring districts since last week, the stock at the seven lakes which supply water to the city, witnessed a marginal rise. The cumulative water level at the lakes has touched 7.15 per cent of the total capacity on Tuesday. Earlier, in June, the water level at the lakes sank to 5 per cent.

After Tuesday's rain, data furnished by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) showed that while the Santacruz observatory recorded 52 mm of rainfall, the Colaba station registered 29 mm rainfall until 8.30 am on Tuesday. The water stock at the lakes is languishing at a three-year low owing to rain deficit in the region and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) says the ongoing 10 per cent supply cut is here to stay until the water

level touches 40 to 45 per cent. In 2023, the water level stood at 15.4 per cent around this time while in 2022, the water levels were at 11.76 per cent.

"We have not taken any decision to increase the supply cut. Currently, our catchment area has started receiving rainfall and the water level has risen. We are observing the situation and will take further call," said a senior official from the Civic Hydraulic Department of the BMC. In a bid to maintain the minimum stock in the dams, the civic body — since early June — has been supplying water to the metropolis by drawing from the state reserve stock of Upper Vaitarna and Bhatsa lake. Earlier this year, with the water levels at these lakes depleting at an alarming rate and the weather experts ringing alarm bells over a hotter summer on cards this year, the BMC had written to the state government to request additional water. The BMC asked for 93,500 million litre of water from Upper Vaitarna and for 1.37 lakh million water from the Bhatsa lake. The state government acceded to the BMC request for allocation of more potable water by approving nearly 15.76 per cent of its stock. Mumbai usually draws its waters from the Tansa, Bhatsa, Modak Sagar, Tulsī, Vihar, Upper Vaitarna, and Middle Vaitarna lakes, which are situated in the neighbouring districts of Thane, Nashik, and the outskirts of Mumbai. Meanwhile, the IMD has predicted a reduction in the rainfall activity in Mumbai from Tuesday. It further said that between Tuesday and Saturday, only light to moderate showers are likely in Mumbai. In June, despite an early monsoon this year, the city clocked a rain deficit of 35 per cent. According to IMD records, between June 1 and June 30 (morning), the Santacruz observatory registered 347 mm of rainfall, falling short by nearly 190 mm from its typical average of 537 mm of rainfall in June.

## Accused planned to attack Salman at film shoot, say Panvel police; file chargesheet

GNS News Agency, July 8

Accused involved in the alleged conspiracy to kill Bollywood actor Salman Khan had planned to attack him during a movie shoot, a police official on Tuesday said citing a chargesheet filed in the case. During an investigation into the case, it came to light that Rs 25 lakh "supari" (contract) was given by jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi to his gang members to attack the actor, he said. The gang planned to use sophisticated weapons, including AK-47, from Pakistan for the attack, the official said. The Panvel Town police in Navi Mumbai submitted the 350-page chargesheet before a magistrate court on June 21 against five arrested accused — Dhananjay Tapsing alias Ajay Kashyap (28), Gautam Bhatia (29), Vaspi Mehmood Khan alias China (36), Rizwan Hussain alias Javed Khan (25) and Deepak Hawasing alias John (30), he said. Jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, his brother Anmol Bishnoi, Sampat Nehra and Goldy Brar have been shown as wanted accused in the case, the official said. The attack was allegedly planned to be carried out during a movie shoot or while the actor was leaving his Panvel farmhouse, the official said. The chargesheet mentions the detailed plot, attack and escape route. It contains an analysis of the intelligence gathered, mobile phone records of the accused, their WhatsApp chats, audio and video calls and tower locations, he said. In April, the Panvel Town

police unearthed an alleged plot of the Bishnoi gang members to kill the actor, he said. The plot was uncovered during their investigation disclosing a video call conversation between Lawrence Bishnoi gang member Ajay Kashyap and another accused. As per the conversation, sharpshooters, trained in modern weapons, were stationed across Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Raigad, and Gujarat under the orders of Goldy Brar. Accordingly, sharpshooters Anmol Bishnoi and Rohit Godara were said to have been instructed by Brar to carry out the attack, utilising minors under 18 years old for the task, officials said last month quoting the First Information Report (FIR). A man named John was allegedly tasked with providing the vehicle for the operation, as per the FIR. After the attack, gang members were to regroup at Kanyakumari and then proceed to Sri Lanka via sea route. From there, arrangements were made to send them to other countries, with gangster Anmol Bishnoi, based in Canada, arranging their travel, officials added. According to police, Lawrence Bishnoi and Sampat Nehra gangs had deployed 60 to 70 members to monitor Salman Khan's movements as part of efforts to conduct recce at his Bandra residence, Panvel farmhouse, and film shooting locations. Following specific information about the plot to kill Khan, a case was registered against 17 identified accused and others at Panvel Town police station on April 24.

## Temple Management, Keertan-Shastra and more; Mumbai University's out-of-the-box courses gaining popularity

GNS News Agency, July 8

Amid the admission season, when new-age courses are seen to be gaining popularity, there are some out-of-the-box courses being offered by Mumbai University. Some of these courses are — MA in Keertan Shastra, P G Diploma in Temple Management, Diploma in Bhagavad Gita, Diploma in Bhakti and others. This is the first time when Mumbai University's Centre for Hindu Studies will be offering a Post Graduate Diploma in Temple Management. Of the 60 seats for the course, around 15 got filled within the first few days of the admissions, said university officials.

Head of the centre Dr Ravikant Sangurde, said, "There are two courses in Temple Management — a one year post graduate diploma and a six month post graduate certificate course. Candidates have the option to take admission to the certificate course and continue for a year to get a diploma or leave in six months with a certificate. "For courses such as MA in Hindu Studies and MA in Keertan-Shastra, 18 and 22 admissions, respectively, have been confirmed already. "For admission to both these courses, candidates are expected to clear an entrance test. It is important for students to have a basic knowledge in this field, especially related to specific terminologies used," said Sangurde, adding that candidates from diverse backgrounds are showing interest in the field. He added, "While people are busy in making ends meet, they are also trying to achieve their ambitions but are struggling for happiness. This is resulting in stressful lives. People seeking admission to these courses have expressed that they want to understand what's written about life in ancient philosophies of the Hindu culture. This quest has also led to demand for our course in Bhagavad Gita too." The Centre for Hindu Studies at the MU is offering two courses on Bhagavad Gita — introduction courses and applied Bhagavad Gita. "The second course connects knowledge from Bhagavad Gita with our day-to-day life struggles. Both are short-term courses for two credits, offered as electives for students from any course at Mumbai University," said Sangurde.

Mumbai University's Department of Sanskrit too is



offering a course on Bhagavad Gita, which they started last year. Head of the department Dr Shakuntala Gawade, said, "It is Diploma in Bhagavad Gita, a certificate course where candidates get to learn various different perspectives of Bhagwad Gita. There are 60 seats for this part-time course which is almost full now." The Sanskrit Department has a long list of unique part-time courses such as Diploma in Bhakti, Certificate in Prakrit and Diploma in Manuscriptology. "In the Manuscriptology course, students learn various scripts of Sanskrit such as Brahmi, Sharada and Newari. There are so many inscriptions, repositories of manuscripts which is like a treasure of knowledge and literature. But it is unexplored as there are not enough individuals who can read those," said Gawade. Last year, the Sanskrit department started four new post graduation courses — MA in Classical Sanskrit Literature, MA in Yogashastra, MA in Ethics and Puranas and MA in Arthashastra which too are gaining demand. For MA and PG Diploma/Certificate courses, a candidate is required to have graduation. All other certificate courses are open to individuals having passed the Class 12 or equivalent exams. Candidates can find admission details on the official websites of the two departments.

## Akali Dal Jalandhar West bypoll candidate Surjit Kaur joins AAP; rebel leaders say 'disowned over modest background'

GNS News Agency, July 8

Surjit Kaur, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)'s candidate for the Punjab Assembly bypoll in Jalandhar West, joined the ruling AAP four days after her party announced support to the Bahujan Samaj Party in the election to the reserved seat. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who inducted Kaur into the AAP at his home in Jalandhar, said the two-time municipal councillor had been mis-treated by the SAD.

Surjit Kaur had stated earlier, "Someone had attempted to withdraw my nomination papers recently, but the deadline for withdrawal had already passed. I will contest the elections." Rebel leaders of the SAD, including Prem



Singh Chandumajra, Bibi Jagir Kaur, and Gurpartap Singh Wadala, cited her modest background as the reason why the party decided to disown her, adding that this would not have happened if the candidate

were wealthier. However, SAD spokesperson Daljit Singh Cheema previously explained that Surjit Kaur was nominated by rebels within the party and that SAD had already decided not to contest the

Jalandhar West seat. The party then opted to support the BSP candidate instead, he added. The rebels have questioned why this decision was made after the deadline for withdrawing nominations had passed.



## Sidhu Moosewala-like murder? What chargesheet against Lawrence Bishnoi said on Salman Khan firing case



GNS News Agency, July 8

Jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi issued a ₹25 lakh contract in a plot to assassinate Bollywood actor Salman Khan, the Maharashtra Police chargesheet claimed. The fresh charges filed against the accused of conspiring to murder Salman Khan revealed chilling details regarding the murder plot and established a clear link with Lawrence Bishnoi, reported NDTV. On April 14, two men allegedly linked to the jailed gangster fired shots outside Salman Khan's residence in Bandra. Multiple accused were arrested in the case and the recent chargesheet records charges of conspiracy to murder and other grave offences.

The chargesheet shows that the Lawrence Bishnoi gang issued a contract worth ₹25 lakhs in an attempt to murder Salman Khan, reported NDTV. The murder plot was hatched over the course of several months, between August 2023 and April 2024. The probe further revealed that the gang was trying to acquire specialised and advanced guns from Pakistan, including AK-47s, AK-92s,

M16 rifles, and the Turkish-made Zigana pistol. Notably, the Zigana pistol was used in the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala in 2022, allegedly carried out by the Bishnoi gang. The Bishnoi gang tried to kill Salman Khan in a way similar to Sidhu Moosewala, according to the chargesheet. The plot was to attack the actor either during a movie shoot or while he was leaving his Panvel farmhouse.

The chargesheet also revealed that an extensive surveillance routine was underway to track Salman Khan and his movement, leading up to the firing incident. At least 60 to 70 individuals reportedly tracked the actor's movements in his Mumbai residence, Panvel farmhouse and Goregaon Film City. Boys under the age of 18 were used by Bishnoi gang members to surveil the residence of Salman Khan. These minors were reportedly acting on the orders of Goldy Brar and Lawrence Bishnoi's brother Anmol. The gang also carried out its communication via a Whatsapp group with 15-16 members, including Goldy Brar and Anmol.

The audio recovered by Mumbai Police from one of the arrested suspects in a firing incident outside Salman Khan's residence, matched with the voice of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's brother Anmol Bishnoi, police said. The audio recording from the accused's phone was sent to the forensic laboratory for verification. Earlier, police said that gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's brother, Anmol Vishnoi, played a key role in motivating the shooters. After receiving weapons delivery in Panvel on March 15, 2024, Anmol provided the shooters with the target's information, instructing them to carry out the firing at the actor's residence.

## Hindenburg gets SEBI notice over Adani short bet, US firm calls it 'nonsense'



GNS News Agency, July 8

Hyderabad: US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research has revealed that it was served a show-cause notice by the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) outlining suspected violations over its short bet against the Adani Group. Hindenburg had published a report last year citing its investigation, stating that the Adani Group was 'engaged in a brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud scheme over the course of decades', triggering a massive \$150 billion rout in Adani's stocks. Calling the SEBI's 46-page show cause notice an attempt at 'intimidation', Hindenburg wrote in a blog post that the regulator had made the "nebulous allegation" that Hindenburg's report contained misrepresentations and inaccurate statements meant to mislead readers.

The New York-based firm termed the show cause notice as "nonsense" and "concocted to serve a pre-ordained purpose: an attempt to silence and intimidate those who expose corruption and fraud perpetrated by the most powerful individuals in India."

It disclosed that Kotak Bank created and oversaw an offshore fund structure that was used by its "investor partner" to be against the conglomerate but hastened to add that it may "barely come out above breakeven" on its trade. Without disclosing the name of the investor, Hindenburg said it made \$4.1 million in gross revenue through "gains related to Adani shorts from that investor relationship" and just \$31,000 through its short position of the conglomerate's US bonds. Adani group has repeatedly denied all allegations. "After 1.5 years Of investigation, SEBI identified zero factual inaccuracies with our

Adani research. Instead, the regulator took issue with things like our use of the word 'scandal' when describing multiple prior instances of Adani promoters being charged with fraud by Indian regulators, and our quoting of an individual that alleged SEBI is corrupt and works 'hand in glove' with conglomerates like Adani to help it skirt regulations," it said.

The US firm said the show cause notice does resolve some questions: "Did Hindenburg work with dozens of firms to short Adani, making hundreds of millions of dollars? No – We had one investor partner, and net of costs we may barely come out above breakeven on our Adani short." "Our work on Adani was never justifiable from a financial or personal safety perspective, but it is by far the work we are most proud of," it said. Hindenburg said it received an email from SEBI on June 27 and later a show cause notice outlining suspected violations of Indian regulations. "To this day, Adani has still failed to address the allegations in our report, instead providing a response that ignored every key issue we raised and has offered blanket denials of subsequent media allegations," it said. "Our January 2023 report had 'provided evidence of a vast network of offshore shell entities controlled by (group chairman) Gautam Adani's brother, Vinod Adani, and close associates.'" "We detailed how billions were surreptitiously moved through these entities, into and out of Adani public and private entities, often without related-party disclosures," it said.

On the SEBI notice, it said, "Much of the notice seemed designed to imply that our legal and disclosed investment stance was something secret or insidious, or to advance novel legal arguments claiming jurisdiction over us. Note that we are a US-based research firm with zero Indian entities, employees, consultants or operations." The regulator, it said, claimed that the disclaimers in the report were misleading because the firm was "indirectly participating in the Indian securities market." "This wasn't a mystery, virtually everyone on earth knew we were short Adani because we prominently and repeatedly disclosed it," it said. The SEBI notice did not "conspicuously" name Kotak Bank with which Hindenburg has ties with. "We suspect SEBI's lack of mention of Kotak or any other Kotak board member may be meant to protect yet another powerful Indian businessman from the prospect of scrutiny, a role SEBI seems to embrace," Hindenburg said

## Gujarat ACB seizes 22 kg gold, Rs 3 crore in case against suspended Rajkot town planner MD Sagathiya

GNS News Agency, July 8

Gujarat's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) seized 22 kg of gold worth around Rs 16 crore and Rs 3 crore in cash in connection with a case of disproportionate assets (DA) registered last month against suspended Rajkot town planner MD Sagathiya. ACB officers said the gold and hard cash, which were unaccounted for, were seized from his brother's office in the city

Sagathiya was arrested by the ACB and produced in court on Monday. This comes after his six-day remand, which ended on June 24, in a separate case of forgery registered by the Rajkot Crime Branch. The ACB had secured his transfer warrant and sought further remand. Hours after his production in court, the ACB conducted searches at his brother Dilip Sagathiya's office in Twin Star, a high-end commercial hub near Nana Mava Chow on Ring Road late on Monday evening.

"When we produced Sagathiya, we also intimidated the court that we have recorded the statement of MD Sagathiya's brother Dilip Sagathiya and that the latter has consented to open his office for the purpose of investigation, though he is not an accused in the case as of now," a senior ACB officer told The Indian Express on Tuesday. The officer said that once the investigation was permitted by court, "Dilip Sagathiya helped open the biometric lock of the office and facilitated searches there", adding that Dilip claims to be a farmer by occupation. MD Sagathiya was first arrested on May 30 by a special investigation team (SIT) of Rajkot city police for his alleged acts of omission that had led to a blaze at TRP Game Zone which killed 27 people. The SIT's probe had reportedly revealed that Sagathiya was aware that TRP Game Zone, a gaming zone complex, had been functioning since 2021 without due clearance from the Rajkot Municipal Corporations' town planning department, which he was heading. However, the town planner had taken



no action against the gaming zone, leading to the fire.

The ACB had booked Sagathiya on June 19 for allegedly owning DAs worth Rs 10.55 crores. The DA case was registered against Sagathiya following ACB searches at his office in RMC headquarters as well as his residence on May 30, in the aftermath of the blaze. "We were aware about the existence of this office near Nana Mava Chow post the searches in May. However, Sagathiya's brother was out of town and not reachable even on his phone. But subsequently, he joined the investigation and stated that he kept mum, fearing his family would be targeted," the ACB officer said. Simultaneous searches were conducted at the office and residence of Bhikha Theba, deputy chief fire officer of Rajkot. Theba was also arrested by the ACB for allegedly owning 79.94 lakh worth of DAs.

The Rajkot Crime Branch had filed a separate offence against Sagathiya on June 8 for allegedly forging a minutes book of his office on May 27 to create false records of meetings as his defence in the aftermath of the fire. After his 12-day SIT remand ended on June 12, the Rajkot Crime Branch had arrested him on June 17 and

## 'Why is Delhi govt taking out its enmity on women?' Swati Maliwal writes to Arvind Kejriwal, questions outage of 181 helpline



GNS News Agency, July 8

Alleging that a systematic dismantling of the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has been going on since her resignation as its chairperson six months ago, Swati Maliwal on Tuesday asked Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to look into the temporary shutting down of the women's helpline 181. The 181 helpline was closed on Monday for a few days as its operating agency has been changed from the DCW to the Department of Women and Child Development. In her letter to Kejriwal, Maliwal said this alleged negligence epitomises a lack of empathy towards crimes against women and girls in the capital.

"Since over 48 hours, survivors of rape and other crimes have been left without crucial assistance. The gravity of this situation cannot be overstated, emphasising the urgent need for intervention to address and rectify these distressing circumstances," she said in the letter

she shared on X. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha MP added that there was no need to take over the helpline from the DCW and no consultation was held with it to evaluate the repercussions of this decision. "I would like to remind you that the 181 Women Helpline had a call drop of over 70 per cent when it was being handled by the Chief Minister's Office of the Delhi government in 2016. Due to the same, the helpline was transferred to the DCW. The 181 women helpline witnessed less than 1 per cent call drops under the Commission's management," she said. Maliwal, who recently accused Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar of assault, said since she resigned as the DCW chairperson, the Delhi government's ministers and officers have opened a front against the DCW. She highlighted several issues the DCW faces, such as lack of funding and delay in appointments. "No one has been paid salary for the last six months, the budget has been reduced by 28.5 per cent, the 181 helpline has been withdrawn and no work has been done to fill the posts of chairperson and two members. Why is the Delhi government taking out its enmity on women? I have written a letter to Arvind Kejriwal ji and asked for an answer from him," Maliwal wrote in a post written in Hindi on X. In her letter, she said that the vacancies in the positions of the DCW chairperson since January 2024 and two members since November 2022 reflect a concerning lack of initiative. The absence of a Dalit member, as mandated under the DCW Act, for the last one-and-a-half years further underscores the oversight in fulfilling essential positions critical for the DCW's effective functioning.

## Majority will become minority unless conversion during religious congregations is stopped: Allahabad HC



GNS News Agency, July 8

conversion Allahabad High Court said "It is against the Constitutional mandate of Article 25 of the Constitution of India, which does not provide for religious conversion, it only provides freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. While rejecting the bail application of a man booked under Uttar Pradesh's anti-conversion law, the Allahabad High Court has observed that if conversion during religious congregations is allowed, the majority population of the country could become a minority one day, adding that such religious congregations should be immediately stopped.

The court made the observations on Monday while hearing the bail application of Kailash, who was booked last year under Indian Penal Code section 365 (kidnapping or abduction with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine a person) at the Maudaha police station in Hamirpur. The police also invoked the UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act 2021 against him. Ramkali Prajapati, the complainant in the case and a native of Hamirpur, said Kailash took her brother Rampal, who has mental illness, to Delhi last year to attend a "social gathering and ceremony for well-being". Kailash allegedly promised Prajapati her brother would be treated and return within a week. When her brother did not come back after a week, Prajapati asked Kailash about her brother but did not get a satisfactory

reply. Ramkali alleged that many people from her neighbourhood were taken to the social gathering and converted to Christianity. Kailash's lawyer informed the court that Rampal was not converted to Christianity, nor was he Christian. He said that Rampal had attended a Christian gathering along with several others, adding that Sonu Paster, who led the gathering, had already been granted bail.

Passing the order, Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal said, "This Court, prima facie, finds that the applicant is not entitled for bail. Hence, the bail application of the applicant involved in the aforesaid case crime is, hereby, rejected." The court stated in its order that the word "propagation" means to promote, but not convert any person from his religion to another religion. "In the instant case, there are serious allegations against the applicant by the informant that her brother was taken away from the village to attend the gathering of well-being at New Delhi and along with him number of persons from the said village were also taken there, and they are being converted into Christianity. Brother of the informant never returned to the village." The court added, "Statements recorded by the I.O. of various other persons clearly reveal, at this stage, that the applicant, Kailash, had been taking away people to attend the religious congregation held at New Delhi, where they are being converted into Christianity."

The court further observed, "If this process is allowed to be carried out, the majority population of this country would be in a minority one day, and such religious congregations should be immediately stopped where the conversion is taking place and changing religion of citizen of India." It is against the Constitutional mandate of Article 25 of the Constitution of India, which does not provide for religious conversion, it only provides freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. It has come into notice of this Court in several cases that unlawful activity of conversion of people of SC/ST castes and other castes including economically poor persons into Christianity is being done at rampant pace throughout the State of Uttar Pradesh."

## Maharashtra's milk subsidy, its effects and its political fallout

GNS News Agency, July 8

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, while presenting the supplementary budget on June 28, announced Rs 5 per litre subsidy for milk producing farmers. This, Pawar in his speech said, would help milk producing farmers. Dairy farmers who have been protesting against low realisation have said this subsidy is too little, while dairies have asked for a quick and efficient rollout of the scheme. Pawar, while presenting the supplementary budget, talked about the Rs 5 per litre subsidy which would continue from July 1. "An amount of Rs 223.83 crore has been distributed as subsidy to 2.93 lakh registered milk producers at Rs 5 per litre. The remaining subsidy will also be disbursed immediately. I announce that the Rs 5 per litre subsidy will continue from July 2024 onwards to support milk producing farmers," his speech read. The earlier subsidy was announced when farmers led by the All India Kisan Sabha—the farmers' wing of CPI (M)—had protested against low realisation of milk. The new production subsidy does not have an end date, but the dairies are waiting to read the fine print to see how this would be implemented. Production subsidy is not new to Maharashtra—during the 2020 Covid-19 subsidy, the then Uddhav Thackeray-led government had announced a similar subsidy. The subsidy was linked to a certain procurement price to be paid by dairies. Subsidy was to be paid directly to the bank accounts of the dairy farmers.

So why was this announced now?

The first reason has to be the drubbing faced by the MahaYuti government in the Lok Sabha elections. In areas where dairy is a major side-business, the MahaYuti candidates have lost. Barring the Hatkanagale seat in Kolhapur district, where Dhairiyasheel Mane, the Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) candidate managed to win, in all other seats the MahaYuti candidates contested were lost. Low milk procurement price—the price paid by dairies to their farmers—has been a sore point with the farmers. At present, dairies in Maharashtra are paying their farmers Rs 24 to 26 for milk with 3.5 per cent fat and 8.5 per cent SNF (Solid Not Fat). The subsidy would push the procurement price to Rs 30-31 per litre—much less than the

Rs 40 per litre that protesting farmers are asking for. On Tuesday, dairy development minister Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil announced that the subsidy would be given over a base price of Rs 30 per litre. Also, Rs 30 kg subsidy would be given for conversion of excess milk into Skimmed Milk Powder (SMP). Dairies point out that at present their realisation would not allow them to buy milk over Rs 26-27 per litre. A dairy owner from Pune said 100 litres of milk (which equals to 102.5 kg of milk) would produce 3.598 kg of fat and 8.738 of SMP (considering 3.5 per cent fat and 8.5 per cent SNF). SMP realisation at present is nearly Rs 210 per kg while yellow butter is trading at Rs 350 per kg. Thus gross realisation for a dairy from processing 100 litres of milk would be Rs 3,371 (Rs 1,835 from SMP and Rs 1,536 from realised fat). Deducting Rs 7 per litre as processing and transportation cost, dairies would be able to pay Rs 26.71 per litre as the maximum price for milk. "The production subsidy would help in increasing the realisation of farmers," pointed out the private dairy owner.

Will dairies be able to pay Rs 30 per litre as procurement price?

Most dairies have said they would be not be in a position to pay the Rs 30 base price. Dairies point out that at present their realisation would not allow them to buy milk over Rs 26-27 per litre. A dairy owner from Pune said 100 litres of milk (which equals to 102.5 kg of milk) would produce 3.598 kg of fat and 8.738 of SMP (considering 3.5 per cent fat and 8.5 per cent SNF). SMP realisation at present is nearly Rs 210 per kg while yellow butter is trading at Rs 350 per kg. Thus, gross realisation for a dairy from processing 100 litres of milk would be Rs 3,371 (Rs 1,835 from SMP and Rs 1,536 from realised fat). Deducting Rs 7 per litre as processing and transportation cost dairies would be able to pay Rs 26.71 per litre as the maximum price for milk.

What have the farmers said?

Ajit Newale, general secretary of the Kisan Sabha, has rejected outright the state government's subsidy scheme. Newale said given the increased cost of production of milk, any price lesser than Rs 40 is not feasible for farmers.



## Won't quit, would rather face confidence vote: Nepal PM Prachanda



GNS News Agency, July 8

Embattled Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has decided not to resign from the post despite an agreement reached between the country's largest parties - Nepali Congress and CPN-UML - to form a new coalition government. In a meeting of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) office-bearers held in Baluwater on Tuesday, Prime Minister Prachanda said he would rather face a vote of confidence in Parliament than resign from the post, the party Secretary Ganesh Shah told The development came after Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman K.P. Sharma Oli inked a midnight power-sharing deal to form a new 'national consensus government' to replace the Prachanda-led coalition government. Nepali Congress, the largest party in the House of Representatives (HoR) has 89 seats at present, while CPN-UML has 78 seats. The combined strength of the two large parties is 167, which is sufficient for a majority of 138 seats in the 275-member HoR. Mr. Deuba, 78 and Mr. Oli, 72, agreed

to share the Prime Ministerial position on a rotation basis for the rest of the term of the Parliament. Meanwhile, the talks between Prime Minister Prachanda and CPN-UML chief Oli to save the current coalition also failed, according to Maoist sources. Quoting PM Prachanda, Mr. Shah said that a conspiracy has been hatched to topple the coalition government and create instability in the country.

The conspiracy came at a time when the government focused on ending corruption and introducing good governance, he said. As per the constitutional provision, the prime minister will have 30 days to seek a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives, which would give PM Prachanda some time for political manoeuvring.

"We will engage in discussions with various parties, including the Rashtriya Swatantra Party (RSP), Nepali Congress, and CPN-UML, so as to save the coalition," PM Prachanda was quoted as saying. Nepali Congress President Deuba briefed party officials about the agreement with the CPN-UML during a meeting of office bearers at his residence in Budhanilkantha on Tuesday morning, according to party sources. Mr. Deuba discussed the initial power-sharing deal reached with CPN-UML, explaining that the leadership of the government formed under this agreement would alternate between the two parties. In the meantime, the RSP, one of the key ruling coalition partners, has decided not to participate in the new alliance between the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML. During a secretariat meeting on Tuesday, the party also decided to withdraw from the current government, party sources said. The party currently enjoys 21 seats in the House of Representatives. Nepal has had 13 governments in the last 16 years, indicating the fragile nature of the Himalayan nation's political system.

## Iran's presidential contenders face hurdle of voter apathy



GNS News Agency, July 8

A zealous anti-Westerner and the low-key moderate hoping to become Iran's next president could struggle to mobilise millions of supporters on July 5's run-off election amid voter apathy about a tightly-controlled contest. Over 60% of voters abstained from the June 28 ballot for a successor to Ebrahim Raisi following his death in a helicopter crash, a historic low turnout which critics of the government see as a vote of no confidence in the Islamic Republic. The run-off election will be a tight race between lawmaker Massoud Pezeshkian, the sole moderate in the original field of four candidates, and former Revolutionary Guards member Saeed Jalili.

Both candidates have sought to engage voters by offering competing visions, with Jalili offering hawkish foreign and domestic policies and Pezeshkian advocating more social and political freedoms. Both pledge to revive the economy, plagued by mismanagement, state corruption, and sanctions reimposed since 2018 over Iran's nuclear programme. The clerical establishment needs a high turnout for its own credibility, particularly as it faces regional tension over the war between Israel and Iranian ally Hamas in Gaza, and increased Western pressure over its fast-advancing nuclear programme. But growing numbers of Iranians have abstained at elections in recent years. The previous record low turnout was 41% in a parliamentary election in March, while Raisi won in 2021 on a turnout of about 49%, in which authorities disqualified heavy-weight conservative and moderate rivals. A clash of visions. "The run-off is a clash of visions: Jalili's hardline ideology versus Pezeshkian's call for essential moderation and change," said Ali Vaez of International Crisis Group. "Beyond opposing Jalili, Pezeshkian

must compete with voter apathy and secure at least some votes from this critical silent majority to win the election."

The next president is not expected to usher in any major policy shift on Iran's nuclear programme or support for militia groups across the Middle East, since Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei calls all the shots on top state matters. However, the president can influence the tone of Iran's domestic and foreign policy. With Mr. Khamenei aged 85, the next president will be closely involved in selecting the next supreme leader. Insiders say Mr. Khamenei is keen on a loyal and compliant president who can ensure a smooth eventual succession to his successor. The rivals are establishment men loyal to Iran's theocratic rule, but analysts said Mr. Jalili's win would signal a potentially even more antagonistic domestic and foreign policy.

Mr. Pezeshkian's triumph at the polls might promote a pragmatic foreign policy, ease tensions over now-stalled negotiations with major powers to revive the nuclear pact, and improve the prospects for social liberalisation and political pluralism. To take victory from his headline rival, Mr. Pezeshkian also needs to attract votes from supporters of hardline parliament speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who finished third in the first round, while mobilising a mostly young population chafing at political and social restrictions to vote for him again. "Given Jalili's extremism, I think it's entirely possible more moderate conservative voters who cast their vote for Qalibaf will either vote for Pezeshkian or stay home next Friday," said Eurasia group analyst Gregory Brew. Backed by the reformist faction that has largely been sidelined in Iran in recent years, Pezeshkian's campaign has been largely focused on "fear of the worse." "I will vote this time ... because Jalili's presidency means more restrictions ... This is choosing between bad and worse," said Mehrshad, 34, a teacher in Tehran. With no intention of confronting the powerful security hawks and clerical rulers, analysts said, Pezeshkian is not expected to gain support from many reform-minded Iranians, who have largely stayed away from the polls for the last four years. "Pezeshkian is part of the establishment. He will follow Khamenei's orders ... Let the world know that Iranians do not want the Islamic Republic, I will not vote," said university student Farzaneh in the central city of Yazd. Activists and opposition groups have called for a boycott distributing the hashtag #ElectionCircus on social media platform X.

## PM-elect Dick Schoof, Dutch government sworn-in 7 months after far-right party won elections

GNS News Agency, July 8

The Netherlands has a different Prime Minister for the first time in 14 years as Dutch King Willem-Alexander swore in the country's new government Tuesday, more than seven months after elections dominated by a far-right, anti-Islam party. Dick Schoof, former head of the Dutch intelligence agency and counterterrorism office, signed the official royal decree at Huis Ten Bosch Palace, saying he "declared and promised" to uphold his duties as the country's prime minister. The 67-year-old was formally installed alongside 15 other ministers who make up the country's right-leaning coalition. The anti-immigration party of firebrand Geert Wilders won the largest share of seats in elections last year but it took 223 days to form a government. What does Geert Wilders's victory in Dutch elections mean for immigrant minorities? | In Focus podcast



choice for the top spot. Mr. Wilders' first pick, Ronald Plasterk, was forced to withdraw from consideration after allegations of his involvement in a medical patent fraud came to light. The other government ministers were sworn in Tuesday according to seniority of their departments. One minister, Femke Wiersma who will head the agriculture portfolio, made her declaration in Frisian — the country's second official language alongside Dutch. Although the November elections were widely seen as a win for the far right, political youth organisations are already pushing back on the ambitions of the new government. Ahead of the swearing-in ceremony, youth groups from six parties, including two of the coalition partners, called for a softening on asylum plans. "Although the influx must be limited, it is of great importance that we receive people here fairly and with dignity," Eva Brandemann, chairperson of the youth wing of the New Social Contract, told Dutch public broadcaster NOS. Her counterpart in Mr. Rutte's party, which brought down the government last summer over concerns about the number of family reunifications for refugees, told NOS that problems stemmed from administration, not migration. "The impression after all those conversations is that there is not so much an asylum crisis but a reception crisis," Mauk Bresser, the chair of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy youth organisation said.

The four parties in the coalition are Wilders' Party for Freedom, outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte's center-right People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, the populist Farmer Citizen Movement and the centrist New Social Contract party. The formal agreement creating the new coalition, titled "Hope, courage and pride," introduces strict measures on asylum-seekers, scraps family reunification for refugees and seeks to reduce the number of international students studying in the country. Opposition from other coalition partners prevented the controversial Wilders from taking the prime minister's job. During the monthlong negotiations, he backpedaled on several of his most extreme views, including withdrawing draft legislation that would have banned mosques, Islamic schools and the Quran. For the first time since World War II, the Netherlands is now led by a prime minister who is not aligned with a political party. Before serving as chief of the country's top intelligence agency, Mr. Schoof was previously the counterterrorism chief and the head of the country's Immigration and Naturalization Service.

During the lengthy talks, his name had not been circulated as a possible prime minister and national newspaper the Telegraaf reported that Mr. Schoof was the fifth

## Bolivia's economic crisis fuels distrust in government amid debates over 'failed' coup



GNS News Agency, July 8

Signs reading "I'm buying dollars" line the doors of Víctor Vargas's shoe shop in the heart of Bolivia's biggest city, a desperate attempt to keep his family business alive. Just a few years ago, Mr. Vargas, 45, would unlock the doors at 8 a.m. to a crush of customers already waiting to buy tennis shoes imported from China. Now, his shop sits hopelessly empty. "Right now, we are in a dreadful crisis," he said. "No one buys anything anymore. ... We don't know what's going to happen." Bolivians like Mr. Vargas have been hit hard by economic turmoil in the small South American nation — fueled by a longtime hyper-dependence on, and now shortage of, U.S. dollars.

The economic downturn has been exacerbated by an ongoing feud between President Luis Arce and his ally-turned-rival former President Evo Morales in the lead-up to next year's presidential election. Many Bolivians impacted by the crisis have lost trust in Mr. Arce, who even denies the crisis. "Bolivia has an economy that's growing. An economy in crisis doesn't grow," Mr. Arce said. That was contradicted by both economists and dozens of Bolivians. That deep distrust came to a head on Wednesday following a spectacle which the government called a "failed coup d'état" and opponents including Mr. Morales called a staged "self-coup" meant to earn the unpopular leader political points before elections. Political stunts.

Whether the coup attempt was real or not, most Bolivians said they no longer believe what their leader says, and that Mr. Arce would be better served addressing Bolivia's gasping economy and less time carrying out political stunts. "He should think about Bolivia's economy, find a way to get dollars and work to move Bolivia forward," Mr. Vargas said. "No more of these childish 'self-coups.'" That simmering anger has paved the way for even more strife in a country that is no stranger to political unrest.

Bolivia's economic crisis is rooted in a complex combination of dependence on the U.S. dollar, draining international reserves, mounting debt and failures to produce products like gas, which was once the Andean nation's economic boon. This has meant that Bolivia has largely become an import economy "totally dependent on dollars," said Gonzalo Chávez, an economist with Bolivia's Catholic University. That once worked in Bolivia's favour, driving the country's "economic miracle" as it became one of the region's fastest growing economies. Mr. Vargas's family opened the shoe business nearly 30 years ago because they saw it as a surefire way to ensure stability for coming generations. The family imports shoes from China, which they pay for in U.S. dollars and sell

them in Bolivia's currency, bolivianos. The shortage of U.S. dollars has led to the emergence of a black market, with many sellers bringing in greenbacks from neighbouring Peru and Chile and selling them at a gouged price. Pascuala Quispe, 46, spent her Saturday walking around La Paz's downtown going to different currency exchange shops, desperately searching for U.S. dollars to buy car parts. While the official exchange rate is 6.97 bolivianos to the U.S. dollar, she was told the real price was 9.30 bolivianos, far too high a price for her. Gouged prices have trickled down to everything. People have stopped buying shoes, meat and clothing, and that has pushed working class people deeper into poverty. Bolivians make jokes about having "mattress banks," storing cash at home because they don't trust banks.

"There are no jobs. ... and the money we earn isn't enough for anything," Ms. Quispe said. "Everyone suffers." It's a complicated economic bind that has few short-term solutions, said Mr. Chávez. But Mr. Arce insists that Bolivia's economy is "one of the most stable" and said he was taking action to address problems ailing Bolivians, including shortages of U.S. dollars and gasoline. He said the government was also industrialising, investing in new economies like tourism and lithium. While Bolivia sits on the world's biggest stores of lithium, a high-value metal key to transitioning to a green economy, investment is only viable in the long term, largely due to government failures, said Mr. Chávez. Meanwhile, inflation has outpaced economic growth, and most Bolivians face unstable work conditions with minuscule pay. That is only compounded by ongoing fights between Mr. Arce and Mr. Morales, who returned from exile after resigning during unrest in 2019, which Mr. Morales maintains was a coup against him. Now the former allies have slung insults and fought over who will represent their Movement for Socialism party (MAS), ahead of 2025 elections.

"Arce and Evo Morales, they fight over who is more powerful," Mr. Vargas said. "But neither govern for Bolivia. ... There's a lot of uncertainty." Mr. Morales, who still wields a great deal of power in Bolivia, blocked Mr. Arce's government from passing measures in Congress to ease the economic turmoil, which Mr. Arce said was a "political attack." While Bolivians have few other options, Mr. Chávez said discontent opened a "small window" for an outsider to gain traction, just as it has with a number of Latin American outsiders in recent years. Most recently, self-described "anarcho-capitalist" Javier Milei has taken the helm of neighbouring Argentina with promises to lift the country out of its economic spiral, which shares a number of similarities with Bolivia's.

## Joe Biden slams U.S. Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity that benefits Donald Trump



GNS News Agency, July 8

U.S. President Joe Biden on Monday criticised the Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity that was seen as a win for his rival, former President Donald Trump, in forceful remarks from the White House. The U.S. Supreme Court found on Monday that Mr. Trump cannot be

prosecuted for any actions that were within his constitutional powers as president, but can be for private acts, in a landmark ruling recognising for the first time any form of presidential immunity from prosecution. "This nation was founded on the principle that there are no kings in America," Mr. Biden said, adding that no one is above the law. With the Supreme Court decision, he said, "That fundamentally changed." Mr. Biden is running for re-election against Mr. Trump and has been sharply critical of his rival's actions related to the January 6, 2021, raid on the U.S. Capitol by Trump's supporters, who believed Mr. Trump's false claims that he had won the 2020 election. Mr. Biden, 81, was making his first set of remarks at the White House since his shaky debate against Mr. Trump last week led to calls for him to step aside as the Democratic Party's standard-bearer for the election. After he stumbled over his words on the Atlanta debate stage, his remarks and comportment will be scrutinised for signs that he is up to the job of running for re-election and of governing the country for four more years.

## 64-year-old Sikh pilgrim from India dies while returning from religious pilgrimage in Pakistan

GNS News Agency, July 8

A 64-year-old Indian national, who was part of a group of over 450 Sikhs who went to Pakistan for a religious pilgrimage, passed away at the Wagah-Attari border after reportedly suffering a heart attack while returning, according to a media report on July 2. Dev Singh Sidhu from Amritsar, Punjab, had come to Pakistan to participate in the 185th death anniversary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and perform religious rites, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. While returning to India with other Sikh pilgrims, Sidhu reportedly suffered a heart attack at the Indian immigration hall. Despite immediate medical assistance, he could not be revived, the report

said. Last week, at least 455 Sikhs arrived in Lahore from India to take part in festivities in connection with Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death anniversary. The restored statue of the first ruler of the Sikh Empire, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, which was earlier damaged by religious extremists, was also unveiled at Kartarpur Sahib in the presence of over 450 visiting Indian Sikhs. The nine-foot-tall bronze statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was first installed at the Lahore Fort near his 'samadhi' in 2019. It was twice vandalised by activists of the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). The statue of the great Sikh ruler of Punjab was a gift to the people of the province from a body of the United Kingdom.



## What does real estate sector expect?



the definition of affordable housing would increase benefits for homebuyers and boost demand. Any tax exemption from rental income will also encourage greater investment in residential real estate. Ease of doing business

"Announcements to enhance the ease of doing business for developers would create a positive climate for real estate investment. We also seek strategic fiscal measures that stimulate demand for homebuyers and developers, address liquidity concerns, and simplify regulations. These initiatives would not only drive growth in the real estate sector but also boost demand in about 250 related industries, thereby creating jobs across these sectors. Overall, we hope to see policy measures that promote sustainable growth and address key challenges facing the industry in the upcoming budget," said Sastri. Reviving schemes "The Indian real estate sector is expecting the Union Budget 2024-25 to improve liquidity, such as enhanced funding for the Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) fund, which has been crucial in reviving stalled projects. We also expect the government to revive the Credit-Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) under PMAY, which expired in 2022," said Pradeep Misra, CMD-REPL (Rudrabhishek Enterprises Limited). He further added that the scheme previously benefited EWS/LIG homebuyers and supported the conversion of 'kaccha' homes into 'pucca' ones under PMAY (Rural). Reintroducing a 100% tax holiday for affordable housing developers under Section 80-IBA and updating the definition of affordable housing to reflect current market dynamics are crucial. Streamlined approvals "To promote SM REITs, long-term capital gains on SM REITs should be exempted for the investment made in the year. Additionally, streamlined approval processes and digitisation in land records can significantly reduce project delays, benefiting both developers and end-users. On the commercial front, incentives for green building practices and sustainable infrastructure development will drive urban regeneration and attract investments," added Misra.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the full budget for 2024 in a few weeks. The real estate sector is looking forward to reforms that will benefit taxpayers. The real estate sector is important for the economy, providing many jobs and contributing greatly to the GDP. Therefore, the upcoming budget could introduce measures that will strengthen this economic sector. The Indian real estate sector continues to grow in 2024, driven by positive market feelings, economic growth, urbanisation, changing lifestyles, rising disposable incomes, better job opportunities, increased business activity, and government policies. Homeownership demand The desire for homeownership remains strong among consumers, with residential sales continuing to reach new highs. This year, the demands go beyond the usual expectation of single-window clearance and industry status, which could unlock financial advantages and streamline project approvals. Tax benefits needed

"There is a clear need for more tax benefits for both homebuyers and investors. The government should raise the deduction limit for interest payments on home loans from the existing Rs 2 lakh a year to Rs 5 lakh. This will boost housing demand, reduce GST on under-construction properties, and adjust raw material pricing," said Ramani Sastri, Chairman & MD, Sterling Developers Pvt. Ltd. He further added that for many people, affordability remains the biggest challenge and hence, expanding

## The last date for filing the income tax return (ITR) for the assessment year 2024-25 (FY24) is July 31, 2024.

Although individuals can file their income tax returns (ITR) themselves, some may need help from a tax professional. It is very important to file the returns accurately and on time to avoid any complications or receiving a notice from the Income Tax department. This is particularly crucial for first-time ITR filers. Taxpayers with income from various sources, such as salary, property, capital gains, foreign income, and crypto gains, need to be especially careful. Salaried individuals who did not opt for the old tax framework in April 2023 or who changed jobs during the financial year should be extra cautious when filing returns due to the complexities involved.

Should you file ITR without a tax expert?

"Assesses who are earning income upto Rs 50 lakh from salary & interest from saving account / FDRs only may file their income tax return themselves as the applicable income tax return Form is ITR-1 which is a form running into 3 pages only and most of the information is pre-filled," said Rohit Ahuja, Partner, Ved Jain and Associates. However, in other cases, ie assesses earning income above Rs 50 lakh engaged in shares or mutual fund transactions, selling of immovable properties, carrying out businesses, etc. the applicable ITR Form may go above 50 pages, which requires extensive information including 'Schedule AL' wherein details of All the Assets & Liabilities are required to be filled in, it is advisable to file the income tax return through professionals only," he added. He further added that the filing of an income tax return may seem an easy task, however any incorrect reporting in ITR Form or error in calculation of



taxes etc. may lead to large consequences including increased income tax scrutiny. "Cost of engaging a professional for filing of the income tax return is minuscule as compared to the cost of engaging professional for handling scrutiny assessment," he added. It is recommended to use a professional for filing income tax returns, especially for complex transactions. This ensures accurate ITR filing and correct calculation of income tax. Tax professionals can also provide guidance on tax savings through planning, such as investments in bonds and property, and inform you about all available exemptions and deductions. ITR can be filed by logging into the income tax portal using PAN number and filling the applicable Form. "It is advised to verify the auto-filled information with bank statements, Form 16 provided by employer etc. Further, it is also advised to go through the Form 26AS as well as AIS report provided by the Income Tax department," said Ahuja.

## 'Hindenburg has never been a client of the firm': Kotak



Kotak Mahindra International Limited (KMIL) clarified on Tuesday that Hindenburg Research has never been a client or investor in their fund. Adani case: Hindenburg said brokerage firms founded by Uday Kotak created and oversaw the offshore fund structure, which was used by its investor partner to bet against Adani group shares.

Hindenburg alleged that Uday Kotak's brokerage firms managed the offshore funds used to short Adani group shares. Kotak Mahindra International Limited (KMIL) clarified that Hindenburg Research has never been a client or investor in their fund on Tuesday.

This clarification comes after Hindenburg Research brought up the name of Kotak Mahindra Bank in its response to a show-cause notice from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). "Kotak Mahindra International Limited (KMIL) and KIOF unequivocally state that Hindenburg has never been a client of the firm nor has it ever been an investor in the Fund," said the company. "The Fund was never aware that Hindenburg was a partner of any of its investors. KMIL has also received a confirmation and declaration from the Fund's investor that its investments were made as a principal and not on behalf of any other person," it added. The company said that K-India Opportunities Fund Ltd. (KIOF) follows strict Know Your Customer (KYC) procedures when bringing on new clients.

The company ensures that all investments comply with the relevant laws. They stressed that KIOF is a Sebi-registered Foreign Portfolio Investor and is regulated by the Financial Services Commission of Mauritius. Established in 2013, the Fund aims to help foreign clients invest in India. "K-India Opportunities Fund Ltd. (KIOF) is a SEBI registered Foreign Portfolio Investor and is regu-

lated by the Financial Services Commission of Mauritius. The Fund, was established in 2013 to enable foreign clients to invest in India. The Fund follows due KYC procedures while onboarding clients and all its investments are made in accordance with all applicable laws. We have cooperated with regulators in relation to our operations and continue to do so," it stated. US-based short seller Hindenburg Research revealed that it earned \$4.1 million in revenue from gains made by shorting Adani securities on behalf of its client. However, it said that this amount will barely cover the costs of producing the research.

"We have made ~\$4.1 million in gross revenue through gains related to Adani shorts from that investor relationship. We made just U.S.~ \$31,000 through our own short of Adani U.S. bonds held into the report," said Hindenburg in a blog post. This statement was made in response to a show-cause notice issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

## AM Green MoU with SJVN Green Energy

Hyderabad: AM Green, incorporated by the founders of Hyderabad-based Greenko Group, on Monday has announced MoU with SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL), for a long-term agreement to supply and sourcing of renewable energy.

As a part of the agreement, the SGEL will supply 4,500 MW of carbon-free energy to AM Green's upcoming green ammonia facilities and set up this capacity through solar and wind power, while AM Green will integrate it with pumped hydro storage to ensure a steady supply of green energy to AM Green facilities, a press release said. SJVN plans to execute the project in three phases, with the first phase delivering 1,500 MW within two years. This initiative is a major milestone for SJVN's renewable energy expansion in India, supporting its goal of reaching 25,000 MW by 2030 and 50,000 MW by 2040.

Mahesh Kolli, Founder, Greenko Group and AM Green says "This partnership demonstrates AM Green's emerging leadership position as a global clean energy transition solutions platform."

## How often should you really weigh yourself?



Few topics are more debated in health than the value of the humble bathroom scale. Some experts advocate daily self-weigh-ins to promote accountability for weight management, particularly when we're following a diet and exercise programme to lose weight. Others suggest ditching self-weigh-ins altogether, arguing they can trigger negative psychological responses and unhealthy behaviours when we don't like, or understand, the number we see on the scale. Many, like me, recommend using scales to weigh yourself weekly, even when we're not trying to lose weight. Here's why.

### 1. Weighing weekly helps you manage your weight

Research confirms regular self-weighing is an effective weight loss and management strategy, primarily because it helps increase awareness of our current weight and any changes. A systematic review of 12 studies found participants who weighed themselves weekly or daily over several months lost 1-3 BMI (body mass index) units more and regained less weight than participants who didn't weigh themselves frequently. The weight-loss benefit was evident with weekly weighing; there was no added benefit with daily weighing.

Self-weigh-ins are an essential tool for weight management as we age. Adults tend to gain weight progressively through middle age. While the average weight gain is typically between 0.5-1 kg per year, this modest accumulation of weight can lead to obesity over time. Weekly weighing and keeping track of the results helps avoid unnecessary weight gain. Tracking our weight can also help identify medical issues early. Dramatic changes in weight can be an early sign of some conditions, including problems with our thyroid, digestion and diabetes.

### 2. Weekly weighing accounts for normal fluctuations

Our body weight can fluctuate within a single day and across the days of the week. Studies show body weight fluctuates by 0.35 per cent within the week and it's typically higher after the weekend. Daily and day-to-day body weight fluctuations have several causes, many linked to our body's water content. The more common causes include: The type of food we've consumed. When we've eaten a dinner higher in carbohydrates, we'll weigh more the next day. This change is a result of our bodies temporarily carrying more water. We retain 3-4 grams of water per gram of carbohydrate consumed to store the energy we take from carbs. Our water content also increases when we consume foods higher in salt. Our bodies try to maintain a balance of sodium and water. When the concentration of salt in our bloodstream increases, a mechanism is triggered to restore balance by retaining water to dilute the excess salt. Our food intake

Whether it's 30 grams of nuts or 65 grams of lean meat, everything we eat and drink has weight, which increases our body weight temporarily while we digest and metabolise what we've consumed. Our weight also tends to be lower first thing in the morning after our food intake has been restricted overnight and higher in the evening after our daily intake of food and drinks.

Exercise If we weigh ourselves at the gym after a workout, there's a good chance we'll weigh less due to sweat-induced fluid loss. The amount of water lost varies depending on things like our workout intensity and duration, the temperature and humidity, along with our sweat rate and hydration level. On average, we lose 1 litre of sweat during an hour of moderate-intensity exercise. Fluctuations in hormones within your menstrual cycle can also affect fluid balance. Women may experience fluid retention and temporarily gain 0.5-2kg of weight at this time. Specifically, the luteal phase, which represents the second half of a woman's cycle, results in a shift of fluid from your blood plasma to your cells, and bloating. Bowel movements Going to the bathroom can lead to small but immediate weight loss as waste is eliminated from the body. While the amount lost will vary, we generally eliminate around 100 grams of weight through our daily bowel movements. All of these fluctuations are normal, and they're not indicative of significant changes in our body fat or muscle mass. However, seeing these fluctuations can lead to unnecessary stress and a fixation with our weight. 3. Weekly weighing avoids scale obsession and weight-loss sabotage

Weighing too frequently can create an obsession with the number on the scales and do more harm than good. Often, our reaction when we see this number not moving in the direction we want or expect is to further restrict our food intake or embark on fad dieting. Along with not being enjoyable or sustainable, fad diets also ultimately increase our weight gain rather than reversing it. This was confirmed in a long-term study comparing intentional weight loss among more than 4,000 twins. The researchers found the likelihood of becoming overweight by the age of 25 was significantly greater for a twin who dieted to lose 5kg or more. This suggests frequent dieting makes us more susceptible to weight gain and prone to future weight gain.

So what should you do?

Weighing ourselves weekly gives a more accurate measure of our weight trends over time. Aim to weigh yourself on the same day, at the same time and in the same environment each week - for example, first thing every Friday morning when you're getting ready to take a shower, after you've gone to the bathroom, but before you've drunk or eaten anything. Use the best quality scales you can afford. Change the batteries regularly and check their accuracy by using a "known" weight - for example, a 10kg weight plate. Place the "known" weight on the scale and check the measurement aligns with the "known" weight. Remember, the number on the scale is just one part of health and weight management. Focusing solely on it can overshadow other indicators, such as how your clothes fit. It's also essential to pay equal attention to how we're feeling, physically and emotionally. Stop weighing yourself - at any time interval - if it's triggering anxiety or stress, and get in touch with a health-care professional to discuss this.

## Major General performs 25 pull-ups without breaking into a sweat: 'That sets a benchmark', say netizens



The internet is in awe of Indian Army Major General Prasanna Joshi who recently aced 25 pull-ups without a break. Sharing the video on X, retired Lt Col JS Sodhi wrote: "Salute and respect to the physical fitness of Major General Prasanna Joshi of the Indian Army. No wonder the Indian Army has been rated as the finest fighting force in the world by the German publication Statista in October 2022. Proud of the Indian Army. Jai Hind! #IndianArmy". As expected, the now-viral video caught the attention of netizens who lauded the armed personnel's fitness level. "Absolutely beautiful. That's what real fitness looks like. Kudos to the real heroes," one wrote, while another commented, "That's real endurance that comes from dedication and devotion for fitness. That sets a benchmark for others to follow. When you love your body and don't cheat with your food habits it will reap a fortune in the near future. Health is our biggest asset."

Why is it a commendable feat?

The Major General's ability to do 25 pull-ups without breaking a sweat is a testament to his overall fitness level and muscle endurance, said Palak Dengla, chief physiotherapist, Aster RV Hospital, Bengaluru. "It's important to note that regular exercise, regardless of intensity, can lead to improved physical fitness and overall health," said Dengla. According to her, exercise doesn't have to be gruelling to be effective. "Low-intensity



bodyweight exercises such as yoga, or stretching can improve flexibility, strength, and balance," Dengla told indianexpress.com.

Dengla stressed that exercise is about listening to your body and finding what works best for you. "It's not always about pushing yourself to the limit," she stressed.

What are pull-ups?

Bodyweight exercises are strength-training exercises that use your own body as resistance, in most cases, not requiring any additional weights. "These exercises leverage your body's weight to build muscle, improve flexibility, and enhance overall fitness. Popular examples include push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges, and planks," shared fitness expert Garima Goyal.

Why should you do pull-ups?

Pull-ups work the back, biceps, and shoulders. "Incorporate different exercises, such as changing grip positions or trying new workout modalities, to keep your muscles challenged and responsive to growth stimuli," Goyal mentioned.

How to perform pull-ups?

All you need is a horizontal bar. "Hang from the bar with an overhand grip, pull your body up until your chin is above the bar, then lower back down with control," said Goyal.



## Darshan's mother meets him in jail, stirs controversy



On Monday, the Central Prison on the outskirts of Bengaluru witnessed a reunion as jailed Kannada star Darshan was visited by his mother Meena, brother Dinakar, wife Vijayalakshmi, and son Vineesh. This marks the second visit by Darshan's family since his arrest, stirring controversy over preferential treatment.

According to police sources, the family met Darshan on Monday morning. Both Darshan and his mother

Meena were visibly emotional during the meeting, with Dinakar stepping in to console them. Vijayalakshmi, who had visited her husband previously, shared a heartfelt statement after the visit, "It's time for a test. For me, for you, for all of us. We lose patience and speak is harmful. So be patient, let's be at peace. I have conveyed your anxiety to Darshan." The recent jail visit has sparked a row in Karnataka, with many questioning the preferential treatment allegedly given to Darshan in allowing his family members to visit him.

Darshan, along with his partner Pavithra Gowda and 15 others, was arrested on charges of murdering 33-year-old Renukaswamy, a resident of Chitradurga. Renukaswamy, whose wife is pregnant with their first child, was a devoted fan of Darshan. The probe revealed that Renukaswamy had sent derogatory messages to Pavithra on social media, which allegedly led to his kidnapping, torture, and subsequent death. The victim was reportedly brought to Bengaluru, kept in a shed, and tortured to death. The allegations against Darshan have shocked the Kannada film industry and his fans, leading to intense scrutiny and media attention.

## Sonakshi Sinha and Riteish Deshmukh film takes a dig at Bhool Bhulaiyaa and Stree, calls their ghosts boring

While Sonakshi Sinha is enjoying her honeymoon, the makers of her upcoming film *Kakuda* unveiled its trailer on Tuesday. The film, which also stars Riteish Deshmukh, Saqib Saleem, and Aasif Khan, is directed by Aditya Sarpotdar. In the trailer, Sunny, played by Saqib, is in love with Indra, portrayed by Sonakshi Sinha. Determined to be together, they marry and move to the village of Ratodi, only to be cursed by *Kakuda*. On their wedding night, Sunny fails to open the smaller door for *Kakuda* at 7:15 pm sharp, inviting *Kakuda*, a wicked ghost who punishes the man of the house by inflicting a hump on their back that grows until their demise on the thirteenth day. With Sunny's life hanging by a thread, Indra seeks help from Victor, an eccentric ghost hunter played by Riteish.

Riteish brings the laughs as he appears on screen. In one scene, he takes a dig at popular horror comedies *Bhool Bhulaiyaa* and *Stree*, commenting on how ghosts these days are boring. The trailer ends with a visual of Riteish fighting a giant *Kakuda* alone. *Kakuda* director Aditya Sarpotdar is currently enjoying the success of his supernatural horror comedy *Munjya*. The film was surprise hit at the box office. Speaking about his latest offering *Kakuda*, he said, "The release of the *Kakuda* trailer is just a glimpse into the fascinating narrative of a unique folklore that we've created. This labor of love has been a thrilling ride, blending horror and comedy in a way that will keep audiences intrigued. Trust me, there are so many more laughs and scares in store when the film premieres on ZEE5. I can't wait for viewers to immerse themselves in the delightfully quirky tale of the Ratodi village and its bone-chilling legend. It's going to be a fun, frightful, and an unforgettable experience."

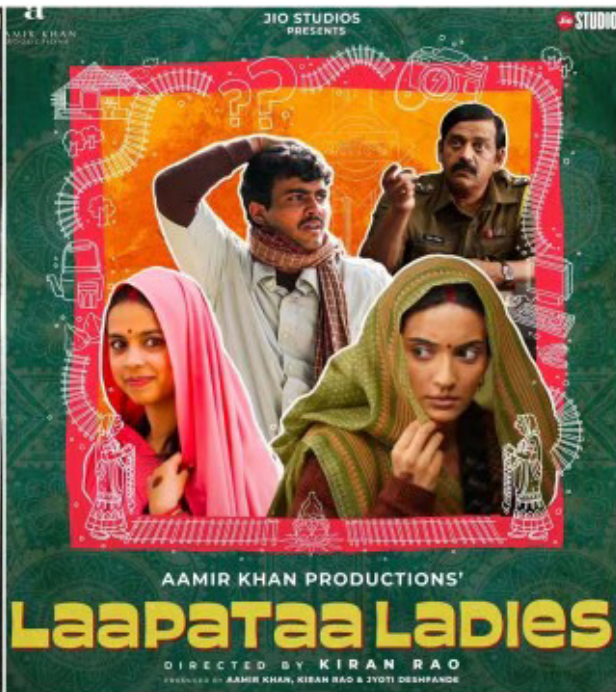
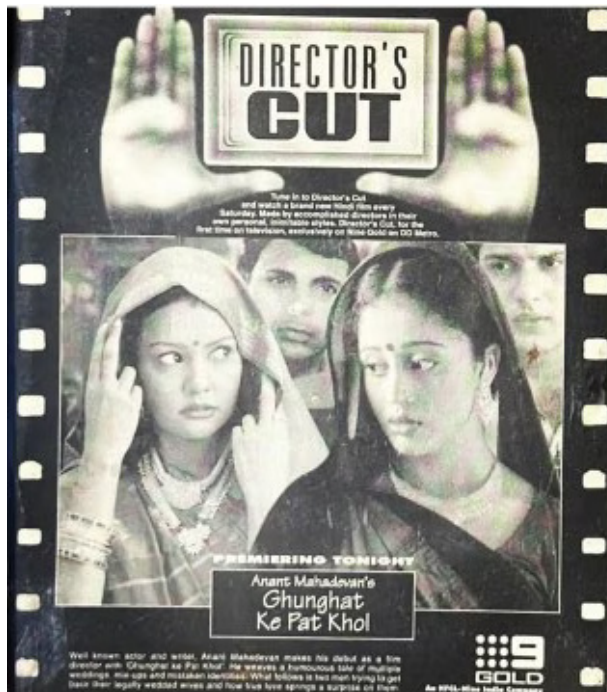
Riteish Deshmukh added, "I'm thrilled to be a part of the quirky and eccentric world of *Kakuda*. Playing the role of Victor, an unconventional ghost hunter, allowed



me to tap into a side of my acting abilities that I hadn't fully explored before. This character is unlike any other I've portrayed, and that's what makes it so exciting. Blending horror and comedy is a delicate balance, and I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside such talented co-stars like Sonakshi Sinha and Saqib Saleem. '*Kakuda*' takes you on a rollercoaster ride of emotions, leaving you both laughing and scared."

On joining hands with Riteish Deshmukh, Sonakshi Sinha said, "In '*Kakuda*', I play the role of a girl who believes in science and not in superstitions. However, when she encounters the peculiar ritual, she decides to dig deeper and find out the truth behind it. I must admit, balancing horror with comedy is a challenging task - it's not easy to make people laugh while simultaneously sending chills down their spines. But this film was an absolute blast to shoot, especially because of my co actors Riteish, Saqib and Aasif who are so funny in real life as well and such talented actors! We had a lot of fun. I'm really looking forward to seeing how audiences react to our efforts. I am confident that that the film will promise both laughter and thrills in equal measure."

## Ananth Mahadevan on Laapataa Ladies plagiarism row: 'It cannot be a coincidence...'



Ananth Mahadevan, however, maintained that he does not believe either Kiran Rao or *Laapataa Ladies*' producer Aamir Khan were aware of the alleged copying. Screenwriter-director Ananth Mahadevan had earlier alleged that Kiran Rao's *Laapataa Ladies* was copied from his 1999 film *Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol*. (Image: Ananth Mahadevan, Kiran Rao/Instagram) Months after Ananth Mahadevan levelled allegations of plagiarism against the makers of *Laapataa Ladies*, claiming the Kiran Rao directorial was copied from his debut directorial venture *Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol* (1999), the actor-filmmaker has opened up about the matter. Mahadevan, however, maintained that he does not believe either Rao or the film's producer, Bollywood icon Aamir Khan, were aware of the alleged copying.

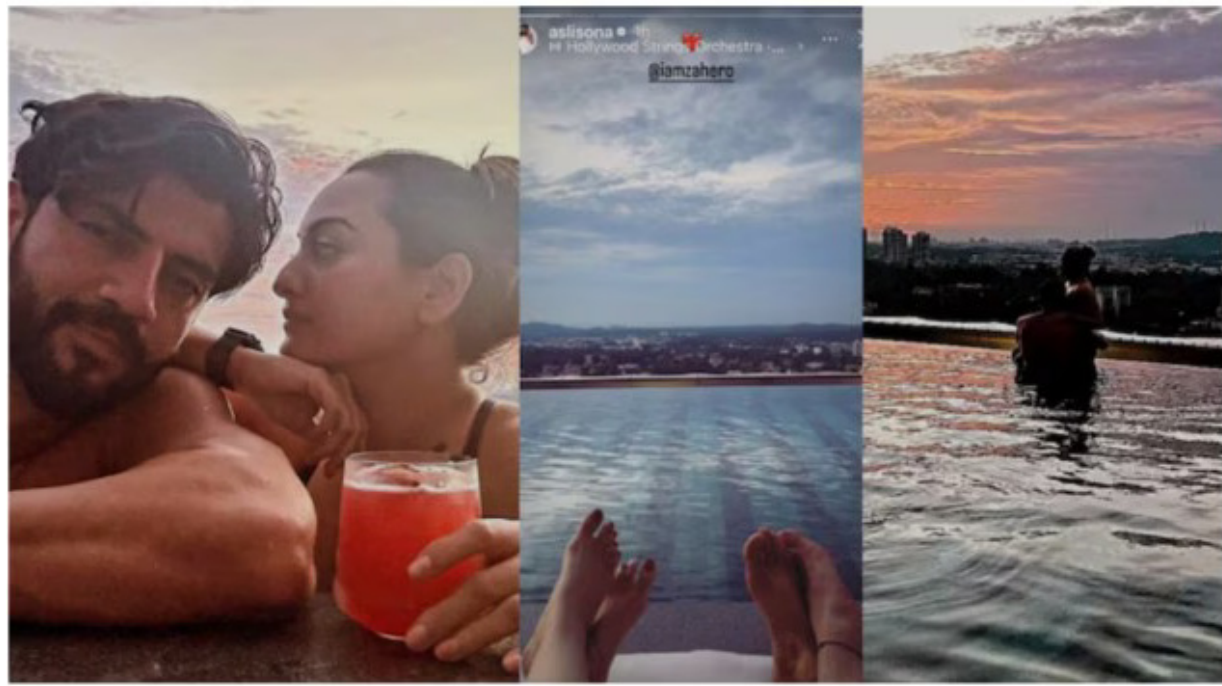
"*Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol* was made for Channel 9 from Australia and was telecast on DD Metro. Several films being made on Bhagat Singh is quite natural because he was famous. But a premise like brides getting mixed up at a railway station... it cannot be a coincidence. I was very amused, frankly, because we are all colleagues here, whether it's Aamir or Kiran. We've all worked together. I was also flattered that they actually wanted to think about this (story)," he said during a chat with director Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri on the latter's YouTube channel I Am Buddha. Mahadevan added that while the initial portions of both movies is similar, *Laapataa Ladies* diverges to focus on women's freedom and their fight for rights afterwards. "For all you know, Aamir and Kiran didn't even know about this. Maybe this

(information) was kept from them. But when *Laapataa Ladies*' writer was asked about this (the controversy) during an interview, he said he doesn't do things like that and stated that it's an original story," he added.

Explaining how he conceived the idea for *Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol*, Ananth Mahadevan credited veteran character actor Satyen Kappu. "We were sitting with Farooq Sheikh and shooting for *Chamatkar*. Once, during the break, Kappu saab said, 'After our marriage, my wife was wearing a veil. Since I had to immediately leave for a shoot, I took her along and sat her down at a bus station. Then I went to check the bus timing. When I returned, my wife was missing. When I looked around, I saw her walking away with the porter who was carrying my trunk. So, she thought it was me.' Hearing this, Farooq Sheikh saab said there's a story in this. It was absolutely novel. So, we started writing," Mahadevan recalled. The filmmaker also mentioned that he laughed off the matter, though, he added, it would have been nice if the *Laapataa Ladies* writer had acknowledged inspiration from his film, if that were the case.

After *Laapataa Ladies* was screened at the 48th Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), Mahadevan took to his Instagram account to share a poster of *Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol* and a few words regarding it. "My very first full length feature *GHOONGHAT KE PAT KHOL* was for Channel 9 Gold, the Australian producer who opened shop in India in 1999. It was a delightful story of two brides in the traditional *Ghunghat* getting mixed up in a train and finding themselves in Bombay with the wrong husband.

## Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal get cozy by the pool on their honeymoon.



After an intimate wedding, Bollywood actors Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal have jetted off for their honeymoon. The Dabangg actor recently shared glimpses of her romantic getaway with Zaheer.

Sonakshi took to her Instagram Stories to share photos from the honeymoon. The first image showcases a tranquil setting where the couple is seen dipping their feet in the pool. In another picture, the newly married couple poses for the camera as they enjoy drinks and each other's company in the pool. Another photo shows them sharing a romantic moment, taking in the breathtaking city view. Though Sonakshi has shared photos from her honeymoon, she hasn't disclosed the location of their holiday. Zaheer Iqbal also shared a fun moment from their honeymoon. He posted a video of Sonakshi Sinha laughing heartily. In the caption, Zaheer admitted that although she was initially angry and wanted to shout at him, he quickly turned the situation around and made her laugh

instead. He also shared a meme of a couple gaining weight after marriage. Earlier today, Sonakshi Sinha's father and veteran actor Shatrughan Sinha thanked prominent personalities for their congratulatory messages on his daughter's wedding. He described Sonakshi and Zaheer as a 'made for each other couple'. Shatrughan wrote, "Thanking everyone for their blessings love & warm congratulatory messages. But most touched to have received extremely heartwarming affectionate wishes from most learned, intellectual par excellence the great Arun Shourie elder brother, statesman Yashwant Sinha & of course the most deserving, Magsaysay Award winner Ravish Kumar for the 'made for each other' couple Sonakshi Sinha & Zaheer Iqbal." As if to hammer home the point he was making, he concluded his tweet with the hashtag, "#SinhaParivar." Sonakshi and Zaheer tied the knot on June 23 at the actor's Bandra home in Mumbai, with close friends and family in attendance.

## Divya Dutta feared being typecast as the 'heroine's best friend' after Veer Zaara: 'I hid behind my mother...'

Over the last 30 years since her on-screen debut, actor Divya Dutta has taken on a diverse array of roles, leaving a lasting impression on viewers. Though she had appeared in many films by then, it was Yash Chopra's 2004 romantic drama *Veer Zaara* — starring Shah Rukh Khan and Preity Zinta in the lead roles — that first brought her widespread recognition. Her portrayal of Shabina Ibrahim, the best friend of the movie's heroine Zaara (played by Preity Zinta), garnered her significant acclaim. However, Dutta recently revealed that she initially feared the role might typecast her as the perennial "heroine's best friend".

"I was sitting at the movie's premiere holding my mother's hand. It's a Yash Chopra film, so the whole world would be watching it. I enjoyed it a lot. But, at the same time, I was worried I would be stereotyped as the best friend of all heroines in the industry. There is a herd mentality in our industry. Everyone runs after the one who looks good and leaves the rest behind," she said during a chat with Siddharth Kannan.

Divya Dutta also recalled the reactions to her performance during a screening of *Veer Zaara*. Dutta said, "At the time of the movie's interval, I ran away holding my mother's hand. Mumma said she was very proud of me for the performance. I said, 'Thank you, Mumma, even I am loving being a part of this film.' When we stepped out, I hid a little behind her. I didn't want to hear any friend calling me because my dream was to become a 'Yash Chopra heroine'. While I was hiding there, Yash uncle saw me and called me over. As I went up to him, I was



crowded and surrounded by people." "In front of Yash ji, someone asked, 'Where did you find this girl from? Pakistan? Is she a new kid?' By then, I had been in the industry for seven years. Though I was finally discovered, people didn't know what category to put me in. Yet, I have turned down many roles unless I felt the role was beautiful. When we were doing *Aaja Nachle* (2007), I went up to Adi (Aditya Chopra, who penned the story and bankrolled the movie) and asked him who my hero was. When he said Irrfan (Khan), I said I would do the film. I wanted a hero. I had to learn to watch out for myself. Some people will always objectify and categorize you. I don't belong with those people... I belong with those who treat me like I do and they will give you due respect," she added. Divya Dutta, who won the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *Irada* (2017), was most recently seen in the comedy film *Sharmajee Ki Beti* (2024), helmed by Tahira Kashyap.

## Vijay Sethupathi's Maharaja earns Rs 100 crore despite Kalki 2898 AD onslaught

Vijay Sethupathi's latest release *Maharaja* has breathed new life into Tamil cinema, ending a prolonged dry spell at the box office. The film has grossed Rs 100 crore worldwide by its third weekend, making it the biggest Tamil grosser of the year, dethroning Sundar C's *Aranmanai 4*. Despite the release of *Prabhas*' highly anticipated *Kalki 2898 AD* on June 27, *Maharaja* has managed to hold its ground.

According to trade tracker Sacnilk, *Maharaja* has collected around Rs 76 crore in India and approximately Rs 24 crore overseas. This impressive feat has pushed the film past the previous top-grossing Tamil film of the year, *Aranmanai 4*, which ended its worldwide run with Rs 99 crore (the makers of *Aranmanai 4* have claimed the film has earned Rs 100 crore). *Maharaja* is now expected to earn around Rs 105 crore by the end of its theatrical run, according to the website.

Though *Kalki 2898 AD*'s Tamil version is expected to take down *Maharaja*, the performance of the Vijay Sethupathi starrer despite the tough competition is commendable. Directed by Nithilan Swaminathan of *Kurangu Bommai* fame, *Maharaja* is a non-linear film about the case of a missing dustbin from a barber's house.



*Maharaja* received positive reviews, but it was also panned for the lack of sensitivity with the way it dealt with sexual violence. The *Indian Express*' Kirubhakar rated the film with two stars and wrote, "The reason behind the bloodbath is something Tamil cinema keeps going back to without sensitivity. There's only a thin line that separates exploitation and concern when it comes to movies that fight for a cause. *Maharaja* doesn't seem to tread the line that well." Other than Vijay Sethupathi, the movie had Anurag Kashyap, Sachana Namidass and Mamta Mohandas in important roles.

## Mithun Chakraborty was insecure about his complexion and teeth, says Shabana Azmi: 'My mummy would hug him tight and say...'

One of the most respected Indian actors of all time, Shabana Azmi is regarded by many as the benchmark for film acting. A recipient of the National Film Award for Best Actress five times, the most by any Indian actor in the performance categories, Azmi is an alumna of the prestigious Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune. At FTII, she was senior to Mithun Chakraborty, who later became a big Bollywood star, and has shared a close bond with him since then. Recently, Azmi shared an anecdote about Chakraborty and his insecurities, and

how her mother, legendary theatre and film actor Shaukat Kaifi, motivated him to look past such things.

"Mithun Chakraborty was my junior (at FTII). I remember he used to come to our house. He was very conscious of the fact that his complexion was not fair and his teeth were like this (she meant he had jutting teeth). My mummy used to hug him tight and say, 'Don't worry about such things; you dance so well...' This kind of encouragement was given to those who were from the Indian People'



## Portugal vs France, EURO 2024 Highlights: France defeat Portugal via penalties, book semis clash vs Spain



GNS News Agency, July 8

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, center, reacts after losing a quarter final match between Portugal and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Hamburg, Germany, Friday, July 5, 2024. France won a penalty shoot out 4-3 after the match ended in a 0-0 draw. (AP Photo) Cristiano Ronaldo, center, reacts after Portugal lost the Euro 2024 quarter-final to France in Hamburg via penalty shootouts.

Portugal vs France Quarter Final, UEFA Euro 2024 Highlights: Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal crashed out of the quarter-final of the Euro 2024 after Kylian Mbappe led France defeated them via penalty shootout. This is Ronaldo's last European Championship. Both teams were deadlocked 0-0 at full-time in the quarterfinal at the Volksparkstadion in Hamburg. France thus booked a semi-final showdown against Spain, who sent hosts Germany out of the tournament. The game between France

and Portugal was a rematch of the Euro 2016 final. This game was also coming on the 18th anniversary of another pivotal clash between the sides: a game at the 2006 FIFA World Cup when Zinedine Zidane smashed the winner through a penalty in the semifinals. Portugal and France were touted as pre-tournament favourites this time but have failed to light up the event thus far. After two wins in their first two matches, Portugal could not score in their last two outings against Georgia and Slovenia. Portugal vs France Highlights, EURO 2024: Catch updates of the POR vs FRA UEFA Euro 2024 quarterfinal match at the Volksparkstadion in Hamburg

It's the Christmas break before Real Madrid clinch the much awaited La Decima. At the team's training complex at Valdebebas, it is business as usual. One after another the crème de la crème of luxury cars and world football are arriving for a holiday break training session. Greeting them inside the facility is a twitzy 13-year-old, wearing the club's original jacket. The boy, who has come to the Spanish capital all the way from the Parisian suburbs, has been in a state of shock since his inviter, club director Zinedine Zidane, received him in his car. "Should I take off my shoes?" he'd nervously ask the French icon. It's Zizou who gifts him with the Real Madrid apparel. For Kylian Mbappe, who turns 14 later in the week, the greatest gift arrives at last as the man postered all over his bedroom walls walks up to him. It's his hero Cristiano Ronaldo. A cute little meeting illustrated on the pages of the comic book, Je M'appelle Kylian. As Ronaldo puts his hand around Mbappe's shoulder, Zidane volunteers to take a photo. Click. This one is going down in the vaults.

## Former coach reveals reason behind Jude Bellingham's steeliness: 'As a kid, he watched his dad get kicked all over the place'

GNS News Agency, July 8

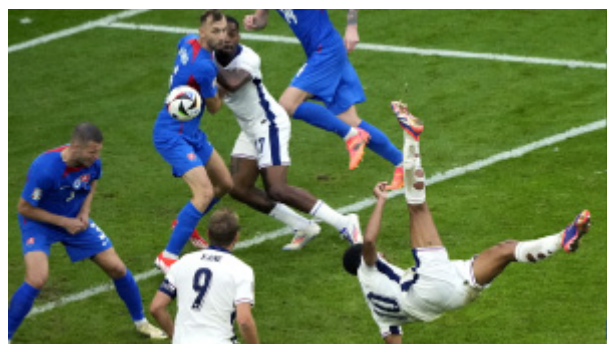
"UEFA's headquarters are in Switzerland. If they ban Jude, we burn the place to the ground," the guest fumed. His comment captured the mood of the nation days before the clash on Saturday night, especially about their undisputed star. If not for the 21-year-old's splendid, 95th-minute bicycle kick in the Round of 16 clash against Slovakia, a sub-par England would have been on the flight back home. The goal, his celebration, and the comeback it sparked only added to the hype around Bellingham. England's Jude Bellingham, right, scores his side's first goal with an overhead kick during a round of sixteen match between England and Slovakia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, Sunday, June 30, 2024. (AP Photo) England's Jude Bellingham, right, scores his side's first goal with an overhead kick during a round of sixteen match between England and Slovakia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Gelsenkirchen, Germany.

He may have showcased his class under the bright lights on a big Euros stage, but the Real Madrid star's journey began on the humble grounds of Birmingham. And his career was shaped in the early years by Paul Robinson, who was Birmingham City's U-21 when Bellingham played there. Robinson sets the mood by narrating a story that underlines Bellingham's class. It's of his jersey number at the club - 22. "His jersey number came from adding all the positions he could play on the field," Robinson tells The Indian Express. "He could play as a holding midfielder (4), get control of the ball in attacking midfield (8), as well as a second striker (10)." The capacity to be an all-rounder on the pitch comes from an astonishing game IQ that Bellingham had even as a teenager. But Robinson, a former Birmingham City player, remembers almost shrugging his shoulders when he first heard the name Jude Bellingham.

"I was still playing at the time. He was 11 when I first heard about him. At such a young age, you don't think too much about it. I never made a big thing of it." It wasn't until Robinson transitioned to coaching the Birmingham academy kids and saw Bellingham train that he realised what the fuss was all about around the young boy. "Straightaway, I was blown. I was more blown away with his intelligence of the game. The know-how of it. His understanding of formations, where he needed to be, was astonishing," he says. "Again, he was still developing, there were still going to be a lot of mistakes, a lot of tidying up that we were going to work on but his mentality and understanding of football was something I hadn't seen in a kid at that age. His mindset was: I want to be the best." An admirable trait for a teenager, Robinson believes, was Bellingham's maturity to admit his shortcomings from an early age and nullify them as soon as possible. One such aspect of his game was heading. Bellingham may have scored from a powerful header in England's Euros opener against Serbia. From the timing of his run to the leap and the finish, everything looked picture-perfect. But it wasn't something that came naturally to him earlier. "Jude as a kid, was technically very poor at heading. We worked on that: me crossing the ball in, getting his timing to attack the ball, and trying to nail that contact." Steely side from his father. While Bellingham the goal-scorer and chance-creator is given his due, especially from his freshman year at Real Madrid, the uglier side of his play is often disregarded.

So far in the Euros, he has drawn nine fouls in four games - more than Cristiano Ronaldo, Kylian Mbappe, and his captain Harry Kane. It's an accurate marker to judge how highly the opposition regards Bellingham. Despite the tackles flying in thick and fast against him, Bellingham has largely remained unfazed. Robinson believes the 21-year-old gets his steely side from his father, Mark Bellingham. A retired police sergeant, Bellingham Sr is a well-known name in England's non-league football.

Jude Bellingham's father Mark is a retired police sergeant. Bellingham Sr is a well-known name in England's non-league football. (Jude Bellingham/Instagram) Jude Bellingham's father Mark is a retired police sergeant. Bellingham Sr is a well-known name in England's non-league football. (Jude Bellingham/Instagram) Per some estimates, Mark scored more than



700 goals in what was a stellar semi-professional career. One that mentally prepared his elder son for his professional career. "The level at which Mark played, it meant physical football. So Jude's been around. Growing up as a kid, he has watched his dad get kicked all over the place. So he has developed the same type of mentality: you're going to get kicked, so you have got to get up and get on with it," Robinson explains. For Bellingham Jr, an early promotion to the U21 team also helped. "When he was 16, he played for our U21s team. He was coming up against more stronger, physical boys. You expect a young lad, who is technically good, getting more fouled at that age. Midfield players don't like it, so they're going to rough you up. Jude has grown in that sort of environment, conditioned to know that people are going to target him, to keep him quiet and out of the game." While Mark has gifted many traits to its greatest football son, Bellingham is boundlessly adored for what he did for the club, and what he means to the city. "Jude will always be a Brummie in his roots," says Robinson. "What he's done, coming through the academy, what he did for the football club at the time, the money he earned for the football club. When they needed it, Jude was the one who brought the funds to make sure it was safe and secure to keep going. Will we ever see a lad from Birmingham, who goes down to play for Real Madrid, that's the question we have to ask."

## Paris Olympics: A look at the top 10 medal prospects for India

New Delhi: The Paris Olympics are fast approaching and we're just 20 days away from the start of the world's biggest sporting carnival. India will be sending a contingent of close to 120 sportspersons to the Olympics, including an Athletics team led by the defending champion in the men's javelin Neeraj Chopra, a 21-member Shooting team and a 16-member men's hockey squad. Here's a look at the top 10 medal prospects for India based on their recent performance and fitness:

Neeraj Chopra (Javelin throw): The javelin superstar Neeraj Chopra will strive to make history by becoming the first Indian athlete to win back-to-back gold medals. Chopra was last in action at the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, on June 18 and currently training in Germany. With a best throw of 85.97m, he won the gold medal there. This week's Paris Diamond League is not part of his competition calendar, meaning the next time he takes the field will be at the Olympics.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty (Badminton): Satwik and Chirag haven't competed since the Singapore Open in May, where they lost in the first round. This has also affected their ranking as they dropped to World No. 3 from the top spot. The duo had narrowly missed out on a quarterfinal berth in the last Olympics despite winning two of their three group matches. Lovlina Borgohain (Boxing): Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina was recently in action at the Grand Prix tournament in the Czech Republic. She lost two bouts and won once, which was enough for her to win silver. Along with Nikhat, she is also in Saarbrücken, Germany, for a month-long training camp. After finishing the camp on July 22, Lovlina will head to Paris in search of her second Olympic medal. Men's hockey team: Head coach Craig Fulton had recently named the final squad that will travel to Paris. As expected, Harmanpreet Singh will lead the side and PR Sreejesh will be the only goalkeeper in the team.

## Arshdeep Singh reveals how he struggled to cry after final, how his family shuts eyes while he's bowling and how Bumrah makes him a better bowler



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Arshdeep Singh bowled India's 19th over in their famous T20 World Cup victory and kept things tight, conceding just 4 runs to strangle the South Africans. In a freewheeling chat with The Indian Express, the lanky Punjab bowler talks about keeping an unflappable temperament at the crunch, choosing his variations and scribbling poetry and taking to photography to unwind from pressures of cricket. Question: Were you able to catch some sleep after last night's celebrations in Mumbai?

Arshdeep Singh: Tagdi neend aayi (I slept really well). We had hardly slept after we won the T20 World Cup

Q: Could you sleep well before the final?

Arshdeep Singh: Before the final, I had the best sleep of my life. I woke up fresh. There were no sleepless nights.

What about nerves during the final?

Arshdeep Singh: There was nothing. In the team meeting, Rohit bhai specifically said that we treat it like any other match. 'Yes the occasion is big but we will treat it like a normal day. Do your routines'. That was the clear message.

The welcome you guys got in Mumbai... has it sunk in yet?

Arshdeep Singh: After we won there was not much of a crowd in Barbados. But when we watched videos on social media and saw the reactions from the different cities... people were dancing on the streets. We knew that we would receive a warm welcome when we returned to India but never imagined that it would be at this scale. When I looked down from the bus, people didn't have place to stand. It was a surreal feeling. I am glad we gave the country so much joy. Everyone was crying after Hardik Pandya bowled the last ball in the final. Did you cry?

Arshdeep Singh: I was very happy. In the IPL, I have played so many nerve-wracking matches for Punjab Kings that I don't have any emotions left. Mai koshish kar raha tha but yaar aansu nikle nahi (I tried hard but just was not able to cry). I watched the legends of the game... Rohit bhai, Virat bhai, who have achieved so much... they just couldn't control their emotions. I was happy for them. But I don't know why I didn't shed a tear. Arshdeep Singh, left, bowls past South Africa's Heinrich Klaasen during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final cricket match between India and South Africa at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Saturday, June 29, 2024. (AP Photo) Arshdeep Singh, left, bowls past South Africa's Heinrich Klaasen during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final cricket match between India and South Africa at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Saturday.

When David Miller hit that ball in the air, did it feel like the World Cup had gotten away from India?

Arshdeep Singh: My heart was pounding. I was standing at sweeper cover. I got the perfect side angle view. When Miller connected, I thought it would go the distance but like in a movie it started to dip. The way Surya bhai (Suryakumar Yadav) judged the catch... As he said in the post-match interviews he just wanted to save the six, but then he realised that he had the chance to take that catch. He took that risk, very brave of him.

You love to write poetry. Did you write after the final or during the tournament?

Arshdeep Singh: I haven't got the chance yet. But whenever I get time, I will definitely put down my emotions on paper. This feeling of winning the World Cup, the reception we got... I don't think I would be able to do justice. I just love to write down whatever thoughts come to my mind. Writing poetry helps me take a break from cricket.

Your father had said that you laughed on reading the comments by trolls after that Asia Cup loss to Pakistan. Did you really laugh?

Arshdeep Singh: I did. When I am in stress, I just sleep. Sleeping is the best medicine, it solves all problems for me. Also I don't care much about people's views. For me what matters is what my family thinks and what my teammates say.

You have played 52 T20s for India. Do you see yourself as a T20 specialist or do you want to play Test cricket as well?

Arshdeep Singh: Arshdeep Singh 100 per cent Test cricket khelna chahta hai (I want to play Test cricket). As a cricketer, when you start, you wear the whites and play with the red ball. You ask any cricketer, they will tell you wearing the Test whites is a dream. That's the most difficult format. Recently when I played for India A, wearing the whites gave me a different feeling. It's true joy. My ultimate aim is to play Test cricket for India.

In this World Cup, it seemed you knew when to bowl which kind of ball. How did that happen?

Arshdeep Singh: I have played enough cricket to understand what a match situation demands. You learn from experience. It doesn't matter how much you plan, you prepare but once you start playing you get to know your game better. You must have options but at the same



time you must also know what variation to bowl and what will be more effective in say the Powerplay or between overs 6 and 15 and in the death overs. And when you have Jassi bhai (Jasprit Bumrah) with you it makes your life easy. His perspective on bowling helps a lot. If the ball is reversing on certain pitches, you must hit the good length, when yorkers will be more effective, when slower ones should be bowled. But instead of overdoing it, we must keep things simple. In the entire World Cup, we have seen that run-scoring was not that easy. But at the same time to keep the batsmen under check, you have to be disciplined and how well you can execute plans. (LEFT) Arshdeep Singh with Jasprit Bumrah after they won the T20 World Cup; (RIGHT) Arshdeep Singh and Jasprit Bumrah after they boarded the flight from Barbados. (Special Arrangement) (LEFT) Arshdeep Singh with Jasprit Bumrah after they won the T20 World Cup; (RIGHT) Arshdeep Singh and Jasprit Bumrah after they boarded the flight from Barbados. (Special Arrangement) In the IPL you bowled more yorkers than Bumrah. Now, bowling alongside him, you seem to be picking the moments to slip in the yorkers. Any reasons behind it?

Arshdeep Singh: The yorker has become like a cliché nowadays. In New York, you didn't have to bowl yorkers. Hitting the length was creating problems for the batsmen. It has become a norm that you must bowl yorkers in the death overs but I think you can't bowl yorkers on every pitch. When bowling in the death, you have to adapt. On certain pitches, you might end up bowling 20 slower ones out of the 24 deliveries. In the IPL, where you are playing on flat wickets, bowling a yorker is the only option. When Jassi bhai is not overdoing the yorker, it's because he knows he might end up conceding runs. In T20 bowling you can't be rigid. You need to keep an open mind as well.

India's Arshdeep Singh celebrates the dismissal of South Africa's captain Aiden Markram during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final cricket match between India and South Africa at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Saturday, June 29, 2024. (AP Photo/Ricardo Mazalan) India's Arshdeep Singh celebrates the dismissal of South Africa's captain Aiden Markram during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final cricket match between India and South Africa at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Saturday, June 29, 2024.

We saw you doing the bhangra with Virat Kohli after the final but why didn't Jasprit Bumrah join you guys?

Arshdeep Singh: It's very rare to see Jassi bhai's emotion. But after the win, he was also very emotional. His family was with him. He is not expressive when you compare him with a typical Punjabi. He expressed a lot after the win and it was good to see. Usually he has a straight face whether he takes a wicket or delivers yorkers. It was different to see him expressing his emotions.

The bond with Virat bhai has always been great. Same Punjabi culture, he also loves to shake his leg. The DJ was playing a perfect song (I can't remember it now), the timing was perfect and we started doing bhangra.

Did you have any discussion with Bumrah on playing Test cricket?

Arshdeep Singh: Whenever you talk to Jassi bhai he will tell you how much he enjoys bowling in Test cricket. At the breakfast table, he would keep telling me that Arshdhyan mein rakh tere ko teeno formats khelna hai (Keep it in your mind that you must play all three formats). He says when you do well in the Test cricket, people remember you and rate you more highly. Whenever we talk, he shares his input on bowling with the red ball. In red ball you have to stick to one length, you have to be relentless and should not think about the rewards because sometimes a jaffa will miss the off-stump, there will be oohs and aahs behind the stumps but the only thing you can do is walk back to your bowling mark. In one spell, you can end up taking five or six wickets but at the same time, you can go a day without taking a wicket. It tests your body and mind. I am looking forward to sharing the new ball with him in Test cricket as well.

Wasim Akram has said that you have got a perfect length to bowl in Test cricket. Have you ever had the chance to talk to him?

Arshdeep Singh: In the 2022 Asia Cup, he told me that my release point is good and that the ball is leaving my hand beautifully. Recently, when I met him in New York, he praised me for my ability to swing the ball both ways. In one of his interviews, he said that I must play red-ball cricket more with the skillset I possess.

How was it to have family watching you bowl and lifting the World Cup?

Arshdeep Singh: They keep their eyes shut when I bowl. I don't know why. Who does these things when they are sitting in the stadium? My parents always say that whenever I bowl they close their eyes. I have told them what is the point of coming all this way. How would you get that feeling, what is going on in the match? I respect their superstitions. For them closing their eyes while I am bowling is their contribution. It gives them happiness.